

Studies in World History

DR. JAMES STOBAUGH

Vol. 2

The New World
to the Modern Age
{1500 A.D. to 1900 A.D.}



Jr. High
STUDENT

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RELIGION

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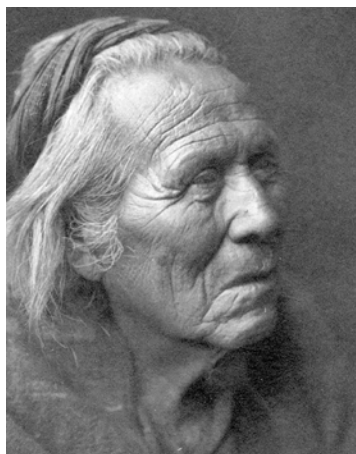
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Preface



Publicity photo of John Wayne in *The Green Berets*, 1972 (PD).

Most social critics argue persuasively that this generation is one of the most hopeless in history. Interestingly enough, this hopelessness has made us rather sentimental. We have become very sentimental about the past, a phenomenon evident even in our most mystical creations. For instance, although Han Solo is a liar, a criminal, and a fornicator, he is still a do-gooder spreading George Lucas' version of truth and justice across the land. But God is totally absent. The Star Wars phenomenon is so appealing because it is about the past, not about the future. Luke Skywalker is more like John Wayne (circa 1930–1960) than he is like someone of his own age (1970–2010).

Society can find itself rudderless. We Christians know, however, that God is in absolute control of history. Thus, we really need to be tirelessly hopeful. But we must also make sure we are not sappy! We can easily do so by speaking the truth found in the Word of God in places of deception.

One of the greatest problems in this current generation is confusion about individual responsibility. Freud told his generation that feelings of guilt were a sign not of vice, but of virtue; that our problems stemmed from our mothers, not from our sin. Perhaps our problem began with Goethe, whose *Faust* escapes the consequences of his sin by sincerity and good humor.

It is time again to truly study history! Our country is in crisis. It really is. I love my country and believe it is a good country. I often think of and celebrate its goodness. But it certainly is bewildered! This is one of your most important challenges, young people and teachers: to create a new generation of leaders, or to be a new generation of leaders who will shepherd our nation throughout the dangerous two or three decades of this new century. You must not be merely speakers of the Word; you must also be doers of the Word.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to communicate with an unsaved world, a world with which we have so little in common. For instance, many of your peers openly boast about promiscuity. Being married to one woman all my life, and having all my experience in that area centered on this one person, I find it difficult to empathize with the struggles of promiscuous young people.

Elie Wiesel lost his faith in the fires of Auschwitz. Ahab lost his faith in an insane quest against the white whale. Where did contemporary America lose its faith and therefore its hope?

Today, in our country, we have lost a lot of our abiding, ubiquitous truths. Very few believe that there are absolute values, for instance, which is at the heart of the American experience. Very few respect authority. And so forth. How did our world lose the loving God we Christians know is in control? All of us are trying to understand why and how this happened, and perhaps that is the first task for apologetics.

Young people and coaches, help our nation find this loving God! The John 3:16 God we all know! This book hopefully will call you to go back to the mundane places to which God has called you. Remember this: wherever the Body of Christ dwells is the Holy Land. Make your special place the Kingdom of God.

I do not despair as I write this book, as I think about you who will use it. I thank God for the storm I see brewing in this land. Oh, no, it is more than a wind. It is a storm!

I thank my Father for the storm that Jesus Christ our Lord brings, even to the awful secular places to which He has called us. I thank Him for Angelique, Debbie, and Vincent. I thank him for Mary and Stephen. I thank God for you all!

Our consumer culture is organized against history. There is a depreciation of memory and a ridicule of hope, which means everything must be held in the now, either an urgent now or an eternal now. Either way, a community rooted in energizing memories and summoned by radical hopes is a curiosity and a threat in such a culture. You must be that threat. Our argument that one should rely on a faithful, historical, omnipotent God is a threatening message to this generation.

Our world does not understand, much less believe in, our history. God is not to be trusted because He cannot be quantified. He is not to be controlled. This God makes self-proclaimed kings of the earth uncomfortable. Therefore, this God of ours has been making kings like Herod, Ahab, and Nero uncomfortable for ages.

I remember a simple, powerful Gospel song that all of us in our 1966 Arkansas United Methodist Church sang. This was the song of the redeemed. But we scarcely knew it.

“Jesus loves the little children . . . all the children of the world.” Since I was still too young to doubt the veracity of my parents and teachers, I actually believed that song. When I started living that song later, it changed my world. And when enough people lived that message, we changed our world. We dared to believe God. And when we did, His history became our history. Our cause became holy, our witness worthy of the Gospel. A price was to be paid, for we defied the world’s order. But our song brought hope, life, and salvation. So it was worth it. Our song is the song of Psalm 8:1: “Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory/above the heavens.”

But if this song is simple, and oft repeated, it is still quickly forgotten. God is a loving God, so loving in fact that He sent His only begotten Son to die for us. It is in this Son, in the vortex of this simple message, that we find wholeness, life, and health. It is our past. It is our memory. This godly heritage equips us to go boldly into the next century and change our world!

As we journey, let us bring wholeness as we endeavor to live a life worthy of the Gospel. And let us be as bold and unequivocal as we can be that Christ alone is the source of our life. If we do, “Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped” (Isa. 35:5).



Jesus blessing the children.

Using Your Student Textbook

How this course has been developed

1. Chapters: This course has 34 chapters (representing 34 weeks of study).
2. Lessons: Each chapter has five lessons, taking approximately 20 to 30 minutes each. There will be a short reading followed by discussion questions. Some questions require a specific answer from the text, while others are more open ended, leading students to think “outside the box.”
3. Weekly exams: The Teacher Guide includes two optional exams for the chapter.
4. Student responsibility: Responsibility to complete this course is on the student. Students are to complete the readings every day, handing their responses in to a parent or teacher for evaluation. This course was designed for students to practice independent learning.
5. Grading: Students turn in assignments to a parent or teacher weekly.

Throughout this book are the following components:

1. First thoughts: Background on the historical period.
2. Discussion questions: Questions based generally on Bloom’s Taxonomy.
3. Concepts: Terms, concepts, and theories to be learned that are bolded for emphasis. Most are listed on the first page of the chapter.
4. History makers: A person(s) who clearly changed the course of history.
5. Historical debate: An examination of historical theories surrounding a period or topic.

What the student will need:

1. Notepad: For writing assignments.
2. Pen/pencil: For answers and essays.
3. The Teacher Guide for weekly exams and/or to record daily assignments.



Astrolabe quadrant, c. 1388, from the British Museum (CCA-SA-3.0).

Chapter 1

Medieval Europe: Technology Triumphs

First Thoughts

A century before Columbus sailed, Europeans were probing the coast of Africa and eventually reached the East Indies going east to China long before Columbus departed, sure that he could do the same thing going west. Europe was suited to lead the world into the modern age. It alone possessed the navigational expertise, the compass, the astrolabe, and mapmaking skills needed to launch the great nautical explorations which resulted in the colonization of the Western Hemisphere and the development of the world economy. There were other attempts at exploration. A century before Columbus, for instance, the Chinese had sent out a very successful, and much more elaborate, exploratory voyage into the Indian Ocean. But it was to be the Europeans who initiated the modern era with their age of exploration.

Chapter Learning Objectives

Medieval Europeans had come through the so-called Dark Ages with only a bump or two, and were ready, literally, to explore the world! We will look at how they did this. We will examine how technology, more and more, would determine the course of history.

As a result of this chapter you should be able to:

1. State why medieval Europeans were ready to explore the world
2. Predict what obstacles these energetic Europeans would face
3. Infer what the habits and clothing of the Viking Greenlanders tell us about them
4. Recall someone who was critical to an important endeavor but no one knew it
5. Judge if it was wrong for a nation, a church, and an explorer, who did not know better, who only acted like normal 15th-century Christian people, to make great monetary profits inflicting great injustice and pain on people groups (slaves and Native Americans)
6. List what technological improvements helped Europeans explore their world
7. Ask relatives how technology — like the computer — changed their lives

CONCEPTS

L'Anse aux Meadows

Prince Henry the Navigator

Caravel

Bartholomew Dias

Mariner's compass

Lead line

Astrolabe

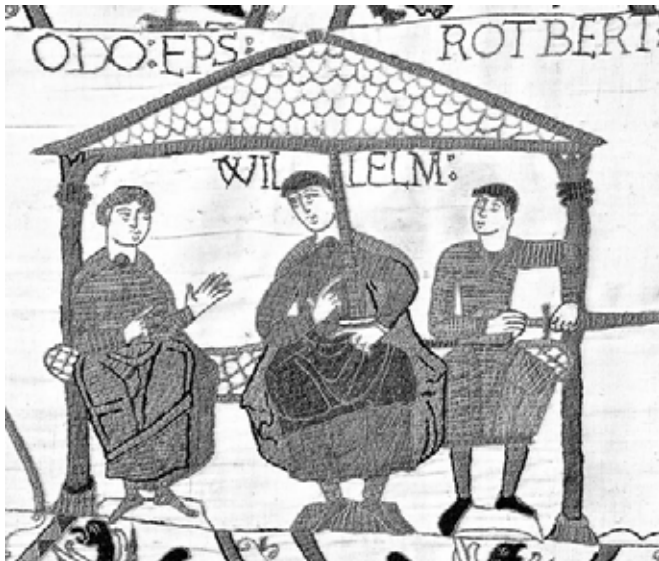
End of the Middle Ages

Western Europe, at the end of the Middle Ages, was prospering. By any standards, Western Europe was at a new apex of growth. In England, William the Conqueror and his Norman successors were in firm control. The Tudors were soon to take over. It took the French kings three centuries to accomplish what William the Conqueror had done in one generation, but by the end of the Middle Ages they had just about accomplished it. The German kingdoms were somewhere between the Holy Roman Empire and the great nation they

would become, but for the present, they were not major players on the European stage. Nation making in Spain was unique, since it acquired the religious fervor of a crusade. The Moors were gone and the Spanish were anxious to explore new vistas.

Economically, Europe was in great shape. Apparently, the Plague was behind them. Society was transformed by new opportunities: food surpluses and increased populations, revitalized trade, new towns, more affordable (but still very expensive) exotic spices from the Orient, and, thanks to the Wall Street tycoons of the 16th century — the Venetians — a robust European economy based on hard species emerged.

The Church during this time had developed the first unified system of law and administration in the medieval age. Every European felt good about that.



Panel from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting Bishop Odo of Bayeux, Duke William (William the Conqueror), and Count Robert of Mortain (PD-US).

Venetian and Islamic traders controlled trade. European countries wanted to avoid these middlemen. They took a pretty hefty cut of all transactions. Other Europeans wanted to bypass them to get to the silk, spices, and other luxury items in Asia. Fabulous fortunes could be made if trade could be opened to China.

At the same time, the Crusades had whetted everyone's appetite to share the Gospel in strange, new mission fields.

The Crusades had unleashed something else: the need for glory and adventure. Europe was full of middle sons of the gentry who had no opportunity whatsoever to own big estates, and they were hungry for something else. Likewise, yeoman farmers wanted larger farms than the pitifully small farms they had in Europe. In short, the New World promised a new, hopeful future for all.

Finally, there were advances in ship construction (bigger, faster, and sturdier), and there were new navigation aids. Now, there was a new compass (in the 1300s they used a magnetized needle floating on a straw in a bucket of water). The astrolabe was used to determine latitude; longitude was less accurate. In the 15th century, maps were still crude and inaccurate, but no one thought the world was flat.

In summary, times were good in Europe around 1492. Prosperity was everywhere. People were optimistic. And they had reason to be. They were ready, more than ready, to initiate, contribute to, and join in the Age of Exploration.

Exploration, then, began in an air of prosperity and great expectation!

Discussion Question

Why were medieval Europeans ready to explore the world?

Lesson 2

Viking Settlements in North America

One has to wonder, why did such a fierce, independent people, who could have, indeed already had, most of Europe at their feet, choose to travel thousands of miles across the ocean to North America? Yet, without a doubt, they did just that.

The Vikings unquestionably settled at **L'Anse aux Meadows** in Newfoundland, Canada. Several Norse Viking pieces and clear Icelandic-style house foundations gave proof positive that the Vikings had indeed landed, and briefly settled, in North America 500 years before Columbus.

More recent archaeological work has revealed over 300 years of sporadic contact between the Greenlandic Norse and various Inuit and other Native American peoples, concentrated primarily in the Canadian Arctic.

When Erik the Red settled in a land to the west of Iceland, he named it Greenland, a sort of public relations ploy to get unwary settlers to come to the green land. In his defense, however, the climate was warmer 1,000 years ago. The people stayed in permanent settlements in Greenland for 500 years.

Here the Vikings tried to maintain their hunting and livestock-raising lifestyle, though as the temperature became colder in the 13th century, hunting became more of a necessity to augment food stock.

Despite these hardships, the Norse Greenlanders clung to many traditions of Christian Europe. There were over 20 churches serving a peak population of around 3,000. The church controlled trade, and bishops held most of the power.

Around A.D. 1450, the Norse society that had existed on the edge of the European and the American world for almost 500 years mysteriously came to an end. No one knows how or why.



Recreation of Norse longhouse at L'Anse aux Meadows, Canada (CCA-SA-3.0).



Inside Norse longhouse recreation in Canada (CCA-SA-3.0).

Discussion Question

The Greenland Vikings were fervent churchgoers and built a fairly tidy European community. In fact, a woolen hood excavated from a churchyard in Greenland dating to the late 14th century showed that the Norsemen were even concerned about fashion! On the edge of nowhere, so-called rough Viking Greenlanders were keeping up with European fashion in the midst of a cooling climate and decreasing trade contacts! Why?

Lesson 3

Portuguese: Influence of One Man on History

Under Prince Henry's direction, a new and lighter ship was developed, the caravel, which would allow sea captains to sail farther and faster.

Portugal is an unlikely place to find the earliest evidence of European exploration. In the shadow of Spain to the west and Italy to the east, no one expected Portugal to create the largest European colonial empire of the 15th century. But Portugal had Prince Henry.

Prince Henry the Navigator never actually sailed on any of the voyages of discovery he sponsored. Instead, Prince Henry established a school for the study of the navigation, mapmaking, and shipbuilding. This equipped sea captains to better guide their ships and to come up with new ship designs.



Portrait assumed to be of Portuguese prince Henry the Navigator (Infante D. Henrique), inserted as the frontispiece in a 15th C. edition of the book *Crónicas dos Feitos de Guiné* (PD-US).

His goal was to find nothing less than a sea route to the rich spice trade of the Indies. The ships that sailed the Mediterranean, however, were big bulky things, first cousins to the Roman galleys, too slow and heavy to make these voyages. The development of the caravel had the same effect on Europe that the automobile had on 20th-century America. Suddenly, the world was at the feet of Europe.

Nonetheless, technology notwithstanding, Prince Henry had a great deal of trouble persuading his captains to sail beyond the west coast of Africa. According to legend, the sun was so close to the earth that a person's skin would burn black, the sea would boil, ships would catch on fire, and monsters would hide, waiting to smash the ships and eat the sailors. And no one had one drop of sunscreen! It took 14 voyages over a period of 12 years until a ship finally reached the equator.

During the two-year period from 1444 to 1446, after everyone saw that the monsters had either disappeared or were too shy to show themselves, Prince Henry sent between 30 and 40 of his ships on missions. The last voyage sponsored by Prince Henry sailed over 1,500 miles down the African coast. Therefore, Portugal was half a century ahead of all European countries in exploration.

Portuguese King John II took over after Prince Henry died. King John II was not satisfied with the revenues he was receiving from trading voyages and he was determined to establish a Christian empire in West Africa. Along the way, he also hoped to barter for a few African slaves who already were the most valuable cargo in Europe.

King John II had two very promising sea captains: **Bartholomew Dias** and Christopher Columbus. Dias (1457–1500) continued the work of previous Portuguese explorers to gather advanced reconnaissance about the African coast, but to him goes the credit for circumnavigating the Cape of Good Hope. For the next Portuguese explorer, Vasco de Gama, it was a hop, skip, and a jump to the East Indies and cheap tea, cinnamon, and silks that made sea captains and kings fabulously wealthy. Regardless, there must be a better way to get those things . . . or at least Columbus thought. King John II was somewhat disappointed in Columbus, and he cut him loose.

Discussion Question

While Prince Henry the Navigator never took a voyage and never received any accolades for his efforts, he was critical to the beginning of the Age of Exploration. Can you think of someone who has been critical to the success of a new endeavor but no one knew about his contribution?



Statue of Bartolomeu Dias at the High Commission of South Africa in London (CCA-SA-3.0).



Statue of Henry the Navigator in Portugal (CCA-3.0).



King Afonso V of Portugal. The author of the sketch is uncertain, but a woodcut based on this sketch is found in the printed version of Georg von Ehingen's memoirs, the *Itinerarium*, published in 1600 (PD-US).

Lesson 4

Economic: Private Investments



Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella of Castile in Madrid (Spain) (CCA-SA-2.5).

Christopher Columbus' voyages of discovery were part of a much broader pattern of European commercial and financial expansion during the 15th century. In the span of less than four decades, European countries revolutionized sea travel.

In Madeira, the Azores, the Canary Islands, and other islands, the Portuguese introduced sugar cane. With financial support from German and Italian bankers and merchants, Portugal was able to exploit these discoveries and create a system of long-distance trade and commerce based on sugar and slavery. As early as 1420, the Portuguese began to settle in islands off the West African coast. Beginning in 1443, Portugal also established a string of trading posts along the West African coast, which soon became major sources of slave labor for the Spanish Peninsula and especially for the Atlantic island sugar plantations. Investors demanded profits, and Portugal complied.

Christopher Columbus was very familiar with this network of Atlantic trade. Therefore, he understood the slave trade. He knew how to use it to benefit himself and his investors. He was also aware of the need to have sound, solvent investors. He was not simply a bold, courageous explorer; he was also a shrewd businessman.

Forty-one years old at the time he made his first voyage of discovery, entrepreneur Columbus, a very pious, dedicated Christian, was obsessed with the idea of finding a new route to the Far East. This would make him obscenely wealthy and would enable him to pay for the liberation of the Holy Land from Islamic rule. Columbus was personally familiar with the two Caribbean businesses that would bring more wealth than all the gold the Spanish Main could muster: slavery and sugar production. Before October 12, 1492, ended, Columbus had already astutely discerned the business opportunities this new land offered his king, his church, and himself.



John Vanderlyn (1775–1852) had studied with Gilbert Stuart and was the first American painter to be trained in Paris, where he worked on this canvas for ten years with the help of assistants. Christopher Columbus is shown landing in the West Indies, on an island that the natives called Guanahani and that he named San Salvador, on October 12, 1492. He raises the royal banner, claiming the land for his Spanish patrons, and stands bareheaded, with his hat at his feet, in honor of the sacredness of the event (PD).

Unfortunately, there were some mitigating factors at play. Like all of his contemporaries, there was not an ounce of appreciation of cultural diversity in Christopher Columbus. Within days of his arrival in the New World, Columbus regarded the Native American population as a potential labor source. Initially, Columbus and his business partners were disappointed with his labor force. But that was only a momentary setback. Within a generation, the Spanish learned to import their own labor supply, and economic prosperity flowed back into Europe.

Discussion Question

Is it wrong for a nation, a Church, and an explorer who did not know better, who only acted like normal 15th-century Christian people, to make great monetary profits from inflicting great injustice and pain on people groups (slaves and Native Americans)?



Inspiration of Christopher Columbus by Jose Maria Obregon, 1856 (Mexico) (CCA-SA-3.0).

Lesson 5

Advances in Technology: The Caravel and Navigation Tools

The caravel of the 15th and 16th centuries was a sight to behold! A magnificent technological feat, Europeans had never seen anything quite like it. It was a ship with a distinctive shape and admirable qualities. A gently sloping bow and single stern castle were prominent features of this vessel, and it carried a mainmast and a mizzenmast that were generally lateen-rigged. Although the caravel had already been in use for hundreds of years, it had developed into an incredibly fast, easily maneuverable vessel by this time. Ship captains could venture miles away from shore and return without any problem whatsoever.

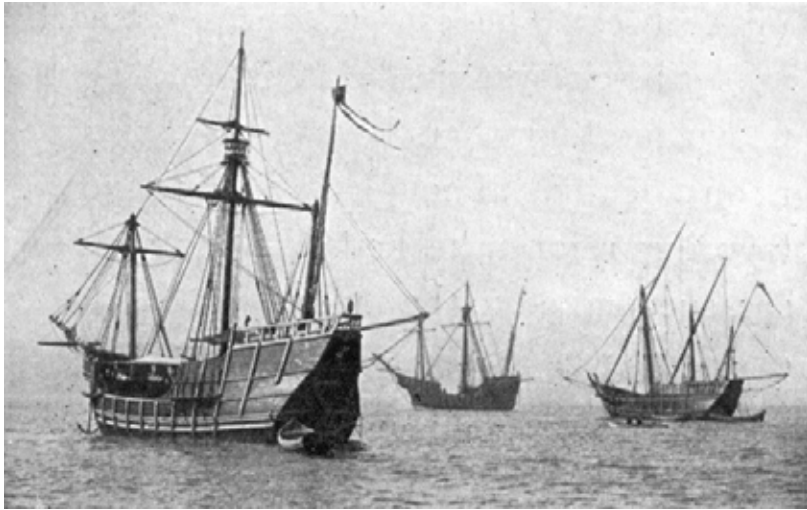
This extraordinary vessel gained fame with the Portuguese and Spanish voyages of discovery. Columbus' ships *Niña* and *Pinta* were caravels.

The exact origin of the caravel is a matter of some debate. That the caravel was a fishing vessel in the 13th century is evident from Portuguese records from that period. The Portuguese no doubt borrowed the design from Arab ships plying the Indian Ocean.¹



Portuguese caravel, Paris (CCA-SA-3.0).

1. <http://nautarch.tamu.edu/shiplab/01George/caravela/htmls/Caravel%20History.htm>.



Replicas of the *Pinta*, *Santa Maria*, and *Niña*, lying in the North River, New York. These caravels crossed from Spain to be present at the World's Fair at Chicago (PD-US).

One of the earliest man-made navigation tools was the **mariner's compass**, an early form of the magnetic compass (c.13th century).

Of course, even the sturdiest and fastest ships needed to be steered to a desired location. Ingenious technicians designed just what the doctor ordered.

Initially used only when the weather obscured the sun or the North Star, the first compasses were very crude. The navigator would rub an iron

needle against a lodestone, stick it in a piece of straw, and float it in a bowl of water. The needle would point in a northerly direction. Early mariners found the compass inconsistent — most likely because they did not understand that it pointed to the magnetic north pole, not the true north (this is called variation). At the time, they could not explain these variations and could not put much trust in the readings when navigating an unknown area. Thus, they preferred not to use it.

Much more valuable, at the time, was the invention of the **lead line** (c. 13th century), which was a tool for measuring the depth of water and the nature of the bottom. This line was weighted with lead and had graduated markings to determine sea depth. The lead was coated with wax to bring up samples from the bottom.

The development of better navigational tools was first motivated by commerce and trade, then by the riches of discovery. The Phoenicians and Greeks were the first of the Mediterranean navigators to sail from land to land and to sail at night. Often they navigated by bonfires set on mountaintops (the earliest known system of aids to navigation).

Furthermore, the **astrolabe**, which had been around for centuries, was refined to even more accurately determine the longitude and latitude of a ship's location.

At this time, mariners came to realize that maps would be helpful and began keeping detailed records of their voyages that land-based mapmakers used to create the first nautical charts. The charts, created on sheepskin or goatskin, were rare and very expensive, and were often kept secret so that competing mariners would not have access to the knowledge. What they lacked in accuracy they made up for in beauty. Lands and ports on the chart were highly decorated with colorful depictions of buildings and flags.²

Discussion Questions

What technological improvements helped Europeans explore their world?

2. <http://boatsafe.com/kids/navigation.htm>.