

Church History Part III (Lutheran Christian Church)

Read below and answer the questions at the end. (From *Catechetical Helps*, by Erwin Kurth, CPH)

We've reviewed the Old Testament timeline of how God preserved a remnant of His people from which a messiah would come. As prophesied by Isaiah (7:14), Micah (5:2) and Zechariah (12:10) Jesus Christ, our Messiah was born (*Christmas*), lived a perfect life for us and died as payment for our sins. After Jesus rose from the dead (*Easter*) and ascended into heaven, His disciples and followers received the Holy Spirit on the Jewish Festival of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2). That day over 3000 believed in Jesus as their Savior. They went forth with the task Jesus had given them to "go, therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. . ." (Matthew 28:19-20a)

The Word of God spread and congregations grew up in many cities (see missionary Paul's journeys in the book of Acts and his letters to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, etc.)

The CHURCH

Congregations became "churches" (visible church) and all Christians together were called "the church" (invisible church.) The church visible was the local congregation of believers who called pastors (I Timothy 2:2 and 2 Timothy 2:24) and maintained their living (Galatians 6:6). The mission of the church was still to "make disciples of all nations."

At first, the church was often persecuted by the world on account of its message, the preaching of Christ crucified - "a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (I Corinthians 1:23) Later, however, the world began to support the church and the church became more interested in its own gain. The "message" of Christ was moved to the background. Under Constantine the Great (a Roman emperor who died in 337) the church was united with the Roman Empire and became a world power. Some of the clergy became ambitious and bishops (church leaders) in the larger cities like Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch held more influence and power than others. The bishops of Rome and Constantinople became the most powerful and when they both wanted to be supreme, a split took place. The Christian church was divided into the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church. The bishop of Rome declared himself the head of the church or "the Pope."

The DEFORMED CHURCH

The church began to deteriorate and decay. Worldly life and corrupt morals invaded all of society and more emphasis was placed on outward service and good works. False teaching was common and the Bible lost its authority. Human traditions became as important as the Word of God. Jesus was depicted as a stern judge and sinners had to speak to Him through His mother, Mary. The church was de-formed.

(Show video clips from the movie "Luther" - #3 Steps to Rome, 8:30-12:00)

1. The "birthday of the Christian church", Pentecost, is remembered as the day the _____ came upon and empowered Jesus' disciples and followers in Jerusalem. That day over _____ people came to faith in Jesus as their Savior.
2. The apostle _____ was a great missionary who spread the Good News of Jesus to many cities around the Mediterranean.
3. Congregations became _____ and are known as the _____ church.
4. All Christians together are known as the _____.
5. The mission of the church is to make _____ of all _____.
6. The church became "de-formed" when rulers put the mission of the church behind false teaching and when the Bible lost its _____ and human _____ became more important.
7. More value was place more on performing good _____ than on receiving the grace of God through Jesus Christ.

A REFORMED CHURCH (Protestant Reformation)

Please use pages 125-130 in your *Keeping the Faith* book to answer the following.

1. The church clearly needed a _____.
2. Martin Luther was born on _____.
3. Martin's parents, Hans and Margarethe were very _____ and Martin's father wanted him to be a _____.
4. Martin learned about Jesus as a _____ but not as a forgiving _____.
5. Martin was very conscious of his _____ and terribly afraid of _____.
6. In 1505 Martin Luther was caught in a bad _____ and almost struck by _____ . He called out to St. Anne to spare him, promising that if she did, he would enter the monastery and become a monk. Luther entered the monastery but his father was not happy.
7. At first Luther spent many hours trying to do things to get rid of his sin and guilt, including doing _____, _____ and _____ but his works gave him no peace.
8. Finally, he found a complete Bible and for the first time in his life began to read it. His teacher, Dr. Staupitz, pointed Martin to Jesus as _____.
9. Luther was a popular preacher and teacher but was disturbed by the Catholic Church at the time. He was upset about Pope _____ selling of _____ through John Tetzel in order to raise money to build _____.
10. Indulgences were _____ that promised _____ to those who bought them. Luther knew that _____ only came freely from _____ and could not be bought. *(Video clip from the movie Luther- The Price of Salvation, 32:35-35:17)*
11. To debate the selling of indulgences, Luther posted _____ on the church door in Wittenberg on _____. This is why we remember this date as _____.
12. Luther was asked to take back his writings and recant what he said. But he replied: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of _____, . . . I cannot and will not recant, since it is neither safe nor advisable to do anything against conscience. Here I stand: I cannot do otherwise! _____ help me. Amen. *(Video clip from the movie Luther – 1:18:25-1:19:29)*
13. Luther was excommunicated and was in danger. A friend, Frederick of Saxony _____ Luther and took him to Wartburg Castle for 10 months to hide. While there, Luther began to translate the Bible into _____ so ordinary people could read it. It was published in _____.
14. Luther married _____ in 1525 and they had _____ children. He was a loving father.
15. He died on _____, knowing he was going to be in heaven with his Lord.
16. Luther's principles can be summed up in three Latin phrases:
 - a. _____ (by faith alone)
 - b. _____ (by grace alone)
 - c. _____ (by Scripture alone)