

# A SURVEY OF CHURCH HISTORY



# Need for the Study

1. We should definitely know about our spiritual family tree, shared history and heritage.
2. Delivers us from isolationism.
3. See God at work building His church.

# Need for the Study

4. To be better informed about doctrinal developments, revivals, heresies and movements.
5. Finding the roots of the current perversions of the truth.

# Need for the Study

6. Our view of the church will be enlightened and enriched.

7. Where do we fit in – our faith and practices.

# Birthday of the Church

- ◇ Church Predicted (Matt.16:18)
- ◇ Beginning of the Church (Acts 2)
- ◇ Church Established, Expanded, and Extended  
(Acts 1:8)

# The Apostolic Church

- ◆ 4 Pillars (Acts 2:42)
- ◆ Organizational Structure – Apostles, Apostles & Elders, Elders & Deacons (Phili.1:1; 1 Tim.3; Titus 1)
- ◆ Organism Organized

# A Simple NT Pattern

- ◊ Non-ritualistic
- ◊ Non – hierarchical
- ◊ Priesthood of all believers
- ◊ Elder rule

# A Simple NT Pattern

- ◆ Church based Mission & Ministries
- ◆ Spirit-empowered, Spirit-directed – Pneumatic
- ◆ Word-oriented (Apostles' teaching)
- ◆ No prominence for extra Biblical traditions



# A Simple NT Pattern

- ◆ Gospel well defined
- ◆ Church doctrine & practices established
- ◆ Apostolic model of ministry & missions
- ◆ End of the NT era – A.D. 100 (death of apostle John)

# Three Major Heresies

1. Gnosticism
2. Libertinism
3. Legalism/Judaizers

# Persecutions

1. Sporadic Jewish Persecutions
2. Organized Roman persecutions
  - ◆ Emperor Nero (64-68)
  - ◆ Domitian (81-96)

# Timeline of Church History

1. Apostolic Church (33 -100)
2. The Early Church (100 – 313)
3. The Medieval Church (450 – 1500)
4. The Reformation Church (1517-1675)

# Timeline of Church History

5. The Period of Revivals (1675 -1901)

6. The Modern period (1901 – to the Present)

◆ The early modern period

◆ The post-modern period

◆ The present period

# Church Fathers

- ◆ Ancient & influential theologians.
- ◆ Intellectual & doctrinal foundations of Christianity.
- ◆ Theologians, philosophers, orators, thinkers.

# Church Fathers

- ◆ Apologeticians, champions of orthodoxy, articulated Christian faith persuasively.
- ◆ Tremendous contributions to the Christian faith.

# Church Fathers

◆ Apostolic Fathers

◆ Great Fathers

◆ Greek Fathers

◆ Latin Fathers



# Church Fathers

- ◆ Cappadocian Fathers
- ◆ Anti-Nicene & post Nicene Fathers etc.
- ◆ Until the end of the Patristic era (AD 700)

# Apostolic Fathers

- ◆ Lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries.
- ◆ Great Christian theologians.
- ◆ Personally knew some of the apostles (their disciples).
- ◆ Significantly influenced by them.

# Apostolic Fathers

- ◆ Clement of Rome
- ◆ Ignatius of Antioch
- ◆ Polycarp of Smyrna
- ◆ Papias of Hierapolis

# Apostolic Fathers

- ◆ Irenaus (*Against Heresies*)
- ◆ Justin Martyr (Early Christian Apologist)

# Other Notable Church Fathers

1. Origen (185-254)
2. Athanasius (293 – 373)
3. Tertullian (155-240) – the first to use the term Trinitas (trinity).

# Other Notable Church Fathers

4. St. Augustine (354-430) – “the most significant Christian thinker & theologian after St. Paul.”
5. John Chrysostom (347-407)
6. Cappadocian Fathers (4<sup>th</sup> century) – Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus.

# Three Early Christian Documents

1. *The Didache* – early Christian treatise, the first written catechism.
2. *Shepherd of Hermas* – visions, mandates & parables.

# Three Early Christian Documents

3. *Against Heresies* by Irenaus – against Marcionism and Gnosticism.



# Early Post-NT Ecclesial Development

1. Ignatius of Antioch (died 140 AD) – first reference to monarchical (single bishops).
2. Irenaeus (died 202 AD) – first reference to infant baptism.