

**THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
AND ITS MESSAGE**

CMI/PVBG

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KDG / CHH 111**

1. **The Earliest Churches ...**
2. **The Suffering Church ...**
3. **The Great Compromise. Constantine.**
4. **The Era of Augustine.**
5. **The Early Middle Ages / Classical Educational Theory.**
6. **The Rise of Islam & Divided - Deluded Christianity.**
7. **The Radical Christians and the Earliest Reformers.**
8. **The Monastic Orders and the Days of Papal Division.**
9. **The Scholastics and the Challenges of the Renaissance.**
10. **The Humanists and their Spiritual "Cousins."**

Introduction:

Understanding History & Historical Culture of the Early Centuries of Christianity

This Church Ministries Institute course seeks to address the reasons for the early church's 'drift' away from its anchorage in the person and work of Christ, in Biblical truth, and in the faithful apostolic witness and interpretation of the New Testament. The history of the development of a Christianity sourced in dogma (in the name of defending the church against heresy) is a limited and often confused form of history since it is often

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written by those most interested in presenting their own false presuppositions and some very biased viewpoints.

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I am sorry to say that Church History (in general) and certainly most Evangelical and Fundamentalist history books were developed under the influence of earlier Reformed Church historians, who to a great degree accepted the Early Catholic and Middle-Ages Catholicism as the only church. The Reformations earliest leaders such as Luther, Zwingli and others originally thought they could reform the Roman Catholic Church [from which they came].

In addition the rejection of any real attention to the history of the Eastern churches gives a convoluted picture of the history of “the church.” The Reformation influenced churches, of course, joined the Roman Catholic church in rejecting all sects and break-off groups or independent congregations as erroneous and dangerous or just heretical. We will carefully discuss early Christianity’s ‘strange lack of understanding’ of the deeper teachings of Paul, John, James, Peter and the other writers. We will consider the implications of this flawed understanding for their day and for now.

1. The Earliest Churches ...

We will look closely at, the regretfully ‘poor Biblical understanding’ of the so-called

Apostolic

Fathers:

Clement of Rome {3—c100],
Ignatius, {d 117]
Hermas {Late 1st to early 2nd C]
Barnabas of Alexandria {Late 1st to early 2nd C]
Papias {60 to c130]
Polykarp {69 to c160]

Apologists :

Quadrates {Early 2nd Century] Writings Lost
Aristides {Early 2nd Century] Writings Lost
Justin Martyr {c100 to 165] Five Writings ~ Logos Concept

¹ Additional Notes on Church History’ - Dr. Marc S. Blackwell, Sr.

We will carefully discuss early Christianity’s ‘strange lack of understanding’ – the “Cures for Compromise” those deeper teachings of Paul, John, James, Peter and the other writers. The basic fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith – as clearly taught in Scripture and as clearly followed by the 1st Century Christians makes for ‘Good history’! You may ask why! There was and is a real possibility for failure in knowing events - as they really were. Where churches were established on an emotional and not on a truth-based foundation. The historic ‘who, what, where and when’ of “genuine” Christianity can allude us due to its having been under a long and drawn-out siege. The attack on ‘historic Christianity’ is commonly fixed on a sinister questioning of its key source, i.e. the Holy Scriptures! The church’s many intentional and ‘un-intentional’ detractors commonly overlook the Bible as primary source material for arriving at their versions of Christian History. The atheistic, or secular challengers to Christian history also add their confusion to the commotion. These ‘noise’ provided by the various self-proclaimed ‘representatives’ of Christian history is a noise of conflicting and hollow interpretive approaches. Examples of the many interpretive approaches include such variations as sourcing Christianity’s roots in: the Old Testament and Mosaic and/or Pharisaic Judaism. Further dangers came from the various influences of Greek & Roman culture and even in false foundations in personalities of the ‘Gospel Period’ - such as John the Baptist, Peter, and/or Christ, and of course, in the later so-called “Apostolic Fathers, etc. the danger is great. See 1 Corinthians 3.

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Tatian {110 to 172] *The Diatessaron*. ~Became a Gnostic
Athenagoras {2nd Century] *Apology on Resurrection* ~ **A platonist.**
Theopjilus {d 181] *Letter to Autolycus* ~ **Bishop of Antioch**
Melito {d 190] *Writings Lost* ~ *Bishop of Sardis*
Hegesippus {2nd Century] *Writings Lost* - *Converted Jew.*

The 3rd Century Church Fathers

Irenaeus of Smyrna;
Clement of Alexandria / Antioch;
Tertullian of Carthage;
Hippolytus of Rome;
Julius Africanus of Palestine
Origen of Alexandria / Caesarea
Cyprian of Carthage
Gregory Thaumaturgos, Palestine / Asia Minor

The weaknesses of these highly honored Christian historical figures is evident in their apologetic efforts were highly influenced to be reactions more than responses.

Basically, the generally non-Biblical reactions/responses of these ‘Early Century Leaders’ were based on natural theology. Their arguments were gleaned from their education in pagan philosophy and the law. They responded so - some would say - since they were responding by trying to vindicate Christianity on the basis of communicating within the boundaries of their generation’s Biblical illiteracy and preoccupation with Greek and Jewish philosophy. The Scriptures were used to some degree but often out of context.

These early “renowned” leaders often missed the most basic fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith – as clearly taught in Scripture and as clearly followed by the 1st Century Christians. ‘Good history’ will ask why! Many historians and philosophers, both modernists and Evangelical, have tried to explain their divergence and discrepancy – even their ‘drift’ away from matters of New Testament truth. Some blame this obvious incongruity (in relationship toward God’s Revealed Word) on compromise with legalistic Jewish philosophy, natural sociological degeneration, intrusion of Greek philosophy, or even the Apostles’ possible failure, i.e. their having only established the church on an emotional and not on a truth-based foundation.

The very difficulty of establishing the historic ‘who, what, where and when’ of “genuine” Christianity alludes to its having been under a long and drawn-out siege. The attack on ‘historic Christianity’ is commonly fixed on a sinister questioning of its key source, i.e. the Holy Scriptures!

The church’s many intentional and ‘un-intentional’ detractors commonly overlook the Bible as primary source material for arriving at their versions of Christian History. The atheistic, or secular challengers to Christian history also add their confusion to the commotion. These ‘noise’ provided by the various self-proclaimed ‘representatives’ of Christian history is a noise of conflicting and hollow interpretive approaches.

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Examples of the many interpretive approaches include such variations as sourcing Christianity's roots in: the Old Testament and Mosaic and/or Pharisaic Judaism, various influences from Greek & Roman culture, foundations in personalities of the 'Gospel Period' - such as John the Baptist, Peter, and/or Christ, and of course, in the influence or teachings of significant geographic regions, leading churches or renowned Apostles.

We would focus attention on the importance of having a Biblical concept of the nature of the church. It should be clearly contrasted with Israel and understood in its mystery sense – now fully revealed through full New Testament disclosure. Equally important, though, is an understanding of the purpose and influence of the church of Jesus Christ and its Apostles and especially the people that made-up these congregations. These congregations, then – of course – carried out its mission or for whatever reason or degree might well have failed to do so! Understanding how the Christian church was established, and especially why it was established (!) leads naturally to the question of how it was to be perpetuated! This subject of perpetuation has been seriously clouded by the passing of time – by history – or at least certain interpretations and so many of the denominationally selective chronicles of Christianity.

The Adventures and the Mis-adventures of the History of Christendom

Matthew 13

Parable of the Wheat and Tares

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Parable of the Tares Explained

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: **"He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.** 38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, **but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.** 39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. 40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

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43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Mark 4:30–32; Luke 13:18, 19

31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32 which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

Adventures and the Mis-adventures.

The earliest New Testament churches originally looked to God by faith alone and to Christ alone for the grace and hope of salvation! The early Christian was one who accepted responsibility for his or her own sin. They recognized that only the righteousness of Christ could save them and they understood that this righteousness was made available to them through the atoning work of Christ on the Cross. Their unity with God and with one another was accomplished by His Divine sacrifice on their behalf.

The early Christians understood that the hope of their Salvation was in the Redemption, Forgiveness, Adoption, Justification, Reconciliation, Regeneration and Resurrection - all through Christ and all available by faith in Him alone. The early church viewed the Old Testament as a prophetic assurance that God had providentially worked in history to bring events to the place where God would send His Son into the world. The incarnation of Christ would lead to God offering salvation to all through the sinless life, atoning death and resurrection of Christ. The earliest Christians accepted the New Covenant’s message as the basis for the victorious regenerating and inner-working of the Holy Spirit in this Age of Grace and this regeneration and work of the Spirit was the basis of their unity with their Lord.

This beginning to the Age of Grace brought the message of individual or personal faith that was established in the gift of inner liberty or competency and responsibility of the soul. Individual salvation was based on this personal decision of faith and was accomplished by God’s grace alone and completed through the Holy Spirit’s regeneration of the believer’s spirit that resulted from the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer. The Word of God was counted on to sanctify or separate the believer by the inner working of the Spirit of God. Their unity was found in their unity with the Spirit of God and in a unity with God, the Three-in-One.

Believers understood the New Testament promises that declared them to be priests (1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6; 5:10) with the ministry of prayerful intercession. The direct worship and communion with God was accomplished and available through Christ who was the believer’s mediator and High-priest. The New

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Testament period's earliest churches worshipped simply by focusing on the Priesthood of Believers and by using their open access in prayer to God. Their unity was in the service to one another as the people of God living lives to the praise and honor of God through the message of salvation in Christ.

Christian's gathered every Sunday to remember the victorious Resurrection of Christ and to live out a life of submission to Christ and one another in the "bond of peace" - the result of being born-again and becoming brothers and sisters in Christ. Their unity was in the sure and true victorious resurrection of Christ and in the resurrection power of Christ available to those who died to self and lived in and for Him. Their worship was formed out of humility and reverence. Their worship was orderly and simple fellowship or 'communion.' Their worship was focused on being equipped for service in evangelism. Their preaching, teaching and singing focused on the Truth of the Gospel message of salvation and on the new life attitudes called for in the Word of God.

The New Testament Epistles along with the Gospels were the basis for the new Christian interpretation and understanding the Old Testament's message. (See 1 Corinthians 10 as a classic example.) They viewed the Old Testament's teachings from this new perspective or in the 'new light' of Christ's Atoning death and victorious resurrection. They now understood the New Covenant's promises of salvation, of a new inner life by the Spirit of God and of the new mandate for service or witness — as the work of prejudice-free churches spreading out over all the known world to offer salvation to all men of all races.

These earliest Christians had a sure eternal hope that was firmly rooted in Christ's promise to return to Rapture His Saints and then, (following the Great Tribulation - on earth and the Marriage Feast of the Lamb - in heaven,) ... to establish a literal 1000 year long Kingdom on earth to vindicate Israel and all those who trust in the Lord. They understood that unbelievers would be - like Satan, himself, judged to eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire. Further they understood clearly that this world and its universe would also be judged, melted down and re-made into a New Heaven and New Earth and this would - together with the New Jerusalem be the joy of eternity for those that had trusted in Christ.

Worship included corporate and reverent prayers of thanksgiving, intercession, confession and contrition. "Public" worship was in reality semi-private and the focus was not one of primarily inviting an unsaved "public" to attend the churches. The Gospel together with the Apostolic Epistles were read and studied primarily for the edification of the believer as a rehearsal for their own preparedness and equipping as witnesses or evangelists. Evangelism primarily took place in the homes and "market places" of the world.

2. The Church at Smyrna

Rev. 2:8-11 A D 100-316

- **CHURCH HISTORY'S SECOND AXIOM.** The New Covenant provides freedom and a 'crown of life' for firmly facing trails through our Soul's Liberty and the Grace of our Lord.

I Cor 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves ... but our adequacy is from God, 6 Who also made us **competent** as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit.

Gal 5:1 "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (5:13) **Soul Liberty: "A free relationship with God without outside interference, mediation or proxy."** 2 Tim 2:1



- **SCRIPTURES' SECOND PROMISE.**

- **Rev. 2:10b.** "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'
- **James 1:12** "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

- **REMNANT VOICES OF REPENTANCE !**

Ten great persecutions: under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, and Diocletian.

- **Polycarp-Smyrna, Irenaeus-Lyons.**
- **Martyrdom of the Tens of Thousands!**
- **Ministering during the 2nd-century Quadratus is known for his teaching against paganism and Judaism and his Letter to Diognetus, related to accounts of early Christian martyrs!** Quadratus' Apology was edited by E. J. Goodspeed, Die ältesten Apologeten (1914; "The Oldest Apologists")

Though Christians recognized God as their Eternal King and the King of the Universe and Christ as King of King and Lord of Lords, they also recognized that until Christ literally returned to earth, after the Great Tribulation, He would not establish His Kingdom on earth. They looked forward to a future and an eternal unity with Christ in the New Heavens and the New Earth. They viewed Satan as the current reigning king of the earth and its worldly system.

This early church, following the Scriptures, remained simple and accepted no other leadership in their churches - other than - Pastors and Deacons. These servants of the church were mandated to care for the flock and to serve the needs of the saints. No authority was granted them or any others that would diminish the finished work of Christ or dilute the ministry of the Holy Spirit or remove the believer's role as a priest before

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God. Christ was the Head of the Church and the Spirit of God working through the Word of God its only source for Truth. Their unity was in their obedience to the truth and their service one for the other.

The “means of receiving grace” was limited to Christ’s atoning propitiating death and His resurrection power. Christ Jesus was viewed as the only Mediator between God and man. The ability, responsibility and opportunity for believing Christians to approach God in prayer was accepted as a universal right of all believers founded in the invitation of . The ‘Priesthood of the Believer’ was an accepted Biblical teaching that opened simple and direct access to God, through the Name or authority of the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Through the individual Christian’s prayers and through the public prayers of the saints the simplicity of faith was maintained. No spiritual power was recognized in either baptism or communion and there were no church leaders or officers who were viewed as being able to personally provide spiritual life or strength. Their’s was a unity of simple faith in the finished work of Christ Jesus. Nothing other than faith was viewed as necessary to allow the believer to receive the benefits of God’s Grace. The Bible was the centre of early Christian Worship.

2. The Suffering Church ...

History testifies that both from the Christians and those opposed to Christianity that it multiplied its converts very rapidly in the first seventy years of its existence. On the day of Pentecost we are told that three thousand were converted and numbers of these converts were visitors from various parts or Provinces of the Roman Empire. The Acts of the Apostles records the spread of the Gospel to Antioch, Ephesus and far beyond - even to Spain. In keeping with the teachings of Christ the Christians spread out to preach the gospel throughout the world. Among heathen historians like Tacitus, we read of the sufferings of the early Christians, as well. Their unity was strengthen in their mutual hardships and sufferings for the name of Christ.

There was the Neronian persecution, which lasted from 64–68 a.d., and Tacitus records that a multitude had turned to Christ in Rome. In Ephesus, Pliny, the governor of the province of Bithynia asks the Emperor Trajan what he shall do about enforcing the law against the Christians. Pliny was concerned that there were so many in the cities, the villages and rural districts who were becoming a part of the “contagion of that superstition.”

Justin Martyr, a pastor in Rome declares that Christianity was so widely dispersed that there was ...”not one single race of men, whether barbarians or Greeks, or whatever they may be called, among whom prayers

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and the giving of thanks are not offered through the name of the crucified Jesus.” The early church was also unified in its commitment to carry the Gospel to all men.

Clement of Alexandria says that the gospel was diffused over the whole world among Greeks and barbarians alike, nation by nation and village by village.

Tertullian of Carthage in the famous passage in the “Apologeticus” says, “Their outcry is that the state is besieged; that Christians are in the fields, the fortresses, the islands; they (the Romans) lament as a dire calamity that every sex, age, condition and even rank, is going over to this profession.”

Another Clement, Clement of Rome (born 30 a.d and died 95 a.d. pastored a church in Rome mentioned by Paul in Philippians (4:3). The earliest churches found their unity, strength and grace through the reading, study and teaching of all of God’s Word both the Old and New Testaments. Clement’s letter of encouragement to the Corinthians was saturated with the language of the New Testament. He quoted from 1 and 2 Peter, James, John and Luke. He based his own thinking clearly upon Paul’s Epistles. His use and clear understanding of the Apostle Paul’s Epistles the Romans, Corinthians, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Timothy, Titus, and his references to James, Peter, Hebrews and the Acts of the Apostles gives us some idea of how wide spread copies of the New Testament letters had travelled.

Ignatius, as pastor of the church in Antioch as early as a.d. 69 led his congregation in the face of the harsh persecutions of Domitian. Arrested for his faith under Emperor Trajan Ignatius was condemned to die in 107 a.d. in a Roman amphitheater. Ignatius was mauled to death by wild beasts. Ignatius wrote letters of encouragement to the Roman Christians, a letter to Polycarp, the pastor in Smyrna, and to some of the other Asiatic churches, as well. He identifies that his beliefs were based on the Gospels and in his letter to the church at Philadelphia (Philad. 5) he uses the Gospels as inspired true Truth from God and equal to the Old Testament Prophets. In his letter to the church at (Smyrna. 3) he rejects Gnostic and Mystic ideas that were surfacing at that time and defends the truth that after Christ was resurrected, Christ had a real (though glorified) body. Ignatius uses Luke 24:36–39 to support this truth.

Polycarp, one of the pastors of Second Century Smyrna was martyred about 156 a.d.

A Roman Judge demanded that he give up his allegiance Christ or be burned to death. Polycarp answered, “Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me any wrong: how can I blaspheme ... my Savior?” Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John, who had been one of the earlier pastors in Ephesus. Polycarp also wrote a personal letter that expresses that his hope of salvation was based on the fact of our

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Lord's resurrection and ascension to glory. Polycarp based his faith on the teachings of our Lord recorded in the Gospel of Matthew and of John, and on the Epistles of both Peter and Paul.

Another faithful Second Century voice came from Papias, who was born about 74 a.d. and suffered a Roman martyrdom about 163 a.d. Papias was the first pastor in Hierapolis. In Colossians 4:13 Paul referred to this pastor and his congregation - and Paul encouraged the Christians of this region of Greece by explaining that Paul's co-worker ... Epaphras [also a citizen and believer from Colossi] has a great zeal for the believer's in Colossi, and for those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis." This Second Century pastor serving in Hierapolis was himself a disciple of Polycarp. Pastor Papias was especially appreciated because he often shared his first hand information and knowledge of many of the apostles and their teachings. Many of the intimate friends and co-workers of the apostles were known to Papias, as well. Men like Irenæus and Eusebius, the first known 'old catholic' historian of the following Century quoted and depended on Papias as sources in their own writings.

Papias was especially well known for his love for the Apostles and his close relationships and working friendship with the Apostles. Papias tells us that Mark was a companion of Peter and that Mark had written one of the gospels. He knew that Matthew primarily wrote one of the Gospels to give the Jewish people a better understanding of Christ ministry to them - even though they had rejected Him. Papias also knew much about John's fourth gospel (the last of the four Gospels to be written). Papias prefaced one of his letters by imitation the style of Luke (in chapter 1:1-4).

Papias loved referring to and quoting from the gospels and the Epistles of John and Peter. Papias had read the Book of Revelation and maintained it was divinely inspired. He also took great care to be sure that everything he stated was originally "given from the Lord to the Faith, and that all he taught would "spring from the truth itself." The purpose of respecting the New Testament Scriptures was to guarantee that they would remain the source of truth and (of course) of true unity in Christ Jesus.

It is interesting to note that between the time of his youth and his old age all revelation from God had moved from oral teaching and 'prophetic' utterances to the place of written books. As the apostles and their co-workers all died the Truth was accepted by all as the inspired, written and final Word of God, the Bible. Papias (died about 163 a.d.) while pastoring in Hierapolis. Papias as a student or disciple of John and as a co-worker of Polycarp, had confirmed how the Gospels and Epistles of the Apostles had been faithfully written and effectively used in the early churches. His ministry would be missed.

Almost immediately after the period of the Apostles the influence of Greek philosophy was to be felt eroding Christian teaching and attacking the unity of the Spirit. The Legalistic Ebionites and the Mystical and

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Philosophical Platonistic or dualists often in one or another part of the Gnostic Cults severely broke into the unity of the faith. Gnostics attacked every church in all of the Roman Provinces. In an attempt to defend itself against the many cults and schisms various churches formed regional alliances and adopted defensive tactics. In their attempt to defend themselves from errors these new alliances led to an increased control in many regions. Unity was increasingly being mistaken as an organizational matter. Organization unification and its natural result, an increased control over the congregation became the norm in every metropolitan center or large city.

Additional Reading: 'Notes on Church History' -

The relationship, or dependence, of Christianity upon a particular conception of its origin and/or of its Founder has historically been an object of vigorous argument and attack by its various antagonists. Some, (usually modernists but now as-often-as-not post-modernists), prefer to 'de-construct' Christian history to make room for their anti-supernatural interpretations. Others, claiming academic and intellectual reasoning simply reduce Christian history to simplistic mythological proportions. They do this by stripping Jesus Christ of His historical robes and then leave Christianity naked – as nothing more than a 'manner of life' that is dependent upon a concept or interpretation centered in the individual opinions of each and every person whether-or-not they have any historical or truth base from which to reason.

Bible-based Christianity accepts Christ as a real historical person (the God-man) living in a definite point in time and space. The believing Christian, personally (in real time and space), accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Savior – Redeemer, living Lord and coming King. The facts are based on the sound and sure representations Breathed/ Inspired by God the Holy Spirit through the Four Gospels and are interpreted factually and infallibly by Spirit directed Apostles who maintain His supernatural and sovereign power, His present mediatorial work, and His coming return for His Saints, to set-up His Kingdom, to judge the unbelieving world and to establish His heavenly reign of righteousness with life eternal for all that believed.

AELIA CAPITOLINA

Jerusalem's pre-AD 70 history is the history of a further frustrated Jerusalem. Under the insane murderers and immoral Roman leadership governance of the city was much of a sham. Jerusalem would further deteriorate, something the debauched dynasty of the Herrods could not reverse. The failed and compromised Jewish High Priests offered no real hope for Jerusalem or Israel, either. The new Jewish sect under the pastoral leadership of James, was at first bound to its base in Jerusalem. These early Jewish converts was known, at first, as the sect of the "Nazarenes." They would suffer horribly under multiple attacks by Judaism's violent Sadducees.

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From AD 35 to 55 the Roman governed Jerusalem remained in a state of religious and political fluctuation. These periodic uproars continued to breakout due to the Jewish Zealots and also due to on-going conversion of Jewish citizens and the imprisonments of the Apostles, of the continued harassment that these new followers of the "Nazarene" were experiencing, of Peter having to stand before the Sanhedrin to defend or explain his message, the periodic beatings of the Apostles, and the unrelenting opposition by the Council of the Pharisees, etc. In Acts 2:45, 4:32-37; Survival itself required these "Nazarenes" to 'pool' their belongings.

To make things worse, there were the multiple waves of general persecution, Acts 4:1, 13, 18-21, 29 and the public opposition, 5:17, 27-28; 40-42. Then, there were the further low points for the City's and Nation, when: Stephen was Martyred Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-60 and when Saul's and others vented their Pharisaical hatred. Saul, and his like, were driven to hunt-down the 'disciples of Jesus' who had recently fled to Damascus due to these recent years of persecution! Acts 9 records Saul's threatenings and this attempt to purge the Christians by slaughtering them.

The extremely dubious history for the next period comes primarily from a self-serving 26 year old Priest, Joseph Ben Matthias ('Josephus') of Maccabean heritage. Along-side of being history's primary, though factually incompatible, resource, Josephus' personal character and veracity was most questionable! His questionable integrity is demonstrated by his failed priesthood being abandoned for a life as a rebel commander, a protege of the Herrods and even serving as a Roman Imperial Advisor.

By 64, the current procurator of Judaea, Gessius Florius, was especially harsh in his taxation and cruelties. The general deterioration of Jerusalem continued and now out brakes of unrest were leading to Florius using even greater and greater brutality in his efforts to crush these rebellions. His wife, Berenice, (thought to be a superficial 'God-fearer') tried to no avail to intervene in the violence. Jerusalem's plight turned when Nero appointed Titus Flavius Vespasianus with some 60000 soldiers in the form of four Roman legions. Titus marched through Israel conquering and destroying in his march toward Jerusalem. The city was an ungoverned disgrace to itself and its God.

Secularist Jewish nationalists and radicals (Zealots) like John of Gischala and then Simon Ben Giora prepared a futile and disjointed effort to defend the city from a steadily approaching Titus. Jerusalem would be destroyed. The Roman Tenth Legion camped nearby the destroyed city. Some few wealthier Jews would return to visit but none were allowed near the old Temple's mount. Christians rarely returned and saw no future connection to the city for their Christian message other than that day when Christ would return to literally

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establish His Millennial Kingdom. (Ref: Simon Sebag Montefiore, Jerusalem: The Biography, 2011, Weidenfield & Nicolson, Orion House, London.)

The history of the early church is primarily a history of voluntary missionary outreach (The Acts), involuntary dispersions of believers due to persecution, and the Jewish War that ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Secular and nationalistic issues that led to Jerusalem's fall should include: The Roman procurators style of rule from A.D. 44 onward. They had been most oppressive and especially corrupt. In A.D. 66, a Jewish uprising occurred in Caesarea. Florus plundered the Temple, and Jewish Zealotry grew. Finally, Jerusalem came under direct Roman attack and some one million or more were slaughtered, over one hundred thousand were made slaves, thousands of the choicest young men were selected for gladiatorial exhibitions. The Temple was destroyed under Titus, (Newman, 117-119)

For Christianity all these disastrous events played a vital historical role:

(A.) This final 'dispersion' of Jews and Jewish Christians guaranteed the spread of the gospel at a much quicker if not much broader level than otherwise imagined.

(B.) Christianity was freed from the previous influence and domination of Jewish believers, the Church at Jerusalem (with potential seniority) and the great catastrophe was a direct fulfillment of the Lord's predictions as recorded in Matt. 21:43; 23:37-39 and in Luke 21:20-28.

The writings of the Early Church.

(Focus: Early Canonics.)

We should first establish that an Apostle was one who had been a personal witness of Jesus Christ, and in addition was commissioned to "propagate the truth by oral announcement" (Neander, 73). The "gift of prophecy" was also given by the Spirit to the church for the purpose of edifying the church with the New Covenant message with its interpretive role over the Older Testament. But as long as the Apostles lived, and the prophetic gift continued in the churches the oral giving of the New Covenant message would be regarded as the prime source of Christian knowledge. As they became available, the writings of the Apostles were considered equal to this special oral message and were carefully collected and used with the Old Testament.

A clear evidence of a New Testament book's validity was its ability to be compared to all pre-existing books without conflict in content or concept. Their original writing was presided over by both the direct inspiration (breathing) of the Holy Spirit and was preserved (canonized) by Divine Providence. The inferiority of the very best of the writings of the time and the fact that no pagan or Greek or other philosophical teaching or influences can be found further confirm the selection process of the New Testament canon.

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By c. 150 a definite New Testament "canon" was recognizable and available. General Christian consciousness of the acceptable books - held over centuries secured the list of book we now have. Some would include or exclude mention of certain of the books, but the reason for this is speculative. The fact of divine protection, and direction of this process by the Holy Spirit is beyond doubt!

All the Gospels except that of Mark (A. D. 65) were probably written after the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). The Gospel and Epistles and Apocalypse (Revelation) of the Apostle John were written in his later years. Irenaeus stated that the Gospel of John was, in part, written as a polemic against the heretic Cerinthus and the Ebonite denial of the deity of Christ. (Archbishop Usher, *Historia dogmatica controversiae inter orthodoxos et pontificios de Scripturis et sacris vernaculus*. ed. Wharton: London 1690)

The First (A.D. 96) and Second Letter A.D. 140) of Clement (addressed to Corinth), Shepherd of Hermas (A.D. 97 or 140 from Rome), The Seven Letters of Bishop Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 111 addressed to Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Rome, Philadelphia, and Smyrna.) The Letter of Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna (A.D. 155 addressed to Philippi), The Letter of Barnabus (A.D. 138 A strongly legalistic collection), The Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord, (A.D. 125, by Bishop Papias of Hierapolis, fragmentary, Chiliastic), The Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, (A.D. 120 Moral and Ecclesiastical precepts.) The Preaching of Peter (Praedicatio Petri, pseudonymous and fragmentary.)

The Early Heresies.

(Focus: Gnostics).

[A classroom discussion of both Marcion, and Montanus will further the theme of heresy in the Second Century and beyond].

New Testament heretical chronological history should begin with Dositheus, a contemporary of Jesus, who according to the "Clementines" was a disciple of John the Baptist, who declared himself to be the 'hestos' (divine manifestation). Simon Magnus (Acts 7) added to the Jewish element a strong mixture of the heathen.

The Gnostics:

An eclectic religious cult which included influences and teachings of old pagan cosmological and myths; Oriental (Persian, Babylonian, and Indian) and Greek pagan philosophies; the Judaism of Philo and mixtures of Christian teaching and that of heretical and cultish forms of Christianity. In Irenaeus' book "Against Heresies" he indicates that numerous and varied groups clearly existed. Saturnus headed a Syrian school of Gnosticism;

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In Egypt, Basilides led another school. In Rome, Valentinian. Yet, Marcion (138, of Pontus) and his followers seem to have been the most influential of the groups linked with Gnosticism. (Cairns, E.E., *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 1954, 107) Read: Colossians 1:19; 2:9. 'Gnosis', a supernatural knowledge supposedly obtained by divine revelation, gave the 'gnostikoi' (the men who know) a 'higher knowledge.' The Gnostics believed they were the only true and acceptable universal religion. Using heathen mysteries, mystical experience, symbolic forms of enchantment and by practicing asceticism higher -redemptive- life was to be achieved.

The Gnostic doctrines: Originating in (Persian) Zoroastrianism dualism was central to Gnostic thought. In Zoroasterism dualism had been physical, i.e. two antagonistic principles -light and darkness. In the Gnostic's interpretation of dualistic philosophy light and darkness became a complex metaphysical and antagonistic dualism of spirit and matter. The world of matter under the governance of evil was from all eternity in violent conflict with the world of the spirit ruled by the 'good god.'

Man: The Alexandrian theory of speculative cosmogony and theogony theorised that from the hidden god there emanated a long series of divine essences (aeons) and the further away the spiritual element moved it lost its power until finally it made contact with matter and was imprisoned in a material body, i.e. man was created. The Creator or Demiurge [Demiurgos] was identified with the Old Testament God of the Jews, Jehovah-God. He was viewed as inferior, antagonistic and ignorant of the 'good god'.

Redemption: Salvation was liberation from the world of matter and made a partaker of the world of light. The 'Highest Aeon' came as a redeemer to secure perfect emancipation. Jesus Christ was this redeemer, but atonement for sin through death was not required. Only a teacher was needed! The Gnostic view of Christ was Docetic, i.e. Christ could not unite with the finite - a body, thus illusion was accepted for Christ. (Nygren, Heick and Neander)

THE TEN GREAT ROMANS PERSECUTIONS

Early Persecutions: Diocletian and Decius and beyond: Ten persecutions are commonly mentioned by the Christian of this period. Three of these were especially marked with bitterness and prevalence throughout the Roman Empire.

Christians had experienced persecution from the beginning. Often from the Jewish leadership's hands, but before long on local levels through Roman governors. By A.D. 49 all Jews were being persecuted by edict from the imbecile Emperor Claudius. By A.D. 64 Nero (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17; the abrupt ending to the book of Acts may leave us with a sense of the cost of the openly persecuted Christians, with the burning of Rome itself (Pliny, others) who even accused the Christians of the deed.

Vedder, In his "Short History of the Baptists," states that ... "The first general and systematic persecution was begun by Decius Trajan (249-251). Fabian of Rome, Alexander of Jerusalem and Cyprian of Carthage are

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some who perished in this persecution." Yet, A. H. Newman, in his "Manual of Church History" indicates the early persecutions may have been more organised and wider-spread than Vedder acknowledged. In A.D. 81-96 Persecution of Christians under Domitian (the son of Jewish persecutor Vespasian and Flavia Domitilla) were based on his demand that everyone worship him as God - Jupiter, and Lord. Many Romans, Flavius Clemens, others were killed, exiled to the island of Pontia, John to Patmos, etc, The first Epistle of Clement of Rome refers to "sudden and repeated calamities and adversities." See also the Second Church of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, Rev. 2.

The Apologists. (Polycarp, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras & Theophilus of Antioch.) Under the influence of men such as Polycarp of Smyrna (d. 155) a disciple of the Apostle John, a dogmatic spirit grew in the process of repulsing Gnosticism. The Apologist and Polemicists made an attempt to preserve the peculiarities of Christianity against Gnosticism. Neader reminds us that Christianity "wore a polemic aspect and would keep no terms with the enemy... and ... it endeavoured to satisfy the want which had given birth to Gnosticism by a gnosis of its own, built on the ground of faith ('pistis') and animated by a Christian spirit."

Montanism: Vedder informs us that Montanus was a native of Phrygia, a converted priest of Cybele, and began his teachings about 150. Two key women left their husbands and became evangelists, Maximilla and Priscilla (Prisca). Montanus taught three central ideas:

(1.) Churches should include only true believers through whom the Holy Spirit gives special revelations, gifts of prophecy, divine inspiration, ecstatic tongues and trances all mixed with soothsaying and divination

(2.) The Chiliastic doctrine: the speedy coming of Christ to reign with His saints for a thousand years, and these teachings were tinged with fanaticism and this led to their,

(3.) emphasis on ascetism and discipline. They were not condemned as heretics, but as an independent or schismatic church (Moller: Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia.)

Manicheanism, similar to Gnosticism, founded by Manichaeus (216-276) of Mesopotamia. Christian thought, Zoroastrianism, and asceticism with a strong priestly caste and celibate practices all led to a thoroughgoing dualistic philosophy.

Useful Excerpts abbreviated from
Renald Showers's Two Millennia of Church History

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(A recommended Textbook and Source for Reading & Research)

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH (100-313 A.D.)

Spontaneous Roman Persecution. From 100 to approximately 250 A.D.

Roman persecution erupts in certain localities. Many Christians become martyrs.

Planned Roman Persecution.

*Officials throughout the empire are ordered
to arrest Christians and give them an ultimatum: Deny your faith in Jesus
Christ, or die. It becomes official policy to destroy Christianity. Vast numbers
of Christians refuse to deny Jesus and become martyrs, often as public
entertainment in large arenas. Yet the church grows stronger and expands
throughout the empire.*

*Metropolitan City Centres, as the focal point of urban Christianity also contends with two
major, divisive issues: When should Easter be celebrated, and what should be done with (the lapsie)
professing Christians who deny their faith to escape persecution?*

*Development of Views and Practices. During the persecution, the title Catholic
(meaning "universal") is applied to the organized church throughout the Roman
Empire. Some leaders begin advocating the concepts of apostolic succession (the
idea that the apostles authority is passed to key church leaders) and the
primacy of Peter (the idea that Peter was the foremost apostle).*

*Some leaders in the eastern segment of the church develop the allegorical (as opposed to
literal) method of interpreting the Bible. This method and the influence of
Greek philosophy cause some leaders to reject and attack chiliasm (the view
known today as Premillennialism) & the original eschatological position of the
church. Some leaders begin writing and preaching anti-Semitic concepts. A cycle
of feast days develop: Easter is observed universally by 300 A.D., some observe
Christ's birthday on December 6, and some begin the practice of Lent. The fish
becomes a symbol of Christianity. Some begin baptizing infants. Construction of
church buildings begins in the early 300s. Some begin to regard communion as a
sacrifice. Some begin praying to dead saints.*

*Development of Organization. Around 125 A.D. local assemblies (especially in larger
metropolitan cities) begin elevating one elder in authority over others. He is called the monarchical
(ruling) bishop*

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of the local church. These bishops were initially equal in authority with each other. By the 200s, local churches throughout the Roman Empire are grouped into divisions paralleling the diocesan political divisions of the empire. The bishop of the largest local assembly in the largest city of each church diocese receives the title of metropolitan bishop and has authority over the other bishops in his diocese. By 313 A.D. the church is well organized and large (perhaps some sixty million members).

The Last Major Persecution and the “Heresies” & Schisms

Diocletian began the last great persecution (303-311). He ordered the cessation of meetings of Christians, the destruction of churches, imprisonment, destruction of Scriptures by fire and a later edict ordering the Christians to sacrifice to the pagan gods upon pain of death if they refused to do so. (Bettenson, p.20, Eusebius, Church History, VIII:2-12) . Note these Schism: Ebonite's, Alogi, Docetae, Dynamic and Modalistic Monarchianism.

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More Notes on the Various Schisms

The Hypostases: Arius [Theos Deuteros] and Athanasius (Also noting the Originistic Party of Eusebius of Caesarea). Discuss Apollinarius, Bishop of Laodicea (d. 312): [Christ's 'logos' took the place of his human 'pneuma'- spirit].

3. The Great Compromise. Constantine.

In 311, an edict of toleration was published, confirmed in 313, and with the triumph of Constantine in 323 as sole emperor, Christianity became practically the "state religion."

The simplicity of Grace ... and the simplicity of the core teachings of Biblical Truth ...were almost forgotten Biblical teaching. In an effort to respond to error of one type - the errors of another type entered swiftly into the churches of the Roman Provinces. The simple Christian faith had been modified and brought under the control of these powerful regional churches and in time it would be a lost memory over time.

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Pastors of the larger city congregations added new titles such as "priest" and "bishop" that reflected their expanding authority. Ever-expanding claims of mediatorial authority led to the powers known as clerisy or "sacerdotalism." Usually the larger city churches also added a regional control and attempted to form a power structure over the regional churches. The churches also created a new "liturgy" or worship experience that used a mixture of adapted old Jewish offices and rites, some Heathen practices and some twisted New Testament ordinances - mixing them altogether to make a new liturgy or uniquely symbolic way of worshipping God.

Then too an increased mystical and figurative spiritual message also led to new claims of priestly power - the ability to forgive, to offer or withhold salvation and to use regulations and discipline as a way of sanctification for the congregation. These liturgies with their "Papal-like" authoritative declarations and new doctrinal interpretations moved the Christian faith away from the simplicity of truth and faith to one of rituals and obedience. These added rituals increasingly took first place and ultimately overwhelmed the Bible.

These new dominant ideas attacked the simplicity of the original core truths that were the focus of the early church's unity. These new - more complex - Church Traditions kept coming quickly and pre-occupied the church as pronouncements of councils and bishops. These new creedal statements would dominate and compete with the Scriptures themselves and eventually were accepted as equal to the Scriptures. The Catholic Councils were meant to resolve issues, stop heresies and guide the doctrinal disputes in the church and they did have a seemingly good effect but (in fact) they also diverted the church away from its spiritual roots in the Scriptures themselves.

While some problems had been resolved by the Great Catholic Councils - the solving of a problem (doctrinal or otherwise) by a denomination's or church's vote opened the church to mistake organizational and administrative unity as equal to the true Unity of the Spirit. They were officially called the Church's "Tradition." These new "Traditions" and their corresponding "Rituals" taught that the sacred (the Divine -i.e. God Himself) could be approached, engaged with and/or activated by elaborate symbolic and mystical phenomenon. These new mystical rituals and liturgical forms would be known as 'the sacraments' or in other words ... they would be accepted as "the means" or paths or acts that "provided grace from God to those obedient adherents."

If I can review matters in another way, we see that the last living Apostle, John, though having pastored one of the churches located in Ephesus, had his pastorate ended with imprisonment on the Island of Patmos.

John's imprisonment took place at the beginning of the 2nd Century a.d., During the last years of John's ministry, his pupil Polycarp (who would be martyred later on - about 155 a.d.) would become one of the pastors in Smyrna.

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By the late Second Century many of the churches and leaders that were found in larger cities throughout the various Roman Provinces were completely changed! They openly gave its leaders an authority or an undue amount of respect that had never been taught in Scripture. These pastor's new influence would continued to grow as they became known as powerful defenders of the faith! Regrettably, more and more of the "pastors" in larger centers took on the name of Bishop or Arch-bishop to indicate that they were the pastors of a large metropolitan city or area and should be granted more authority. Examples of these next generation of famous pastor's - now called "bishops," included such men as Origen of Alexandria, Egypt. Irenæus was another famous pastor from Lyon, and there was Tertullian and Cyprian both who pastored in Carthage and of course Eusebius who was from Caesarea.

With the end of the Second Century and the beginning of the Third Century a number of famous teachers called "Apologists" surfaced. The "apologists" were self-appointed defenders of the church against all the false Roman attacks and all of the extreme cultish ideas of the Gnostics. These Christian philosophers were called "Apologists" - a term based on the Greek word for Explaining and Defending an idea. They were also given this title because "apologia" described their efforts to defend and explain Christianity to the Caesars, Governors and Judges of the Roman Empire and its Provinces

One great controversy erupted in the early 300s over the teachings of a North African priest named Arius. Influenced by Greek rationalism, Arius argued for an absolute monotheism that denied the deity of Jesus and claimed that He was a created being. The Roman Emperor Constantine, had ended the persecution of the church in a.d. 313, then called the Council of Nicea in 325 to deal with the uproar. Arius's arch opponent was Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, whose personal secretary was Athanasius who for the next forty-five years defended the Nicene formula. He taught that the members of the Trinity are coequal, coessential, and coeternal. He powerfully linked the doctrines of the Trinity and salvation. Athanasius - possibly the last of the Apologists was willing to suffer any punishment or persecution to defend the Gospel.

Then, too, there were the "Polemicists" - who took on the errors of Sects and Cults and tried to defend Christianity by their strong defense and logical arguments. The pastors of large cities are known in history but little is known about all of the pastors and churches in all of the surrounding smaller towns through the Roman Provinces. One thing is clear - they were all surrounded by Roman and Greek pagans. Since some of the more famous teachers and even some of the pastors had been educated in Greek philosophy before becoming Christians - they brought dangerous "baggage" with them. This knowledge of philosophy and of the historic Greek philosophers often led them away from the Scriptures and made them far too dependent on philosophy in their defense of Christianity.

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Though these early “defenders of the faith” were quite successful in demonstrating that Christianity had no fear of philosophy or of reason, they were commonly drawn into philosophic debates that would later lead many of the churches to accept wrong interpretations of the Scripture, wrong doctrine - that had been mingled with pagan (i.e. Plato’s and other philosophic teachings). Men like Tertullian and Augustine (for example) struggled to keep the Scriptures, tradition and philosophy apart, [and with all the good they might have done,] they nonetheless led the church down the pathway to greater and greater error.

The ancient church of the third and fourth centuries was plagued with false teaching that challenged the deity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Whether it was the teachings of Arius or a group called the Pneumatomachians, the Son and the Spirit were regarded as subordinate to the Father. Today’s doctrine of the Trinity was a product of a series of debates and councils, sparked in large part by heretical teaching from within the church. It was the collaboration of three friends, the Three Cappadocians—Basil of Caesarea (circa 330–379), Gregory of Nazianzus (circa 329–389), and Gregory of Nyssa (circa 330–394)—that produced the victory over many of these heresies.

The Fourth through Ninth Century was a time period of genuine spiritual darkness. The Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches would organize themselves to new levels and though the monastic orders did much that was good the world was plunged into spiritual darkness caused by these churches just as paganism had done in any previous age. The true Bible-believing Christians had been driven into secrecy and true and faithful congregations were only to be found outside of these politically driven religious organizations and orders.

The Edict of Milan declared by Constantine in 313 A.D. had compromised the Catholic church by bringing it into a church-state relationship where the head of the church was the Roman Emperor. Christians with an independent or “free” or local view of the church have long regarded the Constantinian Summit as the final straw or turning point of a weakening Christianity. This fall of Christianity is considered “almost as calamitous” as the fall of Adam and Eve. The state would rule over the church until the year 800 when Pope Pepin reversed this arrangement and placed the church over the state. But either way Christianity had succumbed to evil and Rome and Babylon would be one and the same for the rest of known history. There were, of course, some who rejected this new worldly relationship of State & Church. Some withdrew into cults and sect, others withdrew into independent congregations harboring in the mountains and out of the way villages. Still others turned to seclusion and the Monastic life of solitude - a sort of private protest.

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The story of Nicea, 325, (now: Isnik, Turkey) and the great Christological debates around the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ is covered in our classroom and in almost every text on history.

Understanding the Times.

An Opinion on Constantine and his World of 'Byzantium.'

drMSBSr

Constantine, a genuine Christian in the opinion of many, most likely embraced Christianity as a political decision more than for any other reason. He was a dangerous and murderous aristocratic politician and more brutal than most historians want to remember. He most like never gave up his father's religion a belief in the "Unconquered Sun." He would, while claiming to be a Christian, have his own eldest son, Crispus Caesar and then his mother, Fausta killed under the guise of defending Christian morality. Following the Edict of Milan, Constantine would soon defeat Licinius and then would unite his empire and refocus the Roman Empire on an Eastern direction. Now refocused on the Bosphorus, the second Rome, the city of Byzantium, to be know, in time, as Constantinople would dominate much of world history for centuries. His strategy was to center his interpretation of Christianity around his own Patriarch further diminishing the influence of the Roman Bishop by adding Patriarchs in Antioch and Alexandria. Jerusalem, or Aelia Capitolina (or just 'Aelia') would find a revival of Christian influence due to Constantine's decision to restore it and due to his mother, Helena, making the city her own personal project. Helena should be credited for "finding" every sort of 'Sacred Archaeological Christian Site' and every sort of 'holy relic' that Aelia (Jerusalem) could possibly deliver. The fact that none of these sites were correct and that all of the relics were falsified made no difference to Helena. She started the practice of building amazing churches as monuments to these imagined sites on the Mount of Olives: the grand and opulent Ascension Church, then too, the "Holy Sepulchre church and others. The goal was to moch the Temple Mount and to show the failure of the Jewish God.

Now transformed into a 'city of grand churches,' Aelia, according to Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea should still be viewed with suspicion. Eusebius questioned whether this city could ever be accepted again as Constantine and his mother had hope to make it: "The City of God." Of course over the previous centuries the city had changed bac-and-forth between pagans, Jews and now even a time of Christian governance. Through all of this a small number of Jews had quietly and humbly continued to live in or most often, near the city - though they were rarely allowed to pray or worship anywhere in the city. This anti-semitism remained a genuine influence on Catholicism in all of its forms and would much later still be true of most all the European Reformers, as well.

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Constantine was 'baptized' on his death bed and divided his empire between his three sons and to a lesser degree to two nephews. These 'new leaders' would fight for twenty some years. The periodic rebel Jewish uprising once again occurred at his time and the Christians of *Aelia* were massacred and this rebellion was brutally reversed by Gallus Caesar another cousin of the emperor. But the new emperor, Julian - one of the Nephews of Constantine - reversed Hadrian and Constantine's anti-semitic acts and restored the Jews to their city once again. Julian also returned his empire to the paganism of the Sun. Julian would see his empire eventually falling into the hands of Theodosius I who would return the empire to Christianity (391 AD).

One should note the **Illyrian Scholar Jerome**. Beginning as a hermit in Syria, he would become the secretary to Damasus I, the then Bishop of Rome. Damasus is credited for declaring himself in the succession of Peter. Both men were involved in scandals and accused of adultery. Jerome and Paula were supposedly exonerated but both had to leave Rome and they set out for Aelia. The sexual accusations and temptations would plague Jerome and the church as never before. Jerome would 'retire to Bethlehem' and focus on translating the Hebrew Bible into Latin.

Then **Theodocius II and his Empress (Augusta) Eudocia** followed and a time of hermitage and the new 'militant' self-flagellating monastics surfaced. Anti-semitism continued and more grand and new churches were built in all the major cities of the Empire, Aelia included - especially since Empress Eudocia made it her 'second home.' By 428 Nestorius was appointed as Constantinople's new Patriarch. He especially opposed those who were referring to Mary as "Theotokos" - the Mother (or Bearer) of God, but preferred "Christokos" or 'Bearer of Christ.' all of this reignited the outstanding Christological disputes and the Monophysites now insisted that Christ had one nature simultaneously human and divine. with Theodocius II deceased, his sister Empress Pulcheria called the next 'Catholic Council' to "resolve the debate..

**Further Useful Excerpts abbreviated from
Renald Showers's Two Millennia of Church History**

(A recommended Textbook Source)

Missionary Activity.

Early 300s A.D. See more regarding the Celts of Britain become true believers in Jesus before the Angles and Saxons invade. 5th CENTURY A.D. Ireland converts to

Celtic Christianity through the missionary work of Patrick, a British, Celtic Christian. By 496 A.D. the king of the Franks and his people adopt Christianity.

Columba, an Irish Christian, leads in the evangelization of Scotland.

Church Councils and Theological Disputes. From 313 to 590 A.D. the church faces

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theological disputes concerning the person of Jesus Christ, the person of the Holy Spirit, the nature of man, and how man is saved. Several church councils convene to examine and settle these issues.

4. The Era of Augustine.

[1.] The General History of Early Christianity: The Remnant Christians.

Key Fifth Century CE cities were Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem.

Eastern Empire Cities, Antioch (Orantes), [Further East] Edessa and Niseis are rarely known.

The dominance of two languages: Greek and Syriac (Earlier Aramaic and Hebrew Isa 36:1-14 or 2 Kings 18:17-29]

Note the dominance of the ancient Persian Royal Road (See: Marco Polo / The Silk Road).

The world's 1st. Christian Kingdom "Osthoene" & Capital of Edessa (200 AD).

The greatest of the Eastern Kingdoms was Armenia & its Capital of Ani (300 AD)]

Then Georgia, Nubia (Nile), and of course the Byzantine.

Central to all of this expansion was Persia (Example 16,000 Nestorians Martyred) with the twin cities Seleucia-Ctesiphon (successors to Babylon) - the most populous city in the world at that time.

[Note the "Melkites" - "the Emperor's Men" the Orthodox of the Council of Chalcedon]

Consider the teachings of Nestorius and the development of an religious apparatus after 431.

The Eastern Christian leadership, the "Catholicos," took the title of "Patriarch" rather than Arch-Bishop or Metropolitan. Asian Monophysites.

The focal point of early Eastern Christian thought was Edessa (modern and ancient Urfa)

Under Jacobus Baradaeus of Edessa

The Nestorian Missionaries spread to Central Asia: the Turks, Uygurs and Soghdians and then the Mongols, Tartars and Chinese all by the 7th Century.

Syria or the Syrian Orthodox (500) - Jacobite Tradition.

First Council of Nicaea (325) repudiated Arianism, declared that Christ is "homooousios with the Father" (of the same substance as the Father), and adopted the original Nicene Creed,

3. The Church at Pergamum Rev. 2:12-17 AD 316-800

CHURCH HISTORY'S THIRD AXIOM.

- The New Testament teaches that congregations were to be independent from all hierarchal interference.
- The growing hierarchy: Councils, Metropolitan Bishops, Bishops, Diaconate.
Ordines Minores: Readers, Acolyths, Exorcists, and Precentors.
- Acts 14:22



- **SCRIPTURES' THIRD PROMISE.**
- **Rev 2:17 "To him who overcometh (conquers),**
[Isa. 62:2.]
- **Acts 20:28 ."**

- **REMNANT VOICES OF REPENTANCE !**
2:13b "... Satan's seat" enthroned."
- Hippolytus, 198-239, Portus (Tiber).
- **Athanasius - Council of Nicea 325.**

fixed Easter date; recognized primacy of the sees of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch and granted the See of Jerusalem a position of honor.

First Council of Constantinople (381) repudiated Arianism and Macedonianism, declared that Christ is "born of the Father before all time", revised the Nicene Creed in regard to the Holy Spirit

Council of Ephesus (431) repudiated Nestorianism, proclaimed the Virgin Mary as the Theotokos ("Birth-giver to God", "God-bearer", "Mother of God"), repudiated Pelagianism, and reaffirmed the Nicene Creed. This and all the following councils in this list are not recognized by the Assyrian Church of the East.

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Second Council of Ephesus (449) declared Eutyches orthodox and attacked his opponents. Though originally convened as an ecumenical council, this council is not recognized as ecumenical and denounced as a Robber Council by the Chalcedonians (Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Protestants).

Council of Chalcedon (451) repudiated the Eutychian doctrine of monophysitism, adopted the Chalcedonian Creed, which described the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ, human and divine. Reinstated those deposed in 449 and deposed Dioscorus of Alexandria. Elevation of the bishoprics of Constantinople and Jerusalem to the status of patriarchates. This is also the last council explicitly recognised by the Anglican Communion. This and all the following councils in this list are rejected by the Oriental Orthodoxy.

Second Council of Constantinople (553) repudiated the Three Chapters as Nestorian, condemned Origen of Alexandria, decreed the Theopaschite Formula.

Third Council of Constantinople (680-681) repudiated Monothelitism and Monoenergism.

Quinisext Council, also called Council in Trullo (692) addressed matters of discipline (in amendment to the 5th and 6th councils). The Ecumenical status of this council was repudiated by Western Catholics

The next development in Catholicism was the growing belief in the so-called 'sacraments' (for many 'seven' and for some nine) led to terrible abuses of the Gospel Message. These false "sacraments," as rituals — were increasingly accepted or believed to be able to give men searching for God - God's own grace via the church and its ritual rites. Together with these so-called "sacraments" a mystically empowered or 'sacerdotal' priesthood, began to take a more direct control over the believer's own soul - the believer's capabilities, the believer's personal spiritual responsibilities and even their most basic access to God. This new definition for worship was known as a "liturgical worship" and it would usurp the New Testament's revelation of Christ alone as the "means of grace." Then, too, the role of a believer's own priesthood was down-graded or given altogether to the pastors who were taking more power for

themselves and referring to themselves as Bishops. Access to God, Himself, had been stolen
from the believer.

Through-out the first Ten Centuries of history and all along the way...(even to this day,) there always were many “unsung” independent churches and individual pastors. In both the major cities and especially in the smaller cities and rural settings these believers stood true! These Bible-believing churches and leaders always apposed the compromises of Catholicism (with its harsh efforts to form a unity through the formation and control of a universal church), the fought the errors of philosophy and warned against the cults and many mystical sects. These Faithful Christians were ‘marginalized’ or side-lined and also persecuted and they were consistently overlooked or mocked by the Catholic historians who wrote what men call “Christian or Church History”!

ADDED NOTES

5.The Early Middle Ages / Classical Educational Theory.

A Unique ‘Early-Catholic’ Father

Tertullian

Following the Apostolic Father's contributions in Ethics, (Clement of Rome,) Against Heresy, (Ignatius,) and Christ's authority, (Polycarp); the Apologists (Justin, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus), were keen to win pagans to Christ. The Anti-gnostic Fathers also took a stand against Greek philosophical errors. Regretfully, these men were often themselves seriously guilty of confusing the issues further.

Among the potential list of “Church Fathers” Tertullian stands out as making some of the “best” theological contributions and doing much to undue the confusion of some of the others that had gone before. Another major shift and attack on Orthodoxy “came from within” in the person of Bishop Origen, who stands out as causing the greatest inroad of error up to that time.

In the post-apostolic Christian literature the tendency toward three distinct, yet converging ideas is obvious. The churches were dividing or uniting over the idea of a universal visible (Holy Catholic) church; a priesthood (monarchal* bishops, and episcopate); and a view that grace depended on sacraments (initially baptism and the Eucharist). Novatian was possibly the first known "clinic" baptism of a sick person (250). Infants were baptised 'for their regeneration' by Tertullian's time, if not as early as Irenaeus. Irenaeus: An anti-Gnostic polemicist. Born in Smyrna, was acquainted with Polycarp of Smyrna (d. 155), a disciple of the Apostle John. He became a missionary bishop to Gaul. His famous work: 'Adversus Haereses' - against the

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Roman Gnostic Valentinian - condemning Marcion - defended organic unity and succession and vindicated the doctrine of the resurrection. He attacked the idea of matter as eternal and as the source of evil. He was not altogether consistent in his representation of the work of redemption. Sometimes his theology becomes somewhat mystical, i.e. the necessity of a living union of Christ with the subjects of the redemption, but this is probably due to his language not his actual thought on the subject.

Hippolytus: Student of Irenaeus. Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. IV., 20) refers to him as in or near Rome, calls him a Presbyter, and was exiled to Sardina with the bishop Pontianus, A.D. 235. Possibly martyred in Rome. Possibly a Novatianist, but surely at variance with the church at Rome in its increasingly Catholic forms. He wrote a number of works, but his best-known was: "The Refutation of All Heresies" where he places the blame for all theological heresies and perversions of doctrine linked to the speculations of the Greek Philosophers.

(*Those that reign as monarchs i.e. "monarchal" - not to be confused with the Second Century Heresy of Dynamic Monarchianism (Unitarianism) or Modalistic Monarchianism or Sabellianism - where the Godhead is perceived as three modes in which God manifested himself. See Tertullian's response.)

Reminder: To understand the pressures and cultures of those times one needs to understand that the persecution led many to unite and schism increasingly was "reckoned the deadliest sins a Christian could commit." (Vedder, 45)

Earnestly contending for the Faith:
A look back on the Anti-gnostic Apologists.

Eastern Apologists such as Justin Martyr (c 100-165), his pupil Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, and then Athenagoras looked to the Scriptures in a reasonable sound way and they tried to focus the Scriptures on the task of defending the church against i. philosophy, ii. the Roman Emperors and iii. the Gnostic heresies. Their Christological differences from the West often complicated the value of their teaching on other subjects.

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Any listing or example of a more literalist interpretation must include
Tertullian, Quintus Septimus Florens (A.D. 160 - 220)
Presbyter of Carthage.

Tertullian looks to the Scriptures to base his arguments. Building his doctrine of authority on the truth of God's Word. The famous Dr. B.B. Warfield points out that though Tertullian lived during the time in history when the "Logos speculation" held a great spell over the world of theology and philosophy, Tertullian, nonetheless held to one thing that he considered more fundamental ... "the Rule of Faith - the immemorial belief of Christians, grounded in the teaching of the Word of God... and he recognized it as his first duty to preserve it whole and entire." (B.B. Warfield, 'Tertullian and the Beginnings of the Doctrine of the Trinity,' The Princeton Theological Review, vol IV, No. 2, April 1906; and Collected Studies, New York, Oxford University Press, 1930, p. 107)

Tertullian placed the majority of the blame of theological heresy on the influence of the Greek Philosophies on Christian thought. Cornelius van Til in his Christian Theory of Knowledge refers to Tertullian's point that "the Platonic theory of knowledge leads to the destruction of knowledge Plato separated intellect and the senses ... Tertullian replied: "For is it not true, that to employ the senses is to use the intellect? And to employ the intellect amounts to use of the senses? What indeed can sensation be but the understanding of that which is the object of the sensation? And what can the intellect or understanding be, but the seeing of that which is the object understood? (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Tertullian, Apology, p. 198 XVIII)" Tertullian also shows that Plato's theory of a soul being out of touch with the body means that this "platonic soul" could in fact attain to no knowledge at all. (ibid,203-205 XXIV)

He found it necessary to create a new language for himself ... but ... the subjectivity of his thinking contributed to the obscurity of his language. Frequently injustice has been done him, by culling some of his paradoxical positions from his works and regarding them as characteristic of the whole... Tertullian intended to assert that paradox belongs to the essence of Christianity in opposition to the triviality of the 'sensus communis, Veritas in medulla, non est in superficie;' in God everything is rational. (Neander, 55-56)

Tertullian is credited by L. Berkov as the "first to assert the tri-personality of God and to use the Word 'Trinity' - three persons of one substance, susceptible of number without division. Yet he did not reach the proper Trinitarian statement, since he conceived of one person as subordinate to the other. (History of Christian Doctrine, p. 67)

Tertullian's Traducianism": "tradux animae, tradux peccati" i.e. the propagation of the soul involves the propagation of sin. Berkov credits Tertullian for giving us the first defined theological trace of the doctrine of original sin. Evil became as it were a 'natural element in man, present from birth and that this condition passes over through generation upon the whole human race. (Berkov, History 68)

A SIN NATURE OR INNATE EVIL?

The earlier Hellenists' (Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius and Chrysostom) 'creationism,' i.e. the doctrine of 'innate evil', was later substituted in the Western Latin Theology for "innate sin". Cyprian, Ambrose and Hillary also taught that all men sinned in Adam, and thus born in sin, but they did not hold to total depravity of the human will.)

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Tertullian opposed Sabellius, Praxeas and Noetus of Smyrna who developed the Eastern arm of Modalistic Monarchianism and Tertullian accused it of: "He drove out the Paraclete and crucified the Father"

Tertullian is also credited for freeing the philosophical concepts of the "Logos" from the Greek philosophers by his simple stress on the "Logos" as a real subsistence, an individual person who was begotten by God and thus "proceeded from Him, not by emanation, but by self-projection... same substance, but differs from Him in mode of existence as a distinct Person." (LB, History p69) Melito was alone his equal in explaining the God-man and His two natures. Christ was fully human, distinct in two natures, with each one retaining its own attributes. According to Tertullian "There was no fusion, but a conjunction of the human and the divine in Christ." (ibid p70) It is nonetheless valuable to remember that Tertullian's own theology was developmental and when you are reading his writings over the length of his life you will find differences of theological viewpoint. Repentance, satisfaction for sin, mortification of sin and other issue seem to remain confused in some of his writings. Some believe that he may have "embraced" Montanism in his later life – but this view is primarily due to his fervour against the lax spirit of the age.

Additional Notes on the "Hellenists"

(Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius and Chrysostom)

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*Before going further...
analysis Of Augustine of Hippo seems most important...*

Since there is no doubt that Augustine was the most important single influence on Roman Catholicism and since this influence continues to this day in the form of Reformed Theology we cannot avoid the following issues.

THE INFLUENCE OF AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Much of the famous theologian Augustine's energies as bishop of Hippo (from 396 to 430) went into trying to settle the Donatist issue, in which he finally despaired of rational argument and reluctantly came to justify the use of limited coercion.

The other major controversy of the Western Church was a more confused issue, namely, whether faith is caused by divine grace or human freedom. Augustine ascribed all credit to God. The British monk Pelagius protested that Augustine was destroying responsibility and denying the capacity of man to do what God commands. Both men applied inappropriate, impersonal categories of thought to the problem; and though Pelagianism was condemned, several of the extreme positions of Augustine (especially on predestination and the transmission of original sin) failed to receive the church's cordial endorsement.

Eastern controversies

In the Greek East, the 4th century was dominated by controversy about the propositions of Arius, an Alexandrian presbyter (c. 250–336), that the incarnate Lord who was born, wept, suffered, and died could not be one with the transcendent first cause of creation who is beyond all suffering. The Council of Nicaea (325) condemned Arianism and affirmed the Son of God to be identical in essence with the Father. As this formula included no safeguard against Monarchianism, a long controversy followed, especially after Constantine's death (337). Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria (reigned 328–373), fought zealously against Arianism in the East and owed much to Rome's support, which made the controversy add to the tensions between East and West. These tensions survived the settlement of the Arian dispute when the Council of Constantinople (381) eliminated Arianism in the East but also asserted Constantinople to be the second see of Christendom, as the new Rome.

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All of this was unwelcome in Alexandria, traditionally the second city of the empire, and to Rome because it implied that the dignity of a bishop depended on the secular standing of his city. Rivalry between Alexandria and Constantinople led to the fall of John Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople (reigned 398–404), when he appeared to support Egyptian monks who admired the controversial theology of Origen. It became a major feature of the emerging Christological debate (the controversy over the nature of Christ).

The Christological controversy stemmed from the rival doctrines of Apollinaris of Laodicea (flourished 360–380) and Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350–428), representatives of the rival schools of Alexandria and Antioch, respectively.

At the Council of Ephesus (431), led by Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria (reigned 412–444), an extreme Antiochene Christology—taught by Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople—was condemned for saying that the man Jesus is an independent person beside the divine Word and that therefore Mary, the mother of Jesus, may not properly be called mother of God (Greek *theotokos*, or “God-bearer”).

Cyril's formula was “one nature of the Word incarnate.” A reaction led by Pope Leo I (reigned 440–461) against this one-nature (Monophysite) doctrine culminated in the Council of Chalcedon (451), which affirmed Christ to be two natures in one person (hypostasis). Thus, the Council of Chalcedon alienated Monophysite believers in Egypt and Syria.

The main speaker for church orthodoxy was Athanasius of Alexandria, for whom the point of departure was not a philosophical–speculative principle but rather the reality of redemption, the certainty of salvation. The redemption of humanity from sin and death is only then guaranteed if Christ is total God and total human being, if the complete essence of God penetrates human nature right into the deepest layer of its carnal corporeality. Only if God in the full meaning of divine essence became human in Jesus Christ is deification of man in terms of overcoming sin and death guaranteed as the resurrection of the flesh.

Augustine, was also an important player in the Western development of the Trinitarian doctrine in theology. He coupled the doctrine of the Trinity with anthropology. Proceeding from the idea that humans are created by God according to the divine image, he attempted to explain the mystery of the Trinity by uncovering traces of the Trinity in the human personality. He went from analysis of the Trinitarian structure of the simple act of cognition to ascertainment of the Trinitarian structure both of human self-consciousness and of the act of religious contemplation in which people recognize themselves as the image of God.

A second model of Trinitarian doctrine—suspected of heresy from the outset—which had effects not only in theology but also in the social metaphysics of the West as well, emanated from Joachim of Fiore. He understood the course of the history of salvation as the successive realization of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in three consecutive periods of salvation. This interpretation of the Trinity became effective as a “theology of revolution,” inasmuch as it was regarded as the theological justification of the endeavour to accelerate the arrival of the third state of the Holy Spirit through revolutionary initiative.

The final dogmatic formulation of the Trinitarian doctrine in the so-called Athanasian Creed (c. 500), *una substantia—tres personae* (“one substance—three persons”), reached back to the formulation of Tertullian. In practical terms it meant a compromise in that it held fast to both basic ideas of Christian revelation—the oneness of God and divine self-revelation in the figures of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—without rationalizing the mystery itself. In the final analysis the point of view thereby remained definitive that the fundamental assumptions of the reality of

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salvation and redemption are to be retained and not sacrificed to the concern of a rational monotheism.

Augustine's influence would carry on in Education through his own education in Rhetoric and he would advance the idea of the "Arts" or the Seven Humanities or Arts used to this day in Western Education.

His views on the State and Church, of course, led Calvin and many others into excesses of idealistic sociological and political theory. This can especially be understood by looking at Calvin and the Reformed School of thought, today's representatives of Augustine of Hippo.

AUGUSTINE'S INFLUENCE ON JOHN CALVIN

Since John Calvin is reported to have made the following statement, we must take a closer look at Augustine and his views. "Augustine is so wholly me, that if I wished to write a confession of my faith, I could do so with all fullness and satisfaction to myself out of his writings."

KEY ISSUES IN AUGUSTINE'S ERA

This material is mostly from Hannah.

The main issues appear to be the saga between Augustine and Pelagius and the theological thinking within the Roman Catholic Church following these debates, even existing until Calvin's era.

Pelagius (c. 354-after 418), a British monk, came on the scene presenting controversial views such as there was no impact on man's spiritual condition due to Adam's sin; people have a totally free will to choose good or evil; grace is assisting but is resistible; and if there is election by God it is based on His prior knowledge of how the sinner would choose.

Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa, responded to what he perceived to be a threat to the life of the church with a barrage of polemical writings. He presented these contrasting views such as Adam's sin does impact all mankind both physically and morally with a nature so corrupted they can do nothing but sin; mankind on his own will never choose God's provision for sin; God's grace is irresistible; and God's mercies are not based on God foreseeing how a person might respond.

After some years of debate, in 431, at the third of the so-called ecumenical councils in Ephesus, Pelagius's views were universally condemned. However, another doctrine of Augustine, predestination, was vigorously opposed.

After continued controversy, finally the Synod of Orange (529) was called where moderate Augustinianism prevailed. Election was recognized, but unconditional election was not mentioned. Grace was not seen as irresistible and predestination was expressly anathematized. Hannah summarizes, "The synod advocated cooperative salvation from an Augustinian perspective. . . . thus setting the pattern for Catholic theology in the medieval period, a semi-Augustinianism."

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Gonzalez, in his 1971 work perceived in this semi-Augustinianism of the synod an ill-boding for the church related to the issue of God's grace being connected to water baptism.

Alister McGrath concluded that while the theology of academia was largely Augustinian, "popular Pelagianism was rampant. Also, McGrath understands Augustine's view of justification to be so broad that it includes everything from the "first moment of faith...to the final perfection of that righteousness in the eschatological city." (p. 36) Stated differently, he considered justification to include everything from the initial moment of salvation to our entrance into heaven.

So at the turn of the sixteenth century the views on justification were a mixture of Augustinian and Pelagian theology. There was uncertainty regarding what the official Roman Catholic view really was. The Augustinian "school" was more grace oriented but included the ideas of infused, transformative righteousness involved in the process of making one right with God. The Pelagian "school" was characterized by justification through merit of self-works requiring individuals to meet all the moral rigors of God's demands without the help of God.

This was the historical and theological context within which Calvin and the other reformers engaged. So of course the Reformation did occur and should have been expected as the natural (supernatural) response to the bewildering and confusing answers being given to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

**WHAT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH THOUGHT AND STILL THINKS ABOUT
AUGUSTINE**

It appears that Augustine was the most highly respected saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II has called Augustine "the common father of our Christian civilization." In 1928 Augustine was named as one of the four original Doctors of the church.

WHAT JOHN CALVIN THOUGHT ABOUT AUGUSTINE

First, a word about what others in his tradition have to say. Steele and Thomas, "The basic doctrines of the Calvinistic position had been vigorously defended by Augustine against Pelagius during the Fifth century." B. B. Warfield, "The system of doctrine taught by Calvin is just Augustinianism common to the whole body of the Reformers."

Note what Calvin himself said about Augustine. "Augustine is so wholly me, that if I wished to write a confession of my faith, I could do so with all fullness and satisfaction to myself out of his writings."

Numerous times in his Institutes Calvin credits Augustine. Here are a few examples. "We have come into the way of faith, " Says Augustine: Let us constantly adhere to it . . ." (III:xxi,2) "Here the words of Augustine most admirably apply...." (III:xxiii,11) "This is a faithful saying from Augustine; but because his words will perhaps have more authority than mine, let us adduce the following passage from his treatise" (iii:xxxiii, 13)

This does not imply that John Calvin agreed with everything that Augustine wrote but it does indicate the impact and influence of Augustine on John Calvin's thinking.

John Calvin was unusually bright, a highly organized thinker, and a prolific writer. But it has always amazed me that so many have so much confidence in the conclusions of a 27 year old only 1-2 years beyond his "conversion." Why would one assume that he understood the Apostle Paul more completely and accurately than anyone else, ever?

FURTHER: REGARDING WHAT AUGUSTINE BELIEVED

Sufficient support for the following statements can be provided by this author.

Regarding anthropology or sin and grace . Augustine believed that with Adam's first sin, in which the entire human race participated, sin came into the world, corrupting every person both physically and morally. Therefore, the need for grace, which Augustine defined as unmerited favor, was central. This grace is irresistible. God strengthens the will so that humankind can freely embrace Christ as the sinner's only hope of forgiveness. And He will do so if he is among the elect. God did not determine to save based upon a foreseen response of the sinner. There is a strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God. God's mercies must be unconditional, that is based on His election. Salvation is rooted in God's eternal predestination, some to salvation and some to damnation. Faith itself is an irresistible gift of God. Faith plus works required for salvation. No one can be certain that he is predestined therefore no one can have assurance of salvation.

Regarding ecclesiology (and other) beliefs. Augustine was more committed to the Roman Catholic Church and system than many seem to have understood. Though he appeared to champion grace he believed that this grace was dispensed only by the Roman Catholic Church. The one true church was alone the Catholic Church. The authority and apostolicity of the Catholic Church, as well as infant baptism, was established through apostolic succession. No truth, no gospel, no salvation outside the one Catholic Church. Grace comes through the Roman Catholic sacraments .

Augustine's theology was sacramental and Sacerdotal. He believed in infant baptism; even the necessity of it for regeneration. Alms giving and penitence brings to the practitioner forgiveness of sins. Also, sacramental participation and alms by the living friends benefit the souls of the dead. He believed in the perpetual virginity of Mary (His De Sacra Virginitate). Augustine believed in purgatory. Augustine believed in using force to compel church attendance as well as persecution of those who reject Catholic dogmas. In the book City of God he announced that Rome had been privileged to usher in the Millennial Kingdom. (Note: the Dark Ages followed)

AUGUSTINE'S HERMENEUTICAL METHODS WERE QUESTIONABLE

Kaiser and Silva, in discussing the patristic period, present a summary of the Western School (Think that which became the Roman Catholic Church) of interpretive method, with Augustine one of the key representatives of this method. Augustine was not hesitant to indulge in a rather free use of the allegorical method. And for Augustine the deciding factor in determining the sense of Scripture was the *regula fidei* ("rule of faith"), by which he meant the collection of doctrines of the church. The authors go on to say that "the use of *regula fidei* presupposes that the meaning of the text has already been established sufficiently in order to recognize that the passage being considered does belong to the doctrine being used as a "rule of faith" to measure it."

It is at this point that the authority of tradition began to play a major part in Augustine's interpretations. This is a huge issue.

Furthermore, "Augustine's knowledge of the original languages was deficient. Accordingly, Augustine specialized more in systematizing the truths of the Bible than in their exegesis." This observation is huge, especially as it relates to Augustine's influence on John Calvin.

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This should be enough to give us a flavor of his views. “His (Augustine’s) insights continue to shape the church today.” (H. 271)

On the one hand when one reads Augustine’s writings one cannot help but be impressed with his effort at countering the view by Pelagius that is there is no connection between what Adam did and the state wherein we are born into the world. (See above) Pelagius believed that our condition is purely a voluntary one and had nothing to do with the Fall of Adam. Pelagius did observe that we all seem to follow the bad examples.

It is easy to see why John Calvin was impressed with Augustine. And for a good number of Augustine’s theological conclusions all of us would agree. Issues such as the serious condition of fallen man, the need of grace as unmerited favor, the sovereignty of God. While the following issues are hotly debated by many, it would be fair to say that another group in the broad evangelical community would likewise appreciate his emphasis on predestination, election, and irresistible grace. Certainly most Calvinists (I think) would begin to depart from Augustine when they read about his belief that works are a condition for salvation and no one can have assurance of salvation.

However, on the other hand, I do not believe that any Bible-based evangelical would agree with such views as the Catholic Church being the one true Church; outside it there is no salvation; it and it alone is the dispenser of grace; alms giving bring forgiveness of sins; sacramental participation in alms benefits the souls of the dead; his belief in purgatory; his belief in Mary’s perpetual virginity and freedom from (at least) temporal sin; his understanding of compulsion/force by the church.

So do you suppose John Calvin was negatively impacted by any of these view in his era? I suggest it is quite unreasonable, and unbelievable, to think that he did escape all of the weeds of this corrupt thinking. Note Augustines’s view on baptismal regeneration, the baptism of infants, and his strong sacramentalism. Furthermore, remember Augustine’s approach to biblical interpretation.

Do you see any of these” weeds” in John Calvin’s thinking? The greater issue is that Calvin declared he was “wholly” Augustine when Augustine had a number of views that we ought not to accept. You might ask, “Are there any Augustine views adopted by John Calvin that I consider incorrect?” I suggest the answer is yes and here is a list of some of them. Double predestination, necessity of water baptism for salvation, infant baptism, sacramentalism and one might add the concept of force to compel church attendance (based on in incorrect use of Luke 14:23) and Augustine’s millennial views advocated in his book, *The City of God*.

My cause for concern is that some of these issues have applied soteriological impact.

Along with Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome, Gregory the Great (540 to 604) - was among the greatest defenders of Roman Catholicism. As the Sixth Century’s most famous Pope he was popular and since he had been a humble monk he seemed more reasonable than most medieval Popes. Nonetheless, he defended the primacy of the Pope and he used his personal skills to reconcile many of the independent bishops to Rome by his humble appeals. Though he did not emphasize his personal rights he stood strong on the the rights of the Catholic Church as an institution. He was the first pope to call himself *Servus Servorum Dei*, "the servant of the servants of God."

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The Catholic church grew stronger and stronger as an arm or extension of Roman power when Charlemagne's father, Pepin donated the land around Rome to the pope as a fiefdom. Then

Pope Leo added more power to the Catholic Church when he manipulated matters to crown Charlemagne as Roman emperor of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas Day 800. Charles had no suspicion of what was about to happen, and if informed would not have accepted the imperial crown.

Some valuable discussion 'assignments':.

Summarise the era, position, and accomplishments of Tertullian and Irenaeus.

Compare the differing approaches of apologists and polemicists.

Outline the problems that stemmed from the Alexandrian school.

State the reasons for the use of monarchical bishops.

Explain why the Roman bishop was given importance.

The Alexandrian Fathers: Clement and Origen

(Hellenistic, Gnostic and Eastern theological influences uniting in
an allegorical and literary interpretation of the Bible.)

The Alexandrian Fathers on account of their ongoing study based in Grecian Philosophy, exposed themselves to the danger of being influenced with the heresy of others. (Neander, 63).

They taught the full free will of man ... that man has the innate power to accept God's offer of salvation. (i.e. early .Pelagianism"). They did not see the necessity of the Holy Spirit drawing or convicting mankind of its need or individual men of their sinfulness. Neither of them believed in the resurrection of the body or in a literal millennial kingdom.

Clement serves as an example. He tried to keep faith and knowledge (gnosis) in balance, but his teaching 'intellectus' must proceed from faith using Isaiah 7:9 LXX. as locus classicus on the subject - in time evolved to a Platonic intellectualism that distinguished between adhering to historical facts as literal in favor of the 'Gnostic' on which man raises himself to higher ideas - the allegorical. (Strom, vi. 663-680; Neander 65-67) Clement's friendliness toward philosophy and sometimes taught that Christian Theology should be a bridge between the gospel and gentile learning. He was docetic, i.e. confused the integrity of the two natures of Christ and confused

the concept of Logos by distinguishing between 'a real logos of God and the Son-Logos' He sometimes called Christ, 'Theos Deuteros' (Berkov, History p. 76).

Origen followed and carried the thought that "spiritual communion with Christ is the fountain of divine life and knowledge... and ...as the earthly manifestation of Christ was an image of the Divine activity ... by spiritual communion with Him ... we understand Him also in His manifestation." Origen was a rigorous ascetic. He was one of the most educated thinkers of his time. Origen taught that there was two ways to gaining salvation, one by faith (exoteric) and another by knowledge (esoteric). Like many of the Apologists and Fathers he confused repentance and confession of sins before God with faith as linked to the condition for salvation.

Origen opposed the Gnostics and Monarchianists, but became a heretic himself by teaching that man pre-existed as a rational spirit co-equal and co-eternal. Origen discriminates between a church proper and an empirical church. He also taught a separate priesthood. The sacraments are all spiritualised and become mystical divine influences and gracious operations of the Holy Spirit. Origen, like his teacher, Clement believed the heathen could repent in Hades and that "eternal" punishment was purifying and thus not truly "eternal." Even Satan and the demons would eventually, according to Origen, be restored. Origen did not search for the Spirit in the letter with a sound scientific exegesis but arbitrarily from his preconceived philosophical notions, attached a spiritual meaning to the letter. (In this way he was a forerunner to existentialism and modern "hyper" criticism denying the historical correctness for a dogmatic - philosophical subjectivism).

5. The Early Middle Ages / Classical Educational Theory.

Councils & Their Creeds ..
from an Independent Baptist perspective.”

The Independent Baptists, like a number of other independent fundamentalists and evangelicals, see the “facts” regarding Christian history from a different perspective. We do respect the Early Church of the New Testament Period and we recognize the next century of Christianity as one under attack from heresy but still one attempting to maintain some semblance of New Testament Christianity.

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Development of Organized Monasticism.

Some individuals pursue a monastic lifestyle through isolation. Eventually monasteries are built, where monks worship and live together apart from society. The first monastery is built on an island in the Nile River in 340 A.D. In the early 500s the first monastic order, the Benedictine Order, is established under Benedict's Rule of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Emergence of Roman Catholicism.

Between 313 and 590 A.D. the organized church changes from the Catholic church (with each bishop equal) to the Roman Catholic Church (with the Roman bishop as first among equals). Bishops of the church in Rome claim their church was founded by the apostles Peter and Paul, that Peter was its first bishop, that Christ appointed Peter to be His vicar on earth, and that the bishops of Rome inherit this vicarship of Christ by apostolic succession from Peter. By 590 A.D. these claims are accepted in the western half of the organized church. In 445 A.D. the Roman emperor officially recognizes the primacy of the Roman bishops. Leo I (440 TO 461 A.D.) is the first Roman bishop to assume the title of papas ("pope"). He claims judicial authority for the Roman church over the entire church. When the western half of the Roman Empire falls in 476 A.D., the Roman church "provides" (STRONG OR DOMINANT) leadership and stability for Western Europe.

Development of Views and Practices.

The following concepts develop between 313 and 590 A.D: purgatory and baptismal regeneration; veneration of angels, saints, relics, statues, and pictures; the system of seven sacraments; the observance of Christ's birth on December 25; more holy days; Sunday as an official day of rest and worship; antiphonal singing; acceptance of infant baptism; communion as a sacrifice; pilgrimages for penitential and thanksgiving purposes; the building of magnificent church buildings. Veneration of Mary begins. She is called "the mother of God" and "the queen of heaven"; eternal virginity and sinlessness are ascribed to her; prayers are offered to her; she is made the head of all saints and is said to have ascended bodily into heaven. Augustine popularizes the amillennial view of eschatology, which strips Israel of future blessing.

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Condition of the Church. The union of church and state makes the organized church rich. It begins adopting the world's standards and becomes polluted with pagans, who find it politically and socially expedient to associate with local churches. They introduce pagan beliefs and practices into the organized church.

In 451 Council of Chalcedon tried to settle the question of how to view the two natures of Jesus, a major council of more than 400 church leaders was called at Chalcedon in 451. After much debate, these leaders affirmed a statement that has singularly remained the most important declaration about Jesus Christ in the history of the church. They proclaimed Jesus to be both God and man in one person. It declared that Jesus is undiminished deity plus perfect humanity united in one person, without any confusion of the two natures. In the absolute sense of the term, He is the God-man! Both the Monophysites and the Nestorians angrily separated from the "Orthodox Catholic Church" from this time forward.

The facts regarding Christian history are: 1st that the early "Ancient Christian Church," [i.e. Hegesippus - Syriac Tradition, and other such independents] would fragment into five (or more) directions: A. The Roman (Chalcedonia); B. The Greek Orthodox (Byzantine); C. The Nestorian (Nasraye) or Jacobites; [also compare the Monophysite) and D. The innumerable rural local congregations that were both informal and/or unaffiliated gatherings; E. The many regional sects- Montanists, Novatians, Donatists, and as with the multiple Eastern Ascetic societies, Anchorites (Hermits), Monastic and Missionary personalities, The Gospel of Matthew in Syriac came to India before the 2nd Century or St. Patrick to Ireland, and cults (Gnostics, and Arianism).

It is worth noting that the three primary organized forms of Christianity (Matthew 13 and Revelation 2, 3) were focused on three different interpretive concepts of Christian worship. The Roman or Western form of Christianity was organized around a Hierarchal Structure and a Creedal Format; The Greek Orthodox (Byzantine) Church was organized on a Liturgical and Thematic Format; and the Eastern or Nestorian or Syrian form of Christianity was focused on a more simple expression of their Faith and it gave great attention to personal devotion to Christ as The Divine.

It is important to this study that we understand that these complicated and vast early Eastern Christian influences spread throughout the East through missionary outreach by such famed men as "Simon Zealotus" whose tradition claimed moved from Samosata to Aleppo to Cirrus; such men as James the son of Alphaeus" who is viewed as having spread the Gospel as far as Palmyra to Batan of Sarug; or even as with the 'apostle'

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Addai, {or Thaddeus} who (according to tradition) came to Edessa. The point of making this emphasis is to clarify the thinking of moderns that their more popular view of Church History as a Western story needs to be revised and enlarged.

6. The Rise of Islam & Divided - Deluded Christianity.

We can only understand ancient and modern Islam if we understand the extensive historic Nestorian missionary advances of the Eastern form of Christianity into Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, the many Slavonic regions, Syria. Centers such as Edessa, Diyarbakir (Amida) and to Malatya, Niseis and Mardin, Tikrit, Mosul (Kurdistan), Egypt, Sinai, Uygur, Mongol, Kyrgystan, China, India and even Sri Lanka (Taprobane).

Independent Baptists especially appreciate the earliest “*Ancient Christian (catholic or universal) Church*,” [i.e. *Hegesippus*² - Syriac Tradition, and other *such* independents]. That this church would be greatly compromised by the late Third Century gives us much concern. Since these otherwise independent congregations had spread throughout the nations their fragmentation and compromise would be incomplete and their fragmentation would protect some from the errors of others. Nonetheless, these internationally evangelized people groups and their congregations would eventually form into five or more central groupings,

These newly developing ecclesiastical groupings are as follows:

- A. *The Roman (Chalcedonia);*
- B. *The Greek Orthodox (Byzantine);*
- C. *The Nestorian (Nasraye)³ or Jacobites; [also compare the Monophysite) and*
- D. *Innumerable rural local informal and/or unaffiliated congregations;*
- F. *The many regional sects- Montanists, Novatians, Donatists, and as with the multiple Eastern⁴ Ascetic societies, Anchorites (Hermits), Monastic and Missionary personalities. One should remember that the various Nestorian types were very “missionary focused: Examples: The Gospel of Matthew in Syriac⁵ came to India before the 2nd Century or St. Patrick to Ireland, and cults (Gnostics, and Arianism).*

Regarding Doctrinal Statements, or the more Formal Creeds that would come out of the “Catholioc Councils, it is worth noting that the three primary organized forms of Christianity (Matthew 13 and Revelation 2, 3) were focused on three different interpretive concepts of Christian worship. The Roman or Western form of Christianity was organized around a Hierarchal Structure and a Creedal Format; The Greek Orthodox (Byzantine) Church was organized on a Liturgical and Thematic

² **Moeller, William**, Dr. *History of the Christian Church*, London, George Allen & Company, 1892 (1912), [Translated from the German by Rutherford, Andrew], p. 116. Volume 1.

³ **Jenkins, Philip**, *The Lost History of Christianity*, New York, HarperCollins, 2008, p.83ff.

⁴ Ibid, Moeller, p 348, 355 and 357 (Pachomius, Basil, Eustathius.), 359 Coenobitism, or Eustathians - Armenia, 363.

⁵ **Ackroyd, P.R. & Evans, C.F.**, *The Cambridge (Kings College) History of THE BIBLE*, Three Volumes, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970 (1989), Note: The Bible in Syriac (170 CE) - The Peshitta i.e. “the simple version” , - p365; (See also the Nubian Version, Ethiopian) - p. 369-370

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Format; and the Eastern or Nestorian or Syrian form of Christianity was focused on a more simple expression of their Faith and it gave great attention to personal devotion to Christ as The Divine.

*It is important to understand that these complicated and vast early **Eastern Christian influences** would spread throughout the East through missionary outreach by such famed men as “Simon Zealotus” who tradition claimed moved from Samosata to Aleppo to Cyrrhus; or such men as James the son of Alphaeus” who is viewed as having spread the Gospel as far as Palmyra to Batan of Sarug; or even as with the ‘apostle’ Addai, {or Thaddeus} who (according to tradition) came to Edessa.*

The point of this emphasis on Eastern Christianity and its development and demise is to clarify the thinking of most modern Western Christians who have come to accept the “popular view” of Church History that is presented in most Christian History Text books that Church History is a Western story. We believe this mistaken view of church history needs to be revised and that our understanding of Christianity needs to be much enlarged.

Christians need to understand the extensive historic missionary advances of the Eastern (Nestorian) form of Christianity into Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, the many Slavonic regions, Syria. Major “Centers” of Christianity should include Edessa, Diyarbakir (Amida) and to Malatya, Niseis and Mardin, Tikrit, Mosul (Kurdistan), Egypt, Sinai, Uygur, Mongol, Kyrgystan, China, India and even Sri Lanka (Taprobane).⁶

The General History of Remnant Christianity.

We should begin our study by recognizing where the Fifth Century CE cities actually were: First, Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem. Then, Eastern Empire Cities, Antioch (Orantes), [Further East] Edessa and Niseis (rarely known).

Further important details

- *The dominance of two languages: Greek and Syriac (Earlier Aramaic and Hebrew Isa 36:1-14 or 2 Kings 18:17-29]’*
- *The dominance of the ancient Persian Royal Road (See: Marco Polo / The Silk Road).*
- *The world’s 1st. Christian Kingdom “Osthoene” & Capital of Edessa (200 AD).*
- *The greatest of the Eastern Kingdoms was Armenia & its Capital of Ani (300 AD)]*
- *Then Georgia, Nubia (Nile), and of course the Byzantine.*
- *Central to all of this expansion was Persia (Example 16,000 Nestorians Martyred) with the twin cities Seleucia-Ctesiphon (successors to Babylon) - the most populous city in the world at that time.*

To consider these early developments in Christianity in any reasonable context one must take into consideration the “Melkites” - “the Emperor’s Men” the Orthodox of the Council of Chalcedon who had such a “politically influenced” role in the division of the Christian Church.

Then, to be truly informed in Church History attention must be given to readings regarding the following themes:

- *The teachings of Nestorius and the development of an religious apparatus after 431.*
- *The Eastern Christian leadership, the “Catholicos,” took the title of “Patriarch” rather than Arch-Bishop or Metropolitan. Asian Monophysites.*

⁶ **Jenkins, Philip**, The Lost History of Christianity, New York, HarperCollins, 2008, p. 69

⁷ Ostler, Nicholas, Empires of the World: A Language History of the World, London, Harper Perennial, 2005 (2006), p. 79.

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- *The focal point of early Eastern Christian thought: Edessa (modern and ancient Urfa)*
- *The period of Eastern Christian thought under Jacobus Baradaeus of Edessa*
- *The Nestorian Missionaries spread to Central Asia: the Turks, Uygurs and Soghdians and then the Mongols, Tartars and Chinese all by the 7th Century.*
- *The earliest Syrian churches and the development of the "Syrian Orthodox" (500) - or the Jacobite Tradition.*

The "Catholic Councils" need to be understood. Attention to the political influences and the ecclesiastical motivations should be discussed. Independent Baptists reject the authority of these Councils outright. Nonetheless, since the Reformers accepted them their acceptance has, in fact, indirectly influenced all of Protestant Christianity and even the Anabaptists and then the Baptists would face many theological issues related to the decisions of these councils. Some would say their decisions were vital, some would summarize them all as suspect. The first council (Nicea) has been broadly accepted by all Fundamentalists and Evangelicals as correct in regard to the issue of *Christ nature (divine and human) as "homoousios with the Father" (of the same substance as the Father)*. *the Anabaptists, Schwenckfelder and others were not sure of the doctrinal trustworthiness of Nicea's theology and independently wrote articles in this regard.*

- **First Council of Nicaea (325)** repudiated Arianism, declared that Christ is "homoousios with the Father" (of the same substance as the Father), and adopted the original Nicene Creed, fixed Easter date; recognized primacy of the sees of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch and granted the See of Jerusalem a position of honor.
- **First Council of Constantinople (381)** repudiated Arianism and Macedonianism, declared that Christ is "born of the Father before all time", revised the Nicene Creed in regard to the Holy Spirit
- **Council of Ephesus (431)** repudiated Nestorianism, proclaimed the Virgin Mary as the Theotokos ("Birth-giver to God", "God-bearer", "Mother of God"), repudiated Pelagianism, and reaffirmed the Nicene Creed. This and all the following councils in this list are not recognized by the Assyrian Church of the East.
- **Second Council of Ephesus (449)** declared Eutyches orthodox and attacked his opponents. Though originally convened as an ecumenical council, this council is not recognized as ecumenical and denounced as a Robber Council by the Chalcedonians (Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Protestants).
- **Council of Chalcedon (451)** repudiated the Eutychian doctrine of monophysitism, adopted the Chalcedonian Creed, which described the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ, human and divine. Reinstated those deposed in 449 and deposed Dioscorus of Alexandria. Elevation of the bishoprics of Constantinople and Jerusalem to the status of patriarchates. This is also the last council explicitly recognised by the Anglican Communion. This and all the following councils in this list are rejected by the Oriental Orthodoxy.
- **Second Council of Constantinople (553)** repudiated the Three Chapters as Nestorian, condemned Origen of Alexandria, decreed the Theopaschite Formula.
- **Third Council of Constantinople (680-681)** repudiated Monothelitism and Monoenergism.
- **Quinisext Council, also called Council in Trullo (692)** addressed matters of discipline (in amendment to the 5th and 6th councils). The Ecumenical status of this council was repudiated by Western Catholics

Module 2: Medieval Church History (390 - 800+ A.D.)

Goals: Discuss:

When and why the Medieval Era began and ended. This era's name: Medieval.

The influence on the Classical Culture on Medieval Christianity.

THE HUMANITIES OR LIBERAL ARTS:

The Romans System // Martianus Capella - The Seven Liberal Arts.

**The Early Sixth Century: The Barbarian (Visigoths, Vandals & the Ostrogoth King,
Theodoric's ... Invasions & the Classical Church**

Two Classic scholars: Cassiodorus and Boethius

The 1st Monasteries formed as centers of scholarship.

The Humanities: Theology, Language, Scripture & History.

The growth of hierarchy and Sacerdotalism in the metropolitan churches.

Discuss the life, piety and contributions of Gregory I. (d. 604)

Sin: Penance (Perception of Sin & Dread; Regret, Confession, Penance) + Purgatory

The impact of the Middle Ages and Gregory the Great to the 21st century church.

Political Theory: Augustine and Ambrose. Pope (492-496)

Gelsius I: Authority of the State and the Church.

6. The Rise of Islam & Divided - Deluded Christianity.

Historical Theology

REVIEWED

1. The Earliest Churches ... See: Pauline Epistles & Rev, 2,3.
[Ephesus: Rev. 2:1-7]

2. The Suffering Church ... [Smyrna: Rev.2:8-11]
“10 days” of tribulations -= Ten Edicts or Persecutions.

1. Nero AD 54-68
2. Domitian AD 81-96
3. Trajan AD 98-112 // Hadrian AD 117-138
4. Marcus Aurelius AD 161-180
5. Septimus Severus AD 193-211
6. Maximinus AD 235-238
7. Decius AD 240-251
8. Valerian AD 253-260
9. Aurelian AD 270-275+
10. Diocletian AD 285-311

Time Period of the Apologists:

1. 90 Clement of Rome, (Phil 4:3) Martyred by Domitian
2. 117 Ignatius, Antioch in Syria, Martyred by Trajan.
3. 130 Papias, Hierapolis.
4. 160 Polycarp of Smyrna Martyred by Antonius Pius.
5. 150? Athens, His *Apology* addressed to Hadrian.
6. 165 Justin Martyr, Opposed Marcion. Martyred in Rome.
7. 181 Theophilus, Antioch.
8. 175? Irenaeus. Smyrna & Gaul. A Pre-millennialist.
9. 215 Clement of Alexandria (*Antioch*) [Allegorical Interpretation.]
10. 220 Tertullian of Carthage {*Joined Montanists by 200*}. Coined term: *Trinity*
11. 236 Hippolytus of Rome. [Allegorical Interpretation.]
12. 254 Origen, Alexandria/Caesarea [Allegorical Interpretation.] Martyred by Romans
13. 258 Cyprian, Carthage. Promoted Episcopate. Martyred by Valerian.

3. The Great Compromise. Emperor Constantine.

1. Ante-Nicene Heresies: *Ebionism, Gnosticism, Montanism, Manichaeism.*

2. *Nicene & Post Nicene* “Fathers” or Early” Metropolitan Bishops”

1. Lactanius, Italy, d320
2. Eusebius, Caesarea. d339
3. Athanasius, Alexandria. d373
4. Basil 379, Cappadocia & Gregory of Nyssa, Cappadocia, d394
5. Gregory of Nazianzus, d390, Patriarch of Constantinople, 381.
6. Ambrose, d397, Milan.
7. John Chrysostom, d407, (Monastic) Antioch & Patriarch of Constantinople, 397.
8. Jerome, d420, Rome, Antioch and Bethlehem (The Latin Vulgate Translator).
9. Theodore, d428, Mopsuestia, Taught Nestorius. [Against Allegorical Interpretation]
10. Augustine, d430, Bishop of Hippo 386.
11. Cyril, d444, Alexandria. Venerated Mary, opposed Donatists and Nestorius.

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4. **Catholic Councils and Controversies:**
 1. Aries (314) Anti-Donatus // Salvation "outside of the church"
 2. Nicea (325) Constantinople (381) Trinitarian: Substance and Coequality.
 3. Ephesus (431) Pelagian Issue. (Robber 449), Chalcedon (451) Anti-Nistorian.
 4. Constantinople (553) Emperor Justinian // Eutychius - Affirmed Cyrillian version.
 5. Constantinople (680-681), E. Constantine IV. Condemned Pope Honorius (d638).
 6. Nicea (787), Emperor Constantine IV, Approved the veneration of icons & statues.
5. **The Era of Augustine. 354-430.**
 1. Outline of His "contributions" to Catholicism. See Notes.
 2. Espoused mild forms of asceticism; opposed Donatists & Pelagians.
 3. Establish 1st Philosophy of History. Two Cities. Founded a Medieval Theology (+ Calvinism)
6. **The Early Middle Ages / Classical Educational Theory.**
 1. 521 Columba, Irish Missionary to Durrow, Scotland.
 2. 542 Columbanus, Irish Missionary to Europe. Challenged Papal Authority.
 3. 578 Jacobites: Jacob Baradaeus, Bishop of Edessar, Monophysite.
 4. 658 Willabron: "Apostle to Frisia"
 5. 680 Boniface - Irish Missionary to Frisia. (Martyred)

THE MIDDLE AGES /

- **Pope Gregory the Great**, Rome 540-605; **Isidore** (560-636) Seville; **Bede** d735 England.
- 6. **Holy Roman Empire:** 754-962 (800 **Charlemagne** crowned by Pope Leo); Otto I, 962-1059.
- 7. **CRUSADES:** 1095 to 1291.
 1. 1096-1099 Urban II and Peter the Hermit Liberation of Jerusalem from Turks.
 2. 1147-1148 Bernard of Clairvaux / Eugene III Konrad III Edessa from Turks.
 3. 1189-1192 Alexander III; Barbarossa retake Jerusalem from *Saladin & Saracens*
 4. 1200-1204 *Innocent II - Vindictive sacking of Constantinople for City of Zara Sacking.*
 5. 1212 *Children's Crusade, N. Stephen, Children: drowned at sea or became slaves.*
 6. 1229 *Frederick II, To regain Jerusalem. Treaty with Sultan leads to excommunication.*
 7. 1248 Louis IX, Relief of Jerusalem by Invading Egypt. They were defeated in Egypt.

4. The Church at Thyatira

Rev. 2:18-29

AD 800-1500

• **CHURCH HISTORY'S FOURTH AXIOM.** The New Testament demands a regenerated assembly & submission to Scripture's authority alone.

- 2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."
- The Donatists, like the earlier Paulicians, Montanists and Novations, and Waldensians focused on the Scriptures and admitted no unbelievers to their congregations. The Cathari - 'the pure,' also known as Bogomiles led the way across Europe for the Albigensians' dissent and dissident theology.
- **John Wycliff (Oxford), Jan Hus (Prague) & Girolamo Savanarola (Florence) followed.**



• **SCRIPTURES' FOURTH PROMISE.**

- 2:26 "...to him I will give authority over the nations; 27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star." (Also See 1 Cor. 6:1-11)

• **REMNANT VOICES OF REPENTANCE !** "... all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts..."

- **Tenchdyn os Antwerp**
- **Peter of Bruis along the Rhone.**
- **60,000 Albigensians killed in Beziers 1146 - 1208.**

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7. The Rise of Islam & Divided - Deluded Christianity.

1. Mohammed 570 (?);
2. Koran written 632? Collated by Abd al-Malik
3. Calif Omar 581 (?) d 644;
4. "The Dome of the Rock" finished in 691/2
- — **WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE**
5. **800 Leo / Charlemagne**
6. **Papal Domination** 1059-1216 /// Decline of Papal Domination 1216-1309
6. **Great Schism of the Papacy** (1378-1417) Popes in Rome, Avignon

8. The Radical Christians and the Earliest Reformers.

1. Paulicians (Eastern Church, "Dualistic" - (?? OT & Peter)
2. Bogomils (Outgrowth of Eucrites - Eastern Europe)
3. Cathari: Patarenes, Albigensians. Early 11th Century - Spain/France & All Europe.
4. Waldensians. Peter Waldo c./d1215. Southern France * Northern Italy, Austria.
5. Lollards: Followers of Englishman, John Wycliff (Bible), d1384, denied transubstantiation.
6. Hussites: John Huss, d1415, Became Bohemian Brethren (later to become Moravians)
7. Girolamo Savonarola, 1452-1498 Florence, Dominican Monk, (Martyr:Hanged & Burned)
8. Desiderius Erasmus, 1466-1536 , Dutch Humanist, Greek NT, Wrote: "In Praise of Folly."

9. The Monastic Orders and the Days of Papal Division.

1. Benedictines 529, Monte Cassino, Italy
2. Clinicians, 910, William of Aquitaine
3. Cistercians, 1098, Molesme, Cluny, France
4. Knights of St John (Hospitalers) DePuy, 1119 Jerusalem
5. Teutonic Knights, 1190, Acre - German Pilgrims.
6. Augustinians Date ?, (Thomas a Kempis and Martin Luther) Rule of St Augustine.
7. Remonstrants, 1119, Norbet, Premontre, France, Followed Rule of St Augustine.
8. Carthusians 1082, Bruno, Chartreuse, France (Flagellation)
9. Carmelites, 1156, Berthold,
10. Dominicans, 1216, Dominic, Spain. T. Aquinas, A. Magnus, Tauler + Girolamo Savonarola
11. Franciscans, 1223, Francis of Assisi, Italy
12. Society of Jesus (Jesuits) 1540, Ignatius Loyola, Rome (Repressed 1773//Restored 1814)

10. The Scholastics and the Challenges of the Renaissance.

11. The Humanists and their Spiritual "Cousins."

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Regrettably, Church History is most commonly just Catholic History and Catholic historians have always preferred to handle the non-cooperating churches as “insignificant sects,” minor heretics, or as just interruptive and unhelpful to the growth of Catholicism. With persecution of non-conforming Christians with their demolishing of their church buildings, with the burning of their Bibles and the public declarations of anathema and destruction on their historical records and writings - the memory of these non-conformists has been lost to most, other than a few historians. One must constantly remember that most of what is called “church history” between the Third and Thirteenth Century is biased Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox history. Catholicism as a huge monolithic and controlling power rejects all others. Their view of unity is accomplished by elimination or absorption of all others.

The danger and yet need for de-construction in history.

The relationship, or dependence, of Christianity upon a particular conception of its origin and/or of its Founder⁸ has historically been an object of vigorous argument and attack by its various antagonists. Some, (usually modernists but now *as-often-as-not* post-modernists), prefer to ‘de-construct’ Christian history to make room for their anti-supernatural interpretations. Others, claiming academic and intellectual reasoning simply reduce Christian history to simplistic mythological proportions. They do this by stripping Jesus Christ of His historical robes and then leave Christianity naked – as nothing more than a ‘manner of life’ that is dependent upon a concept or interpretation centered in the individual opinions of each and every person whether-or-not they have any historical or truth base from which to reason.

Bible-based Christianity accepts Christ as a real historical person (the God-man) living in a definite point in time and space. The believing Christian, personally (in real time and space), accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Savior – Redeemer, living Lord and coming King. The facts are based on the sound⁹ and sure representations *Breathed/ Inspired* by God the Holy Spirit through the Four Gospels and are interpreted factually and infallibly¹⁰ by Spirit directed Apostles who maintain His supernatural and sovereign power, His present work as our Mediator, and His coming return for His Saints, to set-up His Kingdom, to judge the unbelieving world and to establish His heavenly reign of righteousness with life eternal for all that believed.

⁸ Machen, J. Gresham, *The Origins of Paul's Religion*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1925, 3.

⁹ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:15-21 with 2:1-13

¹⁰ Lindsell, Harold, *The Battle for the Bible*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1976.

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AND ITS MESSAGE**

The study of doctrinal truth, apart from its historical background, leads to a truncated theology. There has been too much of this in the past, and there is a great deal of it even in the present day. The result has been a lack of sound understanding and a proper evaluation of the truth. There was no appreciation of the fact that the Holy Spirit guided the church in the interpretation and developments of the truth as it is revealed in the Word of God. The checks and the road signs of the past were not taken into consideration, and ancient heresies, long since condemned by the Church, are constantly repeated and represented as new discoveries. The lessons of the past are greatly neglected, and many seem to feel that they should strike out entirely on their own, as if very little had been accomplished in the past. Surely, a theologian must take account of the present situation in the religious world, and ever study the truth anew, but he cannot neglect the lessons of the past with impunity.¹¹

¹¹ Berkhof, L., The History of Christian Doctrines, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1937, From the Preface.