The Donation of Constantine recounts how the Roman emperor Constantine granted the Western Empire to the Bishop of Rome and endowed his cardinals and bishops with imperial honors. The document stated that he made this generous gift out of gratitude to Pope Sylvester I who had converted him to Christianity and had cured him of leprosy. For centuries the Donation legitimated the Church’s possession of the papal lands in Italy. Unfortunately, the Donation was entirely fake as even the Church eventually acknowledged.

The truth is that the Church only officially acquired the papal lands in 756 A.D. when King Pepin of the Frankish empire gave them to the Church as a gift. 756 A.D. also appears to be the time when the text of the Donation first appeared. It was probably created by a cleric either in Rome or the Frankish court. Its purpose may have been to allow the King to claim that he was returning, not giving, the papal lands to the Church. In this way, the fiction of the Donation added legitimacy to a convenient political marriage between the Catholic Church and the Frankish state.

Lorenzo Valla proved the document to be a forgery in the fifteenth century.
Course Description: The Church to the Reformation is a basic introduction to the history of the Christian Church from its founding at Pentecost to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Important themes in the development of the Church and church dogma will be highlighted including the establishment of the canon, the Trinitarian controversies, the transition from persecuted church to established church, the emergence of monasticism, the rise of the papacy, the crusades, medieval spirituality and reform movements on the eve of the Reformation.

Course Objectives: The Church to the Reformation is designed to provide students with a working knowledge of the major themes, issues and personalities of Church History; to help them make use of the rich resources of Church History in their practice of ministry; and to encourage them to seek for spiritual renewal in their own lives, in the Church and in society.


Course Requirements: The new summer intensive format allows students to utilize the entire summer to complete courses of their choosing. Coursework under this configuration can be arranged into Pre-Reading (work done before the intensive week of lectures), Lectures (The in-class contact hours), and Post-Lecture (work done after the week of lectures). Those who are taking CH 501 for credit will be asked to complete the following:

- **Pre-Reading** – in anticipation of the intensive lectures, students are asked to read the approximately 400 pages of Gonzalez Volume One and the approximately 200 pages of Placher. This can be done anytime before the week of lectures, June 1-5.
- **Lectures** – attend the lectures and participate in class discussion June 1-5 to be held 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm each day during that week. During the week a course study guide will be introduced that will aid in preparing for the final examination.
- **Post-Lecture** – work consists of student-chosen readings of approximately 600 pages in preparation for the writing of two papers (10 pages each). These will be due on the last day of written work, August 14, 2009. In addition there will be a final examination that will be taken via the CAMS student portal. Because this is an internet connection, students will be able to take this examination from off-campus.
Papers: Each student taking the course for credit is required to write two ten page papers: one on a movement, the other on an important person within the first fifteen centuries of Christian history. These report papers need to use a primary source and a secondary source. The first eight pages should deal with the movement or person. Pages nine and ten will include brief reflections on implications for ministry and will also include an annotated bibliography. These papers can be turned in anytime during summer but no later than August 14, 2009.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Please exercise special care in the use of sources. Institutional guidelines can be found in your Student Handbook under “Violations of Academic Integrity.” Guidelines can also be found at http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/plagiarism.html.

Grading: The grading scale used for this class can be found in the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Student Handbook.

Percentages: The following percentages will be taken into consideration when assigning grades for the class; Final Examination 50%, Papers 25% each.

Schedule of Classes: (subject to change)

Monday June 1st: The Birth of the Christian Church
Session I: Introduction of the Course/What is Church History?
Session II: The Beginnings of the World Christian Movement
Lunch break

Diverse Trajectories of the First Christian Communities
Session III: Apostolic Memory in Several Gospels
Session IV: The Spreading Flame

Tuesday June 2nd: The Great Church Takes Shape
Session I: Gnostics, Catholics, and Manichaeans
Session II: The Formation of the Canon
Lunch break

The Age of the Imperial Church
Session III: The Martyr Faith Yields to the Accepted Faith
Session IV: Donatists, Catholics, and the Desert Fathers

Wednesday June 3rd: The Trinitarian and Christological Controversies
Session I: The Arian-Nicene Controversy
Session II: The Trinitarian Controversy

Lunch Break

Theology After Chalcedon
Session III: Eastern Orthodoxy
Session IV: The Western Church

Thursday June 4th: Augustine of Hippo
Session I: Confessions
Session II: Philosophy and Theology

Lunch Break

The Early Middle Ages
Session III: The Papacy
Session IV: Monasticism

Friday June 5th: The High Middle Ages
Session I: Heretics and Inquisitors
Session II: Mystics and Scholastics

Lunch Break

Roots of the Reformation
Session I: Medieval Spirituality
Session II: John Wycliffe: Morning Star of the Reformation