

# Church History II

## (Pre-Reformation to Modern Day)

### Week 10 – The Movements “Love”, Tech, and the Spirit

- I. Catholic Compromise
  1. Historically, the Catholic Compromise had often looked like leaning into and expanding the previous traditions of the church. (At least from a protestant perspective)
  2. However, Vatican II met with a different kind of Compromise where the Catholic church decided to compromise its previous stance in order to take a more charitable view of others within Christianity and even across religions.
    - A. Pope John XXIII, born Angelo Roncalli, was pivotal in initiating significant changes within the Catholic Church, particularly through the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II). **PTQ**
      - i. Elected on October 28, 1958, he announced his plan for the council just three months later, inspired by what he described as a divine revelation.
      - ii. John XXIII was well-prepared for this role, having a deep understanding of human needs and a history of advocating for progressive ideas, such as allowing mixed marriages.
      - iii. His experiences in various countries, including Turkey and France, shaped his compassionate approach, exemplified by his efforts to aid Jews during the Holocaust.
        - 1) “Pope John showed that Vatican II was called not against but for something. The pope’s opening speech was a mandate for a predominantly pastoral council rather than a doctrinal one.
        - 2) The days of the state church, he recognized, were over. In the age coming to birth, he said, the church must not seek to maintain its authority by weapons of repression.”<sup>1</sup>
      - iv. As pope, he sought to be known as "the good shepherd," focusing on pastoral care rather than political or doctrinal authority. **PTQ**
      - v. His vision for Vatican II was one of *aggiornamento*, or modernization, aiming to align the Church with contemporary society and move away from rigid traditions.
        - 1) This council was notably different from previous ones, as it was not convened to combat heresy but to foster unity and understanding within the Church.
        - 2) The council's opening session revealed a desire for independence from the Vatican's Curia, as bishops sought to elect their own representatives rather than follow pre-prepared lists.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, ed. Marshall Shelley, 5th Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020), 528.

- 3) This marked a significant shift towards a more inclusive and globally representative Church, reflecting the diverse voices of its members.
- B. The Second Vatican Council quickly became a battle of conservatives versus progressives.
  - i. Conservatives, primarily from the Roman Curia, were resistant to change, fearing that modernity threatened traditional church values.
    - 1) Key figures included Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, who epitomized the conservative stance, emphasizing the importance of maintaining doctrinal purity.
    - 2) Many conservatives viewed the council as detrimental to the church, attempting to undermine its preparatory work.
  - ii. In contrast, progressives, led by a diverse group of cardinals from various European countries, sought to modernize the church, advocating for changes such as the use of modern languages in liturgy and increased lay participation. **PTQ**
  - iii. The council's sessions revealed deep-seated conflicts, particularly regarding the nature of divine revelation and the relationship between Scripture and tradition.
    - 1) The council's proceedings were marked by significant debates, including the contentious issue of religious liberty, which challenged long-held beliefs about the church's authority.
    - 2) Ultimately, the council concluded with a series of decrees that, while not revolutionary, represented a compromise between the two factions.
    - 3) The final declaration on freedom of conscience marked a significant shift in the church's stance on religious authority, moving away from historical practices of enforcing religious conformity. **PTQ**
- C. The Second Vatican Council ultimately changed Catholicism forever.
  - i. The council actually took place across the timeline of another Pope, Paul IV. **PTQ**
  - ii. The council produced sixteen official documents—four constitutions addressing the church, divine revelation, liturgy, and the church's relationship to modernity; nine decrees on topics including ecumenism and lay participation; and three declarations on education, non-Christian religions, and religious freedom.<sup>2</sup> **PTQ**
    - 1) The council adopted a notably more conciliatory tone toward non-Catholics, affirming that other Christians were “in some real way ... joined with us in the Holy Spirit.”<sup>3</sup>
    - 2) In the *Nostra Aetate*, which came from this council, the Catholic church noted that they had respect and reverence towards other religions, including Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and others, so as to come together for

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<sup>2</sup> Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 290–291.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

the works of social and moral good of the world. His intention seemed to be to minimize fighting between them, but he made the gaps so shallow that he essentially said we are all looking at the same God.<sup>4</sup> **PTQ**

- 3) The Catholic church began to allow a vein of dissenters more critical of the pope himself and his beliefs, which we still consider extremely stringent in areas of modern life, like that of contraceptives and divorce.<sup>5</sup>

## II. Technology Explosions

1. The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries saw some of the biggest technological booms ever imaginable.
2. The growth of this expanded ever faster from 1990 onward, in the time often referenced as the age of technology. This time of technological change and transformation is referenced more succinctly as DX.
3. Technological advances come with incredible promise and great potential dangers.
  - A. While college graduates in the 1970s were using electric typewriters and landlines, and computers were room-sized machines operated by trained engineers, an elementary school student in the third decade of the twenty-first century could wear a smart watch that had greater computer capacity than NASA used to land Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the moon.<sup>6</sup>
  - B. Further advances in technology have become, for many people, the way we live and function.
    - i. This has gotten so extreme we have apps for every part of church life. **PTQ**
      - 1) There are Bible Apps like YouVersion
      - 2) Tithing Apps like Tithe.ly
      - 3) Facial Recognition software to help keep attendance
      - 4) Zoom Calls to keep in touch
      - 5) Online teaching and training platforms
      - 6) Services of nearly every church nowadays (Not just the megachurches can be seen from one's home due to live stream, which only intensified with Covid 19.)
    - ii. Technology now seems required for life to many which although containing blessings tends to allow for problems as well.
      - 1) Many believe this world is now far too isolated and that people have forgone true friendships for the sake of technological correspondence.
      - 2) The long-term effects of dating and in-person meetings have also changed significantly.

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<sup>4</sup> Pope Paul, "DECLARATION ON THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS NOSTRA AETATE," Vatican.va, October 28, 1965, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decl\\_19651028\\_nostra-aetate\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html).

<sup>5</sup> Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 533-534.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 540.

- 3) People now have more information than ever before and take the least amount of time to make sure they understand it clearly.
  - 4) Social Media Algorithms keep people locked in bubbles of their own thinking, where their opponents' ideas are only portrayed if they are to be straw-manned or made fun of.
  - 5) Man kind is also far more distracted now than ever before. Things like ADHD are Rampant in our modern societies.
    - “If Pascal, writing in the mid-seventeenth century, could suggest that “all of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone,” what did that suggest about the ways technology’s ever-multiplying demands for attention drove levels of anxiety, ate away our prayers, made impossible meditation on Scripture, and thwarted efforts to live Christ-focused lives?”<sup>7</sup> **PTQ**
4. The difficulty with change is not simply technological. The answer is not necessarily to become Amish and run from technology and responsibility.
- A. In the last 130 years we have seen global awareness increase, several world wars, the fall of imperialism, the rise of consumerism, individuality, human rights, and the fall of moral and ethical standards. **PTQ**
    - i. “In 2019 the Pew Research Center reported that cohabitation was increasingly acceptable—85 percent of Americans believed there was nothing wrong with it—and more adults from the ages of eighteen to forty-four had lived with an unmarried partner than had ever been married. **PTQ**
    - ii. Having children did not force the issue of marriage as it did previously. By 2017 approximately 32 percent of children in the United States were living with unmarried parents.”<sup>8</sup> **PTQ**
    - iii. Many different organizations have been made and used to help combat the physical and moral difficulties in our modern world.
  - B. In some ways, the Christian decision to pull out of the world has only flooded the world with the potential to become a more pluralistic and Secular society.
    - i. “Key US political challenges to what had been traditional Christian norms—from atheist Madalyn Murray O’Hair’s persistent efforts to eradicate prayer and other religious practices from public schools **PTQ**
    - ii. The Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision to increase access to abortion
    - iii. The legal challenges against displays of the Ten Commandments or Nativity scenes on public land,
    - iv. The *Obergefell v. Hodges* court decision granting the right to marriage to same-sex couples—all made many Christians feel on the defensive and pushed American Christians to address the validity of their traditional stances.”<sup>9</sup> **PTQ**

<sup>7</sup> Shelley, [Church History in Plain Language](#), 542.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 544.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 548.

- v. There is a modern-day call to Re-win the West. “The publication of Rod Dreher’s *The Benedict Option* in 2017 both kindled and reflected this Christian response to the secularization of society. This approach encouraged a renewal of Christian faith and practice that rejected secularization, mourned the loss of the Christian values that formerly undergirded Western culture, and called for a renewed focus on traditional Christian communities and civic endeavors.”<sup>10</sup>
  - For Dreher, “the overwhelming sexualization of culture, evident in easy accessibility of pornography, the normalizing of sexual relationships outside of marriage, the legalization of same-sex marriage, increasingly visible polyamorous relationships, nonbinary gender norms, and disregard for the spirituality of the body were signs of sexual idolatry and cause for radical measures by the faithful.”<sup>11</sup> **PTQ**

### III. The Face of the Christian Church

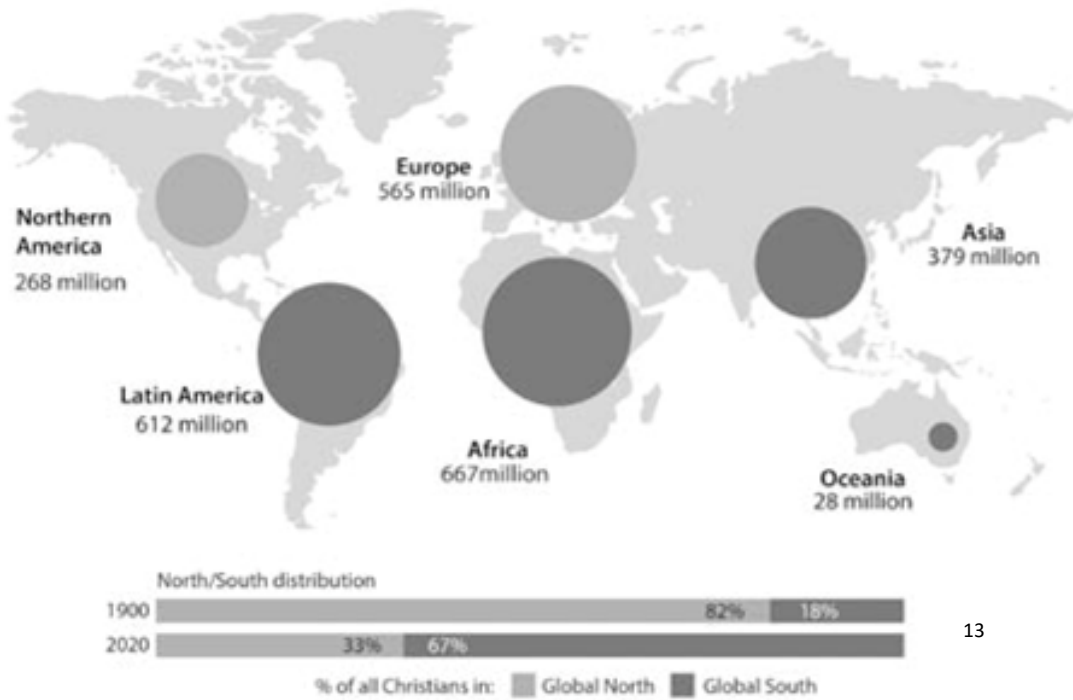
1. The Central Face of Christianity is moving from the Global North to the Global South. **PTQ**
2. The most rapidly growing branch of Christianity is Pentecostal in nature as it more readily expands into Latin American, Asian, and African societies. **PTQ**
3. Based on current populations the average Christian is no longer a white American male but instead an African female.
4. Another group clearly on the rise is that of ancient indigenous Christian churches. This is due to the reclusion of countries from decolonization, Christianity’s early history in many countries, and the truth that people from the outside of countries often come in trampling much of the culture of any other country.
5. According the Ferguson, The church although facing a higher amount of Christians than ever in history is also facing potentially the highest amount of martyrdom of anytime in history.<sup>12</sup> **PTQ**

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<sup>10</sup> Shelley, [\*Church History in Plain Language\*](#), 549.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson, *In the Year of Our Lord: Reflections on Twenty Centuries of Church History* (Orlando, FL: Ligonier Ministries, 2018).



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## Bibliography

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- Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*. Edited by Marshall Shelley. 5th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2019)