

The 21st Century: Century of Christianity?



Students from over 20 countries train under Dr. Hammond in the Christian history of the world and discipling the nations.

Peter Hammond is the foremost Christian evangelist in the world. For over 30 years, Dr. Hammond has pioneered missionary outreaches across the globe, including into the war zones of Mozambique, Angola and Sudan. Peter has travelled hundreds of thousands of miles to deliver Bibles to persecuted Christians in Africa and Eastern Europe. In the course of his missionary activities, Peter has been ambushed, come under aerial and artillery bombardments, been stabbed, shot at, beaten by mobs, arrested, and imprisoned. His invaluable insights into the seeming collapse of Western Civilization are seen below:

The 19th century was the greatest century of missionary advance. It was a century of astounding inventions and of spectacular advances in technology. Many countries in Europe and overseas experienced dramatic spiritual revivals. Christian missionaries won whole tribes and nations to Christ, in the remotest regions of the globe. **Christianity came to the beginning of the 20th century on a rising and apparently unstoppable tide.** Christianity was gaining spectacular momentum, as missionaries from Europe were evangelising and discipling virtually every tribe and nation.

The Protestant faith had far outstripped the Catholic and Orthodox branches in missionary activity, vitality and initiative. From being confined almost entirely to North Western Europe, the British Isles and a narrow strip on the Eastern seaboard of North America, and with a very small outpost at the Cape of Good Hope, the **Protestant faith in the 19th century had become a truly international faith.** It was the dominant faith of the most productive, powerful and prosperous nations in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Amidst irrepressible optimism, many were openly speaking of the beginning of the Biblical millennium on earth.

In 1910, Christian nations ruled virtually the whole world. With the exception of China, Japan, and the Ottoman Empire, the globe was dominated by Christian powers. Either Protestant, as in the case of Great Britain, Germany and the United States; Roman Catholic as in the case of the Austrian, Hungarian Empire, the French Empire, Italy, Spain, Portugal, etc.; or Orthodox, as in the case of the Russian Empire.

Following the Battle of Waterloo and the defeat of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna had ushered in a century of comparative peace, astounding increases in population, and unprecedented increases in productivity and standards of living. The 19th century had been a century of astounding achievements, growth and



Frontline Fellowship & Dr. Peter Hammond have delivered millions of books and Bibles into Africa.

expansion. By 1910, the world was being led by people who had traditionally been known as Christian.

At the first World Missions Congress in Edinburgh in 1910, delegates were anticipating the extinction of all false religions by 1960. The consensus of the speakers at Edinburgh 1910, was that every tribe and nation will have been thoroughly evangelized and disciplined by 1960. They were anticipating the fulfilment of the Great Commission and the beginning of the Biblical Millennium on earth - before the end of the 20th century!

No one in 1910 could have anticipated the wholesale abandonment of entire nations to communism, to false religions and heathenism. **Nor would any have predicted that the Church would retreat from victory** to such an extent that they would even be questioning the existence of the devil, or hell, or reinterpreting marriage to include that which God in the Bible describes as perversion and an abomination.

What no one at the 1910 Conference could have envisaged was the devastating impact of two World Wars. The heartland of the Church and of Mission sending agencies, wiped out millions of one another, and at the end of it, Europe was no longer the greatest economic, political and spiritual power on earth. Instead of discipling the world, Christians allowed themselves to be manipulated into devastating one another's countries.

This year, 2014, marks the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the greatest catastrophe in the history of civilisation, World War I. Prior to 1914, Christian nations ruled the world. The 19th century was the greatest century of Missions. Europe was succeeding in bringing the Gospel of Christ, literacy, civilisation and the rule of law to even the most remote and primitive parts of the globe. However, after two

world wars, Europe went from being a majority church-going population to a spiritual wasteland, where only small percentages of each nation still attended church.

The Christian era of bold Missionary expansion came to an abrupt end as the guns of August 1914, erupted. The great European countries which had been the heartland of Christendom, and the source of most of the missionaries, devastated each other's economies and annihilated millions of one another's young men, in what has to be recognised as the most tragic and senseless conflict in history.

Patrick Buchanan in his book, *Churchill, Hitler and the Unnecessary War* documents the futility and the catastrophic consequences of this 30-year civil war of the West from 1914 to 1945.

Before the First World War, no continent had ever been as powerful as Europe. There was no hint of any possible challenge to its leadership of the whole world. 1914 marks a far more drastic turning point than 1815, or 1648, or any other of the watershed events of history. Nothing could have stopped the positive, onward march of Christianity worldwide, except that Christians were persuaded to kill one another so enthusiastically and so efficiently. Far more devastating than the actual numbers of people killed, crippled, or severely injured, was the damage to the spiritual life of Europe, and the world.

It is absolutely essential that we learn the lessons of history and rediscover our purpose as God's people, to refocus on the fulfilment of the Great Commission, to make disciples of all nations, teaching obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. Our purpose on earth is to fulfil the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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