

**Defining Moments in Christian History: Introduction**  
*Park Street Church Christian Formation Cornerstone Series*  
*Brandon Bayne and Lin Fisher*



I. Why study Christian History?

1. Community of the Saints
2. The Good, Bad, and Ugly and the Perspective that they Give
3. Christian History vs. Church History

II. How do Defining Moments help?

1. Specificity and Personality: Incarnational Faith and the Value of Biography

“who came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again.” --- *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381.*

2. Window into Broader Discussion

III. What do you want to Learn?

IV. Themes

1. Christ and Culture
2. Expansion and Discipleship
3. Rationalism and Mysticism
4. Renewal, Reform, and Schism

V. A Proposed Outline of Defining Moments, Major Themes, and General Periods

1. Sept. 26: The Council of Constantinople (381): The Rise of Christendom (100 - 600)
2. Oct. 3: The Schism of 1054: The Middle Ages (600 - 1200)
3. Oct. 10: The Founding of the Jesuits (1534): The Expansion of Christianity (1200 - 1700)
4. Oct. 17: The Diet of Worms (1521): The Protestant Reformation (1200 -1700)
5. Oct. 24: The Second Great Awakening (1810s): American Evangelicalism (1700-1900)
6. Oct. 31: The Asuza St. Revival of 1906: Global Christianity (1900 to Present)

## **Recommended General Church Histories, Dictionaries, Articles, and Anthologies**

Cross, F. L., and Elizabeth A. Livingstone. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. 3rd / ed. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Dowley, Tim. *Eerdmans' Handbook to the History of Christianity*. 1st American ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

González, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity*. 1st ed. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.

Latourette, Kenneth Scott. *A History of Christianity*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. 2nd ed. Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2000.

Leith, John H. *Creeds of the Churches; a Reader in Christian Doctrine, from the Bible to the Present*. Rev. ed. Richmond, Va.,: John Knox Press, 1973.

**Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points : Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000.\***

Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*. 2nd ed. Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1996.

Walker, Williston. *A History of the Christian Church*. 4th ed. New York: Scribner, 1985.

\* Recommended Class Text.