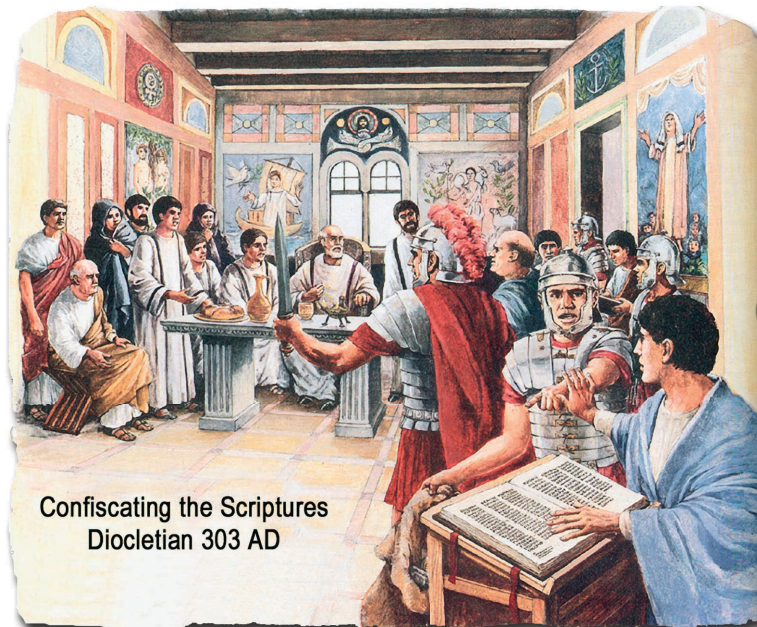


*Study Guide*

# The Church in History

AD 100 - AD 1500



Confiscating the Scriptures  
Diocletian 303 AD

Stuart Jones

**SUNSET**  
International Bible Institute



# **THE CHURCH IN HISTORY A.D. 100 TO A.D. 1500**



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## LESSON ONE

# Introductory Material

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### INTRODUCTION:



Shortly after Cecilia and I married in Lubbock, Texas, September 6, 1958, I began teaching adult classes at Procter Street Church of Christ in Port Arthur, Texas. One of the topics that one adult class showed interest in was church history. I developed a short course on that in 1960, thus beginning a multiple decade pursuit of this topic. Over the years I have read many books related to Christian history and have accumulated many pages of notes along with many impressions. Since I was reading for my own interest, I did not keep references and notes at the detailed level that I would have had this been a research paper for academic recognition. Hence, this writeup is not in an academic format, but is a personal compilation of topics and history flows that seem relevant and pertinent to me.

One purpose is to show how our current western religious environment has its roots in many decisions made in earlier centuries. We **are** influenced by our personal and **cultural** history. History is the story of people. Each of us has a history. Our family has a history. Our nation and our culture has a history. Since this is the story of people doing what people tend to do, the results should be enlightening, but not surprising. If we are ignorant of history, then our ignorance will lead to many unfortunate decisions. One writer said that those who are ignorant of history are like the leaf that does not know that it is part of a tree.

The period of Christian History that we will examine in this course is focused on the Mediterranean, North Africa, Europe, Scandinavia, the Near East, Russia, and the British Isles.

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### THE INDESTRUCTIBLE CHURCH

#### **A. Hades Cannot Overcome the Church Nor Withstand the Assault of the Church upon It.**

1. Jesus' promise in Mt 16.16f. "*and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*"
2. In the common news media, the church (true or apostate) is not a major factor.
  - a. We cannot rely solely upon written records for a full picture of what has occurred.
  - b. News about Christendom tends to record the unusual, odd, immoral, illegal, abnormal, unexpected, violent, etc.
3. Events in history have not happened rapidly.
  - a. Nor should they have been a surprise. There has always been a prelude.
  - b. Most of written history tends to deal with the turbulent events.

4. Winners write history. They tend to either ignore the defeated or twist the positions of the defeated into something that justifies the fact that the winners won. They are rarely objective.
- B. Most of what we will cover in Christian History is based upon western events involving what eventually became the Roman Church and which led into the Reformation and Restoration.
1. We will focus mainly on the western or European heritage of Christian History.
  2. Christian history really deals with a western, apostate church and an eastern, apostate church along with many splinter groups.
  3. Note in the Appendix there is a time-line from about 30 AD to the immediate aftermath of the Reformation in Europe.
  4. Church councils and various controversies indicate that there were differing viewpoints. By inference we can determine that there were people who held to Scripture more firmly than others but who lost in the councils. **The Roman church always had opponents.**

**NOTE:** Studying the church in this way requires some knowledge of the history of Europe and the near East between 30 AD and 1517 AD. Please refer to the time line in the appendix as we travel from the first century to the turbulent 1500's and then extrapolate to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

During this study to ease the flow of presentation, the words 'Christian', 'church', 'Christianity', and 'Christendom' will be used often in the broad ecumenical sense that is common in today's culture. Inserting adjectives at every juncture would slow the whole process and would add little to your understanding. **Be aware, however, that this usage does not imply agreement to this broad ecumenical sense and does not imply that we believe that all churches are acceptable to God.**

## WHAT SHOULD THE STUDENT LEARN FROM THIS COURSE?

1. Most of what we call church history is actually **a tale of sin, sex, silver, sloth, and selfishness.**
2. **Heresies appear and cause trouble.** Some were defeated only to arise again. Others were embraced and accepted as valid. Few had immediate acceptance. Some caused trouble for centuries. Many are still followed as if they were God-given.
3. There have been people wanting to **reform and restore** the existing church throughout the centuries since its establishment. Our restoration plea is thus not unique. There has been an ongoing, persistent effort through the centuries to return to the unique church Jesus built.
4. At every juncture in church history, the people dealt with a multi-faceted environment. Decisions were not clear-cut nor easy. The people acted in what they believed to be a rational way to achieve certain end results. Sometimes the end-results were far different than expected. People face uncertain situations and **do what they consider best**, even if they make serious blunders.
5. They may, and often do, base choices upon unwise foundations. When culture, tradition, and philosophy become the driving forces in religion, people make tragic decisions

because only **Scripture is a valid guide**. Human authorities continually change. Culture is currently the main driving force in religion in the western world.

6. People rarely do anything for only **one** reason. Isolating THE problem in most situations is difficult with the result that **a problem will seem to have many facets** and thus will require multiple solutions – some of which are in conflict with each other.
7. The sacral mind set believes that a sacral society is both inevitable and desirable. The sacral mind set also believes that a politically and religiously diverse society is both weak and opposed to what seems to them to be righteousness. Their view is that peace in the market place is possible only when there is unity at the altar. People combine simplicity and **complexity**.
8. **God's church was planned**, not an accident nor a stop-gap measure due to God being surprised. God has always had a kingdom. He is not bound by time. Hence, He knows the end from the beginning. He instituted the new kingdom of His Son in Jerusalem in AD 33.
9. **God's church prevails** just as Jesus promised that it would.  
We have a rich heritage with many strands. **Let us study history** to learn the spiritual depth of our ancestors, to build upon their efforts, to avoid repeating their mistakes, and learn to stand upon the shoulders of giants of the faith. Let us use history for God's glory and for the salvation of humans.

## CHURCH HISTORY – ITS NATURE

### A. Church History Has at Least Three Aspects.

1. **First** there is God's part.
  - a. He has revealed to man what he wants and he has intervened as necessary in human history. His glory is to be retained while he plans for human happiness.
  - b. He has shown his infinite wisdom, love, power, mercy, and justice via his intervention in human history.
2. **Second** is the human part. Church history is a biography of human spiritual development and spiritual degradation.
3. **Third** is that of Satan and his demons who hate God and destroy humans as part of their hate.

**NOTE:** Church history is characterized on God's side by patience, standards, and love. It is characterized on the human level by sin, sloth, sex, silver, and selfishness demonstrated via the rise, fall, progress, apostasy, purity and error of how humans have treated the perfect, divine kingdom of God. It is characterized on Satan's side by malevolence.

### B. Theology must Avoid Three Extremes.

1. The *first* is Deism. If God is truly removed and uninterested in human activity, then the next logical step from Deism is a practical atheism.
2. The *second* is pantheism. If God is all and all is God, then there is no way for any human to have a truly free will to love God. That leads to fatalism.
3. The *third* is that mankind has the right to establish variable rules to govern conduct in relation to God. Man has no such right – our right is to obey God, not be arrogant in setting our own course.



### **C. Church History Begins with Jesus' Resurrection.**

1. It continues with Pentecost and focuses on the church itself as the bride of Christ.
2. It grasps a world view for outreach and deals with individual sanctification in a group of sanctified people who are in the world but not of it.
3. It embraces mental, moral, and ethical struggles with a wide range of philosophies.
4. Church history clarifies apostasy, truth, orthodoxy and the anti-christs.
5. It highlights sin, rebellion, consequences, and error versus purity, yielding, reward, and truth. It shows that God is more powerful than Satan and in His wisdom He uses the malevolent efforts of Satan and his demons to bring about what God wants.
6. Church history shows that God is involved in leading us to our ultimate goal of perfection in his presence.

**NOTE:** Church history can be reviewed in many ways: missions, persecutions, church government, church discipline, worship modes and procedures, morals and ethics, theology, creedal statements, chronologically, revivals, influential leaders, apostasy movements, etc. Our study will look at some of each of these, understanding that control issues dominate the historical scene during the years we will cover. Therefore, the underlying theme to this whole writeup is **control** and history is the framework.

### **D. The Sources of Information for Church History Include:**

The New Testament, apostolic fathers, ante-Nicene fathers, Nicene fathers, post-Nicene fathers, historians of all ages, eye witnesses, inscriptions, buildings, art, business and political documents, eulogies, and biographies.

### **E. Church History Can Be Divided Chronologically in Many Ways.** The five division arrangement which we will use is:

1. **The Ante-Nicene Age c100-325 AD**  
Important issues: Gnosticism, Montanism, the monarchical bishop, the role of tradition, infant immersion, and martyrdom.
2. **The Graeco-Latin Church 325-590 AD**  
Important issues: the role of councils and secular rulers, the Arian controversy, the elevation of Mary, and the roles of both Augustine and Constantine.
3. **The Medieval Church 590-1049 AD**  
Important issues: missions into Europe, destruction of much of Christendom, split between the eastern and western churches, rise of Islam, papal problems, and monastery reforms.
4. **The Scholastic Era 1049-1294 AD**  
Important issues: strengthening of the papacy, the inquisition, the crusades, doctrine of transubstantiation, and the beginnings of religious revolt in Europe.
5. **Decline of the Medieval Church Empire 1294-1517 AD**  
Important issues: growing nationalism, reform minded leaders, and the renaissance.

## REASONS TO STUDY THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH?

### A. Bible Knowledge a Necessity for a Complete Education.

1. A truly educated person will know the Bible, the history related to the Bible, as well as his/her own culture and role in that culture. No one is educated without a knowledge of the Bible and the history of Christianity.
2. History of any type is not a favorite topic of many – perhaps they have been bored by the seeming irrelevance of the history they studied in school. Yet, we are all interested in our story, the story of our family, the story of friends and acquaintances. By combining and assembling these individual stories, the history of a group, a state, a nation, and a culture can be determined. We may feel that the stories of others pale into insignificance compared to our own. That is short-sighted and selfish. If we listen to these other stories, we will learn much and will thus not have to learn **every** lesson by personal experience.
3. Ecclesiastes 1:10f “Someone might say, “Look, this is new,” but really it has always been here. It was here before we were. People don’t remember what happened long ago, and in the future people will not remember what happens now. Even later, other people will not remember what was done before them.” Galatians 3:24 states that the Law, a historical document and relationship, affects us today. *Those who refuse to learn from history are doomed to repeat its mistakes – note the book of Judges.*

### B. Reasons for Christians to Study Christian History:

1. There is nothing new. Whatever may be presented to us today as ‘new’ has been already.
2. The early church faced similar or worse problems than we do and developed many good/bad solutions.
3. Intelligent, highly-motivated people can develop some strange doctrines.
4. The simplicity and purity of the church as God wanted it is powerful.
5. Understanding cause and effect along with likely sequences is vital.
6. Political and social machinations interfere with the church’s well-being.
7. Tradition, although essential, **cannot** be the final authority.
8. There are many factors that have led to us being in this place at this time.
9. There were many ideas that led to apostasy in the past. We must not repeat those errors.
10. Early Christians mixed in paganism at times with apostasy resulting, i.e., culture determined doctrine.
11. Deviations on doctrine are very serious.
12. ‘Small’ deviations result in large apostasy affecting large numbers of people.
13. Apostasy arises gradually in most cases for some ‘very good reasons’.
14. Apostasy is initially resisted but it often wins in the public mind.
15. Apostasy can appear to be ended but arise from a new quarter in a different place and time.
16. The ‘cures’ for apostasy are sometimes a far worse apostasy than the first one.
17. Our neighbors believe as they do for reasons that are sound to them.
18. We owe much to early reformers and restorers.
19. Politics and religion can interact in three ways, two are bad. Politics can rule religion. Religion can dictate to politics. Or, ideally, religious people can be the

politicians.

20. Christians interact with culture in at least 5 different ways. All of those have occurred in Christian history and each mode has its effects. We will look at those at the end of this series.
22. We *must* diminish our reliance upon human authority.
23. We **MUST** know the past to anticipate the future.

### **C. Another Way to Review the Reasons for Studying Christian History Is:**

#### **1. Christianity survives.**

Christianity has survived: the destruction of Jerusalem, the fall of the Roman Empire, fierce external persecutions, heresies, barbarian invasions, ignorance, papal tyranny, infidelity inside and outside the church, revolution, wars, arrogant enemies, false friends, confused leaders, changing politics, new philosophies, atheism, media hostility, liberation theology, excessive toleration, total intolerance, the social gospel, apathy, worldliness, nepotism, simony, indulgences, Calvinism, emotionalism, rationalism, poverty, affluence, and sacralism.

2. Empires fall.
3. Persecution eventually falters and fails.
4. Heresies run their course.
5. Invasions and war are no match for peace.
6. Ignorance can be overcome.
7. Tyranny never lasts.
8. Infidelity fails.
9. Arrogant enemies and false friends fail.
10. Intellect and emotion must balance.
11. Leaders can be as confused and ignorant as those they attempt to lead.
12. We live in a broken, hostile world.
13. Poverty and affluence are both dangers to the church, especially affluence.
14. There is a 'domino' effect in decision making.
15. To know our roots and understand how we got to this point in time and place.
16. To know that our God truly reigns.
17. To know that Scripture is its own best interpreter.
18. To forecast the future, we must know the past.
19. Sacralism is not a long-term answer to any social situation.

## **WHO IS IN CONTROL?**

### **A. An Age Old Question.**

1. Since the time of Adam and Eve in the garden, the question of who is in control has been part of the human condition.
2. Why should we have conflict with others who claim a restoration or reformation heritage? Are the changes we see merely procedural or are they something more serious? Are the changes disturbing because they invade our comfort zones or is there something more fundamental about these changes?

### **B. Reasons That We See Troubling Trends Today.** We can see those same concepts and ideas in earlier centuries?

1. The ongoing presence of people like those described by Jude.
2. Predatory wolves among leaders like those described in Acts 20.
3. Ignorant, blind leaders who lead ignorant, blind followers as described by Jesus.
4. Leaders who see religion as an avenue to wealth, power, prestige, influence.
5. Willful ignorance by both leaders and followers who know that if they learn more they will be forced to change. And they do not want to change.
6. Followers who want smooth words, simple platitudes, easy doctrines, costless grace, *I'm OK, you're OK*, hollow proclamations,....
7. Leaders and followers who feel out of control in society and want to control something.
8. A lust for power to control other people overtly or covertly.
9. People who want to discuss interesting philosophical issues without regard to their long-term consequences or their relationship to what God has already told us in Scripture.

### **C. Misconceptions of Authority and Control.**

Some people in church groups feel they have responsibility without any control. Others receive authority without responsibility. Others want control to meet a specific problem and then fail to relinquish the control when the crisis is past. Others with ability opt out of responsibility altogether. All four are detrimental to the well-being of the group.

Some people never understand that the Lord's church is an organism with organization as an incidental, necessary part of that organism

### **D. Who Is in Control and Sets the Rules for Life?**

1. In the cosmic dimension the human options seem to be: God, Satan, co-equal good and bad beings, nothing, a vague spirit world, atheistic determinism, chaos, chance, change, progress, deified science.
2. In the social realm the options seem to be: the strongest, the most ruthless, the most clever, the rich, the loudly vocal, the charismatic people, the educators, industrialists, politicians, military, police, criminals, commerce, the titled professionals, the youth, the aged, or God.
3. In our personal sphere the options seem to be: self, my spouse, my parents (one or both), my in-laws, siblings, ancestors, the baby of the family, the eldest, fads, career, money, the boss, things, sports, hobbies, illness, health, or God.

### **E. The Book of Habakkuk Deals with Who Is in Control. The Answer Is God!**

The human lust/need for power may exhibit itself in the church in several ways. These may include: religious manipulation, political activity to achieve status or a goal, developing new doctrines or practices, re-instituting old heresies, seeking personal popularity at all costs, deciding that the end justifies the means, discarding some doctrines just because they are old, adopting doctrines just because they are new, following the 'feel-good' approach, using political power to get ideas entrenched, manipulating people and loving things, operating from some covert agenda for covert change, etc.

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:**

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1. According to Matthew 16.16f, which entity is to be defensive and which offensive?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. We note that the Roman church has always had opposition. What does that imply about restoration? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When Scripture and Culture conflict, which tends to win in the public forum? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Define the concept of deism. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Define pantheism. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Define atheism. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Define agnosticism. \_\_\_\_\_
8. One of the lessons from the book of Judges is \_\_\_\_\_
9. As noted in the lesson, one of the most important tools Satan has used is \_\_\_\_\_  
Why is that so? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What has been an ongoing theme in human history? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Describe the importance of lust for power in the church. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Define sacralism. \_\_\_\_\_
13. List at least six effects of a sacral mind-set on Christians.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_ 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) \_\_\_\_\_
14. List two lessons from Habakkuk. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Why should Christians study the history of the church and the apostate manifestations of it?
16. When we are honest with ourselves, who is often in control of our lives? How must we change that?

## LESSON TWO

# The Religious Environment in the First Century

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### INTRODUCTION:



What was the religious environment at the first? The Jewish people were very religious but divided into several mutually exclusive factions in the first century, (Sadducees, Pharisees etc.) i.e. denominations.

### THE SADDUCEES

#### A. The Sadducees Possessed the Overt Political Power with Rome's Backing.

1. They numbered approximately 2000 official members who practiced power politics.
2. They were interested in the present life and in maintaining the status quo with as little change as possible.
3. They were the political leaders including holding the position of High Priest.

#### B. The Sadducees' Religious Positions.

1. They held to the written law of Moses and the Prophets and the Writings, i.e., the Old Testament. They rejected the traditions of the Pharisees as binding in any way.
2. They rejected the idea of the resurrection of the body. See Matthew 22:23, Mark 12:18, Luke 20:27, Acts 4:1f and 23:8.
3. They rejected personal immortality, believing that the soul dies with the body.
4. They denied any notion of retribution in a future life as well as the existence of both angels and spirits.
5. They believed that man is the master of his own earthly destiny via doing good or evil with no intervention by God.

#### C. Jesus' relation with the Sadducees can be seen in these passages:

Matthew 16:1 – The Sadducees asked Jesus for a sign from Heaven.

16:6-11 – Jesus warned the disciples against the Sadducees' influence.

21:12f – The Sadducees resented Jesus' cleansing the Temple.

21:23 – The Sadducees attempted to discredit Jesus with the Romans.

22:23 – The Sadducees tested Jesus regarding the resurrection.

Luke 20:22 – They tested Jesus about taxation.

Mark 11:18 – They joined with the Scribes and Pharisees to destroy Jesus.

John 11:49 – They feared political ruin if Jesus continued his ministry.

**NOTE:** After the church was established, the religious leaders (Sadducees) persecuted the church and particularly the apostles, Acts 5:17-23. The direct effect of the Sadducees on the church ended when Rome destroyed the Temple and the Jewish nation in 70 AD. There is no record of a Sadducee ever becoming a Christian.

## THE ESSENES

This group is not mentioned in the New Testament. Most of our information comes from Josephus, Philo (first century), Pliny the Elder and Hippolytus (2nd century).

### A. They Practiced Communal Living with No Private Property.

1. Mostly unmarried, the majority lived isolated from the larger Jewish communities. They did not participate in the Temple services, but instituted their own worship system. They observed the Sabbath rigorously – many avoiding normal, voluntary body functions on that day.
2. They kept their numbers up by adopting children from other Jewish families since marriage was not generally practiced in their communal areas.
3. They were not strongly evangelistic. At the height of their influence, they may have counted 4000 members.

### B. Our Information Concerning the Essenes Come from the Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

There is no New Testament reference to any Essenes becoming Christians.

## THE ZEALOTS

### A. A Patriotic Party Devoted to Resisting Roman Aggression and Occupation of Israel.

1. Zealots resorted to violence and assassination in their efforts to get the Romans to leave.
2. Their fanatical violence was one of the factors that resulted in the Roman war and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

### B. The Zealots Disappeared in 73 AD

1. The Zealots captured Masada in 66 AD. When Jerusalem fell to the Romans, the last of the Zealots, about 1000 in all, withdrew to the Masada fortress. Under their leader, Eleazar ben Jair, they withstood a two year siege.
2. Rather than surrender, they killed themselves. The saga of Masada ended the Zealots in 73 AD. Note that Simon the Zealot was distinguished from Simon Peter by calling him a zealot, Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13.

## THE PHARISEES

### A. The Most Important of the Denominations in Judaism in the First Century

1. They probably numbered about 6000 at the time of Jesus' ministry, but influenced virtually everyone in the Jewish culture and world, and continued to influence Christianity for years.
2. Some of their mind-set has been incorporated into present day religious circles.

### B. Their Contributions to Judaism Included:

1. Legalism. During and after the Babylonian captivity the synagogue became the focus of Scripture study and assembly. The scribes in the synagogue interpreted the Scriptures and the Pharisees applied that interpretation.
2. Their personal goal was to live in strict conformity to the law and their interpretation of it. In addition, they intended that other people would be brought into that same conformity.
3. Their legalism included the concept of putting a fence around the law so that no Jew would ever even approach violating the Law.

### B. Another Contribution of the Pharisees Was Jewish Nationalism

Persecution, isolation, attempted forced Hellenization that provoked the Maccabean revolt, and Roman rule drew the Jewish people together and crystallized their view of '*us against the world*'. The Pharisees cultivated this attitude to maintain national cohesiveness.

**C. A Third Contribution of the Pharisees Was Adaptation and Tradition**

1. The Scribes and Teachers, during and after the captivity, formulated the law in detail, adapted it to their then current situation, added tradition, and cultivated a sense of separation from the rest of the world.
2. They violently opposed any change sought by other philosophies. This fervor led some to die for their faith. The ability of some to die for their faith made the Jewish people feel pride. This pride soon developed into a sense of superiority. The most extreme expression of this was among the Pharisees although they managed to affect most other Jews as well.
3. They became tightly organized, proud, loyal, opinionated, sticklers for minute details, and made life hard for themselves and burdensome to their followers.
4. Because they felt that they were the only correct interpreters of the Law, they became haughty and arrogant. These attitudes in turn led to a religion of outward observances and rituals without the mellowing influences of love, mercy, kindness, and wisdom.

**NOTE:** Their doctrines included divine providence, immortality of the soul, retribution and reward in a future life, and a coming Messiah. The Pharisees, in their close working association with the Scribes, were the dominate faction in Judaism in the first century and had many conflicts with Jesus. These conflicts arose from reasons such as their fear, envy, concern for status, life style, and hermeneutics.

**D. The Conflicts with Jesus by the Pharisees Included:**

John 9:16-22 – Messiahship of Jesus.

Matthew 3:7 – Repentance.

Matthew 5:20 – Works and rituals.

Matthew 9:12 – Pride.

Matthew 9:34 – How Satan is involved in human affairs.

Matthew 12:2 – Observing the Sabbath without love and mercy.

Matthew 19:3 – The question of divorce.

Mark 12:17 – The question of taxes to be paid to Rome.

Luke 5:21 – Blasphemy. Note also John 8.

Luke 7:30 – Refusing to be baptized

Luke 16:14 – Coveting

**E. Jesus and the Pharisees in Matthew 23**

1. Jesus dealt with what the leading Pharisees apparently thought most important:
  - v3 teaching others
  - v4 adding more burdens to other people's lives via 'more fences'
  - v5 visibility in public for notice of how religious they were
  - v6 gaining public honor
  - v7 public respect
  - v13 making the entry into the kingdom of God difficult, i.e., more fences
  - v15 making converts of Gentiles
  - v16 how to make oaths both effective and ineffective
  - v23 tithing



v25 cleanliness

v28 appearance before their own followers and before each other

v29 giving honor to earlier generations.

2. Jesus pointed out that the three areas that they needed help on the most were:

**Justice:** giving proper retribution for actions committed.

**Mercy:** able to forebear inflicting punishment when due, and able to feel compassion that will cause a person to help those less fortunate than oneself.

**Faithfulness:** being dependable in fulfilling responsibilities and in carrying out what they promised.

3. Their basic problem had to do with how they read Scriptures and how they applied it. The caution in the Law is to add nothing to it and take nothing away. The Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Zealots violated the letter *and* the spirit of the Law.
4. Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and Saul are examples of Pharisees who did grasp the good news.

**NOTE:** Caution in how we interpret Scripture and how we apply it to our own lives is in order. And, most certainly caution is in order as we apply our understandings to other people and their lives. But that does not mean that we are without responsibility for how we understand and apply the principles God has given for living for ourselves or for others. We are responsible. God's word is both understandable and applicable.

## OTHER RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES AFFECTING THE EARLY CHURCH

### A. ROME

1. Rome originally had only a few gods, but added new ones as they conquered additional territory.
2. In Roman religion morals and ethics were separate from religion. A person could be very religious but still immoral or unethical.
3. Roman religion had never been seen as a strong source of moral teachings. Roman religion was nearer to a businesslike relationship with superior powers that required humans to do proper service to their gods for some kind of reward.
4. Because of its effect on society though, it did promote a certain uniformity of religious views and community standards that would not be lightly broken.
5. Rome's immediate past that affected the church involved a remarkable man named Octavian born in 63 BC, the heir to Julius Caesar.

### B. The Roman Republic Had Begun in 509 BC and Lasted until 27 BC

Internal wars had developed about 100 BC with the first triumvirate of Pompey, Crassus and Julius Caesar in 60 BC. Julius defeated Pompey in 48, and was murdered in 44 BC. Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus formed the second triumvirate in 43 BC. Octavian defeated Anthony and Cleopatra in 31 BC at the battle of Actium. This battle marked the end of the Roman Republic although few realized that until sometime later. For the period 44-31 BC, Octavian was a butcher, i.e. winning at all costs in every battle. In 27 BC Octavian became Augustus, the statesman. How did Octavian change from being a butcher and, in 17 years, becoming the statesman, Augustus, without pardoning his enemies? His steps were as follows:

1. He used a variety of titles to convey **respect** for the Nation's cultural traditions: Son of God, Augustus, Father of the country, and High priest. He did not mess with the important tradition

of names. He showed respect, but he simultaneously and diligently changed the job content associated with those names.

2. He **restored** the old laws and procedures – thus appealing to continuity. He then added and changed laws, but had begun with the appearance of **continuity and respect** for the old.
3. He showed **respect for the old conventional morality** by reinstating old laws relating to marriage, family, and luxuries. In these he highlighted shared values of courage, mercy, justice, and duty – areas of common cultural acceptance, i.e. he forged a basis of unity.
4. He sponsored literary and cultural revival such as Virgil's Aeneid which lauded Rome's **history**.
5. He respected the Nation's earlier religion by rebuilding 82 temples on his own. He encouraged wealthy benefactors to build and repair temples. He restored Rome's ancient religious practices. He also widened the religious base so that those who were positive toward Rome could be included. He gave **public benefactors suitable recognition**.
6. He moved military leaders into **peacetime leadership roles**.
7. Augustus used his and Rome's money to **rebuild** Rome. He found Rome as a brick city and left it as a marble city. He put the statutes of 100 most famous Roman heroes in the city with a plaque detailing their accomplishments. Augustus left some open to encourage contemporaries to become heroes.
8. How does this affect the church? The strategies could be applied as follows:
  - a. recreate the history of the church
  - b. articulate shared values
  - c. give identity to and celebrate our spiritual heroes
  - d. reinvigorate rituals, procedures, traditions
  - e. tell the story of our beliefs well
  - f. work with the informal leadership instead of opposing them
  - g. encourage the team with a shared ministry.

The Romans were very tolerant of the varying religions in the Empire and intervened only in special circumstances to restrict, control, or destroy them. Important features that any accepted religion at that time must have possessed was: (1) to have had a long history before the time of Augustus, (2) to have enjoyed acceptance in its area of origin, and (3) to be tolerant of other religions without claiming to be the only way to reach, appease, placate, or manipulate the gods. Note how Christianity is counter to all three of these.

Gradually the idea that the Roman ruler was a representative of the gods changed due to eastern influences into the idea that the ruler was deity. By the end of the first century AD this was becoming an accepted idea, directly affecting the church.

### C. The Mystery Religions Affected the Environment into Which Christianity Came

1. There were some similarities between Christianity and these mystery religions but some extremely important differences. The areas of commonality were:
  - a. A quest for redemption from both mortality and evil.
  - b. The human need for close association in intimate settings.
  - c. Social fellowship across common social barriers.
  - d. Seeking a sense of equality between male and female, slave and free, rich and poor, etc.
  - e. The human need to seek happiness and blessings in a difficult world.
  - f. Concepts of death and resurrection of a deity. Pagans saw resurrection as seasonal and repetitive whereas Christians focused upon a single, one-time event.
2. The areas of great differences were:

- a. The mystery religions had a mysterious or secret initiation rite. Christianity was open, at least until persecution forced Christians to become more secretive.
2. The mystery religions had a secret worship procedure. Christians were open until persecution led them to be more secretive.
- b. The mystery religions had a recurring dying/reviving god versus the Christian view of a once and forever resurrected savior.
- c. The mystery religions were linked to fertility concepts. (Note that fertility symbols such as eggs and rabbits became linked to Christian activities in due course.)
- d. Mystery religions had special sacred meals to unite man and the gods. This affected Christians' view of the communion.
- e. Mystery religions had paired deities such as:
 

Canaan	Baal and Ashtoreth
Babylon	Tammez and Ishtar
Syria	Adonis and Astarte
Asian Minor	Attis and Magna Mater
Orphic Cult	Orpheus (male) and Eurydice
Egypt	Osiris and Isis

This seems to have affected Christendom in due course via developing Mary as the Mother of God and Jesus as Savior God as a 'paired deity.' As Mary has been exalted, the role of the Holy Spirit has been gradually diminished until a renewed emphasis in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- f. Some mystery religions included baptism (washing) such as in Mithraism and Magna Mater.
3. By the end of the first century AD, two relatively new religions had secured a significant foothold in Roman culture via importation from the east and from Egypt. Both affected the church directly.
  - a. The first was the cult of **Isis**. In Egyptian mythology, Isis was the goddess of fertility and motherhood. The cult of Isis spread from Alexandria throughout the Hellenistic world during the 4th century BC. It was introduced into the Roman Republic in 86 BC during the consulship of Lucius Cornelius Sulla and became one of the most popular branches of Roman religion. However, its licentious rites led to the cult of Isis having a bad reputation. Efforts by several consuls to suppress it continued until Christianity drove it out of existence. The last Egyptian temple to Isis was closed in the middle of the 6th century AD.
  - b. The second was the cult of **Mithra**, a Persian sun-god, which reached Rome itself about 68 BC via some Cilician pirates whom the Roman general Pompey the Great had captured and settled in Italy. It continued to spread with a great impetus in AD 69 by the Roman Legions that had set up Vespasian as the emperor. This cult may have been in Rome earlier, but it certainly was in the eastern portion of the Roman Republic/ Empire earlier.
  - c. It was seen as a notable challenge to Christianity since it offered these doctrines:
    - 1) Mithra was seen as the god of light and wisdom and the ruler of the world
    - 2) He presumably slew the divine bull, from whose dying body all of the animals and plants that humans need sprang, i.e. Mithra was creator.
    - 3) Mithraism taught humility, brotherly love, water immersion, and the idea of communion.
    - 4) When Mithra was born the legend was that his birth was adored by shepherds.
    - 5) Mithra was born on December 25, a date eventually adopted as the date of Jesus' birth.

(Note that the Jewish Festival of Lights was also on December 25. Thus there were powerful influences outside Scripture to promote having December 25 as the day to celebrate the birth of the Messiah.)

- d. Some differences with Christianity were:
  - 1) Mithraism excluded women from all ceremonies.
  - 2) Mithraism had a strong emphasis upon soldiering and endurance, i.e. a macho image.
  - 3) Mithraism's leaders were prepared to compromise with polytheism.
  - 4) Initiates had to go through an ordeal of physical suffering and endurance.
  - 5) At ritual feasts, the members ate chickens and geese cooked with an aromatic fire of pine cones.
  - 6) The chief feast of Mithras was December 25, the date of Mithras' birth versus the Christian observance of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus **each first day of every week.**
  - 7) Mithraism used 'holy' water which came into 'Christendom' a bit later.
  - 8) Christianity has verifiable, accurate historical records of the history leading up to the Messiah, His life and ministry, and His sacrifice and resurrection. Mithraism was based on many legends.

## D. Gnosticism

The gnostics were already active in pagan religions of the time and their philosophical approach to life and to questions of meaning was applied to Christianity when it appeared in the first century. The word 'gnosis' means knowledge. Its adherents believed that Gnosticism gave them special revelation into the secret knowledge of the divine.

Gnosticism is linked to many sources, being a syncretic religion or philosophy. Some sources were:  
*Greek Philosophy*: Philo tried to link Plato and Old Testament scripture. His views included the idea that Logos is the impersonal power of God (note 'the force' in Star Wars), the first born, the chief of the angels, the viceroy of God, and man's representative. Spirits are eternal and become imprisoned in a fleshly body. The spirit of man can achieve release by a special knowledge of God.  
*Persian Religion or Zoroastrianism*: There are two equal gods, one good and one evil. The good god created this world, but the evil one invaded it and thus made it a battleground. There is no guarantee as to which of the two equal gods will win.

*Buddha*: The hopelessness and extreme asceticism of eastern religions led to asceticism by some gnostics.

*Mystery Religions*: The idea of an elite with special knowledge and special rites provide a bonding influence for some; demonstrating that there are special people who are above the normal.

Gnostics wrote much: Gospels include Eve, Mary, Jude, Thomas, Philip, etc., Apocalypses include Adam, Abraham, Niotheus, Zoroaster, etc. Acts include Peter, Thomas, John, Andrew, Matthew, etc. Hymns, psalms, and homilies abound.

Gnostics held that gnosis is religion; knowledge is redemption; to know or to be redeemed is possible only for the one who has special contact with heaven. Gnostics used mystical consecration ceremonies and many symbolic rites. They believed that the spiritual person either suppresses *everything* that ties them to a body (asceticism) or believes himself totally *exempt* for any accountability for his bodily actions (libertarianism). Since the body is inherently and irretrievably evil, the soul has no influence upon it nor vice-versa. Some then said that even marriage and

procreation are inherently evil and avoided both. Others said that nothing they did could make the body more evil, so there were no limits on behavior and no immorality.

Gnosticism's basic question was, "What is the origin of evil?" instead of the question that seems more appropriate to our culture, "What must I do to be saved?". This focus determined their theological direction. Gnosticism was distinguished by an unethical, loveless intellectualism. The incarnation was inconceivable. Salvation is emancipation from the flesh by knowledge, not by a savior who frees us from the guilt of sin. Jesus Christ is an originated being, not God, according to the gnostics. There is thus no place for the creation of the universe by a good God, nor for God coming to the earth in the form of a man.

Although Gnostics claimed direct revelation from the Supreme Being, they diligently tried to link their doctrines to the Apostles directly or via second generation contact as proof of their validity. Their beliefs were complicated and not uniform. But they generally began with the idea that there is an unknowable God which generated a descending series of lesser divinities via emanations. The last of these was Sophia, or wisdom, which conceived a desire to know the ultimate God. Out of this illegitimate desire came a deformed, evil god or demiurge, who created the universe. The divine sparks that fell into this universe (or which were sent by the Supreme God to redeem the material realm) then gave man opportunity to know more of the spiritual realm. The Gnostics identified the evil god with the God of the Old Testament whom they thought actively sought to keep man ignorant. They also usually understood the material realm as totally, absolutely, and irretrievably evil. They understood Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden, the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as some of that god's efforts to keep man from knowledge. They refused to identify the God of the Old Testament as the father of Jesus Christ. They also believed that Jesus was the man. Christ, the divine spirit, came to dwell in the man at baptism but did not die on the cross, leaving the body of Jesus to return to the spirit realm before crucifixion. Gnostics thus rejected the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, the death of Christ, and the resurrection of the Lord. Flowing from that view, they also rejected most of the practices that Christians believe to be important. Some did accept baptism and the Lord's Supper as something important, but without the base that Christians hold in the ministry, crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Messiah. Some held that marriage was honorable, others felt it to be evil.

We know from church history that Cerinthus, a gnostic, was a contemporary of John, the apostle. Since Gnosticism was a subtle, dangerous heresy appearing in the early days of the church and reached its zenith in about 200 AD, it is mentioned directly or indirectly in many passages. Some of these are: John 1.1-5, 1.14, 4.6, 19.34f, 20.27; I Cor 7-11, I Timothy 1.4, 4.3, 6:20, II Timothy 3:2-5, Titus 1.16, II Peter 2.12-18, I John 2.7-11, 2.29, 3.10, 4.1-6, 5.20, II John 7, Jude 4, 8, 11, 19. Gnosticism affected the early church in many ways.

During the second century AD there was a strong need to state exact beliefs such as: God did create the physical world; Christ actually lived in a physical body; Jesus was actually born as a human baby; that Jesus actually suffered; that all of this actually happened in real history; and that Jesus Christ actually died and was actually resurrected. These concepts were detailed in what is known as The Old Roman Symbol and later as the Apostles Creed:

*"I believe in God the Father almighty; maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into Hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I*

*believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy universal church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."*

## **JESUS AND THE EARLY CHURCH FACED A CONFUSED WORLD!!**

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:**

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1. What primary belief held by the Sadducees blocked their acceptance of Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What attitude of the Essenes blocked their coming to Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When, where, and how did the Zealots end their role in Judaism?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. According to Jesus, what three attitudes did the Pharisees lack?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Rome's view of an authorized religion included which three things that Christianity lacked?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. The mystery religions were similar to Christianity in these ways:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. At least two concepts from the mystery religions that came into Christian circles:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What attitude did Gnostics have about their own spiritual maturity?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. In Gnostic thought, human flesh is as the two basic reactions. with either or:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What is your comment about the confused state of the world that Jesus and his followers faced?  
Please limit to 150 words.

## LESSON THREE

# Why Christianity Prevailed Over the Roman Empire

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**n Roman thinking, the state had control of every aspect of human life from cradle to grave encompassing secular, religious, economic, military, social, and personal matters. That gave the central government, and those entities that it nominated, total control over people. The concept was that everyone in a certain geo-political area will believe and behave in certain specified, expected ways or be considered an 'outlaw' or a 'rebel' and thus subject to suitable punishment. Innovation in any sphere of activity in such an environment is difficult. Change poses special problems for both the leaders and the followers since there is no accepted way to cope with change. Change disturbs the status quo and does not fit into preconceived concepts. That was the case in the latter days of the Roman Republic and during the time of the Roman Empire. Rome reluctantly allowed the Jews to be different on the basis that controlling them took too many resources and the Jews were a small portion of the Empire in any event. When Christians began to outnumber Jews and were, by some estimates, well over 25% of the Empire, the Roman authorities could no longer ignore their presence. Since Christians did not follow the Roman sacral system, something had to be done about them.

The idea of separation of church and state and the idea of individual freedom to innovate, choose, and live with the results was beyond their thinking. This factor lay behind the more commonly listed reasons why Rome persecuted the church. Depending upon abilities, personalities, and the 'whims' of fortune over these first 16 centuries, either the religious or political leader had dominance. The apostate church treated the state as one of its tools for expansion and control or the state treated the church as one of the important departments to maintain control of the population.

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### WHY CHRISTIANITY PREVAILED OVER THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Based upon outward appearances, there was no reason that the Roman Empire should fall and Christianity should prevail. Rome was seen as strong enough to cope with virtually anything that their world could use to assault the Empire. Christians did not have those outward manifestations of abundant physical resources, military power, and social control. Yet, the Roman Empire fell and Christians are still here. Why should this be?

#### A. Reasons the Roman Empire Fell and Christianity Flourished

1. Rome died by slow internal decay, loss of focus, affluence, depraved morality, loss of identity and catering to the lowest common denominator in their society. The barbarian invasions hastened the end, but those wars and the accompanying violence were **not** the root cause.
2. Christianity prevailed by being pure, humble, gentle, fervent, and steady.
3. Most importantly, Christianity prevailed because of God's plan and intervention in man's history. Jesus promised that the gates of hades would not prevail against his kingdom.

#### B. What Were the Secondary Causes That Contributed to Christianity Outlasting and

### **Surpassing the Roman Empire?**

1. Christians oppose sin, i.e. favor a certain behavior in life. Christians live according to a standard.
2. The zeal of the individual Christians and the group zeal to change people and the world. Christians had an inflexible zeal against sin, especially against idolatry and demons.
3. The hope and assurance of eternal life.
4. The verifiable miracles of the early church which have never been adequately refuted.
5. The pure, high, noble, and fruitful morals of the early Christians.
6. The unity and discipline of a special group that formed an independent, growing 'state' in the heart of the Roman Empire.
7. Christians gained more converts than they lost by apostasy.
8. A willingness to sacrifice and die for their faith.
9. Their assertion that paganism was evil and there must be no compromise.
10. Christians are special people with citizenship in heaven.

### **C. Paganism Was Tolerant of Every Religion Except for Reciprocal Intolerance Involving Jews and Christians.**

1. This is somewhat similar to today's intolerance by the politically correct toward anyone who deviates from their views. Thus both Jew and Christian had ample opportunity to explain their beliefs or to demonstrate by life style what they believed. Jews tended to be elitist and not evangelistic with a conviction that life was 'us against the world.'
2. Christians were evangelistic for several reasons:
  - a. God commanded it.
  - b. Paganism involved practices that Christians believed to be demon related and which must be exposed.
  - c. Christians knew a better way and they had a practical reason to explain and demonstrate it – to convert others to a better life.
  - d. Christians were willing to die for their faith or to have their physical goods taken by their enemies rather than deny Christ. This was a zeal unknown to rank-and-file pagans.
3. Educated pagans lived as though there would be no reward or punishment in a future state. The less educated pagans did have some hazy ideas about some kind of final retribution, but it was not based on grace or faith or purity. Pagan philosophers arrived at several different ways to view death. Some of these views were:
  - a. Death is the total and final end of all existence; effectively an atheistic approach.
  - b. Death frees the pure, honorable soul for a higher level of delights; no judgement at all.
  - c. The spirit is eternal. Being in the body is a short interlude of no real meaning.
  - d. The spirit of man is part of the great universal spirit and rejoins it at physical death.
  - e. Death ends all troubles.
  - f. Suicide is an honorable way to exit life's troubles.
  - g. Infanticide, abortion, and euthanasia are acceptable 'solutions' to certain problems.
4. Even when some kind of hell or heaven was discussed, there was no sense of equity. Their gods, of whom there was no proof but simply assertions, were capricious, whimsical, and lacking a steady standard by which to judge man (or themselves). Pagan mythology had no evidence or proof. Tradition was a major controlling factor in pagan culture. Fear and shame were more effective ways to control behavior than love, honor, loyalty, and respect. There was no sense that the world might end. Pagans had no restraint on this life and its morals based upon the next life.
5. The miracles in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts were verifiable by witnesses until roughly 100 AD. Afterwards they were accepted as valid because:



- a. The Jewish leaders had not refuted them even though they crucified Jesus and had every motivation to disprove Jesus' claims. The Jewish leaders could have attempted to manipulate society to 'prove their case,' but the evidence was so strongly in favor of Jesus' claims that even his foes recognized they could not directly confront Jesus' claims and prevail.
  - b. The change in life style of early believers was based on the truthfulness of the miracles. They willingly died for their beliefs.
  - c. The vast number of converts to Christianity was linked to verifiable miracles.
  - e. A large number of written records supported the truthfulness of the earliest accounts.
  - f. First century people had a much stronger belief in the spirit realm than is common in current western culture.
6. Christian ethics and morals were enhanced by being skeptically observed by pagans who wanted to find a flaw in Christian living. They were also enhanced by the sympathetic reciprocity of other Christians who looked out for each other. They had a sense of mutual charity, confidence, acceptance, loyalty, trust, and honesty toward other Christians. They also lived as good citizens in the empire. However, by opposing paganism's entertainments and basic customs, Christians were immediately set apart with intense scrutiny. Although some excesses and misunderstandings of Scripture occurred, even the excesses tended to distinguish Christian ethics and morals compared to the pagan culture.
  7. Christians formed a special group with special bonds that set them apart inside the Roman Empire even as they were a part of the Roman Empire. They saw themselves as unique, special, and separate from the world. Although they were to honor the emperor and obey the laws of the land, their final allegiance was to God.

## WHY CHRISTIANITY EXPANDED

### A. Christianity Prevailed and Expanded Rapidly in its Early Years for These Reasons:

1. The Christians truly believed that Jesus was returning soon and people needed to be ready. The resurrection of Jesus and of all mankind was known to be real and certain.
2. The Jewish synagogues throughout the empire gave Christians a ready forum.
3. The cosmopolitan attitude fostered by the Greeks and Romans allowed people to hear new ideas and explore new concepts as long as it did not sound treasonable. Rome, although a sacral state, would allow open debate as long as it was not treasonable. With a sacral mind-set, however, the form of open debate was much more narrow and restricted than would be considered 'free' in our culture.
4. Since the common language was Greek, working through a translator was not necessary.
5. The Romans had enforced peace so that people had a sense of safety in travel and living.
6. Pompey had cleared the Mediterranean Sea of pirates – making travel and commerce safe.
7. The superb roads, built primarily to aid the military, were free of brigands.
8. People felt adrift in their relationships and knew that something must be done.
9. People knew that materialism was not meeting their real needs.
10. The welfare state arose and thinking people knew that socialism was not the answer.
11. People questioned whether life is merely a whim of the gods without any lasting meaning.
12. Is life controlled solely by astral influences? Or do people have free will so they live with the effects of their actions? Is there a proper balance between cause and effect?
13. People had resorted to charms, magic, rituals, relics, etc and found that these failed.
14. There was no valid sense of redemption in pagan religions.
15. Increasing hedonism was destroying culture and social solidarity, like today's America.

16. There was increasing savagery among the 'civilized' portion of society, a la the gladiatorial contests.

**B. Three Overriding Reasons Giving Impetus to Christian Evangelism Were:**

1. Jesus has been resurrected and is now alive and active.
2. Jesus will return to receive the faithful, and it may be very soon.
3. Judgement is certain and will be equitable in relation to how a person has lived his/her life in relation to Jesus.

**OFFICIAL ROMAN GOVERNMENT PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH  
– A SACRAL/CONTROL ISSUE**

**A. The Roman Government Embarked upon Official Persecution of the Church for Several Different Reasons**

1. The Christians were seen as atheists who refused to participate in the state-favored religious ceremonies since they had no visible gods and did not conform to social customs.
2. They avoided images because they saw them as allied to demons.
3. Rumors were prevalent that Christians drank human blood and ate human flesh in worship.
4. Rumors were widespread that incest was common during worship. In that culture public displays of affection were not common. However, Christians did show concern and affection in public, calling each other brother or sister.
5. Christianity did not have ancient roots like the other state approved religions.
6. Christianity was not favored by the ruling groups in Palestine where it had begun.
7. Since any economic or military calamity had to have a sufficient cause (and Caesars were very unwilling to admit that they may have caused such) someone had to be found as a scapegoat. Since Christians did not defend themselves with force, they were a relatively soft target.
8. When Christians did well economically, socially or politically, they were a soft target for enemies. Their enemies would attack them instead of others since retaliation was virtually nil.
9. They were believed to hate the human race in spite of their benevolence because they were not involved in the common social customs of their day.
10. They claimed citizenship in heaven and thus did not value Roman or other earthly citizenship as highly as their neighbors.
11. They set up their own schools separate from the pagan schools to protect their children. But this led to society seeing them as isolationists or arrogant deviants.
12. They avoided gladiatorial combat spectacles, thus making themselves separatists. The truth that blood sports were repugnant to Christians was incomprehensible to the pagan world.
13. For many years Christians would not serve as soldiers or judges because of their pacifist views and at a later point they could not serve until the time of Constantine.
14. Christians refused the common luxuries and personal adornment common in their society as being against their spiritual development.
15. Because they would not offer sacrifice to the divinity of Caesar, they were seen as perverse and not willing to help the state overcome its obstacles, i.e. they were anti-sacralist.
16. The sacral system of thinking in the Empire involved the idea that unity at the altar was essential for peace in the market place. Disunity at the altar, in their minds, was clearly treason since it was therefore unavoidable that social and political upheaval would follow.

**NOTE:** There were isolated local persecutions over the Empire. There were 10 to 12 official

persecutions instigated and carried out by the emperor or his immediate aides. Church historians differ on the exact number and their extent. Some Caesars were very zealous about persecution, others were indifferent, and others did it just enough to satisfy the most rabid of their supporters.

**B. Official Roman Government Persecutions Based upon Several Historical Accounts.**

<u>Name of Emperor</u>	<u>approx dates</u>	<u>comments</u>
Nero	54-68	local, violent
Domitian	81-96	short, violent
Trajan	98-117	mild
Hadrian	117-138	moderate
Antoninus Pius	138-161	mild
Marcus Aurelius	161-180	cruel, severe
Septimus Severus	193-211	North Africa
Maximus	235-238	widespread
Decius	249-251	violent and widespread
Valerianus	253-259	more violent than under Decius
Diocletian	300-305	the most violent and widespread
Galerius	306-311	violent

Out of 270 years, from Nero to Constantine, the years of calm and the years of persecution someplace in the Roman Empire were about the same, 135 years. Some locales managed to avoid persecution altogether; other places experienced frequent persecution, and some were subjected to only some of the persecutions. Peace was helpful to the growth of the church numerically and spiritually. There was a negative, however, to this combination of violence and peace: Christians and their leaders had motivation and time to develop doctrines, organizational changes, and worship changes that continue to plague people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**NOTE:** A brief listing of official persecutions per scholars in this field shows the variation. The name of the Roman Caesar is given under whom some degree of official persecution persisted:

- \*From The Eternal Kingdom by F. W. Maddox: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Galerius
- \*From The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire by Edward Gibbon: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius
- \*From History of the Christian Church by Philip Schaff, p33, volume 1: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Maximianus, Decius and Trajan, Valerian, Aurelian, Diocletian (prompted by Galerius and Maximian).
- \*From History of the Christian Church by Philip Schaff, p45, volume 2: Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Maximianus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian
- \*From History of the Christian Church by George Park Fisher, 1887, Charles Scribner's Sons, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Maximianus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Galerius.
- \*From A History of the Christian Church, Richardson, Pauck, and Handy, 1959, Charles Scribner's Sons: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Antonius Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, Maximianus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Galerius.

**C. How Did the Christians Feel about Themselves in this Time of Upheaval and Persecution?** The unknown writer of Epistola ad Diognetum sometime in the early second century described it this way,

*"The Christians are not distinguished from other men by country, by language, nor by civil institutions. For they neither dwell in cities by themselves, nor use a peculiar tongue,*

*nor lead a singular mode of life. They dwell in the Grecian or barbarian cities, as the case may be; they follow the usage of the country in dress, food, and the other affairs of life. Yet they present a wonderful and confessedly paradoxical conduct. They dwell in their own native lands, but as strangers. They take part in all things as citizens; and they suffer all things, as foreigners. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every native land is a foreign. They marry, like all others; they have children, but they do not cast away their offspring. They have the table in common, but not wives. They are in the flesh, but do not live after the flesh. They live upon the earth, but are citizens of heaven. They obey the existing laws, and excel the laws by their lives. They love all and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, and yet they are condemned. They are killed and are made alive. They are poor and make many rich. They lack all things, and in all things abound. They are reproached and glory in their reproaches. They are slandered, and are justified. They are cursed, and they bless. They receive scorn, and they give honor. They do good, and are punished as evildoers. When punished, they rejoice, as being made alive. By the Jews they are attacked as aliens, and by the Greeks persecuted; and the cause of the enmity their enemies cannot tell. In short, what the soul is in the body, the Christians are in the world. The soul is diffused through all the members of the body, and the Christians are spread through the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, but it is not of the body; so the Christians dwell in the world, but are not of the world. The soul, invisible, keeps watch in the visible body; so also the Christians are seen to live in the world, but their piety is invisible. The flesh hates and wars against the soul, suffering no wrong from it, but because it resists fleshly pleasures; and the world hates Christians with no reason, but that they resist its pleasures. The soul loves the flesh and the members, by which it is hated; so the Christians love their haters. The soul is enclosed in the body, but holds the body together; so the Christians are detained in the world as in a prison, but they contain the world. Immortal, the soul dwells in the mortal body; so the Christians dwell in the corruptible, but look for incorruption in heaven. The soul is the better for restriction in food and drink; and the Christians increase, though daily punished. This lot God has assigned to the Christians in the world; and it cannot be taken from them.”*

This description of Christians is totally **anti-sacralist**. This author provided for independent religious expression, conviction, and experience while still supporting the local and national magistrates, kings, laws, and the pyramidal bureaucracy used by Rome and most other political entities. It comes near to what has persisted in western countries to some extent over the past two and one-half centuries

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:**

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1. What role did sacralism play in Roman persecution of the church?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Rome had abundant physical resources, a strong military and social control. What were the three primary reasons that Christianity prevailed?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. List the ways that the Roman pagan view of the afterlife differed from that of Christians:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. List three facts that allowed Christians to withstand the persecutions they faced.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Of the 16 reasons we listed for Rome's persecution of Christians, which one provided the basis for the others?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Based upon the information in this series, how many years of persecution were there somewhere in the Empire?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. List three benefits of persecution and three serious penalties:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Pagan views of judgment (if they actually had some ideas about it) differed from Christian views in these ways:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FOUR

# The Sacral Society – A Control Issue

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### INTRODUCTION:



sacralism is the view that all aspects of life must be bound together by a common religious loyalty by all citizens in a given locale. In a sacralist society there is NO room for diversity or openly expressed differing significant world views. In Roman rationale, the well-being of the Republic/Empire depended upon its citizenry being absolutely and totally loyal to the human leaders as well as to its religion. Minor diversity was allowed in the Empire, so long as it dealt with what might be called minor matters. Big diversity was seen as a threat to the continuation of the Empire. Significant diversity implied, to the Roman mind, disloyalty, rebellion, sedition, or treason as well as being an insult to Rome's gods. Jews were accepted as different (and therefore a latent danger) on the basis that their small numbers posed no real threat to Rome's existence and controlling them would require a heavy expenditure of the Empire's resources. Of course, even this benign neglect had its limits as the Jews of AD 70 found out.

A sacralist social/political view requires that religion, politics, traditions, commerce, customs, social life, laws, and the military be bound together by a common religious loyalty without room for dissent, diversity, innovation, or even tolerant separation. Uniformity on all important matters is mandatory in sacralism. The leaders determine what is major/important and minor/non-vital.

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### THE EARLY CHURCH AND THE SACRAL SOCIETY

#### A. The Church – Church and State are Separate Identifiable Entities

The early Church operated under the incredible supposition that church and state ARE separate identifiable entities.

#### B. Rome Saw Religion as a Valuable Arm of the Political State

The apostate western church began seeing all political entities as simply a political/social division of its own claimed universal power and authority over the world.

#### C. These Areas of Discussion Are Vital When Considering Sacral Thought:

1. Is the corpus Christi (body of Christ) the same as corpus Christendom (the inhabitants of a locale that is deemed to be Christian) ?
2. Can corpus Christendom (the church embracing a geo-political area) ever be the same as the church that Jesus envisaged?
3. Can the believer's church ever be equal to and coextensive with the locale church? How?
4. Does the political government have a controlling, or deciding, or major role to play in the affairs of the body of Christ?

5. When did the differentiation between church and state start disappearing and how fast did the move toward sacralism reach effective completeness in Christendom?
6. The state requires a loyalty that all men can give irrespective of their religious views. The church requires a loyalty that only a true believer can offer in return. How can people operate with two loyalties? Sacralists deny this possibility and thus do not provide the option.
7. In sacral thought the concept is that the sword is welded to the cross and they act in concert out of a common religious loyalty. (In the Islamic world the sword is welded to the crescent.)
8. The declining fortunes of Rome were seen by its leaders as a clear warning that an eroding sacralism was at fault. Claudius drove the Jews out of Rome as a result of this thinking. Decius demanded a single allegiance proven by a notarized statement that the adult had participated in a state authorized religious activity with allegiance to Caesar as paramount.
9. The Christian view was simply, "What has the Emperor to do with the church?"
10. Constantine was a thorough sacralist and simply replaced a pagan oriented sacral government with what he saw as a Christian oriented sacral government. Once that occurred, then:
  - a. Mission work ended. Since everyone under Constantine's rule was defined and deemed to be a Christian, there was no need to preach salvation.
  - b. Since Christian sacralists operated as if there were no pagan sacralists left, the pagans simply changed names and continued as they were.
  - c. Constantianism became a very real and ongoing concept that continues to plague us.
  - d. The Donatists, who favored the separation of church and state, began thinking of themselves as the small body of the saved in the midst of a large, unregenerate, unsaved, politically powerful mass of people who lived as if they were pagans (and most were). We will return to the Donatists later to discuss their errors which still plague us.
11. Note that Constantine was Pontifex Maximus of the Old State Religion and decided to become the Bishop for Christianity. He thus welded the sword of iron to the wooden cross of Jesus, giving the church armies, navies, war horses, siege machines, generals, etc.
12. History shows that any group out of step with the sacralist decreed standards must be either absorbed or annihilated by the sacral leaders who fear social destruction via diversity.

**NOTE:** By the time that Martin Luther catalyzed the reformation, the battle against sacralism had lasted more than 1200 years. It continues today, most notably in nations that have a single dominant religious orientation or atheistic focus.

#### **D. The Character of A Sacral Society**

1. The idea of a parish developed out of sacral thought since that allowed the political/religious leaders to have absolute control over every individual in a specific area. As matters developed, the Inquisition rests upon sacral thought.
2. The constitution of the USA is a tribute to men who knew how destructive a sacral society is to people. They were aware of the Restitutionists who held very strongly to the view that no secular or church ruler can define people as Christians when they have not obeyed the Scriptural way of the new birth. A non-sacral society gives people the right to believe or disbelieve. They also knew that any religious group that has access to coercion becomes corrupt. Under the USA constitution the intent of the framers was that the secular arm was to be neutral and impartial in its handling of religious matters, not anti-religious. Note that John Calvin was a sacralist in his view that the magistrate has as his duty ensuring that God is served and honored by **all** within his jurisdiction. The framers of the USA constitution did not see this as a prime duty of any government official.

3. Conductal averagism is a necessary corollary in sacralism because people are encouraged to live at the lowest common denominator and there is no incentive to live differently or better.
  - a. Church discipline, as the early church saw it, is impossible in a sacral society.
  - b. In a sacral society any move to put a person out of the church also puts them out of society since the church and society are seen as coextensive.
4. Religious rites are practiced in public as a way to tie community together.
  - a. Sacralism requires a clergy with authority over public religious activities because that allows the clergy to control the laity while tying the laity together in a common bond.
  - b. Sacraments and clergy become ways to control society and manipulate individual members.
  - c. As it develops, a sacrament gains its own inherent power and is thus valuable even if the priest or officiant is unworthy.
5. The church is required to get permission to meet as well as to carry out certain activities such as study, worship, marriage, baptism, funerals, ordinations, etc.
  - a. The granting authority combines both secular and religious concepts into one all-embracing authoritarian control mode.
  - b. Only the 'professionals' have the right to carry out the prescribed religious rituals which are seen as ways that society is tied together.
  - c. Uncommissioned preachers were (and are often now) seen as heretics or troublemakers. In the Dark Ages, these un-commissioned preachers threatened Rome's use of the diocese concept which gave a priest extensive control over the lives of every person who happened to have residence in that diocese.

#### **E. The Reformers Opposition to Restitutionists/Restorationists.**

1. The Reformers saw society as sacralist and could not comprehend religious tolerance and diversity as both normal and healthy.
2. The Restitutionists viewed all who favored a sacral society as fallen from grace and part of the congregation of Satan.
  - a. Luther's first step had been to attempt to have both the corpus Christi and corpus Christendom to function simultaneously and in harmony.
  - b. Since that is impossible, he opted for the politically correct version of corpus Christendom.
3. The Restitutionists said that the true Church of Christ cannot exist where it is intertwined with the secular power. That formed the basis for their opposition to Rome and the Reformers and for the violent opposition by Rome and the Reformers to them.

#### **F. The Practice and Problems of Re-baptizing**

1. Re-baptizing arose partially because the 'christening' concept was a political expedient developed by sacralists early on to tie people to the sacral system before they had any way to consider it, refuse it or ignore it.
2. When people were baptized correctly, it was seen as a violent and defiant step against the state – tantamount to a change of allegiance.
  - a. Margaret of Parma in 1567 issued this statement, "Newly born infants shall upon birth be carried to the parish church in plain sight, to be baptized – under pain of very heavy and rigorous correction for the parents if they have them baptized in another way. Capital punishment is decreed for the parents and for him who officiates at such other baptism."
  - a. Infant baptism involves coercion and is related to a sacral thought pattern. The Reformers also dealt with baptism in a sacral system and opted to continue the christening because to do otherwise would have been to introduce diversity into society and they could not



envisage doing that. They admitted it was not according to scripture, but it was socially necessary in a sacral mindset. The social heart of the conflict between the sacralist and the non-sacralist is the concept of cliques, sects, and diversity. The established apostate church resorted to oaths as a way to identify Restitutionists since Restitutionists would not take an oath that they had not been a Restitutionist. By refusing the oath, they were admitting to being in a sect or a heretical group not in step with the rest of the sacral society. (This chapter is an extract from a book report by Stuart Jones on The Reformers and Their Stepchildren by Leonard Verduin, The Baptist Standard Bearer, copyright 1964 by Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids.)

## THE RISE OF THE CONTROLLING MONARCHAL BISHOP

### A. **The Seeds of Apostasy Were Already Being Sown During the First Period of the Church's Existence.** Paul warned of a general apostasy in:

1. Acts 20.28-32, II Thess 2.3-12, I Tim 4.1-3, and II Tim 4.1-4.
  - a. Recall Jesus' words in Mt 24.24, Jn 15.22ff, Jn 16.1ff, Jn 16.8ff, and Jn 16.13.
  - b. Note Peter's words in II P 2.1-2. **The entire epistle of Jude deals with apostasy.**
2. Another Gospel (Galatians 1.6-8).
3. The observance of the Law of Moses in contrast to the new relationship through Christ (Galatians 5.1-4).
4. Division and a sense of partisanship (I Cor 1.10-15 and 3.3).
5. The idea that the resurrection is past (II Tim 2.18).
6. Another perversion about resurrection I Cor 15.12-19
7. I Cor 5.1-3 and 6.9 deals with lascivious living.
8. Heb 10.25 deals with failure to meet together.
9. I Cor 11.18ff deals with profaning the Lord's supper.
10. Rev 2.4 and 3.15-17 deals with the spiritually indifferent.
11. Rev 3.2 deals with the spiritually dead.

### B. **Mixed in with the Change in Leadership (The First Step in the Apostasy) Was a Gradual Perversion of Grace into One or More of These Ideas:**

- Total grace that takes care of every thing in every way at all times for all people, leading to universal salvation.
- A warm and fuzzy feeling with no specific content past feelings.
- There are no rules, no firm doctrines, and no pattern aside from what the individual wants.
- The spirit is holy even though the body sins so that sin is not at all a serious matter.
- The view that 'I have a God-given right to be happy on my own terms.'

### C. **The Most Significant Change to Occur Began with the Change in Church Organization and Government.** The Spirit warned about this in Acts 20.30. Recall Diotrephes and his attitude.

1. The rise of the Monarchical bishop.
  - a. One of the presbyters was chosen to preside over the meetings of the group in its Sunday assembly and began to be called the president or presiding bishop.
  - b. According to Augustus Neander in his **General History of the Christian Religion and Church**, vol I, p 9, "What we find existing in the second century enables us to infer, respecting the preceding times, that soon after the Apostolic Age the standing office of the president of the presbytery must have been formed; which president, as having preeminently the oversight over all, was designated by the special name of Episkopos

- (Bishop), and thus distinguished from the other presbyters. Thus the name came at length to be applied exclusively to this presbyter, while the name presbyter continued at first to be common to all.”
- c. This arrangement evolved into one man keeping the title and position for prolonged periods so that he/the idea became entrenched.
  2. Ignatius of Antioch (c35-107) was a strong advocate of the monarchical bishop concept and might be said to have been its earliest and most influential advocate.
    - a. His writings do not necessarily represent the actual situation in the period between the apostles and into the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, but may well represent his desire for the monarchical bishop.
    - b. Later church leaders used his writings to claim apostolic origins for the monarchical bishop.
  3. By about 150 or so, many congregations did have a monarchical bishop, but this bishop had NO authority outside his immediate congregation.
    - a. By about 250 the concept of monarchical bishop seems have become widely and generally accepted.
    - b. According to Charles M. Jacobs, **The Story of the Church**, p19f, Muhlenberg Press, “We begin to find congregations headed by a single officer for whom the name ‘bishop’ is exclusively reserved. The bishop becomes the most important man in the church. All of the duties of administration are laid upon his shoulders.”
      - 1) The idea of office and organization became more important than function.
      - 2) The idea of administration became more important than leading and example.
      - 3) The idea of individual leading became more important than a plurality of leadership.
      - 4) The idea of life-time tenure became entrenched. That concept continues to harm the church today. All of this is tied together via the issue of control.

**NOTE:** Newman illustrated how people sought to justify a change for a plurality of shepherds to a single bishop: Newman, A. G. **A Manual of Church History**, Vol I, p266, Judson Press. “The distinction between the bishop and presbyters firmly established from the time of Cyprian was brought about in the following way: The churches had come to be large bodies difficult to manage, especially in times of persecution. The collections and distribution of alms had assumed vast proportions, and the superintendence of this work devolved upon the Bishop. The Bishop was chairman of the board of presbyters and the leader of the church in the administration of discipline. Presbyters often disagreed, and the feeling grew that there should be in each Christian community a center of authority whereby schism might be prevented and unity preserved. Occasions would frequently arise for the interference of the bishop, and when the need for episcopal authority came to be felt, the vindication of such authority was sure to follow.”

- **People arrived at a conclusion and then sought to justify it.**

**D. The Central Person in This Change – Cyprian (Bishop of Carthage, 195-268 and 248-258).**

He was about 1-1/2 centuries after Ignatius of Antioch, whom he patterned his thoughts upon instead of Scripture. Ignatius of Antioch had declared that apart from the bishop there is no church.

1. The church became man-centered, not Jesus centered. According to Lindsay, T. M. **The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries**, p 305, Cyprian said, “...the bishop was the representative of Christ in the community over which he ruled, and therefore he had the authority over the single congregation or church which our Lord possessed over the universal church. He was the Lord or viceroy over that portion of God’s heritage.”
2. The focus was still on a single congregation.

3. The authority of the exalted bishop was then gradually extended over more than one congregation.
4. This was a result of missionary activity of the first congregation or the presbyters of another congregation coming under his supervision: Mosheim, John Lawrence, **Ecclesiastical History**, Vol I, p 30. "The bishops who lived in the cities, had, either by their own ministry or that of their presbyters, erected new churches in the neighboring towns and villages. These churches, continuing under the inspection and ministry of the bishops, by whole labors and counsels they had been engaged to embrace the gospel, grew imperceptibly into ecclesiastical provinces, which the Greeks afterwards called dioceses."
5. In time the bishops of the leading cities became elevated above their fellow bishops and assumed the titles of Metropolitans.
6. Those of the major cities of Christendom (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch; to which were later added: Ephesus, Jerusalem, and Constantinople) were given the titles of Patriarchs.
7. Until the 6th century there was no widely accepted idea of a 'universal bishop' presiding over all of the other bishops of the world.

**NOTE:** It was not a bishop of Rome that first claimed and managed to hold the title of universal bishop. Mosheim, John Lawrence, **Ecclesiastical History**, p145, reports, 'In the year 588, John, bishop of Constantinople, surnamed the Faster, on account of his extraordinary abstinence and austerity, assembled, by his own authority, a council at Constantinople, to inquire into an accusation brought against Peter, Patriarch of Antioch; and upon this occasion, assumed the title of ecumenical or universal bishop.' At that time, Gregory (now called the Great) was Bishop or Patriarch of Rome (590-604). He was greatly incensed by the presumption of his rival in Constantinople.

Philip Schaff in **History of the Christian Church**, Vol III, p220, wrote: "...Gregory I was provoked and irritated beyond measure by the assumption of his eastern rival, and strained every nerve to procure a revocation of that title. He characterized it as a foolish, proud, profane, wicked, pestiferous, blasphemous, and diabolical usurpation, and compared him who used it to Lucifer....After the death of John the Faster in 596, Gregory instructed his ambassador at Constantinople to demand from the new patriarch, Cyriacus, as a condition of inter-communion, the renunciation of the wicked title, and in a letter to Maurice he went so far as to declare, that 'Whosoever calls himself universal priest, or desires to be called so, was the forerunner of the anti-Christ.'"

#### **E. The Influence of The Church in Rome**

1. It was widely respected and had a reputation for stability and soundness.
2. It had been one of the most conservative churches and was noted for its charity.
3. Its compassion and leniency toward sinners enhanced its power.
  - a. Both Irenaeus and Tertullian made agreement with the Roman church a test of apostolic soundness.
  - b. The Roman church had earned its status, but when it went wrong, many followed due to its status.
4. Rome was the western center of political and social power and came to be the religious center as well.

#### **F. Boniface III Assumed the Title of Universal Bishop in 605**

After the death of Gregory the Great, the new Roman patriarch, Boniface III, after one year (in 605), assumed the title his predecessor had so vehemently rejected: According to Mosheim, p160, "The disputes about pre-eminence, that had so long subsisted between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople, proceeded, in this century, the seventh, to such violent lengths, as laid the

foundations of that deplorable schism, which afterwards separated the Greek and Latin Churches....Boniface III engaged the emperor Phocas, that abominable tyrant...to take from the bishop of Constantinople the title of ecumenical or universal bishop, and to confer it upon the Roman pontiff ...thus was the papal supremacy first introduced.”

#### **G. The Change in the Office of Bishop Brought a Change in the Concept of Ministry**

1. At first all Christians were regarded as equal. Some men were full-time or part-time evangelists. **They had no special privileges or status.**
2. In the fourth century definite distinctions between clergy (applied at first to all from ‘kleroi’ – a peculiar people, God’s heritage) and laity (laos or the masses) began to be drawn.
3. The next step, since the Bishop was the church, was that only the clergy could administer the sacraments in the manner of the Law of Moses. This linkage was:  
high priest               = bishop  
priests                 = presbytery  
levites                 = deacons  
Israelites              = the people

#### **H. The Trend Toward a Clergy, Laity Differentiation Accelerated after Constantine**

One writer said, “Even the bishops themselves, whose opulence and authority were considerably increased since the reign of Constantine, began to introduce; gradually, innovations into the forms of ecclesiastical discipline, and to change the ancient government of the church. Their first step was an entire exclusion of the people from all part in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs; and afterwards, they by degrees divested even the presbyters of their ancient privileges, and their primitive authority, that they might have no importunate protestors to control their ambition, or oppose their proceedings; and principally, that they might either engross to themselves, or distribute as they thought proper, the possessions and revenues of the church. Hence it came to pass that, at the conclusion of this century (fourth), there remained no more than a mere shadow of the ancient government of the church. Many of the privileges which had formerly belonged to the presbyters and people, were usurped by the bishops; and many of the rights, which had been formerly vested in the universal church, were transferred to the emperors, and to subordinate officers and magistrates.”

**NOTE:** Edward Gibbon, a non-sympathetic source regarding Christianity, wrote The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. He included many comments supporting the above in his analysis of how the church operated prior to the fall of Rome. In his view, the government of the church as an organization has often been the subject as well as the prize of religious contention. The pressure to maintain proper doctrine, make rapid decisions, and protect the church from outside persecution led to one man, the most skillful one, to be in charge for prolonged periods. This role began to be called ‘president’. Then, to differentiate roles, this leading position began to be known as bishop and the other elders as presbyters. This pyramid structure, once begun, developed rapidly so that it was firmly in place by the time of Constantine. The pyramid needed uniformity of doctrine, common procedure, and some semblance of biblical authority to give it the power to force non-conformists in line. For some time the idea was that the bishop was merely first among equals. That is an impossible stance. Later the bishops agreed to meet together to resolve common congregational concerns. The pyramid then grew more as some bishops were more adept than others and assumed more and more authority. By the early 3rd century it appears that they moved from exhortation to command. A few even began claiming to speak for Christ and **demand**ed obedience. Aspirants needed skills in business, organization, budgeting, controlling, leading, and motivating. They began adding invective to their sermons and used excommunication as a tool. In a sacral society, excommunication is nearly a death sentence since the church and society are seen as co-extensive. The leaders soon lost sight of the fact that they were also sheep and that everyone in the true church

is a volunteer. The bishop began holding title to property in his own name and he controlled the distribution of the contribution. Money became a powerful motivator. Bishops thus needed support staff, just as the CEO of a business needs support staff. The departure in organization appears to have been complete before Constantine and solidified shortly thereafter, building gradually into the papal structure by the early 600's, and widening the gulf between clergy and laity significantly.

### **I. In a Sacral Society, the Religious-political Elite must Retain Control**

1. One effective way to do that is to establish the clergy who must receive authority from above, i.e. be ordained by a higher religious level.
  - a. This clergy holds authority over the masses and laity as the higher religious level holds authority over lower clergy.
  - b. Control is demonstrated by using public rituals that are seen to be holding society together.
  - c. These rituals are derived from normal and usual practices and are then elevated so they become a blessing-generating activity for the geo-political unit involved.
  - d. The clergy becomes administrator and the laity become recipients of the good will of clergy. Eventually the ritual assumes a role of its own, i.e. it has a magical component and effect.
2. About 150 Bishop Hermas of Rome claimed a special revelation that immersion removes only past sins, but does not deal with future sins.
3. In c215, Tertullian identified the seven deadly sins, thus laying the groundwork for the later development of mortal and venial sins.
  - a. The mortal sins were: idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, false witness, and fraud.
  - b. Sacral states define what is sinful or not allowed
4. Tertullian in c220 said that mortal sins after baptism cannot be forgiven; hence many delayed baptism until near death.
5. Kalliston, bishop of Rome, in c220 said that he had the power and authority to forgive sins after **proper** penitence. Others liked the idea and added to it so that **proper** penitence could include: public proclamations, burning candles, paying fines, making pilgrimages, wearing special clothing or insignia, etc. All of these have control issues deeply involved so clergy can maintain control.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR**

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1. Sacralism involves the view that \_\_\_\_\_ of life must be \_\_\_\_\_ by all \_\_\_\_\_ in any given \_\_\_\_\_
2. Comment on the understanding that early Christians knew that church and state are separate entities with different purposes and roles in society.
3. The Diotrefes complex is behind these ideas:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. When one-man rule became the normal mode via elevated bishops, these occurred:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. According to Gregory the Great (590-604), anyone who claims to be the universal bishop is the forerunner of \_\_\_\_\_
6. List four reasons that the church in Rome enjoyed special status:
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which 'bishop' claimed universal authority and made his claim last during his lifetime?
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. Compare the apostate church structure with that of the Israelite structure.
- |       |   |       |
|-------|---|-------|
| _____ | = | _____ |
| _____ | = | _____ |
| _____ | = | _____ |
| _____ | = | _____ |
9. Explain how the apostate church used the concept of PENANCE to establish and maintain control over the laity and clergy.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
10. Tertullian formulated the idea of mortal versus venial sins, c220 AD. What are the mortal sins?
- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 . What was the rationale for people delaying baptism to near death?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FIVE:

# Other Heresies in the Early Church

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### THE RISE OF THE COUNCILS

#### A. Transferring authority from scripture to councils

Another change occurred in the first 4 centuries and which did much to displace the New Testament as the rightful authority of life, worship, and practices in the church. This was the rise of the councils. During the apostolic age, the question was 'What does the scripture say about this?' During this change of authority the question became, 'What does the council say about it?'

1. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, (195-268).
  - a. He was the principle promoter of transferring authority from scripture to councils.
  - b. Cyprian's thought was, that as each bishop sums up in himself the church over which he presides, the whole church of Christ practically exists in the whole of the bishops, and the harmonious action of the whole church can be expressed through the common action and agreement of all the bishops.
  - c. He thought that since the priests control the keys of the kingdom, salvation requires submission to the bishop who gave the authority of the keys to the priests. The true faith is thus transmitted from bishop to bishop, not solely via scripture.
  - d. This gave authority to the meetings of bishops from the various cities of the province. These meetings were called councils.
2. Constantine extended the power of the provincial councils past the provincial boundaries.
  - a. In 325, Constantine determined to hold a synod of the Empire.
  - b. He desired it to be one church, with a single law-making body, with uniform practices and a single creed.
  - c. The general (or ecumenical) council was to be the law-making body, and was to establish uniformity, in doctrine and practice, throughout the Empire."
3. The emperors after Constantine.
  - a. Summoned the general councils, bore the necessary expenses, presided in the councils through commissions, gave to the decisions in doctrine and discipline the force of law for the whole Roman empire and maintained them by their authority.
  - b. The emperors nominated or confirmed the most influential metropolitans and patriarchs.
4. Union of church and state harms both.

A sacral society does not benefit the individual, the corporate church, an individual congregation, or the society. Each and every error in viewpoint and doctrine is likely to become enshrined as normal, important, and THE rule irrespective of reality.

#### B. What Were the Motives Behind Councils?

1. Certain individuals and groups wanted authority and **control**. Councils gave them a forum.
2. Many believed that doctrine could be clarified by open discussion instead of scripture study.
3. Many believed that certain procedural questions must be agreed upon in open discussion.
4. Leaders felt a need to create uniformity of both practice and belief.

5. This was one avenue toward healing schisms – discussion followed by coercion.
  6. Councils could be effective in enforcing ecclesiastical discipline over a wide area.
  7. When change was needed, it should be uniform and at the same pace empire-wide.
  8. Defining orthodoxy became important as new ideas came into society.
  9. Defining heresies and their consequences was essential to maintain church purity.
- Thus, people used a departure from Scripture in an attempt to be closer to Scripture.

## OTHER HERESIES IN THE EARLY CHURCH

**A. The Nature of Jesus.** Was He solely spirit, solely human, or some incomprehensible combination of both? Many of the church councils, having already accepted the perversion of a pyramidal power structure, convened to discuss the nature of Jesus.

### 1. ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

- a. Nicaea 325 Condemned Arianism
  - b. Constantinople 381 Called to settle Apollinarianism
  - c. Ephesus 431 Called to settle the Nestorian controversy
  - d. Chalcedon 451 Called to settle the Eutychian controversy
  - e. Constantinople 553 Called to settle the Monophysites controversy
  - f. Constantinople 680 Concerning the doctrine of two wills in Christ
  - g. Nicaea 787 Sanctioned veneration toward images but not worship
  - h. Constantinople 869 Effective schism between east and western Christendom
2. Roman based councils – do not necessarily include any representatives from the eastern church.
- a. Rome 1123 Decided that the Pope is to appoint Bishops
  - b. Rome 1139 An abortive attempt to heal the east/west rift
  - c. Rome 1179 Procedures to enforce ecclesiastical discipline
  - e. Rome 1215 To allow Innocent III free reign
  - f. Lyons 1245 Political quarrel between political leaders and papacy
  - g. Lyons 1274 Another attempt to heal the east/west rift
  - h. Vienne 1311 Suppressed the Templars
  - i. Constance 1414-18 To heal the Papal schism. Burned John Huss at the stake.
  - j. Basel 1431-49 First steps toward internal reform of the Roman church
  - k. Rome 1512-18 More steps toward reform
  - l. Trent 1545-63 Significant reforms to counteract the Reformation
  - m. Vatican 1869-70 Papal infallibility
  - n. Vatican II 1962-65 More open toward others in Christendom, departed from Latin in Mass, condemned anti-semitism

### **B. Immersion Removes Only Past Sins**

1. In about 150, Hermas, bishop of Rome, claimed a special revelation that immersion removes only past sins. Then, after baptism, Christians have only ONE opportunity for cleansing of new sins.
2. This led to delaying baptism to as close to death as possible.
3. Tertullian (d220, Carthage) said that mortal sins after baptism **cannot** be forgiven.
4. In 220, Kalliston, bishop of Rome, said that he had the power and the authority to absolve sin after proper penitence. ‘Proper’ penitence could be defined as some combination of one or more of:
  - a. a public proclamation of guilt
  - b. burning of candles
  - c. paying fines



- d. making a pilgrimage
- e. wearing special clothing

### C. Heretical Sects

1. Gnostic influences. We have already dealt with that influence in an earlier section.
2. **Ebionism:**
  - a. One group held that Christianity was an extension of Judaism, bringing out all that was truly worthy and noble in the Mosaic Law.
  - b. Another group held that Christianity was not the culmination of Mosaism. After some time, their combined ideas resulted in Ebionism. Ebionites held that:
    - 1) The Mosaic Law was still in force and that Moses was equal in authority to Jesus.
    - 2) Close observance of the Mosaic Law was necessary for salvation.
    - 3) Christianity fulfilled the law but did not abrogate it.
    - 4) Christ was the prophet of Israel's deliverance – Jesus was a mere man and his generation was natural.
    - 5) The Divine Spirit entered Jesus at baptism.
    - 6) Christ was a good Jew; his piety was his claim to Messiahship.
    - 7) He performed miracles; and he supplemented the law by his own commands.
    - 8) They rejected Paul's writings as not Jewish enough. They did accept the "Gospel of the Hebrews" and other apocryphal books.
    - 9) They had communities in Asia Minor, Cyprus and in Rome, and existed down to the fourth century. Ebionites would have retained Christianity within Judaism. Refer to Hurst, History of the Christian Church, 26. and to Kenneth Scott Latourette, The First Five Centuries, Zondervan, 1970, 338.
3. **The Nazaraeans** accepted Paul's writings, believed that Christ was the Son of God and that his generation was divine. Mosaic law was important. They lasted until the fourth century.
4. **The Elcesaites (Sampsaeans)** were oriented toward Judaism by keeping the Jewish Sabbath, retaining sacrifices, held that oil and salt were emblems of spiritual communication, and prayed with their faces toward the sun. A syncretic religion with Jewish, pagan, and Christian parts.
5. The **Marcionites** held that everything Jewish must be excluded from the Scriptures followed by Christians. Their Scripture became some parts of Luke plus all of Paul's writings. Marcion and his followers rigorously observed the Scriptures that they did accept. They wanted a strict standard of living. Marcion wanted to sever all ties to the Old Testament since he believed that a perfect God would have created a perfect world with perfect people. Since the God of the Old Testament had allowed flies, fleas, fevers, famine and fault, Marcion wanted to discard that God and introduce a God he liked better.
6. **The Montanists** accepted the whole of the New Testament as we have it, but they wanted to add the prophecies of Montanus and others they believed to be spokesmen for God. They are seen as maximalists. Their most prominent period was 135-160 AD. Very outspoken. Montanus had been a priest of Cybele before his conversion. He believed he had direct messages from God; that the Holy Spirit was active; that the second coming of Jesus was at hand; that the millennial reign of Christ would then begin; that Christianity was too lax; that the real church is the pure church; that re-admission after sacrificing to idols after baptism was forbidden; that marriage was less virtuous than celibacy; that second marriages should not occur; that prophets should have more respect than the clergy; and that women can have a higher role than in other parts of Christendom (even some women could become bishops.) Tertullian became an ardent adherent. Persisted in Asia Minor until the eighth century. Modern

day maximalists include the Mormons, Christian Scientists, Jehovah Witnesses, the Roman church, and others, i.e. additions and/or adjustments are needed.

7. **Monarchianism** arose as people continued to try to understand Jesus as both man and God.
  - a. The older form of Monarchianism held that Jesus is a man endowed with special power from God, and thus was in a way adopted as God's Son. For the **adoptionist**, Jesus is not really God, only an adopted god. This view arose about 190 AD in Rome (introduced by Theodotus the Tanner) in reaction to the gnostic speculation that Jesus was only an immaterial aeon. He was expelled from the Roman church by Victor (189-198 AD). Although this view never became a major issue in the early church, it reappeared about 750AD and periodically thereafter.
  - b. The later form of Monarchianism is called **modalistic monarchianism** or modalism. It resolves the mystery of the Trinity by viewing the three Persons as simply three different modes of the One God; i.e. they are not distinct persons but three ways the One God shows himself. For the modalist, Jesus is not God on his own, but is the Father in a variant mode. Although Modalism exalts the deity of Christ, it loses the idea that Jesus is our mediator. Also, modalism is docetic in that it teaches that Jesus was human in appearance only, he was not truly man. His suffering was an illusion, not real. And it must lead to the idea that the Father himself died on the cross. Modalism arose about 190 AD from Praxeas who believed that Jesus was the Father who was born in time, i.e. the Father is not eternal. Sabellius (in Rome 198-222) taught the strict unity of the godhead as One Person with three names. The Son revealed the Father by coming to earth and now the Holy Spirit reveals the Father.
8. **Novationists** followed Novation (third century) who is best known as a church leader who was not immersed, but had water poured on his head. This occurred when he was seriously ill (not expected to recover) and wanted to become a Christian. In the 200's up to the time of Constantine, church leaders were divided about how to handle serious or mortal sinners who wanted to return to the church after a major sin such as adultery, murder, and especially apostasy. Cyprian of Carthage (b200-248-258) felt that readmission should not be easy, but possible. Novation felt that readmission should be very difficult. He would not readmit nor would he accept any proof of repentance. In his view a Christian could commit an unpardonable sin not mentioned by Jesus.
9. **Manichaeism**. About 250 AD, Mani of Mesopotamia formulated a new syncretic religion mixing teachings of Zoroaster, some mystery religions and Christianity. He believed in an ongoing conflict between light and darkness. In his view the mother of light formed the soul of man from pure light but the king of darkness enveloped this pure soul with an evil, material body. Salvation lies in releasing the soul from the body and that is accomplished via Jesus as the perfect light. Asceticism was promoted. Marriage was for carnal Christians. The carnal Christians could help the spiritually minded by money and food. This led to a priestly class. Mani was crucified, but **Manichaeism** lasted until about 450. It was very much influenced by the gnostic or mystery religion concepts
10. The **Donatists** taught that the sanctity of the church does not lie in its integrity as an institution, but in the spiritual excellence of its leaders. The character of the officiating clergyman determined the efficacy of the sacramental act. Others in Christendom, especially the political leaders, held that the sacraments were effective because of the church regardless of the personal misdeeds of the administrant since the church sanctified the sacrament. The Donatist view naturally led to the state not being able to use the church as one of its tools since in this view the church is not primarily an organization, but individuals bound together by common beliefs. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), the most influential writer in the period before a functioning

papacy, successfully defeated the Donatists in argumentation, thus allowing the imperial government to use its police powers to create a unified church organization. Augustine is held as one of the Fathers of the Church by Rome. His viewpoints successfully implanted the Sacralist position into western Christendom for centuries.

The Donatists also believed that if a person yielded under persecution and worshiped pagan gods or obtained a certificate (by bribery or some other means) that he/she had worshiped as Rome decreed, they had committed an unpardonable offense.

11. **Pelagianism** arose from a British monk, Pelagius, who lived in Rome about 400-420. Alaric sacked Rome in 410, so this was a time of upheaval and unrest. According to Augustine, Pelagius taught that man is naturally good and that each person has true freedom of will. Pelagius felt that humans sin voluntarily; that God gave commands that all people can obey; that Adam did not transmit sin but taught it by example and word; that people are justified by faith alone at baptism; and that people must continue working toward moral perfection. He denied the doctrine of original sin transmitted to all people by Adam. Augustine of Hippo attacked Pelagianism on the grounds that God has predestined each individual to either heaven or hell and there is no appeal nor alternative. He was also concerned that Pelagius' ideas might lead to a man feeling he did not need a savior if he lived a 'good' life. One of the followers of Pelagius named Celestius did start promoting the idea that if we can live without sin for a very short period of time that we can extend that time of sinless living up to an entire life time. The logic is incorrect, but unfortunately believed by many. Of course, Pelagius could reply that Augustine's rigid determinism would make the good God the author of both sin and good. Although Augustine won this argumentation, being a western oriented word crafter, as years passed most people in Christendom tended to move toward Pelagius and away from Augustine's predestination. Then Calvin reasserted Augustine's double predestination many centuries later.

12. **Arianism** was never successful in the western Mediterranean basin for any extended period, but had major success in the east and in northern Europe among the invading Germanic tribes. Arius believed that Jesus is/was a semi-divine being created, not begotten, by the Father, and had an origin in time, or at least a definite beginning before the creation of the material world. Arius taught that the subordination of the Son to the Father arose because he was of inferior substance instead of the two working together with different functions in the three person godhead.

The effects of earlier controversies with gnosticism had given Christianity a clear monotheistic view and the conflict with Marcionism had given a clear New Testament canon. Arianism led to a clear statement of orthodoxy called the Nicene Creed and was the first doctrinal question settled by a council. Troubles bring forth a response which may be scriptural or anti-scriptural. Arius came into the theological scene as monasticism was beginning among isolated hermits in Egypt and a short time before the explicit toleration of Christians was proclaimed under Constantine when he became the sole ruler of the Empire. Because the church was becoming socially respectable (and thus perceived as soft) many Christians felt that a more harsh life would elevate Christianity to more spiritual levels. Hence the move toward monasticism. Also, the persecution of Diocletian had caused many to either flee into the wilderness as monastics or to apostatize. Arius was one of the rigorists. He believed that those who apostatized could not be readmitted to the church. They had committed an unpardonable sin. This is harmonious with a harsh life being the most spiritual.

The council of Nicaea concluded that Arianism was false. But, after much political intrigue, the Arian group got political support from Constantine and from his sons. About 356 the Arians achieved political victory. Although Julian the Apostate was hostile to Christianity (361-

363AD), he ended all banishment for religious reasons. This benefitted pagans who had been exiled, but also the anti-Arians returned from exile. By 381, the Nicean Creed was reestablished as orthodoxy, thus ending Arian supremacy. However, Arian ideas continued in the eastern areas as well as among some of the Germanic tribes. We will return to Arianism later as it continued to influence Europe.

An ongoing idea allied to Arianism was that of Apollinaris of Laodicea (d. ca. 390) who taught that the LOGOS took the place of a human soul in Christ so that Jesus was not totally human, just a human shell enclosing a piece of God. Jesus did not have a human mind. They read John 1:14 understanding 'flesh' to mean a physical body instead of 'human nature' as it generally means in the NT.

13. The **Nestorian** controversy was based on the perception that Nestorius taught that there was only an apparent unity between the divine and the human in Christ. He held that upon conception, the Logos and the human personality was absolutely united but neither transformed the other. Jesus actually was tempted and God was actually involved. He was popularly understood to believe that there were two Christs and this was rejected although people accepted the idea that there were two distinct natures in one person – human and deity. In effect this claims that Jesus had two personalities, i.e., a divided man.
14. **Eutyches** taught that Jesus had only one nature following the incarnation, although two had been present before.
15. **Monophysitism** is fundamentally the insistence that there is unity of the divine and human nature in Christ and it is fulfilled in the physical life of Christ, producing a single nature. The theory states that the Word became flesh, but worked itself out in the human flesh *becoming* divine. They held that Christ's humanity *became* divine.

**NOTE:** Several councils were called to deal with the general issue of the nature of Christ. In their attempt to find/express the truth, they used language of Greek philosophy, not strictly biblical language. As a result, centuries of confusion persisted. Political cohesion was lost and the barbarians secured victories which hampered the religious life of the Empire.

## 16. MONASTICISM

Tertullian, c220, said that asceticism benefitted a man and that the more a person punished himself, the less God would punish him. In his view grace permitted and assisted asceticism and asceticism was essential. The monastic movement is said to have begun in Egypt with Anthony, 250-350AD, several decades after Tertullian laid the ground work. Anthony's example stirred people because:

- they longed for a purer Christianity
- persecutions in the more populated areas led them to seek sparsely populated areas.
- bonding with people of like mind seemed attractive
- many hermits gained much acclaim.

Typically in the east, individuals tended to be isolated or at least not in communities. In Europe communities were more frequent. Women tended to lead out in this movement. Many different orders of monks and nuns arose – some becoming centers of learning. In time affluence wrecked their original purpose. Hildebrand of Cluny led the way to monastic and church reform in later years, using the monastery reform to provide a platform of power for the papacy.

## 17. IMAGES were a major concern for centuries in Christendom.

1. Jews had opposed any use of images as focus of worship or to represent spiritual matters.
2. Moslems were even more fanatical although very early they had believed that images had been ok, just not idols.

3. Most early church fathers had soundly opposed images for the same reasons that Jews had been opposed to them.
4. Much controversy surrounded the use of images although relics had come into popular use for many purposes: veneration, instruction, healings, etc.
5. By the mid-700's a council seemed to be the solution. At Nicaea in 787, the decision was to allow veneration of images; to teach that the veneration was to be directed toward the saint depicted and not to the image itself; and that true worship was to be reserved for God alone.
6. The Nicaean decision did not solve the problem since many wanted to destroy images. Iconoclasts are image breakers, i.e. those who will destroy images if possible. Iconodules favor images.
7. By the time of Charlemagne, or about 800 AD, the question had been resolved toward the acceptability of images.

## **18. The Premillennial View**

People may believe that the premillennial view is new, i.e. a 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century concept. In fact it has been around for centuries.

The basic view of the premillennial persuasion is that Jesus came to establish the kingdom on earth, starting with the Jews. Jesus and his Father were surprised to see that the Jews rejected Jesus as king. Accordingly, they formed the church as a stop-gap measure until the kingdom could, in fact, be formed on earth. The formation of the kingdom will occur when Jesus comes back. There are many variations in the premillennial teachings. Some believe that the righteous dead will rise when Jesus returns, some believe that he will sit upon the literal throne of David in Jerusalem exactly 1000 years, at which time Satan and his forces will be released to wreck havoc against the righteous. Then the end will come. There are many arguments against this overall doctrine:

1. The spiritual church is transformed into a physical entity in the view.
2. God's plans cannot be thwarted by mankind. Note that in Jeremiah 18:6 that the clay does not control the potter.
3. God cannot be surprised by man nor make a mistake in his plans or judgements. If the Father and Son are capable of error, how can we trust them in any area of life?
4. In John 6:15 the Jewish people were preparing to crown Jesus king and he refused.
5. John the Immerser said that the kingdom was near. Note Matthew 3:2.
6. Jesus said that the kingdom was near. Note Matthew 5:17.
7. In Matthew 16:16ff we find that the church and kingdom were discussed by Jesus in the same context.
8. Jesus promised in Mark 9:1, Matthew 16:28 that some of those standing there would not die before the arrival of the kingdom. In Acts 1:8 Jesus said that power would come with the Spirit. The Spirit came in Acts 2 with power.
9. In Luke 22:30 Jesus promised his followers that they would eat and drink at his table in the kingdom. In I Corinthians 11:20ff, the church was criticized for abusing the Lord's table.
10. In Colossians 1:13 the kingdom has been given (past tense) and in Hebrews 12:28 the kingdom is being received, i.e. it is ongoing.
11. John the apostle in Revelation 1:4, 6, and 9 claimed to be a present tense partaker of the kingdom.
12. The church is part of God's eternal purpose according to Ephesians 3:10f, not an afterthought.
13. We are in the last days; not in the next to last days. Note Acts 2:16f and II Timothy 3:1-5.
14. Acts 24.15 states that there will be single resurrection, not two or more.
15. God no longer deals with Jews as a special set-apart people with advantages over Gentiles. Romans and Galatians both make that abundantly clear.

16. Ezra and Nehemiah both make it clear that any restoration of Israel to the promised land according to the Old Testament prophecies has already occurred.
17. Jesus said that his kingdom was not of this world, i.e. no earthly throne nor physical focus.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:**

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1. What was the overriding topic discussed in most of the early church councils?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What tool did these early councils use in their discussions that became more important than Scripture?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What were the three most important reasons for early church leaders to convene councils?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What was one of the enduring heretical ideas about baptism that affected the response of hearers?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. If we assume that Augustine accurately described Pelagius' views, what must we assume about the maturity and quality of the church in the British Isles about 400 AD?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was one of the benefits arising from the conflict with the Marcionites in the early church?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The Arian statement , **There was when he was not**, means what about Jesus the Christ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Tertullian's view about self-abasement validated what life style?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Iconodules\_\_\_\_\_ images while iconoclasts\_\_\_\_\_ images used in worship.
10. What accusation against the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is necessarily involved in the premillennial concept?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON SIX

# The Canon, Constantine, and Monasticism

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### INTRODUCTION:



Every lasting organization has a standard set of principles, concepts, regulations, and focus. The church is no different. Nor was Judaism any different. The Jewish nation had the Law and all of the books that followed the Law through Malachi. This set of writings was developed and established as their canon over many years. It appears to have been settled before the ministry of Jesus and was later ratified or agreed to by the leaders in about AD 90 at the council of Jamnia.

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### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANON

**A. A Standard of Measurement.** A canon (or standard of measurement) is needed in a religious movement because people have short memories and may (will) lose track of what they believe. Some comments about the New Testament canon follow:

1. The Old Testament was insufficient to portray the story and message of Jesus adequately.
2. The New Testament books were all written by about 100 AD (John the Apostle being the last living writer) with Revelation being the last.
3. Peter accepted Paul's writings as inspired. Paul frequently claimed inspiration.
4. Churches were using these writings and comparing them to each other and to the known truths in the Old Testament to ensure they were using valid documents.
5. When the first heresies arose, church leaders needed to have a standard by which to compare teachings with truth.
6. One of the early heretics, Marcion, spurred this effort on by declaring all of the Old Testament books as invalid and then including as his canon only Paul's letters (minus I and II Timothy and Titus) and portions of Luke. Church leaders had to respond to this attack.
7. By the mid-100's the collection of books that we use was widely recognized.
8. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, was in exile in Rome. While there he issued a Festal Epistle in 367 AD listing the same 27 books we use today. This was public recognition of what the early church had been using for many years. It was **not** an official statement of authenticity from a council or the papacy or any 'official' group of men.
9. The early church leaders excluded all of the OT and NT apocrypha or hidden writings.
10. The New Testament book's canonicity depended upon many factors, such as content and accuracy, but the following two appeared to be the most important when combating Gnosticism:
  - a. The writers were apostles or close companions of the apostles.
  - b. The book was accepted by churches begun by apostles or by the apostles' close companions.

**B. A Criteria – Congregational Acceptance**

This reliance upon congregational acceptance eventually led to the following line of reasoning that resulted in later, ongoing deviation from the truth:

1. Christ passed on special information to the apostles.
2. The apostles then passed that special information on to specific men in the congregation(s) who in turn passed it on verbally.
3. Therefore, these special leaders in those special congregations had knowledge beyond the written word. Since that knowledge became a tradition, tradition could (must) have the same authority as the written words. In practice, the oral tradition superseded the written word.
4. Since there might be a discrepancy between this 'special verbal knowledge' and the written word, the special verbal knowledge began having dominance with a special *asserted* link to an apostle. Note there is a significant difference between an assertion and a fact.

### C. Combating Gnosticism

1. The gnostics claimed their own scriptures and special knowledge.
2. The only argument that the early church fathers developed that seemed to counter the gnostics was the continuity of 'truth' in specific congregations such as that in Rome.
3. This then enabled the Roman church leaders to exercise influence (not coercive authority or power at this stage) over other congregations.
  - a. Their rationale was that Rome had become the repository of special knowledge and truth.
  - b. Dealing with congregations on doctrinal issues or moral issues was not workable unless the bishop(s) of Rome and the bishop(s) of the other congregation met and worked matters out as two people or two small groups.
  - c. The leading bishops soon were viewed as having special knowledge, wisdom and skills.
4. Justin Martyr wrote in the 100's that the Christians assembled on the first day of the week to hear the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the prophets. Written Scripture was vital at first.
5. By the end of the second century the early church had settled upon three basis for authority:
  - a. **The written word** (Old and New Testament),
  - b. **Tradition** (especially that from churches begun by the Apostles or Apostles' companions), and
  - c. **The oral transmission of information.**

**NOTE:** The nature of humans is such that the oral transmission gradually became dominant and the first two were interpreted accordingly. This led increasingly to human control, legislation, and judicial functions without the restraints of written scripture. Culture became more and more the dominant factor. Philosophy and its terms became the 'language' of the Christian leaders.

### D. The Formation of the Canon

1. L. A. Muratori found a mutilated fragment dated c170. It validates most of the 27 we use.
2. Origen (c185-c254) named the 27 books but noted that some controversy existed about Hebrews, James, II and III John and Jude.
3. Eusebius of the 4th century named all of the current books; noting that James, II Peter, II and III John and Jude were disputed by some – but most churches accepted them.
4. In 367 Athanasius listed the same 27 we have.
5. In 397 the Council of Carthage officially recognized what the churches were already doing.
6. The Roman church has **never** controlled canon. The Papacy did not exist until about 600 AD and the canon had been settled well before then. The Roman church did attempt to modify canon later by adding the Old Testament Apocrypha which the Jewish scholars had definitely excluded as unworthy to be in the Scriptures.
7. Canonicity was determined by these questions (among others):
  - a. Is it true?
  - b. Is it compatible with other apostolic writings?



- c. What did the early church fathers say about this book?
- d. Is the content authoritative or merely exhorting and commentary?
- e. Is it suitable for being part of the standard of faith and practice?
- f. Was the human author an apostle or a close companion of an Apostle?
- g. Was this writing accepted by one of the leading congregations associated with an Apostle or his close companion?

**E. Why Did the Early Church Reject the Old Testament Apocrypha?**

1. The Old Testament Apocrypha was never in the Jewish Old Testament.
2. Jesus and the apostles did not use the Apocrypha during their ministries as support.
3. Jewish writers in the first century such as Philo and Josephus rejected the apocrypha.
4. The Jewish Council of Jamnia in 90AD rejected them.
5. Jerome (c400 AD) rejected them in his translation of the Vulgate.
6. There is no intrinsic quality of inspiration and there are errors in facts.
7. These books were clouded with continual uncertainty.

**F. Reasons the Early Church Rejected the New Testament Apocrypha**

1. These books include errors and contradictions with accepted books.
2. The authors used pen-names of well-known people to get acceptance.
3. These books do not claim authority.
4. Fanciful stories make up some of the material.

## EFFECTS OF CONSTANTINE AND HIS FAVORING CHRISTIANITY

**A. Three Negative Situations Faced By the Roman Empire**

1. Constantine thought Christianity would help him deal with these effectively.
  - a. Barbarians had been enrolled into the Empire's army – making it potentially less loyal to the Empire.
  - b. Society had become increasingly militarized, especially along the borders, with a constantly increasing consumption, percentage-wise, of domestic empire production.
  - c. The emperor's court had become increasingly oriental with more and more focus on the emperor being divine.
2. Christians were not identified with the barbarians – being primarily found in the settled areas relatively near the Mediterranean Sea.
3. Christians did not favor militarization of society and had, up to that time, been out of favor with the army.
4. Christians, many of them well educated, could compete with others for high government posts if given the opportunity.
5. In most cases they were excluded from the list of aspirants. They also opposed any idea that the emperor could be divine.

**B. Emperors Had Acknowledged That Having a Common Unifying Religion Would Help the Empire.** There seemed to be these four choices:

1. Develop a pagan state religion by exterminating the Christians – but that was not achievable.
2. Develop a Christian state religion by force – but that would be exceedingly difficult since Christians were not warlike and the pagans were warlike.
3. Develop a totally secular state – but that was unthinkable in that culture which viewed life and religion as part of a normal whole, i.e. a sacral state.
4. Change the sacral system from one that favored pagan religion into one that favored Christianity. Under earlier emperors this had been unthinkable and totally unachievable. With the changes occurring under Diocletian and the rulers after him, this step became more

and more feasible.

### **C. An Attempt To Exterminate Christianity**

Diocletian, a frontier general, began option #1 by trying to exterminate Christianity in 303 AD. His subordinates, also frontier generals, Galerius and Maximian, thought that they could restore the glory of Rome by restoring the ancient pagan worship. Diocletian favored Jupiter and Maximian favored Hercules. So, they issued edicts:

**Edict 1** – all church buildings to be destroyed and all scriptures publicly burned.

– all Christians would lose both civic status and legal rights.

**Edict 2** – specifically restricted activities of the officials of the church.

**Edict 3** – offered an invitation to Christians to repent and return to their pagan roots.

**Edict 4** – death for all Christians.

### **D. The Development of the Relationship Between Constantine and Christianity**

Diocletian retired in 305 to tend cabbages on his farm. He divided the empire into two districts – east and west. Each was to have an Augusti helped by a Caesar. The west was ruled from Treves with a secondary capital at Milan. The east was to be ruled from Nicomedia with a secondary capital at Sirmium on the Danube. The whole was then broken down into 96 provinces so that no one man could ever hope to have large enough army to conquer very much. Diocletian took the east and Maximian the west, both as Augusti. They agreed to retire on a certain date, promoting the two Caesars to Augusti and appointing two new Caesars. The idea was to avoid these four positions from being inherited – but occupied by the highest qualified man. When Diocletian and Maximian retired, Galerius took the east and Constantius Chlorus the west from his base in Britain. Constantius divorced Helena at that time because she was from a lesser family. Part of the package set up by Diocletian was that each Caesar would wed the daughter of the Augusti he worked with. Constantius died soon thereafter and his son, Constantine, petitioned to replace his father. Galerius agreed, thus making inheritance of a title an issue in spite of Diocletian's efforts to avoid this point of conflict. Then the son of Maximian, Maxentius, attempted the same thing. He killed another aspirant, Severus. Galerius then refused to recognize Maxentius, appointing Licinius instead. Maximian came out of retirement. Now six men claimed some degree of empire control. There was intermittent civil war for about 20 years. For some time Constantine fought Maxentius – both of whom were pagans but did not persecute Christians. Constantine allied himself with Apollos/Helios (the sun god) and Maxentius with Hercules.

Then Constantine did two very unexpected things. He publicly stated he was a Christian and he invaded Italy against his advisors' recommendations. Maxentius came out to fight and was drowned. Thus, in 312, Constantine had rule of the west. Galerius, in 311, admitted failure in exterminating Christians in the east and issued an edict allowing Christians to worship. Then he died. Constantine and Licinius agreed on a decree to allow Christians to worship openly. After disposing of another rival, Licinius began persecuting Christians again. Then in 324, Constantine won the rule of the entire empire. Eusebius reported that Constantine had seen a vision in the sky with the words 'by this conquer' adjacent to a cross. In any event, Constantine apparently thought that God had blessed him. But, he remained head of the pagan religion in the empire and used the title, 'sun of righteousness.'

### **E. The Immediate Actions Taken by Constantine That Directly Affected Christians**

1. Restored worship centers at government expense.
2. Made the clergy exempt from taxation.
3. Allowed churches to act as corporations and hold property.
4. Slaves could be released by the actions of church clergy in a church building.

5. Removed the tax penalties on the unmarried since celibacy was a growing attitude in the church.
6. Sunday was made a day of rest for some portions of the populace.
7. Ended crucifixion as a way to punish criminals.
8. Allowed both slavery and gladiatorial contests to continue.
9. Thought of himself as the bishop of the church for external affairs.
10. Introduced some slight degree of tolerance for religious pluralism to promote a united Empire.
11. Introduced a major shift from pagan sacralism to 'Christian' sacralism.

#### **F. Specifics That Resulted from Constantine's Actions and Attitudes**

1. Christianity was made both legal **and** favored. A 'Christian' sacral state was formed.  
In this sacral state these were the accepted ideas:
  - a. Since all persons in the empire were defined as Christians, evangelism effectively ceased.
  - b. Mission work outside the boundaries of the empire diminished since those near the boundary were also seen to be 'Christian' and thus not convertible.
  - c. Life styles deteriorated since everyone was defined as a Christian irrespective of life style.
  - d. Ritual became the focus since it can be observed while one's heart and attitude cannot.
  - e. Administrators of the rituals (sacraments) held final control over everyone else since they held the power to perform or not perform the binding, saving rituals.
  - f. Only ordained administrators or clergy had religious authority; no volunteer preachers.
2. Persecution against Christians by the state was ended but was now begun against pagans.
3. Group meetings or councils would now decide doctrine except when the emperor dictated it. Scripture was no longer the final word nor the standard for doctrinal correctness.
4. Political and secular people would have a direct voice in doctrine and church procedures
5. The emperor could/did decide which church group was orthodox and which heretical.
6. Clergy obtained special privileges to set them apart from the laity or common Christians.
7. Worship became elaborate with pageantry. Special groups were exalted, such as the choirs. Less congregational involvement. More and more of the church activity was by professionals. Entertainment became the standard for inspiring or uninspiring worship.
8. Sunday was recognized as a special day of rest for certain people, not all.
9. Large numbers of scripture-ignorant persons came into the church without conversion.
10. The pagan government gave subsidies to the churches with seculars controlling the church.
11. Many wealthy and powerful people came into the church and expected to have the same role as they had previously had in their social circle. Spiritually blind leaders became usual.
12. Buildings became quite elaborate as an expression of God's grandeur and the magnificence of the communion. Externals became increasingly the standard of evaluation.
13. The religious center moved eastward toward Constantinople and away from Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. As time passed this changed, but was a significant reality for some time.
14. Delaying baptism until near death became more acceptable. The idea was that God would forgive all sins committed before baptism but only a few (or 1) after baptism.
  - a. Delaying baptism thus meant that the person would carry few sins into heaven.
  - b. Constantine did this and set a powerful example to the citizens at large.
15. As a result of the affluence that developed, Constantine inadvertently spurred monasticism.
16. Any theological debate was hampered by political considerations.

**NOTE:** Let's review some of the principles of a sacral state:

- Unity in the market place is possible only if there is unity at the altar.
- Church and State are inseparable, one is always a department of the other.
- The geographic and declared church are always identical.
- Everyone is deemed to be a believer in a certain geographic area.

- The Sword and the Cross are welded together to act in concert.
- There is no tolerance for dissent or diversity.

## **BEGINNINGS OF MONASTICISM**

### **The Beginnings of Monasticism in the Mediterranean Basin**

#### **A.**

1. Eusebius (260-340) was an Arian who enjoyed close association with Constantine. His views seem to be common in that day about the role of God and Constantine. Personally he favored peace at any cost, but he was objective enough to know that war had been a prelude to Constantine's role.
2. His specific views were:
  - a. Christianity will become universal as will the Roman Empire, growing together over the world.
  - b. The Roman Empire is ordained by God to accomplish the growth of Christianity.
  - c. Christianity is the culmination of history.
  - d. God planned for Constantine's rise and his conversion.
  - e. God shows his favor by granting power and wealth to men like Constantine.
  - f. Ornate church buildings are a matter of pride in man's God and in what God has done.
  - g. The kingdom, in every way, is now here and this world will get better and better.
  - h. The sacral state, with a Christian appearance, was now totally implemented.
3. Many others saw Constantine's favoring of Christianity in a completely different way.
  - a. Their idea was that the narrow gate had been redefined as wide and easy.
  - b. They saw the true enemies of the church as: security, comfort, acceptance and affluence.
  - c. They also saw the church as entering into an unholy alliance with the state overwhelming the church. Their solution was FLEE from this environment.
4. They were influenced by some gnostic concepts about the evil nature of the body and the need to punish it.
5. They were also influenced by the concept of celibacy and by the Greek notion of stoicism.
  - a. Sex activity of any kind was considered evil and control absolutely necessary.
  - b. Other pagan ideas also entered into their thinking: sacred virgins, celibate priests, and official eunuchs.

#### **B. The Progression of Monasticism**

1. Becoming monks (solitary = monachos) or anchorites (withdrawn or fugitive) began about the early to mid-300's. Some say Paul (d c 350) or Anthony (d c 356) were the first, but both learned it from an earlier person.
2. Actually this was a contagion affecting thousands at once.
  - a. They desired a simple, subsistence level existence in contrast to the fat, lazy, powerful, rich bishops.
  - b. The monks began cooperating in at least two areas: civil disobedience and overt coercion.
  - c. At a later date in North Africa they began organized banditry to punish the wayward (by the monk's own definitions) and raise funds (a la Robin Hood).
3. Communal monasticism (cenobitic) began with Pachomius (b 286) who developed pyramid monasticism, i.e. there will and must be a single leader of each group. His views were:
  - a. There must be a combination of work and devotion to reach humans and God.
  - b. Each monk must eat a balanced diet to maintain health and vigor.
  - c. Monks must enter into the local trade economy to provide resources for the group.
  - d. There must be total, willing and instant obedience by all in the group.
  - e. Genders must be totally separate since no one could rely upon self-control.
4. Some of the effects of the monastic movement were:

- a. pagans admired their rigor, their will-worship, and their following their own rules.
- b. There was a sense of order and discipline in an ungodly, violent, disorderly world
- c. There was a sense of true dedication in a world given over to hedonism
- d. Some scholarly monks soon rose to positions of influence, such as Jerome.
- e. Monks were separate from the clergy in the east and thus able to avoid many problems.
- f. Monks in the west became the clergy in many instances and molded the western church. Martin of Tours was one early example of the monks having a voice in the larger church.

## THE DONATIST CONTROVERSY

### A. A Major Controversy Was Developing in North Africa

1. It had within it elements of religious belief, cultural prejudice, and bias along with individual desire for control or power.
2. Lasted until Islam conquered North Africa by the sword and effectively destroyed overt 'Christian' institutions and their public role.

### B. During the Severe Persecutions That Swept North Africa Many Christians Weakened and Sacrificed to Caesar as Required by Rome

1. Some handed in their copy of the Scriptures. Some handed in heretical texts under the pretext that they were the Scriptures.
2. Others obtained, on the black market, certificates stating that they had sacrificed to Caesar as required in the presence of many witnesses.
3. A major issue – the role of secular rulers in church matters.
4. After the persecutions ended and Christianity was now sanctioned and even promoted by the Emperor, many of these 'lapsed' wanted to return to the church in full fellowship. There were five questions that had to be answered:
  - a. How are these lapsed to be viewed? Are they to be restored immediately and readily, with difficulty, after some time, or not at all? What will be the conditions of restoration? What will happen to families if there is no restoration of one or more lapsed members?
  - b. Do the sacraments have intrinsic worth in and of themselves? Is there some 'magical' element in them that provides benefit irrespective of the persons involved, especially that of the officiant?
  - c. Does the officiant's personal standing with God affect the sacrament? If the officiant is one of the lapsed, is his officiating of any value? If his officiating is null and void, what must be done for the participants who rely upon him?
  - d. What is the unpardonable sin? Surely it must be a public denial of God and worshiping an idol! In that case, there is no remedy nor return.
  - e. What role does the Emperor have in the activities of the church?
5. The North African population was especially divided upon these matters. The conflict reached Rome as well. Aside from doctrinal matters, the divisions were:
  - a. Lax view on restoration (make it easy) was favored by the rich and Romanized.
  - b. Strict view of no restoration or a very difficult restoration was favored by the poor and anti-Romans.
6. The Donatists were not consistent.
  - a. They allowed some of the lapsed to be part of their leadership.
  - b. They engaged in willful legal and illegal disobedience to Rome.
  - c. They actually instituted armed bands who robbed the rich to benefit the poor.
7. By Augustine's time, Donatists outnumbered the orthodox in North Africa. They disappeared when Islam conquered North Africa. But, the questions continue to arise:
  - a. Can a person sin so badly that we cannot accept their repentance? Note the Old Testament

example of King Manasseh who appears to have been the worst king that Judah ever had. Yet, King Manasseh repented and God forgave him – noting, however, that the consequences of his sin would continue and there would be punishment.

- b. If a public participant in worship is unworthy, how does that affect the worship of others?
- c. What is today's defined unpardonable sin? Do groups differ on this point? How? Is it participation in war, divorce, remarriage, embezzlement, slavery, etc?
- d. Did God intend a sacral state after Jesus' resurrection and ascension? Should the church rule?
- e. Can a diverse population agree on political, economic, military, and legal matters while they differ upon religious matters?
- f. Can people have a common political loyalty when they differ religiously?
- g. How far can people differ religiously before society itself becomes at risk?

#### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:**

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1. Define canon. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. By the late 100's, what had become the standard of truth by the churches?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why are the Old Testament Apocrypha books not accepted as part of the canon?  
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4. Why did Constantine reverse the Roman persecution of Christians?  
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5. In your opinion, what have been six lasting influences wrought by Constantine?  
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6. The six principles of a sacral state are:  
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7. List five attitudes in society that prompted and promoted monasticism:

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8. There are four ideas that persist in 'Christian' thought that arose during the Donatist controversy in North Africa. What are they?

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9. Comment on how you believe Jesus would respond to the idea of the sacral state? Use examples of how He did respond.

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10. There were four aspects of 'Christian' monastics that pagans admired. What were they?

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## LESSON SEVEN:

# Arianism and Influential Leaders

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### INTRODUCTION:



Early issues regarding doctrine and practice had been handled within the churches and later within the meetings of bishops. For the first two hundred ninety years there had been little doctrinal input from non-Christian or pseudo-Christian groups - even in the questions of Judaism, Gnosticism, leadership, and Donatism. Groups *defined* as heretical had had a minimal opportunity to be heard. That all changed when the Arian controversy arose. Groups considered to be or defined as heretical now had a large public platform and able spokesmen.

Arianism used neo-platonic terms and concepts to describe God as unknowable and ineffable. Arius' motto about Jesus was '*There was when he was not.*' The Word was thus not co-eternal with the Father. The 'Word' did help in creating this world and was above angels, but was not deity.

Arianists used passages such as in Colossians 1, 'first born.' Their opponents used John 1, 'in the beginning.' Tertullian's idea of 'Three persons and one substance,' anticipated this viewing of spiritual entities in physical, material, or philosophic terms.

Note how heresies often appear as dualism in conflict. Gnostics saw body versus spirit. Arians saw Father versus Son. Nestorians saw divine versus human. Etc.

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### THE TEACHING AND INFLUENCE OF ARIANISM

#### A. The Threat of Arianism to the Empire

1. Constantine saw that the Arian and anti-Arian (or Nicean as it later came to be known) approaches were totally opposed - threatening political stability and his policies.
2. He called a council in Nicea in 325 to finally resolve the issue. The council eventually wrote an opinion against Arianism. The effects of this were:
  - a. Many not convinced of the Nicean position. The question was unresolved for centuries.
  - b. Many conflicts and bloodshed between Arian 'Christians' and Nicean 'Christians'.
  - c. Secular rulers felt totally free to intervene in church matters and determine policy, especially the ruler in Constantinople.
  - d. Arian missionaries were very effective north of Constantinople, influencing whole tribes and nations.
  - e. Using philosophical terms to discuss scriptural matters became the normal way.
  - f. Politics became the accepted way to resolve church questions.

#### B. After Intrigue And In-fighting The Arians Gained Ascendancy, Exiling The Niceans

### THE PAGANS ARISE!



**A. Julian The Apostate (332-363) Was Emperor Between 361-363.** He was raised by inflexible, haughty, dogmatic ‘Christians.’

1. His cousin, Constantius, calling himself a Christian, became emperor and promptly killed all but two of his relatives. His cousin, Constantius, calling himself a Christian, became emperor and promptly killed all but two of his relatives – leaving these two only because he saw them as no immediate threat to his throne. Since Julian was a potential threat some time in the future, Constantius moved Julian to Gaul, far from home, with the assurance that Julian and the troops assigned to him would never have to come east to assist Constantinople. For most of Julian’s troops, Gaul was home. Julian was highly successful in his conflicts with the Germans, admired by the populace, and developed the apparent tranquility of Gaul. He was then ordered by Emperor Constantius to send four legions of his forces to Persia to combat eastern foes of Constantius. Had he complied with Constantius’ order, he would have had a weak army in a dangerous area with the Germanic tribes intent upon conquering Gaul. Therefore, he **and** his army made an amazing forced march to depose Constantius. Constantius died before any real battle occurred. By leaving Gaul so suddenly, there were long term effects regarding stability.
2. Julian believed that the idea of the golden rule and turning the other cheek were totally opposed to the idea of empire since he believed that conquest was necessary and that meant violence.
3. Then he began changing the religious environment in these ways:
  - a. All religions would be equal and free without special favors – he favored paganism.
  - b. Pagans must reopen their temples.
  - c. All exiled Niceans could return home.
  - d. No violence between Arians and non-Arians (Niceans) would be allowed.
  - e. He began calling Christians *Galileans* and referred to them as odious and contemptible.
  - f. He considered Christians a sect that exalted Mary, revered relics, and displaced Jesus.
  - g. He allowed pagan priests to manage all religious money - even that of the Christians.
  - h. All honors and immunities for Christian priests were cancelled.
  - i. No inheritance could go to any Christian church or organization.
  - j. He referred to the Christian priests as the least persons..
  - k. He prohibited Christians from being school teachers.
  - l. Christians’ children could not attend school.
  - m. Christian groups had to make full and complete restitution to any pagan group that they had displaced. Christians had to destroy their own buildings and rebuild pagan temples they had destroyed, converted or built upon, and completely refurnish the pagan temples.
  - n. He said that Christians were not the only group with rights and removed most of their rights.
4. He died in battle with Persia after 20 months as emperor without selecting a successor. Christians saw this as God working in their behalf, answering prayers, since they had adopted the Christian sacral system totally since the time of Constantine.

**NOTE:** The final destruction of overt, open paganism in the Empire involved the succeeding emperors imposing two specious (invalid) principles:

1. The magistrate will be deemed guilty of the crimes which he fails to punish. If paganism is outlawed, the magistrate must punish the practitioners of paganism or be considered guilty of paganism himself.
2. Worship of idols is the most serious of all offenses against God and is the unpardonable sin. Therefore, man can determine the unpardonable sin according to his own immediate culture. As a result of these ideas, pagans simply changed allegiance and names without a change of heart.

**B. Theodosius (346-395) The Great**

Probably born in Spain and received military training from an uncle. He intended to destroy paganism when he was emperor. His steps were:

1. He prohibited pagan sacrifices, shut the pagan temples, seized or destroyed instruments of idolatry, abolished any privileges of pagan priests, confiscated all pagan temples to benefit the state, and forbade as a capital offense or treason any worship of any inanimate object by sacrifice of a guiltless victim or offering incense, candles, garlands, libations, etc.
2. Within 28 years after his reign, the pagans had filled the Christian churches and virtually no overt pagan activity existed within the boundaries of the Empire. It had simply moved into the churches.

Note how much changed in less than one century.

- Under Diocletian (284-305) Christians were prohibited from serving in the military. Under Theodosius, pagans were prohibited from serving in the military.
- Origen (c185-254) had defended pacifism for Christians. Theodosius made the military a promising career for Christians.
- Tertullian said that coercion was not valid for religious purposes. Theodosius made coercion in religion standard policy.

## ARIANISM AGAIN

Constantine sowed the seeds for the re-emergence of Arianism when he converted to the doctrine himself and exiled those leaders of the Nicean persuasion. When Julian brought back the exiled Niceans (anti-Arians) as part of his policies, the stage was again set for conflict.

### A. Athanasius of Alexandria (296-372)

1. Fought Arianism. He was absolutely convinced of the incarnation and deity of Jesus Christ, i.e. Jesus, in his view, was simultaneously *both* human and deity.
  - a. He spent 46 years as the bishop of Egypt and Libya.
  - b. He was exiled by the Emperor five times.
  - c. He considered Arianism the most dangerous doctrine to assail the church.
  - d. He willingly accepted a perversion of the organization of the church and worked within this changed structure very diligently to overcome a heresy which diminished Jesus.
2. He engineered the acceptance of what we call the Nicean creed in 381, nine years after his death.
  - a. He ensured that eastern and western Christendom accepted the Nicean creed.
  - b. Invading tribes from the east and north of the Byzantine empire gradually accepted the Nicean view over the centuries, although they came in as pagans or Arians.

### B. The Four Cappadocians Were Allies Toward Defeating Arianism. These four were:

1. **Macrina:** 'The Teacher' (c330-c390d). She refused to accept the philosophical underpinnings of Arianism, focusing instead upon Scripture in its description of Jesus.
2. **Basil of Caesarea** ('The Great') (329-379) was one of Macrina's brothers. He founded male Greek monasticism. and was greatly involved in opposing the Arian heresy.
3. **Gregory of Nyassa** (c340-c400) was another brother of Macrina and Basil of Caesarea and worked diligently along with them to oppose Arianism.
4. **Gregory of Nazianus** (330-390) became Patriarch of Constantinople. This Gregory was a friend of the 3 above.

**NOTE:** These four, along with many others, managed to reassert the deity of Jesus in the Mediterranean basin and eventually into the whole of western and eastern Christendom after many trials.

### C. The Four Views Arising from this Long Controversy Were:

1. **Arianism:** *There was when he was not.* Jesus is divine, but not like the Father. **Anomois** or dissimilar was the key word.
2. **Semi-Arians:** The Son is similar to the Father, but not in all ways. **Homoios** or 'similar' was the key word.
3. **Niceans:** The Son and the Father are identical, both fully divine. The key word is **Homoousios** or 'of identical substance.'
4. **Cappadocians:** The Son and the Father are of like substance, fully God, but distinct persons. The key word was **homoiousios**, meaning 'of like substance.'

**NOTE:** The fourth view (that of the Cappadocians) calmed the Mediterranean basin at that time. However, it did not stop the initial warfare when the Arian Barbarians came later. In due course the barbarian invaders eventually adopted the Cappadocian view which in time became known as the Nicean view since they are so similar that for most people there is no distinction. .

**NOTE:** When people decide that they have the ability and scope to totally understand God, define God absolutely, and set boundaries for God, they venture into areas that provoke conflict. When they use physical terms to describe spiritual matters, the risk of oversimplifying or over-complicating becomes very real.

### FROM AMBROSE TO AUGUSTINE

In this time frame of the early 300's to the early 400's, social and religious turmoil enveloped the Mediterranean area. For those claiming to be Christian, there were many issues, changes, and concerns to be addressed – especially since legalized persecution had stopped and various doctrinal issues became central to religious thinking.

Some of the influential leaders in this time frame of 340-430 were:

#### A. In the West: Ambrose (340-397)

1. Ambrose was the able secular administrator of Milan chosen by the people to become bishop.
2. Ambrose was baptized and made a bishop in 8 days, violating the principles of Scripture and violating the customs/church regulations of that day. Culture and the emotions of the moment became more important than any other consideration.
3. The first bishop to openly oppose the emperor, win and live.
  - a. He lived a long way from Constantinople and thus had a barrier of distance.
  - b. Western political leaders had considerably less power over church functions than did the emperors in Constantinople.
4. Converted Augustine of Hippo and that had lasting effects until today via the doctrines set forth by Augustine.
5. Highly prejudiced against the Jews and that set the stage for lasting enmity.

#### B. In the East: John Chrysostom (347-407) (The Gold-Mouth).

1. John believed in religious reform and used his office to promote purity of life by his standards. Part of this purity involved personal and corporate austerity.
2. Somewhat against his wishes he became the Bishop in Constantinople. He was not accepted well in Constantinople initially but soon had an enthusiastic, responsive crowd each Sunday.
3. He was a strong man and a strong bishop, but he was banished by a weak emperor.

**NOTE:** In the West the bishops (especially in Rome) were becoming more and more independent of the emperor. Because of the relative weakness of the political arm in the west, the bishop of Rome gradually assumed more and more control out of necessity and opportunity. In the East, the bishops

were still under the emperor's control. This seems to have been true regardless of the abilities of the religious leaders or the political rulers in the east.

**C. In the West: Jerome (c340-420) (The Scholar).**

1. Jerome, a monk, was hired by the bishop of Rome to translate Scriptures into the vernacular. He chose to do this in Bethlehem so he would have access to the best Hebrew scholarship. As was true in other locations, he attracted many influential women to accompany him – finding their insights and interests fascinating.
2. His translation into Latin from Greek and Hebrew attracted much controversy since many feared and anticipated change. He did make some changes in the text and had many critics about his work. The Latin Vulgate (in the common language) eventually became the standard Scriptures for the western world for centuries.
3. Jerome believed Rome to be the center of the universe.
4. His world views were shaken when Alaric the Goth sacked Rome August 24, 410.

**D. In the West: Pelagius (early 5th century from Britain)**

1. We do know that he was an itinerant preacher from Britain.
2. Because the church in the British Isles had been relatively uncontaminated from Rome for some time, it is highly likely that his beliefs were somewhat different from Rome and may well have been closer to the early church. According to what we know of him, he believed:
  - a. Sex is not defined as evil unless it is inappropriately used.
  - b. Humans have complete freedom of will.
  - c. A human is born sinless and chooses to sin of his/her own free will.
  - d. Infant immersion is totally useless regarding any sin issue.
  - e. Adult immersion is absolutely essential.
  - f. There is no original nor inherited sin.
  - g. The gospel facilitates our salvation.
  - h. Working hard righteously is essential.

**NOTE:** Although Pelagius lost in the initial word battle between himself and Augustine of Hippo, his concepts kept coming back into the main stream of religious thought. During the middle ages, a works-based salvation concept arose which differs from predestination. Pelagius and his advocates thus had a lasting influence upon later religious thought and activity.

**E. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) in North Africa**

1. One of the most influential early writers, he had a Christian mother and a pagan father.
2. Augustine was a rebellious, brilliant student. He was both the despair and hope of his mother who arranged that he moved to Rome for added study at age 17.
3. At 18 in Rome, he gained a concubine who bore a son for Augustine at age 19.
4. Between ages 18-33 he sought answers for life in paganism, only to be disillusioned repeatedly.
5. Augustine was baptized by Ambrose at 33 along with his son who died shortly thereafter at about age 14.
6. Became a 'priest' at age 37. He believed, as did a vast number in his day, that celibacy/singleness was a higher calling and more spiritual than normal married life.
7. Became an associate bishop in 392 at age 38 and becoming bishop of Hippo in 395 at age 41. Under the organizational focus of the day, once a man became a bishop at a certain place, he could never move from that location.

8. In 413 Augustine wrote *The City of God*, a book that became the basis for many social-political-religious actions in later years by both political leaders and religious leaders.

**F. Augustine of Hippo Had Lasting Influence via These Concepts:**

1. God performs double predestination, i.e. some people are destined for hell and can do nothing about it while others are destined for heaven and cannot miss it.
2. Man has NO free will and cannot have faith unless God provides it via His grace.
3. God uses irresistible grace to draw people to him, i.e. the ones destined for heaven.
4. The clergy (special people) have authority over the sacraments and who can receive them.
5. The clergy has the power to determine the destiny of individuals via the sacraments.
6. God put in place both original and inherited sin. Humans can do nothing about this. Nor can humans have any influence upon God and His interaction with the world.
7. There can be a just war. It may be defensive or a preemptive strike to avoid attack.
8. Humans who follow God must/will follow the spirit **and** the letter of Jesus' commands.
9. Rome has primacy over Constantinople because of its heritage.
10. Sin MUST be purged. Religious authorities have the right to use some degree of coercion.
11. Strongly advocated a sacral society, fearing that Pelagius' views would lead to social and political dissolution.
12. Mary was born and lived her life without actual sin.
13. Unbaptized infants are eternally damned.
14. There is no forgiveness of sins outside of the then Universal church.
15. Some apostolic practices and teachings did not apply because the apostles lived in a different age and times had changed.
16. There is a purgatorial fire.
17. The dead can benefit from the sacrifice of the Eucharist.
18. A Christian state can properly persecute heretics. When evil people attack the church it is for evil purpose. When 'Christians' attack evil people it is for good purposes.
19. Adam's sin led to depravity and perversion because Adam and Eve passed the **guilt** of that sin on to their children
  - a. No one can move toward God unless God's grace moves them to do so.
  - b. His grace cannot be resisted. Baptism covers **only** past sins. No one believes unless he wills to believe, but he can will to do so only if God wills it first. Man thus has absolutely NO free will. He is saved or lost solely and totally by God's sovereign election, will and predestination.

**NOTE:** Augustine of Hippo was not able to differentiate between the guilt of a sin and the consequence of a sin. That one point of confusion in his thinking led him to formulate a system of theology with lasting negative consequences. As time passed, Augustine's ideas and those of Pelagius tended to merge. Winning all of the battles does not guarantee winning the war. Unfortunately, Calvin adopted much of Augustine's erroneous thought and then passed it on to the post-Reformation world. Decisions made at one point in time can seriously damage multiple generations ahead.

**G. Original Sin and Baptism**

1. *Irenaeus* first mentioned the consequence of the fall as costing mankind the divine likeness but Irenaeus did not extend this into loss of will, loss of freedom of choice, or inherited guilt.
2. *Origin* (185-254) thought that all souls had been created before time. Some had chosen to obey God and become angels. Some sinned a little and got sent to earth for training. Some sinned

so badly that they became Satan and his angels. Therefore, sin caused birth. Birth did not transmit sin.

3. *Tertullian* (160-220) taught that every soul shares in Adam's guilt and is thus under condemnation to be punished for his inherited guilt. *Tertullian* taught that baptism took care of past sins, but not future sins.
4. *Cyprian* (200-258, 248-258 as bishop of Carthage) declared that every infant needs forgiveness for the inherited sin from Adam (irrespective of the fact that the infant had committed no sin) and this *could* be done in baptism. Although he approved of infant immersion, he did not command it.
5. *Gregory of Nazianus* (330-389) thought the child should be at least 3 years old at immersion.

**NOTE:** All of this came together with *Augustine* when he persistently taught inherited guilt from the original sin along with baptismal regeneration – i.e. baptism has the power to remove sins apart from faith and repentance and confession as if it is a magic ritual.

Augustine may be the most influential writer in Christendom of all time, maybe even more than the writers of the NT in view of the wide acceptance his views have received over the centuries. We return again to the sacral state since that is one monument to Augustine's influence:

1. There is no need for mission work since everyone is defined as a Christian.
2. Since Christianity is political, belief is not really necessary.
3. Dissent from the official presentations is unacceptable.
4. Compromise is impossible because there cannot be two or more different positions.
5. Public rituals can be used to control the public.
6. Life styles deteriorate toward a low average since no one wants to be seen as different.
7. Volunteering becomes unthinkable because that depends upon conviction.
8. Coercion is both valid and honored to maintain the purity of the church.
9. Clergy dispenses all blessings and stands between ordinary people and their God.

#### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:**

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1. What immediate step did Constantine take to minimize damage to the empire when the Arian controversy arose? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What specific impacts did Julian the Apostate have on the church? During his reign:  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are two specious (invalid) principles used by Roman Empire leaders that eventually led to no overt paganism outside the apostate church?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who were the five persons who were the most effective in opposing Arianism and what was their resolution?  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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5. Why did the bishop of Rome have more influence and power than other bishops in the Empire?

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6. Compare the errors of Augustine and the reported stance of Pelagius.

Pelagius

Augustine

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7. List four religious concepts that flow from the idea of inherited/original sin:

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8. List the nine ways that Augustine affected the church of his day and continues to affect many believers today.

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## LESSON EIGHT

# Turbulent Times and Constant Change

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### INTRODUCTION

**A**fter Diocletian had divided the empire (and the world in most people's minds), Constantine had attempted to put it back together. It seemed that in spite of the Arian conflict, other doctrinal conflicts, and various economic and political issues, that perhaps calm lay just ahead. Then the barbarians came!

### THE MASS MIGRATIONS

During the period between 250 and 450 AD, there were many mass migrations across western Asia and the whole of Europe. For example, the Celts were moving into Britain and Ireland. The Picts and Scots had come into Britain in the 360's. The Jutes, Angles, and Saxons also came into Britain around 450. The Franks from Jutland came into Gaul and the Goths plundered Athens in 262 AD.

#### A. The Invasions of the Huns

1. The whole of western Asia and Europe experienced a domino effect from the Huns' movement from Asia into Europe about 370 AD.
2. They had conquered China about 200 BC.
3. They began moving west, appearing in Europe about 370 AD. **They believed that a man is a fool to work for something if he can simply take it.**
  - a. They uprooted the Visigoth people who then appealed for asylum within the boundaries of the Eastern Roman Empire.
  - b. The emperor in Constantinople granted that to serve as a buffer for Constantinople from the Huns.
  - c. The Visigoths were ill-treated by corrupt officials from Constantinople and immediately rebelled, defeating the Emperor at Adrianople in 378.
  - d. The Visigoths moved west and then sacked Rome in 410. They then moved into western Gaul by 418 and then into Spain.
4. As part of the general unrest, the Visigoths were followed by the Alans, Vandals, Sueves, Alemans, Franks, Ostrogoths, and Slavs. There were many movements – this being just an overall summary. *There was no calm. No planning for a peaceful retirement. No peace.* After Atilla's death the Huns gradually merged into the local population.

#### B. The Vandals Swept Through Gaul in 406 With the Concept – If It Is There, Destroy It

1. They reached Spain in 409. Genseric became king in 418 and moved the Vandals into North Africa with full control over western North Africa by 439. They were Arians.
2. The Vandals looted Rome in 477.

#### C. The Ostrogoths (eastern Goths) Settled in Hungary, Northern Yugoslavia, and Eastern Austria



1. Later the Emperor in Constantinople gave them permission to invade Italy – in his effort to keep them away from Constantinople. (So much for doing the right thing for **all** of the subjects of the Emperor.)
2. They ruled Italy between 488 and 526 and then merged into the local scene.
3. The Lombards invaded Italy 568-572 and then merged into the local population.
4. The Slavs moved South by west, forming a barrier between Rome and Constantinople.

**D. What Does All of this Have to Do with Church History?**

1. The invading groups were either pagan and opposed to Christianity or they were Arian and thus opposed to Nicean Christians.
2. There was a great lack of stability in the Empire, especially in the west. That gave scope to the more able bishops of Rome to assume more and more power over weak political leaders.
3. Invasions resulted in rape, famine, destruction, pestilence, slavery, and other hardships that lead people to think about survival first and foremost. Spiritual matters are not always as immediate. A secular mind-set became more and more the way people thought.
4. War is not conducive to stable church growth nor to individual maturing since safety issues come before group issues and the higher needs of any human.
5. During war and major upheavals of society, survival issues dominate group and individual thinking and they may do some very horrible things to others in order to survive.

**NOTE:** One scholar who lived in this time frame observed that although this was a hard time to live in, God was certainly sending a lot of potential converts to the Christians. As the pagans and Arian Christians conquered, they tended to settle. They merged into the local population and eventually became Nicean Christians in the west.

**E. After the Wars Calmed a Bit, this Was the Approximate Arrangement:**

Britain	Angle, Saxon, Jute, Pict, Celt
Spain	Visigoth (later with a large mix of eastern Mediterranean people)
Gaul	Franks
Italy	Vandals, Huns, Goths, Romans, Lombards
The East	Largely as it was but boundaries were rearranged.

Arianism was being defeated by assimilation, not by open debate and discussion.

**F. In Great Britain and Ireland:**

1. Hadrian built a wall to keep out the wild people of the north since Rome was unable to provide the number of troops needed to protect an un-walled south.
2. Rome then withdrew all of its legions to protect the homeland in 407. In 410, the year Rome was sacked, the Roman Emperor, Honorius, told the British Romans that they must look after their own security since no fresh legions would come from the southern areas. The last of the Roman army left the British Isles in 426.
3. Christians were in Britain by the first century (perhaps associated with the army of 62 AD) and certainly were there by the second century. They had no tie to the Roman bishop.
4. Patrick (c389-461) went to Ireland during this time of great population movements. He went not as a Protestant nor as a Catholic.
5. Ireland had avoided invasions. Thus learning and Christian beliefs were more stable there. Because of this isolation, the doctrines in Ireland had been less contaminated than on mainland Europe. There was no allegiance by Ireland to the Roman bishop. That development occurred in later centuries.

6. As a matter of interest, in 599 Gregory The Great sent Augustine of Canterbury to Britain to convert the area to the Roman form of Christianity. In so doing, he began the destruction of the Scotch/Irish church that had been in existence for about five centuries. This destruction was not complete until the reign of William the Conqueror who took Britain at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. He imposed the Roman forms upon all his domains.

## **MONASTICISM REARRANGED**

When society faces turmoil people try to find stability, safety, and continuity. Europe and the Mediterranean basin faced turmoil as a result of the barbarian invasions throughout the area. Many sought refuge in monasticism. In earlier times, when Constantine ended persecution and made Christianity the favored religion, monasticism was to escape affluence, apathy, and worldliness. This time it was **for** safety and stability.

### **A. Five Benefits to the Individual Participant and to Society as a Whole**

1. Monasteries provided a sense of order in a shattered society.
2. A school environment made contemporaries aware of their own heritage.
3. The regimen in Monasteries and Abbeys dignified honest labor for free people in contrast to the view that only slaves did manual labor.
4. Monasteries and Abbeys ensured survival of learning (especially in Ireland) in a chaotic time on the European continent via copies of Scripture and writings by various intellectuals.
5. Many of these monasteries and abbeys provided a rationale and safeguards for a higher moral standard than in the world at large, although we note that in many cases morals and ethics were no higher there than in the surrounding society.

### **B. The Common Attitudes in Eastern Monasticism**

1. To punish the evil body and minimize how it harmed the spirit. This has a gnostic background.
2. To renounce the world and all that is therein.
3. Avoid cooperation with the clergy because the clergy were deemed to be part of the problem. The clergy insisted that the only way to do things was their way and independent monks disagreed.
4. Work toward self-perfection with abasement as one of the tools.
5. Live either alone or in small groups to seek solitude, intensifying the spiritual contest.
6. Pride in how much privation and suffering they could endure before quitting.

### **C. The Common Attitudes in Western Monasticism**

1. Each person was to train the body and make it more suitable for the spirit.
2. Each must seek to fulfill a defined mission that would benefit some part of society.
3. Participants must minimize solitude and seek community to allow their example to help.
4. Each must work with the church officials and perhaps become a ranking official in due course.
5. As individuals and as a group, they must work for unity and continuity in an unstable world.

### **D. Benedict (C480-550) Defined Western Monasticism with Well-considered Rules**

Justinian closed the last of the schools of philosophy in Athens in 529, the year that Benedict gave his rules for conducting a monk's life to the Abbey of Monte Cassino. His rules became the standard.

1. There must be strict discipline.
2. Each monk must have two, well-balanced meals per day.
3. Each monk must have a pillow, a cover and a bed.

4. No monk may move to another location after committing to one.
5. Obedience must be instant, willing, and complete.
6. Prayers must be offered eight times per day.
7. Each monk must read some each day. (Some came to be known as very learned.)
8. Scripture must be memorized.
9. Physical labor was required.
10. Punishment was gradual with increasing severity and exile was the final step.
11. Leaders must recognize human fallibility.
12. The monastery will become school, hospital, hotel, pharmacy, refuge, etc.

**NOTE:** As farmers, they brought marginal lands into productive use. Although Benedictine monks were to spend their waking hours in manual labor and prayer, copying manuscripts for their own study and devotional use became a major activity. In due course it became a primary activity and the monks hired peasants to do the manual labor.

Alongside the males, many females became nuns in convents. Many times the monastery and convent were adjacent. Some Abbesses had the power of bishops or a high abbot. Some could strike their own coins; some were viewed as baronesses; and they could be summoned to appear before rulers and councils. They also had temporal powers such as a local army since they had to protect the convent from marauding bands who would like both their money and their women. The nuns copied manuscripts as well, wove tapestries, made vestments, made altar cloths, and ran schools. Nuns were among the best educated people in the dark ages.

#### **E. How the Monasteries and Convents Eventually Got So Rich**

1. Monks and nuns were skilled workers, productive, and organized.
2. Given land, they worked to make it productive.
3. Many pilgrims paid the monasteries and convents for prayers since relics were held there.
4. Many people donated money for the prayers of the monks and nuns who were considered to be closer to God than they were.
5. Postulants gave up their worldly possessions when they entered the convent/monastery.

#### **F. The Effects of this Money Were:**

1. As time passed many monks and nuns hired servants to take care of their obligations.
2. Monasteries and convents owned land upon which they paid no taxes.
3. They allied themselves to the papacy and not to local bishops or princes.
4. By this linkage with Rome, they destabilized local politics and economics.  
One writer noted that had the Abbot of Glastonbury wed the Abbess of Shaftsbury, they would control more land than the King of England.

### **THE RISE OF THE PAPAL OFFICE**

The office of the pope (father) did not arise suddenly nor was it in place from the beginning. There was a gradual development that took about five and ½ centuries before a man held the papal office in a way that modern people would see it as the papacy.

#### **A. Pagan and Jewish Societies Had Operated as Sacral Societies for Centuries Before Jesus' Ministry**

1. Unity at the altar was seen as mandatory to ensure peace in the market place.
2. The Roman emperors before Constantine saw a pagan sacral society as essential.

3. Sacral thinkers gained political ascendancy and ensured that a pyramidal arrangement was developed with public rituals and an absence of personal choice.

#### **B. The Concept of the Monarchal Bishop Was in Place by the Time of Constantine**

1. This development was accepted by the people who wanted stability and continuity.
2. The monarchal bishops wanted that role for many reasons: authority, an outlet for their abilities, a feeling of being useful, a need to ensure what they saw as correct doctrine, greed, control issues, power issues, and intensifying the sacral state mind-set.
3. Centralization of power and authority was gradual and based upon the need to meet some kind of problem that seemed to require a center of authority, responsibility, and power.
4. Some small steps that eventually led to the Roman bishop having extraordinary power.
  - a. Leo (455) negotiated with Genseric of the Vandals and Rome was not burned.
  - b. Leo (455) claimed universal religious control but did not convince enough people. He did convince the emperor of the west (Valentinian III) to issue a decree that all people must obey the Roman bishop as Peter's successors. The decree was not widely obeyed.
  - c. In 579, Pelagius II, a Roman bishop, ransomed Rome from the barbarians.
  - d. Later, this same Pelagius II asked the Franks (non-Christians) for assistance to fight the other barbarians.
  - e. Then **Gregory the Great (c540-604)** ruled as bishop of Rome (590-604).
    - He acted as the ruler of Rome by necessity since the political leaders had so little ability.
    - He did not claim universal authority – rejected such as a mark of the anti-Christ.
    - He converted the Visigoths to the Nicene mode from Arianism via negotiations with their leaders. This averted widespread bloodshed.
    - He sent Augustine of Canterbury to convert the British Isles to his kind of belief. This process accelerated when William the Conqueror won England at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, 470 years later. Gregory thus set in motion the destruction of a form of Christianity which was likely closer to the original than his own form.
    - He elevated Augustine of Hippo to near infallibility in spite of the confusion in Augustine's writings and doctrines.
    - He affirmed purgatory.
    - He set up priestly absolution and penance, ensuring sacral cohesion.
    - He set up masses for the dead.

**Note:** Gregory's successors had a hard life, most not being as capable as he was.

#### **ISLAM AROSE**

By the early 7th century (600's), Europe thought that order lay just ahead. Then Islam arose. It was a reaction against paganism, apostate Christendom, and closed Judaism. Had Mohammed really understood Christianity, he might not have fathered a new religion.

- A. Islam Did Not Grow Because of its Inherent Strength of Logic, Evidence, or Inspiration.** It grew by the sword. The Islamic armies conquered the Mediterranean basin and adjoining areas by these dates:

Arabia	632	Syria	635	Jerusalem	638		
Egypt	642	Persia	651	Carthage	695	Spain	715.

- B. The Islamic Armies Sacked 10 Cities Between 647 and 904 (Including Rome in 846).** They occupied 6 more by 902, occupied Crete between 823-961, occupied Sicily in 827, and forced Cyprus to pay tribute in 688. This is the list:

<u>Cities sacked by Islamic armies:</u>		<u>Cities occupied:</u>		<u>Islands occupied:</u>
Caesarea (Turkey)	647	Alexandria	642-646	Crete 823-961
Sardes	716	Palermo	831	Sicily 827
Pergamum	716	Brindisi	840-870	
Dorylaeum	778	Bari	841-871	<u>Siege of:</u>
Tyana	806	Syracuse	878	Constantinople
Ancyra	838	Taormina	902	647-678
Amorium	838			717-718
Rome	846			
Demetrias	901			<u>Tribute from:</u>
Thessalonica	904			Cyprus 688

**NOTE:** Islam was not a peaceful, evangelistic movement that converted by force of logic or by elevated theology and morals. Islam has historically advanced by the sword or political coercion. It thrives when other cultures are ignorant of their own history and that of Islam itself. Current western trends of credulity, porous ecumenicism, religious/political manipulation, extreme tolerance, and religious ignorance assist Islam expand and/or maintain its control over people in many areas.

- C. Charles Martel** (the hammer) stopped the northern advance of Islam at the Battle of Tours in 732 at Potiers (France) and Islam then gradually retreated from Europe (until recently when in the Balkans the USA went to assist Moslems from aggression by the Serbs and Croats. Islam is also growing rapidly in western Europe and in North America.).

- What were the effects of this advance?
  - Five of seven Christian centers were now in Moslem hands. Only Rome and Constantinople were left.
  - Christianity had been effectively destroyed in North Africa with the Donatist controversy dead and buried as a result of the conquest.
  - The territory controlled by Constantinople was reduced to modern Turkey. Islam blocked mission work from Constantinople into Africa. Consequently, Constantinople directed its mission activities northward into Russia, Poland, the Baltics, Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, etc. Simultaneously, Rome was sending its representatives west and north.
  - Westward expansion of the Chinese was blocked by Islam's eastward movement.
  - The East and the West portion of Empire were now effectively separate, although not officially. Rome was acting independently of Constantinople.
  - The people in North Africa were forcibly transferred from a 'Christian' sacral society into an Islamic sacral society.
- In Eastern Christendom, the seculars controlled the church. The church leaders engaged in ongoing controversies about the nature of Christ. The iconoclast controversy in the east brought forth two parties: the iconoclasts destroyed images and iconodules worshiped images. The church in the east was very fragmented with many, many divisive doctrines. The iconoclast controversy was handled with the initial decision being to venerate images as representing the spirit being. The final result was worship.
- In Western Christendom, Rome became dominant.

- D. What Was Going on up North-west?** One example of a preacher will give insight. COLUMBA (521-597) was an early Roman church missionary to the people living in what is today Scotland and northern England. He grew up in a tumultuous society characterized by quarreling and

fighting. It was peopled by rugged individualists, fond of song and music, talented and capable of great learning. He spent his first 42 years in Ireland, mostly in the service of the church. He became a priest/monk and later a founder of new monasteries throughout the island. Around 561 he copied, without permission, a manuscript of Jerome's version of the Psalter and gospels that Finnian of Moville had brought from Rome. Upon learning of this, Finnian of Clonard was angry and demanded the copy of the rare text. When Columba refused, Finnian sought judgement against him from Columba's own kinsman, the high king at Tara, who rendered a verdict against Columba. Still he refused to surrender his precious book. Even though a reconciliation between Finnian and Columba was eventually achieved, the rift between Columba and his cousin, the king, widened. Civil war finally erupted, with Columba arousing the clansmen of the north country to attack the forces of the high king. Columba and his allies were victorious in the bloody battle of Culdrevney near Sligo, in which more than 3000 men were killed. Columba, upon reflection, apparently felt remorse and decided that he would leave his native Ireland as an act of rededication to become a missionary. He determined to win at least as many souls for Christ as he had caused to die in the battle. (He actually won many more to his brand of Christianity.) He settled on the small island of Iona off the west coast of Scotland, setting up a missionary outpost from which he and his companions could evangelize the pagan Scots and Picts.

In summary, his life's significant events were:

521 (Dec) born in County Donegal, Ireland

545 founded 1st monastery

561 Quarrel over a disputed book and the battle of Culdrevney

563 April, departed from Ireland

563 May, Established missionary post on Iona

564 Converted King Brude of the Northern Picts

575 attended national convention at Brumceatt, near Derry, Ireland

597 June, death

Note his firm belief in the efficacy of works.

**NOTE:** The Bible was not readily available to the clergy. Political leaders were ready to intervene into religious discussions. Wars could be fought over the Bible. And the people were led by clergy who thought they could do enough good to outweigh the bad they had done.

NOW WE FAST FORWARD TO ABOUT 800 A.D.

## **CHARLEMAGNE**

Charlemagne or Charles the Great (742-814) was the king of the Franks from 768-814 and Emperor of the Romans 800-814. His father, Pepin the Short, had to save the papacy from the Lombards on two occasions in 754 and 756. Charlemagne accompanied his father on these campaigns at age 12 and 14.

Before Charlemagne came to the throne, his grandfather, Charles Martel, who had been Mayor of the Palace before usurping the throne, had stopped the advance of Islam in Europe, defeating them at the Battle of Tours in 732 about 125 miles southwest of Paris, at Poitiers. When Charlemagne came to the throne, he wanted to bring western Europe to something greater than it was. In 799, Leo III had been beaten by a Roman mob, accused of various crimes and vices and then imprisoned. He appealed to the Franks. Charlemagne came to his rescue and placed Leo III back on the papal throne. Then, Leo III crowned Charlemagne the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas Day, 800, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It appears that Leo had at least these motives: thanksgiving for rescue, to make a statement of papal authority, to recognize the existing secular power as his ally, and strengthen his concept of a sacral state. But, Leo III could not even administer the city of Rome, much less rule an empire. His reach exceeded his abilities.

Charlemagne's policy about conversion in the areas that he conquered was simple: ***convert or die***. He did not even ask for tribute as the Moslems had done. He embarked upon 16 campaigns to get the Saxons to submit to baptism. Forced conversion was acceptable to him. His world view involved a **sacral state**, of which he was **head** of every part.

Charlemagne promoted education and monasteries; promoting the use of Latin. In administration he used 250 royal administrators called counts. He issued hundreds of decrees on a wide variety of topics. He stressed the rule of law even as he violated this in his own rule. He was the ruler of western Christendom. He personally had devotionals each morning and each evening. He called councils and then advised them on what to decide religiously. In effect, he treated the church as one of the government departments. Charlemagne promoted a return of classical Christian culture, his version thereof, and he invited well-educated men from all over Europe to come to his court. One of these, Alcuin of Britain, became his advisor on education and religion. Charlemagne required monasteries to use the Benedictine rules and he commissioned Alcuin to standardize the liturgy. Although Charlemagne admired Alcuin and asked for his advice, he did not always follow it. For example, Alcuin opposed forced baptism while Charlemagne favored it.

The environment that Charlemagne faced was very different from ours. Trade had been curtailed because the Moslems controlled the Mediterranean. Money circulation slowed and became very scarce. Land became the measure of wealth. This led to feudalism and serfdom. The church owned about 1/3 of the land in Europe and paid no taxes. The best learning situation was in Ireland. In the church transubstantiation was being adopted – a testimony about the level of culture and sensibilities of the day. Predestination from Augustine re-emerged, leading to much confusion and division. Then, before his reign came to an end, Viking incursions were beginning into his territories and he was unable to counter them.

Just after his death, the pseudo-Dionysian treatises were introduced to the west. Purporting to have been written by Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts 17), they were actually composed in the 500's. These promoted a hierarchal structure in society – secular and religious – with the net effect being to elevate both emperor and papacy and promote an enduring sacral state. They proved to be an effective introduction to the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals.

#### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:**

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1. Mass migrations in Europe during the 300-500 AD period affected which parts of the Empire?

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2. In what ways was Europe affected by the invading nations?

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3. What denomination was Patrick a part of when he went to Ireland?

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4. When did Roman bishops begin deliberately destroying the church in the British Isles and Ireland?

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5. What are five of the perceived benefits of monasticism?

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6. What were five views of monasticism which have affected civilization?

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7. What allowed Monasteries and Convents to get so rich?

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8. What were some of the effects of their newly acquired wealth?

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9. When large portions of Christendom accepted the concept of a monarchical bishop, what was the next logical step?

Who was the person who took the first lasting advantage of this world view?

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10. List the successes, failures and doctrinal changes fostered by Gregory the Great:

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## LESSON NINE

# The Evolution in Worship Methods (I)

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**he center piece of this segment of our study has to do with worship which is focused on the worthiness of God to be revered, feared, loved, and honored by man

Worship has been a part of human nature since the Garden of Eden. Contemporary with the church were Jewish and Pagan worship practices. The church was different – deliberately so – and did not borrow from the culture as the standard of righteousness. The church practiced what God prescribed, not what the Christian’s neighbors preferred.

Worship can be hampered by compartmentalizing life, making conversion so easy that **culture** becomes the standard, letting pageantry come before content, and letting men decide the rules. Any such change is necessarily a slow process. Control issues also interfere in worship.

When the church attempts to be all things to all people, then it will practice what God has not allowed. Satan’s greatest and most durable victories are worked from within the body of Christ as a cancer. Before we investigate worship methods let's look at one more significant development.

### THE PSEUDO-ISIDORIAN DECRETALS AND THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE

During the continuing social, political, and economic confusion in the mid-800's, a mysterious book appeared, giving legal expression to the popular opinion of the papacy. This book raised and strengthened papal power more than any other single event or writing. It formed to a large extent the basis for the canon law of the church of Rome. This is a collection of ecclesiastical law under the false name of bishop Isidor of Seville (d 636), and hence called the ‘Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals.’ Isidor was a widely respected deceased bishop who had been renowned for his wisdom and honesty. Attaching his name to a spurious document aided in getting it accepted.

A ‘**decretal**’ is an authoritative answer of a pope in reply to some question. A ‘**decree**’ is a papal ordinance enacted with the advice of the Cardinals, without a previous inquiry. A ‘**canon**’ is a law ordained by a general or provincial synod. A ‘**dogma**’ is an ecclesiastical law relating to doctrine. The earliest decretals had moral rather than legislative force. But as the questions and appeals to the pope increased, the papal answers grew in authority. People became used to his word being final. Fictitious documents, canons, and decretals were nothing new since trade in relics and old documents was a major industry among some clergy in the dark ages. There was, seemingly, an inexhaustible demand for relics and hence a supply was developed.

#### A. The Pseudo-isidorian Collection Is the Most Colossal and Effective Fraud Known in the History of Ecclesiastical Literature

The contents are:

1. Part One
  - a. 50 apostolic canons from the collection of Dionysius.
  - b. 60 spurious decretals from the Roman bishops, from Clement (d 101) to Melchiades (d314)
2. Part Two
  - a. Forged documents regarding the donation of Constantine
  - b. Some tracts about the council of Nicea, the canons of the Greek, African, Gallic and Spanish councils down to 683.
3. Part Three
  - a. A chronological listing of the decretals from Sylvester (d 335) to Gregory II (d731).
  - b. 35 were forged and even the genuine letters have insertions or interpolations included.

**B. Comments on the contents and their meaning:**

1. They were designed to exalt the power of the clergy against secular rulers, not specifically to exalt the papacy over all other persons. The latter was the end result, however.
2. They made up a manual on orthodoxy and clerical discipline current in the 800's.
3. They promoted the papal theocracy via these arguments:
  - a. The clergy is a divinely instituted, consecrated and inviolable special group that mediates between God and man in somewhat the same manner as in the Jewish Law.
  - b. The priests are defined as the spiritual and the laity are the carnals.
  - c. If a man sins against clergy, he sins against God.
  - d. Clergy is responsible to God alone and not to any earthly tribunal.
  - e. The papacy is the fountain of all power since he is the spiritual heir of Peter.
  - f. The pope must agree to all councils and to all matters relating to bishops.
  - g. The pope is the final and ultimate umpire of all controversy and there is no appeal after his decision, i.e., not even the emperor can overrule the pope.

**C. The Aim of the Pseudo-isidorian Decretals.**

1. To protect the clergy against secular power.
2. To promote moral standards within the clergy. It simultaneously promoted the papacy over clergy. The forgery was not doubted as genuine in the Dark Ages. But, the forgery is apparent. It is full of anachronisms such as:
  - a. Roman bishops of the second and third century 'wrote' in Frankish Latin of the ninth century on doctrinal questions that only arose in the fourth century.
  - b. They quoted the Bible from the Jerome edition amended by Charlemagne's scholars, c800.
  - c. Victor presumably wrote a letter to Theophilus of Alexandria, who lived 200 years later, about a second century question.

## THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE

**A. An Older Forgery That Accompanied the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals**

It affirmed that Constantine, when he was baptized by Sylvester in 324, presented Sylvester with the Lateran Palace and all the imperial insignia along with the Roman and Italian territory appertaining to the imperial insignia, i.e., the western half of the entire empire. This is not something a power seeking emperor was ever likely to do. In fact, Constantine was not baptized until 337 by the Arian bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia. The whole premise is wrong.

**B. The Object of this Set of Forgeries Was Clearly to Antedate by Five or six Centuries the Temporal Power of the Papacy**

The **only truth** in the whole document is that the Lateran Palace was occupied by Fausta, the wife of Constantine, and it **was** given to Sylvester when the seat of the Empire was moved to Constantinople. But, Constantine did not cede the western empire to any churchman.

**C. The Final Significance of the Pseudo-isidorian Decretals and the Donation of Constantine**

1. It stamps the organization, doctrines, and concepts of the ninth century with the authority of antiquity from the second century. The idea that the first century is determinative shows clearly.
2. It makes the ninth century organization, doctrine, and concepts appear to have been complete and unchanging from the first days of the church.
3. It is a conscious fraud fathered by the father of lies yet used to underpin the whole Roman church superstructure. The Roman church leaders have never publicly repudiated these forgeries by making the necessary moves to dismantle the religious superstructure built upon them.

**NOTE:** Nicholas I (the pope when the documents appeared) was a man able to take advantage of the fraud. Did he suspect anything about this being a forgery? There is no way to know. But, he believed that he was supreme, sovereign, and over the emperor. Yet he was careful to avoid giving the emperor any reason to attack him.

## **CHANGES IN WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH**

**A. Simplicity Changed to Pageantry**

Mosheim (p55) said, "There is no institution so pure and excellent which the corruption and folly of men will not in time alter for the worse, and load with additions foreign to its nature and original design. Such in a particular manner, was the fate of Christianity. In this century (the second) many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men. These changes, while they destroyed the beautiful simplicity of the gospel, were naturally pleasing to the gross multitude, who are more delighted with the pomp and splendor of external institutions, than with the native charms of rational and solid piety, and who generally give little attention to any objects but those which strike their outward senses." Entertainment became the standard.

In a sacral society, public rituals must be public and are forbidden in private. They must be socially binding, possess perceived power, be dispensed by an authority either directly or indirectly via an ordained representative, and are seen as effective in providing blessings. The more impressive they are the greater their perceived power. The administrator has power when people accept this view. When public attitudes are manipulated and people begin to believe that certain forms have power, then the sacral state is in process of becoming consolidated.

What were some of the reasons the church changed its worship?

**1. Cater to Culture:**

Bishops added to the number and types of religious rites to accommodate the Jews and heathens in order to facilitate their conversion to Christianity. Their apparent goal was to be relevant.

**2. Remove any sense of being different from other people:**

The changes were designed to remove the criticisms which the Jewish and pagan priests directed against Christians, on account of their worship. Outsiders viewed Christians as little better than atheists, because they had no temples, no altars, no victims, no officiating priests, nor the pageantry and entertainment that pagans used.

3. **Make religion mysterious so that it is better felt than told.**

The populace felt that religion had to be both mysterious and exciting. Christians labored to produce that in their public activities to make themselves fit into society better. In this mind-set the Great Commission cannot be communicated in rational terms, only in emotional terms.

4. **Make religion entertainment.**

The custom of teaching their religious doctrines by art, images, drama, actions, songs and other sense oriented modes was common with pagan religions. Christians now labored to do the same for their beliefs. The level of entertainment and stimulation became the criteria for approval.

Solid preaching and teaching was no longer sufficient for many church leaders.

5. **Christianity became both popular and expected.**

When the pagan Constantine (influenced by a Christian mother) assumed headship of the church, the floodgates of secularizing the church were opened. When the entire population of the empire was determined to be Christian by decree, then paganizing the church was sure to occur. When Constantine offered temporal inducements to those professing Christianity, he brought unregenerate multitudes into the official membership of the church. He also made it possible for people to separate religion from life, i.e. together in culture, but without influencing each other. A sacral society does not lend itself to depth of spiritual understanding by the masses.

**B. There Were Some Specific Changes:**

1. **Lord's Supper**

It became a powerful, blessing-generating, and mysterious ritual binding the population in an area together. It also promoted a closer tie to their clergy and more dependence upon the priests.

- a. The prayers became lengthy with great solemnity and instruction. Gold and silver vessels became associated with communion.
- b. If once per week is good, then more times per week must become better.
- c. Location became important. Why not at the tombs of martyrs and at funerals to bring in both death and resurrection as features? Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386) was the first to clearly advocate that communion could help the dead.
- d. Eusebius, Athanasius, Origen, Cyprian, Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom all opposed the literal transforming of the bread and wine into body and blood of Jesus - affirming that Jesus' words were symbolic. Gelasius (496), one of the bishops of Rome who was eventually included in papal lists as a pope, opposed the literal change. John of Damascus (700-750) was the first to teach that the bread and wine did become the body and blood of Jesus. About 831 Paschasius Radbertus, a monk of the monastery of Corbie, near Amiens, renowned for his extensive learning in Greek as well as in Latin theology, set forth the first thorough going treatise on the Lord's Supper, "De Corpore et Sanguine Domini," in which he taught that only those who partake in faith eat and drink the body and blood of Christ...and also that by divine miracle the substance of the elements is made the very body and blood of Christ. See Walker, Williston, **A History of the Christian Church**, Charles Scribner's Sons, 192.
- e. In order to offer a sacrifice, Tertullian reasoned, there must be a priest. With him the term sacerdos (priest) first came into full use. Walker p91. This set the stage for differentiation between the priest, the dispenser of blessings, and the laity, the receivers of blessings.

- f. The mass was fully developed by the papacy of Gregory 540-604, as a focus of worship.
  - d. Justin and Irenaeus both spoke of the Lord's Supper as an offering. Later the gift came to be thought of as a sacrifice of man toward God. Later it became to be seen as a sacrifice of Jesus toward God. Cyprian added the idea that the service reenacts the offering of Jesus at Calvary, i.e. a repetitive, recurring, ongoing sacrifice – **not** once for all.
2. **Music In The Early Church.**

The early church was ridiculed by society because it did not use the commonly and readily available instruments of music. The first recorded clergy sanctioned use of mechanical accompaniment in Christian worship was by Pope Vitalian (657-672). Even then its adoption was very slow in Europe and not at all in the eastern church.

'A capella' means 'in the manner of the church,' i.e. unaccompanied singing. The early church, in spite of abundant opportunities to use mechanical instruments, used vocal music only.

However, using a capella only does not avoid all of the dangers. Men and Satan are quite inventive. A capella can be perverted. During the fourth century when so many changes were taking place, churches were selecting choirs and other special singers to entertain, stimulate, and encourage. Those developed into official choirs. Justin, Tertullian, Origen, Irenaeus, Meliton, Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom all mention singing. Only Basil mentions instruments and he condemns them. Singing was taken away from the congregation and given to those who were trained to sing well – form, sound, harmony, rhythm, etc became the standard of worship music.

Adam Clarke's comment: "I further believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is without the sanction and against the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion and that they are sinful...I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have reason to believe that they were productive of much evil." Clark, Adam **Commentary on the Bible** vol IV, p684. Although many years after the time frame we are discussing, his comments are valid and worth consideration.

The claim is often made that the Old Testament included instrumental music in worship as a matter of routine and was seen as commanded by God from early days. If every scripture mentioning singing, instruments, instrumental accompaniment, and worship are analyzed, the student will see that such is not true. Instruments in conjunction with worship and especially with singing, came into prominence only in the time of David, about 5 centuries after Moses gave the Law to Israel. God allowed David's behavior, but we also note that frequently God allowed something that He knew was not in man's best interests – slavery, polygamy, human kings, etc. He would regulate it, however.

The logic of using some Old Testament verses (reporting events occurring well after the Law was given) to validate a practice that came into Christian activity only after 6 or more centuries after Christ seems to be grasping for straws. The logic is appalling.

Verses in the New Testament that apply to this discussion directly include:

- a. The verb form of 'hymn' which means to sing praise to God, Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26, Acts 16:25 and Hebrews 2:12
- b. Noun form of 'hymn', a song of praise, is found in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16.

- c. 'Ado' (the verb) and 'Ode' (the noun) mean 'to sing' and 'a song'. Found in Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16 and Revelation 5:9, 14:3, and 15:3
- d. Psallo. The original meaning was 'to move by a touch, to twitch, to touch, to strike the strings or chords of an instrument, absolutely to play on a stringed instrument, to sing to music.' By New Testament times, the secular meaning had become 'to sing praise.' Words do change meaning over time. It is found in Ephesians 5:19 (make melody), Romans 15:9 and I Cor 14:15 (sing) and James 5:13 (sing praise).

## WHAT WAS THE PRACTICE IN THE EARLY CHURCH ?

### A. The Early Church Used Vocal Music Solely Without Any Accompaniment as They Praised God and Edified One Another

Their rationale was that there is no basis in Scripture for using any man-made instrument in connection with the expression of their heart in praising God. Secondly, using an instrument made by God in worship to God is fitting. Thirdly, a human has a higher nature that best expresses itself via vocal music. Fourthly, aesthetics do not control our worship. In any event, a well-trained human voice is far superior to any mechanical instrument. Fifthly, God's pleasure is paramount, not human pleasure. Sixthly, man must communicate to God in the most intelligible way possible and that involves the mind expressing itself in words.

### B. In Judaism, Instruments Were Used in Conjunction with the Temple Sacrifices and Rituals

But, the use of instruments along with the voice came into Jewish life only in the time of David, centuries after the Law was given to Israel via Moses. Instruments were **never** used in the synagogue worship which stressed instruction, study, fellowship, and minimal ritual.

We are no longer under the Mosaic Law and its practices. See Hebrews, Galatians, etc.

## COMMENTS ON CHANGES THAT HAVE ARISEN

### A. The Greek Orthodox Church

Has never accepted the instrument in worship because there is no basis in Scripture for it and it is not in harmony with the nature of Christian worship. The Greek language does not allow it.

### B. The Roman Church

Did not accept the instrument until about the tenth century AD on any widespread basis. Even then, it came in with difficulty. Her leading thinkers opposed it on the basis that the safest course and the original course is purely vocal music.

### C. The Early Reformation Leaders

Opposed the use of mechanical instruments in worship because they could find no basis in Scripture for using them. In addition they had seen what had happened in the Roman churches that had adopted it. They also saw that it was against spiritual worship, had major secular influences in it, and was easily perverted into entertainment and mood setting. During the Restoration in the 1800's in the USA, the mechanical instrument was introduced after the Civil War among much controversy, strife and division. Recall Romans 16:17, 'Mark those that cause divisions...!'

### D. Ten of the Rationales That Have Been Used to Justify the Use of the Instrument in Praise to God

1. Vocal music can be simply awful; totally offending our aesthetic natures and driving away those who need to hear the gospel.
2. We can use anything in worship to God that He has not specifically prohibited.
3. It helps to set the mood and satisfies our meditative and aesthetic natures.
4. It will help someone to sing better or at least cover some of their mistakes.
5. The original meaning of 'psallo' included plucking strings and we must accept the original meaning of any word in Scripture. Therefore using the instrument in worship is a command.
6. It is not commanded, but it is an aid just as a songbook or pitch pipe is an aid.
7. It is not the same as a mechanical prayer wheel since thought lies behind the mechanical instrument in worship.
8. What occurs during worship is absolutely unimportant. All that counts is our attitude.
9. Those who oppose the use of the instrument in worship can block the sound out of their mind/hearing as they worship.
10. It will attract outsiders, especially the youth.

#### **E. Arguments Opposing the Use of Mechanical Instruments of Music in Worship to God**

1. We are limited to doing what God has specifically commanded.
  - a. Micah 6:8 includes a very basic principle – walk humbly with God, do not be presumptuous.
  - b. I Samuel 15:22ff stresses obedience
  - c. Note Matthew 7:21 and John 14:23f about obedience to Jesus, not to self.
  - d. Note Amos 3:3 for a basic principle – how can we walk together in disagreement?
  - e. There are declarative statements such as Mark 16:16 and imperative statements such as Acts 2:38, and examples such as Acts 20:7. We must understand the language being used, the way the words fit together, and what the meaning is.
  - f. Note the inference in Hebrews 10:24f, that Christians assembled at a place. This means that we do have the obligation to understand the meaning of a passage with some 'common sense.'
2. Although humans have an aesthetic nature, that nature is not to control us. John 4:24 informs us that we must worship in spirit (the higher portion of our being) and in truth (i.e. on God's terms). Vocal music satisfies both.
3. Since our worship is to God, His pleasure is paramount.
4. In the New Testament, there is no hint of a mechanical instrument being used in the worship of God nor is there any hint of it being required later.
5. Singing and using a mechanical instrument are different aspects of music. They can be done separately and hence do not rely upon each other. Singing requires both notes and words. Instrumental music dispenses with words and thus is not required to transmit verbal truth. How can a person edify another person and praise God intelligibly without words?
6. The early church did not use any mechanical instrument in its worship. They had ready and ample access to a wide variety of string, percussion, and wind instruments.
7. If the instrument is commanded as being inherent in the word 'psallo', then each and every worshiper must have his/her own instrument and use it in their individual worship - even in an assembly. This is contrary to doing all things decently and in order.
8. If the instrument is commanded as inherent in 'psallo' (plucking), then wind instruments such as the organ, or trumpet are excluded and pianos as impact instruments are excluded.
9. Worship must be from our higher nature. We cannot assign the worship activity from us to someone or something else by proxy or by default. Assigning praise to God to a mechanical instrument of music is identical to using a mechanical prayer wheel as is done in Asian circles.

10. Christians are in a thinking religion as well as in an emotional religion. Music must communicate systematic, reasonable thought and only vocal music can do this. Instrumental music can and does affect emotions and causes some recall of words, but only vocal music can stimulate ongoing rational, reflective, analyzing, communicative thought.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Purely vocal music arising from the heart and based on the principles found in God's word is the safest course in worshiping God. Adding to, subtracting from, or changing God's word is dangerous. It has eternal consequences. Singing must be an intelligent emotional response to God and appeal to God. A lifeless instrument cannot participate in intellectual communication. Accompanied singing is similar to the use of a mechanical prayer wheel which is used in some eastern religions to ensure that there are many prayers offered.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:**

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1. How do you see culture affecting Christianity?
2. What was the overriding impact of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals on the religious world in the medieval period?
3. What was the effect of the Donation of Constantine on the medieval church?
4. When culture intervenes in worship, worship moves from simple to complex. Why?
5. What were three of the changes in the Lord's Supper in the medieval period?
6. Why did a capella singing become accompanied? When? Why so late?
7. What are three overriding considerations to avoid mechanical instruments in Christian worship?
8. Describe the advantages of a capella music?
9. If instrumental worship is acceptable, then what rationale dictates against our using mechanical prayer wheels?
10. What does Romans 16.17 have to do with change agents?



## LESSON TEN

# The Evolution in Worship Methods (II)

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**f worship of angels is wrong, what about worship of dead humans? In Rev 19.10 and in 22.8f John was told not to worship the angel talking to him.

The veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and of the saints which the Roman church has created is another direct influence of paganism upon the history of Christianity.

### VENERATION OF SAINTS AND RELICS

#### A. The Actual Veneration of Saints Can Be Attributed to the Paganizing Influence Introduced by Constantine

“The beginnings of the veneration of martyrs and of their relics run back to the middle of the second century. Their deaths were regularly commemorated with public services.” Walker p 155. “With the conversion of Constantine...and the accession to the church of masses fresh from heathenism, this reverence largely increased.

1. Constantine himself built a great church in honor of Peter in Rome.
2. His mother, Helena, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where the true cross was thought to have been discovered.
3. Popular opinion, which had long sanctioned the remembrance of martyrs in prayer and worship, had passed over, before the close of the fourth century, to the feeling that they were to be prayed to as intercessors with God, and as able to protect, heal and aid those who honored them.
4. The martyrs for the masses took the place of the old gods and heroes. To the martyrs, popular feeling added distinguished ascetics, church leaders, and opponents of heresy....They were guardians of cities, patrons of trades, curers of diseases. They were omnipresent....they were honored with burning tapers.” Walker, 155.

#### B. This Process of Paganism Can Be Seen in the Case of Mary, the Lord’s Mother

Curiously enough, she did not stand out preeminent until well into the fourth century. Schaff remarks: “The ‘mother of the Lord’ was transformed into a ‘mother of God,’ the humble handmaid of the Lord’ into a ‘queen of heaven,’ the ‘highly favored’ into a ‘dispenser of favors,’ the ‘blessed among women’ into ‘the intercessor above all women,’ nay, we may almost say, the redeemed daughter of fallen Adam, who is nowhere in Holy Scriptures excepted from the universal sinfulness, into a sinlessly holy co-redeemer.” Schaff, vol III, p441. She became equal to Christ as redeemer.

### THE VENERATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINTS

“The veneration of martyrs and saints had respect, in the first instance, to their immortal spirits in heaven, but came to be extended, also, in a lower degree, to their earthly remains or relics. By these are understood, first, their bodies, or rather parts of them, bones, blood, ashes; then all which was in any way closely associated with their persons, clothes: staff, furniture, and especially the instruments of their

martyrdom. After the time of Ambrose the cross of Christ also, which with the superscription and nails, are said to have been miraculously discovered by the empress Helena...was included and subsequently His crown of thorns, and His coat, which are preserved....according to legend....in Paris....and in Treves.” Schaff, Vol III, p449f.

Few organic things last very long. In any event, why would Christ, whose worship must be spiritual, allow physical things to be preserved which would be used to detract from the worship of Christ? We don’t even have the original manuscripts of the scriptures. Humans would worship them and forget their purpose of showing us the Christ!

The widespread use of relics is illustrated by one of the statutes of the Seventh General Council (787): “If any bishop from this time forward is found consecrating a temple without holy relics, he shall be deposed as a transgressor of the ecclesiastical traditions.” Relics could be stolen and a successful theft incurred no ecclesiastical reproach. Note that the supply of relics might not meet demand and some might have been found/made.

### **FESTIVALS TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF THE SAINTS**

Other events were added. When pleasure becomes more and more important and it can be linked in any way with religion as a basis, then pleasure will increase to the exclusion of spirituality. Culture tends to overrule Scripture when people do not know the scriptures.

In the fourth century: Innocent V instituted festivals sacred to the memory of the lance with which our Savior’s side was pierced, the nails that fastened him to the cross, and the crown of thorns he wore at his death.” Mosheim, p371. In the sixth century the festival of the purification of the Blessed Virgin, was invented with a design to remove the uneasiness of the heathen convert on account of the loss of their luperalia, or feast of Pan, which had been formerly observed in the month of February.” Mosheim, vol 1, p153. Easter was selected to fall on Sunday, a day of rest, by the council of Nicea in **325 AD**.

If we recognize why certain days are celebrated for religious reasons **and** we can use that day for positive family times, then why not use it to bind family and friends together? But, not as a religious event. “December 25 was a great pagan festival, that of *Sol Invictus*, which celebrated the victory of light over darkness and the lengthening of the sun’s rays at the winter solstice. The assimilation of Christ to the sun god, as Sun Of Righteousness, was widespread in the fourth century and was furthered by Constantine’s legislation....which is not unrelated to the fact that the sun god was the titular divinity of his family....the gift-giving we associate with Christmas has its origin partly in the similar custom at the Roman Saturnalia.” Walker p155. Note also that Hanukkah is celebrated by the Jews on December 25 and the main festival for Mithra was celebrated on December 25.

#### **A. The Sign of the Cross and the Crucifix**

“This arose as early as the second century, the custom of making the sign of the cross on rising, bathing, going out, eating, in short, on engaging in any affairs of every-day life; a custom probably attended in many cases, even in that age, with the superstitious confidence in the magical virtue of this sign.. The crucifix, that is the sculptured or carved representation of our Savior attached to the cross, is of much later date, and cannot be clearly traced beyond the middle of the sixth century.” Schaff vol II p269. The cross itself was considered to be a holy object and thus it seems to have become more important than the one who died on the cross.

#### **B. Holy Water**

People wanted protection against the power of devils. Relics were deemed to be effective, but holy water, more readily available, was felt to be even more immediately helpful.

### C. Rosary Beads

“There are also to be found in this age (tenth century), manifest indications of the institutions of the rosary and crown of the Virgin, by which her worshipers were to reckon the number of prayers that they were to offer this new divinity....the rosary consists in fifteen repetitions of the Lord’s Prayer, and a hundred and fifty salutations of the blessed Virgin; while the crown...consists in six or seven repetitions of the Lord’s prayer, and six or seven times salutations of Ave Marias.” Mosheim, vol I, p 229. In 2002 the Vatican adjusted the rosary.

### D. Names and Titles

People like flowery, majestic, emotional, nice-sounding, ‘religious’, and attention-getting terms. The church does not need this since there is only one and it is owned by Jesus as His body. The papacy has moved in this direction with several very exalted titles for the papal office and that of his immediate subordinates.

## DOCTRINAL CHANGES IN OTHER AREAS

### A. Investiture

Other doctrinal changes coincided with the rise of councils. What people accept as doctrine is based upon what they accept as **authority**. The concept of extra-Biblical authority in the western apostate church was first defined by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (200-258). He taught that the bishop represents Christ in the congregation, and that the sum total of bishops, i.e., the ecumenical or general council, can legislate for the whole church. Thus the infallibility of the church was established, displacing the infallibility of the apostolic writings. The bishops had increasing authority and power up to the time of Constantine. For some period of time the councils then were dominant. There was also the interplay between the kings, emperors, the councils, and the papacy. The Concordat of Worms in 1122 between Pope Callistus II and Henry V, the king of Germany and the Holy Roman emperor, provided that investiture of bishops and abbots would be reserved to the papacy whereas emperors had long claimed that right. Heresies may take some time to cement in place. In this case Cyprian’s incorrect view finally was adopted by most leaders after nine centuries.

### B. Inherited and Original Sin

1. Augustine of Hippo cemented the doctrines of **original sin and inherited guilt** in the minds of western Christendom.
  - a. This doctrine teaches that children are born with the GUILT of sin.
  - b. He seems to have never distinguished between **guilt of** and **consequence of** sin. Through their inheritance all children are depraved in nature and lost in his view.
2. Irenaeus in the latter part of the second century said, “He (Jesus) came to redeem all by himself; all who through him, are regenerated to God, infants, little children, boys, young men and old.” Irenaeus, **Against Heresies**, book II, chap 22, sec 4. This comment was used later to validate infant baptism and original sin as of apostolic origin.
3. Cyprian of Carthage (248-258) enlarged upon Irenaeus’ concept and declared that even though an infant had committed no actual sin, it needed forgiveness for the sin inherited from Adam and this forgiveness was received in immersion. Although Cyprian was among the 1st to approve of infant baptism, he did not urge it. He was not consistent.
4. What the Bible says about “inherited” sin.
  - Rom 5.12 Death is passed on, not guilt
  - Rom 1-2-3 Humans are capable of great sin, but they do it individually and willingly.
  - II Sam 24.17 Note guilt and consequence, David sinned and Israel suffered.
  - Matt 18.6 Jesus elevated little children, their angels behold the Father.
  - Ezek 18.2ff Guilt is not passed on, nor can righteousness be inherited.

Acts 22.16 Immersion washes away sin. How can the next generation inherit what is no longer there?

### C. Infant Baptism

1. Tertullian (160-220) mentioned infant baptism to condemn it. "The delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however in the case of little children....Let them 'come' while they are growing up; let them 'come' while they are learning whither to come; let them become Christians when they are able to know Christ. More caution will be exercised in worldly matters; so that one who is not trusted with earthly substance is trusted with divine! Let them know how to 'ask' for salvation, that may seem (at least) to have given to him that asketh." Tertullian, **On Baptism**, chap XVIII. He believed baptism about age 20 would be reasonable.
2. Origen (185-254) made these false assumptions:
  - a. That all are polluted by birth.
  - b. Normal, marital intercourse is polluted.
  - c. That baptism regenerates without faith, repentance, and confession
  - d. Matter and flesh are both unclean – a gnostic concept.Origen was the first to openly advocate the baptism (immersion) of children. He claimed it was an apostolic practice but provided **no** evidence. He said, "None is free from pollution, though his life be but the length of one ray upon the earth. And it is for this reason because of the sacrament of baptism that pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized." Origen **Works** Vol I, p65. Note that a God-created normal human function was declared by humans to be unclean.. This is another control issue in which mankind wants to make the rules, overriding God.
3. From the second century onwards the question of baptism seems to have been confused. Some held to infant baptism. Others held that it should occur only after extended training and instruction. Others believed in delaying until they were on their deathbed. Another question dealt with the officiant or administrator of the baptism – how worthy must they be?

Regarding infant baptism, we note that Alford, church of England exegete, stated about his church: "The language of the Bible is against them; and, on their own ground, this is a very sore perplexity. There is one escape, and that a perfectly effectual one; but they are unwilling to avail themselves of its assistance. They might declare, and they ought to declare, that infant baptism was a practice unknown to the apostles: that not only does the New Testament not give one single expression which plainly and necessarily implies that infants were baptized in the apostolic churches but it can be fairly argued from a passage in chap vii of I Corinthians that such a practice could not have existed at Corinth." Alford, Henry **Contemporary Review** vol X, March 1869, p 329. **Many people decide upon a conclusion and then search for reasons for their conclusion instead of examining evidence and arriving at a sound conclusion.**

### D. Immersion and Pageantry became linked

During the 3rd century **baptism was made into a ritualistic ceremony performed by the bishop** or one of his assistants once or twice a year. The new birth came to be a major social event following a long period of preparation and instruction when the convert was older.

### E. Sprinkling instead of immersion

1. Novation's use of **sprinkling** as a substitute for immersion is related to the following idea: "If a little bit is good, a lot is better. If a lot is ok, then a small amount will suffice." The logic is unsound but many seem to use that approach, especially in religious matters. The first significant example of sprinkling is from the 3rd century.

2. Novatus/Novation was seriously ill and received affusion while in bed. Eusebius described this: "He (c251) when attacked by an obstinate disease, and being supposed at the point of death, was baptized by aspersion, in the bed on which he lay; if, indeed, it be proper that one like him did receive baptism. This illustrious character abandoning the church of God, in which, when he was converted he was honored with the presbytery, and that by favor of the bishop placing his hands upon him, to the order of bishops, and as all the clergy and many of the laity resisted it, since it was not lawful that one baptized in his sick bed by aspersion, as he was, should be promoted to any order of the clergy." Eusebius **Ecclesiastical History** Baker Book House, 1958, p266.
3. Clinical baptism or affusion was resisted and came into general acceptance only in the 9th century. "The first law for sprinkling was obtained in the following manner. Pope Stephen III, being driven from Rome by Astulphus, King of the Lombards, in 753, fled to Pepin, who a short time before had usurped the crown of France. Whilst he remained there, the Monks of Cressy in Brittany consulted him, whether, in case of necessity, baptism performed by pouring water on the head of the infant, be lawful. Stephen replied that it would. But though the truth of this was only admitted in the case of necessity. It was not until 1311 that the legislature in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent." **Edinburgh Cyclopedia**, Baptism, Vol II, p 245.

**NOTE: *The council changed truth. The same mechanisms occur today in the case of homosexual matters and gender roles in the church. Councils or majority rule have no right to change 'truth,' although they do assume that humans have the right to change Scripture. The implication is that God did not have the wisdom to address what we face.***

#### **F. Penance and Indulgences**

"Nor can scriptural authority be claimed for the system of penitential discipline which was gradually developed in the church." **Encyclopedia Britannica** v19, p800c

1. Clergy want to be involved in the lives of their parishioners. In some instances this was a wholesome idea. In others, it was a matter of control. By having the parishioners tell their secrets, an unscrupulous man could gain control over male and female. By offering 'forgiveness' the priesthood was able to get this control. Then, he could demand some evidence of repentance. If he set the terms of penitence, then he could control the parishioners at the point of confession as well as for some time thereafter.
2. Schaff said, "The sacrament of penance and priestly absolution included three elements: contrition of the heart, confession by the mouth, satisfaction by good works. On these conditions the priest grants absolution, not simply by a declaratory act, but by a judicial act." Schaff, vol IV, p382.
3. The practice of penance is a corruption of the biblical practice of confession of sins. From the Catholic Encyclopedia, vol xi p 626 and 625. "The institution of confession was necessary in order that the sin of the penitent might be revealed to Christ's minister: hence the minister to whom the confession is made must have judicial power as representing Christ, the Judge of the living and the dead. This power again requires two things: authority of knowledge and power to absolve or to condemn." "Confession is the avowal of one's own sins made to a duly authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining their forgiveness through the power of the keys...called auricular, i.e., spoken into the ear of the confessor."
  - *Note this line of logic: Peter is the rock and has the keys of salvation (kingdom). He delegates authority to the priest who deals through the saints, Mary, Jesus, to get to God (agnostic concept).*

That gets remission of sins (i.e. takes care of Augustines' inherited depravity and sinfulness) using the surplus deeds done by others (Pelagius' idea) via a perversion of the command to

confess sins. Even this is twisted to force a man to tell a priest things he cannot tell his wife and forces a woman to tell a single male things which she cannot tell her husband, father or brother. All Christians are priests, male and female. Therefore the NT practice consisted of a priest confessing to a priest. What a perverse tool the Roman church turned this into!!

4. Thomas Aquinas further developed the idea of indulgences based upon an immense **treasure of merit** composed of pious deeds and virtuous actions performed by the saints well in excess of what they needed for their own salvation and which would then be available for others to draw upon. It was inexhaustible. Note that this is kin to the idea that Pelagius advanced earlier and which Augustine had resolutely opposed. Pelagius was rejected during his life time, but he 'won' the argument later. The church claimed jurisdiction over this treasury and that they could sell the excess off.

## G. Celibacy

1. This was advanced to keep church offices from becoming hereditary, to keep the priest loyal to the pope, and keep him focused on his role. The idea was that he could not keep that focus if he had a wife to care for.
2. But, all celibates are not chaste. *Celibacy is not a synonym for chastity*. Sexual relations outside of marriage would be sinful, but would not violate a vow of celibacy. The word is apt to be a misnomer for immorality. And one who take the vow of celibacy does not break it by sinning against the 6th command (adultery). He is true to it until he weds. Refer to **Explanation of Catholic Morals**, Sullivan, p 149.
3. Celibacy was opposed by Clement of Alexandria. It was normal for all leaders and ministers in the church to marry for at least the first three centuries.
  - a. One author suggested that one factor stressing celibacy came from the common people who believed that demons could more easily control a married man than a single man. What nonsense!
  - b. Later, parents and husbands in most communities insisted that every Roman priest have a concubine to protect their own wife and/or daughters. Celibacy is not purity nor chastity.
  - c. A large part of this error arose from the mistaken belief that sex in and of itself is sinful, even in the marriage relationship. The Roman church has been and is confused on sexual matters.

## REFORMERS AND THOSE INFLUENCING REFORM

As a very brief snapshot of history, we can note the following individuals who either promoted reform in the existing structures or they laid the groundwork for those who did try for reform. In some instances the whole effort was to reform; in others to discard and rebuild. Many of these individuals would not have considered themselves to be reformers but merely endeavoring to correct some abuses or make a situation better. This is merely a snapshot to encourage students to read further.

- A. **Helvidius** in the fourth century opposed the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. He was considered a heretic and a blasphemer since Mary was held, in some circles, to be the mother of God and thus above normal, human circumstances. Recall the earlier comment that pagan religions tend to have paired male-female deities. This appears to have influenced Christendom to exalt Mary to such a high status alongside Christ.
- B. **Vigilantius**, c370-c406, was born in western Gaul and became a presbyter in Barcelona, Spain about 395. He later visited Jerome in Bethlehem.. He was pious, vehement, and a strong writer. He denounced the worship or veneration of departed saints as idolatry. He called those who gathered to adore the bones of the dead, "ash-gatherers." He was strongly against the lighting of candles at

the tombs of saints and called it pagan superstition. He opposed celibacy, the vows of poverty by the priests, and the double standard of morality between clergy and laity which held clergy to a different and higher standard, at least in theory.

**C. Jovinian**, died c 405, was an unmarried monk who opposed certain aspects of monastic life. He believed:

1. a virgin is not superior to a married woman.
2. abstinence is not better than partaking in moderation.
3. one born again by baptism cannot be overcome by the devil.
4. all sins are equal
5. rewards in Heaven are equal.

He influenced many monks and nuns to return to normal life. He was excommunicated and banished for heresy about 390 by the local bishop. He went to Milan where a council was held against him by Ambrose. Recall that Ambrose (340-397) was elevated from a secular role to bishop of the city of Milan in eight days and was influential in converting Augustine of Hippo. Jovinian died in exile about 405.

**D. Gregory of Naziansus**, 330-390, was a poet and orator and son of Nonna, one of the most noble of early Christian women. He is listed as one of the four Cappadocians whom we discussed earlier in relation to the Arian controversy. His father was a bishop for about 50 years. Gregory was well educated. He was baptized by his father at age 30, and then spent a few months in a monastery before returning home and being appointed a presbyter by his father. He was then appointed as a bishop before retiring to a period of solitude. He was invited to Constantinople's decadent church to revive it. Shunned at first, he later preached to enormous crowds. He opposed the ecclesiastical power structure although he was deeply involved in it. The Arian controversy wore him out, but the heresy was checked. He retired to writing.

**E. Claudius of Turin**, d839. The 9th century was the period of controversy about images. The iconoclasts (image breakers) reacted against the widespread practice of using images, bowing before them, etc. Claudius became the bishop of Turin, Italy in 823. He removed all images from the churches he oversaw and burned them. He denied that the cross should be worshiped. He treated relics with contempt. His efforts meant that for many years the area around Turin was much less superstitious than other parts of Europe.

## SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:

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1. What role was Mary, the mother of Jesus, elevated into by 400 AD?  
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2. What are the two primary errors introduced via relics as a focus of Christian life?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. What competing events occurred near or on December 25? What is the implication as to why the apostate church chose that for Jesus' birth?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What was the primary purpose of both holy water and rosary beads at their introduction?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Investiture refers to the concept of who has the authority to appoint bishops – the king or the pope. Why is that crucial?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. When Augustine and others like him failed to distinguish between guilt of and consequence of, their misunderstanding led to these errors:  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Name some dates and/or persons involved in modifying baptism.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
8. What malevolent tool did the Roman church attach to confession of sins?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What is the rationale for a 'treasury of merit'?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Celibacy as a doctrine arose from these concepts:  
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\_\_\_\_\_
11. When we read about Helvidius, Vigilantius, Jovinian, Gregory of Naziansus, and Claudius of Turin, what do we understand about the Roman church? What does that mean for us?  
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## LESSON ELEVEN

# The New Barbarians and the Crusades

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### INTRODUCTION:

**A**fter the upheaval introduced by Islam and the very real division between Rome and Constantinople in many aspects of life, there was some hope that Europe and the Mediterranean basin were now entering a period of relative quiet with the possibility of development and growth. But, a new set of barbarians arrived.

### THE NEW BARBARIANS

#### A. First, There Were the Magyars from the East

They were called Huns by many, hence their latter name of Hungarians. Most of them settled in what we now know as Hungary, but in their initial entry into Europe, they conquered areas controlled by the Slavs, Germans, and Italians. They raided as far west as France (Gaul). Eventually they were defeated by a German army in 935 and then merged into the local cultures, forming their own special identity in Hungary.

#### B. The Vikings, Danes, Northmen, or Norsemen

Began their moves west, south and east from Scandinavia toward the end of the 700's. There were two main movements. The Norwegians and Danes (as we now know them) moved west and southwest into western Europe. They also moved west into Iceland, Greenland and even to Vinland (Newfoundland in Canada). The Swedes moved eastward into the Slavic areas and eventually formed the royal house of Russia at Kiev. Some also got to Constantinople and formed the royal bodyguard for the emperor of the eastern wing of the Roman Empire. That occurred after they attacked Constantinople and were bought off by the Byzantine emperor.

When the northern and western Europeans first became aware of the Norsemen, it was a terror attack. According to Alcuin, scholar at the court of Charlemagne, *“Never before has such terror appeared in Britain as we have now suffered from a pagan race. Behold, the church of Saint Cuthbert is splattered with the blood of the priests of God, despoiled of all its ornaments; a place more venerable than all in Britain is given as a prey for pagan people.”* This was his summation of the first attack on a church facility at Lindesfarne, northern Great Britain, in June 793, by the Northmen.

The Vikings' basic approach in early years was to attack for quick profit and plunder. In some cases they asked for and got protection money. In a few instances that actually protected the people who paid for protection. Many bands of Vikings came to attack and later ones did not honor any earlier protection money agreement. Deceit, force, and diplomacy were all used in some combination as they attempted to control trade routes, kingdoms, and servant populations. Later they developed trade as an extension or as an alternative. If the intended target proved to be too strong to attack by

sword, they acted as middle men in setting up trade between other areas. Their longboats, carrying about 50 men, had a shallow draft. This enabled them to enter rivers and other shallow bodies of water that had seemed to offer protection to many villages and towns heretofore. They also attacked monasteries and other 'church' related facilities as 'soft targets.' Hence, they were seen as godless warriors, although they were very religious. Their religion was mythological and featured war in which bravery, honor, and dealing with privation were exalted. In some ways the Klingons in *Star Trek, Next Generation* are space Vikings.

Why did the Northmen move south and east and west? No one knows for sure. But some reasons may have been:

1. They saw the prosperity, comparatively speaking, of the 'Christian' societies south of them and thus greed prompted the attacks.
2. If the God of the south was more powerful economically than the gods of the north, perhaps they needed to find out how to get into the good graces of this more powerful God.
3. A growing population that needed room to expand into.
4. Awareness that a powerful nation existed to the south when Charlemagne embarked upon his cruel wars against the Germans. This may have led to preemptive strikes by the Northmen.
5. The belief that to die well in battle guaranteed reaching Valhalla.
6. More centralized control in the Scandinavian countries may have forced exiles and lesser chiefs to seek a safer place to live.

### **C. How Did Europe Deal with the Vikings?**

1. They offered little resistance at first.
2. Then they paid tribute or ceded tracts of land to them.
  - a. Tribute did not pacify; it encouraged other groups to demand even more.
  - b. Giving land away resulted in partitioning and loss of control by the local kings to the invaders.
  - c. In some places the rulers managed to assemble enough money, after about a century, to actually build some fortifications against a sea-borne attack – something they had not planned for.
  - d. The attacks, especially those involving tribute, meant that getting fortifications built was delayed due to lack of money, insufficient manpower (via death in battle), and loss of crops (i.e. famine).

### **D. Christianity's Influence on the Vikings**

Immediately after Charlemagne's death, the control and order he had imposed on central and southern Europe began breaking down – limiting European resistance to the Vikings and Magyars. His three grandsons divided the land. Charles the Bald got western France. Louis the German got what is now Germany. Lothair got the land in-between from the Atlantic down into Italy. None was strong enough to withstand the Viking incursions. As a result, the populace developed a mutual self-help system that involved negotiations and an element of faith. This was the true beginnings of feudalism in which every person reported to someone more powerful and had certain obligations to them. Even the emperor/kings and pope had a continual conflict over which of them reported to the other.

The idea of one individual, other than a king, unilaterally changing his religion or gods was not in Viking thinking. If a chief or king changed, he expected his subjects to change as well. But, if the chief or king knew that there would a lot of protest, he might convert in private or not convert at all. The Scandinavians became 'Christian' on the basis of **convert or die**.

### **E. Why Did the Leaders Want to Be Christian?**

1. This would ease trade barriers with the southern kingdoms.
2. This would allow the Scandinavian leaders to claim equality with the 'Christian' leaders to the south.
3. This would imply wealth, status and civilized standards in their area.
4. The doctrine of the divine right of kings was widely held in the south and could be used effectively in the north. The Viking 'gods' did not offer that advantage.
5. Christianity was seen as scholarly, unifying, and centralized. Little did the Vikings know!
6. Christians respected civil law at least as well as the Scandinavians.

### **F. The General Sequence of Viking Attacks**

1. They attacked Britain in 787 and Ireland in 795.
2. Turgeis built Dublin in 840 as a trading post.
3. The Norsemen sacked Paris in 846.
4. By 851 they had bases on the Thames, near London, and on the Seine, near Paris.
5. They colonized Iceland by 875.
6. Raiding parties were in Italy by 911.
7. By the late 900's they were virtual rulers of northern France.
8. They reached Vinland by 1000.
9. By 1018 they ruled all of Scandinavia and northern Britain.
10. By 1060 they ruled Sicily.
11. In 1066 at the Battle of Hastings, they took England from their base in Gaul, defeating another Norseman who intended to rule that part of the world.
12. They were bodyguards in Constantinople.
13. And they became the royal house of Kievan Russia.  
They eventually became part of the local culture where ever they settled, becoming 'Christians' per sacral thinking.

### **G. Some of the Long Term Effects of the Viking Raids**

1. They were the most advanced technologically in Europe and shared that as part of their trading empires.
  2. They had the ability to mobilize resources effectively toward a common goal.
  3. They had learned how to use and cope with a hostile environment.
  4. They had some of the first truly open, representative governments. The first was the Althing in Iceland which is still operating.
  5. British common law had its origin with the Vikings. USA laws spring from Bible and British common law.
  6. Feudalism began in earnest as a result of the need for local people to help one another.
  7. The Viking trinity was replaced by the Christian trinity around the 1000-1100 period.
  8. Pagan tactics to win battles became part of the 'Christian' techniques of conversion, i.e. the end justifies the means. They developed breaking treaties into a highly skilled mode of war.
- There was a short time in which Europe could consolidate what had occurred. But, the rivalry within Europe and between various groups, led to many possible 'solutions'. True Christianity was not one of the avenues tried. The one outlet for this energy, futility, and blood-lust that actually functioned successfully for some period of time was the Crusades.

## **THE CRUSADES**

## **A. Description and Environment of the Crusades**

### **1. Definition.**

‘Crusades’ comes from the Latin word for ‘cross.’ The word ‘crusade’ denoted a military expedition organized by the Roman Church or its adherents against the Moslem powers to wrest control of Palestine from Islamic control. The emblem of the crusades was the cross. The meaning of ‘Crusade’ has been extended to include any papal war against those not under control of the Vatican or its representatives. In the mid-20th century it was further extended to mean an evangelistic campaign. In this presentation the original and first secondary meanings will be used, not an evangelistic campaign.

There were several major expeditions in the middle ages between 1095 and 1291 (the end of the Kingdom of Acre), as the Northmen invasions were ending and the Vikings were being assimilated. Franks, the recent descendants of the Norsemen, composed a major portion of the Knights in the Crusades. We would view them as French today.

### **2. The aim or goal of the Crusades.**

In 638 Palestine fell to the Moslems. However, few restraints were placed on Christendom in the area until 969 when a new dynasty took over. Even those restrictions were minimal. It was only in the 11<sup>th</sup> century that significant problems arose for the pilgrims/resident Christians from the Islamic authorities. About 1000, Pope Silvester II called for volunteers to go to Palestine to retake the area for Christendom. No one responded. In 1073 the Seljuk Turks took over and introduced somewhat harsher restrictions toward Christians. However, the Moslem rule for eastern ‘Christians’ and Jews was easier than in later years under the Crusaders. In 1074, Gregory VII (Hildebrand) called for a crusade. Nothing happened immediately. In 1095 Peter (the Hermit) of Amiens aroused Pope Urban II and got his permission to preach a crusade.

### **3. Moslems find the word ‘crusade’ offensive but they fail to admit or understand that Moslem conquests and behaviors provoked the Europeans and got their attention.**

They also believe that most of the suffering was on the Moslem side whereas both sides suffered greatly. Both the Moslem warriors and the Crusaders inflicted and suffered atrocities. Both sides suffered treasonable behaviors, exploited the defenseless, performed acts of chivalry, violated treaties, bought and sold people, acted at the highest levels of morality, and were totally debased at times. Local civilians very often suffered intensely, regardless of whether Moslem or Crusader was involved in the fighting or in the few periods of relative peace.

## **B. The Motivations for this First Crusade (And to Some Extent All of the Later Ones)**

### **1. To free Palestine from Moslem control.**

### **2. To stop Moslem expansion although Charles Martel had stopped it inside Europe at the Battle of Tours in 732, at Poitiers, France. There was concern that Islam was expanding again with the goal of taking the entire Mediterranean basin under control.**

### **3. To win the favor of the Virgin Mary since she had lived near Jerusalem.**

### **4. To gain absolution from sin by papal decree. The pope had promised full absolution from sin for anyone dying in a crusade, giving them immediate entrance into Paradise.**

### **5. Escape from the deteriorating economic conditions in Europe:**

a. Feudalism meant virtual slavery for the masses in almost every area

b. Several harvests had failed over wide areas. There had been 48 famine years in Europe in 70 years between 970 and 1040 and conditions worsened between 1085 and 1095.

c. Incessant war among the nobles had wearied the poor people who were obligated to fight for their master/protector with little reward.

d. A foreign war with possible rich plunder seemed better than starving at home

- e. Since the eldest son received 100% of the family inheritance, younger siblings wanted opportunity.
6. To extend the religious and political power of the papacy.
7. To bring the eastern and western wings of Christendom back together by a joint victory. The Emperor in Constantinople had requested a few knights from the west to come help him train his army and provide a deterrent to the Islamic forces. He finally got some knights – but far too many and far too hard to control.
8. To provide secular nobles opportunity to seize more power, land and commerce.
9. Adventure.

## EIGHT CRUSADES IN THE ELEVENTH THROUGH THE THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

### A. First Crusade: 1095-1099

Pope Urban II first mentioned a crusade in March 1095 at a synod in Piacenza. On Tuesday, Nov 27, 1095, at Clermont-Ferrond, France, he preached and ‘was amazed’ at the enthusiastic response by the crowd with their cry, “God wills it.” *Was the audience primed and manipulated?* We have no way of knowing.

There were many segments of this first crusade. The first group to actually form was led by Peter the Hermit. Some estimate that he gathered about 40,000 to go with him from Gaul to Constantinople. Peter had little influence with the clergy, but the common people listened to him.

He collected funds for the crusade from many nobles (who did not want to go), from Jews (who feared reprisal if they did not contribute), and some from the commoners (many deciding to go since they had no money to contribute). En route to Constantinople his ‘army’ committed a number of atrocities in Europe out of malice, envy, and ignorance. Their presence around Constantinople was a worry to the Byzantines and thus they were allowed to travel on toward Nicea to attack their first Moslem city. En route, the Sultan Kilij of Arslan attacked them, killing about 38,000 (by some estimates). Peter survived along with about 2000 stragglers. They joined the later Baron’s Crusade that is usually counted as the first true crusade. The Baron’s Crusade was sponsored by Pope Urban II, and led by Godfrey of Bouillon (the duke of Lower Lorraine), Hugh of Vermandois (brother of Philip, king of France); Baldwin (Godfrey’s brother); Robert II of Flanders; Robert of Normandy (brother of William II, king of England); Raymond of Toulouse; Bohemund I of Otranto (son of Robert Guiscard); and Tancred, cousin of Bohemund.

The strategy of the Baron’s Crusade was:

1. Small groups would begin their journey about August 1096. They were to be self-financed and totally responsible to their own leaders, i.e. no single leader for this crusade.
2. They were to rendezvous at Constantinople.
3. After all the groups assembled, then they would attack the Seljuk Turks, proceeding south to Syria, Palestine and Jerusalem.

They had five major armies of noblemen along with the remnants of the commoner army led by Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless. Only a small percentage actually got to Jerusalem.. After the commoner group had been decimated, the later group, led by the above Barons, actually entered Turkey and conquered Nicea in June 1097. They laid siege to Antioch and took it in June 1098. In May 1099 they laid siege to Jerusalem and took it in July with a terrible massacre. Godfrey became the local king over the kingdom of Jerusalem for one year. He died in July 1100. His able brother

Baldwin took over. One reason for this crusade's success was the division among the Moslem forces. But, the Moslems soon united against their common foe. Baldwin was a man who was good to have as a friend, but not as an enemy nor as a part of one's family. He was generally an effective ruler, but certainly not one we would admire today.

The Franks, with their armor, were seen as terrible warriors equal to maybe 10-20 of the opposing foot soldiers. They were almost untouchable in battle unless the Moslem fighters decided to forgo the horses and kill the knights' horses. Horses were rich plunder and the Moslem warriors hesitated to kill them. Once on the ground, however, the Franks were almost helpless. For some time in the Palestine/Syria area the Franks gained the reputation of being totally invincible.

**B. The Second Crusade: 1144-1149**

Sponsored by Bernard of Clairvaux, this crusade was led by Conrad III, Emperor of Germany and Louis VII, King of France. They left Nuremberg in May 1147, about 50 years after the first crusade. When the Moslems united their forces and conquered Edessa in 1144, Europe was alarmed that the Moslems would oust the Christians from Palestine and then proceed into Europe. Pope Eugenius III sponsored this crusade. The Germans were ambushed in Turkey. Few escaped. The French army besieged Damascus, got discouraged, and went home. The only success of this crusade was when the English defeated the Moslems at Lisbon, Portugal on their way to the east.

**C. The Third Crusade: 1189-1191**

Saladin retook Jerusalem in 1187 for the Moslems. Saladin was one of the most effective of the Moslem leaders -being absolutely ruthless, charming, lenient, severe, and intelligent about military matters. Three leaders of Europe joined forces to oust the Moslems: Frederick I (Barbarosa) of Germany; Philip II, King of France; and Richard I (Couer de Lion) King of England. Frederick, the real leader of this crusade, drowned in Cilicia at 70 years old. Philip became discouraged at Acre and went home. He had home matters requiring his attention. Richard stayed 14 months. After much fighting to win Jaffa and Cyprus, he signed a treaty permitting Christians to visit Jerusalem. This was the only real success of this crusade. Upon his departure, he was imprisoned in Europe for a ransom. by the emperor of Austria. He was released in 1194, preventing his brother, John, from usurping the throne in 1194. He was at war almost continually with Philippe II of France – forcing him to raise taxation rates. His behavior ranged between extreme cruelty and noble chivalry.

**D. The Fourth Crusade: 1201-1204 (THE SECOND WORST)**

Sponsored by Innocent III, this crusade was led by Thibaud of Champagne, Baldwin, Count of Flanders; and Enrico Dandolo of Venice. This became an economic war, starting when they conquered Zara in Dalmatia, a former vassal city of Venice. They were excommunicated by the Pope by this act. They then attacked Constantinople, their erstwhile ally, and pillaged the city in 1204. Baldwin of Flanders took over as emperor of the East and forced the Pope to recognize his role. At this point the crusade died. (A small Greek army retook Constantinople from the westerners in 1261, 57 years later.) This effort poisoned relationships between Rome and Constantinople for centuries.

**E. The Children's Crusade: 1212 (THE WORST OF ALL)**

Since the earlier crusades had experienced so much failure, many people began believing that only the pure and innocent would ever oust the Moslems from Palestine. After 117 years since the first crusade, Stephen in France and Nicolas in Germany began raising a children's army. Innocent III sponsored it. Two groups of 30,000 French children and 20,000 German children separately crossed

into Italy. None of them ever reached Palestine to fight the Moslems. Slavery, death by exposure and disease, and settling into a farming environment stopped this crusade. All of the crusades caused much harm. This was the most senseless.

**F. The Fifth Crusade: 1217-1221**

A Hungarian army went to Egypt since they believed that Egypt was the seat of Moslem power, i.e. food and manpower in the region. That was true on many counts. They captured Damietta. However, so much disaffection developed in the army that they surrendered Damietta in August of 1221, abandoned the crusade, and went home.

**G. The Sixth Crusade: 1228-1229**

Sponsored by Gregory IX but thought of by Honorius II, Frederick II of Germany led the sixth crusade. He had vowed to go in 1205 and again in 1220. The pope was pressing him to proceed. Frederick was disillusioned by a pestilence in his army as well as his own serious illness just before they sailed from Italy. So, he decided to stay in Italy. Then Gregory IX excommunicated him.. In 1229, he led an army to Palestine. While he was away, the pope rejected his achievements and authorized an attack on all of Frederick's Italian possessions. Without any fighting on the crusade itself, Frederick negotiated control of the kingdom of Judea for himself on the condition that he allow Moslems to live in it. However, shortly thereafter the Saracens in 1244 overpowered the Seljuk Turks and rejected any concessions to Christendom.

**H. The Seventh Crusade: 1248-1254**

Innocent V sponsored this one, led by Louis IX of France who organized and financed it. He spent four years preparing. He laid siege to Damietta in Egypt and took it. However, when he attempted to attack Cairo, he led his army into the irrigation system of the Nile, became trapped, and had to surrender in April of 1250. He paid a huge sum to get out of captivity. He and his soldiers sailed to Palestine where they helped to build fortifications for other western armies for four years. He returned home with no lasting accomplishment except loss of life.

**I. The Eighth Crusade: 1269-1272**

Gregory X sponsored Louis IX of France to lead another crusade. France's nobles were tremendously unenthusiastic. He landed on the north coast of Africa where a large number of his knights perished. He died at Tunis. Simultaneously, the English led by Prince Edward, attacked Syria. Deciding that he could not win, Edward negotiated a truce and returned home. As a note, the last 'Christian' bastion on the Syrian coast, Acre, was stormed by the sultan in 1291.

The Crusades from Europe to Palestine thus lasted 177 years. But the last stronghold of Acre did not fall until 1291, thus the span of the external crusades was from 1095-1291, or 196 years.

**J. Results of the External Crusades:**

1. Hardened Moslem attitudes toward the west. The Crusaders tended to be overly violent and totally merciless.
2. Caused doubt by westerners about the pope's legitimate power.
3. Inspired a revival in literature, especially in the spoken languages.
4. Opened the west to new ideas from the Muslims and from cultures farther east.
5. Resulted in the growth of the Hospitalers, the Templars and Teutonic Knights which influenced European politics for centuries.

6. Convinced the Moslems that the west was weak and could be overrun. This led to several wars. The first knights appeared to be invincible. Later leaders were inept, resulting in the knights being defeated on numerous occasions.
7. Drained huge sums of money from Europe that was desperately needed for development.
8. Formed an early and tragically expensive step toward the Renaissance.
9. Began a new era in taxation of personal property.
10. Many Italian cities such as Venice became very wealthy via providing transportation to the Holy Lands for crusaders and later for pilgrims. Venice also used her status to promote attacks upon some cities that had been vassals but had gained freedom.
11. The crusades broke down *some* of the barriers and distinctions between various classes.
12. Aristotle and other ancient philosophers were reintroduced to the western world.
13. Crusades led to enmity between various ethnic groups within the papal domains.

The idea that the church could instigate a war was derived from Augustine's idea of a just war. If defense was acceptable, then offense to destroy error seemed logical. As long as the warriors respected the non-combatant, prisoners and hostages, then the war could be called civilized. In practice, civilians and other non-combatants suffered greatly. War does not discriminate.

#### **K. Other Considerations Pertinent to Today (2004):**

1. What did the Moslems learn from the Crusades of 900 years ago? How are these viewpoints influencing current thought? How current are the Crusades to the Islamic opinion molders?
2. *The lessons learned by Islamic leaders appear to be:*
  - a. Western Christians enjoyed massacring thousands of Moslems in Jerusalem (and other cities) and then went into one of their 'holy places' to offer thanksgiving to their God for the massacre.
  - b. Moslems were defeated in the first western Crusade because the warring Islamic tribes could not coordinate their activities against a common foe.
  - c. Western Christians had no plans to hold Jerusalem and had no plans to govern after the massacre. All they were interested in was winning – and that involved killing Moslems.
  - d. Saladin, the most renowned of all Islamic warriors, was/is honored in Islam because:
    - 1) He managed to get the warring Moslem factions to coordinate their efforts against a common foe – western 'Christians'.
    - 2) He managed to evict the westerners from Jerusalem and began the eventual eviction of western 'Christians' from the entire area over the next several decades.
  - e. Richard the Lion-Heart, in spite of the French and German withdrawal from the third crusade, had the manpower and strategy to reconquer Jerusalem. However, he also knew that he did not have the manpower and long-term commitment to hold Jerusalem. He knew that Europe was so involved with its own turmoil that any long term focus on Jerusalem/Islam was impossible. So, he negotiated a treaty with the Moslems and then withdrew his forces.

Today's efforts to unseat militant Moslem leaders are seen as a repetition of the western ineptness in thinking. Current Moslems have vivid memories of events 900 years ago. In their framework, these events are *recent* or at least highly relevant to today. The west is viewed as 'Christian' in spite of the fact that Christian beliefs and value systems are not presently controlling countries and societies in the west to any appreciable degree.

Islamic hardliners have no difficulty in demanding freedom of religion in countries in which they are minorities while totally refusing freedom of religion in countries which they control. Their view



is that Islam is the only true religion and thus has the right and obligation to act in this way which seems contradictory and arbitrary to western thought. It violates the concept of tolerance which has been won in the west at tremendous cost.

Regardless of the truth of any of these 'lessons', the viewpoints generated by these 'lessons' have a major influence over how the Islamic opinion molders deal with their own culture and the west. These 'lessons' affect national policies.

Note: Islamic opinion molders have chosen to forget that some of the reasons for the Crusades being launched in the first place involved Islamic expansion at the expense of western nations and nations in the middle east that had friendly interaction with the west. Islamic armies maintained sieges, destroyed cities, exacted tribute, and occupied locations important to western nations.

#### **L. Some More Observations about the Crusades**

1. Political and economic considerations seem to have been much more of a driving force than religious reasons.
2. Fresh arrivals from Europe seemed to be much more ready to fight than those who had been in the Holy Lands for some period.
3. Moslem and Western leaders generally preferred negotiation and treaties to war.
4. Often, Moslem fought Moslem and westerners fought westerners.
5. On occasion, Moslem and Western leaders fought as allies against other Moslem or western groups.
6. Hospitalers, Teutonic Knights, and Templars were supposed to work in harmony to promote western interests. In fact, they rarely did. They acted as independent 'kingdoms' with their own set of treaties, alliances, understandings, etc. They were the best fighters available, but their leaders squandered their resources to make themselves more powerful or rich.
7. At the outset of the crusades, the Moslems viewed the Frankish knights as invincible. That lasted until some Frankish leaders made some unwise decisions and allowed their soldiers to be slaughtered.
8. Genoa, Venice and Pisa were made rich by supplying transportation and materials to the Crusaders. They established trading centers in many towns in Syria and Palestine, jealously guarding their 'rights'. Their wealth made them many enemies. They actively assisted Islamic forces as well.
9. Many of the combatants on both sides developed treaty breaking to an art form.
10. On the whole it appears that the Moslems respected treaties more than the westerners.
11. Local 'Christians' generally preferred Moslem rule to that of the Roman church. Jews especially favored Moslem rule over Roman church rule. They faced less restrictions.
12. The fourth crusade which resulted in the Latin church controlling the Byzantine church left lasting hatred between eastern and western wings of the dominant church groups.
13. When Constantinople was eventually destroyed as a bastion of western values, the resulting turmoil lasted for centuries and the center of what can be called 'orthodox Christianity' moved north to Moscow.
14. All combatant leaders violated safe-conduct promises.
15. Marriages and rights of succession became exceedingly complicated with some women being used as pawns to gain political or religious control of a city or area. Some women were equally adept at this maneuvering and achieved status.
16. Papal representatives, usually very corrupt, claimed total power while being exceedingly poor generals. They were readily manipulated, totally intolerant, ignorant, and enjoyed status.

17. By removing troublesome nobility and malevolent serfs from Europe, the papacy achieved immediate political power. In the long run, however, this quieter time in Europe allowed the local nobility the opportunity to consolidate their own power to the detriment of the papacy.
18. The crusades added nothing to the intellectual life of Europe because scholars from Jewish, Islamic and 'Christian' circles were in routine contact, exchanging ideas and materials.
19. The crusades did fuel a rise in desire for more creature comforts in Europe.
20. By occupying the Moslems in the crusades, Europe did manage to eliminate any central voice of Islam.. With multiple groups of Moslems and Christians, the various subgroups were able to interact with each other in non-violent ways on a few occasions.
21. Mohammed had viewed Christians and Jews as believers (though with only a partial revelation) and thus they should be honored as people of the book. The brutality of the crusaders led Islamic followers to introduce ever harsher restrictions on Christians and Jews in their area. The idea that they should treat Christians sympathetically vanished.
22. Eastern Christendom fared better under Islam than under the crusaders.
23. Western leaders failed to agree upon a leader, a unified plan, and a supply system.
24. Western leaders failed to use the Mongols as allies. Mongols ruled over all of Asia, most of Russia and the northern and eastern Middle east. They wanted to destroy the Islamic dynasty in Egypt, but Europe could not agree; instead debating finer points of papal doctrines with the Mongols. The battle of AIN JALUD in 1260 thwarted the Mongol takeover of Egypt and hence of the entire middle east. They would have destroyed the Islamic world as a political force had they succeeded in this one battle. After that the Mongol influence in the middle east gradually declined and Islam increased upon the final withdrawal of all the western forces and Mongol forces.
25. The crusader brutality brought a backlash which they could not understand.
26. Because of the crusade debacle, the papacy eventually lost credibility.
27. The Crusades were motivated by:
  - a. a faith based on emotion, warrior mentality, and little Bible
  - b. a belief in God's direct miraculous intervention on their behalf
  - c. intolerance of any belief system that differed in any way from their own.
  - d. greed since it was deemed to be ok to plunder infidels, schismatics, and heretics.
28. Individual crusaders operated on:
  - a. courage without honor
  - b. high ideals alongside cruelty and greed.
  - c. Enterprise and endurance with blind self-righteousness.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:**

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1. How did the Norsemen affect the rest of Europe?

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2. How effective was the protection money paid to various Viking bands? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the lure for Norsemen to journey south?

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4. What were the long term effects of the Viking raids?

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5. Which of the Crusades actually benefitted Europe?

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6. In your estimation, what were the five most important effects of the Crusades today?

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7. What current attitudes can you trace to the Crusades?

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8. Discuss the one battle that shifted the Middle East from being a province of the East to being more independent of both West and East? Why is that?

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9. What specific event(s) prompted the initial Crusades and kept them going for so long?

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10. When the Roman church controlled Palestine, the local groups calling themselves 'Christians' had more or less independence than under the Moslems? \_\_\_\_\_ Why?

## LESSON 12

# Continual Church Turmoil

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### INTRODUCTION:



When the European population had accepted that a sacral state such as the Roman Church could wage war to advance its purposes, ostensibly religious ones, then the idea of internal crusades to attack those defined as foes of the papacy was a logical extension.

Since certain groups resisted the authority of Rome, Rome decided that war would either convert them or rid the earth of them.

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### CRUSADES WITHIN EUROPE

#### A. ALBIGENSES – 1208-1229

Innocent III decreed the extermination of the Albigenses in southern France, northern Spain and northern Italy. A large number of people in this area opposed the Roman church. Although they had differences in doctrine among themselves, they were united in opposing Rome. Rome considered that all of them were heretics which must be eliminated.

#### B. HUSSITES – 1425

Martin V decreed a war against the followers of John Hus in Bohemia

#### C. WALDENSES – 1484-1492

Innocent VIII decreed the extermination of the Waldenses.

#### D. PROTESTANTS – 1546-1555

Paul III declared the war that Emperor Charles V was waging against Protestants in northern Germany to be a crusade with indulgences for warriors on behalf of the Roman Church.

#### E. HUGUENOTS – 1572

Pius V urged the extermination of HUGUENOTS in France. On August 24, 1572, 20,000 were slain. Rome rejoiced over the outcome.

### THE INQUISITION – SACRALIST EXCESS!

The quest to silence dissent and gain uniform obedience to Rome was ongoing. Aside from the external and internal crusades, the inquisition was a powerful tool to force conformity and obedience. The Inquisition was a medieval church court instituted to seek out and prosecute heretics. The term 'inquisition' refers to three things. First: the institution itself as set up by Rome, Second: the clergy who carried out the search and prosecution; and Third: the procedures applied by the church/secular court against the accused.

#### A. The Theological Justification for the Inquisition

1. Constraint may be used to save souls out of love for them and for those they influence.

2. Amputating the diseased member (the heretic) may be needed to save the body (church).
3. Heresy is the ultimate sin because it is against the ultimate being – God. (In papal thinking the Roman church was the way that God manifested himself in this world.)
4. Serious punishment such as confiscation of goods, burning at the stake, etc would be a deterrent to others who might be tempted to become heretics. This presumably showed love for the church.

#### **B. Something like the Inquisition Was Used Relatively Early by Some Secular European Rulers**

1. Wanted uniformity in all things and considered force a valid way to obtain it.
  - a. In 1017, Robert II of France burned 15 heretics at Orleans.
  - b. In 1051 Emperor Henry III of Germany hanged a group of heretics.
  - c. By 1163, a **heretic was deemed to be an enemy of the human race since he promoted diversity**. In a sacral system, any deviation is tantamount to treason.
2. Sacralism cannot accept a position involving:
  - a. A common political loyalty with religious diversity,
  - b. Becoming a Christian by choice instead of via family and geography.
  - c. Diversity since that is seen as treason, rebellion, and leading to civil unrest.
3. These ‘heretics’ were also considered to be traitors to the local rulers. Henry II (England) and Louis VII (France) pressured Pope Alexander III to act against heretics. At the Council of Tours (1163), the pope commanded the clergy to search out heretics by holding inquests based upon the testimony of sworn witnesses. Lay princes were invited to assist in the detection of heretics, the scattering of their congregations and assemblies, the imprisonment of the individual members, and the confiscation of their goods.
4. In 1178, Alexander began increasing his efforts to obliterate heretics. Later in the 12th century, the Roman church began having problems with the Albigenses and the Waldenses. That led the Roman church to consider using force for compliance. They considered Augustine’s use of Luke 14.23 and portions of Roman Law as a valid justification. Secular rulers and the Roman church cooperated in this since both saw nonconformity as a threat to social, political and ecclesiastical harmony.
5. The second, third, and fourth Lateran councils (1139, 1179, and 1215) prescribed imprisonment and confiscation of property as punishment for heresy. In addition, any secular ruler who failed to punish heretics faced excommunication. Anyone who gave shelter to a heretic faced censure or worse. The 1179 pronouncements expressly prohibited the clergy from shedding any blood, giving this task to the secular arm.

#### **C. Gregory IX Formally Instituted the Inquisition in 1231**

1. Emperor Frederick II of the Holy Roman Empire enacted something like this in 1224 for Lombardy and then extended the principle over all of his empire in 1232.
  - a. Gregory IX ordered that convicted heretics be sought out, seized and burned by the secular authorities since the church did not want to be identified with capital punishment.
  - b. Because the Dominicans and Franciscan orders were seen to be highly educated and overtly free of any drive for power, possessions, fame, and autonomy, they were used as the early administrators of the Inquisition.
2. In the early part of the application, the Inquisitors would arrive in a locale, ask for those who were heretics to come forward voluntarily and receive their penance. At a later date, denunciations were asked for. Two accusers, who did not have to be known to the defendant nor have to make a public denunciation, were considered sufficient to the Inquisitor to allow him to pronounce guilt. **Guilt was assumed until proven innocent.** The accused was often

arrested at night to minimize the risk of defense. The Inquisitor(s) was to obtain a confession and a full acceptance of the applied penance. He was not to determine if the defendant was guilty or innocent. Torture was allowed at the discretion of the Inquisitor. If the Inquisitor determined on the death penalty, the accused was handed to the secular authorities for execution. If confiscation was the penalty, the church and the state usually divided the spoils. Neither appears to have been concerned that the family of the accused would become suddenly destitute while both church and state gained financially.

3. The Inquisition began in central Europe (Germany, northern Italy and eastern France) before moving into Southern France, southern Italy, Portugal and Spain. It was also used in England against the followers of John Wycliffe. It was administered in the western hemisphere by representatives from Portugal and Spain.

#### **D. The Spanish Inquisition**

1. Became especially brutal, partly because Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile had political and economic motives in addition to the Roman church's pursuit of heretics.
  - a. Beginning in 1478, they first focused on the Marranos (converts from Judaism) and Moriscos (converts from Islam) since they doubted their sincerity in conversion and because of the relatively strong economic strength these two groups held.
  - b. Later, in the 16th century, Protestants became targets. The Spanish extended the Inquisition into their western colonies in the Americas. It finally ended in Spain in 1834 and in Portugal in 1821.
2. Later developments about the Inquisition have been:
  - a. Paul III, at the time of the Reformation, created a cardinal's court as a court of final appeal.
  - b. Paul IV in 1555 urged a vigorous pursuit of suspected heretics.
  - c. Paul IV in 1559 set up the Index of Prohibited Books.
  - d. Sixtus V in 1588 renamed this as the Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition.
  - e. in 1908 it was redefined as the Congregation of the Holy Office.
  - f. in 1965 Paul VI renamed it the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, stressing that their role was more to develop and promote right doctrine than to pursue heretics.

#### **D. Some of the Effects of the Inquisition and its Related Activities:**

1. Well known victims included Galileo, Joan of Arc, The Templars, and the Huguenots of France.
2. The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France killed over 20,000 Huguenots. Following that massacre, about 500,000 Huguenots were forced to flee France.
3. Some historians believe that:
  - In the Netherlands about 100,000 died.
  - In Bohemia about 3,200,000 died.
  - In Austria and Hungary, more than 50% of the population died.
  - In Poland and in Italy, reform was stopped by the deaths.
  - In Spain, between 1480 and 1498 at least 10200 were burned to death and 97000 imprisoned.
  - Between 1481 and 1808, more than 100,000 were killed and 1,500,000 banished from Spain.
  - England was encouraged to defeat the Spanish Armada to keep the Inquisition away.
4. The Counter Reformation Wars which were allied to the Inquisition in desired repression:
  - a. Charles V (1519-1556) of Spain against the German Protestants in 1546-1555.
  - b. Philip II (1556-1595) of Spain against Holland (1566-1609) and England (1583).
  - c. Ferdinand II (1619-1637) of Austria against the Bohemians.

- d. Francis II (1559-1560), Charles IX (1560-1574), Henry III (1574-1589) against the Huguenots.

**NOTE:** Now we must drop back in time to pick up another thread of history. Another reason arose for people joining monasteries.

## **PARA-CHURCH GROUPS**

We will now deal with more of the orders, monasteries, abbeys, and related structures beginning from the time of the Northmen invasions. Para-church groups had been important in the Roman church organization, but increasingly so from at least the time of the establishment of the Cluny monastery.

### **A. The Influence of the Cluny Monastery on Roman Church**

1. In 909, William III of Aquitaine set up a monastery on his own property with the rules of Benedict (500's) applying.
  - a. Became known as **Cluny monastery**.
  - b. **Founded to be totally independent of any secular or religious office.** Although it seems to have been a para-church organization, in effect it was a parallel structure to the existing ecclesiastical structure. Any monastery founded by Cluny was to report to Cluny.
  - c. **Its program involved, not conversions, but permeating society.** The monks were to devote themselves to prayer, education, hospitality, and integrating the monastery with society. They had guest houses and staff assigned to take care of travelers. Cluny tried to eliminate feudal warfare and urged internal church reform.
  - d. Cluny's views were that a **good** secular ruler had the right to depose an **unfit** spiritual leader. Of course papacy did not agree. Secular rulers did. In 963 Otto I deposed John XII and had a council select his successor. For the next 40 years secular rulers controlled the papacy.
  - e. Later Cluny alumni said that reform must come from within the church, not imposed from outside.
  - f. The Cluny movement also attempted to control feudal warfare via two statements: The Peace of God and The Truce of God. No hostilities were to occur between sunset on Wednesday and Monday morning. Nor could it occur on holy days. Combatants were not allowed to attack nuns, priests, pilgrims, merchants, farmers, their animals, tools or properties. While not observed, it does show the nature of their society. People faced violence but wanted calm.

**NOTE:** As you recall, the first monastics fled from the Roman government persecutions, c280-310. The second monastics, c325-400, fled from societies' affluence. The third monastics, c400ff, fled to get away from social turmoil when the barbarians came as a result of the Huns moving west from Asia. The fourth monastics, c900ff at Cluny, fled to train and then return to the world to permeate society and mold it into their way of thinking.

### **B. The Influence of Cluny Alumni on the Roman Church**

1. Bruno, a Cluny alumni became Leo IX (1049-1054), and declared the papacy free of secular control.
2. Humbert (a cardinal and Cluny alumni) was Rome's representative to Constantinople. He sealed the east-west division of Christendom in 1054 for three reasons.
  - a. First, he was ignorant of the Greek language.
  - b. Second, he was abrasive and did not like the Greeks.

- c. Thirdly, the Greeks did not want nor trust him as the ambassador from the west because of his antagonism toward them.
- 3. The third of the Cluny alumni with a major impact was Hildebrand or Gregory VII, c1020-1085, 1073-1085. One of the great reformers of the medieval church.

## **B. The Cistercian Influence and Activities**

- 1. The Cistercians were founded in 1098 by Robert of Molesme. He and others were discontented with what they saw as lax spiritual behavior by Cluny. In their estimation the Cluniacs had become too close to the world and the Cistercian goal was to avoid this trend – becoming even more austere than the Benedictine rules required.
- 2. Their farming skills were such that they brought marginal lands into cultivation and improved the marketing of both grain and wool. This led to increasing prosperity and the Cistercians followed the same path that they had complained about with the Cluniacs. History indicates that affluence is one of the most insidious and damaging results that can afflict any religious group.
- 3. The Cistercians became involved in architecture and in copying manuscripts.
- 4. In 1113 Bernard of Clairvaux, their most famous member, joined the Cistercians.
  - a. He became more influential in the 12th century than even the popes.
  - b. Largely through his efforts, by 1153 the Cistercian order had grown to 300 monasteries. By the time of the Reformation, there were about 700.
- 5. They eventually had representatives in the Roman Curia and occupied many bishoprics.
- 6. Bernard of Clairvaux justified killing on crusades as malicide (killing of evil) and not murder or homicide.
  - a. His ideas about war eventually led to the formation of the Knights Templars.
  - b. He was also something of a mystic and preached love as superior to knowledge. Two of his songs are in many hymnals.
  - c. He actively opposed contemporary efforts directed at reforming the existing Roman church.
- 7. After the end of the 13th century the Cistercians split into two groups, the newer one stressing the need for austerity in contrast to the older group's acceptance of affluence.

## **C. The Roman Church Instituted Several Para-church Organizations**

- 1. They functioned as cell-groups within the Roman church at large.
- 2. Three of the best known are the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits. The first two were founded because the leaders saw a need for **major** internal reform while the Jesuits were instituted specifically to stop the reformation.
- 3. The major events that seem to have precipitated the formation of the Dominicans and Franciscans were:
  - a. The Viking invasions and the disruption in society that followed.
  - b. The Crusades and the instability and poverty that came to Europe as a result
  - c. The Battle of Hastings that had dramatically enlarged the papacy's area of control.
  - d. The Inquisition was just beginning.
  - e. The previous orders' successes, such as the Cluniacs and Cistercians, indicated a valid role for such orders. Note that affluence seems to be the death-knell for such para-church groups.

## **D. The Dominicans**

- 1. Founded in 1215 by Dominic.
  - a. Their first focus was against the Albigenses.



- b. Dominicans were to be poor, walk among the people and preach to bring people back to the Roman church from what they saw as heresy.
  - c. They became associated with scholasticism and became prominent in universities.
  - d. They were selected to head the Inquisition in many areas because of their knowledge, piety, and supposed lack of worldly desires.
- 2. Famous Dominicans were:
  - a. Thomas Aquinas
  - b. Catherine of Siena
  - c. Albertus Magnus
  - d. Savonarola
  - e. Pius V

Note that the pope's theologian is always a Dominican.

### **E. The Franciscans**

- 1. Founded by Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) in 1210
- 2. He worked to overcome the common view of the day that clergy was fat, lazy, rich, and insensitive.
- 3. Franciscans were to live in **total** poverty.
- 4. They were to be known by their good works and by begging.
- 5. They became known as the Grey Friars as a result of their clothing.
- 6. Their primary focus was preaching, teaching, foreign missions, and local work.
- 7. Notable Franciscans were:
  - a. Roger Bacon
  - b. Duns Scotus
  - c. William of Occam
  - d. Anthony of Padua
  - e. Sixtus IV (pope)
  - f. Sixtus V (pope)

### **F. The Jesuits**

Outside the time frame of this study, but nonetheless a strong indicator of earlier papal attitudes, was the formation of the Jesuits in 1534 by Ignatius Loyola to counter the reformation. Their focus was to be foreign missions, education, and scholarship – all with a focus on stopping the reformation. In 1773, Clement XIV suppressed them. They were re-established in 1814 with a focus on journalism, universities, and history.

## **THE MILITARY ORDERS**

Along with the para-church organizations we have mentioned, another type of para-church organization developed to take care of some perceived needs.

### **A. The Hospitalers – Had a Hospital at Jerusalem That Was Destroyed in 1010**

- 1. They rebuilt. They remain in existence today as the Sovereign Military Order of Malta with a focus on charity and medical assistance.
- 2. They were originally to care for the sick and needy pilgrims in Jerusalem.
- 3. In 1113 they received their papal approval in that role. Raymond du Puy had them reconstituted to include military operations.
- 4. When Jerusalem fell in 1187, they moved to Acre.
- 5. After Acre fell in 1291, they moved to care for pilgrims in Cyprus.

6. In 1310 they moved to Rhodes and stayed there until the Turks seized it in 1522.
7. In 1530, Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire granted Malta to the Hospitalers. They ruled there until Napoleon I ousted them in 1798.

**B. The Templars – Formed in 1118 by Hugo De Payene and Geoffroy De Saint-omer**

1. Given quarters next to the Temple (hence their name).
2. Their vows were to protect pilgrims in the Holy Lands, defend the Holy Land, and fight infidels.
  - a. Many Europeans gave the Templars huge sums of money as their way to fight the Moslems. As a result, the Templars became enormously wealthy.
  - b. After 1291, when westerners lost their hold in the Holy Lands, they shifted to banking and land management – arousing much hostility among rulers and clergy alike in Europe.
3. They loaned money to many influential people, including kings.
4. Philip IV of France, sorely in need of money, charged the Templars with heresy and sodomy (1307). He planned to get money out of this. Many were arrested, tortured, and tried as heretics.
5. In 1312, Clement V suppressed them. Several leaders retracted their earlier confessions, declared their innocence and that of the Templars as a whole. Many were burned at the stake in Paris on March 18, 1314. Much of their land was given to the Hospitalers and some to secular rulers. Philip received nothing. At least that was ‘poetic’ justice.

**C. The Teutonic Knights**

1. A military/religious order founded at Acre in 1190-1191 by German merchant crusaders during the third Crusade to care for the sick.
2. In 1198 it became the third order of knights, confined to noble birth Germans, and became increasingly militaristic.
3. In 1229 they embarked upon a crusade against Prussia which they ruled during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.
4. In 1525 it moved into being a secular organization, was suppressed by Napoleon in 1809, and revived in 1840 in Austria.
5. In 1929 it became a mendicant order, i.e., they survive by receiving alms. There is a protestant branch in Utrecht, as a society of noblemen.

**PAPAL DECAY**

The leaders of Europe, secular and religious, seem to have lost sight of four things in the dark ages:

1. Who they actually were as creatures of God.
2. What their role had to be in their society.
3. How to make things work better for individuals and for society as a whole.
4. People can differ religiously while being united politically.

**A. The Continuing Struggle For Power and Authority**

1. Leo, when he crowned Charlemagne on December 25, 800, attempted to prove that he had the power to create and remove kings. In fact, he was having great difficulty in managing the city of Rome.
2. Nicolas I (858-867) used the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals to bolster his status. These documents made it appear as if the religious arrangements in the mid-800's had been in place since the time of the early church fathers.

3. His successor, Adrian II (867-872) continued this role and use of these documents. Men who sat on the papal throne succeeding them did not have their ability or focus for some time.

**NOTE:** Historians report that for some time after Nicholas I and Adrian II, the papal history is actually a story of murder, deceit, simony, harlotry, confusion, competition between rival claimants, and individuals or families actually purchasing the throne.

People need strong leaders for stability and calm and they did not have this in either their secular or religious arena. In a sacral society, instability at the top is a near-disaster since the top must hold the entire pyramid together. The base, though important, is not seen as holding the edifice together.

Interestingly, the next reform movements began, not at the top, but very near the middle social group via the monasteries. What provided the spark for this reform movement?

- The obvious lack of leadership in both secular and religious arenas.
- The Magyar and Norsemen invasions that had upset society.
- The fact that many monasteries had become a big business by many abbots.

## **B. The Gregorian Reformation**

Perhaps the most outstanding and influential alumni of Cluny was Gregory VII (Hildebrand).

1. He asserted the primacy of the church over secular powers and led the papal party in the first phase of its conflict with the Holy Roman Empire.
2. Born Hildebrand into a family of modest means in Tuscany, he was sent to Rome for education. After he was ordained a cleric, he attracted the attention of Pope Gregory VI (c1045-46) who chose him for his chaplain. Eventually considered the most influential person in Rome, he enjoyed the confidence of all the popes beginning with Gregory VI and before his own elevation to the papacy in 1073. During those years the popes were engaged in a vigorous campaign to reform the church. Hildebrand's role was so significant that this effort in this time frame is called the Gregorian Reformation, after Gregory VII.
3. The problems that Hildebrand (Gregory VII) perceived as hindering the Roman church were:
  - a. Simony whereby offices in the church were being bought and sold.
  - b. Nepotism whereby families gained offices and kept them in the family.
  - c. Clergy was marrying and thus losing their focus on their jobs and their allegiance to the pope.
  - d. Too many clergy were too affluent and thus lost sight of their need to lead spiritually.
  - e. Too many clergy had too much secular power and were no longer religious leaders.
  - f. Emperors made clerical appointments without consulting clergy nor considering the spiritual depth of the appointee.
4. Underlying much of this conflict were two different sacral views:
  - a. The state was instituted by God and had civil power over all citizens and residents in the kingdom, even the clergy.
  - b. The church has final and complete power over the every person and is not answerable to the state which is one of the tools that the papacy can use in his role as leader of the world.

## **C. The Conflict Between Religious and Secular Leaders Now Intensified**

1. Gregory VII (Hildebrand) was elected pope by acclamation in Rome on April 22, 1073, i.e. without dissent. Relations with the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV of Germany were already strained under Gregory's predecessor and the new pope's vigorous measures in the Roman Synod of 1075 to eliminate simony (sale of clerical offices) and to promote clerical celibacy

increased the tension. In particular, the synod forbade lay investiture, the right claimed by emperors and kings to confer upon clergy the symbols of their spiritual authority.

2. Henry responded to those and other actions of Gregory VII (Hildebrand) by declaring him deposed; the pope countered by excommunicating the emperor. This marked the public outbreak of the Investiture Controversy, the papal-imperial struggle for authority over appointments in the church. It stems from the two very different sacral views we mentioned.
3. Gregory VII (Hildebrand) and Henry IV were temporarily reconciled in 1077, when Henry did penance outside the castle at Canossa (shoeless in the snow) and begged the pope's forgiveness. The conflict soon erupted again, however, renewing a civil war in Germany provoked by a rival who wanted to replace Henry on the throne. Henry eventually led his army into Rome when the populace finally turned against Gregory and forced him to leave the looted city with his allies. Gregory VII (Hildebrand) died soon thereafter in Salerno on May 25, 1085.

### SUMMARY:

How do we evaluate Hildebrand (Gregory VII)? The rule of Gregory VII was one of the most tumultuous and controversial papacies in history. He had a single-minded pursuit of his ideas. As expected, this led to loyal admirers and implacable enemies. His internal reforms gradually gained wide acceptance, but his successors had to modify them. Gregory laid the foundation for a morally regenerated church, for clearer distinction in the church between the roles of the clergy and those of the laity, and for **a greater centralization of authority in the papacy**. His actions against Henry IV weakened the German monarchy and undoubtedly led to Germany's slow political development in the Middle Ages as well as for Germany's later active role in the Reformation. Gregory was canonized in 1606 in view of his overall efforts to revitalize his church.

Before this time and especially afterwards, there was continual intrigue, deception, power politics, invasions, etc. involving nobility, kings, and papal representatives. Henry IV made a tragic decision by stripping the bishops of political power **without** assuring the nobility that he did not intend to do the same to them. This step frightened the nobility who thought that they were next. As a result an unlikely alliance between clergy and nobility developed although there had been a long period of animosity between them in Europe. This three component combined opposition of bishops, papacy, and nobility posed a serious threat to any secular ruler.

The Concordat of Worms in 1122 stated that the bishops were to be appointed solely by the church. Then, after being installed by the papacy, these bishops were to swear loyalty to the emperor. Some thought that this might work, but in practice divided loyalties always bring conflict.

### SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:

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1. When external crusades became accepted, what logic step was needed to allow internal crusades?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The theological justification for the Inquisition is:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The Inquisition was formally instituted by \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

- 
4. A primary premise of the Inquisition was: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  5. Although the Inquisition was effective from a papal viewpoint, it was a disaster. Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  6. Why did William III of Aquitaine set up a monastery in Cluny in 909?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  7. Name three very influential Cluniacs.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  8. The Cistercians intended to overcome the failures of earlier monastic change movements but split and failed over \_\_\_\_\_ which was the downfall of earlier movements.
  9. Describe para-church organizations. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  10. What role did the Templers and Hospitalers have in the Crusades?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  11. Hildebrand, Gregory VII, opposed simony, nepotism, breaches of celibacy, rich clergy, and believed that he alone had the right to appoint bishops. How did his reign end and why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  12. What was the Concordat of Worms of 1122?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 13

# Scholasticism, Fragmentation, Papal Decline

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**here were many people in Europe that wanted a better life, better education, more opportunity, and less control by the papal authorities. That was not easy to achieve. However, some trends were developing in population growth and grouping that would eventually lead to more openness in some ways. Cities offered more scope for what people were seeking; where clerical control was not so easy to enforce.

### SCHOLASTICISM

#### A. The Influential Power of Cities In the Development of the Church

1. During the Middle Ages towns rarely reached more than 10,000 population. A few reached 100,000 and Constantinople reached about one million.
  - a. As cities grew they became important economically.
  - b. Guilds developed in the towns to protect and develop their crafts and marketing. They were powerful, monopolistic, and protectionist.
  - c. The merchants began having a voice in society in consultation with the land-rich-but-cash-poor-nobility.
  - d. Guilds developed hospitals and banks and assisted in maintaining social order.
2. Cities also helped in the formation of universities to stimulate thought and skills with the first being established before 1200.
  - a. University of Paris began in 1150 and Oxford in 1190 c. Each tended to specialize at first, but eventually expanded their curriculum.
  - b. The first questions that thinking men were dealing with at this time dealt with the nature of reality and the existence of God. This developed into what is known as **scholasticism**.

#### B. Scholasticism Also Prompted Chivalry

1. In chivalry a young man would follow an internal/external code of honor to fight for the less able or defenseless.
  - a. In practice his focus was to protect women and in due course that led to a romantic view of love that was very different than the arranged marriages so common since Old Testament times. But, romantic love was not necessarily linked to marriage. Since marriage was usually linked to social relationships, economics or politics, this view of love actually was a way for society to rebel in a 'safe' way.
  - b. In time romantic love became an essential part of male-female relationships. Read Peter Abelard (1079-1142) and Heloise for an early example of this.
2. In the late 1000's, many Europeans began a search to find truth and validity about life. In due course a university setting was seen as an ideal place for this. One impetus was the reintroduction of Aristotle to the western world via Moslem scholars. They had studied the

Greek philosophers and then, through scholarly circles, passed them on to the west. Reintroduction of Aristotle forced people to rethink some of their older ideas.

3. Many universities were begun in Europe -some with a special focus. For example:
  - a. Montpellier – medicine 1289
  - b. Salerno – medicine 1173
  - c. Pavia – law 1361
  - d. Bologna – law 1200
  - e. Paris – theology 1150
  - f. Oxford – theology 1190
4. Universities were established in Europe over 550 years as follows:

between	1150 and 1300	21 established
	1301 and 1400	23 established
	1401 and 1500	30 established
	1501 and 1700	37 established

### **C. During The 11th-13th Centuries Many Buildings Arose out of Religious Ardor**

1. Between 1050 and 1350 in France, citizens erected 80 cathedrals, 500 large church buildings, and thousands of smaller buildings for religious purposes.
2. Monasteries were built in large numbers in this period. Part of this had to do with the need to instruct the masses. One approach was to build imposing cathedrals. Our view may be that these are imposing edifices that demonstrate dedication, ignorance, engineering skills, or waste. At the time, however, they served a significant purpose in teaching.
3. Images were included as reminders. The overall atmosphere was to impress the attendee. The view was that any structure for the church to worship in should be magnificent since it was to house the most magnificent event – the communion or mass.

## **FRAGMENTATION**

During the height of papal power, European society was becoming ever more rigid and organized. That meant that individuals had less and less freedom of will and action. The sacral system had been as fully implemented as humans can make it. As a result of this, several groups and individuals reacted and embarked upon a spiritual adventure in spite of the risks. What were the specific reasons for many efforts arising at about the same time? Some answers are:

1. Every previous group that had viewed affluence and prosperity as hindrances to spiritual well being had succumbed to affluence and prosperity. The new groups knew they would do better. They did not.
2. Many individuals and groups looked back in history to what they perceived to be the ‘golden age’ when Christianity was right with God and properly opposed the world. They thought that the past was better than the present in manifold ways.
3. People had one of two major sacral society presuppositions to guide them:
  - a. The secular rulers focused upon Paul’s writings about the role of government and determined that secular rulers were appointed by God and were thus equal or superior to the clergy, while clergy were to be one arm of government.
  - b. The clergy focused on the church as God’s preeminent institution and saw it as superior to all other institutions. In their view the clergy had more rights and authority than seculars and could control the secular rulers and institutions.
  - c. Thinking people recognized that neither sacral view offered prospects for any significant improvement in how the world functions.
  - d. The doctrine of predestination from Augustine’s time was making a resurgence. It led

naturally to the view that not all citizens of the secular kingdom were citizens of the spiritual kingdom. Therefore, efforts must be made to get the 'saved' together away from the 'lost.' Once this idea is adopted, then the conductal averaging of sacral thinking can be attacked.

- e. Some thought that perhaps the clergy and papacy had both served their purpose and were now to fade away. But, that was too radical and too far ahead of the conventional thinking.
- f. The confusion surrounding marriage and sexual relations led to much confusion among the clergy and laity. Extreme positions were taken. The Roman church is still confused on this.

## PAPAL COLLAPSE

Now let us consider the time of transition away from papal power. About 100 years had elapsed since the rule of Hildebrand (**Gregory VII**, 1073-1085). The papacy reached its greatest level of power under **Innocent III** (c1160-1216, 1198-1216). Innocent III is generally considered the most capable and effective of the medieval popes.

**A. Innocent III**, came from an ancient noble family with powerful connections. He studied theology at the University of Paris and canon law at the University of Bologna, thus receiving the best education his age offered.

1. Although he was not yet a priest, he was, at the age of 37, unanimously elected pope by the College of Cardinals on the day of his predecessor's death. Innocent's papal rule fulfilled the promise that his electors anticipated for him in most ways. He also made some tragic choices.
2. It appears that almost all areas of contemporary public life were influenced by **Innocent III**. He was keenly aware of the public nature and power of his office. He wanted and intended to make a difference in the life of his world. He often preached in public. Innocent III tried to keep the lifestyle of his immediate circle of associates within modest bounds, knowing the ways his enemies might use an extravagant life style as a weapon against him. That was a common complaint over the years of papal corruption. Although fully conscious of his authority as pontiff (he was particularly fond of the title Vicar of Christ), he tried to strengthen the cardinals, bishops, and other ranking officials by restricting the cases that could be appealed to Rome. He delegated as much as he could safely delegate without destroying his own power base. This obviously freed him to think about other matters – not just the daily operations. His ability indicated that he could have been an effective CEO in today's business world.
3. He secured papal control around Rome, perhaps being a forerunner founder of the later Papal states. When Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI died in 1197, Innocent used the opportunity to assert the pope's right to examine political candidates to the throne and to arbitrate between rivals. He dealt very well with Philip II of France when Philip persistently repudiated his wife. He made a serious blunder in the controversy with King John of England over the appointment of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. Although Innocent III won a clear victory for the papacy and won the **whole** kingdom of England as a fief, he failed to understand the social tide building in England that was manifested in the Magna Carta.
4. Innocent III also arranged that the Roman church promote a crusade against what he saw as heretics in southern France. Much bloodshed and lasting enmity were the only lasting effects of this effort. Innocent III promoted the Fourth Crusade to recover Jerusalem for the western nation coalition. The fourth crusade was a debacle since in 1204 a group of Crusaders sacked and took control of Constantinople, ostensibly the ally of Rome. This episode poisoned relations between the Greek and Latin churches for centuries to come. The Latin kingdom in



Constantinople did not last long and brought added enmity between east and west.

**B. Innocent III and the Magna Carta in England**

When King John, a vassal of the pope, signed the Magna Carta in England, agreeing to the rule of law versus the rule of one man, Innocent III was furious. In his rage, he declared the charter null and void and pronounced excommunication upon anyone who observed or tried to enforce its provisions. Furthermore, he ordered archbishop Langston to Rome – to be an exile from the See of Canterbury. But both Innocent III and King John had only a short time to live. Their deaths made their actions of no effect. John died on Oct 19, 1216, and a revised version of the great charter (Magna Carta) was issued less than a month later, on November 12, by the government of the new King, nine year old Henry III. The Magna Carta has many provisions and was designed for a specific point in time. But the principle of rule by law versus rule by a man is a bedrock for later political developments in the western world and is vital in our relationship to scripture. Without the Magna Carta, political and social freedoms we deem natural would not be available. We are not bound by a human (pope) or a council or any ecclesiastical group – we are bound by God’s law as He has revealed it in scripture. This principle is being increasingly ignored by so many religious leaders today.

- C. Near the End of His Life in 1215, Innocent III Called the Fourth Lateran Council.** Besides dealing with some political and doctrinal issues, the council issued regulations governing the rights and duties of almost every class of society. Among the most famous of the council’s decrees is the one (Omnis Utriusque Sexus) **requiring** of all adult Christians the annual reception of the sacraments of confession and the Eucharist. They also confirmed Transubstantiation as a doctrine of the Roman Church. Along with his encouragement of Dominic and Francis to found new orders, the council was one of his most impressive achievements. He managed to have in attendance about 400 bishops and 800 abbots and superiors plus many secular princes and their entourage. According to some scholars, this may have been the largest assembly of nobility/clergy in the middle ages. He died suddenly on July 16, 1216 in Perugia while on trip to northern Italy.

**D. Boniface VIII (C1235-1303, Pope 1294-1303) Came to the Papal Throne.**

He rose through the ranks until he persuaded Celestine V, the reigning pope, to resign from the position, which he took. (The story is that each night Boniface VIII inserted a hollow straw through an opening in the wall near Celestine’s bed. He whispered, ‘It is the Lord’s will that you should resign.’). Eventually Celestine did. Most of Boniface VIII’s reign dealt with tax questions between himself and Philip of France. (Recall that over the years, the popes had relied upon the Franks/French to take care of various problem areas. Now a French king was getting independent.) Historians say of Boniface VIII that he came in like a fox, ruled like a lion, and died like a dog.

**NOTE:** One historian wrote: “Boniface was devoid of every apostolic virtue, a man of passionate temper, violent, faithless, unscrupulous, unforgiving, filled with ambition and lust of worldly power.” To cover his weakness and inability to rule like Innocent III had tried to, Boniface issued what we know as the Unum Sanctum in 1302:

‘One sword must be under the other, and temporal authority must be subject to the spiritual....we further declare, affirm, and define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation for all human creatures to be under the Roman pontiff.’ This is an ultimate sacral statement.

- E. Both Philip of France and Edward I of England Levied Taxes on Roman Church Property** Boniface VIII resisted and refused to let his clergy pay. Then both Philip and Edward refused to let

any money be sent from their country to Rome. Boniface VIII eventually had to relent because he and his court were running out of money. Philip then imprisoned a bishop on grounds of treason. Boniface VIII attacked Philip with strong words. In 1303 Boniface VIII was about to excommunicate Philip, when Philip declared him deposed and arrested Boniface. Boniface VIII died three weeks later on Oct 11, 1303. The Papal throne reached its strongest about mid-way through the reign of Boniface VIII. The downhill slide was rapid. In this study we have spent little time with individual popes, but note that Boniface VIII's reign was such a major disaster for the papacy that the Avignon debacle lay just ahead.

**F. What Happened to Lead to this Situation?**

1. God is still involved in what goes on in our world.
2. There was rising power of the secular kings versus nobles, clergy, and papacy. **Control issues abounded.**
3. There was a rising middle class that wanted more stability and a voice in what occurred.
4. The middle class became lenders to the politically powerful, thus controlling their masters to some degree.
5. The banking institutions became so powerful that kings and others had to listen to them.
6. There was rising nationalism and sense of nationhood with less tribal focus.
7. The Hundred Years War between England and France disrupted society. Recall also the Viking incursions, the Magyars invasion, and France's control of papacy.
8. Burning Joan of Arc polarized the laity and clergy in France.
9. Europe perceived that the papacy was under the control of the French.
10. The bubonic/pneumonic plague of 1347-1350 killed perhaps 1/3 of Europe.
11. People wanted release from fear.
12. Constantinople was constantly in trouble and finally fell to Islam on May 29, 1453, with the active aid of European (Christian) engineers and arms merchants.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THIRTEEN:**

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1. What were the primary effects of the growing towns on European society?

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2. Define chivalry: \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What was one of the primary impetuses for building the cathedrals in the medieval period?

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4. Whenever a society has become totally sacral, what can we expect?

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5. What were Innocent III's greatest blunders in an otherwise successful career as the chief operating officer of the Roman church?

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6. Boniface VIII was characterized by:

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7. Write out the Unum Sanctum: \_\_\_\_\_

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8. How was Boniface VIII humiliated?

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9. List the major factors leading to the sudden change in papal powers (at least 10):

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## LESSON 14

# The Avignon Period, the Great Schism and the Reformers

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**mmediately after Boniface VIII's death, the downward spiral picked up speed. The papal court was dominated by France between 1309 and 1377, i.e. almost 70 years. Clement V had moved the papal court to Avignon in French territory in 1309, for a period that the Roman church calls *The Babylonian Captivity* of almost 70 years. Clement V died in 1314. After Clement's death, the cardinals were divided upon which man to choose as a successor. To give themselves time, they decided to elect John XXII because he was 72 and would die within a year or so – by which time they could get a candidate they could all agree upon. Human plans often fail. John XXII lived for 20 more years, until 1334, longer than most of the cardinals. John XXII was pro-French and he developed elaborate taxation schemes to finance his lavish court. Benedict XII (1334-1342) promised the Romans that he would return to Rome, but he built an elaborate palace at Avignon. He then moved all of the papal archives to Avignon. Since he also put all of the resources of the papal court at the disposal of the French in their war with Britain, he alienated a large portion of Europe. Clement VI followed and tried to mediate the war between France and England without success since the British did not trust him. The great plague came in this time frame – with many of the population believing that the reason stemmed from the pope being away from Rome. Innocent VI (1352-1362) planned to return to Rome, but died first. Urban V (1362-1370) reformed the Avignon court and then returned to Rome in 1365 amid great rejoicing. However, he was unable to hold Roman loyalty and returned to Avignon. Next was Gregory XI (1370-1378) who had been made a cardinal at age 17 by his uncle, Clement VI. Catherine of Siena began preaching reform in this period.

### THE GREAT SCHISM

#### A. The Romans Wanted the Papal Court Back in Rome, Complaining That the Roman Church Was Losing Spirituality (And its Political Influence)

1. Gregory XI returned to Rome in 1377, dying in 1378.
2. The Roman public forced the College of Cardinals to elect Urban VI. He immediately showed disrespect for these cardinals. Since they felt that their election had been coerced, they reversed their votes and elected Clement VII instead.
3. Clement VII promptly went to Avignon. Since both Urban VI and Clement VII had been elected by the same set of cardinals, both claimed to be the rightful successor of Peter. Northern Italy, most of Germany, Scandinavia and England followed Urban VI. France, Spain, Scotland, and southern Italy followed Clement VII of Avignon. In the Roman church this is known as the Great Schism.
4. The University of Paris then suggested a new council to decide which man was the real pope. The Council of Pisa met during July and August 1409. By this time Benedict VIII ruled at Avignon and Gregory XII in Rome. Both had excommunicated the other and the council that was involved in the other's selection.
5. The Pisa council deposed both men and elected Alexander V. Neither Benedict nor Gregory

- agreed. Thus there were now 3 popes. Alexander V died in 1410, after less than a year in office.
6. John XXIII was elected to succeed Alexander V. He asked Sigismund, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, to convene another council to finally settle the matter, thinking he would win. The council of Constance met in 1414 and then occasionally until 1418. They deposed John XXIII, Benedict VIII and Gregory XII to elect Martin V in 1418. But, the French held their court at Avignon until 1449 when they finally capitulated. This debacle sent a strong message to the papacy. Accordingly, in 1459, Pius II condemned appeals to general councils via his bull called *Execrabilis*.

**NOTE:** During the period just after the Avignon debacle and as the Renaissance began, the popes had an opportunity to improve the morals of the hierarchy and begin a return to the scriptures. They did not do so. A few comments about some of the popes will illustrate this. We have not dealt with individual popes very much aside from some of the more outstanding, pivotal or corrupt.

#### **B. Five Popes as an Example of How the Love of Power Affects People**

1. **Nicholas V (1447-1455)** focused his energy, money, time and resources on collecting books that we would classify as sociology.
2. **Pius II (1458-1464)** was a scholar, but became a warlord pope – outfitting a navy and developing a land army to defend his own possessions against the Turks.
3. **Alexander VI (1492-1503)** had six children by two different women. He bribed enough cardinals (25) to ensure he was elected pope. He then appointed his children to high church offices but feared that they would kill him.
4. **Julian II (1503-1513)** was known as the Warrior Pope since he raised, trained, supported and marched with his own private army.
5. In **1513**, **Leo X**, a member of the wealthy and politically powerful de Medici family of Florence, was elected to the papal throne. His immediate response was, “God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it.” He did.

### **THE RENAISSANCE AS A PRELUDE TO REFORMATION AND RESTORATION**

**A. The Renaissance** – a comprehensive movement of European society toward a major change in social, religious, financial, military, and political processes. These changes involved:

1. Emancipation from totalitarian forces of theology and politics.
2. Reassertion of human reason and senses along with Scriptures as valid ways to see the world.
3. Conquest of the environment to make the world more habitable and comfortable.
4. The formation of new theories and practices regulating how nations and individuals perform. This included: rule of law, representative government, and the responsibility of leaders.
5. The gradual abandoning of a sacral mentality for regulating and ruling nations.

#### **B. The Renaissance Came about Gradually**

1. It began first in Italy and then later in northern Europe and England. It spanned approximately: From c1400-c1520 in Italy and from c1450-c1600 in Northern Europe. Efforts to eliminate the sacral system began earlier and continue today.
2. The major factors that influenced Europe toward the Renaissance were:
  - a. The absolute power wielded by the papacy had started breaking down, giving more opportunity for freedom of thought.
  - b. The moral and ethical imperfections of the Roman church disillusioned many.
  - c. The Holy Roman Empire (not holy, not Roman and not a true Empire) lost political

control in Europe. At the same time a sense of nationality and local identity arose so that people expressed their own language, culture, and independence from foreign influences – including the papacy.

- d. The feudal system broke down, thus allowing a middle class to arise. This reduced the power of the secular and the ecclesiastical princes.
- e. The invention of moveable type printing in 1440 hastened the exchange of ideas and gave the renaissance great momentum.
- f. The invention of the mariners compass, c1300, and a reliable mechanical clock, c1330, freed mariners from hugging the shoreline. They could become more adventurous. Note Columbus' voyages and those of other explorers from 1492 onwards as a testimony to the power of these two inventions.
- g. Ptolemaic astronomy which had put man on center stage had been replaced by Copernican astronomy which put man in a much less central, dominating position.
- h. The invention and use of gunpowder in warfare changed the nature of warfare and the way that cities and nations conducted both defense and offense. Wars became more destructive. Non-combatants were even less safe than before.
- i. The Crusades had shown Europe that the Moslems were their contemporary superiors in military matters. They also *perceived* that Islam's morals were higher than Christendom's. Had Christendom actually carried out what Jesus commanded, that perception would never have arisen.
- j. Sacral thinking was gradually eroding with the realization that people could differ at the altar while agreeing in the market place and that innovation was not necessarily evil or disruptive.
- k. Understanding the concept of a loyal opposition was a major political move.

**C. The Renaissance Was a Period of Rapid Transition.** It was a time of combining ideas, preparing new ways, developing a sense of nationhood, and accepting that diversity was not fatal. It involved the rediscovery of both Latin and Greek writings. The effect of this was:

1. To restore man's confidence in his own learning ability.
2. To show Europeans that history is consistent, repetitive, and continual.
3. To show that mankind is similar in spite of age, customs, area, language, etc.
4. To set a new standard of excellence in literature.
5. To provoke inquiry into the FACTS of a situation, not rely solely upon what 'authorities' say.
6. To encourage analysis of existing knowledge, beliefs and 'facts'.
7. Formed the basis of humanism which initially was the idea that man is a free being without any forced allegiance nor being in subjection to any other human being

**D. Some Significant Specific Effects of the Renaissance Have Been**

1. Ancient manuscripts were recovered, preserved, translated and studied.
2. The Greek and Hebrew languages were learned by western scholars.
3. Scholasticism lost its hold upon scholars who tended toward more freedom of thought.
4. Learning became respectable for the 'laity' instead of being something that only wizards and witches had along with a small portion of the Roman church.
5. People gained the idea that learning imposes a social obligation upon the learner.
6. People saw that the world was a place to be happy in, not a place of sadness or depression.
7. Studying people as individuals became important.
8. People saw problems as an opportunity for study, achievement, and understanding.
9. Humans must develop ALL of their capabilities.

10. The goal of all of the educated was to be the relaxed, highly skilled amateur who succeeds in every endeavor without appearing to work very hard at it. Somewhat like James Bond.
11. Charm is essential. ALL endeavor must be done gracefully and in good taste.
12. Use euphemisms to avoid unpleasant words or acts.
13. School is to be used to help children learn how to cope with society.
14. Physical exercise is important.
15. Town living became more accepted, normal and valuable in contrast to agrarian living.
16. Paganism became socially respectable and accepted as it infiltrated 'Christianity.'
17. The educated developed a contempt for mediaeval mysticism.
18. The educated became openly inclined toward hedonism and the sensuous enjoyment of paganism.
19. Art became based upon delight in loveliness and harmony for their own sakes.
20. Artists tended to show things as they really are, slightly improved, or in the abstract.
21. Literature became concerned with the immediate and physical instead of the spiritual.
22. Scientists moved from 'what man **ought** to do' to 'what man **can do**.'
23. Politics became openly and avowedly amoral, i.e., the end justifies the means. **The Prince** was a summation of the contemporary and succeeding political thought in Europe.
24. Savonarola introduced the social gospel in Florence.
25. The popular culture became a thin veneer over gross appetites and savage passions which were no longer restrained by either Scripture or personal experience.
26. Cause and effect relationships were increasingly used in Science.
27. The educated began losing their contact with the foundations of basic morality.
28. Since no common standard of behavior existed among the various economic classes, the middle and lower economic classes became effectively impotent for political action.
29. Toleration was admired but rarely practiced. Then excessive toleration became the normal.
30. Hedonism was glorified.
31. The 'religious' could live as pagans if they went along with some of the culture's religious ceremonies and traditions. Religion became a social option.
32. In northern Europe the effect of the Renaissance was to stimulate religious thought, leading to Martin Luther's reformation endeavor.
33. In England the Renaissance led to the works of Shakespear, Bacon, etc.
34. Humanism's roots were firmly established. Their beliefs eventually developed into:
  - a. Religious humanists believe that the universe is self-existing, not created.
  - b. Humanists believe that man is part of nature and that he has emerged as part of a continuous process defined as evolution or, more accurately, Darwinism.
  - c. Humanism believes that man's religious culture and civilization are the product of gradual development since religion evolved and is not God-given.
  - d. Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantee of human values.
  - e. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world in something similar to socialism.
  - f. No deity will save us. We must save ourselves.
  - g. Ethics must be autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction.
  - h. In the area of sexuality, Humanists believe that intolerant attitudes are often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures that unduly repress sexual conduct. Humanists do not wish to prohibit by law or social sanction any sexual behavior between consenting adults.

- i. Humanists want the development of a system of world law and a world order based on transnational federal government, i.e., a one government world.

## LATER REFORMERS

- A. **Anselm (1033-1109).** One of the early leaders in this field.  
Started applying reason to faith. His philosophy was to start with God and then examine the world from that point without any doubt about God. He said that God's revelation must always supersede human reason and deductions. In effect, he was promoting a paradigm shift in his time and place, i.e., councils, papacy, and bishops must have less authority than scripture.
- B. **Peter Abelard, 1079-1142, Born near Nantes in Northern France**  
Educated in Paris. Called, "too brilliant to be prudent." Prominent place among thinkers of his day. Considered a liberal in view of his attachment to Heloise. Bernard of Clairvaux had him charged with heresy at two councils, the last in 1140. One of his best known pupils was Arnold of Brescia.
- C. **Peter Lombard (c1100-1160).** Author of a book named *Sentences* that was the most widely used textbook in the middle ages with commentaries written upon it. He was the father of what we call systematic theology because he engaged in careful thought and pursued matters very systematically – a new way to study in his time.
- D. **Arnold of Brescia, c1100-1155.** Studied under Abelard who attacked the orthodoxy of the Roman church, the morals of the clergy, and their secular power.
  1. He advocated the separation of the church and state (i.e., the end of the sacral system) and the abolition of the pyramid government structure within the Roman church.
  2. He was condemned as a schismatic at the Lateran Synod of 1139 and at the council of Sens in 1140.
  3. Expelled from Italy, he went to France and joined with Peter Abelard against Bernard of Clairvaux. When the king expelled him from France he went to Switzerland and then to Bohemia. He later obtained papal permission to go to Rome where he organized such a following that revolt appeared imminent.
  4. He preached for apostolic poverty and condemned the Roman church for its corruption and abuses. The Roman senate and the common people protected him. But when he got involved in politics, Adrian IV forced him into submission, banishing him as a heretic in 1154.
  5. In 1155, Adrian IV and Emperor Frederick I had him hung, his body burned, and his ashes thrown into the Tiber. In 1883 Brescia raised a monument to him.
- E. **Peter of Bruys, d1135-1140.** A medieval dissenter and founder of the Petrobrusians.
  1. A pupil of Peter Abelard and perhaps the teacher of Henry of Lausanne.
  2. His goal was to restore Christianity to its original purity and simplicity.
  3. He rejected infant baptism, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, church buildings, ecclesiastical ceremonies, the veneration of the cross, and prayers for the dead.
  4. About 1126 he was seized. Later, in 1140, he was burned as a heretic. His followers joined Henry of Lausanne and the combined group later joined with the Waldenses.
- F. **Henry of Switzerland (Lausanne) Died about 1145.** For a time he was a Benedictine monk at Cluny.
  1. Henry began itinerant preaching which included:



- a. personal responsibility in spiritual matters
  - b. rejection of the rites and authority of the Roman church
  - c. rejection of the corruption of the Roman church
2. He was arrested, but released. He joined Peter of Bruys in southern France. By 1135 he was practicing and teaching celibacy and poverty.
3. He taught that sacraments are effective only when administered by worthy priests. Recall the Donatist controversy at the time of Constantine. Bernard of Clairvaux preached against Henry.
4. Henry was arrested and died shortly afterwards in prison. The Henricians joined the Waldenses.

**G. Peter Waldo (Or Valdez) Died about 1217.** He was a prosperous merchant in Lyon, France.

1. Convinced of monasticism, he disposed of most of his property. He did provide modestly for his wife and daughters.
2. Took a formal vow of poverty and gathered a group of like minded men about him.
3. In 1179 at the Third Lateran Council in Rome they appeared before Pope Alexander III asking for permission to preach to the poor people and to work for reforming the Roman church. The pope denied their preaching right since they were seen as 'ignorant laymen.' They obeyed him for awhile and then decided that their calling was so strong that they must preach.
4. In 1184 Pope Lucius III excommunicated them. This forced the Waldenses to be seen as schismatics and separatists against their will. For the next 40 years the movement spread rapidly enough to concern the Roman church.
5. The Waldenses and Albigenses were officially condemned by the Council of Toulouse in 1229.
  - a. The Dominicans were entrusted to suppress the heresy.
  - b. They used the Inquisition with great suffering by the Waldenses.
6. Peter Waldo died about 1217.
 

Pope Innocent VIII branded them as venomous serpents and ordered their extermination via armed expeditions. Their distinguishing characteristics were:

  - a. the Bible, especially the New Testament, is the sole rule for life and belief
  - b. secret prayer is invaluable to a spiritual life
  - c. abandoning the Roman church as corrupt and too elaborate
  - d. infant baptism and transubstantiation are valid.
  - e. only God can forgive sins
  - f. prayers for the dead are useless
  - g. the pope is not supreme

**H. Albert Magnus (The Great, So Named by His Students, c1200-1280)**

Believed that theology sets the boundaries for knowledge, but reason prompts inquiry into whatever confronts man. He thought that the idea 'Go wherever truth leads us', is only partially valid. Some knowledge is forbidden to us. Thomas Aquinas was one of his students.

**I. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274).** Believed that all of the knowledge we need for salvation has been revealed by God via scripture **and** the Roman church. There is no extra human authority (past that of Rome) needed for our salvation. We should trust our senses and use them to learn more about God. He also stressed the need to investigate and learn more of God, even using empirical approaches. He became one of the most respected Roman church scholars.

**J. Marsilius of Padua, c1275-1342.** Studied for medicine, receiving his master's degree and his priest's orders in 1312.

1. He and John of Jandun and William of Occam collaborated in the controversy between Pope

John XXII and the emperor Louis IV of Bavaria.

2. In 1324 he and John of Padua prepared the most important written contribution on the relation between church and state prepared in the Middle Ages. A bold attack against the temporal assumptions of the papacy, it included:
  - a. the hierarchy of the Roman church was wrong.
  - b. the church needs reforming.
  - c. the church should be involved in spiritual matters only, not secular power politics.
  - d. the state has power over the church because the clergy must obey state laws.
  - e. the people have democratic rights within the church and within the state, i.e. no sacral state.
  - f. the people should elect a legislature that has law making powers.
  - g. the people should elect the chief executive.
  - h. there should be a fixed constitution.
  - i. priests must be limited to spiritual matters and must not extend them into other parts of society. This would mean the end of the sacral state ruled by a religion.
  - j. all of the church leaders must be pure from the pope to the lowest member.
  - k. denial of the divine origin, infallibility or absolute powers of the papacy.
  - l. the Holy Scriptures are the ultimate source of authority.

**Our efforts at Restoration have not been the first nor only efforts at restoration.**

**K. John of Jandun, d 1328.** A theologian and political writer educated at the University of Paris. He was a co-worker with Marsilius of Padua.

(Pope John XXII denounced the authors (Marsilius and John) as ‘sons of perdition, the sons of Belial, those pestiferous individuals, beasts from the abyss.’ He told the political authorities to imprison them.)

**L. William of Occam (1280-1339).** An English Franciscan monk of great learning.

1. He defended the independence of the state from ecclesiastical authority.
2. He taught that the Scriptures and not the decisions of councils and popes are alone binding on Christians. He said that the pope is not infallible, that the general council is above the pope and that in secular matters the church must be subordinate to the state. Note that Boniface VIII (1294-1303) said that submission to the pope is essential to salvation.

**M. John Wycliff (1328-1384).** Born in Yorkshire, England. He has been called the “Morning Star of the Reformation” because of his stressing the value of Scripture. Educated at Oxford, he was opposed to the pope as a student. He stayed at Oxford his whole life, becoming the master. He was influenced by Augustine’s writings. In 1366 Wycliff became the king’s chaplain; by 1372 a doctor of theology, and in 1374 the rector of Lutterworth. After a visit to Rome, he returned to preach reform opposing the pope’s secular sovereignty. He published tracts and leaflets. By 1377 he was so outspoken against the pope that the Bishop of London called him before a tribunal. The pope issued a public condemnation of his writings. But the people, the scholars and the nobles of England protected him from the pope. He then defended English rights from foreign encroachments. He assailed scholasticism and the abuses practiced by the Roman church. He proclaimed the Bible as the only source of truth. He rejected the infallibility of either pope or council and held that their decrees were helpful only if they were in harmony with Scripture. He said the clergy is not to rule, but to serve. He challenged transubstantiation, purgatory and many other doctrines. He said that marriage is honorable. He believed that there were only two officers in the church of the Scriptures: elders and deacons. Relics are useless. Images are not to be worshiped. Festivals are not important.

Latin should not be used in worship. Gregory XI in 1377 condemned him. By 1380 Wycliff enlisted from the Oxford graduates a body of ‘pore priests’, later known as Lollards, who would go out as evangelical preachers. The Archbishop of London prohibited him from preaching. The Chancellor of Oxford expelled him from the faculty and a synod condemned him in 1382. He retired to his rectory and devoted himself to writing and translating the Bible. It is thought that the Wycliff New Testament was his translation from the Vulgate and the Old Testament from his friend Nicholas of Hereford. In 1401 the ‘Heresy of Wycliff’ was made a capital offense. Reading of the Bible translated by Wycliff was to be accompanied by forfeiture of land, cattle, life and goods from the readers’ heirs forever. His followers went underground. At the 1415 Council of Constance, his books were ordered burned and his remains were to be exhumed and burned. That last order was carried out in 1428. Note that John XXIII (1410-1415) was in power in Rome at the time of the decree. One writer called John XXIII the most depraved criminal who ever sat on the papal throne. He was guilty of almost every crime. He openly denied the future life. He lived with his brother’s wife. He bought the papacy. He sold cardinalates to wealthy children. He was guilty of sodomy. He violated at least 200 women while acting as a cardinal in Bologna. And he spoke out against what he saw as heresy!!

- N. John Hus (1373-1415).** He was a Bohemian reformer. He received his bachelor and master’s degrees from the University of Prague and was lecturing on theology at the university by 1398, at age 25. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1401 and became rector of the University of Prague in 1402 at 29. Although a loyal Roman Catholic, he desired to see reform and doctrinal purity. He translated Wycliff’s Trialogues into Bohemian. By 1409 he was branded as a heretic. Bohemia rallied about him. Although excommunicated, he continued to preach and write. By 1411 he openly rebelled against John XXIII’s use of indulgences. John XXIII had called all of Europe to a crusade against the European defender of his predecessor and needed money to fund his army. Hus said that the pope has no right to use force for anything; cannot collect money by indulgences; and indulgences do not give forgiveness. He attacked transubstantiation, subservience to the pope, belief in saints as mediators, efficacy of the absolution by the priests, unconditional obedience to the earthly rulers, and simony. He said that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith. In 1414 he was called to the Council of Constance ( the same council that exhumed Wycliff’s bones and burned them) under a promise of safe conduct by King Wenclaus, Emperor Sigismund, and the pope. He was hastily prosecuted, condemned and jailed. The religious authorities told Emperor Sigismund that a person does not have to keep a promise to a heretic. In 1415 he was burned at the stake, the bishop of Lodi using Rom 6.6, “That the body of sin may be destroyed.” as his text. He said that the extermination of heretics was one of the most pleasing works to God, that rotten flesh must be removed, that a little cancer must be removed, that the poison must be removed by prompt application of the cauterizing iron.

Hus’ followers divided into two groups. The Taborites opposed what could not be supported by Scripture. The Utraquists opposed only what was expressly forbidden by Scripture. This is still an ongoing question among those who wish to restore first century Christianity.

- O. Jerome of Prague (c1370-1416).** He was a knight at the court of the King of Bohemia. He was well educated, much traveled, and a highly eloquent man. He became interested in Wycliffe’s views during a visit to England. In 1407 he took some of Wycliffe’s writings home. He preached some even though he was not a priest. After much rejection, he joined with Hus in Prague. He was captured at the Council of Constance, recanted, felt ashamed, demanded a new trial, and eloquently denounced his recanting and stated his faith which was very much like Hus’. In 1416 he was burned

at the stake at the same spot that Hus had died.

- P. Jerome Savonarola (1452-1498).** Born at Ferrara, Italy, into a physician's family. He was a precocious student who loved music and poetry. In 1474 he secretly left home to enter a Dominican monastery at Bologna, remaining there for seven years. He wrote to his father about his decision, "I could not endure any longer the wickedness of the blinded people of Italy. Virtue I saw despised everywhere, the vices exalted and held in honor." He became famous for his zeal and piety. He preached at Ferrara on Lent but was not successful. When he preached at Florence he started on Lent with 25 listeners. He then switched to Bible preaching, attacking sin with much boldness and developed a strong following. He even attacked the monks of his own order. In 1491 he became head of a monastery in San Marco. When Lorenzo, the master of the city, died, Savonarola was made head of Florence instead of Lorenzo's son as a result of France's Charles VIII involvement. The city became a republic with a preacher as its leader. He organized 4000 young people to go through the area preaching repentance. (An early version of AIM.) Pope Alexander VI in 1497 offered Savonarola a cardinal's office if he would leave Florence. He attacked the papacy and the whole Roman church structure and was excommunicated. The public then turned on him because the pope threatened an interdict if they did not turn against Savonarola. In April, 1498, he was arrested, found guilty of heresy, hanged on May 23rd and his body burned. His ashes were thrown into the Arno River.
- Q. Ximenes (1436-1517).** Tried to reform Spain. In 1492 he became chief advisor to Queen Isabella. He issued the Computensian Polygot, a Bible with parallel columns of the New Testament in Greek and Latin and the Old Testament in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and Chaldaic. He drove corrupt priests out. He stressed that shepherds must help the sheep, not just shear them. He stressed that religion must have meaning. He had no desire to leave the Roman church. He organized a campaign to rid the ocean around Spain from piracy. In the midst of a corrupt clergy, his morals were unapproachable.
- R. John Reuchlin (1455-1522).** Born near Stuttgart, Germany. He was the granduncle of Philip Melanchthon and was known as one of the best Greek scholars in his time. Trained as a lawyer, he became a linguist. He published a Latin lexicon and pioneered the study of the Hebrew language by gentiles in Europe, publishing a Grammar and Dictionary in 1506. Although his work fostered the development of much of the later learning by the reformers, he never left the Roman church.
- S. Erasmus (1465-1536).** A Dutch scholar born in Rotterdam. He spent five unhappy years in a monastery (1486-1491), taking monastic vows at age 25. He studied at the University of Paris and at Orleans. From that time he became an independent scholar – independent of country, of academic ties or religious ties, of everything that could interfere with his studies. Traveled extensively and made friends with many current leaders, even many who thoroughly detested each other. By his studies, he paved the way for reform but was not a good organizer. He remained loyal to the Roman church even while he knew they needed reform. His Greek New Testament issued in 1516 was a valuable aid for Martin Luther. He advocated the translation of the New Testament into the spoken languages of his day. He eventually turned against Luther and the other reformers and returned fully to the Roman church. Someone wrote, "Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched."

## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOURTEEN:**

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1. What is the significance of the 1309-1377 period in Roman church history?

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2. What is the significance of the 1378-1449 period in Roman church history?

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3. Describe the new European mindset at the beginning of the Renaissance.

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4. What were the 11 factors that prompted Europe toward Renaissance?

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5. In your view, what have been the most important seven results of the Renaissance?

6. What is the foundational cornerstone of humanism?

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7. List two provocative ideas that Marsilius of Padua and John of Jandun promoted well ahead of their social time.

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8. What did the Roman church do in official acts about John Wycliffe?

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9. On what specious grounds was John Hus executed? \_\_\_\_\_

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# The Reformation

## Its Causes and Impetus

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### INTRODUCTION:

**W**hen the reformation is discussed, the impression may be created that Martin Luther and his associates began the reformation without any prelude. In an earlier section we noted that there had been a large number of both individuals and groups that had either embarked upon a reforming effort or who laid the ground work for a later effort. Among these were: Claudius of Turin (839), Arnold of Brescia (1100-1155), Peter of Bruys (d1135), Peter Waldo (d1218), Marsilius of Padua and John of Jandau (c1324), The Albigenses of France (1100---), William of Occam (1280-1339), John Wycliff (1328-1384), John Hus (1373-1415), Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498), and others. Some of these could be called reformers, those who wished to modify the existing church to remove certain excesses or errors. Others could be called restitutionists or restorationists who wanted to return to the original church as presented in Acts and Hebrews and in the epistles from Paul, Peter, John, Jude and James.

**THE REFORMATION REFERS TO THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION OF THE 16TH CENTURY ONWARDS WHICH DIVIDED EUROPE INTO TWO MAJOR CAMPS – ROMAN CHURCH AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES.**

### A. The Causes of the Reformation

1. The Black Plague had decimated about one-third of Europe's population convincing people that God was not pleased with the status-quo. Young adults died at a disproportionately high rate compared to the seniors and children.
2. Peasants lived a harsh, brutal, short life and they wanted better.
3. Secular rulers wanted less control and taxes imposed from Rome.
4. Religious practices were destroying spiritual matters:
  - a. Celibacy produced gross immorality that was only partially controlled via concubines.
  - b. Simony led to the rich getting richer off the work of the poor.
  - c. Selling indulgences promoted immorality with a loss of a sense of guilt.
  - d. Christ had been displaced by traditions, rituals, ceremonies, legalism, sacerdotalism, relics, and the saints.
5. The tyrannical disposition of the popes coupled with their own open immorality, absence of spiritual attributes, simony, nepotism, and political machinations led people to doubt them.
6. Lower echelons of the Roman church followed their leaders in immorality, simony, nepotism, vulgarity, ignorance and unethical office holding.
7. Religious discipline in the Roman church disappeared because of the flagrant violations by its leaders and the parish priests.
8. Study of Scripture had been abandoned and people wanted it back.
9. Preaching was neglected since raising money for Rome became the main focus. (Today's televangelists fit this mold as well.)
10. Hagiolatry (worship of saints) was tied to indulgences.

11. Works of merit (or payment of money) replaced righteous living as crucial.
12. Sins could be paid for with money after or **before** the event.
13. The Renaissance stressed learning, the importance of one individual, independence of thought, the beauty of the world, and human potential.
14. Many European leaders wanted separation of the state from ecclesiastical control. They finally began recognizing that the sacral state was not a positive.
15. The Crusades had taught the people that their leaders were not trustworthy. They gained the powerful, but incorrect impression, that Islam was superior to Christianity in morals and life. Had Jesus been followed, this impression would never have arisen.
16. The popes had moved from Rome to Avignon for political reasons, convincing many people that politics was more important to the papacy than spiritual matters.
17. The laity wanted control over what they provided money to support.
18. Unrest countered by internal crusades and the inquisition could not be contained indefinitely.
19. Orthodoxy was complacent, feeling that they had arrived with a complete and total understanding of how things were to be with social equilibrium that would not change. Roger Bacon said that this feeling arose from misunderstanding the Bible, Aristotle, and other authorities while being ignorant of the physical and mathematical sciences.
20. The Inquisition was a terrible burden politically, economically, socially, and religiously. It harmed morale greatly. It had paid its own way earlier since the initial focus was on the rich. When most of the rich 'heretics' had been destroyed, the princes ceased to take much interest in it. The Inquisition then fell into financial problems. At this point the populace understood that it had been counter-productive and traumatic without justification on any grounds.
21. The Roman church had claimed supreme political rights which included:
  - a. The RC had its own laws, lawgivers, lawyers, and courts separate from the secular state.
  - b. The RC had the power to compel obedience.
  - c. The RC had its own penal system.
  - d. The RC had the right to pronounce the death sentence although they let the state execute
  - e. The RC had the right to control everyone in the society, i.e. total sacralism.
  - d. The RC determined heresy and orthodoxy without any outside input.
  - f. The RC deemed it a crime to leave its fellowship.
  - g. The RC was supported by involuntary taxes and tithes as well as indulgences.
  - h. The RC claimed to be free of taxation although it taxed everyone else.
  - I. The RC sold justice in the courts
  - j. **All spiritual authority was claimed by the papacy.**

#### **B. The Provoking Cause of the Reformation Was the Sale of Indulgences.**

1. Indulgences arose from the theory of the sacrament of penance. Because of sin against God or man, an individual had to make satisfaction or restitution. It was said that God would forgive the sin, but the church must require temporal punishment.
2. The priest was to state the terms for such.
3. Since complete satisfaction could not be obtained on earth, purgatory was necessary to purge the final stages.
4. Through the power 'given' to Peter, the pope could grant a full or partial atonement out of the treasury of merit built up by Christ, the Apostles and the saints.
5. A person could pay for himself or for someone else. The charge was scaled in terms of income and status as well as for the kind of sin. It cost more for the rich to sin than for the poor.

#### **C. Martin Luther's Opposition to the Blatant Abuse of Political Power, Financial Institutions,**

### **and Religious Trappings.**

The immediate stimulus for Martin Luther's response came about when Prince Albert of Brandenburg, 23 years old, paid Pope Leo X a large sum of money for the right to hold a second bishopric. Albert was not satisfied with two and wanted a third. When the Archbishopric of Mainz became vacant, he applied. Leo agreed that Albert would pay the papacy ten times the previous fee for the second office plus another equal sum for the special right to hold three offices simultaneously. Albert did not have this much money available. Albert intended to make money on these offices, so this was an investment. Accordingly, Albert went to the Fugger banking group in Augsburg for a loan. The collateral for the loan was that Albert had Leo's approval to sell indulgences. The first of the indulgences sale was to go to Leo. Albert and the banking group would take care of the rest. This blatant abuse of political power, financial institutions, and religious trappings provoked Martin Luther to nail his 95 thesis on the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg.

Luther did not deal with the whole of Roman church error in his 95 thesis; focusing instead upon the specific abuses of indulgences.

### **D. The Sellers of Indulgences**

1. Tetzel was commissioned by Rome to collect money from believers to finance St. Peter's Church in Rome. The giver was told that his gift of money covered many sins. Their claim for example: "No sooner do the coins clink in the money chest than the soul of a loved one flies out of purgatory."
2. Tetzel also affirmed that people could pay money now to cover a sin to be committed later. In one such unsubstantiated episode, a young man contributed toward his future sinful action. He later held-up Tetzel, taking all of the day's proceeds, with no sense of shame since he had recently purchased the right to sin from the man he just robbed.
3. Indulgences did not have a standard cost – the rich and/or powerful had to pay much more for an indulgence than did a poor person.
  - a. Kings, Bishops and members of their families were to pay 25 Rhenish gold guilders for a specific sin.
  - b. Abbots, counts, and barons and their equivalents were to pay ten.
  - c. Lesser nobles and church officers were to pay six guilders.
  - d. Other free citizens were to pay only one guilder.
  - e. Others with infrequent employment would pay only ½ guilder.
4. What did Rome promise the purchaser? The purchaser no longer had to attend mass or go to confession and he would skip purgatory altogether – going straight to paradise. Tetzel and other salesmen promised even more, i.e. the above note about coins clinking, souls flying.

## **THE REFORMATION – AN INTRODUCTION**

### **A. The Seven Fundamentals of the Reformation Included the Following.** Note that no one person likely ever held all seven, but the seven do form a consistent thread.

1. The Bible is the ONLY infallible rule of faith, morals and practice.
2. What is not contrary to Scripture is for Scripture and Scripture is for it.
3. Justification is by faith alone in contrast to meritorious works of the Roman church.
4. Believers should have no obstructions between themselves and Christ such as priests, Mary, sacraments, rituals, saints,...
5. The priesthood of all believers.
6. Intolerance. Although the reformers resented Roman church intolerance, they practiced it as well.



7. Secular authority can be used to advance one's own personal religious views.

**B. Leading Personalities in the Early Reformation:**

1. Martin Luther 1483-1546 – Nailed the Thesis on the Wittenberg Cathedral, Oct 31, 1517.
2. Philip Melancthon 1479-560 – Provided scholarly support to Martin Luther
3. Ulrich Zwingli 1482-1531 – Some ideas close to restoration concepts. Killed in battle.
4. John Calvin 1509 -1564 – Most influential man in terms of church doctrine.
5. Henry VIII 1491-1547 – Formed the Church of England as a result of divorce and tax questions.
6. John Knox 1505 – 1572 – A follower of John Calvin in Scotland.

**C. Results of the Reformation**

1. In western nations, some tolerance of differing religious views became *possible*, although not widely practiced for some time. Intolerance persisted and, in some places, increased.
2. The principle of private judgement became more widely accepted. People could hold diverse religious views and not cause chaos in the market place.
3. People began following certain charismatic leaders without a serious examination of doctrine.
4. The idea of restoration became thinkable.
5. The Bible began to be available in local languages that people actually used.
6. Public schooling was set up to encourage literacy so people could read the Bible.
7. People adopted the idea that they could speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent while others believed that they could do anything that the Bible does not specifically condemn.
8. The gulf between clergy and laity was narrowed, but not obliterated. Control issues continued.

## THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

**A. The Attempts of the Roman Church to Defuse the Reformation**

In addition to the internal crusades, religious wars, and the Inquisition, the Roman Church confronted the Reformation forces via some active internal reforms. The Council of Trent, 1545-1563, met with the purposes of internal reform and enticing Protestants to return to the Roman Church. The council made 46 specific statements:

1. The Old Testament (including the Apocrypha), the New Testament, and the traditions of the church fathers were dictated by the Holy Spirit and authored by God himself.
2. All **LATIN** editions of the Scripture are authentic.
3. No one can interpret the Scriptures contrary to the official church interpretation.
4. Original sin was reaffirmed and can be removed only by Christ's atonement via baptism.
5. Christ died for all, but only the elect receive it.
6. Justification is only through baptism or the desire for baptism.
7. God's grace moves men toward Him, but men have free will.
8. Justification is via faith and obedience to the Roman church.
9. Good works are done for a reward.
10. Purgatory was reaffirmed.
11. Sacraments were reaffirmed as necessary.
12. Grace is conferred by the seven sacraments.
13. Only the clergy can administer sacraments, not the laity.
14. Reaffirmed transubstantiation.
15. The laity are NOT to have the cup.
16. Only bishops and priests can pronounce forgiveness and remission of sins.
17. Pray to the saints for help.

18. Venerate relics, but do not worship them.
19. Venerate sacred images and paintings but do not worship them.
20. Reaffirmed the selling of indulgences.
21. The council was to prepare catechisms for definite theology.
22. The hierarchal structure was solidified.
23. Dueling was forbidden. Any participant was to die, even the 'winner.'
24. Mass was to be closely regulated and formal.
25. Sale of indulgences must be closely controlled with careful explanation of benefits.
26. Mystical properties of relics were disavowed.
27. Bishops have power in their diocese, not elsewhere. Bishops must reside in their diocese.
28. Holding several offices at once is forbidden.
29. Income must be from only one source.
30. Church buildings must be repaired. Hospitals must have adequate supervision.
31. Priests can be ordained only after age 25.
32. RC must set up colleges to train priests.
33. No wandering priests allowed. All holy orders will have specific assignments.
34. Must hold provincial synods every three years.
35. Every diocese must have a visit by ranking clergy at least every 2 years.
36. Priests must preach and explain the sacraments in the vernacular.
37. Confession to the priest is essential and required.
38. All public sin, except that of a bishop, must be rebuked in public.
39. No one can use church property to enrich one's relatives.
40. Celibacy is required.
41. No one can preach without a license from the bishop.
42. Only bishops can ordain.
43. Candidates for scholarships at colleges must be accepted by the bishop.
44. Monasteries must be certified by the bishop.
45. The system of taxation was curtailed, but not eliminated.
46. The Pope is the VICAR of Christ and must be obeyed by ALL.

**B. The Jesuits Have Done Much to Enforce and Apply These**

Since the Council of Trent, there has been no mass defection from the Roman church. Dissent is becoming more open, especially in the United States. Moral issues seem to have a stronger influence upon dissent in the Roman church than any other doctrinal matter.

## JOHN CALVIN'S INFLUENCE ON THE REFORMATION

**A. John Calvin (1509-1564) Published the Institutes of Religion**

- a. The most scholarly and influential writing to come out of this period of the Reformation.
- b. It has affected every western based religion in some way – either by being adopted wholly or in part or by being specifically rejected.
- c. John Calvin studied the ancient Greek and Latin writers but appears to have learned Stoicism instead of Epicureanism or hedonism.
- d. That, coupled with his view of God as stern, foreboding, hard, and unmerciful, led to a doctrine that is stern, unyielding and harsh.
- e. He based a large part of his views on the Old Testament and failed to differentiate between the Mosaic Law and the new relationship with Jesus. He also adopted much of Augustine of Hippo's teachings and logic which we have noted violated Scripture.

**B. Major Doctrines Can Be Studied Using the Acronym "TULIP"**

1. T = Mankind is *totally depraved*, incapable of making any right decision; totally condemned;

and has no part whatsoever in his/her salvation. This total depravity applies to all ages.

Read: Matt 18.3 – change and become...

Matt 19.14 – let the little children....

Matt 21.16 – from the lips....

Matt 5.48 – be perfect

Col 1.28 – So that we may present EVERYONE ....

Heb 10.1 – make perfect those who draw near

James 3.2 – he is a perfect man

2. U = **Unconditional Election**. Before Adam fell, God knew exactly what would happen to /by each individual. Those who were going to be saved were given to Christ then. Some were consigned to hell as part of Calvin's predestination concept. Mankind is not equal regarding salvation.

Read: Phil 2.12 – continue to work out your salvation

Luke 13.3 – repent or perish

John 3.16 – believe – shall not perish

II Peter 3.9 – Not wanting anyone to perish

3. L = **Limited atonement**, Christ's sacrifice was only a *limited atonement*, applying only to the saved or elect. Only the elect can receive faith and repentance. Atonement has no value unless it is accepted; and only the elect can accept it. The non-elect have no part whatsoever in Christ's atonement.

Read Romans 5.6ff – Christ died for sinners

II Cor 5.14ff – Christ died for all

I Thess 5.10 – he died for us

Matt 28.18ff – into all the world

Mark 16.15f – terms of salvation

4. I = **Illumination**. The Holy Spirit renders the elect open and pliable via *Illumination* of the Holy Spirit. The call of the Holy Spirit ALWAYS bears fruit via of *Irresistible grace*. The non-elect cannot respond. This illumination occurs gradually and maturing takes time. Maturing is aided by preaching, but is not dependent upon it. Note: since Jesus did not have 100% success rate in reaching people for conversion, how can we then say that the Spirit is irresistible?

5. P = **Perseverance** of the saints occurs because God made the selection and God cannot be mistaken. The saints *persevere* because the role of the Spirit is *irresistible*. The saints *persevere* because of Christ's atonement.

Read: Gal 5.4 fallen from grace

Read Judges, I & II Kings and I & II Chronicles for examples of falling away from God.

Heb 2.1-3a

Heb 3.12f – an evil and unbelieving heart

Heb 4.1-11 – don't fall short

Heb 4.14 – hold fast

Heb 5.11

Heb 6.4ff – fall away

Heb 12.25 – don't refuse him

James 2.14-26 – faith shown by works

James 3.13-18 – life shows the heart

James 4.7 – come to God and resist the devil

Scripture contains many warnings about falling and promises of blessings for faithfulness along with curses for disobedience. This is useless if TULIP is valid. TULIP removes all responsibility from us and puts it entirely upon God.

### C. We Can Thank John Calvin for These Ideas:

1. Our society believes that all children and adults should be educated.
2. There is little room in society for sloth, carelessness, laziness, and poor appearance.
3. Everyone should follow an acceptable standard of conduct.
4. Church and state should cooperate, but must be separate.
5. The church is not defined by apostolic succession nor via some bishop's role in it.

**D. Reasons Many Intelligent People Become So Confused on Religious Matters**

1. These articulate, intelligent people may:
    - a. Adopt only a portion of Scripture, especially the parts they like
    - b. Practice selective use of even the part they do accept.
    - c. Arrive at conclusions that do not appear to be based on the Scripture they accept.
    - d. Base their religion upon human philosophy
    - e. Base their religious views entirely upon their own personal experience.
  2. We are also aware of how some Christians are adapting worship styles and letting culture have an increasingly large role in how they live and worship. This is not new nor will it disappear. People have, since Adam and Eve, wanted to be in control as they exercise their free-will.
  3. Governments, opinion molders, celebrities, and powerful companies seem to ignore some basics that we Christians believe to be self-evident:
  4. Some groups fail to actively care for the weakest and most defenseless members of society (abortion, etc)
  5. Leaders fail to provide honest accounting for the use of both power and money
  6. Coordinators in society as a whole plan activities that conflict with worship on Sundays.
  7. Commerce no longer respects a special day of worship requiring a business to close.
  8. Incorrect role models are presented to society at large, i.e. music personalities, athletes, etc.
  9. There is shocking disregard for human life in bombings, genocide, wars, slavery, etc.
- The list goes on and on.

**NOTE:** How did we get into such an appalling state of affairs? We could obviously go back many centuries but we really need to go back only into the middle of the 1800's when Charles Darwin promoted his concept of macro-biological evolution – the progressive upward development of living organisms via inherited random mutations, natural selection and survival of the fittest. Many, many people have used this concept and intertwined it and each of the others to arrive at a very confused state.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIFTEEN:**

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1. What was the social impact of the Black Plague?

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2. List the ten reasons you believe to have been the most important for the Reformation to have begun when it did and where it did.

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3. What one aspect of Roman church theology actually promoted Martin Luther to protest?
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4. The seven principles of Reformation that finally developed as the conflict increased were:
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- 
- 
5. When the Roman church began a counter reformation, would the popes have considered it a success? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Describe Calvin's Theology using TULIP. List the verses that contradict each of these positions
- T – \_\_\_\_\_
- U – \_\_\_\_\_
- L – \_\_\_\_\_
- L – \_\_\_\_\_
- I – \_\_\_\_\_
- P – \_\_\_\_\_
7. List three concepts that have led our world away from God.
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# What Is Molding Western Thought?

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### INTRODUCTION:



any 'isms' have come into our society and have remained intertwined with each other and with some aspects of truth. There are 13 of these we can specifically identify and define.

In the 1960's the concept that God is Dead arose. Since western civilization had become so adept at solving problems, skillful, knowledgeable, and capable, God was no longer needed. So, he 'died.' That meant that mankind moved into the position of acting as the highest being in the universe (or at least our part of it). On that basis, humans can and will make all of the rules, decide on absolutes – the only one being that there are no absolutes. We determine our own destiny. Of course, without God, extinction is our eventual destiny.

### THE ELEMENTS MOLDING WESTERN THOUGHT

#### A. Dealing with Culture from Five Different Perspectives

There are at least five ways that professing Christians can interact with culture. In practice, few people ever adopt only one way for their Christian beliefs and culture to interact. Most adopt two or more ways and these will vary depending upon circumstance. The one way that has been and is the most widespread has been named as the Sacral System similar to Agreement with Culture.

1. **Christians against culture:** This concept is manifested in the following ways:
  - a. Jesus lived a radical life. We must as well.
  - b. We must live in a way totally different from our culture. Culture is sinful by definition.
  - c. Sin is 'out there', elsewhere, not in or with us except as we allow it.
  - d. We must avoid helping this sinful culture and avoid any participation in it.
  - e. We cannot hope to reform our world. Therefore we must abandon it and form our own parallel culture that avoids the sinful excess of the culture around us.
  - f. This line of thinking will lead to communes, utopian communities, and other experiments involving 'us against the world.' Groups such as the Amish participate in this world view.
2. **Christians agree with culture.** Seen in the following:
  - a. Jesus totally identified with his culture and enjoyed the social life
  - b. We must identify with our culture:
    - 1) We must become all things to all men so we can gain some.
    - 2) All things are lawful, although not all things are expedient.
  - c. We have both the right and obligation to use our government/culture to overcome evil and force folks to live right according to our standards. When governments determine 'righteousness' or 'correctness,' they are adopting this world view.
  - d. Honor what our culture honors and despise what it despises.
  - e. Take advantage of the opportunities and get the fruits of this culture.
  - f. Use this culture to spread the gospel – using its technology, wealth, infrastructure, and ideas.
  - g. Allow doctrine to be molded by culture since everything is relative.
  - h. The Sacral system, to which we will return shortly, identifies culture and Christianity as coextensive, i.e. every person in a certain geo-political area is viewed as Christian irrespective of whether or not that person has made any decision in the matter or lives in a manner reflecting Christian principles. The State uses its sword to promote the 'sword'

of the church. Depending upon personalities, the State is dominant or the 'church' is dominant.

3. **Christians synthesize culture and Christianity**

- a. Jesus lived the ultimate happiness
- b. We are in our culture, but actually above it. We are the elite.
- c. We are to participate in culture, but know that happiness is really in the spiritual realm.
- d. Sin is so pervasive that no one can avoid it. By extension, we are to use this sinful culture to do some good, such as churches that own gambling casinos. Recall that God created both culture and Christianity. Therefore choose and use what is best out of both to arrive at a hybrid of our own making. The end justifies the means. Decide upon end results and then select how to get there by a synthesis of religion and culture. Self becomes the final authority.

4. **Christians treat culture as a paradox**

- a. Jesus was both in and above the world. Nature is more relevant than culture which is incidental and changeable. Old humanity must become new humanity
- b. Obey the government outwardly, but know that it is wrong. This can lead to passive disobedience and overt disobedience based upon human reasoning, not Scripture.
- c. Sin is pervasive and cannot be avoided. So, use sin to promote good.
- d. Ensure separation of church and state with state dominant. The state must and can control the church, making it an 'arm' of government. This is the attitude of many who want religion to be marginal in society. There is some basis for a sacral system in this view.

5. **Christians must convert culture**

- a. The end justifies the means
- b. Sin can be diminished by converting culture and making life better for people.
- c. God created culture, but Satan messed it up and Christians must convert it back.
- d. Christians must control culture, i.e. the state is subservient to us.
- e. The church rules the state and dictates the limits of the state.
- f. The attitude of 'state churches' even when the state has control over them.
- g. In a sacral system there is no opportunity for dissent, true freedom of conscience, innovation in society or abandoning the pyramidal religio-politico structure.

**SUMMARY**

1. Christians must take culture into account. Christians cannot ignore it. We live in it 24 hours every day.
2. People often operate from confused motives, unclear thought, or hidden agendas.
3. We tend to protect our personal status quo unless it is too painful to remain that way.
4. We tend to an extreme reaction to something we oppose.
5. We want calm, peace, cooperation and doctrinal purity and may violate several to get one.
6. Few people treat culture in only one of the above ways. Most use several views at once or in sequence.

**B. Belief Systems That Affect the Church**

Now, we will consider 13 belief systems and then look at our current age which is defined as both Post-Modern and Post-Christian. *Post Modern* refers to the way we live which is vastly different from that of just 100 years ago. *Post Christian* refers to the fact that people do not use the Scriptures as their base and authority as they did even 70 years ago. Then we will look at 4 major social factors that have significant effects upon each of us. Then lastly, we will examine the six religious trends that are changing our world.

1. HUMANISM is the concept that humans are the highest beings in the universe. We are all alone. We make the rules and change the rules. Ethics and morals are culturally driven and determined. There is no spirit realm at all. Although we may improve to some extent in time,

- we are destined for extinction, the timing of which is in dispute.
2. SECULARISM is living life separate and apart from religion. It may range from official, overt atheism to defacto atheism even when the words show some familiarity with religious thought.
  3. NATURALISM is the view that nature is the ultimate. Whatever is is right. Nature is self-existing, all powerful, and all wise. Although the view claims to have no personality involved, naturalists frequently refer to Mother Nature. Much use is made of Darwinism. This view cannot explain morals, altruism, will power, 'ought', and related ideas.
  4. MATERIALISM is the view that matter is the ultimate with no hint of any spirit realm. Thought is molecules in motion, not spirit directed nor based. There is no spirit realm at all.
  5. STATE-ISM is the view that the political state has full, final, and complete authority in every way for every issue and every action regarding humans. Law is relative, changeable; determined by the consensus or majority or elite minority of society. Ultimately, man is fully accountable to the state and to no other entity. The only absolute is that the state is fully sovereign.
  6. STRIDENT FEMINISM is the view that there must be no distinction between genders. There must be equal responsibilities, privileges, status, functions, roles, and rules for male and female. Recent behaviors indicate that the real goal is not equality, but superiority. This view attempts to ignore basic realities of gender; assuming that all such differences are mere social conditioning.
  7. HEDONISM is the view that my pleasure is the highest, sole and ultimate good. Man is the measure of all things. One person's pleasure may be another's pain, but that logical contradiction is usually ignored as unimportant since this view is totally self-centered. This view is as if the person never moved past the terrible two's emotionally.
  8. CHOICE has become the god of the western world. Humans are perceived as having total freedom of choice without the boundary of ought, morals or ethics. This view is based upon the idea that humans must never have consequences for any action except good, positive, helpful rewards. The 'no-fault' concept is allied to this. In fact, rewards must come before the work!
  9. SELECTIVE TOLERATION has become the prime virtue of western life that is extended to everyone regardless of behavior and attitude, except to those who say that there are limits to tolerance. Then those who preach total tolerance discover a boundary – something they have been opposed to if others hold to boundaries. Political correctness is the defining principle and that changes, depending upon who has dominance. Political correctness avoids pointing out the errors in the preceding philosophies because selective toleration must use them as its foundation.
  10. TRIVIALIZATION of God is growing. Lip service to religious concepts and allegiances is frequent. But the power of godly living is either ignored or misunderstood. Standards become cultural and highly individual. 'If it feels good' and 'if it works' become the dominant determinants. This soon moves into SECULARISM.
  11. PANTHEISM has been promoted by wealthy Hollywood individuals under the guise of the New Age movement. This philosophy sees time as circular and believes in reincarnation. God is all, all is God, I am god, you are god, we are all gods. This means that none of us have to consider answering to a higher power at all – we are that higher power. This view is actually a regression to animism, a philosophy of life that is linked to the more primitive social structures.
  12. SCIENTISM is the view that science and the scientific method can and will eventually answer every human question and problem, personal or sociological.
  13. NEO-DARWINISM can be defined as continual change in life forms via the influence of environment and mutations so that new species, genera, families, orders, classes, sub-phylum, phylum and kingdoms emerge in the plant, animal, Protista, fungi and Monera life forms. Neo-Darwinism and the precursor of Darwinism are based upon random inherited change, survival of the fittest, and natural selection. One important concept for Darwinians is uniformitarianism



– that is, no processes have ever been active in this world except those that we see today and they have never had different intensity. This is a philosophical construct and cannot be demonstrated scientifically. Darwinians have to accept catastrophes which interfere with uniformitarianism, but that does not change the end result since neo-Darwinism is a matter of faith and not science.

Neo-Darwinism supports the foregoing philosophies and they in-turn support Darwinism. If we can breach this interaction in any way, then the individuals involved can be more easily taught about God and His ways. In western thought there are two primary ways to understand how things are as they are: God created and humans made a long series of mistakes and errors of judgement, accompanied by outright rebellion. Alternatively, life began by some unknown mechanism and humans have now improved to the present level. The crux of the discussion is: “Is the Bible account correct?”

Each of these philosophies have contributed to the confusion we see in western thought. Because western thought is conveyed via movies, tv, radio, magazines, and newspapers, it is increasingly becoming the way the world thinks. How is the world thinking?

## **PRESENT TRENDS AND CONCEPTS AFFECTING CHRISTIANITY**

### **A. We Are Presently in What is Called:**

1. **A Post Christian Age** – i.e. how we think has changed. Scripture is no longer the base. Each person makes up his/her own rules as they live with a sense of no-fault, no-penalty. Even 50 years ago the most reprobate person in the community knew what the authority for morals and ethics was – Scripture. Now, it seems that the primary base line is: Will it work?, Will it make money? What do we have to do to reach our goals? What is the bottom line?
2. **The Post Modern Age** – i.e our style of living has changed. We are increasingly urban, selfish, cocooned, and vulnerable. Neighborhood and extended family concepts have changed to allow ever more individual freedom and lack of constraint.

### **B. Four Factors That Have Contributed to the Current Confusion**

1. Socialism and communism have both failed to fulfill their promises. The world has moved increasingly toward capitalism. Capitalism has successfully rewarded many who are innovative, risk takers, imaginative, hard workers. It has reorganized our social structure in these ways:
  - a. Our whole social structure is organized to maximize production of consumables, their distribution and their eventual consumption.
  - b. This new social structure stresses mobility of families and individuals.
  - c. It has made leaving home relatively easy with less extended family protection and interaction. More and more individuals and families are basically isolated.
  - d. People have more incentive to transfer allegiances and loyalty from one religion or culture to another in order to fit in and be seen as adaptable.
  - e. Profit becomes the overall guideline. Social emphasis is upon money and growth potential
  - f. Retrenching, relocating businesses, expansion and contraction become normal
  - g. People are expected to move without considering their emotional and family ties.
  - h. Breaking relationships and keeping them relatively shallow thus results.
  - i. Obsolescence is a given to increase consumption
2. Technology has introduced a whirlwind of change that includes:
  - a. Ongoing obsolescence – it is out of date the instant you buy it.
  - b. A throwaway society – it is faster and cheaper to throw it away and buy new than to repair anything. For those of us who prefer to repair, the machines, such as cars, are getting so complicated that we are defeated before we start.

- c. If things can be thrown away with impunity, what about people?
  - e. Efficiency is the main thing. Efficiency rules. Efficiency is defined as the best way, the cheapest way, the fastest way, the least man-power intensive way, .....
  - f. Efficiency is easily defined in dollar terms – the least cost for most output.
  - g. Quality of life is affected. We have more labor-saving devices than ever and less free time. We have more opportunities to experience new things and ideas but less time to actually explore them and let them truly enrich us.
  - h. Abortion and euthanasia give the individual more control over his/her life at the expense of another's life. This leads us to being more and more selfish and less and less inclined to think of others first – being a servant is not a goal.
  - i. More and more toys that thrill, educate, mystify, challenge, and entertain have become normal.
  - j. The idea that technology will solve all our problems is the religion of scientism. Scientism has become the casual, accidental religion of many millions.
3. Urbanization is increasing all around the world. This has several effects:
- a. More availability of goods and services, but at a cost.
  - b. More cocooning so that people live life at the office/school and inside their houses.
  - c. There is less productive interaction with other people at home or at the place of study or employment. People are more likely to be involved in virtual-reality technology and less involved in people's lives because they can manipulate and control virtual-reality, but not people.
  - d. People now screen phone calls and can block e-mail messages to keep out anything they wish to avoid.
  - e. People have less privacy in spite of the cocooning and less sense of personal safety.
  - f. More fortress mentality so that the 'world' is outside and threatening.
  - g. People tend to have many acquaintances but fewer real friends
  - h. Individuals have less personal contact with business; just a name or number
  - i. Parents find there are fewer adults they can trust to help rear their children
  - j. Parents appear to have less and less influence over the schools
  - k. Individuals are experiencing more unexpected or overwhelming influences upon the family
  - l. Every activity takes longer than it should
  - m. Government services cannot keep up with the demand
  - n. Taxes must continually rise to keep services functioning.
  - o. New social needs arise that no-one budgeted for or anticipated.
4. Telecommunications and speed of information transfer has led us to the point that:
- a. Our culture is increasingly affected by other cultures and no culture can be considered truly local once the telecommunications technology arrives.
  - b. We cannot get away from whatever we might wish to get away from. Search firms will find anyone for a fee. People can be found. Even when they do not wish to be found.
  - c. People have to live with decisions made by someone else, whom they do not know, who may live thousands of miles away and who has no sense of doing the right thing by anyone of us. People can respond, but the message often gets lost in the electronic universe.
  - d. There is a sense of frustration and helplessness that may exhibit itself in random acts of violence or apathy or lethargy or indifference.
  - e. All cultures come to be seen as valid, although most still prefer theirs as THE best
  - f. Individuals are frustrated by government, business, entertainment who control the communication arena but appear to have little regard for the individual with standards.
  - g. Individuals experience information overload and become inundated. Individuals have trouble understanding the principles and concepts that tie the information together.
  - h. The multiplicity of cultures that are thrown together mean that communities no longer

have a common base upon which to make social and political decisions.

### **C. What Are the Religious Trends in the Western World?**

1. There will be an increasing emphasis upon spirituality – being in touch with one’s own spirit with or without any reference to God or gods. So, people can claim to be religious and spiritual without any reliance whatsoever upon Scripture or the way that we view Scripture as God’s revelation to man. The recent Harry Potter’s books illustrate that the public is interested in spiritual matters but not necessarily in Jesus nor the Father. The tv series “Touched by an Angel” also illustrates a spiritual sense that is out of step with a Biblical view of God. Even Satan worship is a response in this area of life.
2. There will be increasing syncretism. People will build their own religions out of their childhood beliefs and new ideas that come their way from eastern religions, new age thinking, skepticism, scientism, etc. Another way to describe this is to call it a synthetic or syncretic religion – made up of elements not entirely like the original or using original ingredients but putting them together in novel ways. New Age movement falls into this category. There will be no sense of an absolute authority such as Bible believers understand this. Control issues will abound, but there will be no consensus about who is in control nor what the standard of control must be.
3. Old, main-line denominations will continue to lose members. People will continue to develop their own ideas and sense of religion. These will be increasingly different from their churches and many will thus just drop out. Some will form their community churches while others will adopt a one-person religion. This trend has been with us since the 1960's. This is a control issue. Councils will increasingly drift toward culture as the control instead of Scripture.
4. Those who can be called fundamentalists (such as ourselves) will be increasingly marginalized and ignored by the population at large. However, in some instances, we will be seen as the origin of community problems (our intolerance of sin, for example) and we will be considered as detrimental to the public good. What we will see as persecution can be expected. Our pleas for returning to sanity will be ignored by opinion molders and public manipulators. Gradually we will feel more and more out of place in our own society.
5. We can expect abnormal behavior, such as homosexuality/lesbianism, to be treated as if that is a normal way to live. Those who object to such sinful lifestyles will be characterized as intolerant and detrimental to public safety and harmony. The charge of being both intolerant and politically out of touch will be ongoing. There will be tremendous pressure against some industries, such as tobacco, while others such as alcohol will remain above public condemnation. People will be unable or unwilling to acknowledge the link between sexual behavior and a wide range of sexual problems, family issues, identity issues, and health problems.
6. There will be increasingly visible and open demarcation between:
  - a. The world and Bible believers
  - b. Liberal believers and those who are more fundamental
  - c. Factions within any religious groups, including the Lord’s church

Since Darwinism effectively laid the groundwork for much of today’s thought, Christians must understand Darwinism and neo-Darwinism (the current evolutionary hypothesis).

With all of this confusion, what is the church all about? What is its role? How is it defined? How do we identify it? How much latitude do people have in their application of Scripture? What is the role of culture and various philosophies in the functioning of the church? Many questions naturally arise at this point. The following brief coverage is not meant to answer all of these, but to point in what appears to me to be a suitable direction for restoration or restitution of the original designed by God.

## **THE NATURE OF THE LORD’S CHURCH**

## A. Identity of the Church of the Lord

The congregation of the Lord's people in Corinth, as described in I and II Corinthians, was beset with such serious problems that one could logically ask, "Was it a true church?" This leads to a question that every person should ask today, "How do we identify the correct church that is following the will of God?" On the surface, this is a simple question that deserves a simple answer. In fact, the answer is a complex one due to the confusion that surrounds religion in our day. The best way to approach the question is to deal with it in a series of small parts.

1. **Firstly**, Scripture says that the church that follows Jesus correctly is the one which is composed of individuals that recognize their personal responsibility to God; who understand the difference between guilt and consequence of actions; who recognize the deity of Jesus Christ; who have confessed Jesus as Lord and Master, and who continue to do so; who have repented of past sins and have changed their life style to walk close to God; and who have been immersed in water to wash away their sins. A church group that is composed of individuals such as these has been in contact with their Lord. Yet, if we left the situation at this point, we would be teaching error, since the picture is incomplete.
2. **Secondly**, Scripture says that the true church will be that one which follows the New Testament pattern in worship and in living in addition to the matter of initial obedience mentioned above. We must say that the true church will not have added traditions and customs of men to be equal or superior to the New Testament record. Christians must rely upon Scripture for guidance — not flashes of "inspiration" nor intuition nor the words of religious leaders, nor decisions of councils nor even personal experience. Christians have a firm anchor, an unchanging law book which gives the answers to our basic needs. It is so devised by God that the new Christian can find what he needs to make him humble and ever-conscious of his needs. Fads and customs and pressures come and go, but the true church will remain ever faithful to the Scriptures. If a group does not do that it is not a part of the Lord's church.
3. **Thirdly**, Scripture says that the true church will have as part of its worship these clearly defined activities and no other:
  - a. Vocal singing without mechanical aids, i.e. "a capella" singing. The pattern for six centuries was for the church to use solely vocal music.
  - b. Praying through Christ to the Father with Christ being our sole mediator and our Savior.
  - c. Giving of our material means, which must include benevolence.
  - d. Studying the Scriptures together in an ordered, positive environment.
  - e. Partaking of the Lord's Supper with unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as commanded by Jesus with a full recognition of his love and sacrifice.

With regard to these, we must go even further and recognize that God wants each Christian to engage in these group activities every first day of every week.

The foregoing summary of these three basic areas has been rapid. What has been written can be amply backed with Scripture as well as the example of the Christians in the first and second centuries who lived before apostasy became so rampant. Accordingly, we can adopt as a standard of evaluation the foregoing reliance upon Scripture, individual response to Christ on his terms, and individual participation in group worship to God on the terms as set out by Christ and the apostles.

## B. Other Marks of Identity

Someone might ask, "What about organization? Surely that is basic." *Organization* is important. However, a congregation can be complying with God's commands and be in harmony with his will before it is fully organized in compliance with Scripture. There is necessarily a period of growth before full organizational maturity is achieved. By the nature of the church, the level of organization is related to the spiritual health of the congregation. In this sense organizational matters fall more into growth than into these three basic areas.

Once we have been able to identify the correct standards of evaluating a congregation and its relationship to Jesus, another question arises, "How do we determine the *spiritual health* of that congregation?" A congregation could very well satisfy the foregoing criteria and yet be as ill as the church in Corinth which was suffering from immorality, internal division, lack of love, abuse of the Lord's Supper, vying for authority, improper role of women in the public worship, etc.

What criteria may we use to ascertain if a congregation is sick or well spiritually? The standard should be "Behold, how they love one another!" Let me hasten to say that the love that is being spoken of here is not the physical passionate love between male and female. In fact, this kind of love cannot be adequately nor even correctly expressed by hugging and kissing. More accurately, the love that would show the measure of spiritual health can be determined by how well the congregation provides a haven as follows:

1. People need a haven from "religion" that depends upon religious titles, elaborate organization, and rigid controls. Such religion is all about us. We need time away from it. In the first century, Judaism was one example, but in our day there are many man-made religions with such traits. Implicit in these religions is man-made rules, ancient traditions that determine acceptability, and codes of conduct that change with political and social trends. Since change is a feature of these religions, man never knows what truth really is. If a congregation of the Lord's people is well spiritually, each individual in it will have a haven from the imposter of a religion; each will know exactly what his or her code of conduct must be — it will be based on Scripture.

A part of human systems is coercion to conform to a special set of rules devised by the leaders of that religion. A Christian needs to have a righteousness that arises from his own decision to follow God, not something handed to him nor forced upon him, however carefully and casually it is done.

A congregation that is well will be composed of individuals that do not have to be coerced to do what Scripture clearly says, such as attend, give, love, serve, teach, study, show hospitality, be a good employee, be a good member of the family, obey the government, etc.

2. A congregation that is healthy will be a haven from the immorality and looseness of the world around us. Each member must seriously consider the pollution that is ever present around us and realize that in the church we can escape that filth. If the members bring the filth in, then the church is no longer a haven from filth and has ceased to stand mature before God. Hence it is imperative that each of us keep filth out. Avoid the common evils of our day.
3. A congregation that is healthy will provide a haven for those who feel lonely, unloved and unwanted. In a healthy congregation every individual knows that someone cares and will provide aid if the problem is adequately made known. It is a mark of an immature congregation if songs and talks emphasize "poor little me, life is so hard." All of us need a haven for feeling wanted, loved, accepted and worthwhile since in the world around us so little of that is provided.

As part of this haven of loving and caring, we must follow personally these principles and allow others the same right:

- a. Study to show thyself approved.
- b. Work out your own salvation.
- c. Be able to give an answer for the faith that you have.
- d. The greatest of these is love.

A congregation that is truly following the Lord will believe and follow the matter of obedience on Christ's terms (John 14:23f), will believe and follow the matter of worship on God's terms, and will refuse to accept the rules of man as valid and authoritative. In addition, the congregation that is truly

following the Lord will provide a haven from the storms of life. It will provide a haven for study, for work, and a haven of love, care and acceptance for those who seek to please God and love God on God's terms.

### **C. Designations for the Church in the New Testament**

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|--|---------------------|
| 1. The body of Christ                  | Ephesians 1.22f     |
| 2. The church of the Lord              | Acts 20:28          |
| 3. Churches of Christ                  | Romans 16.16        |
| 4. Church of the saints                | I Corinthians 14.33 |
| 5. Church of the first born ones       | Hebrews 12.23       |
| 6. The Bride of Christ                 | Revelation 21.9     |
| 7. The family of God                   | Ephesians 3.15      |
| 8. The flock of God                    | I Peter 5.2         |
| 9. The fold of Christ                  | John 10.16          |
| 10. The general assembly               | Hebrews 12.23       |
| 11. God's building                     | I Corinthians 3.9   |
| 12. God's husbandry                    | I Corinthians 3.9   |
| 13. God's heritage                     | I Peter 5.3         |
| 14. The heavenly Jerusalem             | Galatians 4.26      |
| 15. The new Jerusalem                  | Revelation 21.2     |
| 16. The house of Christ                | Hebrews 3.6         |
| 17. The house of God                   | I Timothy 3.15      |
| 18. The household of God               | Ephesians 2.19      |
| 19. The pillar and ground of the truth | I Timothy 3.15      |
| 20. A spiritual house                  | I Peter 2.5         |
| 21. The temple of God                  | I Corinthians 3.16f |

Each of these describes our relationship to Deity as a group and as individuals in the group. Organization is **not** the primary focus.

### **D. The Primary Focus in These Descriptions Is**

1. God is in control.
2. We seek a relationship to God.
3. Individual seekers find relationship with each other.
4. There is no human derived pyramidal structure as the focus or the normal way for the organism of the church to live.

### **E. The Names, Titles, Designations and Descriptions of Christians**

I Peter 4:10 "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." We each have a function and role.

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|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Salt of the earth                       | Matt 5:13                   |
| 2. Light of the world                      | Matt 5:14                   |
| 3. Wise man                                | Matt 7:24                   |
| 4. 'Family'                                | Matt 12.50                  |
| 5. My sheep                                | Jn 10.27                    |
| 6. My disciples                            | Jn 13.35                    |
| 7. My friends                              | Jn 15.14                    |
| 8. Disciples                               | Acts 6.1f, 13.52, 14.28     |
| 9. Of the Way                              | Acts 9.2, 19.23             |
| 10. Saints                                 | Acts 9.13, Rom 1.7, Eph 1.1 |
| 11. Those who call on the name of the Lord | Acts 9.14, Rom 10.12f       |

12. Christians	Acts 11.26, 26.28
13. Brothers	Acts 14.2, Heb 13.1, I Thess 5.25, I Peter 5.9
14. The church of God	Acts 20.28
15. Servants of Christ	Rom 1.1, James 1.1, II P 1.1, Jude 1
16. Beloved of God	Rom 1.7
17. Servants of righteousness	Rom 6.18
18. Sons of God	Rom 8.14
19. Children of God	Rom 8.16
20. More than conquerors	Rom 8.37
21. My brothers	Rom 15.14, James 1.2
22. Sanctified	I Cor 1.2, 6.11
23. Called to be holy	I Cor 1.2
24. Saints	I Cor 6.2, Phil 1.1
25. Washed	I Cor 6.11
26. Justified	I Cor 6.11
27. Temple of the Holy Spirit	I Cor 6.19
28. The body of Christ	I Cor 12.27
29. A new creature	II Cor 5.17
30. His sons	Eph 1.5
31. Chosen	Eph 1.11
32. God's possession	Eph 1.14
33. His workmanship	Eph 2.10
34. Fellow citizens	Eph 2.19
35. The new self to be like God	Eph 4.24
36. Children of light	Eph 5.8
37. Children of God without fault	Phil 2.15
38. Partakers of the inheritance	Col 1.12
39. Sons of the day, light	I Thess 5.5
40. Believers	I Tim 4.12
41. Servants of the Lord	II Tim 2.24
42. Holy Brothers	Heb 3.1
43. God's house	Heb 3.6
44. The first born ones	Heb 12.23
45. God's elect	I P 1.1
46. Strangers in the world	I P 1.1
47. Chosen	I P 1.2
48. Obedient children	I P 1.14
49. Born again	I P 1.23
50. Living stones	I P 2.5
51. Spiritual house	I P 2.5
52. Holy Priesthood	I P 2.5
53. Chosen people	I P 2.9
54. Royal Priesthood	I P 2.9
55. Holy nation	I P 2.9
56. A people belonging to God	I P 2.9
57. The People of God	I P 2.10
58. Dear friends	I P 2.11
59. Aliens and strangers in the world	I P 2.11
60. Christian	I P 4.16
61. God's flock	I P 5.2
62. Dear friends	I Jn 2.7

63. Dear children	I Jn 2.12f
64. Born of God	I Jn 4.7, 5.1
65. Kingdom	Rev 1.6
66. Priests	Rev 1.6
67. Pure first fruits	Rev 14.4
68. Called	Rev 17.14
69. Chosen	Rev 17.14
70. Faithful	Rev 17.14
71. God's people	Rev 22.21



## **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIXTEEN:**

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1. There are five ways that Christianity and culture interact. What is one effect of each of these five views in the personal life of a Christian?

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2. Of the 13 belief systems in the presentation, which one has the most impact upon your life and why is that?

3. Describe Post-modern thinking. What does this lead to?

4. Describe Post-Christian living. How does this affect community?

5. Which of the four major secular factors causing our world to move toward Postmodernism is the most important to you and which has had the most impact on you? Explain.

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6. What do you expect our culture to do with the church that Jesus built in the next 20 years? Explain.

7. What is the overriding concept in Scripture regarding our relationship to God? Why is that?

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8. Is there a common thread in the different ways the church is described in the New Testament?  
If so, what is it?  
Why is that so important?

9. The designations for Christians in the New Testament seem to be focused on:

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the implication of that for our living?

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**CHURCH HISTORY AD 33 – 1517**  
**FIRST PERIOD – ANTE-NICENE ERA 33 – 325**

**APOSTOLIC ERA 33 – 100**

- 33 Pagan Religions  
Persecution by Sadducees and Pharisees
- 50 Jerusalem Conference  
The Law Question Persisted: Ebionism(to 4th Century)  
Nazareans (To 4th Century)  
Elcasites (Sampsaeans)
- 54 Rome Burned
- 62 10,000 Roman Soldiers Arrived in Britain
- 64-68 First Persecution by Nero – Localized in Rome
- ? Gnosticism Began Affecting the Church
- 66-73 Jews Revolted Beginning in Caesarea Maritima. Jerusalem Destroyed in 70 and Masada in 73.
- 79 Vesuvius Erupted
- 93-96 Domition Began Local Persecution

**APOSTOLIC FATHERS 100 – 200**

- Notable Persons:
- Clement of Rome c 30-100)
  - Ignatius © 35-107)
  - Justin Martyr © 100-165)
  - Polycarp © 69 -155)
  - Marcion ( d c 160)
  - Montanus ( d c 160)
  - Irenaeus ( c 130 – C 202)
  - Tertullian ( c 160 – C220)

Events

- 98-117 Persecution by Trajan Empire Wide
- 107 Ignatius Martyred
- 117-138 Persecution by Hadrian Empire Wide
- 132 Jews Revolted Against Rome Who Crushed the Rebellion by 135.
- 138-161 Persecution by Antoninus Pius Empire Wide
- 150 Justin Martyr's First Apology
- 144 Marcionites (Minimalists) (Into 5th Century)
- 155 Polycarp Martyred
- 156 Christianity in the British Isles
- 161-180 Persecution by Marcus Aurelius Empire Wide
- 172 Montanism (Into 5th Century)  
Gnosticism in Rome by Valentinus
- 177 Martyrs in Gaul
- 178c Revival in Britain
- 179 Lucius, First Ruler in Britain to Be Baptized.
- 190 Monarchianism (Into 5th Century. Resurfaced in 750 and in the 1800's)  
Monarchial Bishop Established in Some Places by Late in the Century.  
Baptismal Mode and Subjects ( Immersing Infants, Date Uncertain.)  
Date Set for Easter in Western Churches
- 193-211 Persecution by Septimus Severus in North Africa
- 195 Earliest Known Hymn with Notes
- 197 Tertullian Began Writing
- 200 Mishnah Compiled

## **ANTE-NICENE FATHERS 200-325**

<u>Notable Persons</u>	Clement of Alexandria (c150 – C 215)
	Mani (c250)
	Origen (c185 – c254)
	Cyprian of Carthage (c200 – 258)
	Constantine the Great (c288-337)
	Arius (256-336)
	Anthony (250-356)
	Novation (Mid Century)

### Events

c200	Irenaeus Introduced Concept That Scripture Can Be Interpreted Only in Light of Tradition
232	Earliest Known Church Building
235-238	Persecution by Maximinus Empire Wide
240	Manichaeism ( into 5th Century)
248	Rome Celebrated 1000th Anniversary of Founding
249-251	Persecution by Decius Empire Wide
253-259	Persecution by Valerian Empire Wide
261	Gallienus Legalized Christianity
290	Anthony Began Monasticism in Egypt
292	Diocletian Divided the Empire into East and West with Four Rulers
300-311	Diocletian, Galerius et Al Empire Wide Persecution, the Worst.
c310	Arianism Began Developing. Lasted into Time of Barbarian Kingdoms.
311	Persecution by Secular Authorities Ended Because of Galerius' Edict of Toleration.
311	Donatist Controversy Began
313	All Religions Legalized
321	Sunday Made a Day of Rest for Certain Parts of the Population
324	Constantine United the Two Parts of the Empire
325	First Empire Wide Church Council Convened by Secular Authorities
	Constantinople Became the 'New Rome', the Eastern Capital of the Roman Empire

## **GRAECO-LATIN CHURCH 325-590**

Notable Persons

Helvidius (Mid-fourth Century)  
 Athanasius of Alexandria (296-372)  
 Ulfilas (Wulfila) (c311-382)  
 Julian the Apostate (332-363)  
 Four Cappadocians: Anti-arian  
     Macrina (c325-380)  
     Basil the Great (329-379)  
     Gregory of Nazianus (330-389)  
     Gregory of Nyassa (c335-c395)  
 Jerome (340-420)  
 John Chrysostom (347-407)  
 Ambrose of Milan (340-397)  
 Augustine of Hippo (354-430)  
 Vigilantius (370-406)  
 Jovinian (c405)  
 Pelagius (Early 5th Century)  
 Patrick (c389-461) .  
 Leo I (c390-461)  
 Clovis ( c466-511)  
 Benedict of Nursia (c480 – C550)  
 Columba (521-597)  
 Columbanus (543-615)  
 Augustine of Canterbury (d604)  
 Gregory I (540-604)  
 Ethelbert (552-616)  
 Mohammed (c570-632)

### Councils Called

314	Arles	Harmony in the Empire
325	Nicea	Arianism
381	Constantinople	Apollinarianism
431	Ephesus	Nestorianism
451	Chalcedon	Eutychian
553	Constantinople	Monophysites
311	Donatist Controversy Began and Endured until the Moslem Conquest of North Africa	
313	All Religions Legalized in the Roman Empire by the Edict of Milan	
313	the Arian Controversy Arose and Persisted into the Medieval Period in Various Ways	
314	Council of Arles to Discuss How to Achieve Harmony in the Empire	
321	Sunday Proclaimed a Day of Rest for Certain Persons	
324	Constantine United the Empire Again	
325	Council of Nicea to Discuss the Issue of Arianism	
328	Athanasius Became Bishop of Alexandria	
335	Church of the Holy Sepulcher Built in Jerusalem	
350c	Visigoths Appealed to the Romans for Refuge from the Huns	
350c-382	Wulfila (Ulfilas) Preached among the Goths, Teaching Arianism.	
354	Pagan Temples Closed	
361-3	Julian the Apostate Attempted to Revive Paganism and Hamper Christianity	
364	East and West Empires Officially Reunited	
367	Athanasius Listed the New Testament Canon Which the Churches Had Accepted for Some Time.	
373	Ambrose Became the Bishop of Milan	
381	Christianity Became the Official Religion of the Empire	
381	Council of Constantinople to Discuss Apollinarianism	
382	The Pagan Altar of Victory Removed from the Roman Senate Chambers	

- 386 Avila Executed for Heresy
- 390 Ambrose Defeated the Emperor on Two Occasions (The Emperor Was Right on One)
- 392 Theodosius Defined Paganism as a Crime.
- 395 Augustine Became the Bishop of Hippo In North Africa
- 398 John Chrysostom (Gold Mouth) Became Bishop of Constantinople

**Some Call this the End of the Early Church Period and the Beginning of the Medieval Church Period**

- 400 Important Doctrinal Matters Arose about 400:  
Total Hereditary Depravity  
Salvation by Grace Alone  
Double Predestination  
Necessity of Infant Immersion  
Mariolatry
- 400c Vandals Attacked Across the Rhine into Roman Gaul and Moved into Spain by 409.
- 405 Jerome Completed the Vulgate with Controversy Such as Surrounds the KJV Today
- 408 Roman Legions Left Britain
- 410 The Visigoths under Alaric Sacked Rome
- 415 Monks Murdered Hypatia
- 417 Pelagius Introduced Doctrines Opposed by Augustine. Augustine Won, But....
- 426 Roman Army Left Britain.
- 429 Vandals Invaded North Africa
- 431 Council of Ephesus to Discuss Nestorianism.
- 432 Patrick Went to Ireland
- 439 Vandals Conquered Carthage
- 440 Leo I Claimed Papal Authority, but Could Not Make it Hold
- 449 Britain Occupied by Jutes, Angles and Saxons
- 452 Huns under Atilla Stopped Outside Rome by Negotiations
- 476 Last Western Emperor of the Empire until Charlemagne in 800. Rome Fell to Barbarians.
- 489 Ostrogoths under Theodoric Invaded Italy
- 496 Clovis, King of Franks, Baptized.
- 493 Ostrogoths Ruled Italy until 526 (Arians)
- 500c Clovis Drove the Visigoths Toward Spain
- 525 Concept of Extreme Unction Arose
- 530 Belisarius Defeated Persia
- 534 First Christian Calendar
- 534 Belisarius Defeated the Vandals in Africa and Began Crushing Ostrogoths in Italy
- 535 Goths Moved into Italy and Ruled for 19 Years
- 540 Benedict Issued the Rules
- 550 Concept of Apostolic Succession Accepted
- 553 Council of Constantinople to Discuss Monophysites.
- 559 Belisarius Defeated the Huns
- 563-597 Columba at Monastery in Iona
- 568 Lombards Invaded Northern Italy (Arian)
- 570 Mohammad Born
- 590 Gregory I Became Pope. Died in 604.
- 597 Ethelbert Converted
- 600 First Papal Army

## **MEDIEVAL (DARK AGES) PERIOD 590-1049**

Notable Persons: Augustine , Archbishop of Canterbury (? – 604)  
Mohammed (c570-632)  
Isidore of Seville (c560 – 636)  
Charles Martel (688-741)  
Bede (c672 – 735)  
Boniface (c672 – 754)  
Pepin III (The Short) c 714-768)  
Alcuin (c735 – 804)  
Charlemagne (Charles the Great) (c742 – 814)  
Paschasius Radbertus (c786-865)  
John Scotus Erigen (810-877)  
Claudius of Turin (? – 839)  
Alfred the Great (849 – 901)  
Aelfric (955-1020)  
Anselm of Canterbury (c1033 – 1109)

### Church Councils

680      Constantinople Discussing Two Wills in Jesus Christ  
787      Nicea Decided That Images May Be Venerated, Not Worshiped  
869      Constantinople to Discuss Growing East – West Schism

Barbarian Invasions – Begun by Pressure from the Huns, Turco-mongol People, Forcing Westward Waves.

Iranian (Sarmatae and Alans) were among the First into the Roman Empire. Visigoths Requested Asylum in 376 and Crossed the Danube. Gothic Cavalry Defeated Romans in 378. The Visigoths Dispersed about the Empire Capturing Rome in 410. This Sent Shock Waves Throughout the Known World. Visigoths Finally Settled with Imperial Approval in Southern Gaul and Spain. The Vandals Advanced into North Africa, Conquering Carthage, Before Turning North Toward Italy. The Huns Invaded the West in 451. Atilla yielded to Leo the Great and Did Not Sack Rome.

By Early 600's the Tribes Had Settled Into:

Italy Controlled by Lombards  
Spain Controlled by Visigoths  
Central Europe Controlled by Franks  
Britain Controlled by Angles-Saxons-jutes

Then in the Late 700's the Norsemen or Vikings Headed West and South from Norway and Denmark and Southeast and East from Sweden.

### Events

597      Augustine Arrived in British Isles  
600c      Doctrinal Matters:  
            Purgatory  
            Penance  
            Priestly Absolution  
            Masses for the Dead  
            Mass as Re-enactment of Sacrifice  
600c      The Avars Unsuccessfully Besieged Constantinople  
610      The Eastern Empire Became Known as the Byzantine Empire  
622      Mohammed Fled to Medina from Mecca, marking the Hijra, the Beginning of the Moslem Calendar  
630      Mohammed Took Mecca  
632      Mohammed Died  
634      Umar, the Second Calif, Became the 'Ruler of the Faithful.'

636	Isidore of Seville Died
638	Muslims Conquered Jerusalem
650c	Carthage Fell to the Moslems
661	Caliph Muawiya Founded the Umayyad Dynasty in the Middle East.
680	Council of Constantinople Concerning Two Wills in Jesus Christ
691	Dome of the Rock Built in Jerusalem
711	Moors Arrived in Spain
716	Boniface Sent to Germany
726	Icon Question Becomes Important
732	Charles Martel Stopped Moslem Advance into Europe at Battle of Tours
735	The Venerable Bede Died
750	Lombards Evicted Byzantine Rule in Central Italy
750c	The Abbasids Began Dominance over the Umayyads.
751	Chinese Westward Expansion Stopped by the Eastward Moslem Expansion.
751	Pope Zacharias Approved of a Dynasty Change in Central Europe
754	Pepin III Provided Land for a Papal State in Italy
772	Charlemagne Attacked the Saxons in Gaul
787	First Viking Raids on Britain
787	Council of Nicea to Discuss Veneration or Worship of Images.
788c	Adoration of Saints and Relics
793	First Norse Attack on the British Isles at Lindesfarne Monastery
795	Norsemen in Ireland
800	Charlemagne Crowned Emperor of Holy Roman Empire by Leo III
800c	Iconoclastic Controversy Ended with Worship of Images Accepted
	Vikings Entered Finland, Lithuania, Russia. Involved in Royal House of Russia.
	Irish Hermits Settled in Faeroe Islands and Iceland
814	Charlemagne Died
843	Carolingian Empire Divided into Three Portions.
846	Norsemen Sacked Paris and Moslems Sacked Rome
850	Moslems Attacked Rome
850c	Norwegians Colonized Iceland
851	Norse Bases Established on the Banks of the Thames and Seine
859f	Norsemen Active in the Mediterranean.
860c	Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals
862	Ryurik Founded Earliest Russian State at Novgorod.
864	Boris I of Bulgaria Converted from Paganism
866	Roman Missionaries to Bulgaria
869	Council of Constantinople to Discuss the Schism Between East and West.
875	Iceland Colonized
882	Kiev Became the Capital of the First Russian State
885	Paris Successfully Resisted a Viking Incursion
886	Oxford University Founded by Alfred the Great
889	Carolingian Empire Ended
898	Magyars Invaded Italy
900c	Magyars in Italy and Bavaria
909	Cluny Founded
	Focus on Benedictine Rules and Abolishing: Simony, Secular Investiture, Clerical Marriage
911	Norsemen in Southern Italy, Vikings Settled in Normandy, Saxons Control Germany.
930c	Invoking Saints in Prayer
934c	Hakon the Good Became King of Norway and Began Attempts to Convert His Land to Christianity.
960c	Missionaries Sent to Scandinavia
960c	Arabs Lost Crete
950c	Russians Adopted Orthodoxy from Constantinople
962	Otto I, King of Germany, Crowned Emperor of Holy Roman Empire While in Rome.



965c	Harald Bluetooth of Denmark Converted from Paganism., First Scandinavian Monarch to do So.
966	Missionaries to Poland
967c	Fatimids Conquered Egypt and Founded Cairo.
980	Greenland Colonized by Eric the Red
988	Prince Vladimer of Kiev Baptized
995	Olof Skotkonung, King of Sweden, Converts from Paganism
1000	Millenial Fears Unrealized, Iceland Becomes 'Christian' by Decree. Hungary Converted to Constantinople Orthodoxy Norseman Arrived in Canada – Leif Ericsson in Newfoundland or Vinland.
1010	Hospitalers Operated in Jerusalem to Help Pilgrims (Approved as an Order in 1313)
1013	Danish King, Svein Forkbeard, Conquered England.
1018-35	Cnut Ruled over Scandinavia and Britain
1027	First Scandinavian Stone Church Building Erected in Rokilde, Denmark.
	Norman Mercenaries Serving in Southern Italy.
1043	Edward the Confessor Crowned King of England

## PERIOD OF SCHOLASTICISM 1049-1294

Notable persons: Anselm (1033-1109)  
 Peter Abelard (1079-1142)  
 Bernard of Cluny (c1090 – 1150)  
 Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153)  
 Peter the Lombard (c1100-1160)  
 Peter of Bruys (? – 1140)  
 Arnold of Brescia (1100-1155)  
 Henry of Lausanne (? – 1145)  
 Thomas Beckett (1118-1170)  
 Peter Waldo (? – 1217)  
 Innocent III (1161-1216) Ruled 1198-1216  
 Dominic (1170-1221)  
 Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226)  
 Albert Magnus (1200 – 1280)  
 Bonaventura (1221-1274)  
 Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274)

### Councils:

1123	Rome	Who Appoints Bishops?
1139	Rome	
1179	Rome	Discipline
1215	Rome	Innocent Iii, Unprecedented Power
1245	Lyon	Political Matters
1274	Lyon	the East – West Rift
1035	Yaroslav the Wise Emerged as Undisputed Ruler of Kievan Russia	
1037	Seljuk Turks Began Their Expansion	
1054	Mutual Excommunication Between Rome and Constantinople	
1059	College of Cardinals Set up	
1060	Norsemen Ruled Sicily	
1066	Norwegian Army Invaded Northern England. – Harold Hardrada. Conquered England.	
1066	Normans Conquered Britain at Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror (Viking Descent).	
1070	Islam Expanded into West Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa	
1071	Seljuk Turks Defeated the Byzantine Army.	
1073-85	Gregory VII (Hildebrand) Pope. Reform Agenda: Simony, Clerical Celibacy.	
1075	Investiture Contest Between Gregory VII and Henry IV	
1085	Toledo Recovered from Moslems	
1091	Normans Conquered Sicily.	
1095-99	First Crusade with Many Parts. Jerusalem Captured from Islam in 1099.	
1093	Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury	
1090	Rosary Beads Introduced and Accepted	
1099	Crusaders Took Jerusalem, Church of the Holy Sepulcher Rebuilt 1099-1149.	
1110c	Pagan Rites Ended at Uppsala	
1115	Bernard Founded Cistercian Abbey of Clairvaux in Central France	
1118	Templars Founded in Jerusalem	
1123	Celibacy Firmly Enforced (Celibacy Is Not the Same as Chastity)	
1123	Council of Rome to Discuss Authority Issues.	
1124	Kingdom of Tyre Set up by Crusaders	
1139	Council of Rome to Discuss General Issues.	
1140	Saints Began Being Canonized	
1144-49	Second Crusade	
1150	Universities of Paris and Oxford Established	
1157	First Roman Church Missionaries to Finland	
1164	Thomas Becket Defied the Constitutions of Clarendon	
1170	Thomas Becket Assassinated	

1179	Council of Rome to Discuss Discipline
1187	Jerusalem Fell to the Moslems Led by Saladin.
1189-91	Third Crusade
1190	Sale of Indulgences Begun
1198-1216	Innocent III, the Most Powerful Pope
1201-04	Fourth Crusade
1208	Attacks Began on Albigenses, Called by Innocent Iii
1210	Franciscans Founded
1212	Children's Crusade
1214	Battle of Bouvines Confirmed France as Leading European Power
1215	Magna Carta Signed by King John under Pressure
1215	Council of Rome to Discuss Authority
1217-21	Fifth Crusade
1220	Dominicans Founded
1228-29	Sixth Crusade .Frederick II Gains Jerusalem by Negotiation. Ed
1230	The Teutonic Knights Began Subjugation of the Prussians
1232	Gregory IX Founded Inquisition. Ran by Dominicans and Franciscans.
1241	Mongols Invaded Poland and Hungary and Annexed the Russian Principalities
1245	Council of Lyon to Discuss Political Matters
1248	Moslems Controlled Only the Extreme Southern Part of Spain.
1248-54	Seventh Crusade
1258	Mongols Destroyed Abbasid Rule
1269-72	Eighth Crusade
1268	Priestly Absolution
1274	Council of Lyon to Discuss the East-west Rift
1290c	Islam Introduced into Malaysia and Indonesia
1291	Crusaders Left the Holy Lands, Evicted by the Mamlukes from Acre.
1293	Ottoman Dynasty Founded
1294-1303	Boniface VIII. Issued Unam Sanctum in 1302.
1296	England Invaded Scotland

Romanesque Architecture Gradually Began Developing into Gothic.

## DECLINE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC EMPIRE 1294-1517

### Notable Persons

Boniface VIII (c1235 – 1303)  
 Marsilius of Padua (1275 – 1342)  
 John of Jandun (? – 1328)  
 William of Ockham (Occam) (1280 – 1349)  
 John Wycliffe (Wycliff) (1320 – 1384)  
 Catherine of Sienna (c1347 – 1380)  
 John Huss (1369 – 1415)  
 Jerome of Prague (1370 – 1416)  
 Thomas a Kempis (1380 – 1471)  
 Joan of Arc (1412 – 1431)  
 Ximenes of Spain (1436 – 1517)  
 Savonarola (1452 – 1498)  
 Leonardo Da Vinci (1452 – 1519)  
 John Reuchlin (1455 – 1522)  
 Erasmus (1465 – 1536)

### Events


1300c Use of the Compass in Western Maritime Voyages  
 1300c Gradual Rise of Mysticism Extending for Centuries  
 1302 Boniface Issued **Unam Sanctum**  
 1309-77 Papacy in Avignon Papacy or the 'The Babylonian Captivity'  
 1312 Began Suppressing the Templars  
 1314 Scotland Confirmed Independence from England via Robert Bruce's Victories  
 1321 Dante's **Divine Comedy**  
 1330c Mechanical Clock Developed.  
 1337 – 1453 Beginning of 100 Year War Between France and England (May Extend to 1475)  
 1347 – 1350 The Great Plague Decimated Europe (Black Death), First Reached Europe c1346.  
 1361 – 1405 Mongol Power Re-emerged via the Rule of Timur the Lame.  
 1378 – 1423 Papal Schism with Rival Claimants  
 1380 Wycliff Condemned  
 1400c Beginnings of the Renaissance in Italy  
 1402 John Hus Appointed Rector of Prague's Bethlehem Chapel  
 1413 Lollard Rebellion  
 1414 Council of Constance. Execution of John Hus.(1415)  
 1415 Portuguese Established its First African Possession.  
 1420 Crusade Against the Hussites  
 1423 Council of Pavia. No Content.  
 1431 Joan of Arc Burned at the Stake  
 1440c Moveable Type Printing Developed in the West.  
 1431 – 49 Council of Constance Dealing with Some Reform Issues  
 1453 Constantinople Fell to the Ottoman Moslems and Became a Main City of Islam.  
 1456 GUTENBURG's Printed Bible after Moveable Type Developed c1455.  
 1479 Spanish Inquisition Began  
 1480 Russians Stopped Paying Tribute to the Mongols  
 1488 First Complete Hebrew Bible  
 1492 Columbus to America on Behalf of Ferdinand and Isabella.  
 1498 Savonarola Burned at the Stake  
 1506 Began Building St. Peter's in Rome  
 1512 Sistine Chapel Frescoes  
 1512 – 18 Council in Rome Dealing with Reform Issues  
 1516 Erasmus Issued a Greek New Testament

# Study Guide



## Stuart Jones

Stuart Jones is well qualified to teach Church History. His education includes: Doctor of Ministry and an M.Sc in Bible and Ministry. He also has an M.Sc in Chemical Engineering. He has served as elder in the Ridgewood Church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas and is now an elder at the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. His wife, Cecilia, also has an M.Sc in Bible and Ministry and is very capable in the areas of teaching and coordinating of ladies activities. Both have served as vocational missionaries in the state of New York and the nation of South Africa. Stuart has published several religious articles, teaching guides on church history and religion and science, and *Frozen in Time*, a book on the "generation gap." Stuart has served as Coordinator of the Sunset International Bible Institute's "Senior Adventures In Ministry" program since 1994.

  
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