

# CHURCH HISTORY

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## Lesson 1 Introduction

In this lesson, we begin a study that will challenge all of us - a study of Church History, in which we will examine the roots of today's Christian Church. I describe it as a challenge because, unlike prior studies, this one will require us to use external reference materials in addition to our Bible. In the lessons that follow, I hope to introduce you to the very roots of your faith, the organized church, doctrine/theology, and how the Bible we use today came into being.



So, let's see if we can identify the order of events that led to the beginning of Christ's Church, what her mission is and how the body of doctrine/theology of today grew from its roots in the early first century.

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*To get started, let's test our current knowledge of Church history.*

1. Put the following events in their proper order:

- a. The stoning of Stephen.
- b. Christ on the road to Emmaus.
- c. Christ taken up into the clouds.
- d. Matthias chosen to replace Judas.
- e. Believers filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.
- f. Christ says "upon this rock I will build my Church".
- g. Seven are chosen to serve the Greek widows so that the Apostles can "give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" - many will use this as the basis for today's various Deacon ministry roles.
- h. The term "Christian" is used in Antioch.
- i. Paul begins the first of three missionary journeys.
- j. Circumcision is not required as a part of salvation.
- k. The Apostle John dies.
- l. Jerusalem is burned, the Jews dispersed, and the Temple is destroyed.
- m. The Great Commission.
- n. Peter realizes that the gospel message is for both the Jew and the Gentile.
- o. Saul of Tarsus experiences his "Damascus Road Experience" and is renamed Paul.
- p. Luke writes the books of Luke and Acts.
- q. John writes John; and three letters/epistles called 1st, 2nd, 3rd John; and the Book of the Revelation.
- r. Christ's resurrection.
- s. Power to build the kingdom is given to the Apostles.

2. Assign the following verses to some of the events listed above - see how many you can match.

- a. Matthew 16:18.
- b. Matthew 16:19.
- c. Matthew 28:18-20.
- d. John Chapter 20.
- e. Luke 24:13-32.
- f. Acts 1:9.
- g. Acts 1:15-26.
- h. Acts 2:1-4.
- i. Acts 6:1-6.
- j. Acts 7:51-8:1.
- k. Acts Chapter 9.
- l. Acts 10:34-35.
- m. Acts 11:26.
- n. Acts Chapter 13.
- o. Acts Chapter 15.

I hope you enjoy this week's study. It was challenging for me to locate all of the verses associated with many of these events, and I know that when I first began to study the Church, it helped me immensely to be able to put the events in their proper order.

For this coming week we'll look at the days following Christ's Resurrection and the very birth of the Church. It turns out that there is much we can learn about the early days of the church from the New Testament. The period of Church history that covers approximately 4 or 5 BC to almost 100AD has much about the Church we can learn from studying the New Testament writings.

May God continue to richly bless you as you study with us this week.

In Christ,

**Wes**