

Lesson 2: Patrick of Ireland

Introduction: Three Time Eras—Ancient, Medieval, Modern.

What are the Dark Ages?

God preserves Scripture learning later on Ireland (an island) but to do so God first sends to Gospel to them

Note: Almost all legends of “Saint Patrick” are not true.

Hagiography is literally “the writings about the saints.” This genre is very common in the early church.
E.g. St. Valentine, St. Nicholas, etc.

American Hagiography: Parson Weems’ stories about George Washington

How much does the truth matter, if the story is inspiring others?

Illus. Linus and the Great Pumpkin

But with Patrick, we are blessed to have two authentic writings from him, although with very poor Latin.

Patrick’s life – big picture:

Grew up in a British Christian home (Wales); he was captured and taken to Ireland (pagan! And living among the shepherds

He experienced real conversion to Christ (age 16?); he prayed hundreds of times daily; later he escapes home and senses the call to Ireland (see also: Acts 16:9-10)

His lack of education was an obstacle in ordination (sore spot), but he is not Catholic (under the pope)

He uses the Bible well, emphasizes Christ, has some elements of works but seems to have the true Gospel – a true frontier missionary in the Dark Ages!