

FORERUNNERS
... — OF THE — ...
FAITH



Goals of the Series

Page 10

1. Introduce you to some of the **major figures and events** in church history.
2. Provide **basic historical framework** for understanding church history.
3. Encourage you in the faith by offering a glimpse into **what God has done** in prior generations.

The Biblical Framework: Identifying the Pillars of the Faith

June 17, 2026



The Biblical Framework

I. Picturing the Church as a Building

- 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 1 Cor. 3:9-11; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; Matt. 7:24-25

II. Three Doctrinal Pillars

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God
2. The Sufficiency of the Work of God
3. The Sanctity of the Worship of God

THE
WORD
OF GOD



THE
WORK
OF GOD



THE
WORSHIP
OF GOD



Doctrinal Pillar 1: The Word of God	16th-20th Centuries	Doctrinal Pillar 2: The Work of God	Early/Late Modern Age	Doctrinal Pillar 3: The Worship of God
	11th-15th Centuries		High/Late Middle Ages	
	6th-10th Centuries		Early Middle Ages	
	2nd-5th Centuries		Patristic Period	
The Foundation: Jesus Christ and the Apostolic Witness to Him				

The Biblical Framework

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God

A. 3 Key Truths (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:16-17; Mark 7:5-13)

1. The true church **embraces and submits** to the Word of God
2. Conversely, false teachers **seek to undermine** the Word of God
3. Scripture is the **authority over tradition**, not the other way round

The Biblical Framework

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God

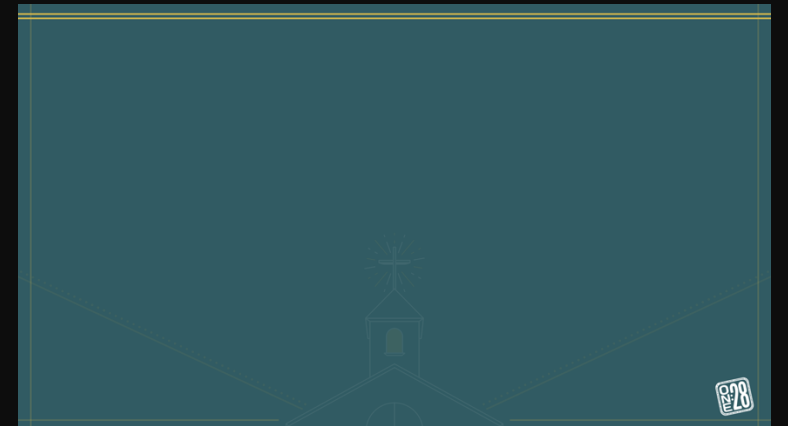
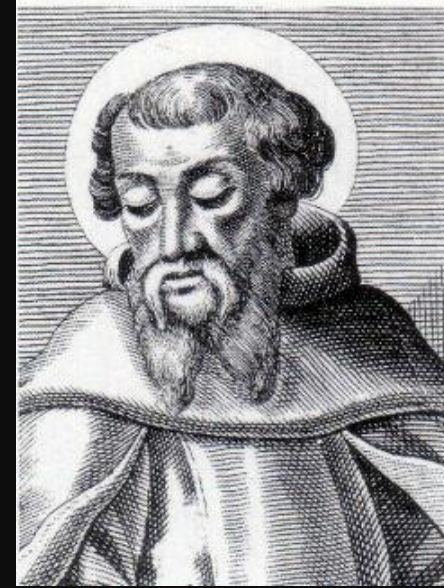
A. 3 Key Truths (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:16-17; Mark 7:5-13)

B. What about Tradition? (1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 2:15; 2 Thess. 3:6)

1. The word "tradition" comes from a Greek word that means "**that which is given over.**" The Latin word, traditio, means "**that which is handed down,**" and it is from that Latin word that we get the English word tradition.
2. Apostolic tradition has been preserved for us in the writings of the **New Testament**. When we read the New Testament, we find exactly what the apostles taught.
3. Believers are instructed, by the New Testament, to evaluate all teachings and traditions in light of **God's Word**. (1 Thess. 5:21; Col. 2:8)
4. The early church viewed the writings of the apostles as inherently **authoritative**.

“We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us [that’s a reference to the apostles], which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us [a verb form of the word ‘tradition’] in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith.” - Irenaeus (c. 130–202)

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3.1.1. Trans. from *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, 10 vols. (Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 1:414.



The Biblical Framework

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God

2. The Sufficiency of the Work of God

- The biblical gospel asserts that sinners are justified before God on the basis of **His grace alone** (Luke 18:14; Acts 16:30-31; Rom. 3:28; 5:1; 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 3:8-9; Tit. 3:4-7; Gal. 2:5)

The Biblical Framework

The Gospel

- 1. God** (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Ps. 103:19; Jam. 1:13)
 - He is a Sovereign Creator
 - He is Holy
- 2. Man** (Rom. 3:10-12; Eze. 18:4)
 - Mankind is Sinful
 - Sin Demands a Penalty
- 3. Christ** (Col. 1:16; Ps. 103:19; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:26)
 - Jesus is Lord
 - Jesus is Savior
- 4. Response** (Lk. 13:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; Matt. 11:28-30; Jn. 17:3; 1 Jn. 2:3; Jam. 2:19; Eph. 2:10)
 - Repentance: the Character of Saving Faith

The Biblical Framework

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God
2. The Sufficiency of the Work of God
3. The Sanctity of the Worship of God
 - The true church worships the triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in both purity of **devotion** and purity of **doctrine**.
 1. Purity of Devotion: Undefined worship is reserved for God alone. It removes **distractions** and rejects **competitors**.
 2. Purity of Doctrine: Undefined worship requires an accurate view of **who God is**.

The Biblical Framework

I. Picturing the Church as a Building

II. Three Doctrinal Pillars

III. Applying These Principles To Church History

1. The Supremacy of the Word of God: Scripture ALONE is our Authority.
2. The Sufficiency of the Work of God: We are saved by grace alone through faith apart from works based solely on the finished work of Christ.
3. The Sanctity of the Worship of God: We are called to worship God in purity of devotion and purity of doctrine.

AN OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY

Over time, these pillars of biblical orthodoxy are corrupted by the elevation of man-made traditions and philosophies.

Pillar: The WORD of God

Sola Scriptura

Age of Reason

Emphasis on Tradition

Pillar: The WORK of God

*Sola Fide
Sola Gratia*

Age of Reason

Sacramental Works

Pillar: The WORSHIP of God

*Solus Christus
Soli Deo Gloria*

Age of Reason

Veneration of Saints

Ante-Nicene Fathers

1st Century
Pentecost
Apostles
Clement of Rome

2nd Century
Ignatius
Polycarp
Justin
Irenaeus

3rd Century
Tertullian
Origen
Cyprian

4th Century
Nicaea
Athanasius
1st Council of Constantinople

5th Century
Chrysostom
Augustine
Chalcedon

Post-Nicene Fathers

Early Middle Ages

6th Century
2nd Council of Constantinople

7th Century
Rise of Islam
3rd Council of Constantinople

8th Century
2nd Council of Nicaea
Donation of Constantine

9th Century
Charlemagne
Holy Roman Empire

10th Century
Papal Corruption
Russia Christianized

Rise of Feudalism

High Middle Ages

11th Century
East/West Schism
1st Crusade

12th Century
Anselm
Bernard
2nd & 3rd Crusades

13th Century
4th Crusade
Thomas Aquinas
Peter Waldo

14th Century
Papal Schism
John Wycliffe

15th Century
Jan Hus
Council of Constance
Humanism

Pre-Reformers

Reformation

16th Century
Luther
Calvin
Knox
Anabaptists

17th Century
Puritanism
New England

18th Century
Edwards
Whitefield
Great Awakening

19th Century
Carey
Judson
Spurgeon

20th Century
Modernists vs. Fundamentalists
Evangelicals

Modern Era

PATRISTIC AGE

MIDDLE AGES

MODERN AGE

The Foundation: The Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostolic Witness to Him

(1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:4-6; see also Matt. 16:16-18)

