

# OUTLINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

## 1. Day of Pentecost, Jerusalem, A.D. 30

- Establishment of a new movement within the context of the Judaism of the first century-- exclusively Jewish.
- Approximately A.D. 38 (first persecution of believers), Philip preaches the gospel to the Samaritans.
- Philip preaches the gospel to the Ethiopian officer. Henceforth, the Church had a representative among the Hamites in the South.
- Approximately A.D. 40, Peter preaches the gospel to the household of Cornelius.
- Between A.D. 38-40, they that were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the Word. Then, the universality of the gospel began to assert itself. Some of the persecuted believers fled to Cyrene, others to Phoenicia, Cypress, Antioch, and Syria. In Antioch, a number of Greeks accepted the gospel. Hence, the establishment of the first Christian Jewish-Gentile congregation.
- Approximately A.D. 36, the apostle Paul's conversion takes place,
- From A.D. 36 to A.D. 44, Paul is found in Damascus, Jerusalem, Tarsus, and finally, Antioch.
- By A.D. 44, the center of attention in the book of Acts is focused on the church in Antioch in Syria (A.D. 44-68). Antioch became the center of Gentile Christianity, Jerusalem the center of Jewish Christianity.
- A.D. 66-68, 2nd stage in the development of the apostolic church.
- Jewish war broke out A.D. 66 at Caesarea.
- James was killed in A.D. 66.
- John took up residence in Ephesus, which then became the leading center of Christianity. Ephesus, the 3rd center of Christianity, A.D. 68-100, population 225,000.
- A.D. 70, Jerusalem was conquered and the Temple destroyed, Many Jewish believers fled to Pella (modern day Jordan).

## 2. The Rapid Spread of Christianity

In the first three centuries, Christianity spread with astonishing rapidity to all parts of the Roman Empire and beyond.

Reasons:

1. Heathenism, as a religious force, was bankrupt.
2. Christianity taught the equality of all men before God.
3. The Church practiced charity, hospitality, love,
4. The Church embraced women and exalted womanhood.

The gospel was spread by traveling merchants. Christians were imbued with a strong conviction that Christianity was the only true and universal religion and means of salvation for mankind, They expected the speedy return of the Lord and the end of the Age. High government officials became Christians and used their influence to promote its spread.

In A.D. 313, Constantine, emperor of Rome, issues his Edict of Toleration. In this edict, Constantine:

- Granted to "Christians and to all others full liberty of following that religion which each may choose.";
- Commissioned the Bible to be prepared under the direction of Eusebius. Perhaps Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts belong to this group.
- Made Sunday a day of rest.
- Erected first church building.

Paganization of the Church began. Mission to conquer changed from spiritual to Imperial. Christianity virtually made the State religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine declares himself as Head of the Church and *continued* to hold the traditional office of Pontifex Maximus, or High Priest, of the official pagan religion.

In A.D. 330, Constantine transferred the seat of government to Byzantium because of heathenism prevailing in Rome. Byzantium (Constantinople) would change the course of Church history.

The first division of the empire and the first division of the church.  
The bishop of Constantinople elevated to a position equal to that of the bishop of Rome.

### 3. Ten Severe Persecutions

1. **Domitian** (A.D. 96). John banished to Patmos.
2. **Trajan** (A.D. 98-117). Simon, brother of Jesus, crucified (A.D. 107).
3. **Hadrian** (A.D. 117-138).
4. **Antoninus Pius** (A.D. 138-161). Polycarp suffers martyrdom.
5. **Marcus Aurelius** (A.D. 161-180). Justin Martyr suffers martyrdom.
6. **Septinius Severus** (A.D. 193-211). Persecutions very severe.
7. **Maximin** (A.D. 235-238).
8. **Decius** (A.D. 249-251). Determined to exterminate Christianity.
9. **Valerian** (A.D. 253-260). More severe than Decius. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage executed.
10. **Diocletian** (A.D. 284-305). the last imperial persecution and the most severe.

#### **4. The Five Patriarchs**

By the end of the 4th century, the churches of Christendom were dominated from five geographical centers, Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria, whose bishops had come to be called patriarchs of equal authority.

After the division of the empire, A.D. 395, into East and West, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria acknowledged the leadership of Constantinople.

#### **5. Division of the Empire**

Siricius, A.D. 385-398, bishop of Rome claimed universal jurisdiction over the Church. Empire divided into East and West and, gradually, the bishop of Rome found it difficult to get the East (Constantinople) to recognize his authority.

#### **6. The Rise of the Papacy**

Leo I, A.D. 440-461, claimed that he was, by divine appointment, primate of all bishops (beginning of idea of Catholicism being only true Church and popes infallible). Emperor Valentinian, III, gave imperial recognition to his claim. The council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) bestowed on the patriarch of Constantinople powers equal to the bishop of Rome. Gregory I, A.D. 590-604, generally regarded as the first pope.

#### **7. The Holy Roman Empire**

Leo III, A.D. 795-816, in return for Charlemagne's recognition, conferred upon Charlemagne (A.D. 742-814) the title of Roman Emperor, thus combining the Roman and Franc realms into the Holy Roman Empire. With Charlemagne and Leo III, the Western Roman Empire was established, with German kings on the throne, bearing the title of Caesar, which was conferred by the popes. The Holy Roman Empire lived for a thousand years and was brought to an end by Napoleon (A.D. 1806).

#### **8. The Great Schism**

By A.D. 1054, the Pope's insistent claim of being the Lord of Christendom became unbearable, and the Eastern Church definitely and finally separated itself. The church to the East became known as the Greek Orthodox Catholic. Still so today, (Roman Catholic in the West.)

## **9. The Golden Age of Papal Power, A.D. 1054-1305**

Crusades - Beginning A.D. 1096

Inquisition - 1200's and on into 1800's (52 million put to death). Innocent III, A.D. 1198-1216, most powerful of all popes, claimed to be the Vicar of Christ, Vicar of God, Supreme Sovereign of the Church and the world. He claimed the right to dispose kings and that "all things on earth and in Heaven and in Hell" were "subject to the Vicar of Christ." He ordered the extermination of heretics and instituted Inquisition (systematic extermination of all who opposed or questioned the Catholic church).

Papal power maintained by the Inquisition lasted for 500 years.

## **10. The Decline of the Papacy**

Boniface VIII, A.D. 1294-1303, issued the papal bull, Unam Sanctum, "We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary for salvation that every creature be subject to the Roman pontiff--there is one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church and, outside this Church, there is neither salvation nor remission of sins."

## **11. French Control of the Papacy**

With Philip the Fair, king of France, the leading monarch of Europe, the history of modern France began. He entered into a conflict with Pope Boniface VIII over taxation of the French clergy. In Philip the Fair, Boniface met his match.

The papacy was brought to complete submission to the State. The papal palace was removed from Rome to Avignon and, for seventy (70) years, the papacy was a tool of the French court. The greed and immorality of the French popes knew no bounds. Burdensome taxes were impressed, and church offices were sold for money. The papal household was accused of rape, adultery, and fornication. It was a common practice for priests to keep concubines--even sex with animals was widely practiced.

## **12. The Papal Schism**

For forty (40) years, A.D. 1377-1417, there were two sets of popes, one at Rome and one at Avignon, each claiming to be the Vicar of Christ. Martin V, A.D. 1417-1431, healed the papal schism, but by now, the papacy had suffered a tremendous loss of prestige.

### **13. The Need for Reform**

With the decline of the papacy, there was an ever-increasing need for reform. Some of the earliest of the reform movements were the Albigenses, around the city of Albi in southern France, and the Waldenses, followers of Peter Waldo, circa A.D. 1150, a simple, back-to-the-Bible movement.

John Wycliff, A.D. 1324-1384, who preached against domination of the priesthood and the authority of the Pope, translated the Bible to English. His followers were called Lollards.

John Huss, a student of Wycliff, rector of the University of Prague in Bohemia, attacked the vices of the clergy and the corruption of the church--burned alive at the stake. Savonarola, A.D. 1452-1498, from Florence, Italy, preached against papal vice--hanged and burned in the Great Square at Florence nineteen years before Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Wittenburg Church.

Anabaptists (rejected infant baptism) appeared through the Middle Ages under different names, and independent groups rejected the clergy and infant baptism. They were devoted to the Scripture and separation of church and state.

Erasmus, A.D. 1466-1536, advocated a return to the Scriptures, a relentless critic of the Roman Catholic Church. By this time, there was such a widespread discontent with the corruption of the Church and the clergy that the people were ready for change. They were tired of the cruelties of the Inquisition and the interference of the papacy in civil matters.

At the blast of Luther's trumpet, Germany, England, Scotland, France, and other countries of Europe woke like giants out of their sleep.

### **14. The Reformation**

Martin Luther, A.D. 1483-1546, led the world in its break for freedom. On October 31, 1517, he posted on the church door in Wittenberg his 95 Theses, nearly all of which related to the sale of indulgences, which struck at the authority of the Pope.

A.D. 1520, Pope issued a bull excommunicating Luther, declaring that, unless he recanted in sixty days, he would receive the penalty due for heresy--death. Luther burned the bull publicly December 10, 1520, and on that day a new age in the history of the Church began.

With Luther came the philosophy that no Jew would have a place in the world to come unless he converted--synagogues were systematically burned and Jews persecuted, This was the beginning of Protestant anti-Semitism.

The Pope, A.D. 1546, declared war on Luther's followers that lasted until A.D. 1555, ending with the Peace of Augsburg (Germany). Heidelberg press was the official press for the Protestant church. The name given to those rejecting the papacy was Protestant.

The Diet of Spires in A.D. 1529 ruled that Catholics could teach their religion in Lutheran states but forbade Lutheran teaching in Catholic states. The Lutheran princes made formal protest against this rule and were henceforth known as Protestants.

## **15. The Reform Church**

Started in Switzerland with Zwingli and carried on by Calvin. The union of their followers in A.D. 1549 constituted the Reform Church.

## **16. The Anglican Church (the Church of England), Henry VIII, A.D.1509-1547.**

In A.D. 1534, the Church of England repudiated papal authority and accepted the spiritual direction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Anglican church retained the episcopal form of church government.

Persecutions under Queen Mary, A.D. 1553-1558, a devout Catholic, drove many English Protestants into exile either to Scotland or to America, Some who returned during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (daughter of Henry VIII and Ann Boleyn), A.D. 1558-1603, desired a purer form of worship than the Anglican; hence, the name Puritans.

The Puritans displace the Episcopacy by Presbyterianism, which they claimed was the New Testament form of church government.

In A.D. 1690, Presbyterianism is officially recognized as the Church of Scotland.

A party of non-conformists, called Independents, or Congregationalists, appeared around A.D. 1580. Most of the passengers on the Mayflower were Congregationalists.

By the 16th century, there were two types of Anabaptists, the Quietists and the Revolutionaries. The Quietists were devout and peaceful and believed in passive resistance.

The Revolutionaries were fanatics. The fanaticism of the Revolutionaries led to the Peasants' War.

Melchior Hoffman, besides holding the usual Anabaptist views, claimed to be one of the two witnesses in Revelation, Chapter 11, and predicted Christ would return to reign over His saints in A.D. 1533, and Strausberg was to be the New Jerusalem.

Jan Matthys appeared in Strausberg in A.D. 1533 claiming to be the other witness but transferred the New Jerusalem to Munster and advocated the forceful setting up of the new kingdom of the saints and the slaughter or expulsion of the ungodly.

In A.D. 1535, the city was captured by the soldiers of the Catholic bishop. Munster was restored to the Catholic fold and the New Jerusalem was at an end.

After the catastrophe at Munster, Anabaptists were so scattered that their disappearance seemed certain. But, in A.D. 1646, a man by the name of Menno Simons (A.D. 1492-1559) appeared on the scene. A devout Catholic, he renounced the priesthood, accepted the Anabaptist view and was re-baptized in A.D. 1536. He purged Anabaptists of its apocalyptic and revolutionary elements and organized the people into a simple, brotherly association known as the Mennonites.

The Baptist Church originated in England at the beginning of the 17th century. They differed from the Anabaptists by retaining the Congregational constitution but generally adhered to Calvinistic doctrine. Calvinism taught "election of the saints," Certain ones destined to be saved; certain ones destined to be lost.

In A.D. 1791, there was a division within the Baptist movement over Armenian views. The larger number, which held to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, was called Regular, or Particular, Baptists. Those who held to the Armenian views were called General, or Free-Will Baptists.

The Armenian views were the historical forerunners of Methodism.

The Unitarians originated in Transylvania about A.D. 1600.

## **17. Protestant Life and Thought in the 17th and 18th Centuries**

### **Age of Orthodoxy**

Out of the orthodoxy of Protestantism in the 16th century arose several counter-acting tendencies, Mysticism, Theosophy, and Syncretism.

#### **a. Mysticism**

Emphasized freedom of spirit, emotional experience. Divine revelation, visions, and dreams were placed above authority of the Bible.

- The Society of Friends, the Quakers, started in Nottingham, by George Fox (A.D. 1624-1691). He traveled extensively in England, Scotland, Holland, and America.
- The Swedenborgian Church, or the New Jerusalem Church, Emanuel Swedenborg (A.D. 1688-1772). He claimed the New Jerusalem foretold in Revelation came to earth in A.D. 1771, and the New Swedenborgian Church was begun. He communicated with spirits and angels and claimed to have the true key to the understanding of the Bible. (The beginning of pentecostal philosophy and thought.)

### **b. Theosophy**

Inter-revelation is superior to sensible experience and reason. Constantly searching for secret documents. Began with men such as Valentine Weigel (A.D. 1533-1588), Jacob Bohme (A.D. 1576-1624), and John Valentine Andreae (A.D. 1586-1654). Founded the secret brotherhood known as Rosicrucians, a union of science and Christianity symbolized by the rose and the Cross -- rosa for rose, and crux for Cross.

### **c. Syncretism**

Also known as latitudinarianism, so-called because of their broad religious toleration. One of the earliest religious movements that attempted to recognize and/or unify the three ancient creeds, the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian.

## **Pietism**

Name given to a great religious awakening in the Protestant church during the 17th and 18th centuries.

- Encouraged active participation in religious gatherings by the lay people.
- Emphasized personal spiritual life.
- Opposed dancing, cards, the theatre.
- Stressed moderation in food, drink, and dress.
- One of the first to stress missionary activity to the Jews.
- Their Christianity was gloomy, austere, and legalistic.
- Devoted inordinate attention to the study of the Second Coming and the Millennium.

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, was much influenced by the pietism of the 17th and 18th centuries.

### **The Moravians**

The renewed fraternity, Unity of the Brethren (A.D. 1727) in Saxony. Zinzendorf and Spangenberg, principal leaders. Introduced the love feast, feet-washing, and the fraternal kiss. A combination of Pietism and Lutheranism.



## **English Methodism**

English Methodism was the last great religious revival that spread over the Protestant world. It was largely a reaction to the general moral and spiritual decline of the English nation.

John Wesley (A.D. 1703-1791) and his brother, Charles Wesley (A.D. 1708-1788), along with George Whitefield (A.D. 1714-1770) and John Williams Fletcher (A.D. 1729-1785) were the prominent leaders. John Wesley was the great organizer, Charles Wesley the great hymn writer, Whitefield the great pulpit orator, Fletcher the great theologian.

- Emphasized holiness.
- Advocated Armenianism.

Also, Whitefield was Calvinist. This difference of theology led to Wesleyan Methodists and Calvinistic Methodists. Calvinist Methodists divided into three groups, Lady Huntingdon's Connection, the Tabernacle Connection, and the Welch Calvinistic Methodists. Emphasized evangelism, humanitarianism, orphanages, relief for the poor, widows' homes.

The Salvation Army was an outgrowth of Methodism. The Salvation Army was started by William Booth (A.D. 1829-1912) in A.D. 1865.

## **18. The Apocalyptic-Pentecostal Movement, A.D. 1820**

### **The Catholic Apostolic Church, A.D. 1835**

Organized by Edward Irving (A.D. 1792-1834). Declared development of the Church since the days of the apostles "The Great Apostasy," that the Last Judgment was near, and true Christians were to be blessed with the supernatural gifts and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

### **Plymouth Brethren, A.D. 1831**

- Also known as Darbyites.
- Founded by John Darby (A.D. 1800-1882).
- Inter-Mission movement expressed in a great variety of ways. Elizabeth Fry (A.D. 1780-1845) worked among prisoners and ex-prisoners.
- Charles Dickens aroused the public through his novels to see its social responsibility.
- Florence Nightingale (A.D. 1820-1910) trained nurses to care for the wounded,
- George Williams founded the YMCA in London in A.D. 1844.
- David Livingstone and brother, Stanley, missions to Central Africa.
- Hudson Taylor, China Inland Missions, A.D. 1866.

While all these movements were in progress, a revolution was taking place in the world's thinking. Science and mechanical inventions transformed the living conditions and raised new questions for the Church to answer, Charles Darwin, Origin of the Species, A.D. 1859, and Descent of Man.

In A.D. 1870, the Vatican Council proclaimed the dogma of papal infallibility. Under the influence of the realism of the period, the scholarly world turned from Romanticism and the speculative to scientific studies and investigation. Out of the study of Comparative Religion arose the School of Higher Biblical Criticism, Julius Wellhausen (A.D. 1844-1918), and the Documentary Hypothesis.

## 19. Religion in the New World

- Practically all early settlers were Protestants who came to America in search of religious freedom.
- Episcopalianism, Jamestown Colony, Virginia, A.D. 1607, Sir Walter Raleigh.
- William and Mary College, founded A.D. 1693. Named Virginia after Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen. Congregations founded in Georgia, New York, New Jersey, North and South Carolina, Maryland.
- Congregationalism, New Plymouth, A.D. 1620. The Congregationalists, Massachusetts and Connecticut, established Congregationalism by law.
- Harvard College, founded A.D. 1636.
- Yale University, A.D. 1701.
- Dutch Reform, A.D. 1623.
- New Amsterdam at Manhattan, In A.D. 1664, New Amsterdam changed to New York, Huguenots, Lutherans, Puritans, Mennonites, Quakers, and others established there.
- Lutheranism, A.D. 1623, New York.
- Roman Catholicism, A.D. 1634, Maryland.
- Baptists, A.D. 1639, Providence, Rhode Island.
- Brown University, A.D. 1765, the earliest Baptist institution of learning.
- Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, A.D. 1640, Long Island,
- Quakers, A.D. 1656, Massachusetts, Virginia, New York,
- William Penn (A.D. 1644-1718), A.D. 1681 granted lands constituting states of Pennsylvania and Delaware.
- Mennonites, A.D. 1688, Germantown, Pennsylvania,
- German Lutheran, A.D. 1735.
- German Reform, A.D. 1747.
- Moravian, A.D. 1742 Methodists, A.D. 1739 (Whitefield).
- German Baptist Brethren ("Dunkers"), A.D. 1719-1723, Germantown, Pennsylvania,
- Schwenkenfelders, A.D. 1734, Philadelphia, PA,
- The Society of Believers (Shakers), A.D. 1774.

- Universalists, A.D. 1779
- Unitarian, A.D. 1785.
- When George Washington was inaugurated president in A.D. 1789, there were twenty-eight different Protestant denominations in America.

## **20. Development of American Protestantism, After A.D. 1789**

### **Revivalistic School**

Jonathan Edwards (A.D. 1703-1758), Timothy Dwight (A.D. 1752-1817), president of Yale University, introduced waves of revival. Charles Finney, American Holiness movement.

### **The Liberal School**

- Harvard University, center of Liberal-Unitarian activity.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson (A.D. 1803-1882).
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (A.D. 1807-1882).
- President William H. Taft (A.D. 1908-1912).

### **The Broad-Churchly School**

- An effort to combine the best elements in both schools, leading advocate, Horace Bushnell (A.D. 1802-1876).
- Phillip Brooks (A.D. 1835-1893) successor of Henry Ward Beecher, rector of Trinity Church of Boston, another great representative movement for Christian unity.

### **The Conservative Evangelical School**

A strong emphasis on historical creeds, coupled with spirituality and an attempt to develop from the Scriptures a new confessional theology to which all congregants must subscribe. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is an example. Carl F. W. Walther, principal leader.

### **The Apocalyptic-Spiritualistic School**

- William Miller, A.D. 17,82, initiated the Adventist movement, predicting Christ would appear sometime between A.D. 1843 and 1844. The Seventh Day Adventists are an outgrowth of the Millerites.
- In A.D. 1872, Charles T. Russell established what is now known as Jehovah Witnesses. Believed the world would end in 1914. Russell was a very "colorful" figure (his character questionable). Followers also known as Russellites. Mormons and Christian Scientists also a part of this movement.

- Alexander Campbell (A.D. 1788-1866). Beginning of back-to-Bible, or Restoration Movement, and originated on American soil.
  - Scottish Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, Church of Christ.
  - Abner Jones, Elias Smith, New England,
  - Barton W. Stone, Kentucky.
  - Walter Scott, Ohio.
- Thomas and Alexander Campbell, father and son, West Virginia, founders of Disciples of Christ,
- In A.D. 1832, Stone and Campbell unite and Church of Christ develops, A.D. 1906.

None of these movements are known in the New Testament. We need to drop names and just gather as Christian believers. All of these had worthy ideals, but none had the basic information at their disposal to lead them to return to the origins of the Church of the New Testament.

## 21. Heresies, Controversies, and Schisms

The term, "heresy," is derived from the Greek word, *hairesis*, which meant "capture" (from *haireo*, or "election," or "choice" from *haieomai*) and assumed the idea of opposition to prevailing opinion or authority. In the New Testament, it signifies a way of life, a school, sect, or a party, not necessarily in a negative sense. It also signified discord and, finally, error. The term, "heretic," (*hairetikos anthropos*) occurs only once in the New Testament, Titus 3:10, and means a "sectarian," rather than one who was in error. From the time of Constantine, the word, heresy, is used of false teaching,

- Philastrius, bishop of Brixia (died A.D. 387), in his Book of Heresies, numbered 28 Jewish and 128 Christian heresies.
- Epiphanius (died A.D. 403) listed 80 heresies, 20 before and 60 after Jesus.
- Augustine (died A.D. 430) listed 88 Christian heresies. Augustine said that it was altogether impossible or, at any rate, most difficult to define heresies, that the spirit in which error is held, rather than the error itself, constitutes the heresy. There are innocent as well as guilty errors. In the course of time, heresy was defined as "religious error held in willful and persistent opposition to the truth after it has been defined and declared by the Church in an authoritative manner."

### I. Sectarian Movements Within Jewish-Christian Orthodoxy

#### Nazarenes

Kept the law of Moses but did not reject fellowship with Gentile Christians. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah, that his teachings were superior to Moses and the Prophets, that Jewish believers should observe Jewish laws, circumcision, the Sabbath, and dietary laws--but these teachings were not imposed on non-Jewish believers.

### **Ebionites (from the Hebrew word which means poor, or humble)**

They regarded themselves as the true followers of Christ and his poor disciples and believed that Jesus was merely a man, a prophet, a spokesman for God. Some believed in the virgin birth. They considered Paul a heretic (because he did not require non-Jews to observe the Law), the law of Moses binding on all believers, observance of the law essential for salvation. These were the Judaizers. They **always** used the Hebrew gospel of Matthew. (From them we have unmistakable evidence that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew).

Two principle branches, Pharisaic Ebionites and Essene (ascetic) Ebionites continued till well into the 5th century A.D. and beyond (as late as 10th century).

### **Elkasaites**

About A.D. 220, a Syrian named Alcibiades, of Apamea, brought to Rome the Book of Elcheasai (or, hidden power). Elxai declared this book to have fallen from heaven about A.D. 101. Christ is described as an angel incarnated in human body. Mingles pagan religious elements with Jewish-Christian ideas. Focused on astronomy and magic.

## **II. The Greek Menace**

After the Church spread west, off Jewish soil and, as Christianity is embraced by the non-Jewish world, the Church was confronted with a subtle and formidable force that would shake the foundations of Christianity to the very core.

This threat appeared in the philosophy and attitude of the Hellenistic mind. The danger manifested itself in an attempt to think through and present the gospel in the categories of Greek philosophy. One distinctive feature of Hellenism was the sharp distinction between spirit and matter.

This philosophy seems to have entered Greek thought through the Orphic movement centuries before Christ and was perpetuated through Platonism and Neoplatonism. Marked the beginning of the trichotomy of man (Plato), physical-body, psyche-mind, and pneumo-spirit. (However, this is different from what later develops religiously regarding body, soul, and spirit).

### **Greek Legend**

In Greek legend, Orpheus was the chief representative of the art of song and playing the lyre. He might have originally been the God of Darkness. From the 6th century B.C., he is looked upon as one of the chief poets and musicians. Using music, he was able to charm wild beasts, draw trees and rocks from their places. He was a seer, practiced magical arts, astrology, instituted mystic rites, prescribed initiatory and purifactory ritual.

The doctrines of the Orphic school are founded on two elements:

- i. the religion of Dionysius, with its orgies, mysteries, and purifications; and
- ii. philosophical speculation on nature and gods.

This doctrine prescribed abstinence from certain kinds of foods and wearing certain kinds of clothes, believed in original sin, transmigration of souls, and that the soul is entombed in the body and when completely purified, the soul would become divine.

Orpheus came to be look upon as the founder of Mysticism.

### **Platonism**

Plato, born in Athens, 427 B.C., friend of Socrates. Plato's philosophy embodies both the intellectual and the mystical, dominated by a pervading ethical motive. Dialogues are pervaded by two dissonant motives, a passion for human improvement, and a persistent faith in the power and supremacy of the mind.

These two great forces are persistent in Platonism:

- i. The love for truth, and
- ii. the zeal for human improvement.

Beginning of philosophy--search for truth.

### **Neoplatonism**

Neoplatonism arose mainly among the Greeks of Alexandria.

Neoplatonism's sole interest was religious (exercise of mind considered of little value. It introduced a new first principle into philosophy, the suprarational--that which lies beyond reason and beyond reality since perception nor rational cognition is a sufficient basis for justification or religious ethics. The higher sphere of knowledge, the suprarational, must depend upon divine communication, i.e., "revelation knowledge."

It adopts the ethics of Stoicism and considers Epicureanism its mortal enemy. It changed thought into an emotional dream and plunged into the ocean of sentiment.

Stoics were ascetic--no emotion, "stiff upper lip," practiced self-denial, rejected better things in life, almost fatalistic. The philosophy/religion of the Epicureans was, "Eat, drink, and be merry!" Neoplatonism's principal maxim is that man shall not live by knowledge alone.

Porphyry of Greece (A.D. 233-304) offered Neoplatonism as a substitute for Christianity. Basically, the charismatic movement is Neoplatonistic. It has two divisions -- "holiness" and "hyper faith." But above all is the suprarational--revelation knowledge (divinely placed in one's mind by the Holy Spirit, rather than acquired by study), and an attitude that the exercise of reason takes the mind off contemplation of the eternal in which condition one then cannot receive divine revelation.

### **III. The Gnostic Threat**

Gnosticism comes from the Greek word, gnosis (knowledge, enlightenment).

During the first four centuries A.D., Gnostics were identified as a group of people who proclaimed salvation knowledge. Gnosticism centered around two general questions, the origin of the universe and God, and God's method of governing the world.

Gnosticism tended to minimize the historical and to divorce faith from life. Gnosticism was highly syncretic, borrowing from Orphic and Platonic dualism, Syrian conceptions, Persian dualism (that both good and evil are in God), the mystery cults (the Bahai's of the ancient world), Mesopotamian astrology, and Egyptian religion.

They make a marked distinction between body and spirit. Sin resides in the body. Spirits are held in the body as in a prison. Redemption consisted in the liberation of the spirit from the body (as in Orphism). Christ, being God, could not have had a real body. He had a phantom body, or he was just an ordinary human being. He became divine at baptism, and divinity departed before the crucifixion. The Gnostics were either ascetic or libertine (shades of Neoplatonism)--if it is evil, deny it proper care; if it constitutes a prison house, abuse it in licentious living.

Gnosticism leads to the attempt to harmonize pagan philosophy and religion with Christianity.

Gnostics had no well-knit organization--they were too divided and too varied. Most remained within existing churches until they were cast out as heretics. Being everywhere, however, their influence is widespread, even today.

Chief of the Gnostic teachers and schools were the Ophites, the Cainites, the Sethians, the Peratae (or Peratics--from the Greek, perao, to pass or cross, or to go beyond [the boundary] of the material world), Simon Magus and the Simoneons, the Nicolaitans, Cerinthus, Basilides, and Valentines.

## Chief Gnostic Teachers & Schools

### Ophites

Ophites comes from the Greek, ophis, which means a snake, known also as the Naasenes (Serpent Brethren) who ascribed special import to the serpent as a type of gnosis (knowledge), Serpent used as an amulet. They are a sect of Gnostics described by Iranaeus in *Against Heresies*, Book 1, Chapter 2, and Epithanius' *Heresies* XXVI. This sect combined mythologies of Babylon and Egypt along with popular cults of Greece and the Orient in giving honor to the serpent. Their system of deity was, (1) the universal God, the first man; (2) his conception, the second man; (3) the female Holy Spirit and from her, the third man. Christ, was begotten by the first and second man.

### Cainites

The Cainites are a Gnostic sect of the second century, also mentioned by Iranaeus, who believed that Cain derived his existence from the superior power and Abel from the inferior power. They regarded God as an evil being whom to resist is a virtue. They honored Cain, Korah, Judas Iscariot; changed vice into virtue.

### Sethites, or Sethians

Considered the third son of Adam as being the first spirit man and the forerunner of Christ.

Maintained three principles--darkness below, light above, and spirit in between.

### Peratae

They are mystic tritheists who taught three Gods, three Logoi, three minds, three men. Christ had a three-fold nature, a three-fold body, and a three-fold power.

### Simon Magus

Simon Magus represented himself as an emanation of deity (the great power of God).

The sect of the Simoneans continued into the third century. Simon declared himself an incarnation of the creative world-spirit and his female companion, Helena, the incarnation of the receptive world-soul. Here we have the Gnostic conception of the syzygy - a blending/melding (of spirit and soul).



## Nicolaitans

The founder of the Nicolaitans was Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch and one of the seven deacons mentioned in Acts

The basic teaching was the crucifixion of the flesh, but in order to know how to crucify the flesh, one must first indulge the flesh in all the lusts and passions thereof. Like the libertine school, but also with the idea of eternal security.

They led lives of unrestrained indulgence.

## Cerinthus

Appeared toward the close of the first century in Asia Minor, Cerinthus was an Egyptian and a Jew who had studied in the school of Philo in Alexandria. Rejected all the gospels except Matthew, was strongly Judaistic and demanded circumcision (Galatians 2:4, 2 Corinthians 11:13). Separated the earthly Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, from the heavenly Christ who descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove--a differentiation between the human and the divine.

## Basilides

Claimed to be a disciple of the apostle, Mathias. Taught in Alexandria during the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138). Wrote twenty-four books on the gospels and produced the first well-developed system of gnosis, but it was too metaphysical and intricate to be popular. The system was based on Egyptian astronomy and Pythagorean numerical symbolism. God was not only super-existent but nonexistent.

Everything created moves upward toward God.

Basilides held a three-fold Christ, the son of the first archon (ruler), the son of the second archon, the son of Mary. The death of Christ was necessary to remove the corporeal and psychical elements. His body returned after death into shapelessness. The soul rose from the grave and stopped in the hebdomad, or planetary heaven, but his spirit soared, purified, to the blessed first sonship and the fellowship of the non-existent, or hyper-existent, God, Jesus, being the first fruits. All other pneumatic persons will rise, purified, to the same place.

## Valentines

The author of the most profound and influential of the Gnostic systems. Iranaeus directed his work chiefly against it. He was of Egyptian-Jewish descent and Alexandrian education. He came to Rome about A.D. 137 and remained there until A.D. 154. He was excommunicated and went to Cypress where he died about A.D. 160. In Valentines' Christology, there are three redeeming beings, the heavenly Christ, the redeeming Christ, and the Jewish Messiah who passes through Mary and is, at last, crucified, but since he only has an apparent body, he does not suffer. Of all of the forms of Gnosticism, that of Valentines was the most popular and influential. It was divided into two branches, an Oriental and an Italian. The Oriental school held the body of Jesus to be Spirit and heavenly, the Italian school that the body of Jesus was physical, and it was for this reason that the spirit descended upon him at baptism.

## Other Gnostic Movements

**Saturninus** (Satornilos) - Contemporary with Basilides was Saturninus of Antioch. Believed in a bold dualism between God and Satan, the two antipodes of the universe, and known for its ascetic severity. God is the unfathomable abyss, absolutely unknown, and from him emanates, by degrees, the spirit world with angels, archangels, powers, and dominions, The Jewish God, the demiurge, is unable to defeat Satan, the ruler of the hyle (created matter) and is eternally banished to the realm of light.

Finally, the good god sends the aeon, Nous (mind), in an unreal body as Soter, savior on earth who teaches the spiritual man by gnosis. Taught strict abstinence from marriage and carnal food to emancipate themselves from the vexations of Satan and from the dominion of the Jewish God, and to rise to the realm of light.

**Manichaeism** - Founded by Mani, or Manichaues (A.D. 216-277). Mani was a Persian who attempted to reconcile Christianity with Zoroastrianism, a dualistic religious philosophy mixed with pantheism, gnostic, and ascetic elements. In the third century A.D., it had many adherents in the West, and Augustine was much interested in Manichaeism before his conversion to Christianity.

Mani claimed himself to be the last and greatest prophet of God and the paraclete promised by Christ. He went to East India and China and became acquainted with Buddhism and in A.D. 270 returned to Persia. He was flayed alive by order of King Bahram I about A.D. 277, and his skin was stuffed and hung up for a terror at the gate of the city of Gunderhapur. The gate has since been known as the Gate of Mani.

As the sect spread westward after his death, it assumed a more Christian character. It flourished until the sixth and seventh centuries.

The leading features of Manichaeism were the dualistic separation of body and soul, the ascription of nature to the devil, concealing of heathen views under Christian phrases and the haughty air of mystery.

Unlike other Gnostic sects, Manichaeism had a fixed hierarchical organization, which ultimately accounted for its endurance (apostolic succession). At the head stood twelve apostles among whom Mani and his successors held the chief place. Under them were seventy-two bishops, and under these came presbyters, deacons and itinerant evangelists. In the congregation were two distinct classes, the hearers, or auditors, and the perfect, or the electi perfecti.

The worship was very simple. They had four daily prayers; they turned toward the sun or the moon, observed Sunday, made it a day of fasting, and celebrated in March the martyrdom of Mani. The perfection of the elect consisted in a three-fold seal, Signaculum--the Signaculum Oris, purity in words and diet, abstinence from all animal food, and from strong drink, the Signaculum Manum, renunciation of earthly property and material and industrial pursuits, even agriculture, and the Signaculum Sinus, celibacy and abstinence of any gratification of sensual desire.

The sign of recognition was the extension of the right hand as a symbol of the common deliverance from the King of Darkness by the redeeming hand of the Spirit of the Son.

The beginning of the ecclesiastical church.

**Marcion and the Marcionites** - Marcion, a native of Sinope, a seaport in Pontus on the south coast of the Black Sea, the son of a bishop and reared a Christian, came to Rome with great wealth around A.D. 139. Justin Martyr regarded him as the most dangerous and formidable heretic of his day.

Marcion, although influenced by the Gnostics, yet is at variance with them in many ways. He rejected a secret body of knowledge or initiation into a mystery. Extremely anti-Jewish he contended Christianity had no connection whatever with the past, whether Jewish or heathen, but had fallen abruptly and magically from heaven. Christ had not been born but suddenly descended into the city of Capernaum in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius and appeared as the revealer of the "good god." He had no connection with the Messiah announced by the demiurge of the Old Testament (considered a lower god). His body was a mere appearance and his death an illusion. Practiced strict ascetic self-discipline, rejecting marriage, meat, wine, and admitted married people to baptism only after a vow of abstinence of all sexual intercourse. (Tertullian 1:29, 4:10, Book IV).

He wrested Christ's words in Matthew 17 to, "I am come not to fulfill the law and the prophets but to destroy them." In worship, he excluded wine from the

eucharist but retained the bread, water baptism, anointing with oil, and the mixture of milk and honey given to the newly baptized. Females were permitted to baptize. He practiced baptism for the dead (as in Mormonism).

Remains of the Marcionites can be found as late as the tenth century although by the fifth century, most have been absorbed into the Manichaeists.

**Montanists** - A movement distinct from both the Gnostic and the Manichaeists, but which flourished in the second half of the second century. Took its name from Montanus of Phrygia in Asia Minor. At his baptism, Montanus spoke in tongues and began prophesying, declaring that the Holy Spirit was finding utterance through him.

Two women disciples, believed to be prophetesses, were also considered to be mouthpieces of the Holy Spirit. The three taught that the Spirit had revealed to them the early end of the world and that the New Jerusalem would come down out of heaven from God and would be established in Phrygia. Christ would set up his kingdom and reign on earth for a thousand years.

This movement represented the beginnings of Dispensationalism.

Believers were urged to be strict in their living. Celibacy was encouraged, fasting was enjoined, and martyrdom held in high honor. Montanism spread rapidly, and one of the most imminent converts to Montanism was Tertullian.

**Carpocrates** - Also lived under Hadrian at Alexandria, put Christ on a level with heathen philosophy, sank to unbridled immorality. Jesus was the son of Joseph, except his soul was steadfast and pure.

They practiced magical arts, incantations, love potions, familiar spirits and declared they possessed power to rule over this world. They were the first known sect to use pictures of Christ that they claimed derived from an original from Pontius Pilate.

The son of Carpocrates, Epiphanes (means, the brilliant one), who died at the age of seventeen, taught God gave benefits to all men alike and in common; derived the community of goods and of women. He was worshiped as a God after his death.

**Tatian and the Encratites** - Tatian was born in Syria, converted to Christianity by Justin Martyr in Rome, and died A.D. 172. He was anti-Jewish, ascetic, declared marriage to be licentious and a service to the devil.

His followers continued into the fifth century and were called Encratites, or abstainers, from their ascetic life. Because they used water and wine in the Lord's Supper, they were also known as hydroparastatac, or Aquarians.

The term, Encratites, was applied ultimately to all ascetic sects.

**Justin, the Gnostic** - Hippolytus mentions a Gnostic by the name of Justin. Hippolytus classed him with the Naassenes (serpent worshippers).

He assumed three original principals, two male and one female. The first is the good being, the second Elohim, the Father of Creation, the third is called Eden and Israel and has a dual form, a woman above the middle and a snake below.

Elohim falls in love with Eden, and from their intercourse springs the spirit world of twenty angels, ten male and ten female, and these people the world. Naas, the serpent, committed adultery with Eve, and a worse crime with Adam. He nailed Jesus to the cross, but this crucifixion of Jesus also emancipated him from his material body, and he rose to the Good God to whom he committed his spirit and, thus, became the deliverer.

**Hermogenes** - A painter in Carthage at the end of the second and beginning of the third century. Tertullian described him as a turbulent, loquacious, and impudent man who married more women than he painted. He denied God created the world out of nothing and explained the ugly, as well as the evil, by the resistance of matter to the formative influence of God.

He taught that Christ left his body in the sun and then ascended to the Father which he proved from Psalm 19.

**The Docetae, or Docetists** - Taught that the body of Christ was not real flesh and blood but merely a deceptive phantom and that, consequently, he did not really suffer and die.

Docetism was the characteristic feature of the first anti-Christian Errorists about whom John wrote in 1 John 4:2 and 2 John 7.

The term, Docetists, applied equally well to most gnostics.

**Antitactae, or Antitactes** - Licentious, antinomian (from nomos = law, against) Gnostics.

**Prodicians** - Founded by Prodicus. Considered themselves the royal family and above the law, above every form of worship, even prayer itself, which they considered only for the ignorant masses. Also known as Adamites, Barbelitae, Borboriani, Coddiani, Phibionitae, and by other unintelligible names.

Almost every form of immorality and lawlessness was practiced under the sanction of religion by these baser schools of gnosticism and, from these schools, we can trace the corruption and perversion of Christianity through the centuries.

## 22. Summary

To the modern mind, these Gnostic systems seem complicated and bizarre. In general, they held that there exists a first principal, the all-Father, unknowable, who is love, and who, alone, can generate other beings. Since love cannot dwell alone, the all-Father brought into existence other beings, aeons, which, together with all-Father, constitute pleroma, fullness, or true reality. From this world of the Spirit, the present world appeared. This was the work of one of the aeons, who, moved by pride, wished to do what the all-Father had done and create something on their own. The present world was ascribed to a subordinate being, a demiurge who was identified with the God of the Old Testament (a rejection of the Old Testament).

This present world has in it some traces of the spirit world. Men belong to this present world and are compounded of spirit, matter, soul, and flesh. Some have more of the spirit than others.

Salvation, the freeing of the spirit from the contamination of matter, is through Christ. Many different conceptions are held about Christ:

1. That he was never flesh but pure spirit and just seemed to be a man.
2. That he was an aeon and separated Christ from Jesus. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and sent to be the savior of men. Not all men will be saved for many have little or no spirit in them and will, therefore, be destroyed. Others having a portion of the spirit will be saved by being taught the hidden knowledge, or gnosis, and through faith and works, they will be freed from the contamination of the flesh and will mount to the pleroma.

(Two classes: saved and lost--predestination.)

The principal effect of gnosticism on Christianity was to so distort the person of Jesus as to make him quite different from the Jesus recorded in the gospels.

The popularity of these heretical movements ultimately forced Christianity to develop a structured organization and to clarify and formulate beliefs. Thus, the first notable steps in the development of what was called the Catholic church were taken.

The word, Catholic (meaning, universal), as applied to the Church was first used in the letter of Ignatius to the church in Smyrna. He declared, "Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church," The term is also found in a letter from the church in Smyrna written about A.D. 155, describing the martyrdom of Polycarp. By the end of the second century, the word carried with it the dual meaning of universal and orthodox.

In response to heresy, an administrative system developed centered around the bishops. The first episcopate, as distinct from presbyterate, appears in the Epistles of Ignatius. From the beginning, presbyterate and bishop were interchangeable terms with a plurality in every church. The bishop becomes a characteristic feature of the Catholic Church and falls into different ranks according to the ecclesiastical and political importance of their district,

1. The lowest level, the country bishops, chorepiscopi, stood between presbyters and the city bishops.
2. City bishops, called metropolitans, were the bishops of capital cities of the provinces.
3. Bishops of the apostolic mother churches were held in highest regard as the bearers of pure church tradition, Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome. Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome, capitals of the three divisions, eparchiae, were the most prominent. To the bishop of Antioch fell all Syria as his sphere of power; to the bishop of Alexandria, all Egypt, and under Rome was Central and all Italy.
4. The eparchal, or patriarchal system. The name, patriarchal, was first applied as an honorary title for all bishops but in the fourth century, was appropriated exclusively to the bishops of the three ecclesiastical and political centers of the Empire, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome, and also as an honorary title to the bishop of Jerusalem.

In the West, the term, papa is appropriated by the Roman bishop as Sumus Pontifex, Vicarius Christi (even today).

As early as the beginning of the second century, a distinction had begun to appear between clergy and laity in spite of the fact that, in the first century, every Christian was held to be a priest under God. The bishop selected and ordained a subordinate clergy. Among them were presbyters, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, readers, and janitors. Deaconesses were appointed in the Eastern church and, in both East and West, were widows charged with the duty of prayer and caring for the sick.

## 23. Major Controversies

- In the middle of the second century, major controversy arose over **the time of the celebration of Easter**. Should it be fixed by the Jewish Passover, or celebrated on Sunday, the first day of the week? Synods met to decide the issue. The controversy, called quarto decimarian, from the fourteenth day of Nisan, was a bitter one. In the last decade of the second century, Victor, bishop of Rome, declared the observance should be held on Sunday and broke off communion with dissenting bishops and churches.

The matter was finally settled at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325 in favor of the Western practice, which was Sunday (actually to divorce the church from any connection with the Jewish calendar).

- The **Novatian Controversy** (about A.D. 110). From the beginning, baptism had been by immersion for the remission of sins. Novatian, at an adult age grew sick. Nigh unto death, he called for baptism. He received only clinical baptism by sprinkling, only on the condition that, if he got well, he would be properly baptized. Following his recovery, he was ordained to priesthood and rose to the highest rank in the Roman clergy. The controversy arose over whether one unscripturally baptized could attain to such an office. The followers of Novatian advocated strict discipline, also advocated the possibility of mercy for a mortal sinner but denied the church the right of absolution for such offenders. Instead, all who come to them from other communions must be re-baptized. They considered themselves the only pure communion. Novatian died a martyr under Valerian. After his death, the Novatians spread rapidly over the Empire and called themselves Katharoi, or Puritans. They maintained that no one who had lapsed from the faith could be readmitted to communion. The movement died out about two hundred years after its inception.
- **Trinitarian**. Very early in the history of the Church, a controversy arose over an attempt to explain the nature of Christ. Monotheism was the fundamental tenet of biblical faith. In Christianity, this one God was seen as a triune god, a holy trinity (from the trichotomy of man, Platonism). Others declared this doctrine led to tri-theism. Anxious to preserve the unity of God, others espoused a monarchy of the deity; hence, the term, monarchian.
- **Monarchianism**. Anxious to preserve the unity of God, others espoused a monarchy of the deity; hence, the term, monarchian. Monarchianism stressed monotheism against those who would make Jesus as the incarnation of the Logos, the second God, There were two groups of Monarchians, the "dynamic" and the "modalistic." The first believed that Jesus Christ was born of the virgin, Mary, and imbued with a power, dunamis, which issued from God. They also were known as adoptionists because they held that this power came upon Christ after his baptism and that he was not the son of God by nature but became God's son by adoption.

The second group made no distinction between father and son but saw a difference only in the mode in which the divine manifested himself. Modalistic Monarchians, also called patripassianists from patris passio, i.e., the Father's suffering.

- **Sabellius** was the most famous exponent of patripassianism and, therefore, it is often known as Sabellianism. He held that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three modes, or aspects, of God much as the sun is bright, hot, and round. Tertullian employed the Latin word, substantia, meaning status, declaring that God in substance is one. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three personae. These personae have their place in the administrative activity of God, a unity of substance, but a trinity in form and in aspect. The Son was subordinate to the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father through the Son. A widely held concept today.



- **Origen** of Alexandria (A.D. 185-254) taught that the son, Jesus, was but an emanation, or an outflowing from the Father and that the Holy Spirit was an emanation from both. Origen also taught the punishment of the wicked was not final and the redeeming work of Christ extended even to the fallen angels. He was the Father of Universalism (universal salvation). He also taught that the future life would be a time of probation, the concept that paved the way for the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory. Eventually, the Catholic Church labeled Origen a heretic because of his extreme views.

A pupil of Origen, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, stressed the distinction of the son as a person and implied that the Father had created the Son and that there had been a time when the Son was not and that he was subordinate to the Father.

Dionysius' friend, another Dionysius, bishop of Rome, wrote urging that he be more careful and make it clear that the Son was homoousion, i.e., the same essential being or substance, and not homoiousion, or similar substance. (Heteroousion=differentness)

Another contemporary with Origen, Lucian, presbyter of Antioch, saw in the Logos a way of expressing the relation of Christ to God. One of his students was Arias, a presbyter of Alexandria (circa A.D. 320) who claimed that Christ was neither true God nor true man but a sort of demigod, halfway between man and the Father. He was unlike the substance and nature of the Father in all respects and also unlike man because he had no human soul. (The beginning of Arianism, which became a major controversy.)

The discussion over the nature of Christ involved the church in bitter controversy for nearly a century.

- **Athanasius**, bishop of Alexandria (circa A.D. 300) became the outstanding opponent of Arianism and one of the outstanding figures in the entire history of Christianity. Athanasius became the principal advocate for homoousia.

The first Ecumenical Council that met at Nicea, A.D., 325, condemned Arianism although some bishops took a middle position that became known as Semi-Arianism (homoiousians).

Another group called Macedonians, from Macedonius, their leader, also known as pneumatomachians, held that the Holy Spirit was of an essence inferior to that of the Father and of the Son.

At the first Nicean Council, homoousia was adopted as the basic creed of the church, and Constantine banished Arias and his supporters. However, the debate continued, and Athanasius again comes to the forefront in the debate against Arias. In A.D. 327, Constantine readmitted Arias and other of his followers to fellowship and sought to have Athanasius disposed. Athanasius was banished to Gaul where he remained until after the death of Constantine in A.D. 337.

Constantine was succeeded by his three sons: Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius, who divided the Empire among themselves. They permitted the exiled bishops to return, and Athanasius returned to Alexandria.

On the death of Constantine II in A.D. 340, the realm was divided between Constans in the West and Constantius in the East. In the West, the Catholic Church, supported by Constans, held to the Nicean decision while in the East, the majority opposed it. Athanasius was again disposed and took refuge in Rome.

In order to heal the breach, the two emperors called a council of the entire church that met at Sardicia (Sophia) in A.D. 343. Athanasius is cleared of all charges and returned to Alexandria.

In A.D. 353, Constantius became ruler of the entire empire. His sympathies were pro-Arian. He sought to achieve unity with councils at Arles in Gaul, A.D. 353, and at Milan, A.D. 355.

Athanasius was again sent into exile in A.D. 356, along with others. The emperor forbade the use of *ousia*, *homoousia*, or *homoiousia* on the ground that it was not found in the Scriptures and this position of the Nicean Creed was condemned.

In A.D. 361, Constantius died and was succeeded by Julian who sought to restore paganism. Julian died in A.D. 363, and Jovian succeeded to the throne. He in turn was succeeded by Valentinian I who made his brother, Valeas, ruler to the East. The conflict rages, and Athanasius is exiled twice more.

Finally, in the year A.D. 380, Emperor Theodosius issued an edict on ecclesiastical affairs. He was born in Spain and was anti-Arian. In A.D. 381, the second Ecumenical Council convened at Constantinople, and the Nicean formula, *homoousia*, was confirmed, and Arians and Semi-Arians anathematized. Although it persisted until well into the fourth century, the Arian cause was irretrievably lost; however, there remained the problem of the relation of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ, and the controversy was to continue into the seventh century and beyond into the present.

- **Apollinaris**, bishop of Laodicea in Syria, a friend of Athanasius, felt that in one being two complete and contrasting natures could not exist, namely, the human and the divine. He held each human to be composed of body, soul, and mind (or reason). Apollinaris said that the divine Logos was the rational element. The Cappadocians opposed Apollinaris and declared Apollinaris had sacrificed the full humanity of Christ.
- **Nestorius**, presbyter at Antioch and later patriarch of Constantinople, A.D. 428-435, made a distinction between the divine and human nature of Christ which amounted to almost a separation into two persons. Christ was not born, only the man, Jesus. Mary, therefore, could not be called the Mother of God. Nestorianism was condemned as heresy at the third General Council held at Ephesus in A.D. 431.

- **Monophysitism**, from the Greek monos and physis, single essence or nature, claimed that Christ was both human and divine but had only one nature, that of God. Christ was so completely divine that he had no real human body but only the outward appearance of a man. The fourth General Council at Chalcedon, A.D. 451, rejected this doctrine. However, another group of Monophysites advocated the two natures in Christ had mixed into a third and new theanthropic (God-man nature). The fifth General Council in A.D. 553, forcibly suppressed Monophysitism.
- **Monothelism**, from Mono and Thelma, (single will), followed declaring that, though Christ had a human nature, he had only a divine will. The sixth General Council at Constantinople, A.D. 680, condemned this doctrine.
- **Donatism**. Donatists, or high church men of the fifth century, who took issue with the Catholic church in matters of church discipline and martyrdom, so-called after Donatist the Great, bishop of Carthage. Similar in belief to Novatians, this group disappeared in the fifth century.
- **Pelagius** (A.D. 370-440), Pelagianism centered in the question, "How is a man saved?" Three answers were given. Pelagius ascribed the chief merit of conversion to man. Augustine gave God all the glory and made freedom a result of divine grace. The Semi-Pelagianists coordinated the human will and the divine grace as factors in the work of salvation. Pelagius, a British monk, set forth the following views:
  1. Man has no original sin inherited from Adam; Sin is not at fault of nature but a matter of will.
  2. Each person has freedom to do good or evil. A sinless life is possible, and a man can save himself by his own good works (the choice to do good).
  3. Newborn children are sinless. Therefore, infant baptism is useless because there is no original sin.
  4. While salvation is possible without the law and the gospel, or by divine grace, these do facilitate the attainment of salvation.

Augustine appeared as the great opponent of Pelagianism. He asserted that man was created in the image of God but that Adam lost all this in the fall. The character of Adam passed to his posterity through the act of procreation so that all are born in sin. Also, through Adam's fall, man lost his freedom of choice pertaining to salvation, which now must be attributed solely to divine grace. Infants dying without baptism are damned because they are born in sin. Original sin is taken away in baptism, yet the sinful nature remains after. Salvation of man is attributed to grace and faith. Even faith is a work of grace. It depends solely on the will of God. God has mercy on some and leaves others to their merited fate.

The views of Augustine were generally accepted by the Catholic Church, while Pelagianism was condemned by the third General Council at Ephesus in A.D. 431. (All Jewish roots lost).

## 24. Church Fathers

- **Polycarp** (A.D. 69-156), student of the apostle, John, church of Smyrna --burned alive.
- Ignatius (A.D. 67-110), student of apostle John, church of Antioch-- thrown to the wild beasts in Rome by Trajan.
- **Papias** (A.D. 70-155), pupil of John, bishop of Hierapolis—suffered martyrdom at Pergamum.
- **Justin Martyr** (A.D. 100-167), born at Neapolis (ancient Shechem), near Jacob's Well, prolific writer--suffered martyrdom in Rome.
- **Iraeneus** (A.D. 130-200), pupil of Polycarp and Papias, brought up in
- **Smyrna**, bishop of Lyons in Gaul--suffered martyrdom.
- **Origen** (A.D. 185-254), most learned man and most prolific writer of the ancient Church, lived in Alexandria and later in Palestine where he died in prison under Decius.
- **Tertullian** (A.D. 160-220), bishop of Carthage, father of Latin Christianity.
- **Eusebius** (A.D. 264-340), bishop of Caesarea, father of Church history.
- **John Chrysostom** (A.D. 345-407), greatest orator of ancient times, patriarch of Constantinople--banished and died in exile.
- **Jerome** (A.D. 340-420), educated at Rome, lived at Bethlehem, translated the Bible into Latin (known as the Vulgate).
- **Augustine** (A.D. 354-430), bishop of Hippo in North Africa, greatest theologian of the early Church. Much of the doctrine of the early Church molded by Augustine.

## 25. Church Councils

The Jerusalem Council, A.D. 50, Acts, Chapters 6 and 15, The issue being, "What shall we do with all these non-Jews who are accepting Jesus as Messiah?"

## 26. Ecumenical Councils

- **Nicaea** (A.D. 325). Condemned Arianism.
- **Constantinople** (A.D. 381). Called to settle Apollinarianism.
- **Ephesus** (A.D. 431). Called to settle the Nestorian Controversy.
- **Chalcedon** (A.D. 451). Called to settle the Eutychian Controversy.
- **Constantinople** (A.D. 553). To settle Monophysites Controversy,
- **Constantinople** (A.D. 680). Doctrine of Two Wills in Christ.
- **Nicaea** (A.D. 787). Sanctioned Image Worship.
- **Constantinople** (A.D. 869). Final Schism between East and West.
- **Rome** (A.D. 1123). Decided Bishops be appointed by Popes.
- **Rome** (A.D. 1139). An effort to heal Schism of East and West.
- **Rome** (A.D. 1179). To enforce ecclesiastical discipline.
- **Rome** (A.D. 1215). To do the bidding of Innocent III.

- **Lyons** (A.D. 1245). To settle quarrel of Pope and Emperor.
- **Lyons** (A.D. 1274). A new effort for union of East and West.
- **Vienne** (A.D. 1311). Suppressed the Templars.
- **Constance** (A.D. 1414-18). To heal Papal Schism. Burned Huss.
- **Basel** (A.D. 1431-49). To reform Church.
- **Rome** (A.D. 1512-18). Another effort to reform.
- **Trent** (A.D. 1545-63). To counteract the Reformation.
- **Vatican** (A.D. 1869-70). Declared the Infallibility of the Pope.
- **Vatican** (A.D. October 11, 1962). An effort to bring Christendom into one church. Largest ever. Continued for several years.