

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: What Does Today's Church Need to Learn from the Early Church?

Christian witness in Europe today is difficult. We live in a continent which is increasingly either indifferent or hostile to biblical truth. But are the challenges we are facing today new? As we seek to be faithful in bearing witness to Christ in our contemporary situation, what lessons can we learn from those who have gone before us? In this session, we will examine the character and witness of the early church (A.D. 90–313) and consider how we can learn from its example as we face similar challenges today.

Lindsay Brown is a native of Wales. He studied European history at Oxford (MA) and theology at the Free Faculty of Theology at Vaux-sur-Seine, near Paris, under Henri Blocher. Lindsay has worked with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) for the past 45 years in a variety of roles, including serving as International Director. More recently, he has been leading the Fellowship of Evangelists in the Universities of Europe (FEUER). FEUER's main goal is the development of a Europe-wide network of public university evangelists who work in partnership with indigenous student ministries throughout every country in Europe. He is the author of *Shining Like Stars – The Power of the Gospel in the World's Universities (IVP)* and *Into All the world – The Missionary Vision of Calvin and Luther (Christian Focus)*, which was written after a presentation at the European Leadership Forum several years ago.

INTRODUCION

- 'If you don't know where you have come from , you won't know who you are, or where you should be going'. -John Lennox

- 'He who wants an easy life has been born in the wrong generation'. -Tolstoy.

- 'The Early-Church grew because the early believers out-lived and out-argued the pagans.' -Adolf Harnack,

- Latourette's 6 weapons in the Christian's armoury:
 - Prayer
 - Evangelism
 - Lifestyle
 - Argument
 - Community
 - Suffering

I. Their LIFESTYLE Was Attractive in at Least Three Ways

A. Koinonia

B. Diakonia

C. New ethics

II. They Sought to PERSUASIVELY COMMUNICATE Gospel Truth.

A. Apologia

III. They Engaged in the TEACHING and DISCIPLING of New Converts as well as DEFENDING Gospel Truth Against Heresy

A. The Didache

B. Early Councils

C. The First Appearance of the Word 'Evangelical'

IV. PERSEVERANCE: Dying for the truth

A. Martyrio

B. 'They are immortal for all time and we live forever, which explains why they despise death and voluntarily give themselves up' -Lucien

CONCLUSION