

Biblical Theology

Introduction: Week 2 – History of Theology

70-313 - Early Church

- **Key Historical Events:**
 - Waning Apostolic Presence, Roman-sponsored hostility, Unorganized overall structure.
- **Theological Struggles:**
 1. Jewish **Legalism**
 2. Greek **Philosophy** / Gnosticism
 3. Eastern **Mysticism**
- **Theological Development:**
 - Bishops and Overseers, Creeds, Early attempts at New Testament Canonization

313-590 - Church Rises as Rome Falls

- **Key Historical Events:**
 - Rome ends oppression of Christians – Constantine, Council of Nicea, Roman Empire begins to fall.
- **Theological Struggles:**
 1. **Nature** of Christ: Man or God?
 2. **Trinity** – Nature of God
 3. **Original Sin**, Free Will
- **Theological Development:**
 - Augustine - Trinity, Original Sin, Free Will vs. Election, Hermeneutics
 - Sabellius – Trinity
 - Athanasius - Deity of Christ
 - Eutyches - Christ's Nature: 100% God, 100% Man

590-1516 – Medieval Church

- **Key Historical Events**
 - Rise of Islam
 - Rise of Political influence of Church.
- **Theological Struggles:**
 1. Christianity takes on **military** role. (Crusades)
 2. Money Making **Indulgences**
 3. **Politics**: Papal competition and campaigning.
- **Theological Development:**
 - Growing Unrest (Thomas Aquinas, John Wycliffe, Jan Hus)
 - Growing belief that church was scripturally defined as followers of Christ, not popes, priests and sacraments.
 - Every follower of Christ should study and know the bible personally.

1517-1648 – Reformation

- **Major Theological Shift**
 - Superstition is replaced by conviction and reason.
 - **Martin Luther** - Lawyer turned monk studies scriptures only to realize how unscriptural the church had become. Nailed 95 theses to door of church in Wittenberg, Germany.
 - **John Calvin** – Protestant pastor who promoted Luther’s belief of a more scripturally-based church rather than a governing Church.
 - **William Tyndale** – English scholar who believed every follower of Christ should read and study God’s word. Translated the bible into English and had it mass distributed in England.
 - Protestant movement is born.

1648-1789 – Enlightenment

- **Key Historical Events:**
 - Two paths forged out of reformation:
 - Enlightenment and Scientific and Philosophical Evolution
 - Revival and Spiritual and Theological Revolution
- **Theological Struggles** - Descartes, David Hume, Immanuel Kant
 1. “**Reason** trumps faith.”
 2. “God is not **needed**.”
 3. Over questioning leads to theological **skepticism**
- **Theological Development** - Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, George Whitefield):
 - Departure from religion-based dogma to deep spiritual conviction, personal relationship with God through faith in Christ.

1789-1914 – Liberalism vs. Fundamentalism

- **Key Historical Events:**
 - Enlightenment leads to age of revolution and optimism.
- **Theological Struggles** - Schleiermacher, Ritschl, von Harnack, Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche
 1. **Liberalism** - God is unknowable (or dead), Theology is speculative., Scripture is unreliable, Jesus was nothing more than a good man., Ethical living is ultimate goal of mankind, Mankind should strive toward utopia.
- **Theological Development** - Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr
 - **Fundamentalism:** Inerrancy of Scripture, Response to Liberalism, Philosophical basis for rationality and knowability of God, Christ was real, Miracles happen.

1914-Present – Evangelicalism

- **Major Theological Shift** - Carl F. H. Henry, Edward John Carnell, Billy Graham
 - Birth of Pentecostal movement.
 - Rejection of retreatalist nature of Fundamentalism movement.
 - Strong emphasis on personal relationship with Christ
 - Strong emphasis in evangelism and outreach