

COURSE SYLLABUS

A History of the Church in China Since 1949

Course Lecturer: Jonathan Chao, PhD
Founder of China Ministries International

Course Description

With almost twenty percent of our world's population, China is a large mission field. This course presents a history of Protestant Christianity in China since 1949, tracing the development of the church within the context of modern Chinese history. Learners examine the influence of politics on religious and church life, and study the Party's influence upon both the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the independent house churches. The course begins with a discussion of church and state relations and concludes with spiritual lessons learned from Chinese history. Students are encouraged to appreciate the tremendous needs and opportunities in China, and to reflect on how God might use them for Chinese ministry.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain the history of state and church relations in China.
- Trace the political development of China since the Communist Party's establishment in 1949 and show the effect of politics on religious policy.
- State the nature of Chinese communist religious policy and explain how it functions in conjunction with the Religious Affairs Bureau, the patriotic religious organizations, and the Public Security Bureau.
- Develop viable approaches to China ministries for the present and future.

Course Lecturer



Jonathan Chao, PhD (1938-2004)

Education:

- University of Pennsylvania, PhD
- Westminster Theological Seminary, MDiv
- Geneva College, BA

Teaching Career:

- Taught courses in Theology and Chinese Religious History at the Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong
- Taught or lectured at several other seminaries in Asia and the United States including Calvin Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Reformed Bible College (now Kuyper College) Wheaton College, William Carey University, and the Seminary of the Air

Other Career Highlights:

- Considered the leading expert in the world on the church in China by the time of his passing
- Director of the Chinese Church Research Center in Hong Kong
- Founder of the Chinese Mission Seminary
- Missionary to China for 25 years, teaching his faith and tracking the development of Christianity in China under Communist rule
- Traveled to China more than 100 times to train ministers to lead the Christian “house church” movement
- Lectured on the house church movement at conferences and in churches across the United States and Canada

Publications:

- Numerous books and articles including *A History of Christianity in Socialist China, 1949–1997*, *China Mission Handbook*, and *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: Christians in China Tell Their Story* (interviews by Dr. Chao)

Recommended Reading

Though not required, you may choose to read the textbooks shown below to supplement your learning.

Lambert, Tony. *China’s Christian Millions*. London, United Kingdom: Monarch Books, 2001.

_____. *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church*. Wheaton, Illinois: OMF Books, 1994.

Van Houten, Richard, ed. *Wise as Serpents, Harmless as Doves: Christians in China Tell Their Story*. Hong Kong: Chinese Church Research Center and Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1988.

Textbooks can be ordered through your local bookstore, various online bookstores, or through your preferred eReader when available.

Course Methods

The lecture content for each lesson is provided in two easy-to-use formats: audio and PDF text (if available). Students can choose the medium (or combination of media) that most closely aligns with their individual learning styles.

Course Assessment and Requirements

Course requirements include:

- Listening to all 24 audio lectures.
- Completing a final self-assessment form in which you will reflect on the content in the course and evaluate your life in light of what you have learned. The specifics of this assessment are provided in the course materials.

Course requirements noted in this syllabus will be validated before a Certificate of Completion is awarded to any student. No numeric or letter grade will be awarded for this course.