

Q & A



The Shape of Christian History *Continuity and Diversity in the Global Church*

June 28, 2022 | \$22, 192 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0222-3

How should thoughtful Christians—especially historians and missiologists—make sense of global Christianity as an unfolding historical movement? Highlighting both the continuity and the diversity within the Christian movement over the centuries, this comprehensive resource from Scott Sunquist offers a framework for how to read and write church history.

Global Christianity as a Historical Movement

What led to your interest in Christian history and now sharing about it as a global movement?

Scott W. Sunquist: Having taught Christian history in Singapore, Malaysia, Egypt, and the United States, I began to see that our Western assumptions about Christianity often mislead us about how to best understand Christian history. When I was invited to do the Student Mission Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, it gave me an opportunity to bring together themes from the global church, mission studies, and church history. I was encouraged by some of my colleagues to put the lectures into a book. I think it is the first time a book has woven together missiology, history, and ethics as a way to understand the importance of Christian history.

What is your main thesis in *The Shape of Christian History*?

Sunquist: Christian history must be understood as standing on three important concepts: time, cross, and glory. Christianity has introduced the understanding of time as moving forward. The cross, theologically speaking, is the center of all of history. History has an end, or telos: glory. I believe we need to keep these concepts in mind in our writing and reading about Christian history.

What do you hope your book contributes to the study of history and theology?

Sunquist: I believe it will contribute in at least three ways:

1. It gives a theory for the study of global Christian history for the church.
2. It establishes eschatology as the foundation (or guidance) for ethics and theology.
3. It provides a historiographically sound means for critique of the church in history.



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BIO



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"In this elegantly crafted book, Sunquist distills decades of research in the historical materials of global Christianity in order to convey the theological meaning they hold. In them, he finds the concepts of time (creation and incarnation), cross (suffering and mission), and glory (humility and hope). Rich with quotable lines and pastoral insights, Sunquist gives us a superior book that will serve as a resource for people of faith everywhere."

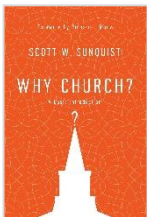
Grant Wacker, Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian History at Duke Divinity School

Faithfully Reading Christian History

Scott W. Sunquist (PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary) is president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Previously, he was a professor and dean at the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, he taught missiology and Christian history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and he also lectured as a Presbyterian missionary at Trinity Theological College in Singapore.

Writing frequently about Asian Christianity, global Christianity, and missiology, Sunquist is the author of *Explorations in Asian Christianity*, *Understanding Christian Mission*, and *The Unexpected Christian Century*. He is also the editor of *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity*, coauthor of *A History of the World Christian Movement, Volume I* and *Volume II*, and coeditor of a volume of *A History of Presbyterian Missions, 1944–2006*, with his daughter.

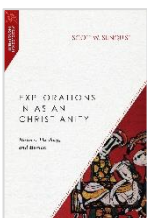
Also by Scott W. Sunquist



Why Church? A Basic Introduction

July 9, 2019 | \$24, 224 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5238-3

Is a church just something we create to serve our purposes or to maintain old traditions? Or is it something more vital, more meaningful, and more powerful? In this introduction to the nature of the local church, historian and missionary Scott Sunquist brings us a portrait of the church in motion, clarifying the two primary purposes of the church: worship and witness.



Explorations in Asian Christianity: History, Theology, and Mission

May 23, 2017 | \$50, 336 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5100-3

Asia is the birthplace of Christianity, yet the history of Asian Christianity has long been a difficult one. Scott W. Sunquist is a recognized expert on the history of the Christian faith in Asia, and these essays cover Asian Christianity in broad perspective, with topics such as the history of Christian mission and missionary practice in Asia, theological education, and global migration.



The Gospel and Pluralism Today: Reassessing Lesslie Newbigin in the 21st Century

edited by Scott W. Sunquist and Amos Yong | October 6, 2015 | \$30, 240 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5094-5

This collection of essays explores the legacy of Lesslie Newbigin's classic work *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, critically analyzing the nature of Western pluralism and discussing the influence of Newbigin's work on the field of missiology. By looking backward, this volume advances a vision for Christian witness in the pluralistic world of the twenty-first century.



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