Church History: Part One

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I. Introduction: Why Study Church History?

A. There are two opposite attitudes towards church history today.

i. A lot of Christians and even scholars today make _____of church history.

ii. On the other hand, more and more Christians make _____of church history.

iii. Instead, we must be diligent & humble students of church history, yet _____.

B. How does studying church history benefit us?

i. As Christians studying the history of the Christian church, it's our _____.

ii. As many have said, if you don't know history you're doomed to repeat it.

iii. Studying church history helps us understand & interact with _____.

iv. Studying church history helps to dispel _____ about the church.

II. The Periods and Progress of Church History

A. The Ancient Church (30s – 450 AD)
   i. The Apostolic Era (30s –90s AD)
   ii. The Post-Apostolic Era (90s – 200 AD)
   iii. The Pre-Nicene Era (200 – 324 AD)
   iv. The Post-Nicene Era (325 – 450 AD)

B. The Medieval Church (450 – 1650 AD)
   i. The Early Medieval Era (450 – 700s AD)
   ii. The Papal Era (700s –1517 AD)
   iii. The Reformation Era (1517 – 1560s AD)
   iv. The Era of Confessionalization (1560s – 1650s AD)

C. The Modern Church (1650 – Present)
   i. The Era of Deconfessionalization (1650 – 1800s AD)
   ii. The Era of Modernity (1800s – 1940s AD)
   iii. The Era of Post-Modernity (1940s – Present)

III. What Was the Early Church?

A. The Roman catholic church & Eastern Orthodoxy both claim to be the original true church.

i. And most _____ take on a Roman catholic view of history.

ii. But the early church doesn't fit perfectly into any modern denomination.

B. A brief sketch of the history of the early (institutional) church.

i. The Apostles travel around the known world, spreading the church & writing Scripture.

ii. The Apostles didn't just leave Scripture, though, they also left _____.

1. The early church was governed by _____—councils of elders.

2. In the 3rd century, the _____ emerged as a regional overseer.

iii. Naturally, the most important cities in Roman empire had the most important Bishops.

1. Five cities emerged: Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, _____, & Jerusalem.

iv. The church was already divided East (_____ speaking) and West (_____ speaking).

1. And when the church split East-West, Rome was the only Patriarch in the West.

2. And the 4 other Patriarchates were ultimately conquered by the _____.

3. In the middle ages, the Eastern Church was in exile under Muslim rule, while the Western Church was in exile under the rule of the unchallenged Bishop of Rome.

C. Beliefs and practices of the early church.

i. Sacraments: There were _____ Sacraments in the early church, not seven.

1. Augustin: ""Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man," says Christ, "and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." This seems to enjoin a crime or a vice; it is therefore a figure."

2. Augustin: the baptism of infants "is rightly held to have been handed down by apostolical authority, still we can form a true conjecture of the value of the sacrament of baptism in the case of infants, from the parallel of circumcision."

ii. Salvation: Did the early church believe in the same Gospel of salvation by grace alone?

1. The heart of our view is that we are saved by grace through faith, not by works.

2. _____ had the same view, & the church affirmed it against Pelagius.