



# **Synopsis of Lectures on Church History: General Introduction; History of Christian Doctrine, 100-750 A. D (Classic Reprint)**

*Egbert Coffin Smyth*

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Inquire, first, What is the Idea of History? secondly, What is the Idea of the Church? as each term is used in the phrase "Church History."

§ 1. History. - Uses of the word "History." Analysis of the Idea: Events occur in space and time; in a series; are to be studied in their causes; [Aristotle's classification of causes; application of this division; main use of it; "bare" fact, "exact" fact, often not = the historical fact;] in their development; [development = evolution; more than growth from a germ; general acceptance of the conception; its fruitfulness, its nature, and some of its characteristics - a formal idea, denotes a process, not the subject, moving forces, nor specific end of the process; importance of retaining the principle that events are to be studied in their causes; criticism of Dr. Shedd's definition; specific type of evolution given in history; some of its marks - selection of ends, spiritual ideals, dependence and moral obligation, law and fact of sacrifice]. Definition. Distinguish History from Chronicles; from Archaeology, from Biography. Different methods of writing History - their key. Define Narrative History; Dramatic; Pragmatic; Idealistic; Religious.

Why begin with the older? Characteristics indicated in Exodus xix. 3-6? General characteristics given in the New Testament. Inferences. Special Characteristics - The Principle, Goal, Visibility, Condition in the world, Law of Growth, of the Church. Definition of the Subject of Church History. Definition of Church History.

§ 3. Relation of Church History to other branches of Theology.

II. Sources of Church History.

Definition of "Sources." Classification. Three grounds of distinction. Classes thus obtained. Best method.

III. Methods of Division and Arrangement of the Materials of Church History.

§ 1. Three grounds of division. Three methods. Relative value of each. Method of Eusebius. Of the Mediaeval Historians. Of Baronins.

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