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The Mustard Seed Story

A BC to AD Course
By Timothy Ministries

Work Sheet 1A

The Ekklesia Emerges Through Conflict

A Reflective Review Of The Ekklesia's Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

Why did God choose conflict as the environment for advancing His kingdom?

Papyrus texture ©2008-2010 by ~freestock

What does the Mustard Seed Parable predict (Mat. 13.31-32)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Satan's Agenda:

God's Agenda:

As subjects of His Kingdom, God calls us to embrace ten callings:

1 TRUTH vs. CONVENIENCE

John 18.37

6 PARTICIPATION vs. RESTLESSNESS

1 Peter 4.10

2 FAITH vs. NATURALISM

Jeremiah 17.5-8

7 DISCERNMENT vs. IRRESPONSIBILITY

Matthew 10.16

3 HUMILITY vs. COMPLACENCY

Philippians 3.12-14

8 ACCOUNTABILITY vs. INDEPENDENCE

Ephesians 5.21

4 UNITY vs. FALSE SECURITY

Romans 12.16

9 SUFFERING vs. UNFRUITFULNESS

John 12.24-25

5 PURITY vs. SYNCRETISM

2 Corinthians 6.14-18

10 CONFLICT vs. ACCOMMODATION

Acts 14.22

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Why are we confident the things recorded in the Gospels and Acts really happened?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Early Christian Symbols: For the symbols below, write down whether it originated BC or AD along with its meaning for early Christians.



Orante:



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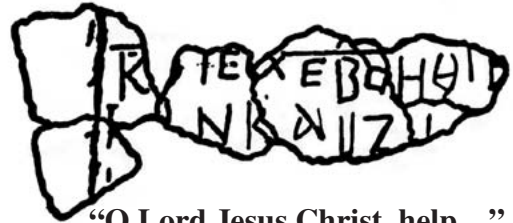


Fish:



Cross:

Inscriptions From Peter's House



"Petrus"

What happened when these men embraced conflict?

1. Peter
2. Paul
3. Polycarp

Responses to the key question:



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Work Sheet 1B

7 Compelling Facts About The First Christ Followers

A Reflective Review Of The Ekklesia's Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

The First Christ Followers:

1. _____

- A. *The Church would break almost completely from its Hebraic heritage by AD 135. Until then, Christ-followers were viewed as a Jewish sect.*
- B. *In reality, the Way (Act 9.2) was simply Judaism universalized. The first believers thought in Jewish categories, with a Hebraic worldview.*



2. _____

- A. *The Jewish priority on kinship carries over into the NT ideas of spiritual adoption (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.4-7; Eph 1.5), "the household of faith" (Gal 6.10), "the household of God" (Eph 2.19; 1Ti 3.15; 1Pe 4.17; cf. Heb 2.11), the corporate temple (1Co 3.9-17; 2Co 6.16), filial respect in the Church (1Ti 5.1-3; 1Pe 1.22; 2.17), and brotherly love for believers (Rom 12.10; Heb 13.1; 1Pe 3.8; 5.9).*
- B. *Two models for church life compete in our culture: the business model and the family model. The Ekklesia in Acts clearly operated on the family model (Acts 1.12-14; 2.42,44; 4.32,23; 5.42; 6.1; 20.20; 21.17; see 1Ti 3.1-5).*

3. _____

- A. *The whole of religion was summed up in the commands to love God and one another (Joh 13.34; 1Jo 4.20-21), and they understood this love as an action (Jam 2.15-17; 1Jo 3.10,16-17).*
- B. *In the NT, the common apostolic phrase "in Christ" has varied connotations depending on context, but in many passages we may paraphrase it as "in [the household (or family) of] Messiah," or simply "in [(or by) relationship with] Messiah" (Rom 8.1; 12.5; 16.3,7,9; 1Co 1.30; 3.1; 4.15; 15.22; Gal 1.22; 3.28; 5.6; Eph 1.1; 2.13; Philip 1.1; Col 1.2; etc.).*

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The First Christ Followers:

4. _____

- A. *They understood the Human-Divine Partnership (Act 4.29-30; 14.3).*
- B. *They ministered creatively to other cultures (Act 17), but also used common sense (Didache 11).*

5. _____

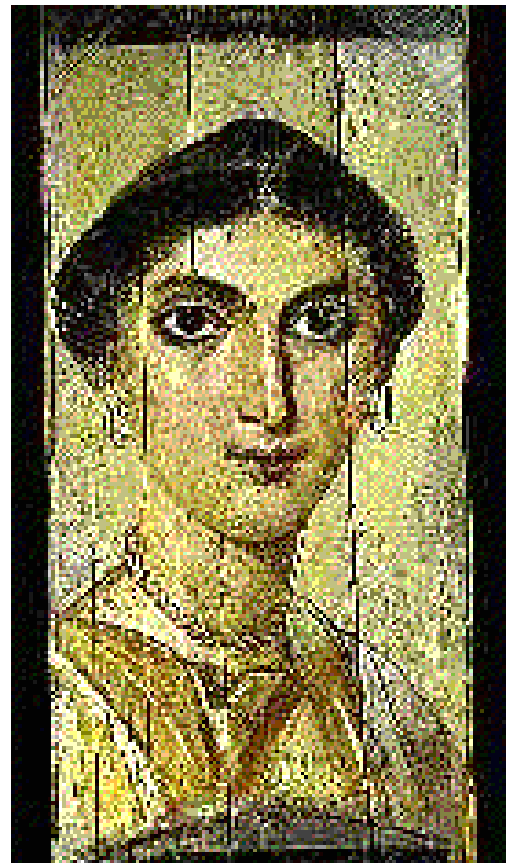
- A. *They fellowshiped with a city church rather than in sectarian groups.*
- B. *They associated their leaders with the cities where they ministered.*

6. _____

- A. *Over Themselves: They depended upon hearing from God by Scripture, counsel (Acts 15.28), and by corroborated revelation (Acts 16.10).*
- B. *Over All Creation: They obeyed God before man, stood against heresy (like Gnosticism) and decided on the basis of rightness rather than feasibility (Acts 13.1-3).*

7. _____

- A. *Peter: "God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified" (Act 2.36).
The book of Acts correlates bold proclamation with signs and wonders.*
- B. *Stephen: "Behold, I see the heavens opened! ... Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Act 7.54-60).
See The Passion Of Perpetua in section D.*



A Roman Egyptian woman
of the 2nd century



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Work Sheet 2

The Mustard Seed's Surprising Success

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

How did the followers of Jesus plant churches throughout the whole world in only three centuries?

How God Prepared The Way

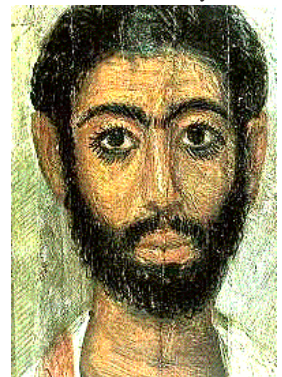
A.

B.

C.

D.

A Roman Egyptian man of the 2nd century



Why Christianity Should Not Have Succeeded

1. Doctrines opposed to human nature

A.

B.

2. No Political Sanction

3. No military nor economic compulsion

4. Misunderstood practices resulted in these accusations against Christians:

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

Responses to the key question:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Travels Of The Twelve





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Work Sheet 3

The Devil's Devices

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

How do we give Satan a tactical advantage?

List some primary tactics of all warfare:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are the essential beliefs of Gnosticism?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What library is responsible for the current resurgence of Gnosticism?



Codex II, *The Apocryphon of John*



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Would we accept these as Christ followers today?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Arians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donatists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Novationists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Montanists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How would you explain
Col. 1.15 to a Jehovah's
Witness?

THE PASSION OF PERPETUA & FELICITAS

1. What did Perpetua understand from her vision (ch. IV)?
2. What emotion did Perpetua experience at her condemnation (ch. VI)?
3. What did Saturus experience in his vision (ch. XI)?
4. Who helped the saints kiss the One on the throne (ch. XII)?
- 5. What did the bishops that Saturus saw need help with (ch. XIII)?**
6. What happened to the governor of the prison (ch. XVI)?
7. What did the martyrs call their persecutors to witness (ch. XVII)?
8. What did the martyrs sign to the procurator (ch. XVIII)?
9. What final prayer was answered for the martyrs (ch. XIX)?
- 10. What were Perpetua's final words (ch. XX)?**
11. What did Saturus do with the ring of Pudens (ch. XXI)?
12. How did Perpetua help the young gladiator (ch. XXI)?



SYLLABUS
PAGE D-14

Responses to the key question:



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Work Sheet 4

Conquest of Christianity

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ



Marble sculpture of Constantine the Great

Key Question

With the conversion of Constantine, did Christianity conquer or was it conquered?

THE APOSTOLIC *EKKLESIA* PRE-CONSTANTINE

1. Romans 10.9; Acts 11.26:
2. Acts 2.41:
3. Acts 2.42:
4. Acts 2.46; Philemon 1.2:
5. Acts 4.34-35; 6.1:
6. Acts 8.1; 14.22:
7. 1 Timothy 5.3; James 1.27:
8. 1 Corinthians 14.26; 1 Peter 4.10:
9. Luke 10.1; Acts 13.1,2; 15.2; 20.28:
10. Acts 4.29,30; 16.9-10:
11. 1 John 4.2; 2 John 1.7:
12. Epistle to Diognetus (D-1):

Question: Were more Christians martyred in the 1st century or in the 20th?

Responses to the key question:

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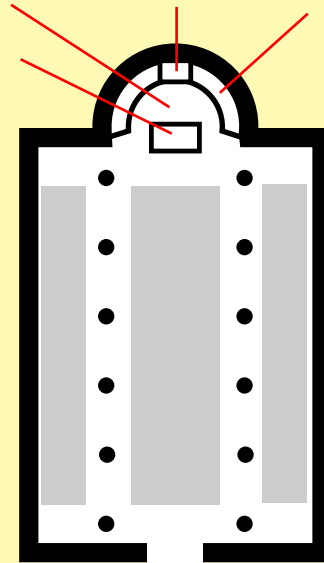
CHRISTIANITY AFTER CONSTANTINE

Constantine's "Conversion" gave Christianity new:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

When Theodosius outlawed paganism, Christians in some places formed mobs and violently tore down pagan buildings and statues, engaging in bloody conflicts with the heathens that resisted the destruction of their property...Later, when no pagans remained to fight, Christians began to fight themselves. — R. Graciano, *The Death & Resurrection of the New Testament Church*.

THE BASILICA FLOOR PLAN



IMPACT FROM THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

THE PAGAN-CATHOLIC SYNTHESIS

Pagan gods & Christian martyrs
became _____

Pagan festivals became

Pagan rites became

Secular rulers became

Egyptian
Isis & Horus



Roman
Isis & Horus



Catholic
Mary & Jesus





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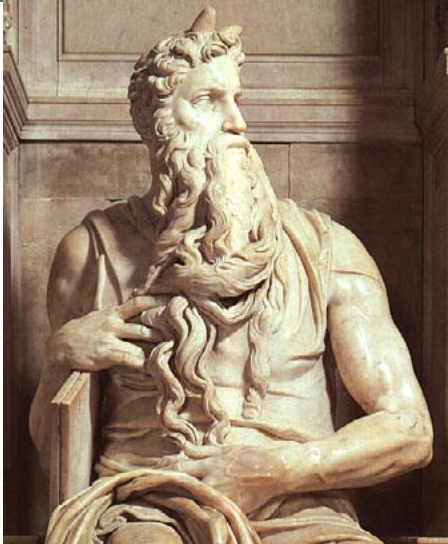
A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia*

Work Sheet 5



Key Question

There were many reasons why Rome fell;
why did it *have* to fall?



Name the famous relic represented in this sculpture:

✕

Other Relics of the Dark Ages

✕

✕

✕

✕

✕

✕

✕

✕

THE AMAZING ROMAN CATACOMBS

The cumulative length of catacomb corridors is approximately:

☐ 6 miles

☐ 365 miles

☐ 77 miles

☐ 587 miles

The known catacombs number:

☐ 3

☐ 42

☐ 12

☐ 83

The known catacombs have up to how many levels?

☐ 5

☐ 12

☐ 7

☐ 21

The catacombs descend as far as:

☐ 20 ft.

☐ 49 ft.

☐ 33 ft.

☐ 80 ft.

The Bible generally does not concern itself with artifacts and their location or their preservation for posterity. (The one great exception is the artifacts from the Exodus—even they could be problematic, however, as demonstrated by the brass serpent that the Israelites were worshipping in the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18.4)). In contrast to the biblical attitude and contrary to its warnings, pagan cultures were apt to revere persons as gods and worship artifacts associated with those persons. This pagan veneration of objects seems to have bled over into the medieval craze for relics. Thanks to Catholic tradition, people believed that a visit to a relic, and an offering to the chapel in which it was housed, earned indulgences for the pilgrim. An indulgence was a transfer of spiritual credit from a departed saint (who had earned greater merit with God than he needed) to a living person who needed more points to escape a near-eternity in purgatory. For a deal like that who wouldn't want to have a holy relic housed in their own town's church building?

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SOME SAINTS IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CANON

Paganism had gods and goddesses who presided over every aspect of human life. Ceres was the goddess of cereals, Ops the goddess of wealth, Janus the god of doors and gates, etc. When Christianity absorbed paganism in the 4th century, the Church began to replace or sometimes rechristen these pagan gods. The result: Saints, real or mythical, to preside over every aspect of Roman Catholic life. There are 1,848 Roman Catholic saints, and there are more from Italy than from any other nation.

Match these saints with their titles:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. St. Albert | ___ Patron of Bankers |
| 2. St. Clare | ___ Patron of Beer drinkers |
| 3. St. Dymphna | ___ Patron of Bite of dogs |
| 4. St. Gregory | ___ Patron of Comedians |
| 5. St. Hubert | ___ Patron of Cooks |
| 6. St. Ives | ___ Patron of Doctors |
| 7. St. Lawrence | ___ Patron of Foot diseases |
| 8. St. Luke | ___ Patron of Insanity |
| 9. St. Martha | ___ Patron of Lawyers |
| 10. St. Matthew | ___ Patron of Poor |
| 11. St. Nicholas | ___ Patron of Scientists |
| 12. St. Victor | ___ Patron of Singers |
| 13. St. Vitus | ___ Patron of Television |



Signs Of Deepening Darkness

What is simony?

What does “the perfect” mean in 1 Corinthians 13.10?

What underlying problem does Classic Pentecostalism share with Roman Catholicism?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Responses to the key question:



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Work Sheet 6

Divine Revelations

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

An Arab of Muhammad's Time



Key Question

How can we know that any given revelation comes from God?

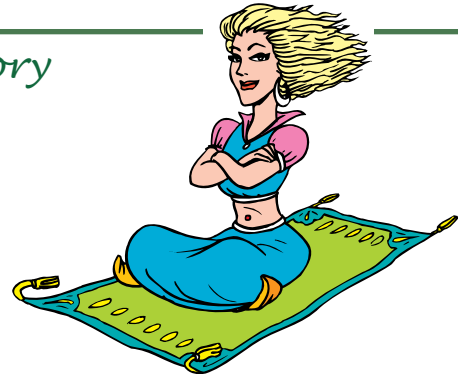
Who were the 5 great "Scourges of God"?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- ☉ What important truth did the scribes misapply In Mark 3:22?
- ☉ Who was Muhammad?
- ☉ Where did Muhammad receive his first revelation?
- ☉ Where did Joseph Smith receive the golden plates inscribed with the Book of Mormon?
- ☉ What are the six Pillars of Islam?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.

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- ☉ Describe Muslim Paradise:
- ☉ When God chastens us, how can we know what He wants changed?
- ☉ What sparked the Iconoclastic Controversy?
- ☉ Why was iconoclasm doomed to fail?
- ☉ How did the rise of Islam parallel the trend of the Christianity of the time?
- ☉ Where was Moses when He received the revelation of God's Covenant?



“It cannot be doubted that, as a matter of fact, the rise and reign of Mohammedanism has resulted in the infliction of a most terrible scourge upon the apostate churches in the East, and in other portions of Christendom; and...we cannot err...in referring the organ of chastisement to the will of the Most High.” — Rev. George Bush in *Life of Mohammed*

- ☉ What was the Donation of Constantine?
- ☉ How did Christian martyrs differ from Muslim martyrs?

Please see the article *Mountains of Evidence* at:
<http://www.tmin.org/pdfs/mountains.pdf>

Responses to the key question:



Much of what historians report about the widespread panic of AD 999 comes from the chronicle of the 11th century, French gyrovague, Raoul Glaber (glab-BEAR). His *Chronique* in five books covers the period from 900 to 1030, and was written between AD 1025 and 1046. Personally, Glaber was more concerned with the year AD 1033, the millennium of Christ's Passion.

Work Sheet 7

Doomsday Opportunities

Humanity's Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

When do spiritual kingdoms make their greatest advances?

Things That People Let Go in AD 999:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

"The church itself, at the highest level, frowned upon those who preached the end of the world on a specific day....The notion of a specific date was rooted, however, in the vast lower strata of Christian society".
—Richard Erdoes, *AD 1000: Living on the Brink of Apocalypse*

The Tragedy of the Crusades

"Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction." — Blaise Pascal

What prompted the Crusades?



The Pope's Possible Motives



Incentives For Crusaders



God Wills It?

Crusader War Crimes



Doomsday AD 1349

“And no bells tolled and nobody wept no matter what his loss because almost everyone expected death.... And people said and believed, ‘This is the end of the world.’” — Agnolo di Tura, quoted in Hillel Schwartz, *Century’s End*

Which Europeans suffered the highest mortality rate during the Black Death?

What did the flagellants hope to do?

Reminder: Ask _____
how they feel about the future!

Responses to the key question:

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Dancing Mania of AD 1374



Sometimes associated with the Flagellants, the Dancers appeared in German and Dutch towns, numbering 500 in Cologne. In semi-nudity, and sometimes bound together by twos, they preferred to dance in churches in front of images of the Virgin. Their exuberance was such that some dropped dead from exhaustion. The sensual performances of the dancers were blamed for an increase in unwed mothers. — Philip Schaff, *History Of The Christian Church*.

Crusade Imports to Europe



“What [the producers of the Back to the Future motion pictures] discovered was actually an ancient truism: When times are uncertain, people will do anything to gain some sense of security. A glimpse into the future—even if it is just a day, an hour, or even a few minutes ahead — offers people a sense of hope. Surely this explains the fascination many people have for psychics, astrology, and other occult practices. They will leap at things that offer some vision of tomorrow even when it is a false vision. We need hope, and for many of us, the best hope is the future.” — D. James Kennedy, *Character & Destiny: A Nation In Search of Its Soul*.

“Maybe they’re crazy for all I know, but I don’t have any choice but to go for it because I’ve been on this planet for 31 years and there’s nothing here for me.” — Woman saying good-bye on video before committing suicide with the Heaven’s Gate cult, quoted in The News Tribune (Tacoma, WA), March 28, 1997.





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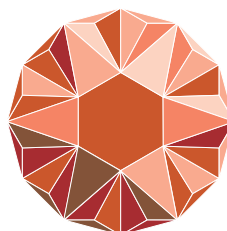
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Work Sheet 8 Snapshots Of Medieval Life

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

What is the first mark of a false prophet?





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What ended the career of the Cretan Messiah? (p. E-46)

Why did Tanchelm marry a statue of Mary? (p. E-51)

Who would lead the world in the Millennium according to Joachim of Floris? (p. E-49)

Why does the Jewish merchant convert in the Decameron?

What was the Inquisition?

Why did the Inquisitor never sentence the condemned?

Review *The Didache*, ch. 11, and respond to the key question:





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Work Sheet 9 Up The Scala Sancta

A Reflective Review Of The *Ekklesia's* Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

☞ How did Europeans of the early 1500's hedge their bets on eternity?



☞ What are indulgences?

☞ From which bank are they issued?

☞ Visiting the relics of Castle Church in Wittenberg earned how long an indulgence?

☞ A 7-Years indulgence buys what?



“As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, The soul from purgatory springs!”

The doctrine of purgatory is based on 2 Maccabees 12.39-45 which describes how Judas Maccabeus “...made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin.”

The torments of purgatory are so horrendous that “St. Cyril said...he would rather suffer all the pains that have beset man from the time of Adam...until the end of the world rather than spend one day in purgatory”. (Joseph Zacchello, *Secrets of Romanism*)

“St. Bridget beheld a soul in purgatory tortured inexplicably for having been vain and having thought more of frivolous diversion than of things spiritual.” (ibid.)

St. Robert Bellarmine said, “There is absolutely no doubt that the pains of purgatory in some cases endure for entire centuries.” (ibid.)

In 1944, the Archbishop of Winnipeg, Mons. A. Sinnott, “urged all the Roman Catholic mothers to guarantee their sons in the army salvation from purgatory by the payments to him (in monthly installments) of \$40.00 for prayers and masses to be celebrated.” (ibid.)

Key Question

What is the reformer's greatest temptation?



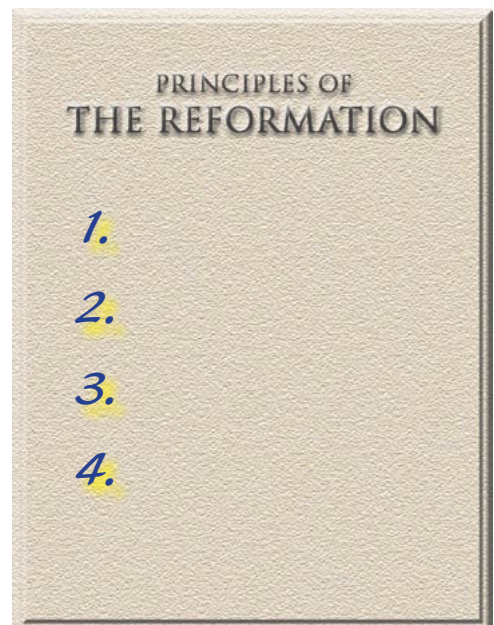
- ☞ What does it take to get a lawyer to join a monastery?
- ☞ What terrified Luther as he recited his first mass?
- ☞ What did Luther say when he reached the top of the Scala Sancta?

- ☞ What was Luther's most nagging fear?
- ☞ In 1517 the future course of western civilization hung for a time on the meaning of a single word. What word was it?

- ☞ How did Luther rock the world a second time in 1522?

- ☞ What happened when the Anabaptists came along teaching "believer's baptism"?

- ☞ What are the "seven last words" of the dying congregation?



Response to the Key Question:



Work Sheet 10

taLe of two COLOnIES

A Re

cklesia's Progress Since The First Coming of Christ

Key Question

What is the relationship between prosperity and faith?

After the Roanoke disaster, how did the Virginia Company promote their next business venture to America?

Why did half the Jamestown settlers refuse to do manual labor?

Instead of evangelists, what did the second convoy bring to Jamestown?

The discovery of what new cash crop finally "saved" Jamestown?



Why were the Mayflower "Separatists" prepared to live sacrificially?

What did Squanto find upon returning from Europe to his homeland?

What opportunity came for the Pilgrims to demonstrate God's power?

What final course was served at the end of the 2nd Thanksgiving dinner?

What is Deism?



**Sinners In the Hands of An Angry God**

“...the bow of God’s wrath is bent and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your hearts and strains the bow...The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire... You hang by a thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it.” Edwards read this sermon in a monotone, but his hearers fell to their faces pleading for God’s mercy.

Farewell Sermon to Boston

“Listen sinners, you’re monsters of iniquity and deserve hell. And the worst of your crimes is that criminals though you’ve been, you haven’t had the good grace to see it. If you will not weep for your sins and your crimes against the holy god, George Whitefield will weep for you...” Whitefield then reared back his head and wept loudly for his audience.

Why was the gifted Jonathan Edwards dismissed from his pastorate?

How old was Phebe Bartlett when she was converted under Jonathan Edwards’ ministry?

How large a crowd did Whitefield address outside on Boston Common (without amplification)?



How many American colonists heard Whitefield preach at least once?

What resulted from the Great Awakening taking such a hold of America?

Why did the Colonies need revival in the early 1800’s?

Response to the Key Question:

The Mustard Seed Story

Clash of Champions

Key Question

Why does God field champions rather than wage all-out war?

- Huguenots vs. Catholics
- Council of Trent, 1545-63
- Hapsburgs vs. Protestants

- Supporting abusive royals

Voltaire

- Reason deified
- Religions humanized
- Human nature rehabilitated (cf. Psalm 36.1,2)

- Index of Prohibited Books, AD 1559-1966
- Perpetuation of simplistic cosmogony
- Trial of Galileo, 1633

James Hutton

Theory of the Earth, 1795

Social & Political Factors

Charles Lyell

Principles of Geology, 1830



Charles Darwin

Origin of the Species, 1859

the french revolution
& REIGN OF TERROR
1789-1795



Robespierre

- End of feudalism in France
- Birth of the secular state
- Muzzling of the church
- Human nature fails the test: power corrupts!
- Paradigm of politics by tyranny
- Rationalist ideas disseminated

- New Geology: Uniformitarianism vs. Catastrophism
- New cosmogony: God unemployed

"In 1905 Lenin evoked with relish the prospect of a Terror....Faced with an eventual counterrevolution, he openly proclaimed his adherence to Jacobin psychology and policy, which he viewed as authorizing the use of 'revolutionary violence.'"—Jacques Solé, *Questions of the French Revolution*

Nietzsche

No Heavenly God
No Human Soul

social chaos



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☞ What did other Lutherans call the missions-minded Pietists?

Began sending missionaries to India, 1705

☞ What was the Moravian missionary ratio?

☞ How did the Moravians finance the launch of the modern missions movement?

ERA OF MODERN MISSIONS

Planted mission stations:
Virgin Islands, 1732;
Greenland, 1733;
North America, 1734;
South America, 1735;
South Africa, 1736;
Labrador, 1771.



Count Zinzendorf

☞ What did Leonard Dober and Tobias Leopold feel they had to do in order to reach the black slaves of the West Indies?

With less than a high school education, he translated the entire Bible into 6 languages. Indian women thank him for helping abolish sati.

His life provides a modern paradigm for living by faith. An underground church still exists in the world's most populace nation thanks to his work.

He worked and prayed for 10 years with hardly a convert—but then the natives cast away their idols and came to Christ in droves.

Sometimes afraid of what visiting pastors will think when scantily clad prostitutes call to him by name, this man and his wife evangelized effectively in Amsterdam's red light district.

His family's house formed the border between two warring cannibal tribes. As arrows flew overhead, he realized how to introduce the headhunters to Jesus Christ.

After converting members of a tribe that had previously killed all strangers, he was captured by Marxist guerillas—only to be released when too many guerillas received Christ.

Response to the Key Question:

Work Sheet 12

The Death & Resurrection of the *Ekklesia*



**How has
Satan tried to
neutralize me?**

Key Question

What is the secret to
finding lasting joy?

**How should I
respond?**

Persecution



Endurance

Deception



Knowledge

Division



Unity

Pollution



Purity

Dilution



Potent Involvement

Dissipation



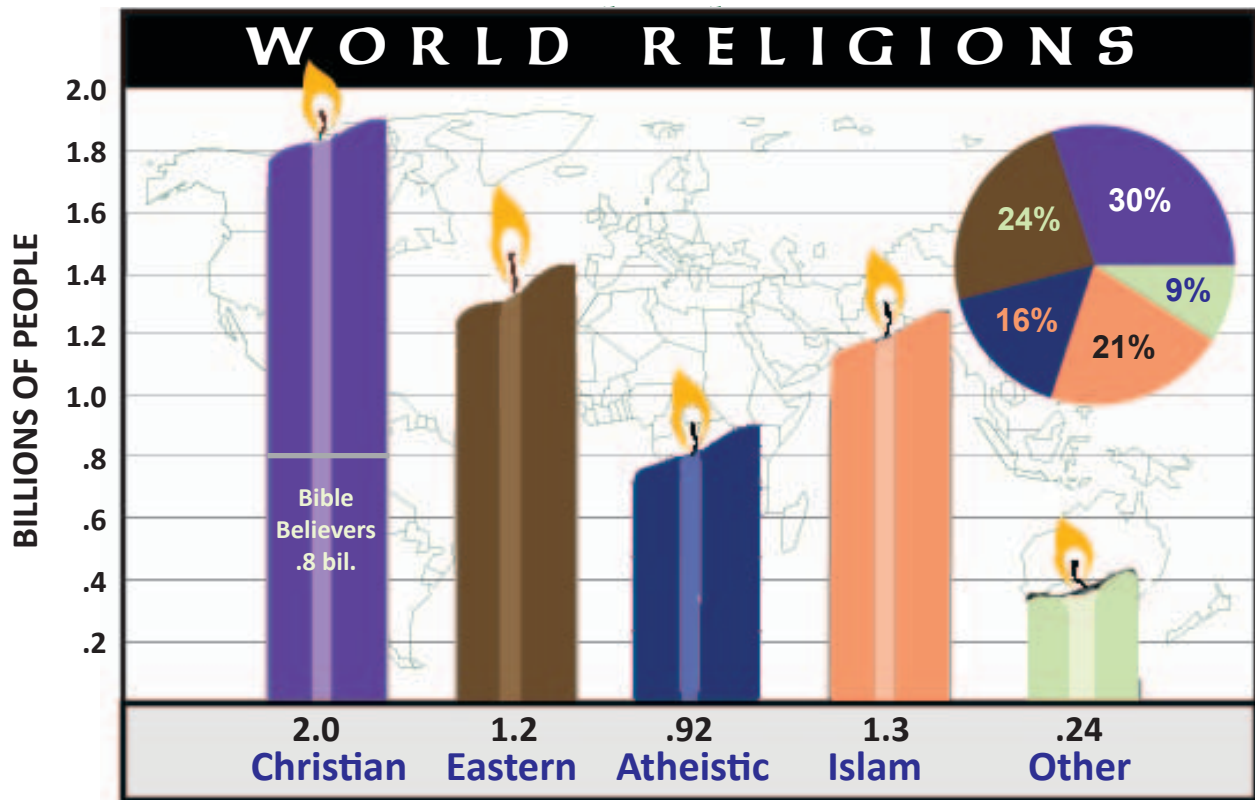
Eternal Values

Misdirection



Biblical Priorities

God promises a safe landing, but not a calm passage.
—Bulgarian Proverb



☞ In AD 100 there were 360 unbelievers in the world for every 1 believer in Jesus. How many unbelievers per believer are there now?

☞ What did Jesus say would happen before “the end” (Matthew 24.14)?

☞ In AD 100 the world ratio of Christian congregations to unreached people groups was 1 to 12. What is the present ratio of evangelical congregations to unreached peoples?

☞ What is the current numerical growth rate of “Great Commission” Christians? Who is our global competitor?

☞ Since God uses believers as His champions in the cosmic war, is it the *Ekklesia* who will usher in the millennial kingdom?

Response to the Key Question: