

PREPARED FOR THE ST. MARK ADULT EDUCATION CLASS, JANUARY 2008 (UPDATED JAN. 2009)
THE MAJOR PARADIGMS OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

ANCIENT ±100 – 600 C.E.		MIEVEAL ±600 – 1500 C.E.		ENLIGHTENMENT ±1500 – 2000 C.E.		POSTMODERN ±1950 – ??? C.E.					
CLASSICAL ERA		MIDDLE AGES, A.K.A. “DARK AGES”		REFORMATION ERA (±1500 – 1750)		MODERN ERA (±1750 – 2000)		TO BE DETERMINED			
Central ideas of Christianity: Mystery, community, symbol		Central ideas of Christianity: Institutional, authority		Central ideas of Christianity: Word		Central ideas of Christianity: Reason, Systematic/Analytical, Verbal, Individualistic		Central ideas of Christianity: Return to mystery, community, symbol			
Christ model: <i>Christus victor</i> Rule of Faith (180), Nicene Creed (325), Chalcedon Creed (451)		Christ model: Anselmic theory of satisfaction (penal substitution), Moral theory of Abelard		Christ model: Luther combines sacrifice and <i>Christus Victor</i> Calvin: <i>Sacrifice</i>		Christ model: Conservative: Propositional, Foundationalism Liberal: Example Theory, Expressive-Experiential		Christ model: God, in Christ, has rescued and is rescuing the world from evil; Reconciliation/forgiveness (un-economic)			
Centrality of the person and work of Jesus Christ God who acts / Trust in Christ, fully God, fully man				Centrality of the Bible God who speaks/ Trust in the Book Sacrificial view of Christ’s death at zenith				Return to centrality of Christ; <i>Regula Fidei</i> – View of Christ regulated by the Creeds; Sacrificial view is incomplete			
Church: Continuation of the incarnation: the body of Christ; The unity of the Church; Mystery		Church: Institutional; visible, sacramental, juridical		Church: The herald model; The true church is an invisible, inner Christendom		Church: Rise of denominations; Invisible; Inception of parachurch phenomenon		Church: Return to incarnational model, Visible; Church is the mystical presence of the body of Christ on earth			
Worship is God-oriented, full of mystery. There was a strong eschatological anticipation. Scripture and Eucharist (Word and Table) Acts 2:46b, Acts 20:7... Symbolic, participatory, worship is upward Baptismal, Eucharist, Liturgical, Spirituality of the hours (prayers)		Worship became clericalized; worship was turned into the Mass, “an unbloody sacrifice of Jesus” marked by Latinate ritual <i>Lectio divina</i> ; monastics; pilgrimages; feasts & fasts; veneration of the saints; inner and outer discipleship		Worship was returned to the people through a translation into the language of the people. The Reformation developed Word-oriented worship. As a corrective to the medieval paradigm, we see rejection of symbolism, icons, etc., which remains to this day spirituality of the Word, (witness of the Spirit) Vocational spirituality		Worship is in conflict through much of the Modern Era: Should worship be directed toward the education of the believer’s mind or should it be directed toward the sinner? Continued rejection of symbolism; hyper-modernity: CCM phenomenon, WWJD, etc.; knowledge, new birth, rule-keeping, witnessing		Worship return to God-centered worship; emphasis on the mystery of God at work in the history of salvation; Restoration of classical understanding of content, symbolism; return to mystery, to supernatural worldview, and to baptismal, Eucharistic, and liturgical spirituality			
Evangelism: A process of incorporation into Christ through the church and adult baptism		Evangelism: Living into and out of infant baptism		Evangelism: Justification by faith		Evangelism: The “experience” of being born-again; Mass evangelism		Evangelism: A return to an evangelism that incorporates a person into Christ through baptism in the context of community; post-Evangelical			
Education: Immersed participation in the event of worship, baptism, Eucharist, Christian Year				Education: Shift to education through print; Introduction of catechism; Sunday School; intellectual, verbal communications of faith; iconoclastic rejection of visual (mistrust of the arts, symbolism, icons as a corrective)				Education: Shift back to “immersed participation” with a new emphasis on audio-visual experience; the arts			
Cultural Models/Church in the world: Antithesis; Identification; Transformation		Cultural Models/Church in the world: Transformation; The emergence of Christendom		Cultural Models/Church in the world: Luther and Calvin: continuation of Christendom idea but under the word, not the pope; territorial, not universal; Luther’s “two kingdoms”		Cultural Models/Church in the world: Church achieves mission in the world through collusion with gov’t; clear sacred/secular divide [also, H. R. Niebuhr’s models of culture arise]		Cultural Models/Church in the world: Return to church as antithesis of evil; rejection of sacred/secular divide; God’s activity seen in all aspects of culture; Cooperate with God in God’s work in world			
Authority/Epistemology: Apostolic authority; Rule of faith; scripture The church possesses, interprets, guards, and hands down the truth		Authority/Epistemology: Scripture and tradition regulated by the magisterium of the church; martyrs give way to monks, influence of monasticism develops a two-tiered church: laity/clergy		Authority/Epistemology: <i>Sola Scriptura</i>		Authority/Epistemology: Reason over Scripture resulting in liberal criticism and conservative biblical apologetics/systematic theology		Authority/Epistemology: Relativism of all authorities suggests a return to the ancient understanding of apostolic authority, rule of faith, and the ecumenical creeds as authoritative summaries and Scripture as the revealed Word of God, possession of Church, handed down by apostles			
Church underground until Constantinism		Church = State		Church amidst Nation-States		Separation of Church and State		Decline of Nation-States/ Supranational bodies emerge			
Christianity adapted in the Greek world remains with us in the different flavors of Eastern Orthodoxy. They “dropped their anchor” in this paradigm, and it shows		Christianity adapted in the medieval world remains with us in (pre-Vatican II) Roman Catholicism. They “dropped their anchor” in this paradigm, and it shows		Christianity adapted in the Reformation remains with us in Lutheran, Anglican/Episcopalian, Reformed, Anabaptist. They “dropped their anchor” in this paradigm, and it shows		Early Modernity (1750-1950) Revivalist, Baptist, Pietist. They “dropped their anchor” in this paradigm, and it shows		High Modernity (1950 – today) Evangelicals, CCM, televangelism. They “dropped their anchor” in this paradigm, and it shows			
Music styles: Early Hebraic and pagan music styles emerge		Music styles: Unison chant Notation begins 9 th c.; Liturgy unified; Pitch representation codified		Music styles: Gregorian chant; psalmody Rise of polyphony Hildegard, et al. organ: circumspect		Music styles: Rejection of chant; hymnody emerges (later, organ); Calvin: rejection of choir; Luther kept choir; Choral music later blossoms; instrumentation blossoms; Hymnody will slowly migrate from Europe to UK to America over the span of several hundred years		Music styles: 2 Great Awakenings: American hymns emerge, revival camp-meeting songs, shape-note hymns, Negro spirituals influence Sunday School songs		Music styles: pre-1930: black gospel music and revivalist hymns; 1930: white gospel emerges; 1950s: Singpiration; 1960s: Jesus People Music; post-1970s: CCM	
More on worship: Informal, intimate worship; in homes; catacombs Proclamation of God’s salvation; Anticipation of Christ’s return		More on worship: After Constantine, basilicas donated to Christians; Intimacy trades for theater; Rev. 4 is central; earthly worship echoed heavenly worship: pomp and ceremony; processions, great choirs, fixed liturgy, sign of cross, genuflection, “worship with the angels, the archangels and whole company of saints...”		More on worship: Shifted from visual to Word-centered; primary emphasis on preaching; Gutenberg; rise of printing and literacy; Renaissance; truth “not so much seen as heard”; truth not mysterious but available; plain architecture rejects Roman forms		More on worship: 1700s: means of education people; sermons frequently 2 hrs. long; intellectual 1800s: Romanticism, Revivalism, Eucharist replaced by invitation; Intellectual sermons replaced by emotional appeals 1900s: Style over substance; myriad of styles abound		More on worship: Expect to see a recovery of aesthetics; architecture; sense of sacred space; sermon will diminish; expressions (music, poetry, art, drama) will increase			
Jewish Christians and Pauline Christians gradually merge into One Church as Gnostic heresy is marginalized			R. Catholic/Gr. Orthodox split in 1054 (Great Schism)			First 1000 years of church, essentially one Church; by the end of the 20 th c., there are over “34,000 separate Christian groups in the world. Over half of them are independent churches that are not interested in linking with the big denominations.”			Postmodern Christians seek to recover the unity of the Church; frequently going back to the Nicene Creed, Ancient Church for commonality		
Constantine, <i>Edict of Milan</i> (313); Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (398);		Anselm, <i>Proslodium</i> (1078); Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i> (1274)		Printing press (1452); Columbus (1492); Galileo (1564); KJV (1611); Descartes, <i>Discourse on the Method</i> (1637); Newton, <i>Principia Mathematica</i> (1687); Locke		Darwin, <i>Origin of Species</i> (1872); Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche (nihilism), Wittgenstein, Kuhn		World Wide Web (1990s); Derrida (deconstruction); Foucault, <i>The Archaeology of Knowledge</i> (1969); Lyotard, <i>The Postmodern Condition</i> (1979)			

Works cited: N.T. Wright, *The Christian Challenge in the Postmodern World*; Tony Jones, *The New Christians*; John Caputo, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?*; Adapted from [chart by Paul Soupis](#).