

# ***THE EARLY CHURCH***

**Western Reformed Seminary ([www.wrs.edu](http://www.wrs.edu))**

**Course Notes prepared by**

**John A. Battle, Th.D.**

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. List at least two advantages and two disadvantages for Christianity for each: Roman empire, Hellenistic culture, Judaism. (12)
2. List the five Julian and three Flavian emperors of the first century, with at least one pertinent fact for each emperor. (16)
3. List four major purposes for the book of Acts. (4)
4. Discuss why the first century is a period of little evidence (natural reasons, and suggested divine reason). (3)
5. Discuss the author, recipients, purpose, and view of church government of 1 Clement. (5)
6. List four items Josephus mentions which bear on church history. (4)
7. What does Suetonius say that bears on church history? (2)
8. What does Tacitus say that bears on church history? (2)
9. List the six Antonine emperors, with one pertinent fact for each one. What made this dynasty unique? (13)
10. What was the Antonine position regarding the Christian church? Discuss the correspondence between Pliny the Younger and Trajan in this regard. (5)
11. What does the correspondence between Pliny and Trajan reveal about the lives and worship of early second century Christians? (4)
12. List the four undisputed apostolic fathers and indicate which of their writings now are extant. (8)
13. Discuss the form of church government indicated by the letters of Ignatius, in the eastern and western churches. (4)
14. Define the Quartodeciman controversy. (2)
15. List the four early church fathers or documents which may come from the apostolic period. (4)
16. List at least five second century apologists, with one pertinent fact for each. (10)
17. What were the three elements of the Colossian heresy? (3)
18. Describe Gnosticism, its main leaders and varieties of beliefs. (5)

19. Which two church fathers wrote against Gnosticism, and provide us with the most information about it? (2)
20. Discuss Montanism. (3)
21. Discuss Monarchianism, its basic types and leaders, both in its beginnings in the second century and its growth in the third century. (8)
22. Discuss the importance of the bishop of Rome in the church at large throughout the first three centuries of the church. (5)
23. List the five emperors of the Severi dynasty, with one pertinent fact for each. (10)
24. Describe the "three lives" of Hippolytus and his attitude toward the popes. (4)
25. Describe the school of Alexandria, its emphases, and its main leaders. (7)
26. Discuss Origen, his life, allegorical method, and major writings. (7)
27. Discuss the major persecuting emperors of the third century: Septimius Sevarus, Decius, and Valerian, giving dates and information concerning the persecutions sponsored by each. (9)
28. Discuss the four classes of Christians who faced persecution. (8)
29. Describe how Diocletian reorganized the Roman empire. (3)
30. Describe the life of Cyprian. (4)
31. Identify and briefly describe two new Oriental religions of the third century.
32. Describe Neo-Platonism and its main adherents. (5)
33. Describe the persecutions under Diocletian—their origin, nature, and outcome. (3)

END EXAM 1

34. Describe the career, conversion, and policies of Constantine. (5)
35. Identify the Melitian and Donatist schisms. (4)
36. Name and briefly discuss four great movements of the fourth century. (8)
37. Describe Arianism, its development, beliefs, progress, and final defeat. (8)
38. Discuss the council of Nicea, including its date, calling, parties, actions concerning Arianism, and other actions. (7)
39. Describe the life of Athanasius. (4)

40. Name at least four other orthodox church fathers of the time who assisted Athanasius in maintaining orthodoxy. (4)
41. List at least three main events of the reign of Theodosius. (3)
42. Discuss the first council of Constantinople, its date, calling, and main actions. (5)
43. List the cities and dates for the four ecumenical councils recognized by all Christian churches (after Acts 15). (8)
44. Describe the life and accomplishments of Ulfilas. (4)
45. Explain some of the causes for the development of monasticism; include the names of important individuals who encouraged its development. (6)
46. Describe how paganism finally was replaced by Christianity as the religion of the Roman empire. (3)
47. Describe the life and accomplishments of John Chrysostom. (3)
48. Describe the life and accomplishments of Jerome. (5)
49. Identify and describe at least two bishops of Rome during the fourth century who either denied the faith or important doctrines. (4)
50. Describe the conversion of Augustine. (3)
51. Summarize Augustine's life, career, and controversies. What were his most important writings? (8)
52. Discuss the Pelagian controversy. (5)
53. Explain the reasons for the fall of Rome to the barbarians. Describe the major events of that fall. (5)
54. Describe the life and accomplishments of Patrick. (4)
55. Explain the relation of the Irish church to the Roman church through history. (4)
56. Why did the Roman bishop become the leader of the Western church? (4)
57. Describe pope Leo I, the Great. (3)
58. Describe Nestorianism and the third ecumenical council at Ephesus. (5)
59. Describe Eutychianism and the council at Chalcedon. (6)
60. Explain how the barbarian tribes of Gaul were won over to orthodox Christianity. (3)