

Religious History Doctrines & Divisions

Digression from Truth
(Pentecost - Reformation)
Quarter One

Modern Day Divisions
(Restoration - Present)
Quarter Two

Annex Class: September 2016 - February 2017
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Introduction

Objectives of this Study:

1. Obtain a knowledge of the major developments in religious history from the time of the apostles to the present and therefore obtain a better understanding of the religious world into which we were born.
2. Learn that religious history is largely a record of man's departure from God's way and of the efforts of a few to hold on to the true gospel or to return to it.
3. Learn to avoid the spiritual blunders of past generations.
4. Learn the immense consequences of what can seem at the time to be slight and inconsequential deviations from apostolic teaching.
5. Learn that the problems of the present are not really new.
6. Help ground us in the truth by recognizing departures from it and equip us to understand how these errors developed and how to refute them

Chronology of The New Testament Period

New Testament Writers as Historians:

"That a few simple men should in one generation have invented so powerful and appealing a personality, so lofty in ethic and so inspiring a vision of human brotherhood, would be a miracle far more incredible than any recorded in the Gospels. After two centuries of Higher Criticism the outlines of the life, character, and teachings of Christ, remain reasonably clear, and constitute the most fascinating feature in the history of Western man." - Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, Vol. III (*Caesar and Christ*), p. 557.

The Chronology:

(Note: Our present system of dating, B.C. [Before Christ] and A.D. [Anno Domini, year of the Lord], was initiated in 525 A.D. by the monk Dionysius Exiguus and came into general use in about the 8th century A.D. Previously, years were counted in relation to other events or the reigns of rulers. The Roman counted their years from the year that Rome was supposedly founded (A.U.C.). Dionysius calculated the date of Christ's birth to have been 754 A.U.C., i.e. 0 B.C./A.D. This calculation has since been proven wrong. By it Herod the Great would have died about 4 B.C., more than three years before Jesus was born.)

Birth of Christ	5/4 B.C.
During reign of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1)	
Beginning of John's Ministry	26 A.D.
During 15th year of the reign of Tiberius (Luke. 3:1)	
Tiberius became co-regent with his step-father, Augustus about 764 A.U.C. or 11 A.D.	
Beginning of Jesus' Ministry	26 A.D.
When He was about 30 years old (Luke 3:23)	
Likely about 6 months after John began preaching (Luke 1:35,36).	
Crucifixion of Jesus	30/29 A.D.
From number of Passovers recorded in the gospel of John, it is estimated that Jesus' public ministry lasted a little over three years.	
Beginning of the Church	30/29 A.D.
Came during Pentecost of year Jesus died.	
Death of James the Apostle	41-44 A.D.
Came before the death of Herod Agrippa I who is known to have died about 44 A.D. (Acts 12).	
Paul's First Visit to Corinth	50 A.D.
Claudius' edict expelling all Jews from Rome is thought to have occurred about 49 A.D.	
Priscilla and Aquila had just come from Rome to Corinth when Paul met them there (Acts 18:2).	
Paul's stay was during the procuratorship of Gallio (Acts 18:12) which occurred in 51-52 A.D.	
Paul's Arrest in Jerusalem, Imprisonment in Caesarea	58-60 A.D.
Note Acts 24:27. Festus begins as procurator - A.D. 60	
Paul's (first) Imprisonment in Rome	61-63 A.D.
Note Acts 28:30 and Phil. 2:23,24.	

During his freedom - Titus 1:5; 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:3.	
Paul's (second) Imprisonment in Rome	66 A.D.
Note 2 Tim. 4:6,13.	
Paul's Death	67-68 A.D.
Tradition places his death in Rome during the reign of Nero who died in 68 A.D.	
Jewish Revolt in Palestine	66 A.D.
Nero Sends Vespasian to Put Down Revolt	66-67 A.D.
Vespasian Becomes Emperor	68 A.D.
Vespasian Sends his Son Titus to Complete the Pacification of the Jews. He Captures and Razes Jerusalem; Temple Destroyed	68-70 A.D.
Fortress Masada Taken by Romans, Revolt Ends	73 A.D.

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson One: New Testament Backgrounds

I. The World into which the Gospel Came (Note Gal. 4:4)

A. Greek Background

1. Greek Philosophy undermined belief in the old pagan gods.
 - a. Socrates (471-399 B.C.) taught that there was a single divine principle or wisdom which ruled over the universe. He is also believed to have taught the immortality of the soul.
 - b. Plato (427-347 B.C.) taught a good God
 - c. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) taught that God was a spirit who was the final cause of all things. He based his belief in such a God on the intelligent design of the universe.
 - d. The Stoics taught that the universe was God and that the soul was divine outliving the body. (Acts 17:18)
 - e. The Epicureans denied the supernatural and the immortality of the soul. To them pleasure (not necessarily sensual) was the only good. (Acts 17:18)
 - f. Yet the philosophers were never able to know the true God. Note the reason for their failure in 1 Cor. 1:21ff.
2. An international language was established by the conquests of Alexander the Great (4th century B.C.) who introduced Greek culture and promoted the use of the Greek language throughout his empire.
 - a. The presence of such a universal tongue greatly facilitated the spread of the gospel in the first century.

B. Roman Background

1. International peace under law maintained by the Roman empire made for easy travel between countries under their dominion.
2. The road system built by the Romans greatly increased the ease of international travel.
3. Both of these factors greatly facilitated the spread of the gospel into the Gentile world, and the apostle Paul made good use of his Roman citizenship in his extensive travels throughout the empire.

C. Jewish Background

1. The Old Testament, which was given to Israel through Moses & the prophets, prepared the way for the coming of Christ. Note Gal. 3:24; Matt. 5:17-18.
2. The Dispersion of the Jews by the captivity into all areas of the world caused a rapid spread of the gospel after Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11; Acts 8:1-4), and gave Paul and others an immediate beachhead for the gospel in the synagogues scattered over much of the Gentile world.

II. The New Testament Period

A. Roman Emperors

Palestine was conquered by the Roman army under Pompey in 63 B.C. and was made a part of the Roman province of Syria. During the New Testament period the following emperors reigned:

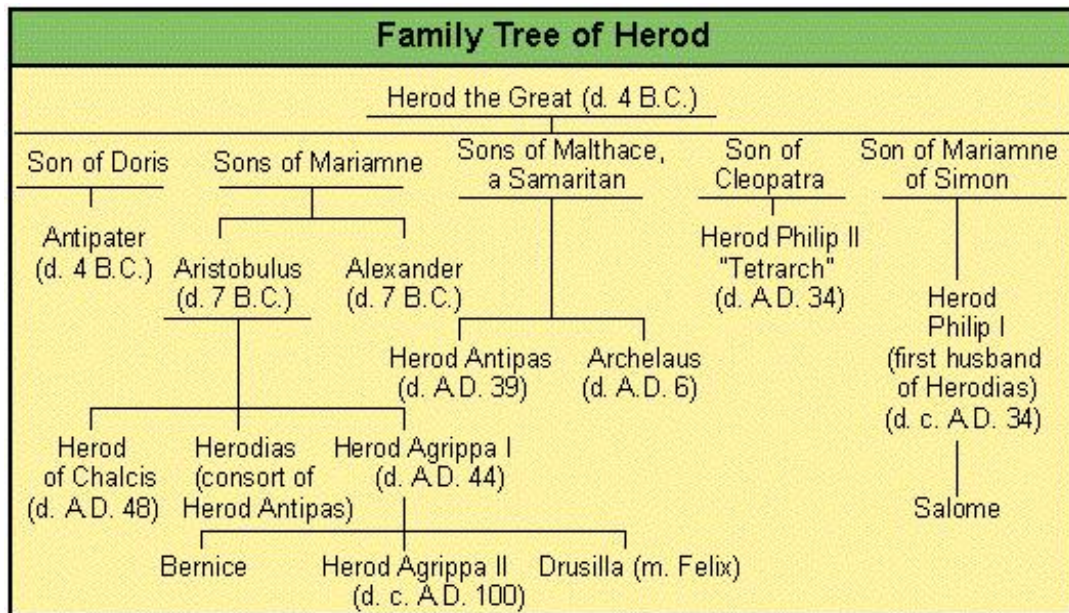
1. Octavius or Augustus (B.C. 31 - A.D. 14)
 - a. During his reign Jesus was born (Luke 2:1).
2. Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)
 - a. During his reign Jesus was crucified (Luke 3:1). The Roman historian Tacitus records the crucifixion of Jesus under Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius.
3. Caligula (Gaius) (A.D. 37-41)
 - a. Called the Mad Caligula because of the later excesses of his reign, he was arrogant, brutal, a consummate sensualist.
4. Claudius (A.D. 41-54)
 - a. In or about A.D. 49 Claudius banished the Jews from Rome. Among them were Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:2). He married his niece, Agrippina, as his fifth wife and adopted her son, Nero.
5. Nero (A.D. 54-68)
 - a. The man. He was very obscene and had an insane passion for popular applause. He murdered his brother, his mother, two wives, and his teacher. Committed suicide at age 32.
 - b. The Great Fire. The fire which destroyed two thirds of the city of Rome began in July, 64 A.D. and raged for six days and nights.
 - (1) Christians Blamed.
6. Vespasian (A.D. 69-79)
 - a. It was Vespasian who was sent by Nero to put down a rebellion in Judea. He was declared emperor in 69 and sent his son Titus to finish the pacification of Judea. The Roman army finally entered the city in 70 A.D., crucified many of the inhabitants and burned the city.

B. The Herods

1. Herod the Great (37 - 4 B.C.)
 - a. He ordered the infants of Bethlehem slain in order to destroy the infant Jesus (Mt. 2:16).
2. Sons of Herod the Great
 - a. At his death the territory of Herod the Great was divided among his sons.
 - (1) Archelaus received the tetrarchy of Judea and Samaria. He was so incompetent and so much hated by his subjects that he was replaced by a Roman governor (procurator) in about 6 A.D. In the process he was relieved of all his property and exiled to Gaul. Note Matthew 2:22.
 - (2) Antipas was given rule over Galilee and Perea (Lk. 3:1). His friendship with Rome and the divorce of his first wife in order to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, alienated him from his subjects. John the Baptist's rebuke of this immorality cost him his life (Mt. 14:1-10). Antipas' former wife's father, Aretas, king of Arabia, attacked and defeated him, which, Josephus says, was looked upon by the Jews as divine punishment for having killed John the Baptist. Jesus referred to Herod Antipas as "that fox" (Lk. 13:31,32). He was the Herod who mocked Jesus during His trial

(Lk. 23:8-12). During the reign of Caligula, Antipas was banished to Gaul. (3) Philip was given the northern areas of Iturea and Trachonitis (Lk. 3:1). This is not the Philip whose wife Antipas took. This Philip was the son of Cleopatra of Jerusalem and, unlike his brothers, he evidently ruled with justice and moderation until his death in 34 A.D. Three years later the emperor Caligula gave his territory to Agrippa I the son of Philip's brother Aristobulus who had been executed by his father, Herod the Great.

3. Herod Agrippa I
 - a. Agrippa was the grandson of Herod the Great and son of Aristobulus who had been executed by his father. He was extravagant and dissolute. Raised in the court at Rome he so supported the claim of Caligula to the throne that Tiberius imprisoned him. Upon the accession of Caligula Agrippa was freed and made king of the territory of his uncle Philip (A.D. 37) and shortly thereafter the territory of Herod Antipas. Upon the assassination of Caligula, Claudius united all Palestine under Agrippa (A.D. 41-44). He killed James and imprisoned Peter and died by the hand of God in 44 A.D. (Acts 12:1-23).
4. Herod Agrippa II
 - a. The son of Agrippa I, he was given rule over the North East section in 50 A.D. where he ruled in a very insignificant fashion until 100 A.D. Paul preached before him in Caesarea (Acts 25:23 - 26:32).



C. The Roman Procurators (Governors) of Judea

1. Coponius 6-9 A.D.
2. Ambiblus 9-12
3. Ammus Rufus 12-15
4. Valerius 15-26
5. Pontius Pilate 26-36 Luke 3:1 Matt. 27:2

6.	Marcellus	37
7.	Herenorius Capeto	38-41
8.	No procurators	41-44 (Herod Agrippa I is king.)
9.	Cuspus Fadus	44-48
10.	Alexander	48
11.	Cumanus	48-52
12.	Felix	52-58 Acts 23:26; 24:1-27
13.	Festus	58-62 Acts 25,26
14.	Tucinus Albinus	62-64
15.	Florus	64-66

QUESTIONS:

1. How did Greek philosophy prepare for the coming of Christ?

2. What two schools of Greek philosophy did Paul encounter in Athens? Acts 17:18 Describe the view of each.

3. Why did philosophy fail to reach a knowledge of God? How did God determine that men should know Him?

4. What two things did the Romans provide which made the spread of the gospel easier?

5. What two great contributions to the spread of the gospel came from the Jews?

6. What Roman emperor initiated the first persecution of Christians by the Roman government? With what catastrophe did he blame Christians?

7. Under what Roman emperor was a rebellion in the city of Jerusalem put down and the temple destroyed? In what year?

8. What had Jesus prophesied about Herod's temple in Jerusalem?

9. Which Herod had all the male infants of Bethlehem slain who were two years old or younger? Why?

10. Which son of Herod the Great was given rule over Galilee and Perea at his father's death? Whose

death did he order and why?

-
11. Who was made king over all Palestine in 41 A.D.? What was his relationship to Herod the Great, and to Herod Antipas?

-
12. How did Herod Agrippa I afflict the church? How did he die? (Acts 12)

-
13. Who resumed their rule over Judea after the death of Herod Agrippa I?

-
14. Before which Herod did Paul preach in Caesarea?

-
15. Who was the procurator (governor) of Judea during the preaching of John the Baptist and the public ministry of Jesus?

-
16. Before which two Roman governors of Judea did Paul preach?
-

ADDENDUM TO LESSON ONE High Priests and Sects of the Jews

High Priests of the New Testament Period

Herod the Great set up and deposed high priests at his pleasure. The Romans did the same, and changed so frequently that the position almost became an annual appointment. Though many changes were thus made, the high priest was always chosen from certain priestly families. From this group of deposed priests it is supposed that the "chief priests" arose as a distinct class.

In NT times the high priest was the chief civil and religious dignitary among the Jews. He was chairman of the Sanhedrin and head of political relations with the Roman government.

During the time of Christ and the beginning of the church the following men occupied the office of high priest:

- A. Annas, the son of Seth
 - 1. The virtual head of the priestly party in Jerusalem during the days of Christ. He was made high priest in 7 A.D. by Quirinius, governor of Syria. He was deposed by Valerius Gratus in 15 A.D. Though deprived of his office he continued to wield great influence as the dominant member of the hierarchy. He used members of his own family as his willing instruments. Five of his sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas held the high priesthood in almost unbroken succession. Annas' continuing influence after being deposed is evidenced by:
 - a. He is mentioned as holding the high priesthood jointly with Caiaphas. Luke 3:2
 - b. He is called high priest. Jn. 18:19-24; Acts 4:6
 - c. Jesus was brought to Annas first before being tried before Caiaphas. Jn. 18:19-24
 - 2. Annas was of the Sadducean aristocracy. He was ambitious and enormously wealthy. The chief source of his wealth seems to have been the sale of requirements for sacrifice for which outrageous prices were extorted. Note John 2:13-16.
- B. Joseph ben Caiaphas
 - 1. Son-in-law to Annas (Jn. 18:13) he served as high priest from 18-36 A.D. He was deposed by Vitellius. Played a leading role in the trial and condemnation of Jesus.
 - a. Caiaphas proposed the death of Jesus to the Sanhedrin as necessity to save the nation. John 11:47-53; 18:14
 - b. The plot to obtain the death of Jesus was hatched in the court of Caiaphas. Matt. 26:3-5
 - c. Caiaphas is mentioned in Acts 4:6 as one of those who presided over the trial of Peter and John.

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Two: Origin, Growth & Persecution of the New Testament Church

I. Definitions and Explanations

- A. Church - the term itself
 - 1. From Greek *ekklesia* which means a gathering or assembly of people who have been called (< *kaleo*, "to call") out (ek) for a given purpose.
- B. Use of *church* in the New Testament:
 - 1. Of an assembly of citizens (Acts 19:32).
 - 2. Of the congregation of Israel in the wilderness (Acts 7:38).
 - 3. Of those called out to follow Christ (Acts 2:47; 1 Co. 1:2; 12:13,27ff).
- C. Use of church when referring to followers of Christ.
 - 1. Universal sense
 - a. Of all Christians, all disciples of the Lord. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 3:10, 5:25; Note Hebrews 12:23.
 - 2. Local sense
 - a. Of disciples of Christ who identified with each other, assembled together, and functioned together in a given place. Acts 13:1; 15:22; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2; Rev. 1:11; Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 4:15-16.
 - b. Of the actual assemblies of these local groups or teams of Christians. 1 Cor. 11:18; 14:23
 - c. Of Christians who met in different assemblies but in the same general area or district considered distributively or individually. Acts 9:31

II. The Origin of the New Testament Church

- A. Determined by composition of the church.
 - 1. The NT church is composed of people called out of darkness of sin into the light of God by the gospel. 1 Pet. 1:23-25, 2:9
 - a. 2 Thess. 2:14
 - b. Rom. 1:16
 - c. Mark 16:15,16

2. What is the gospel?
 - a. Facts to be preached and believed. 1 Cor. 15:1ff
 - b. Commands to be obeyed. Rom. 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; John 3:36; 1 John 5:1-3
 - c. Promises to be trusted. Acts 2:38,39; 2 Cor. 6:17,18
 3. First time these factors all together - first Pentecost after the resurrection, Acts 2.
- B. Determined by the church's purchase price.
1. Christ's people bought by the blood of Christ
 - a. Acts 20:28
 - b. Rev. 5:9,10
- C. Determined by the Head - Eph. 1:22-23
- D. Before Pentecost, the kingdom of Christ is spoken of as future - Matt. 16:18; Mk. 9:1; Luke 23:42; Acts 1:6,7. After Pentecost, as a reality - Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:12,13.

III. Luke's History of the Early church - *Acts of the Apostles*

- A. Luke's history in Acts records the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the "uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8).
- B. From a small beginning to a mighty force in the world. (Mt. 13:31-32)
1. At the first preaching - 3,000 (Acts 2:41)
 2. Within thirty years Paul would write that the gospel had come to "all the world" (Col. 1:6) and the "hope of the gospel" had been "preached in all creation under heaven" (Col. 1:23).

IV. A Brief Review of Past Studies

- A. What is authority?
1. Jesus has all authority in religion today - Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:22-23
 2. He delegated authority to His apostles - Matthew 19:28; John 20:20-23; Acts 2:42
 - a. Their teachings were to govern the doctrine, organization, work, and worship of the churches in the New Testament - Acts 20:17...28; 1Corinthians 7:17; 14:37; 2Timothy 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:15-16
 - b. The revelation of the apostles and prophets is the sole source of our knowledge of the truth about Jesus and His will - John 16:13; Ephesians 2:19-20, 3:1-6; Jude 3; Gal. 1:6-9
- B. Work of the Local Church
1. Duties are based on relationships - examples

- a. Benevolence to all men (Luke 10:27-37) - neighbor relationship
 - b. Pay taxes (Rom. 13:6-7) - citizen relationship
 - c. Train children (Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 5:14) - parent relationship
2. Basic relationship underlying the existence of the local church
 - a. Members are those "sanctified in Christ Jesus" - 1Co 1:2
 - b. Collectivity is "in Christ" - 1Th 1:1
 - c. Thus called churches "of Christ" - Rom. 16:16
 3. Authority for church work
 - a. Saints (units of the collective) - 1Co 1:2
 - b. Acting together (purpose of the collective) - 1Co 11:17; Php 1:27
 - c. In Christ (nature of the collective) - 1Th 1:1; Rom. 16:16
 4. Applied: its work
 - a. Edification "in Christ": Col 3:16; 1Co 14:26
 - b. Evangelism "in Christ": Php 4:15,16
 - c. Benevolence to those "in Christ": Acts 6:1-6; 11:27-30; 1Tim 5:16
- C. Oversight of the Local Church - God Appointed
1. Apostles - Acts 2:42; 4:35; 6:2-3
 - a. No more apostles on earth, but must still respect their authority - Mt 19:28; 1Co 4:17; 14:37,38
 2. Elders - Acts 20:17,28; 1Pt 5:1,2
 - a. Elders/Presbytery, Bishop/Overseer, Pastor/Shepherd
 - b. Plurality in each congregation - Acts 14:23; 15:4; 20:17; 1Th 5:12; Tit. 1:5; Jam 5:14
 - c. Oversight limited to local congregation - Acts 20:17,28; 1Pt 5:1-2
 - d. Character qualifications: 1 Ti. 3; Tit. 1
 - e. Work (note terms above) - Acts 11:30; 20:17-35; 1Th 5:12-22; 1 Ti. 3:1,5,14-15; Tit. 1:9; Heb 13:17; 1Pt 5:1-4

V. In the Gospel Seed Which Produces Christians, Every Characteristic of the Disciple and the Church is Found. Luke 8:11

- A. Obedient faith in Jesus and His word, the gospel, produces children of God who are saved from sin by His grace and the blood of His Son. 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1:18-19
- B. A continued trust in Christ and His word keep the Lord's disciples serving Him faithfully both as individuals and in their work together in the churches.
 1. Jude 3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Jn. 9

2. The true church of Christ is that body of disciples who are ruled by the one head. Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23,24.
- C. A reverence and love for Christ as Lord will keep His people doing only the things which He says. Luke 6:46; 1 John 5:2-3; 1 Pet. 1:12-16
1. This will affect what we believe, what we teach, how we live, how we worship, how we order ourselves and work in local churches.
 2. When we cease to reverence Jesus as Lord it will produce corruptions in our lives and teachings, and in the life, work and order of the churches.

VI. The Early Christians Warned of False Teachers and Apostasy.

- A. Warnings of Jesus:
1. Matt. 7:15-23
 2. Matt. 24:4,5,11,24
- B. Paul's prophecies:
1. Acts 20:28-32
 2. 1 Tim. 4:1-5
 3. 2 Tim. 4:1-4
 4. 2 Thess. 2:1-12
- C. In the history of Israel
1. Acts 7:51-53
 2. 1 Cor. 10:1-12 (see vss. 11-12)
- D. In the false teaching and teachers already present in the NT churches.
1. Judaizers (Gal. 1:6-9; 5:1-4)
 2. Sectarians (1 Cor. 1:10-15)
 3. Gnostics (1 John 4:1-3)
 4. Sensualists (Phil. 3:18,19; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Jude 4)
 5. Materialists (1 Cor. 15:12-19)
 6. In the churches of Asia - Rev. 2:14,15; 20-22.

VII. Warnings about Persecutions in the New Testament:

1. Matt. 5:10-12; 10:16-23; 24:8-13
2. Luke 6:22,23; 21:12-19

3. John 15:18,19
4. 2 Tim. 3:10-13
5. 1 Pet. 4:13-16
6. Rev. 2:10; 6:9; 17:6

VIII. The History of the Imperial Persecution of Christians

- A. Romans make the way of Christ illegal.
 1. The way of Christ was at first regarded by the Roman state as a branch of Judaism which had legal status in the empire and therefore enjoyed a period of peace (Acts 9:31)
 2. But the hostility of the Jewish establishment to Christians may have in time shown that there was a distinction, for by the time of the Nerodian persecution (64 A.D.) the line was plainly drawn. The emperor Trajan's reply to Pliny, the governor of Bithynia (111-113 A.D.), makes clear that being a Christian by and of itself was viewed as a crime.
- B. Accusations made against Christians.
 1. The most frequent ones were: atheism, disloyalty to the Roman state, cannibalism, and licentiousness.
 2. Christians were blamed for natural calamities, floods, earthquakes, famines, pestilence and plague because of their rejection of the gods.
- C. The Ten Roman Emperors who persecuted Christians:
 1. Nero (64) Limited to city of Rome
 2. Domitian (96) Possibly emperor during writing of John's Revelation. First *widespread* persecution, especially severe in Asia Minor.
 3. Trajan (100-113) Emperor to whom Pliny the governor of Bithynia wrote about prosecution of Christians.
 4. Aurelia and Commodus (161-185)
 5. Septimius Severus and Caracalla (202-213)
 6. Maximinus I (235-238)
 7. Decius (249-251) Very severe and widespread.
 8. Valerian (253-260) .
 9. Aurelia (274-275)
 10. Diocletian (303-313) Most severe of all persecutions.
- D. Roman Persecution Pauses, Resumes, Ends.
 1. Period of peace 260-303 A.D.

- a. Churches grew in numbers and outward prosperity.
 - b. Large and sometimes splendid houses of worship erected in chief cities.
 - c. Discipline relaxed, quarrels and factions increased, and worldliness poured in like a flood.
2. Last and most violent persecution under Diocletian, 303-311.
- a. A soldier raised to seat of empire by the army, Diocletian was deeply devoted to emperor worship and the old pagan gods. He was also dedicated to order in the empire and ruled with absolute power
 - b. In 303 Diocletian ordered church buildings destroyed, sacred books confiscated, and the leaders of the Christians imprisoned and forced by torture to offer sacrifice to the "gods". In 304 all Christians were required to offer sacrifice. There were many who died and many who fell away.
3. The Edict of Toleration and the Edict of Milan.
- a. In 305, Diocletian and the man whom he had made ruler of the west entered voluntary retirement and turned the empire over to two subordinates, Constantius Chlorus in the west, and Galerius in the east. Upon the death of Constantius Chlorus in 306, his son, Constantine, with the support of the army ' replaced his father in the west. In April, 311, he and Galerius issued an edict of toleration to Christians, "on condition that nothing is done by them contrary to discipline."
 - b. After the death of Galerius (311) Constantine defeated Maxentius, his chief rival for the western empire, at the Milvian bridge across the Tiber just north of Rome (October 28, 312). Constantine declared that the Christian God had given him victory.
 - c. In early 313, now in absolute control of the West, Constantine published in Milan an edict which gave complete freedom to Christians. It proclaimed absolute freedom of conscience placed Christianity on full equality with all other religions of the empire, and ordered restoration of all church property confiscated in the recent persecution.
 - d. Under imperial favor the church grew by leaps and bounds. In 319 private heathen sacrifices were forbidden and the Christian "clergy' exempted from public obligations.

In 321 Sunday work was forbidden to the people of the cities . Christianity became not just a legal religion but the favored religion of the empire.

Constantine is considered the first "Christian" emperor, but his conversion is suspect. He seemed more interested in uniting the empire as it was with one emperor and one religion, Christianity now exchanged for the old paganism. In 325 he called together the first general council of the church at Nicaea to settle the Arian controversy which was dividing the empire. Most Christians at this time were in the East. Constantine delayed baptism until shortly before his death in 337.

Conclusion

Apostasy among the disciples of Christ always ultimately comes out of a failure of love and faith toward God and His Son. Complete trust in God and His word is an absolute defense against apostasy. People who are not totally committed to Christ will not be able to escape the "traditions of men" and the "doctrines of demons." Apostasy always comes in slowly and quietly. Spiritual collapse comes more like a slow leak than a blowout. Look for this principle in our study of the development of doctrines.

Questions:

1. What are the two basic senses in which *church* is used in the NEW TESTAMENT to refer to the disciples of Jesus? Illustrate each.

2. Define a local church as in "the church of God at Corinth".

3. Who has called out the church of God and Christ?

4. What is the means of that call?

5. What is the basis of authority for the worship, work, & organization of the/a church?

6. What leads to apostasy in the lives of people and in a church?

7. Did New Testament Christians ever have to face division and false teachers in the churches?

8. Why should Christians of that day have known that such would come?

9. What is an absolute defense against falling away from the faith?

10. How does apostasy come, both in individuals and churches?

11. Who is destined to suffer persecution? 2 Tim. 3:12

12. What did John see in his vision of the altar? Rev. 6:9

13. How was Christianity viewed by the Roman government after Nero?

14. What were the most frequent accusations made against Christians during the Roman persecution? Why?

15. During what years did the churches know relative safety and quiet, and with what result?

16. Whose was the last and most severe of all the persecutions of Christians?

17. Under which emperor did persecution cease?

18. When and what was the Edict of Toleration? The Edict of Milan?

19. With Constantine what position did the Church effectively have in the empire?

20. Was what happened during the reign of Constantine good or bad for the cause of Christ? Explain your answer.

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Three: The Great Falling Away (100 - 325 A.D.)

Introduction

First Century Apostasy

As noted in Lesson Two, New Testament writers speak frequently of apostasy as a present reality in the apostolic church. The earliest departure arose from Judaizing teachers who refused to relinquish the law (Gal. 1:6-8; 5:2-4), but many other false ideas came to challenge the gospel and corrupt the disciples during this period. Paul speaks often of immoral influences and disruptive doctrines working their havoc amidst the churches (1 Tim. 1:3-11; 6:3) and sometimes mentions the culprits by name (1 Tim. 1:19,20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:16-18; 4:14,15). Jude indicates that the warnings of Peter about false teachers (2 Pet. 2:1-22; 3:1-4) were being fulfilled in his own time (Jude 3-4, 17-19).

The "Falling Away" to Come

In addition to speaking of present apostasy among the churches and the characteristic presence of such challenges during the 1st century (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-7) Paul warns particularly of a great "falling away" which had first to occur before the 'coming' of Christ. (2 Thess. 2:1-12).

I. False Doctrines the 2nd and 3rd Century Churches Fought.

A. Gnosticism

1. Philosophy older than the gospel. Sought to gather in other religions to its religions. From Greek gnosis meaning knowledge. Regarded pure spirit as good but matter as evil. Believed a lesser angelic being, not the true God, created the world. Said Jesus came to free the spirits of men from the contamination of matter. True spirituality came through special hidden knowledge. Minimized gospel history and divorced what you believed from the way you lived. Some think at one time most Christians under its influence. An accommodation of gospel to popular thinking.
2. Cerinthus (early 2nd century) taught the God who created the world was not the true God but a lesser being. He distinguished between the earthly Jesus and the heavenly Christ who came on Jesus at baptism and left before death.
3. Docetists (from Greek word meaning "appearance") taught Jesus not really a man but "appeared" to be a man.
4. Significant Teachers:
 - a. Basilides (taught in Alexandria c. 130). Valentinus (greatest teacher among Gnostics, active in Rome from 135-165).
 - b. Marcion. Came from Pontus to Rome where disfellowshipped by church. Rejected OT and the God of the OT, as an inferior being concerned with justice. Supreme God is pure love and mercy, punishes no one, saves by faith alone. Drew up a NT canon composed of Luke and some of Paul's epistles.

B. Montanism

1. From Montanus of Phrygia who in about 160 claimed power of spiritual gifts and preached a strict morality in preparation for the immediate pre-millennial return of Christ. A rebellion against worldliness and compromise.
2. Spread widely. Most important convert, Tertullian.

C. False Ideas of Christ and the Trinity

1. Defenders of "The Faith"
 - a. The "Apostolic Fathers." The uninspired men who wrote during the years of 100-150 A.D. are generally referred to as the 'Apostolic Fathers'. They generally simply repeated the New Testament teaching on the person of Jesus Christ.
 - b. The Apologists. The Apologists were another second-century group that picked up after the "Apostolic Fathers' and defended Christianity against criticism and vigorously debated the Christian doctrines with philosophers and emperors.
 - (1) The best known of them was Justin Martyr. Justin and the other Apologists taught that the Son is a creature.
 - (2) In theology this relationship of the Son to the Father is called subordinationism.
 - c. The Polemicists. The polemicists were another second-century group that generally became active in the latter part of the century after the apologists. Well known Polemicists include Origen and Irenaeus.
2. Tri-theism. This view held that there were three who were God but they were only related in a loose association as, e.g., Peter, James and John were as disciples.
3. Adoptionism. Only one God, therefore Jesus only human but power of God dwelt in Him. Power present at birth or bestowed at baptism. View refined by Paul of Samosata in 3rd century.
4. Modalism. only one God who manifests himself under various modes - Father, Son, Holy spirit - one at a time as temporary and successive expressions. Leading proponent was Sabellius in late 2nd, early 3rd century. Sometimes called "patripassians" because implied Father was crucified.
5. Response: in the West Tertullian said that in the Godhead there were three persons but only one substance. For the East Origen said Son was "eternally generated" from the Father, Godhead was three beings in one essence.

II. False Doctrine the 2nd and 3rd Century Churches Embraced

A. A New Principle of Authority

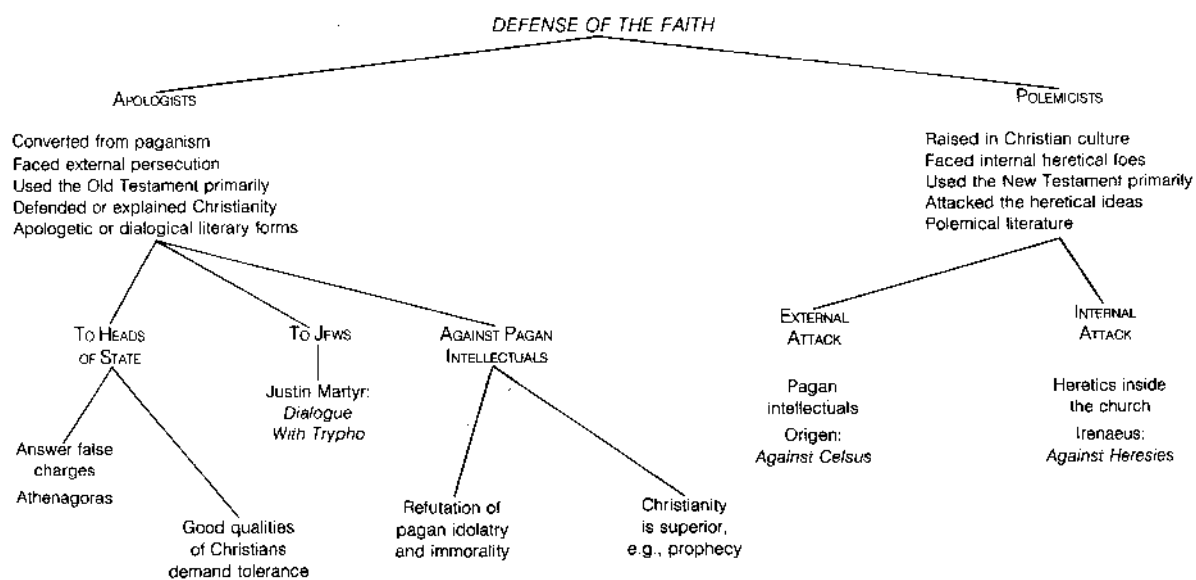
1. Writings of the NT abandoned as basis of authority in battle with heresy. Thought ineffective. (Note 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 3:1,2; 1 Jn. 2:24; Jude 17,18)
Tertullian: "Though most skilled in the Scriptures, you will make no progress when everything which you maintain is denied on the other side, and whatever you deny is maintained." And, It... a controversy over the Scriptures can clearly produce no other effect than to help upset either the stomach or the brain."

2. Authority of Church through apostolic succession substituted.
 - a. Rule of faith formalized in creeds written by bishops of the churches in council.
 3. This quantum shift in pattern of authority came because of flood of heretics threatening the churches. It radically affected course of church history.
 4. From new concept of authority came idea of catholic or orthodox church - those who conformed to views of churches with real or supposed apostolic connection.
- B. A New Church Government
1. Government of the churches centralized. Purpose, in part, to deal more effectively with heretics.
 2. Rule of one bishop. From plurality of elder/bishops in NT churches (Acts 14:23; 15:4; 20:17,28; Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:5-7). 2nd century churches ruled by one bishop with elder/presbyters and deacons under them. (Was Diotrephes first one? 3 Jn. 9,10).
Ignatius of Antioch (110-117) claimed to be the bishop of church in Antioch and wrote: "Shun divisions as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles, and to the deacons pay respect."
 3. Clergy-laity Distinction. Appears clearly in Tertullian who wrote of "clerical order" and "ecclesiastical orders". Officers in the church became known as "clergy" while others were known as "laity".
 4. Special Priesthood. (Note: 1 Pet. 2:5,9).
 5. Episcopal Ordination. Clergy rather than the church chose their successors. In NT see Acts 6:3.
 6. Rise of Metropolitan Bishops.
 7. Formulation of creeds.

ADDENDUM

The Apostles' Creed

- I. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
- II. And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;
- III. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary;
- IV. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell;
- V. The third day He rose again from the dead;
- VI. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
- VII. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
- VIII. I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- IX. I believe a holy catholic Church, the communion of saints;
- X. The forgiveness of sins;
- XI. The resurrection of the body;
- XII. And the life everlasting. Amen.



2nd-3rd Century Defense of "The Faith"

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Paul say must occur before the coming of the Lord?

2. What were the major heresies which the second and third century churches battled?

3. What was the teaching of the Gnostics?

4. What was the teaching of the Montanists?

5. What view did the Adoptionists hold of Christ?

6. What view did the Modalists have of the Godhead?

7. What change in the concept of authority occurred in the second and third centuries? Why was this change thought necessary?

8. How was truth and error determined by this new system?

9. What change in the eldership of local churches took place in the second century? How did some bishops grow to be "super" bishops?

10. Where did creeds originate? What threat greatly influenced the second and third century changes in church government?

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Four: The Great Falling Away (100-325), Part 2

Introduction

Because of a **fundamental change in the church's view of how to determine God's true will**, a flood of departures from New Testament teaching followed. The church, in its clergy, became the sole arbiter of spiritual truth. The writings of apostles and prophets were laid aside.

I. Changes in the worship

Christians in the 2nd and 3rd centuries met early in the morning on the first day of the week and at appointed times during the week. These meetings took place for the most part in private homes or the out of doors during the 2nd century, but buildings specially for this purpose began to be built in the 3rd century. The nature of their assemblies is reflected in the following quotations:

Pliny to Trajan: "... they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit a fraud, theft or adultery, , never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food--but food of an ordinary and innocent kind."

Ignatius: "If therefore those who lived according to the old practices came to the new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath but living according to the Lord's day, in which also our life arose through him and his death (which some deny), through which mystery we received faith..."

Justin Martyr: "We always remember one another. Those who have provide for all those in want. And on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a city or a rural district. The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. Then when the reader ceases, the president in a discourse admonishes and urges the imitation of these good things. Next we all rise together and send up prayers. And, as I said before, when we cease from our prayer, bread is presented and wine and water. The president in the same manner sends up prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability, and the people sing out their assent saying the 'Amen'. A distribution and participation of the elements for which thanks have been given is made to each person. And to those who are not present it is sent by the deacons."

Justin Martyr: "We all make our assembly in common on the day of the Sun, since it is the first day, on which God changed the darkness and matter and made the world, and Jesus Christ our Savior arose from the dead on the same day. For they crucified him on the day before Saturn's day... "

Tertullian: "We meet together in an assembly and congregation so that praying to God we may win him over by the strength of our prayers. ... We pray also for emperors, for their servants and those in authority, for the order of the world, for peaceful circumstances, for the delay of the end. We meet together in order to read the sacred texts, if the nature of the times compels us to warn about or recognize anything present. In any case, with the holy

words we feed our faith, we arouse our hope, we confirm our confidence. ... Elders who are proved men preside over us, having attained that honor not by purchase but by attestation."

Tertullian: "... inasmuch as the abolition of carnal circumcision and of the old law is demonstrated as having been consummated in its own times, so also the observance of the Sabbath is demonstrated to have been temporary" (An Answer to the Jews, 2:10)

A. Changes in the Lord's Supper

As seen by the above quotations, during this time the churches continued to meet every first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper, but new and strange ideas about it were creeping in.

1. A sacramental idea of mystical power in the elements.
 - a. Ignatius called the Lord Supper "a medicine of immortality and an antidote of spiritual death." Yet elements still not seen as actual body and blood of Jesus. Justin says they were "made a memorial of his passion which he suffered." Irenaeus calls them "antitypes" of the real, and Tertullian refers to them as a "figure".
2. Viewed as a "sacrifice".
 - a. Around 260 A.D. Cyprian of Carthage taught that the Lord's Supper was a sacrifice to God and was to be offered only by specially appointed "priests."
3. Called "eucharist" from Greek, eucharisteo, "to give thanks".
 - a. *Ignatius*: "Be careful, therefore, to employ one eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup of unity with his blood, one altar, as there is one bishop together with the presbytery and deacons.." (Philadelphians 4)
 - b. *Didache*: "Concerning the eucharist, give thanks in this way: First concerning the cup..."
 - c. *Justin*: "And this food is called by us eucharist. It is not lawful for any to partake of it than the one who believes the things which have been taught by us to be true, and was washed with the washing for the remission of sins and for regeneration, and lives in the manner Christ taught."
4. The doctrine of transubstantiation (literal change of the bread and fruit of the vine into actual flesh and blood did not come into being prior to 700 A.D.
5. Observations:
 - a. In the NT the Lord's Supper is simply a memorial feast like the Passover. There is no sacramental power in the bread and fruit of the vine. (1 Cor. 11:23-26)
 - b. Read 1 Peter 2:5 and Hebrews 13:15 - the Lord's Supper might possibly have been at first innocently referred to as a "sacrifice" in the general sense in the worship and service of God and then carried later to extremes.

B. Addition of Special Religious Holy Days

1. The "Christian Passover".
 - a. A special remembrance of the death and resurrection of Jesus at the time of the Jewish Passover began as early as the middle of the second century. The first evidence of this practice appears in the controversy over the correct date of observance between Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Anicetus, bishop of Rome. The churches of Asia Minor observed the special memorial of the resurrection on the same date as the Passover, regardless of the day of the week. The Roman practice was to observe it on the nearest Sunday.
 - b. But there must have been churches at this time who did not observe this "Christian passover"
 - c. The term "Easter" for this celebration came much later and is of pagan origin.

2. Pentecost. celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Also on Sunday. From Passover to Pentecost was a time specially given over to the baptism of new converts.

II. Changes in the Practice of Baptism

During this period baptism was universally held to wash away all previous sins.

Justin Martyr: "Those who are convinced of the truth of our doctrine, and have promised to live according to it, are exhorted to prayer, fasting and repentance for past sins; we praying and fasting with them. Then they are led by us to a place where is water, and in this way they are regenerated, as we also have been regenerated; that is, they receive the water bath in the name of God, the Father and Ruler of all, and of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. For Christ says: Except ye be born again, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Thus, from the children of necessity and ignorance, we become the children of choice and of wisdom, and partakers of the forgiveness of former sins..."

- A. Introduction of the doctrine of original sin. The doctrine of original sin teaches that children are born with the guilt of sin and through inheritance are depraved in nature. This idea is not found in any of the extant works of the "Apostolic Fathers".
 1. In Irenaeus (175-195) there is the first trend in this direction when he discusses the consequence of the fall of Adam. He taught that this brought man under the control of Satan and cost mankind the "divine likeness." There is, however, no indication that this cost man his freedom of will, which is an essential part of the doctrine.
 2. In the work of Clement of Alexandria there is no semblance of this doctrine. In Origen (185-254) we see a basis for it, but not the theory itself. Origen taught that all souls were created in the beginning of time. They all possessed freedom of will and some of them chose the pure and the good. These became angels. Others chose evil and these became the Devil and evil spirits.
 3. Tertullian (160-220) is the first to formulate the doctrine of original sin. He taught that the soul shares in Adam's guilt and every man therefore is under condemnation and is punishable for his inherited guilt quite apart from any actual sin he may commit.
 4. While the doctrine of original sin and baptismal regeneration would encourage infant baptism, there was another teaching that worked against it. This was the idea that since baptism removed one's sins, there was no additional remedy for those sins committed after baptism and baptism could not be repeated.
- B. Pouring for immersion
 1. The normal practice during this period was immersion but "pouring" was permitted by the Didache (the only indication of such before the middle of the third century) and Cyprian defended pouring water upon the sick. This was called clinical baptism.
 2. In 251 Novatian was rejected as a bishop in Rome because he had received clinical baptism.
 3. During the third century baptism was made a ritualistic ceremony performed by the bishop or one of his appointed assistants and conducted twice a year.
- C. Infant baptism.
 1. The earliest reference to infant baptism is Tertullian's opposition to it. "Let them become Christians when they are able to know Christ. In what respect does the innocent period of life hasten to the remission of sins?"

2. Both Origen and Cyprian defend it as "for the remission of sins" which come with birth, from Adam (Cyprian).

III. Growth of Sects

- A. Continued Influence of Gnosticism
 1. Basilides was introduced in an earlier lesson. He led a group of Gnostics in Egypt where he conducted a school and taught that there was one supreme God and three hundred and sixty-five angelic orders.
 2. Satormlus of Antioch is one of the earliest and most influential Gnostics. The basis of his system was dualism; matter is evil and the spirit good. He theorized that besides one great God there were seven lesser gods who ruled the seven planets.
- B. Neoplatonism. This sect taught a new type of mysticism, attempting to harmonize pagan philosophy and Christianity. It taught the creation of man to be the result of emanations from the original "Absolute Being" and the purpose of man to be re-absorbed into this great force. The process by which this was to be accomplished involved mental contemplation of the higher things of art, nature, love and the spiritual things. When one reached, through this mental contemplation, an ecstasy that took him above the material world, he would be enjoying the highest state possible in this life.
- C. Manichaeism. Emphasis was placed upon asceticism. Marriage was permitted, but those entering it could not attain to the height of "perfection."
- D. The Ebionites The Ebionites were a body of Judaizing Christians. They held that Moses was equal in authority to Christ. The "Gospel of the Hebrews" and various Apocryphal books became their guide.
- E. Monarchianism. The false doctrines which disturbed the church most of all were those that concerned the nature of Christ. The Ebionites in denying the divinity of Jesus by asserting that He was the son of Joseph and Mary, denied the virgin birth. They said that as Jesus kept the Law in such a perfect manner, God adopted Him to be the Messiah. Later, in the second and third centuries this view was known as Adoptionism or Dynamic Monarchianism. Those who belonged to this school of thought held that Jesus was just a man who so perfectly kept the Law that God adopted Him to be His son. Their emphasis on the humanity of Jesus laid the foundation for the Arianism of the fourth century.
- F. Donatists. During the severe persecution under Diocletian some Christians weakened under pressure and worshipped pagan gods. In 311 Donatus began to teach that these people had committed an unpardonable sin and could not be restored to the church.

QUESTIONS:

1. Which church leader began to teach that the Lord's Supper required "priests" to administer it? What year?

2. When did the doctrine of 'transubstantiation come into being?

3. What is the Lord's Supper according to the Bible?

4. When did the precursor to Easter (the "Christian Passover") first appear to be practiced?

5. Who first formulated the theory of "original sin"? When?

6. Where did this doctrine lead in reference to baptism? Who opposed the practice?

7. What was Neoplatonism? What religion(s) of today have doctrines very much like this?

8. What was a major tenet of Adoptionism? What does the Bible teach? Do any religions teach a similar doctrine today?

9. Who were the Donatists and what did they teach? How would you refute their doctrine from the scriptures?

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Five: The Apostate Church in the Middle Ages

Introduction

The "Middle Ages" (Medieval times) denote that period of time when the world was moving from ancient history (Greco-Roman world) to modern history. It is generally set between the fall of Rome in the fifth century and the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth. During this period the apostate church ("the Church", i.e. Roman Catholic Church) rose to its greatest power and its greatest corruption.

I. Constantine Joins the Church to the Empire

- A. Christianity becomes the state religion. Recall that:
 - 1. In 313 the protection of the empire granted to Christians. Confiscated property returned to the churches.
 - 2. In 319 all heathen sacrifices forbidden.
 - 3. In 321 work on Sundays forbidden in the cities.
 - 4. This gave the Church great influence in the Empire and the Empire great control over the Church.

- B. Constantine and church councils
 - 1. The Council of Arles (in Gaul) in 314 A.D.
 - a. Donatist controversy
 - (1) After Decian persecution in mid 3rd century Novatians said that apostates should not be forgiven and received in the churches. After the Diocletian persecution at the beginning of the 4th century the Donatians (followers of Donatus) in North Africa took the same position.
 - (2) Donatists opposed appointment of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage in 312 because the bishop who appointed him had handed over copies of the scripture for destruction during the Diocletian persecution. The Donatists appealed to the emperor against this appointment.
 - (a) Small council called at Rome - failed to resolve the matter.
 - b. Constantine called a council at Arles to settle the matter.
 - (1) The council of 23 western bishops acquitted Caecilian.
 - (2) The Donatists seceded from Caecilian's communion and appointed Donatus as their bishop. Their motto was: "What has the emperor to do with the church?"
 - 2. The Council of Nicaea (first general council) in 325

- a. The Arian controversy
 - (1) In 318, Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, accused the bishop, Alexander, of teaching a modal view of the Godhead, but Arius in attacking Alexander took the view that the Son was not eternal but had been created by the Father out of nothing as the first of all created beings.
 - (2) Alexander called a council at Alexandria in 321 at which Arius was deposed. But Arius' following caused the dispute to spread beyond Egypt and threaten schism in the Eastern church, and, therefore, the Empire.
 - (3) Constantine's efforts to mediate failed and therefore in 325 he called the first ecumenical council of the Church at Nicaea in northwest Asia Minor.
- b. The Nicaean Council
 - (1) Attended by nearly 300 bishops. Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, the great church historian was there. And of course, Alexander and Arius.
 - (2) The West was sparsely represented. Sylvester, bishop of Rome did not attend but sent two presbyters to represent him. Caecilian came from Carthage, Hosius from Cordova, one bishop from Gaul.
 - (3) The council pronounced against Arius and wrote the creed of Nicaea which was likely a baptismal confession revised to deal with Arianism:
 - "We believe in one God the Father almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible;*
 - "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is to say of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of the same essence of the Father: through whom all things were made, things in heaven and things on earth: who for us men and for our salvation came down and became flesh and lived among men, who suffered and on the third day rose again, ascended into heaven, is coming to judge the living and the dead;*
 - "And in the Holy Spirit."*
 - i) An addendum says that "The holy catholic and apostolical church condemns all that who say that there was a period in which the Son of God did not exist; that before he was begotten he had no existence; that he was called out of nothing into being; that he is of a different nature and of a different substance from the Father; and that he is susceptible of variation or change."

Note: This is not the "Nicene Creed" which was actually declared by Council of Chalcedon (4th general council) in 451.

C. Church Filled with the World.

- 1. Union with Rome brought the Church:
 - a. Wealth
 - b. Carnal power
 - c. Popularity

2. Therefore:
 - a. Many church leaders were overcome by greed.
 - b. The church began to use political force to gain submission of its members and others. The gospel and the sword were joined.
 - c. Many became "Christians" for other than noble reasons and filled the churches with unconverted people.
- D. Church Filled with Pagan Superstition
1. Half-converted or unconverted masses brought their old superstitions into the Church with them.
 2. Pagans accustomed to worshipping many gods took up the worship of revered martyrs and apostles.
 3. By 5th century the feeling arose that the apostles and martyrs should be worshipped and prayed to for protection and help.
 - a. Chief among these was Mary who was declared by Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) to be the "mother of God." Because of her closeness with Christ she was thought to be a most beneficial intercessor.
 4. Veneration of the relics of apostles and martyrs began in the latter second century.
 - a. Miraculous powers attributed

II. The Rise of the Papacy

- A. Struggle between Rome and Constantinople.
1. The Nicene Council (325) gave equal eminence to the bishops of Alexandria, Antioch and Rome.
 2. The Council of Constantinople (381) which took place after the imperial capital was moved to that city, declared the bishop of Constantinople was to have the primacy of honor after the bishop of Rome.
 3. The Council of Chalcedon (451) affirmed that Rome and Constantinople should enjoy equal privilege and rank in ecclesiastical matters.
 4. In 595 John the Faster, patriarch of Constantinople, used profusely in his letters the title "Universal Bishop" and Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome, severely rebuked John for his presumption and wrote later to the emperor that anyone who arrogated to himself such a title would have to be the forerunner of the Anti-Christ.
 - a. Boniface III, declared universal bishop - 607 A.D.
 5. The popes grew in both political and religious power during the Middle Ages.
 - a. In 1076 Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) excommunicated and deposed the German king, Henry IV.
 - b. The papacy reached its zenith of power under Innocent III (1188-1216) who deposed King John of England and presided over the very important 4th Lateran Council.

6. Throughout the Middle Ages it was generally held that the infallible guidance of the Church was expressed in the decrees of Church councils.
- B. Reasons for the Victory of Rome over Constantinople
1. The claim of the Roman bishop to dependence from Peter (as well as Paul) who was the prime apostle.
 2. The Eastern Church was continually rent by controversy, whereas the Western Church under Rome was more stable.
 3. The Patriarch of Constantinople was under the complete domination of the emperor while the bishop of Rome was left free in the vacuum to become the greatest power both religious and political in the West.
 4. The growth of the Church from the 5th century onwards was almost entirely in the West.

III. The Division of the Church between East and West

1. In 750 A.D. the Roman bishop, Nicholas, strongly opposed the appointment of the layman, Photius, as bishop of Constantinople. They concluded their dispute by excommunicating each other.
2. The final breach came in 1053 when Michael Cerularius, bishop of Constantinople, anathematized Pope Gregory IX and in turn was excommunicated by Gregory in 1054. The breach was never healed and has issued in the Roman Catholic and the Greek Catholic or Orthodox Churches which exist to this day.

Table: Perversions of the Doctrine of Christ¹

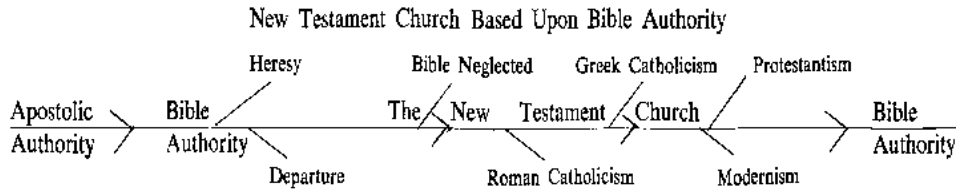
Party	Time	Reference	Human Nature	Divine Nature
Docetists	Late 1st century	1 John 4:1-3	Denied	Affirmed
Ebionites	2nd century	Irenaeus	Affirmed	Denied
Arians	4th century	Condemned at Nicea, A.D. 325	Affirmed	Reduced
Apollinarians	4th century	Condemned at Constantinople, A.D. 381	Reduced	Affirmed
Nestorians	5th century	Condemned at Ephesus, A.D. 431	Affirmed	Affirmed ²
Eutychians	5th century	Condemned at Chalcedon, A.D. 451	Reduced	Reduced ³

1. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*
2. Nestorians believed that Christ was two persons.
3. Eutychians taught that Christ had one mixed nature, neither fully human nor fully divine.

Development of the Roman Catholic Departure from the Word of God

Mattox, F. W. *The Eternal Kingdom*, Gospel Light Publishing Cor., 1961

V. UNDENOMINATIONALISM CONTRASTED WITH ROMANISM



The Undenominational Church Remains Constant

1. Apostolic authority was left in the written Word, the New Testament, 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:6; 2 Tim. 2:15.
2. Authority of Scripture remains constant in all ages and available to all generations.
3. Individuals coming to Christ through the Scripture constitute the true church.
4. Faith centers in God through the inspired Word.

Roman Catholicism Based Upon Human Tradition

	100	150	325	440	600	1545	1875	1955
Apostles	Elders Deacons Bible	Monarchal bishops Elders Deacons Synods Bible	Patriarch, Monarchal bishops Priestly orders Council Tradition Bible	Papal Claims Patriarchs Dioceson bishops Priests Councils Tradition Bible	Pope Cardinals Curia Hierarchy Tradition Bible	Tradition made equal to the Bible	Papal Infallibility proclaimed	Authority of hierarchy Papal Decrees

The Roman Church is the Result of Growing Tradition

1. Apostolic authority was left with church officials who were uninspired men.
2. Church officials kept oral traditions of men as commandments of God.
3. Tradition was enlarged.
4. The hope of salvation depends now upon submission to the hierarchy.

QUESTIONS:

1. What advantages did the "conversion" of Constantine bring to the Church?

2. What tragic consequences did it bring?

3. Name two practices which the pagan superstition of the unconverted masses brought into the churches.

4. What was the first church council that Constantine called and why?

5. What was the date of the Council of Nicaea; who called it; and why was it called?

6. To the bishops of what three cities did the Council of Nicaea give equal honor?

7. What Council affirmed that the bishops of Rome and Constantinople had equal authority in religious matters? In what year?

8. Who was the first of the Metropolitan bishops or Patriarchs to make a serious claim to being the "universal bishop" of the Church? In what year?

9. Who severely reprovved him for his presumption? What did he call him?

10. Who was the first Roman bishop to accept the title "universal bishop" of the Church? In what year?

11. What pope forced Henry IV of Germany to stand three days barefoot in the snow begging for forgiveness?

12. During the reign of which pope did the papacy reach its zenith of worldly power? Give dates.

13. In what year did the Church finally divide into East and West with what two resultant Churches?

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Six: The Seven Ecumenical Councils (Part 1)

Introduction

There are seven councils of the Church which occurred before the great division into East and West in 1054 and are accepted as authoritative by both branches. For this reason they are called the seven ecumenical (universal) councils. They not only exemplify the centralization of the government of the apostate Church but also the doctrinal issues which exercised that Church.

I. The Council of Nicaea (325)

A. The Controversy

1. Arius (d. 336), a presbyter of Alexandria, taught:
 - a. Christ was a created being.
 - b. He was the first and highest of God's creatures.
 - c. There was a time when he was not.
 - d. In a sense He was divine but properly speaking neither God nor man.
2. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and Athanasius, a deacon of Alexandria, emphasized that:
 - a. Christ was eternally pre-existent with the Father.

B. The Council

1. Called by the emperor, as were all seven of the councils, and presided over by the emperor.
2. Conclusion:
 - a. Creed of the council chose the Greek term *homoousios* (of same substance) to describe Christ's relationship with the Father.
 - b. Arius condemned along with two others who refused to accept the creed of Nicaea.
 - c. Date for "Easter" celebration set in favor of practice of the West - the Sunday after the new moon nearest the vernal equinox.
 - d. Churches must receive penitents who fell away during persecution and those who had married again after death of first mate.
 - e. Canon VI of the Council declared that the bishop of Alexandria had jurisdiction over Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis just as the bishop of Rome had his own jurisdiction. Rome is accorded no position of supremacy.

C. Significance of the Council

1. First use of creeds for the bishops as a test of fellowship. Previously there were only baptismal creeds for new converts.
2. First universal council of bishops.
3. Church tacitly accepted right of emperor to take a guiding hand in ecclesiastical affairs. Heresy now illegal.
4. After Council Constantine wrote to church at Alexandria: "What is the opinion of 300 bishops can only be the opinion of God."

II. Council of Constantinople (381)

Called by Emperor Theodosius I. Attended by 206 bishops, 56 of whom held the Macedonian view that the Holy spirit was not divine in same sense as the Son.

A. Controversy

1. Arian controversy remained practically unsettled. The Arian party enjoyed imperial favor, especially in the East, for nearly 50 years after Nicaea.
2. *Athanasius*, who succeeded Alexander as bishop of Alexandria, continued to write extensively on the subject and was banished 5 times from his bishopric in Alexandria by imperial pressure.
3. The four trinitarian parties:
 - a. Homoousians. Led by Athanasius. Christ of same substance with the Father.
 - b. Homoiousians. Led by Basil of Ancyra. Christ of similar substance with the Father.
 - c. Homoeans. Attempted compromise by saying Christ was "like" the Father but this vague compromise had no lasting influence.
 - d. Anomoeans. Led by Eunomius who succeeded to an extreme Arian position. Christ is not like the Father.

B. Conclusion of the Council

1. Written by the Three Cappadocians: Basil of Caesarea (330-379), his brother, Gregory of Nyssa (330-395), and their friend, Gregory of Nazianzus (328-389)
2. Full deity of Christ established, along with that of the Holy Spirit - three individuals (hypostases) in one essence (ousia).
3. Bishops urged not to go beyond their jurisdictions, and bishop of Constantinople to have prerogative of honor after the bishop of Rome because Constantinople is New Rome.

C. Creed of the Council:

"We believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things came into existence, Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures and ascended to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and will come again with glory to judge the living and dead, of Whose kingdom there will be no end;

"And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is together worshipped and together glorified, Who spoke through the prophets; the one holy Catholic and apostolic church. We confess one baptism to the remission of sins; we look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen."

III. The Council of Ephesus (431)

The trinitarian controversies of the 4th century issued in the controversies of the 5th century over the relationship of deity and humanity in the person of the Son.

The council was called by emperor Theodosius II.

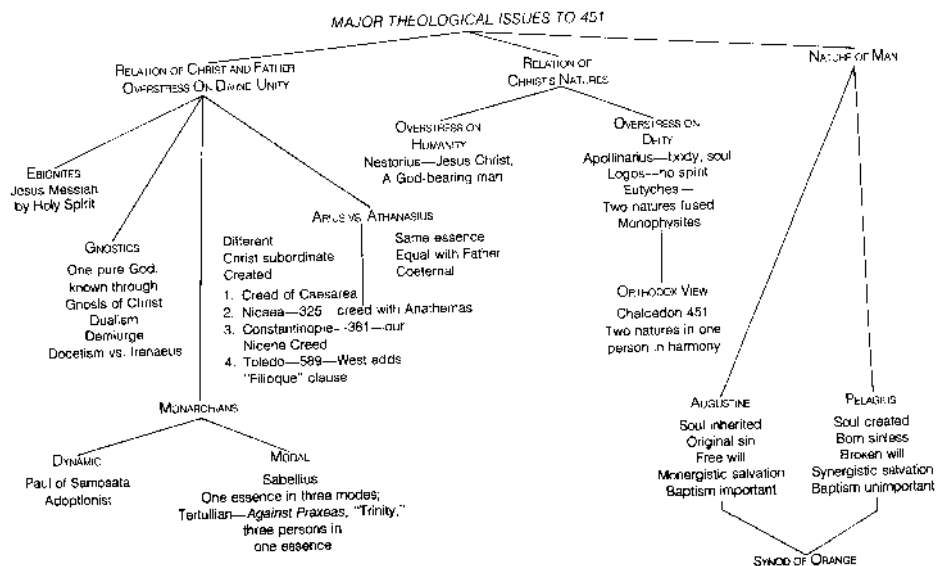
A. The Controversy

1. *Nestorius*, presbyter of Antioch and then patriarch of Constantinople started controversy by preaching against use of term "God-bearer" (theotokos) for Mary as was current among Alexandrians. The Alexandrians evidently only intended to stress the deity of Christ but not to say that His deity came from Mary.
2. He was immediately opposed by *Cyril of Alexandria* (bishop, 412-434) who had political as well as religious motives to destroy Nestorius' influence at the capital. He appealed to Celestine, bishop of Rome for help against Nestorius.
3. This controversy had been stirred earlier by one *Apollinaris* who had argued that two natures in one person would result two personalities. He said man consisted in body, animal soul and reason (logos) and that in the incarnation the divine Logos took the place of the human logos. He had been condemned by the Council of Constantinople.
4. Apollinaris wrote to the emperor Jovian: "... we do not speak of two natures in the one Son, of which one is to be worshipped and one is not to be worshipped, but of only one nature of the Logos of God, which has become flesh and with His flesh is worshipped with one worship..."

B. Results of Council

1. Nestorius was condemned but later agreed to use "God-bearer" with his own reservations intact but was deposed from office and spent the rest of his life in exile.
2. John of Antioch in 433 sent a compromise creed to Cyril of Alexandria which he signed. *"That He is of the same nature as the Father according to His godhead, and of the same nature with us according to His manhood; for a union of the two natures has been made; therefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord. According to this conception of the unconfused union, we confess that the holy virgin is Theotokos (God-bearer), because God the Word was made flesh and become man, and from her conception united with Himself the temple received from her. We recognize the evangelical and apostolic utterances concerning the Lord, making common, as -in one person, the divine and the human characteristics, but distinguishing them as -in two natures; and teaching that the godlike traits are according to the godhead of Christ, and the humble traits according-to His manhood."*
3. Though Antioch and Alexandria were momentarily reconciled the issue was not settled.

Issues Plaguing the "Church" of the First 500 Years



QUESTIONS:

1. Explain in brief the opposing views of Arius and Alexander.

2. Who holds the view of Arius today?

3. Who presided over the first council of Nicaea?

4. What decision was made the relationship of Jesus to the Father? About other matters?

5. In what three ways was the Council of Nicaea specially significant?

6. Who convened the Council of Constantinople and in what year? who presided?

7. State in plain English the four views of the relationship of the Son to the Father present at the council?

8. What unusual view was held by the Macedonian bishops?

9. What was the conclusion of the council?

10. What view of the authority of the Roman bishop did the council take?

11. Who convened the Council of Ephesus and in what year?

-
12. What were the opposing views of Nestorius and Cyril which produced this council?
-
-
-
13. What kind of approach did the Eastern Church take toward the incarnation of Christ? Is this a wise attitude? What is the result likely to be?
-
-
-
14. Does controversy still arise over the relationship of deity and humanity in Jesus? How do you think we should resolve it?
-
-
15. Do you think these councils made their decisions based on scripture or politics or a bit of both?
-

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Seven: The Seven Ecumenical Councils (Part 2)

Introduction

The controversies in the apostate Church over the nature of Christ began with Ephesus (431) and continued through three successive universal Councils. The question of how the divine and human natures were joined in Jesus wracked the Empire for more than two centuries.

I. The Council of Chalcedon (451)

A. The Controversy

1. The dispute between Nestorius of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria was not settled at Ephesus but continued to roil the churches. *Theodoret* took up the position of Antioch with great skill and warned of the dangers of Alexandria's "monophysitism" (two natures become one nature). *Eutyches*, a popular monk (monastic life had begun in the 4th century) of Constantinople took up where Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, had left off. Ayer says that "the Eutychian controversy is less a dogmatic controversy than a struggle between the patriarchs of the East for supremacy, using party theological differences as a support." (*A Source Book for Ancient Church History*, p. 511).
 - a. Theodoret believed that:
 - (1) Christ's body was the same in essence as our own.
 - (2) A union of the two natures, divine and human, had occurred in one person.
 - b. Leo I in his letter to the council was more practical than the Easterners. He taught that:
 - (1) Jesus was truly human, rejecting Eutyches.
 - (2) Jesus was truly divine, agreeing with both sides.
 - (3) While each nature maintained its own properties unimpaired, the two came together in one personality.
 - (a) by reason of His humanity Jesus was able to die.
 - (b) by reason of His divine nature He was not able to die.
 - (c) each nature operates what belongs to it, the divine miracles, the human - suffering

B. The Council

1. Largest of all the ancient councils with 630 bishops present. Called by the emperor Marcian (under the influence of Leo I) to meet in Chalcedon which was on the coast of Asia Minor just opposite Constantinople. The council was disorderly and tumultuous.
2. Decisions:
 - a. The position of Leo I of Rome was upheld - two natures in one person. Christ declared perfect in deity and perfect in humanity.
 - (1) There was much opposition to this by both Antiochians and Alexandrians, but they were threatened by the deputies of Rome and the emperor with another council in the West if they didn't submit.
 - b. Dioscurus, patriarch of Alexandria, was deposed because of his refusal to submit to Leo's definition.
 - c. Defined which preceding councils were ecumenical.
 - d. Made Constantinople next to Rome in honor.

- (1) Leo protested this honor as based on political considerations rather than contact with the apostles.
3. Consequences:
 - a. The victory of Leo's views at Chalcedon gave Rome more power as mediator of the East's many controversies.
 - b. Controversy not settled. Ten Egyptian bishops refused to anathematize the teachings of Eutyches or submit to the letter of Leo I. Opposition to the Chalcedonian creed as "Nestorian" remained strong in Egypt and other parts of the East. They were called "monophysites" (literally, "one-nature-ites") because of their belief that Christ had only one nature.
 - c. When imperial control of the West was lost to the barbarian invaders, it became more important for the emperor to please the Monophysite bishops than Rome.

II. Second Council of Constantinople (553)

- A. Controversy (One nature or two?)
 1. Emperor Justinian (527-565) was committed to the Council of Chalcedon, but his wife Theodora favored the Monophysites who strongly objected to the Nestorianism of writers who were declared orthodox at Chalcedon, among them Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret. This laid the foundation for the Second Council of Constantinople.
 2. The Monophysite bishops wanted the Antiochian writers condemned as a price for submitting to Chalcedon.
- B. Council
 1. To allay the strife over Chalcedon, Justinian called a council at Constantinople which condemned three men (Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret, and Ibas) and their writings.
 2. Said conclusions of Chalcedon on nature of Christ could only be interpreted as Cyril of Alexandria taught: That in Christ the human nature found its individuality only in the person of the divine Logos (Word).
 3. Monophysites, unappeased, grew as a separate party. They controlled the Jacobite Church of Syria, Coptic church of Egypt, and the Church of Armenia.

III. Third council of Constantinople (680-681)

- A. Controversy (one will or two?)
 1. The doctrine of the two natures of Christ led to a controversy over whether He had one will or two. The Monophysites said that the two nature position was foolish because it required two wills. They argued that after the incarnation Christ had one nature, one will.
 2. Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, said the unity was found in one "energy". "Pope" Honorius of Rome objected to the term "energy" but said Jesus had "one will". The belief in one will for Christ came to be known as "monothelism", literally, "one-will-ism". Honorius' successors in Rome however repudiated his view.
 3. The question was: was will a property of "nature" or of "person"?
 4. By this time the Moslems have overwhelmed the Monophysite provinces of the Church and it was now more important for the emperor to get along with Rome.
- B. The Council

1. Called by Constantine IV in an effort to reunite the Church and especially to placate the bishop of Rome.
2. Amended the Council of Chalcedon so as to teach two natural wills for Christ, not opposed to each other, but the human will following the divine will, and in subjection to it.
3. Pope Honorius (d. 638) condemned as heretical.

C. The Consequences

1. Further established Rome as the rock of orthodoxy.
2. The Roman Church had greater independence of the Emperor and greater freedom to develop its power. On the other hand the Eastern Church was completely dominated by the Empire.

D. Lessons:

1. Reveals how large a part politics played in the outcome of the ecumenical councils.
2. Shows that the Roman Bishop has not always been infallible by the standard of official Church doctrine.

IV. The Second Council of Nicaea (787)

A. The Controversy

1. Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717-741) saw the increased adoration of icons (pictures and images) as little removed from gross idolatry. In 726 he issued an edict intended to prevent all veneration of icons.
2. There was strong opposition to Leo's order, especially from bishops of Rome, Gregory II (715-731) and Gregory III (731-741) who bitterly denounced the action. Much of Italy severed its relation with the empire. Leo retaliated by annexing Illyricum to Constantinople and confiscating papal revenues in southern Italy. From this time on the connection between Pope and Emperor was very slight.
3. Leo's son, Constantine V was more severe than his father and in 754 called a council of 338 bishops in Constantinople which supported his iconoclastic position.
4. Constantine's son, Leo IV tolerated the icons, but his widow the empress Irene was determined to restore them.

B. The Council

1. A synod held at Constantinople in 786 was broken up by the army which was deeply iconoclastic.
2. In 787 in Nicaea a council was called at a safe distance and opposition to the images was condemned.

Nicene Creed

(Product of the Council of Chalcedon)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died, and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Map - The Seven Ecumenical Councils



QUESTIONS

1. What was the view of the monk Eutyches of Constantinople about the nature of Christ?

2. What did this view of Christ's nature come to be called?

3. Whose view of the nature of Christ dominated the conclusions of the Council of Chalcedon?

4. What were his views?

5. Whose teachings were condemned by the Council of Chalcedon?

6. What effect did the Council of Chalcedon have on the power of the bishop of Rome and why?

7. Did Chalcedon end the controversy over the nature of Christ?

8. What was the conclusion of the Second Council of Constantinople?

9. What was the conclusion of the Third Council of Constantinople ?

10. What was the effect of this council on the power of Rome?

11. What did one of its decisions say about the infallibility of the Roman bishop?

12. What was the issue that the Second Council of Nicaea was intended to resolve and what decision was made?

13. What lessons can we learn from the controversies over the nature of Christ?

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Eight: The Ideas and Influence of Augustine (354-430)

Introduction

Perhaps no man has more influenced the doctrinal development of both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism than Augustine Aurelius of Hippo. Though he had little influence in the Eastern Church, medieval Catholicism was the virtual creature of his thought, and surprisingly, he was also to be the spiritual father of much in the Reformation. Both Luther and Calvin looked at the Scripture through his eyes.

I. Background

A. Youth

1. Born in Tagaste, Numidia, North Africa (now in modern Algeria) to a pagan father who was very worldly and a believing mother who was superstitious and ambitious for her son.
2. In Carthage he studied rhetoric and at seventeen took a concubine who bore him a son, Adeodatus. Augustine said later of this time that he was willing to pray, "O Lord make me chaste, but not yet."

B. Philosophy

1. The study of Cicero at age 19 turned Augustine toward philosophy. For nine years he followed Manichaeism, a materialistic system of thought much like Gnosticism.
2. Later he went to Milan, Italy where after a period of skepticism he was drawn to Neo-Platonism - a philosophy of spiritual idealism. This provided a bridge to the spiritual world view of the Bible but always influenced his thoughts about God.
3. In Milan he came under the influence of Ambrose, the powerful and eloquent bishop of the city. It was at this time that his mother persuaded him to dismiss his faithful concubine and become betrothed to a young lady befitting his station. Even during the betrothal he was involved with another concubine.

C. Conversion

1. Moved by the preaching of Ambrose and the moral purity of the monks, Augustine was finally converted to Catholicism in 386 by a dramatic experience. While alone in a garden, a voice from children at play said, "Take up the book and read" and he took up the New Testament from the bench and read Romans 13:12f: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof."
2. He was baptized during the "Easter" season, 387, along with his son, Adeodatus.
3. Soon afterward he returned to his home in North Africa where in 391 he became a presbyter, and in 394 bishop of the small town of Hippo Regius. He died in 430 during the invasion of the Vandals.

II. Principal Teachings

A. On God

1. God is the only real being and the only real good. Evil has not real existence but is non-being, the tendency of all created things to lapse again into nothingness. God permits the evil but overrules it for good.
2. The unity of the Godhead so pressed that Augustine almost inclines toward Modalism (One God assuming different roles). "When it is asked, what are the three? human language labors under great poverty of speech. Yet we say, three 'persons,' not in order to express it, but in order not to be silent."
3. "God the Father alone is He from whom the Word is born, and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds. And therefore I have added the word principally, because we find that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also."
4. Stressed the human as strongly as the divine in Jesus.

B. On Sin (worked out in his dispute with Pelagius)

1. Man was created good and free of will, but Adam's original sin is inherited by all his descendants through a corrupted human nature. The result is that the whole human race even to the youngest infant is a "mass of perdition" and deserves the wrath of God. No one to be delivered from this original sin save by the grace of Christ.
2. Augustine's summary of man's history:
 - a. Adam: Able not to sin
 - b. Men since Adam: Not able not to sin
 - c. Saved men after judgment: Not able to sin
3. Man cannot help sinning until God gives grace. Though man in some ordinary sense has free will, one thing he cannot choose. He cannot choose to live for God instead of for himself without divine help.
4. Divine help or grace for the sinner is not just God's kindness and mercy, but a definite "spiritual" substance infused into men. This substance is communicated through the sacraments of the Church.

C. On Predestination (worked out in his dispute with Pelagius)

1. Since God's grace is wholly unearned, it is given by God's choice alone.
2. Therefore God has predestined whom he will "to punishment and to salvation". The number of each class is fixed. Therefore God's grace as well as His damnation are irresistible. However one does not know if he is elect.
3. Saving grace does two things:
 - a. Faith is instilled ("The faith by which we are Christians is the gift of God.") and sins, both original and personal, are forgiven at baptism.
 - b. It infuses love by the Holy Spirit which frees the enslaved will to choose what pleases God - "not only in order that they may know, by the manifestation of that grace, what should be done, but moreover in order that, by its enabling, they may

do with love what they know."

D. On the Church (worked out in controversy with Donatists)

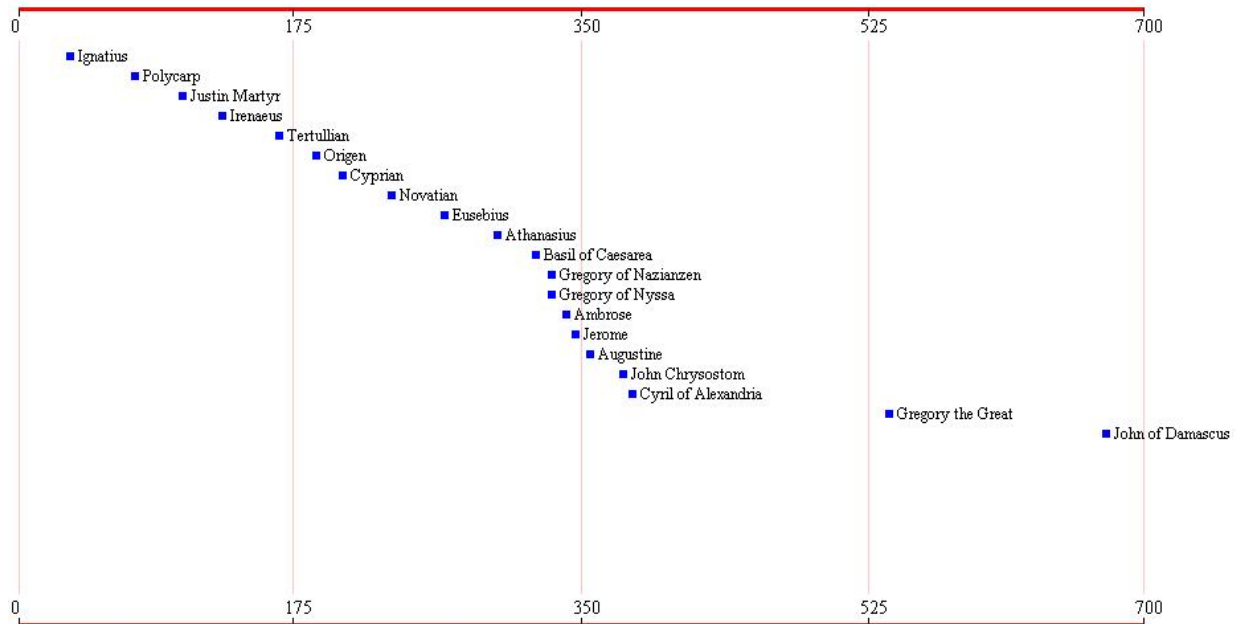
1. Donatists had argued that the purity of the administrator affected the validity of the sacrament - baptism, eucharist. Augustine denied this. He argued that the holiness of the Church was in the sacraments rather than in the lives of Christians and that the sacraments were valid even when performed by heretics and schismatics.
2. But Augustine also upheld Catholicity by saying that this validity becomes effective only if the person is in communion with the Catholic Church. Therefore, one baptized by a heretic does not have to be rebaptized but must be reconciled to the Catholic Church in order to be saved.
3. For Augustine the four marks of the true church are: unity; sanctity; apostolicity; catholicity
4. The sacraments of the Church are exorcism, ordination, marriage, and the Eucharist given to those receiving their first instruction in the faith, baptism, and the Lord's supper. These sacraments are visible signs of an invisible grace and are necessary to salvation.
5. In his book, *The City of God*, written when the Visigoths sacked Rome in 410, Augustine argued that the Earthly City would perish while the City of God grew in strength. He identified the City of God as the elect who were all in the Catholic Church though all in the Church are not elect. This book laid the groundwork for the Papacy and the Mediaeval Church which came to view itself as the City of God which was to rule in the world.
6. Writing against the Manichaeans, Augustine said, "I should not believe the Gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church."

III. Pelagius' Teachings Against Augustine

- A. Pelagius was a British monk of great moral earnestness and much learning who came to Rome in 400 and was shocked by the low moral estate of the city. He evidently worked hard to stir people to greater moral effort and was shocked by Augustine's statement in *his Confessions*: "Give what you command and command what you will."
1. Pelagius believed that the will of men is free and that he had the capacity to live without sin. He thought it scandalous for Augustine and others to excuse their moral failures as "weakness of the flesh". God would not ask the impossible: "He has not willed to command anything impossible, for he is righteous; and he will not condemn a man for what he could not help, for he is holy."
 2. Pelagius believed that Adam injured only himself in his sin and not the whole human race. He denied any original sin inherited from Adam. "We are not born in our full development, but with a capacity for good and evil; we are begotten as well without virtue as without vice, and before the activity of our own personal will there is nothing in man but what God has stored in him."
 3. Pelagius is also accused of believing that Adam was created mortal and would have died regardless; that the law leads to salvation as well as the gospel; that even before the coming of the Lord there would be men without sin.
 4. Pelagius was condemned at the Council of Ephesus (431).
 5. An Estimate of Pelagius by Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, p. 185:
"Instead of being an innovator, his teaching in many ways represented older views

than those of Augustine. With the east generally, and in agreement with many in the West, he held to the freedom of the human will. 'If I ought, I can,' well expresses his position. His attitude was that of the popular Stoic ethics. 'As often as I have to speak of the principles of virtue and a holy life, I am accustomed first of all to call attention to the capacity and character of human nature and to show what it is able to accomplish; then from this to arouse the feelings of the hearer, that he may strive after different kinds of virtue.' He, therefore, denied any original sin inherited from Adam, and affirmed that all men now have the power not to sin. Like the Stoics generally, he recognized that the mass of men are bad. Adam's sin set them an ill example, which they have been quick to follow. Hence they almost all need to be set right. This is accomplished by faith alone, through baptism, by reason of the work of Christ. No man between Paul and Luther so emphasized justification by faith alone. After baptism, man has full power and duty to keep the divine law."

Timeline of Significant Figures in Church History



QUESTIONS:

1. Was Augustine responsible for many of the teachings of both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism?

2. What was characteristic of his early life and where was he "converted"?

3. What did Augustine say Adam's sin had done for the whole human race?

4. Was man in Augustine's view able not to sin?

5. How, according to Augustine, does God by His grace change the sinful nature of man? How does this grace come to men?

6. How in Augustine's system is it decided who will be saved and who will be lost?

7. What two things does God's saving grace give to those whom He has chosen for salvation?

8. In what ways does the Roman Catholic Church which "sainted" Augustine agree, and disagree with his teachings?

Agree: _____

Disagree: _____

9. Does Augustine believe that a heretic could administer effective baptism? What was the catch in his thinking that saved the absolute power of the Catholic Church?

10. Why was Augustine's teaching on the sacraments important to an already corrupt Catholic Church?

11. What book of Augustine's laid the groundwork for the power of the papacy and the Catholic Church in the political world? Why?

12. Who was Pelagius?

13. What did he believe about human free will and sin?

14. What did he believe about "original sin"?

15. Where may Pelagius have gone too far in his beliefs?

Excerpts From Augustine

On the Fall of Man and Original Sin

"The first men would not have suffered death if they had not sinned... But having become sinners they were so punished with death, that whatsoever sprang from their stock should also be punished with the same death. For nothing else could be born of them than what they themselves had been. The condemnation changed their nature for the worse in proportion to the greatness of their sin, so that what was before as punishment in the man who had first sinned, followed as of nature in others who were born... In the first man, therefore, the whole human nature was to be transmitted by the woman to posterity when that conjugal union received the divine sentence of its own condemnation; and what man was made, not when he was created but when he sinned, and was punished, this he propagated, so far as the origin of sin and death are concerned." (city of God, XIII, ch. 3]

"For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, being by his own will corrupt and justly condemned, begot corrupted and condemned children. For we were all in that one man when we were all that one man, who fell into sin by the woman who had been made from him before the sin. For not yet was the particular form created and distributed to us, in which we as individuals were to live; but already the seminal nature was there from which we were to be propagated; and this vitiated by sin, and bound by the chain of death, and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other state. And thus from the bad use of free will, there originated a whole series of evils, which with its train of miseries conducts the human race from its depraved origin, as from a corrupt root, on to the destruction of the second death, which has no end, those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God." (City of God, XIII, ch. 143

on Grace and Free Will [how grace gives the power to do good]

"Now the Lord not only shows us what evil we should shun, and what good we should do, which is all the letter of the law can do; but moreover He helps us that we may shun evil and do good [Psalm 37:27], *which none can do without the spirit of grace*; and if this be wanting, the law is present merely to make us guilty and to slay us. It is on this account that the Apostle says: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6).

.... It is to be confessed, therefore, that we have free choice to do both evil and good; but in doing evil every one is free from righteousness and is a servant of sin, while in doing good no one can be free, unless he have been made free by Him who said: "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" [John 8:36].

(De Correptione et Gratia, 2]

on Predestination

[Inasmuch as all men are born condemned, and of themselves have not the power to turn to grace, which alone can save them, it follows that the bestowal of grace whereby they may turn is not dependent upon the man but upon God's sovereign good pleasure. This is expressed in the doctrine of Predestination.]

"This race (human race) we have distributed into two parts: the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we have also mystically called the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the

other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil ...”

[City of God, XV, ch. 1]

“Whosoever, therefore, in God’s most providential ordering are foreknown and predestinated, called, justified, glorified -- I say not, even though not yet born again, but even though not yet born at all -are already children of God, and absolutely cannot perish... From Him, therefore, is given also perseverance in good even to the end; for it is not given except to those who will not perish, since they who do not persevere will perish.” (De Correptione et Gratia, ch. 23]

"I speak of those who are predestinated to the kingdom of God, whose number is so certain that no one can either be added to them or taken from them; not of those who when He had announced and spoken, were multiplied beyond number [Psalm 40:5). For these may be said to be called but not chosen, because they are not called according to purpose." (De Correptione et Gratia, ch. 39]

on the Sacraments [Lord's Supper]

"on Easter Sunday we say, 'This day the Lord rose from the dead,' although so many years have passed since His resurrection... The event itself being said to take place on that day, because, although it really took place long before, it is on that day sacramentally celebrated. Was not Christ once for all offered up in His own person as a sacrifice? And yet, is He not likewise offered up in the sacrament as a sacrifice, not only in the special solemnities of Easter, but also daily among our congregations; so that when a man is questioned and answers that He is offered as a sacrifice in that ordinance, does he not declare what is strictly true? For is the sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the things of which they are the sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. In most cases, moreover, they do, in virtue of this likeness, bear the names of the realities *which they resemble*. As therefore in a certain manner the sacrament of the body of Christ is the body of Christ, the sacrament of the blood of Christ is the blood of Christ, so the sacrament of faith is faith....”

on the Sacrament of Baptism for Infants

"Now, believing is nothing else than having faith; and accordingly, when on behalf of an infant as yet incapable of exercising faith, the answer is given that he believes, this answer means that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith, and in like manner the answer is made that he turns himself toward God because of the sacrament of conversion, since the answer itself belongs to the celebration of the sacrament. Thus the Apostle says in regard to this sacrament of baptism: "We are buried with Christ by baptism unto death." He does not say, "We have signified our being buried with Him," but "We have been buried with Him." He has therefore given to the sacrament pertaining to so great a transaction no other name than the word describing the transaction itself."

"Therefore an infant, although he is not yet a believer in the sense of having that faith which includes the consenting will of those who exercise it, nevertheless becomes a believer through the sacrament of that faith.... The infant, though not yet possessing a faith helped by the understanding, is not obstructing faith by an antagonism of the understanding, and therefore receives with profit the sacrament of faith." [Epistle 98, To Boniface)

on the Church Using Force on Heretics

(At first opposed to using force to correct the Donatists, Augustine changed his mind and supported it]

"Why, therefore, should not the Church compel her lost sons to return if the lost sons compelled others to perish? Although even men whom they have not compelled but only led astray, their loving mother embraces with more affection if they are recalled to her bosom through the enforcement of terrible but salutary laws, and are the objects of far more deep congratulation than those whom she has never lost. Is it not a part of the care of the shepherd, when any sheep have left the flock, even though not violently forced away, but led astray by soft words and by coaxings, and they have begun to be possessed by strangers, to bring them back to the fold of his master when he has found them, by the terrors or even the pains of the whip, if they wish to resist... "

"For in this sense also we may interpret without absurdity the apostolic declaration when the blessed Apostle Paul says: 'Being ready to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled" [2 Cor. 10:6). Whence also the Lord himself bids the guests to be brought first to His great supper, and afterward compelled [Luke 14:22-23] Wherefore if by the power which the Church has received by divine appointment in its due season, through the religious character and faith of kings, those who are found in the highways and hedges--that is heresies and schisms--are compelled to come in, then let them not find fault because they are compelled but consider to what they are so compelled." (De Correctione Donatistarum, p, 22f]

Excerpts From Pelagius

On How Grace Changes Our Lives [Not without our wills]

"Very ignorant persons think that we do wrong in this matter to divine grace, because we say that it by no means perfects sanctity in us without our will: as if God could impose any commands upon His grace and would not supply also the help of His grace to those to whom He has given commands, so that men might more easily accomplish through grace what they are required to do by their own free will. And this grace we do not for our part, as you suppose, allow to consist merely in the law, but also in the help of God. God helps us by His teaching and revelation when He opens the eyes of our heart; when He points out to us the future, that we may not be absorbed in the present; when He discovers to us the snares of the devil; when He enlightens us with manifold and ineffable gifts of heavenly grace. Does the man who says this appear to you to be a denier of grace? Does he not acknowledge both man's free will and God's grace?"

[Commenting on Romans 7:25] "Now what you [Augustine] wish us to understand of the Apostle himself, all Church writers assert that he spoke in the person of the sinner, and of one still under the law, who by reason of very long custom of vice was held bound, as it were, by a certain necessity of sinning, and who, although he desired good with his will in practice, indeed, was driven into evil. In the person, however, of one man the Apostle designates the people who sinned still under the ancient law, and this people, he declares, are to be delivered from this evil of custom through Christ, *who first of all remits all sins in baptism, to those who believe on Him, and then by an imitation of Himself incites them to ' perfect holiness, and by the example of virtues overcomes the evil custom of sins.* (Fragments in Augustine's *on the Grace of Christ and Original Sin*, I, 7,39]

on Sin and Free Will

"One must be careful to see to it that one does not think that a man is not made good because he can do evil and is not compelled to an immutable necessity of doing good through the might of nature.... But just in this freedom in either direction, in this liberty toward either side, is placed the glory of our rational nature. Therein, I say, consists the entire honor of our nature, therein its dignity; from this the very good merit praise, from this their reward. For there would be for those who always remain good no virtue if they had not been able to have chosen the evil. For since God wished to present to the rational creature the gift of voluntary and the power of the free will, by planting in man the possibility of turning himself toward

either side, He made His special gift the ability to be what he would in order that he, being capable of good and evil, could do either and could turn his will to either of them."

"We defend the advantage of nature not in the sense that we say it cannot do evil, since we declare that it is capable of good and evil; we only protect it from reproach. It should not appear as if we were driven to evil by a disease of nature, we who do neither good nor bad without our will, and to whom there is always freedom to do one or two things, since always we are able to do both Nothing else makes it difficult for us to do good than long custom of sinning which has infected us since we were children, and has gradually corrupted us for many years, so that afterward it holds us bound to it and delivered over to it, so that it almost seems as if it had the same force as nature."

"If before the Law, as we are told, and long before the appearance of the Redeemer, various persons can be named who lived just and holy lives, how much more after His appearance must we believe that we are able to do the same, we who have been taught through Christ's grace, and born again to be better men; and we who by His blood have been reconciled and purified, and by His example incited to more perfect righteousness, ought to be better than they who were before the Law, better than they who were before the Law." (*Epistula ad Deme riadem*. ch. 3)

Pelagius's Confession of Faith [Laid before Zosimus, bishop of Rome, in 417. Ironically once thought to have been penned by Augustine] "We hold that there is one baptism, which we assert is to be administered to children in the same words of the sacrament as it is administered to adults.... "We execrate also the blasphemy of those who say that anything impossible to do is commanded man by God, and the commands of God can be observed, not by individuals but by all in common, also those who with the Manichaeans condemn first marriages or with the Cataphrygians condemn second marriages..... We so confess the will is free that we say that we always need the aid of God, and they err who with the Manichaeans assert that man cannot avoid sins as well as those who with the Jovinian say that man cannot sin; for both take away the liberty of the will. But we say that man can both sin and not sin, so that we confess that we always have free will."

Condemnation of Pelagius in the Council of Carthage, 418

(The following are excerpts from the edict of condemnation]

"... that whosoever denies that infants newly from their mother's womb should be baptized, or says that baptism is for the remission of sins, but that they derive from Adam no original sin, which is removed by the laver of regeneration, whence the conclusion follows that in them the form of baptism for the remission of sins is to be understood as false and not true, let him be anathema."

"Likewise, that whoever should say that the grace of God, by which a man is justified through Jesus Christ our Lord avails only for the remission of past sins, and not for assistance against committing sins in the future, let him be anathema."

"Also, whoever shall say that the same grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord helps us not to sin only in that by it are revealed to us and opened to our understanding the commandments, so that we may know what to seek ' what we ought to avoid, and also that we should love to do so, but that through it we are not helped so that we are able to do what we know we should do, let him be anathema."

Athanasian Creed

1. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith;
2. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
4. Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.
5. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.
8. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.
9. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
10. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.
11. And yet they are not three eternal but one eternal.
12. As also there are not three uncreated nor three incomprehensible, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible.
13. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
14. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;
16. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
17. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord;
18. And yet they are not three Lords but one Lord.
19. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;
20. So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say; There are three Gods or three Lords.
21. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
22. The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.
23. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
24. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.
25. And in this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another.
26. But the whole three persons are coeternal, and coequal.
27. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.
28. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.
29. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
30. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.
31. God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of substance of His mother, born in the world.
32. Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
33. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.
34. Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.
35. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of that manhood into God.
36. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

37. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ;
38. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead;
39. He ascended into heaven, He sits on the right hand of the Father, God, Almighty;
40. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
41. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies;
42. and shall give account of their own works.
43. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
44. This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Nine: The Semi-Pelagian Controversy

Introduction

When Pelagius was condemned, Augustine was not entirely accepted. While original sin and enabling grace (along with the baptism of infants) were approved by the Church, Augustine's doctrine of predestination was vigorously opposed by many. The ensuing dispute, known as the Semi-Pelagian controversy (427-529), was carried on largely in Gaul. The leading opponents of Augustine were John Cassian (b. 360), the head of a monastery in Marseilles, and his pupil, Vincent of Lerins.

I. John Cassian's Argument against Augustinian View that Men were Predestined to Salvation and Damnation Apart from their Will:

"...He 'will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth' [I Tim. 2:4].

"Those then who perish, perish against His will, as He testifieth against each of them day by day: 'Turn from you evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?'" [Ezek. 33:11]

"... The grace of Christ is then at hand every day, which while it 'willeth all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,' calleth all without exception, saying: 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest'" [Mt. 11:28]

Cassian took the view that man was able to initiate good will toward God but without God's enabling grace was not able to do what is good.

"We should not hold that God made man such that he neither wills nor is able to do good. Otherwise He has not granted him a free will, if He has suffered him only to will or be capable of evil, but of himself neither to will nor be capable of what is good... it cannot, therefore, be doubted that there are by nature seeds of goodness implanted in every soul by the kindness of the Creator; but unless these are quickened by the assistance of God, they will not be able to attain to an increase of perfection..."

["The idea of Cassian is, that the human will has indeed been crippled by sin, but that a certain freedom has yet remained to it. By virtue of this, it is able to turn to God, and, just as though God had first turned to it, it is able, with the assistance of divine grace, setting before it the law and infusing the needed power, to will and to do that which is good. Hence the sinner is not dead, but wounded." - Reinhold Seeberg, History of Doctrines, V. I, p. 371]

II. Vincent of Lerins

Wrote his *Commonitorium* in 434 (three years after the death of Augustine) in which he attacked Augustine under the pseudonym of Peregrinus. In it he sets down the general principles of the tests of Catholic truth, working out in detail the rule of Tertullian set forth in his *Prescription of Heretics*. The Augustinian doctrines of particular Predestination and irresistible grace are shown not to be able to stand the test. It is ironic that this rule of Catholic truth which still prevails in Catholicism should have been developed to attack one of Catholicism's greatest "saints".

A. Bible and the Church

1. "But here some one, perhaps, will ask: Since the canon of Scripture is complete and sufficient for everything, and more than sufficient, what need is there to add to it the authority of the Church's interpretation? For this reason: because, owing to the depth of Holy Scripture, all do not accept it in one and the same sense, but one understands its words one way, another in another way; so that almost as many opinions may be drawn from it as there are men..... Therefore it is very necessary, on account of so great

intricacies, and of such various errors, that the rule of a right understanding of the prophets and Apostles should be framed in accordance with the standard of ecclesiastical and Catholic interpretation." (*Commonitorium*, ch. 2)

B. Rule of Catholic Truth

1. "Moreover, in the Catholic Church itself all possible care should be taken that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all. For that is truly and properly "Catholic" which, as the name implies and the reason of the thing declares, comprehends all universally. This will be the case if we follow universality, antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality in this way, if we confess that one faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity, if we in nowise depart from those interpretations which it is manifest were notoriously held by our holy ancestors and fathers; consent in like manner, if in antiquity itself we adhere to the consentient definitions and determinations of all, or at least almost all, priests and doctors." (Ibid.)

C. The Church as Guardian of the Faith

1. "The Church of Christ, the careful and watchful guardian of the doctrines deposited in her charge, never changes anything in them, never diminishes, never adds; does not cut off what is necessary, does not add what is superfluous, does not lose her own, does not appropriate what is another's, but, while dealing faithfully and Judiciously with ancient doctrine, keeps this one object carefully in view -- if there be anything which antiquity has left shapeless and rudimentary, to fashion and to polish it; if anything already reduced to shape and developed, to consolidate and strengthen it; if any already ratified and defined, to keep and guard it."

III. From semi-Pelagianism to Semi-Augustinianism

A. semi-Pelagianism

1. The Church in southern Gaul, strong supporters of Augustine, agreed with Augustine on:
 - a. original sin
 - b. enabling graceBut disagreed on:
 - c. irresistible grace
 - d. no free will
2. This compromise between Augustine and Pelagius was called Semi-Pelagianism:
 - a. All men are sinners by Adam's sin and must be regenerated by God's grace.
 - b. Salvation comes to all men and it is up to man to accept or reject it.
 - c. The act of faith is man's own, not God's.
 - d. The number of the elect is not fixed.

B. Semi-Augustinianism

1. At Council of Arles (473) predestination of a specific and unchangeable elect was condemned.
2. At II Council of Orange (529) both Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism condemned.
 - a. Not only death but sin has come upon all through Adam.

- b. The free will of man has been weakened in such a way that man of himself can neither believe in God nor love him
 - c. The grace of God works in us an impulse to call upon God and to strive after purification, as also faith.
 - d. It is in baptism that our will is renewed.
 - e. The idea of predestination to evil is condemned.
 - f. Irresistible grace rejected.
3. Pope Gregory the Great declared this to be the true Augustinianism and thus saved Augustine for the Catholic Church.
- a. The primary concern of the semi-Pelagians and certainly of the semi-Augustinians was to keep man's will free and therefore dependent upon the Church.
 - b. If there is irresistible grace and an exactly numbered elect, what is the need of the sacraments of the Church??

QUESTIONS:

1. What was John Cassian's argument against Augustine's position that a certain number of men were predestined to salvation?

2. What was Cassian's view on whether man's will was free.

3. What two positions of Augustine did Vincent of Lerins say would not stand the test of Catholic truth?

4. What role did Lerins give to the Catholic Church in determining truth?

5. What was his rule for determining God's will? Was the teaching of Scripture taken into account?

6. In the mind of Vincent of Lerins could the Catholic Church ever err in its teaching?

7. What was the view of the semi-Pelagians on the following:

1) The influence of Adam's sin on men - _____

2) Human free will - _____

3) Predestination of the elect - _____

8. What attitude did the Catholic Church take toward both Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism?

9. .What was the semi-Augustinian view that the Church adopted under Pope Gregory the Great.

1) On the influence of Adam's sin: _____

2) On the free will of man: _____

3) on baptism: _____

4) on predestination of some to damnation: _____

5) on irresistible grace _____

10. What was the major concern of the Churchmen in their disagreement with Augustine?

Religious History - Doctrines & Divisions

Lesson Ten: The Apostate Church and Its Doctrine (Part 1)

Introduction

The history of the Middle Ages is largely the history of the western Church (Rome) . The eastern Church, dominated as it was by politics, had little doctrinal significance.

This period was actively missionary. With the advance of the Germanic tribes of northern and central Europe into the south, the church determined to send missionaries to these people and tame them. This effort was successful and ultimately resulted in the rise of the Holy Roman Empire of central Europe - a league between the papacy and the state.

During the so-called "dark ages" when Europe was dominated by the "barbarian" tribes of the north, the Church stepped in and filled the vacuum left by the vacated seat of the Roman government. Rather than relinquish their wealth to the barbarian invaders many gave their property to the Church. The Church therefore began to be very wealthy and very worldly. Great land holdings were administered by the clergy.

At the same time that the Church at large was becoming more and more worldly and materialistic there arose a disposition on the part of some to live a monastic life, wholly removed from world and its wealth.

Additionally, before beginning our study of the Reformation and the circumstances which led to it, a quick review of the essential dogmas of the Roman Catholic church is in order.

The fundamental doctrines of the Western Church were essentially fixed by the end of the Middle Ages. It was left only for the first Vatican Council of 1870 to declare the infallibility of the Pope.

I. The Barbarian Tribes and the Fall of Rome (476)

1. The pressure of Attila and his Huns from the Mongolian desert on the growing German tribes of central Europe forced them to expand southward and westward upon the Empire.
2. In the fifth century the Angles, Saxons, Vandals, Lombards, Franks, and Goths, some of whom had already come peaceably into the Empire in earlier days, moved in ever increasing strength into southern Europe where after sacking Rome several times they eventually took permanent control of the western Empire.
3. In 476 A.D. a new wave of Germans swept into Italy, deposed the western emperor and placed their general, Odoacer, on the throne. Odoacer was the son of a minister of Attila the Hun.
4. The Germans destroyed the external features of a system that was already dead from internal decay. It fell from within.

II. Gregory I (the Great) (590-604) and the Imperial Papacy

A. The Beginning of Papal Political Power.

1. Gregory was far more important in the west than the representatives of a distant emperor in Constantinople. He led the defense of Rome against an invasion by the Lombards, administered the city of Rome, and often fed the people from the large papal estates.
2. He actively pursued the conversion of the tribes of northern Europe and England to the Church.

B. New Doctrines Developed.

1. Penance. Gregory taught that sins committed after baptism must be "satisfied" by works of merit in penance.
2. Purgatory. Gregory developed and taught the doctrine of purgatory as essential to the faith. The purgatorial fire was for those who did not make adequate satisfaction for sin while living. "It is to be believed that there is a purgatorial fire before the judgment for certain light sins" (Dialogues, 4:30)

C. In Gregory, the Form of the Medieval Church Set.

1. Doctrine, organization, worship, life of the western Church of the Middle Ages in place as result of Gregory's influence.
2. All later growth was to be in the direction Gregory had moved.

III. The Rise of the Holy Roman Empire

A. Papacy Allied with the Franks

1. To obtain protection from the invading Lombards, Pope Stephen II went to France in 754 to anoint Pepin the Short (or Pippin, also known as Pepin the Younger or Pepin III) as king of the Franks. In return, Pippin drove the Lombards from north Italy and gave the pope control of "the states of the Church".
2. Pippin's son, Charlemagne extended the Frankish empire over most of western Europe. In Rome, on Christmas Day, A.D. 800, Charlemagne was crowned as emperor of the Romans by Pope Leo III. Thus began the Holy Roman Empire, and the precedent for Popes crowning kings and thus demonstrating the superiority of the Church over the State.

B. Later Frauds Supporting the Imperial Papacy

1. False Decretals of Isidore. Published about 850 A.D. and professed to be decretals from early bishops of Rome going back to the apostles. They declared absolute authority of the Roman bishops over the universal church, the independence of the church from the state, and the absolute lack of authority of the state over the clergy of all ranks. Included in the document was a section referred to as the "Donation of Constantine".
2. Donation of Constantine (8th cent.). It purported to be Constantine's donation of supreme authority to Sylvester I, bishop of Rome (314-325) over all the European provinces, even above emperors.
3. Believed without question during the early Middle Ages, they were shown to be frauds in the 15th-17th centuries but the Church was already securely anchored in both ecclesiastical and political power.

IV. The Rise of Monasticism

A. Origins

1. Jewish and Greek: The Essenes (associated with the Dead Sea scrolls) were an ascetic Jewish sect who often practiced celibacy and withdrew from the affairs of the world. The Cynics were Greek philosophers who renounced the world and lived with the minimum necessities. Greek thought had long held that matter was evil and the prison house of the spirit.

2. An Ascetic Mood: A self-denying pessimism seized the early centuries of the Christian era which made celibacy, vegetarianism, and severity to the body a mark of true religious piety.
 3. Literal Application of Scripture: "Sell what you have and give to the poor" (Mt. 19:21) and "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Mt. 19:12) were seen as the mark of perfect spirituality.
 4. Christian monasticism is thought to have begun near the end of the 3rd century as a reaction to the increasing secularization of the Church. With the conversion of Constantine asceticism replaced martyrdom as the means to a lofty piety. The monk now replaced the martyr as the hero of the Church.
- B. Two Kinds of Monasticism
1. In the East - a hermit life, strongly individualistic, contemplative.
 - a. Anthony, a 4th century hermit who lived in the deserts of Egypt-
 - b. The "pillar saints" - Simeon Stylites who spent several years living atop a pillar or column in the desert.
 2. In the West - a communal, practical, activist life.
 - a. Benedict of Nursia founded a monastery in 529 and the prevailing form of monasticism before the 13th century was Benedictine.
 - b. The monk or nun's ideal was spiritual perfection in the contemplation and love of God achieved by renouncing the world and uncompromisingly imitating Christ. The three principles were: poverty, celibacy, and obedience.
- C. Monasticism and the Church
1. An inevitable conflict: Monasticism said the world belonged to Satan and was to be avoided. The Church said the world was to be ruled as the City of God.
 2. The "sacraments" became the tie that held the monks to the institutional Church. The result was a double standard of morality. One austere, the other liberal. Purgatory became the equalizer. Suffer here, or suffer there.
 3. The monastic orders came to be independent of local church authorities (secular priests) and nobles and were under the direct control and protection of the Church in Rome. Gregory the Great used the monks as missionaries. Gregory VII (Hildebrand) used them to reform the very worldly secular priests of the 11th century.
 4. Orders:
 - a. Mendicant orders: In the 13th century the Franciscan and Dominican orders joined the long established Benedictines. Whereas the Benedictines stayed in the cloister, the Franciscan and Dominican orders lived by begging and went out to preach to the people. The Franciscans were begun by Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) and the Dominicans by Dominic of Spain (1170-1221). They sought to restore the ideal of apostolic poverty.
 - b. The Jesuits were established by Ignatius of Loyola, They served as the shock troops of the Counter-Reformation in 16th century.

V. The Catholic Church and the Bible.

- A. The Bible is a Catholic Book, Produced by the Church.

1. Quotations from newspaper ad placed by the Supreme Council of Knights of Columbus Religious information Bureau, St. Louis, MO.
 - a. "Yes, the Bible is truly a Catholic book. They are members of the Catholic Church who, under God's inspiration, wrote the New Testament in its entirety."
 - b. "It was the Catholic Church which treasured it and gave it to the world in its original and unaltered form."
2. Some Questions to Consider:
 - a. There is a false premise leading to a false conclusion in the statement above (a. "Yes, ...entirety"). What is it?
 - b. Why does the Bible not contain Catholic doctrine and practice? where does the Bible speak of The Roman Catholic Church, pope, archbishops, purgatory, limbo, the mass, the rosary, indulgences, holy water, the sign of the cross, praying to Mary and the "saints"?
 - c. Why does the Bible not refer to Peter as "the vicar of Christ"?
3. The truth: The Bible, including the New Testament, was written between the years 1500 B.C. and ~100 A.D. (depending upon date of Revelation), hundreds of years before there was a Catholic Church like the one we know today. The Bible is not a Catholic book!

B. The Scriptures are not Inspired and not Infallible on Their Own Merit.

1. "Is the Bible the infallible Word of God? The Catholic's answer is a decisive 'No!' Indeed, it is only by the divine authority of the Catholic Church that Christians know that the Scripture is the Word of God and what books certainly belong to the Bible. The Bible is not its own witness. it is like a will without a signature or probate. It is infallible only because of and to the extent of the Church's infallible witness. Deny the Church's infallible witness, and the Bible is at once reduced to the level of mere Oriental literature and utterly devoid of divine inspiration. The Catholic Church alone guarantees infallibly the authenticity of the Latin Vulgate, the contents of the canon, and the inspiration of all the 72 books of the Holy Writ. As St. Augustine could rightly say in the 5th century, 'I would not believe the Gospel unless moved thereto by the authority of the Church. ' (The Catholic's Question Box [Herbst] P. 653)
2. See 1 Cor. 2:1-13; Eph. 3:1-7; 1 Thess. 2:13.

C. The Scriptures are not Sufficient

1. "The New Testament does not bear the marks of having been drawn up to serve as a code of Christian belief. Neither does it anywhere direct us to take Scripture as our sole Rule of Faith, or free us from the obligation of believing more than is clearly taught in its pages. Therefore, to assume that the Bible is the sole and adequate rule of Christian Faith may perhaps be the only alternative left after rejecting the authority of the Catholic Church; but neither Scripture nor history seems to afford any warrant for such an assumption." (E.R. Hull, *What the Catholic church Is and What She Teaches*, p. 2)
2. See 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:3, Jude 3.

D. Traditions of the Church are Authority.

1. "The unwritten traditions which we receive from the mouth of Christ himself by the apostles or from the apostles themselves, have come down to us as if delivered from hand to hand on an equality with the books of the Old and New Testament" (Council of Trent - 1545)
2. "It would be well to remember that the Bible was never intended to take the place of the living, infallible teacher, the Church, but was written to explain or insist upon a teaching,

already preached..... The Catholic Church a divine, living, infallible voice, guarantees to every one not merely the written word, but also the unwritten teaching of divine tradition." (*The Catholic's Question Box*, pp. 653,654)

E. Ordinary Men are not Able to Interpret the Scriptures.

1. "That in matters of faith and morals, and whatever relates to the maintenance of Christian doctrine, no one confiding in his own judgment shall dare to wrest the sacred Scriptures contrary to that which has been held and still is held by the Holy Mother Church, whose right it is to judge of the true meaning and interpretation of the sacred writ; or contrary to the unanimous consent of the fathers; even though such interpretations should never be published.
2. See Luke 10:21; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 4:11.

VI. Papal Infallibility

A. The Position

1. " We the sacred council approving, teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed; that the Roman Pontiff, when speaking ex cathedra, that is, when discharging the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be held by the universal church, he by the divine assistance promised to him in the Blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed the church should be endowed in defining doctrine regarding faith and morals; and that, therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the church. But if any one -- which may God avert -- presume to contradict our definition, let him be anathema" (*Declaration of Papal infallibility made by Pope Pius IX, and adopted by the Vatican Council, 1870*).

B. There have been numerous contradictions between popes.

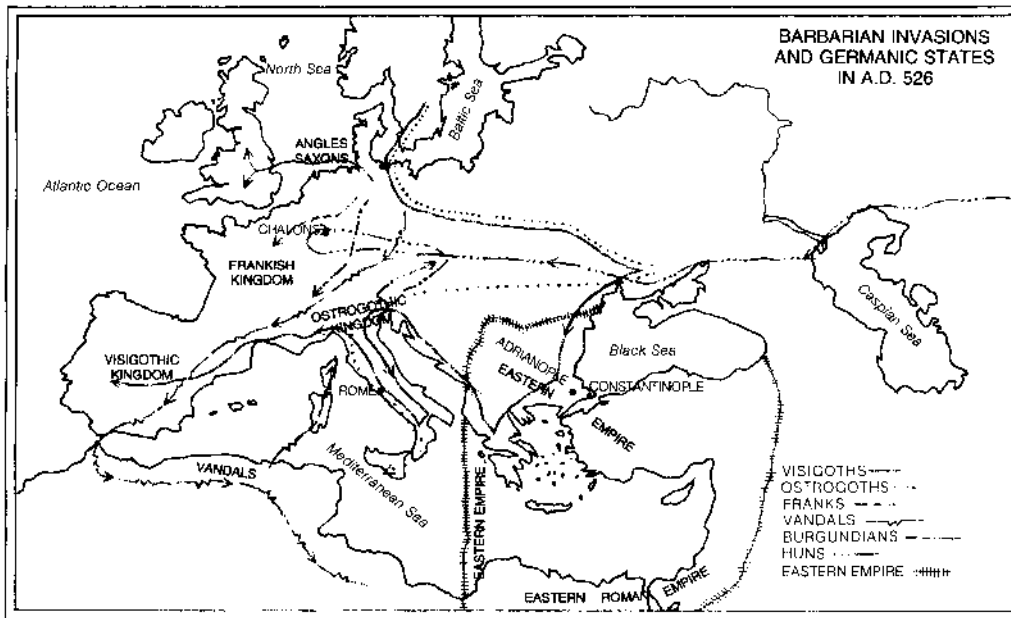
1. In 1088, Pope Paschall II (and in 1145 Pope Eugenius III) authorized dueling. In 1509, Julius II (and in 1560, Pius IV) forbade it.
2. In 867, Pope Hadrian declared civil marriages to be valid. In 1800, Pius VII condemned them.
3. In 1585, Pope Sixtus V published an edition of the Bible and by a bull recommended it to be read. Pius VII condemned the reading of it.
4. In 1520, Pope Urban VIII excommunicated the famous Italian Galileo and put him in jail because he taught that the earth was round and revolves around the sun. Popes today state that Urban was wrong in condemning the teachings of Galileo.

C. For about forty years in the 14th century, three men claimed the papacy.

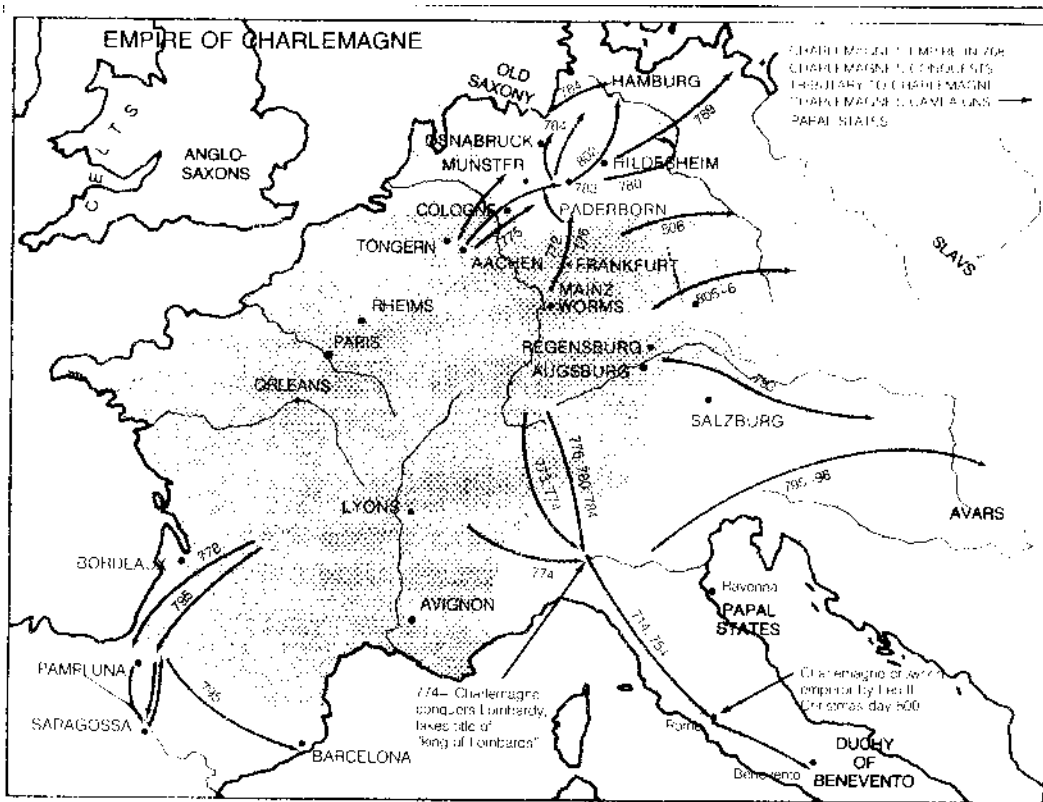
D. Prior to 1870, Catholics denied Papal Infallibility. After 1870, they had to believe it or be guilty of heresy.

E. There have been many wicked popes. Archbishop Purcell, who debated Alexander Campbell, said, "Without doubt some popes are in hell."

Figures



Barbarian Invasions and the Fall of the Roman Empire



Charlemagne's Empire

QUESTIONS:

1. Where does most of the doctrinal development take place in the middle Ages?

2. What people finally brought Rome down? In what year?

3. What pope laid the groundwork for the Imperial papacy and the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages?
When was he pope?

What significant doctrines did he fully develop and place securely in the dogma of the Church? Give the meaning of each. _____

4. With what German tribe did the Catholic Church ally itself in the 8th century? Why?

5. Who was Charlemagne? What was his connection with the papacy?

6. What two fraudulent documents were used to establish the spiritual and political power of the papacy during the Middle Ages? What were they intended to prove?

7. Discuss the origin of monasticism and the relationship of the monastic orders to the Church.
