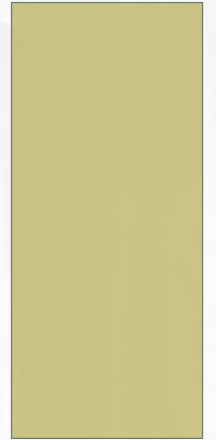




A SURVEY OF THE  
REFORMATION

ITS HISTORY & IMPACT



The background of the slide features a faded, light-colored image of four large stone statues of men in historical, clerical-style clothing. They are standing in a row, facing forward. The man in the center-right is holding a book. The overall tone is historical and academic.

# A SURVEY OF THE REFORMATION

OUTLINE & PLAN OF ATTACK

# WHY STUDY THE REFORMATION?

- American Christians suffer from **historical amnesia**.
- Studying church history will **safeguard us from error** now.
  - Errors: Jehovah's Witnesses (Arianism), Evangelicals & Catholics Together.
  - Departures: Many Evangelicals feel detached from history and migrate to Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy.
- The Reformation was the **virtual recovery of evangelical doctrine** – and we are still being blessed because of this (often forgotten) event.
- Studying the doctrine of the Reformation may help us **reform the Church today** and recover the passion for God that characterized that era.

# WHY STUDY HISTORY?

**“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”**

~George Santayana

*The Life of Reason, vol. 1 (1905)*

# HISTORY

1. **Intro & Early Church History**
2. Church Schisms, & the Decline of the Roman Church
3. Forerunners of the Reformation
4. The Protestant Reformation
5. Puritanism & the Legacy of the Reformers

# IMPACT

6. Reformation Doctrine: 5 Solas & the Sovereignty of God
7. Why the Reformation Matters Today

The background of the slide features a row of four large, classical-style statues of men with long beards, wearing robes, representing early church fathers. The statues are set against a light, textured background. Below the statues, there is a stone ledge with a faint, embossed inscription in Greek characters, including the letters 'IHS' and 'E'.

# EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

DOCTRINE & TRADITIONS DEVELOP

# OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY

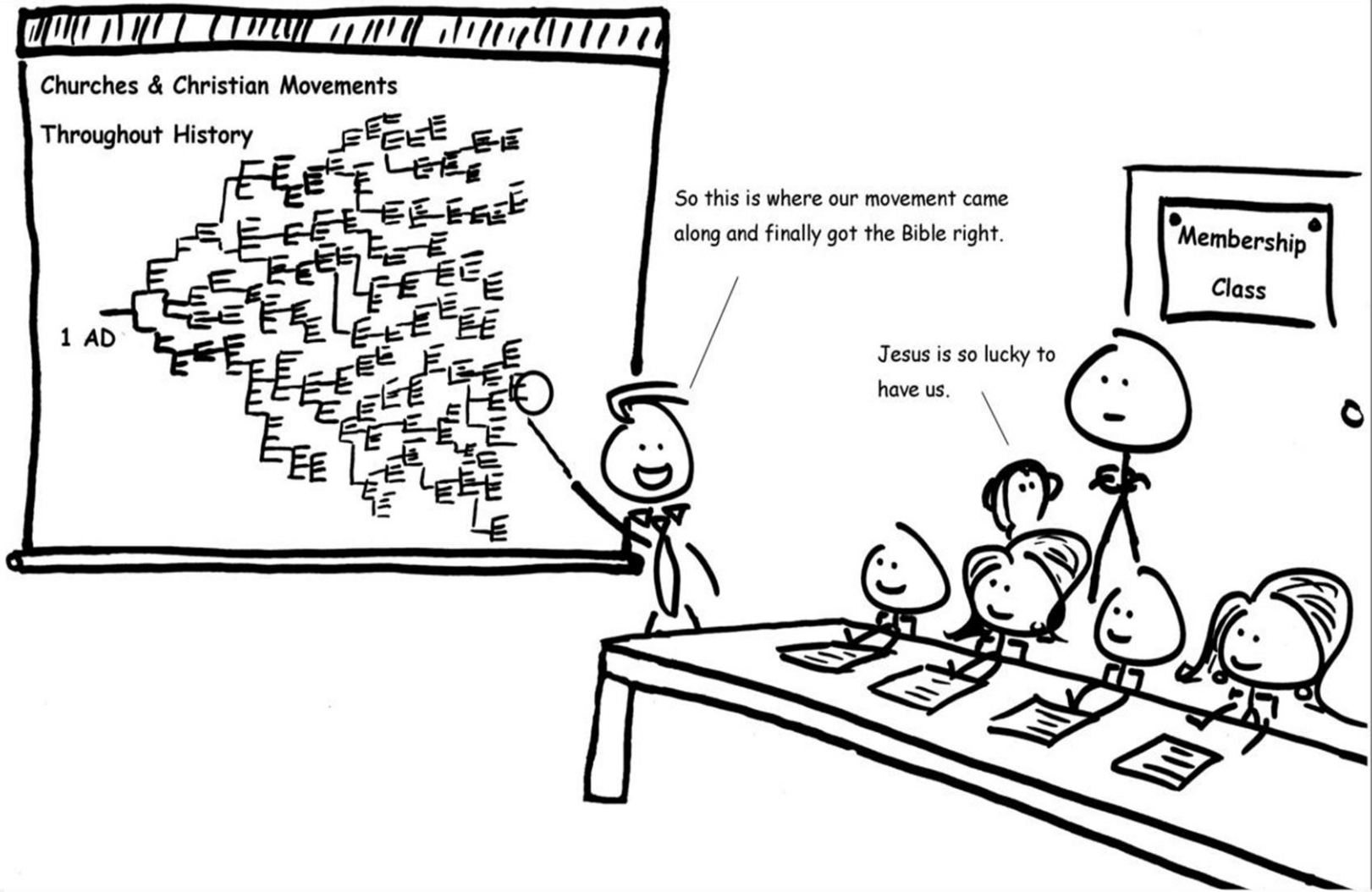
- Approaches to Studying Church History
- Persecutions & the Spread of the Church
- Early Church Meetings
- Church Fathers: Encouraging, Defending & Protecting the Church
- The Progressive Development of Doctrine

The background of the slide features four large, light-colored statues of men with long beards, likely representing church fathers, standing in a row. They are wearing traditional robes. Below the statues, a stone ledge is visible with a carved inscription in the center that reads 'IHS' in large, stylized letters, flanked by decorative flourishes. The entire scene is set against a light, textured background.

# APPROACHES TO STUDYING CHURCH HISTORY

INTRODUCTION





NOT SO HUMBLE APPROACH TO HISTORY

# BAD APPROACHES TO STUDYING CHURCH HISTORY

- ***What's Church History?*** – total bliss, church is about innovation and adaptation
- **Restorationism** – the true faith was lost by years of church tradition, we (our group) has recovered it [think Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Church of Christ, Apostolic Church, some Pentecostals]
- **Negative view** – views the early & medieval church with heavy suspicion, effectively church history starts with the Reformation
- **Positive view** – Our church dogmas today are overly “modern,” we should recover the pristine church which was much more open to different theologies

# A BALANCED, BIBLICAL APPROACH

- **Christ has not forsaken his Church** – Matt. 16:18, Matt. 28:18-20
- **Progressive Revelation & Progressive Development of Doctrine** – more on this later, but see John 14:26, 16:13
- **Avoids “snobbery”** – time and culture limits what we understand of history, different emphases for different times, we can learn from the early church (care for poor, desire for spiritual life, shunning of worldly goods, high view of sin and doctrine, high view of the church)
- **Recognizes importance of historic orthodoxy** – Scripture seen through the lens of the church fathers & ecumenical creeds – just like the Reformers did.
- **Humble approach** – above all seeks to learn from history and recognize that there may be areas where we have to change, in our understanding too.



# PERSECUTIONS & THE SPREAD OF THE CHURCH

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 313)

# EARLY PERSECUTION

- The NT records early Christian martyrs & persecution.
- Per Eusebius and the English historian John Foxe, each of the Apostles were persecuted:
  - Paul: imprisoned under Nero, then beheaded in Rome
  - James the brother of John: was beheaded by Herod (Acts 12:2)
  - Thomas: shot with an arrow in India
  - Peter: imprisoned under Nero, then crucified upside down in Rome
  - Simon the Zealot: crucified in Africa
  - Mark: founded the church in Egypt & was burned alive in Alexandria
  - Bartholomew: beaten, crucified, and beheaded in Armenia
  - Andrew: crucified in Ethiopia
  - Matthew: killed with a spear in Ethiopia
  - Philip: crucified and stoned in Greece
  - John the apostle: exiled to Patmos, died of natural causes
  - James the brother of Jesus: stoned by the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem

~ adapted from "Church History," session 1,  
a core seminar from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC)

# PERIODS OF PERSECUTION

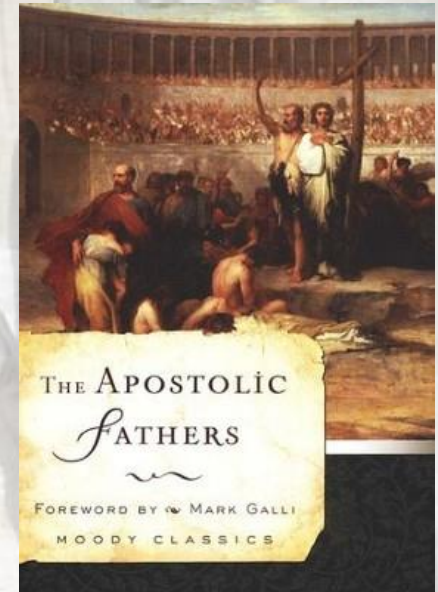
- Early Jewish persecution (Herod and others)
- Nero – July 16, A.D. 54
- Domitian – A.D. 95
- Trajan/Hadrian – A.D. 111-138 (sporadic)
- Aurelius/Severus/Maximinus – A.D. 161-211 (sporadic)
- Decius/Valerian – A.D. 249-260
- Diocletian – A.D. 303 (systematic extermination of churches and books)

# MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP

An account of Polycarp's martyrdom in a letter of the Church of Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium (mid 2<sup>nd</sup> Century).

~ *The Apostolic Fathers (Moody Classics)*  
edited by Mark Galli (Moody, 2009), pages  
137-141

[Read online here](#) (use arrow to continue  
reading from chapter 9 through chapter 14)



# SPREAD OF THE CHURCH

- Rapid growth during the age of the Apostles, church tradition says Mark went to Africa, Thomas to India, Paul reached Spain.
- Missionaries continued, Augustine (not of Hippo) evangelized Britain, and others went everywhere.
- Persecution accelerated the spread. Tertullian said: “The blood of the Christian [martyrs] is the seed [of the church]”
- By the early 300s, about 1 in 10 people in the Roman empire considered themselves Christians.
- There wasn't much time to develop traditions and doctrine carefully amid the many persecutions, however.



# CONSTANTINE'S CONVERSION:

## The End of Official Roman Persecution

- Emperor Constantine: vision of a cross “in this sign conquer” before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. (A.D. 312)
- “We have determined, with sound and upright purpose, that no-one at all should be denied the liberty to choose and follow the religious observances of the Christians. Each person shall be given the freedom to devote his mind to whatever religion he thinks best for himself, so that in everything God (whom we worship freely from our hearts) may show us his usual care and favour.” ~The Edict of Milan (A.D. 313)



# EARLY CHURCH PRACTICE

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 200)



# CHURCH MEETINGS

“They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as God, and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wicked deed, but to abstain from all fraud, theft and adultery, never to break their word, or deny a trust when called upon to honor it.”

~Pliny the Younger, Letter to Trajan (A.D. 112)

~ Pliny the Younger, Letters x.96. AD112  
quote found in “Church History,” a core seminar  
from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC)

# BAPTISM

“This is how to baptize. Give public instruction on all these points, and then ‘baptize’ in running water, ‘in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’” If you do not have running water, baptize in some other. If you cannot in cold, then in warm. If you have neither, then pour water on the head three times ‘in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.’ Before the baptism, moreover, the one who baptizes and the one being baptized must fast, and any others who can.”

~ The Didache, an early manual of church practices, likely from mid-late 2<sup>nd</sup> Century

~ The Apostolic Fathers (Moody Classics), p. 151-152.  
quote found in “Church History,” a core seminar  
from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC).

# BAPTISM

- Baptism of infants was first mentioned by Tertullian in around A.D. 200 (he argued against the practice)
- By A.D. 250 some church leaders were defending the practice, and it became more and more prevalent in the following two centuries.
- Some early fathers supported the idea of baptismal regeneration – that it removes sin.
- Others saw it as a symbol or sign only (a more biblical position)

adapted from “Church History,” session 2,  
a core seminar from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC)

# COMMUNION

“At the end of our prayers, we greet one another with a kiss. Then the president of the brethren is brought a bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he takes them, and offers up praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and gives thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at his hands. When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their joyful assent by saying Amen. . . . Then those whom we call deacons give to each of those present the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and carry away a portion to those who are absent. We call this food ‘Eucharist.’” ~Justin Martyr (A.D. 150)

~ Justin, *First Apology*, 65-66, AD150  
quote found in “Church History,” a core seminar  
from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC)

# PREACHING

“And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president [pastor] verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.”

~Justin Martyr (A.D. 150)

~ Justin, *First Apology*, 67, AD150  
quote found in “Church History,” a core seminar  
from Capitol Hill Baptist Church (DC)

The background of the slide features a row of four large, classical-style statues of men with long beards, wearing robes, representing Church Fathers. They are set against a light, textured background. Below the statues, a stone ledge contains a faint, embossed inscription in Greek characters, likely the IHSXPI (Jesus Christ) monogram.

# CHURCH FATHERS:

*Encouraging, Defending & Protecting the Church*

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 500)



# APOSTOLIC FATHERS

## Purpose: to exhort & edify the church

- **Clement**, bishop of Rome A.D. 95 (1 & 2 Letters of Clement to Corinthians)
- **Ignatius**, bishop of Antioch A.D. 110 (seven letters to churches, including Ephesus, Rome, Philadelphia, Smyrna and a letter to Polycarp)
- **Polycarp**, bishop of Smyrna and disciple of John the Beloved A.D. 155 (letter to the Philippians, & a famous story of his martyrdom told in a letter from the church of Smyrna)
- **Papias**, bishop of Hierapolis and another disciple of John A.D. 125
- Other influential books widely read: The Shepherd (pastor) of Hermas, Didache (Teaching of the 12 Apostles)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 9

# APOSTOLIC FATHERS' WRITINGS

- The books called today “The Apostolic Fathers” were early Christian bestsellers.
- “Eighty-six years I have served him, and he never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?” ~ Polycarp (Martyrdom of Polycarp)
- “[Paul] wrote you letters that will enable you, if you study them carefully, to grow in the faith delivered to you” (Polycarp’s letter to the Philippians)
- “by this [Rahab’s scarlet thread] they made it clear that it was by the blood of the Lord that redemption was going to come to all who believe in God and hope on him” (1 Clement)

~ *The Apostolic Fathers* edited by Mark Galli  
(Moody, 2009), pgs. 138, 25, 127

# THE APOLOGISTS

## Purpose: to defend the faith

- **Justin Martyr**, Christian philosopher, A.D. 150 (wrote apologies to the emperor Antoninus Pius & Marcus Aurelius, and wrote a dialogue with Trypho the Jew, martyred in A.D. 163)
- **Tatian**, a convert of Justin, A.D. 160 (most famous for the *Diatessaron*, an early “harmony” of the four Gospels – presented as one narrative, also wrote against paganism)
- **Tertullian**, “father of Western Theology”, of Carthage, A.D. 200 (numerous writings, wrote against Gnostic heresy, was the teacher of Cyprian, and the oldest Latin writer to use the term “Trinity”)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 14

# THE POLEMICISTS

## Purpose: to attack error

- **Irenaeus**, bishop of Lyons, France, disciple of Polycarp, A.D. 185 (wrote *Against Heresies* a systematic rebuttal of Gnosticism, also known for his *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*) – acknowledged only 4 Gospels
- **Hippolytus**, disciple of Irenaeus, elder at the church of Rome, A.D. 200 (wrote *Refutation of All Heresies* another answer to Gnosticism, also known for criticizing several bishops of Rome over moral & doctrinal concerns)
- **Cyprian**, bishop of Carthage, A.D. 250 (wrote against Novatianism – a splinter group that refused to admit those who had recanted under persecution back into the church even if they repented, he also defended Christianity against paganism)

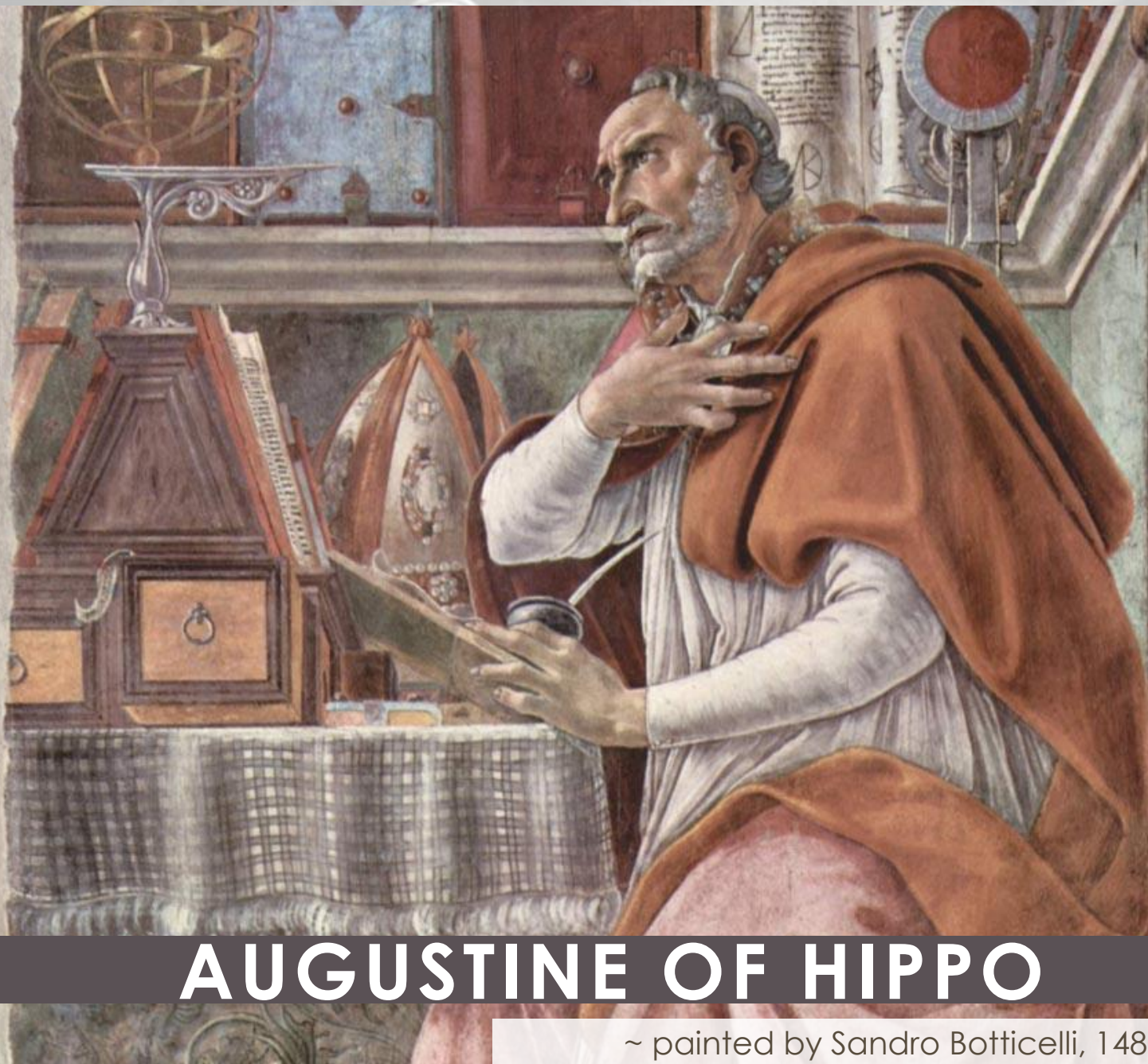
~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 17

# THE EARLY THEOLOGIANS

Purpose: to develop methods of biblical interpretation

- **Clement** of Alexandria A.D. 180 (led the Alexandrian school for training of converts to Christianity, developed allegorical interpretation, mixed Greek thought with Christianity, one of the “inventors” of purgatory)
- **Origen** of Alexandria/Caesarea A.D. 230 (led Alexandrian school before going to Caesarea and starting his own, one of the greatest minds in the world in his time, compiled the *Hexapala*—Hebrew-Greek parallel Bible, often fanciful interpretations, wrote first Systematic Theology we know of)
- **Athanasius**, bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 360 (chief defender of Trinitarian theology vs. Arianism, *Athanasius Contra Mundum* – *Athanasius against the world*)
- **Jerome**, theologian and writer of Rome/Bethlehem, A.D. 390 (wrote commentaries on nearly the whole Bible, best known for translating the Vulgate – Latin Bible, direct from the Hebrew)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 19



# AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

~ painted by Sandro Botticelli, 1480, Fresco in Church of Ognissanti, Florence, source Wikipedia

# THE EARLY THEOLOGIANS

Purpose: to develop methods of biblical interpretation

- **Ambrose**, bishop of Milan, A.D. 385 (well known writer, oft-cited by later authorities, championed congregational singing and writer of many hymns, including “Savior of the Nations Come”)
- **Augustine**, bishop of Hippo and student of Ambrose, A.D. 400 (greatest and most widely read Church Father, influenced Roman Catholic doctrine on the church as well as Protestant doctrine on election and salvation, known for his *Confessions*, *City of God*, and *On the Trinity* among numerous other works)
- **John Chrysostym**, of Antioch/Constantinople A.D. 390 (well known for his preaching, “father of grammatical, historical interpretation”)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 19

The background of the slide features four large, classical-style statues of men with long beards, wearing robes, standing in a row. They appear to be early church fathers. The statues are set against a light, textured background. The overall image has a slightly faded, historical feel.

# THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 1100)



# PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Doctrine is what Scripture teaches. (“Doctrine” = “teaching.”)
- The early church’s **understanding** of the doctrine of Scripture **grew** over time. Just as God progressively revealed more and more truth in Scripture, the Church progressively grew in the area of different doctrines.
- Heresy would challenge the status quo, the church would collaborate and meet in a council to discuss the new teaching, and orthodox creeds and statements or confessions would result, clarifying doctrine and expelling error.
- Examples:
  - **Theology & Christology** (Church Councils & Creeds, A.D. 300-600)
  - **Soteriology** (Reformed Confessions and Catechisms, A.D. 1400-1600),
  - **Ecclesiology** (Denominational Confessions, A.D. 1600-1800),
  - **Eschatology** (Niagara Bible Conference articles, A.D. 1800-now),
  - **Bibliology** (Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, A.D. 1900-now).

A.D. 100	A.D. 200	A.D. 250	A.D. 300	A.D. 367
<p>27 NT books have all been written.</p> <p>Collections of all Paul's letters were made.</p> <p>by A.D. 150, the four Gospels were brought together</p>	<p><b>Muratorian canon:</b> [used by church of Rome]</p> <p><b>-4 Gospels</b> <b>-Acts</b> <b>-Paul's 13 Letters</b> <b>-James</b> <b>-1&amp;2 John</b> <b>-Jude</b> <b>-Rev. of John</b> -Rev. of Peter -Wisdom of Solomon</p> <p><b>For private use:</b> -Shepherd of Hermas</p>	<p><b>Origen's NT:</b> <b>-4 Gospels</b> <b>-Acts</b> <b>-Paul's 13 Letters</b> <b>-1 Peter</b> <b>-1 John</b> <b>-Rev. of John</b></p> <p><b>Disputed:</b> <b>-Hebrews</b> <b>-James</b> <b>-2 Peter</b> <b>-2 &amp; 3 John</b> <b>-Jude</b> -Sh. of Hermas -Letter of Barnabus -Teaching of the 12 Apostles (Didache) -Gospel of the Hebrews</p>	<p><b>Eusebius' NT:</b> <b>-4 Gospels</b> <b>-Acts</b> <b>-Paul's 13 Letters</b> <b>-1 Peter</b> <b>-1 John</b> <b>-Rev. of John</b> (authorship in doubt)</p> <p><b>Disputed but well known:</b> <b>-James</b> <b>-2 Peter</b> <b>-2 &amp; 3 John</b> <b>-Jude</b></p>	<p><b>Athanasius' NT:</b> [also fixed by Council of Carthage (397)]</p> <p><b>-4 Gospels</b> <b>-Acts</b> <b>-Paul's 13 Letters</b> <b>-Hebrews</b> <b>-James</b> <b>-1 &amp; 2 Peter</b> <b>-1, 2 &amp; 3 John</b> <b>-Jude</b> <b>-Rev. of John</b></p> <p><b>To be excluded:</b> -Sh. of Hermas -Letter of Barnabus -Gospel of the Hebrews -Rev. of Peter -Acts of Peter -Teaching of the 12 Apostles (Didache)</p>

~adapted from *Church History in Plain Language* by Bruce Shelley (Thomas Nelson, 1995), pg. 67

# MAJOR CHURCH COUNCILS

Statement	Council
Christ is fully divine	Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325)
Christ is fully human	Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381)
Christ is a unified person	Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431)
Christ is human and divine in one person	Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451)

- Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox (Greek/Russian) and accept all 4 councils
- Oriental Orthodox (Coptic, Nestorian, Jacobite, Ethiopian, Syriac, Indian) only accept the first 3 councils

~ *Church History in Plain Language* by Bruce Shelley (Thomas Nelson, 1995), pg. 141

# THE APOSTLES CREED (c. A.D. 300)

“I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.”

~ *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem (Zondervan, 1994), pg. 1169

# THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (A.D. 451)

“We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood...

# THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (A.D. 451)

...one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.”

~ *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem  
(Zondervan, 1994), pg. 1169-1170