

History of the Church

5 Part Study

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Today we are going to discuss the 3rd part of this study

Recap of where we are

- We left off last week at 312 ad. The period from 70ad to 312 was a time when the Early Church expanded quickly and widely
- Most of the new converts were non Jewish heritage and this posed significant problems for the Church
- The Apostles were all dead and the vacuum for church leadership and structure caused the church to install Overseers (Bishops), Elders, Pastors and Deacons in place across the churches.
- Due to the continuing persecution of Christians by both Romans and Jews, there was a growing problem with weak faith, little understanding of God, Inconsistent views of Jesus and who He was and what He did, plus general Apostasy under persecution.
- Forgiveness and Restoration was needed but the Church was not equipped to handle it. They gave the Bishops the power to forgive sin, and set the punishment for it...like penance, indulgences payments, and the like.
- There was much concern in the church about this new power
 - 3 main reactions
 - Not Biblical, and not part of Apostolic Teaching – a willful power grab
 - OK, since it was the church adapting to new circumstances
 - Ordained by God since Church fathers did it, and binding for the future
- Persecution finally comes to an end for the Christians after 300ad and the stage is set for the next chapter in the Church.

We finished part 2 last week, but lets recap what we have learned about Church History so far

See Chart

As the reign of Emperor Decius comes to an end, the persecution has overreached and revulsed the Empire as a whole and the time for a new Emperor was at hand.

This is where we begin today, The Age of the Hold Roman Empire was here

Schedule of Lessons

Topic		Date
Part 1- Beginnings	√	5/5/2010
The Age of Jesus and the Apostles (30ad-70ad)		
Part 2 – Early Church	√	5/12/2010
The Age of the Universal Church (70ad – 312ad)		
Part 3 – Institutions Formed		5/19/2010
The Age of the Christian Roman Empire (312ad-590ad)		
Part 4 – Religion and the State		5/26/2010
The Christian Middle Ages (590ad-1517ad)		
The Age of Reformation (1517ad – 1648ad)		
Part 5 – Challenged by Expansion and Ideas		6/2/2010
The Age of Reason, Revival, and Progress (1648ad – 1914ad)		
The Age of Ideology (1914ad to Present)		

As you can see, we have covered the Beginnings and the Age of the Early church. The next several sections are long with many events and people, but I have attempted to select the ones that demonstrate key events to move the church, not just look at all the awful things that happened in these ages.

Part 3

The Age of the Christian Roman Empire

312ad to 590ad



8 Topics for Part 3

- The Conversion of the Empire
- The Doctrine of the Trinity
- Christ in the Creeds
- The beginnings of Monasticism
- The Sage of the Age – Augustine
- The Beginnings of the Papacy
- Between Heaven and Hell (Eastern Orthodox)
- Mission to the Barbarians

There are 8 general topics we will try and cover in this session. They lay out the key check points in the Christian Roman Empire period and also define the Church changing under Roman Rule.

I have far more slides than I will actually cover in this talk, but I wanted you to have them in the handouts for reference for topics that may be unfamiliar. I will actually talk about 20 slides tonight.

Reference Map of Mediterranean



Map of Europe around 1100ad



Conversion of the Empire



Emperor Constantine

- In AD 312, Constantine was fighting to become sole emperor of the Roman Empire.
- Constantine claimed to have seen a vision of Jesus before his victory in Rome.

Image: © [Andre Nantel](#)

Constantine Changes Everything



The "Chi-Rho"

- Constantine's soldiers chalked the *Chi-Rho* on their shields—a figure that some seem to have understood as an abbreviation for “Christ.”

Constantine added the Chi-Rho to their shields as they went into battle. The Greek letter Chi and the Greek letter Rho represent the first letters of Christ

Xχ [Chi](#) Pρ [Rho](#)

Conversion of the Empire

- In 312ad Constantine came to power as the Emperor of the Roman Empire
 - Vision of the Cross before him as he killed his rival to become Emperor, so he thought God was with him
 - Converted to Christianity, although some thought it a conversion of political expediency
 - The horror at what had happened to Christians under previous Emperors provided a good base for Constantine's conversion
 - Kept the title "Pontifex Maximus" even when he converted to Christianity

Constantine came on the heels of Decius, who was the most notorious killer of Christians as he tried to establish himself as "Lord". The absolute horror of what happened to Christians turned even hardened Romans into a somewhat sympathetic group toward them.

Constantine was warring for control of the Empire with the pretender Maximus who lived near Rome, and before the battle, Constantine saw a cross in front of him and believed God and Christ was endorsing him and giving him power for Victory. He killed his rival and his men, drug them through the streets of Rome and then threw their bodies into the Tiber River. One of the magnificent Arches in Rome (Arch of Triumph) commemorates Constantine's great victory over his enemy. The Arch fails to mention the details of the Battle, but then the Victor gets to write the history of the War and battles.

Constantine in great pomp and circumstance converts to Christianity, is Baptized and becomes a Christian Emperor, as it were. Many thought the conversion hollow but great numbers of people in the Empire became Christians because it became the official state religion of the Roman Empire.

The Title Pontifex Maximus had always been used by the Emperors as the title for their role as head of the pagan Roman God. Pontifex = bridgebuilder, and Maximus = supreme, so he was the Supreme bridgebuilder between the people and the Roman Gods, as well as a Christian. This title becomes useful to the Bishop later in time.

The Empire moves East

- Many warring communities were still trying to take over for Rome.
 - Mostly from the East, the area where the Huns, the Mongols, the Persians, and other nomadic Eastern people lived.
- To protect his flanks, Constantine moved the city of his rule to Byzantium, and named the city Constantinople (modern Istanbul)
 - Constantinople= Constantine's city
- Rome still important in terms of honor and prestige because it was one of the first cities where a church was formed, it was a large church by comparison, and two Apostles had been martyred there...Peter and Paul both around 64ad
- Constantinople was built with elaborate architecture from the Byzantine period, and the ways of the Eastern church began to influence the new Emperor
- Five cities now were the power of the Empire: Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Antioch
 - Each with their own Bishop and churches and customs
 - Jerusalem was still very important, and Constantine through his mothers influence, built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, among other sites in and around Jerusalem

The mixing of Church and State was a new thing to the Christian community. They had always been on the wrong end of the spear when it came to relationships with either the Jews or the Romans. This was a blessing and a curse at the same time. Constantine was a vigorous supporter of the Christian Faith, even making it a good thing for citizens if they became Christians. This swelled the ranks of the church even more, especially in the Eastern part of the Empire where Constantine had his city.

Loyalty became important, and the Emperor was loyal to the Bishop of Constantinople and vice versa. In fact the Bishops were set just below the Emperor in the Church Hierarchy...Christ, Emperor, and Bishops. Constantine controlled his Bishops like generals in the Roman Army. Of course the closer in proximity they were to Constantine, the more he watched them. This was the Holy Roman Empire. A fusion of church, church leadership, and state, and state leadership. They were hard to distinguish from each other. With all its problems, this forged and forced alliance brought new unity, stability, and strength to the Empire. The revived Roman Empire lived several hundred years in the East, and nearly another 1000 years in the West.

By 380ad, Constantine was gone and Theodosius was Emperor. A building frenzy continued in the East and the basic Byzantine structure with domes, and jeweled ceilings, and depictions of Holy scenes began to appear all over Asia Minor (modern Turkey). The Emperors were becoming more controlling of the beliefs and were policing church actions. In Thessalonika, a famous charioteer lived and was very popular. He was charged with homosexuality, one of the great sins of the church, and the

Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Outside View



Easter Week Services at Tomb of Jesus

Doctrine of the Trinity or Splitting Important Hairs

- Three in One – blessed Trinity
 - Other religions take a different view
- Was Jesus begotten or unbegotten?
 - Was He created by God or part of God?
- Bishops and laymen had hard disagreements on the subject
- Constantine called Church Councils to resolve and get the Church back in agreement.

As the Church moved out from the thumb of the Emperors the old problems of doctrine kept returning. The councils submerged the problems but they did not go away. No other religion confesses or worships a 3 in 1 deity. In today's world, the Muslims and Jews find the idea heretical and offensive, and the Unitarians and Jehovah's Witnesses find it deplorable. We have many views on who God is, how does he relate to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Are they all part of God, or are they separate and different.

Was Jesus begotten or un-begotten? Was He created or part of God?

be-get- (esp. of a male parent) to procreate or generate (offspring).

Some of the disagreements between the various traditions today are not too important, that is to say, they are not matters of salvation but of worship style. Baptism traditions, Women Leaders, Music style, church structure, formality or less formal liturgy, Which version of the Bible you read, are examples. While there are traditions that are more representative of Apostolic traditions, these items do not confer or block salvation.

BUT, there are hairs worth splitting. The question of who God is, what is His nature, what is His relation to Christ. Is Christ part of God, a separate being, created or begotten. Is His nature and substance the same as God the Father? Is the Holy Spirit part of God and Jesus, and is He part of the Godhead too. These questions divided the early church and are still dividing the church today.

Other Hairs

- If these weren't enough there were specific heresies that arose
 - Heresies of Christ
 - Man-God, or God-Man, or God in all Men?
 - Spirit Man that was not Flesh and Blood
 - First of the Created Beings
 - Brother of Angels and Satan
 - Same as God, similar to God, like God but not equal with Him
 - Heresies of Mary
 - God bearer – Mother of God *Really ?*
 - Son of Mary, Son of God, One nature, 2 natures
 - How could Mary give birth to God?
 - If she is the Mother of God, what can we say about Mary?
 - What is her role in the Church and the Church worship?

Many heresies took root. Most of them live on today in one form or another. They particularly revolve around the view of Jesus to God and the Holy Spirit to both of them. If you believe that all three are God, in different persons, you believe in the concept of the Trinity. This is a very complex discussion but the Bible clearly calls God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit each God. So by Faith we take this as true even though we do not good words to adequately describe it. If you do not believe that these 3 “people” are God, then there are many other ways you could believe that provide for your personal satisfaction, but not necessarily Christian beliefs.

The role and special nature of Mary is particularly important to the Roman Catholic Church which ascribes a special nature and place for Mary in the church role of being an intermediary for us to go to for help in time of need

The Church Councils

- During this era of tumult, three more church councils clarified what Christians understood Scripture to teach about Jesus.
 - The Council of Ephesus (431)
 - The Council of Chalcedon (451)
 - The Second Council of Constantinople (553)

Key Church Councils

Councils of the Church	Statement	Place	Date
1	Christ is fully Divine	Nicea	325ad
2	Christ is fully Human	Constantinople	381ad
3	Christ is a Unified Person	Ephesus	431ad
4	In One Person, both Human and Divine	Chalcedon	451ad
4 Laterane	Various- Church Discipline, Procedural	Rome	varies
General	Protestant Heresies, Catechism, Catholic Doctrines	Trent	1551ad
General	Doctrine of Papal Infallibility	Vatican 1	1869-1870
General	Major Tradition Changes - Liturgy Changes	Vatican 2	1962-1965

Late Antiquity
Nicaea I • Constantinople I Ephesus • Chalcedon
Early Middle Ages
Constantinople II • Constantinople III • Nicaea II • Constantinople IV
High Middle Ages
Lateran I • Lateran II • Lateran III Lateran IV • Lyon I • Lyon II
Late Middle Ages
Vienne • Constance • Florence
16th century
Lateran V • Trent
19th and 20th centuries
Vatican I • Vatican II

Many many councils were held....some General and some Lateran. The Lateran were held in Rome at the Church of the Lateran, and the General Councils were held across the Empire in various cities where there were strong Bishops. In recent times there were two Vatican councils, the latter one making immense changes, still problematic, in both Catholic Tradition such as Latin Mass being switched to native languages, and some restatement of previous council findings as to the heresy of the Protestants, and the infallibility of the Pope. Many Priests left the Roman Catholic church after Vatican 2 due to a changing role of the Priest to be more like Pastors and less authoritative. Other changes too we will discuss when we get to the later age of the Church.

The Council of Nicaea—AD 325



*Emperor Constantine
and the First Council
of Nicaea*

- When Arius stated that Jesus had not existed eternally, all but two bishops agreed that this contradicted Scripture.
- The Creed of Nicaea responded to Arius' heresy.

Arianism was the early heresy that stated that Christ was not Eternal. In other words, he was created by God sometime. This was a huge heresy since it attacks the very nature and substance of Christ, and denies the scripture that contradicts that.

As you can imagine, this was nearly universally condemned, but two other Bishops agreed with Arius that it did not contradict scripture. The Creed of Nicaea was the result.

First Council of Constantinople

- In Constantinople, more than 150 bishops reaffirmed the Creed of Nicaea while carefully clarifying the relationship between Christ's divine and human natures.



*Emperor Theodosius with
Ambrose, Bishop of Milan*

“Saint Ambrose Forbids Emperor Theodosius to Enter the Church” by Anthonis van Dyck (1599–1641).

First Council of Constantinople

- The statement of faith formulated at the First Council of Constantinople became known as the Nicene Creed.
- Even while the Nicene Creed was drawing Christians together, the Roman Empire was falling apart.
- The “eternal city” of Rome had not fallen to foreign invaders for more than 800 years.

We will talk about Rome falling in a few minutes but I want finish the section on the Councils that clarified the Faith and Beliefs

Council of Ephesus (431)

- **Why?** Nestorius was accused of saying that Jesus was two separate persons, one human and one divine.
- **What happened?** Nestorius was exiled.



*Mary as "Theotokos,"
"God-Bearer"*

Image: © Vladimir Wrangel

As I mentioned last week, there were huge questions arising about who Jesus was, and the role of Mary. As the leaders got further and further away from the actual resurrection and Apostles teaching, they began to think and preach the very un thinkable to the early Christians.

Much of the Gospels and letters (especially John), proclaimed Jesus as God and Man. Fully both at the same time. A leader named Nestor began to teach separate persons, not the same person at the same time.

The council at Ephesus was convened to discuss and take action.

Council of Chalcedon (451)

- **Why?** Monophysites claimed that Jesus' divine nature swallowed up his human nature.
- **What happened?** Bishops affirmed that Jesus was one person with two natures: "Christ [is] ... recognized in two natures, without confusion, division, or separation ... but not as if Christ were parted into two persons."

Having "solved" the two persons heresy at Ephesus another one arose. Was Jesus really fully God and Man or was He really Mostly God with a little Man...Monophysitism

Monophysitism

Monophysitism is an error concerning the nature of Christ that asserts Jesus had only one nature, not two as is taught in the correct doctrine of the hypostatic union: Jesus is both God and man in one person. In monophysitism, the single nature was divine, not human. It is sometimes referred to as Eutychianism, after Eutyches 378-452, but there are slight differences. Monophysitism arose out of a reaction against Nestorianism which taught Jesus was two distinct persons instead of one. Its roots can even be traced back to Apollinarianism which taught that the divine nature of Christ overtook and replaced the human one.

Monophysitism was confined mainly to the Eastern church and had little influence in the West. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon attempted to establish a common ground between the monophysitists and the orthodox, but it did not work and divisions arose in the Eastern church which eventually excommunicated the monophysitists in the 6th century.

The denial of the human nature of Christ is a denial of the true incarnation of the Word as a man. Without a true incarnation there can be no atonement of sin for mankind since it was not then a true man who died for our sins.

It was condemned as heresy also at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 680-681.

Council of Chalcedon (451)

- Bishop Leo of Rome sent a “Tome” to Chalcedon that influenced the decisions there.
- In 452, Leo also convinced Attila the Hun not to destroy Rome.



Attila Meeting Leo of Rome

Image: Attila Meeting Pope Leo the Great (c. 1360)

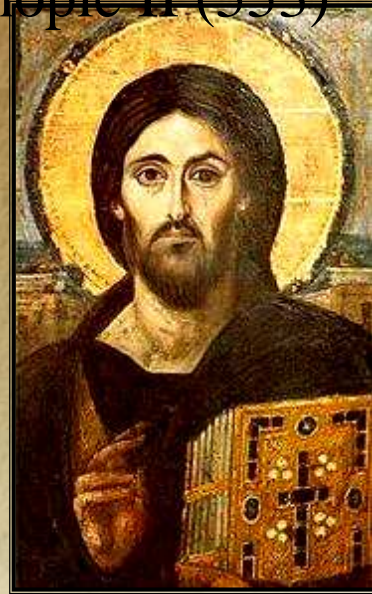
After Constantine died, other Emperors also took residence in the Eastern city of Constantinople. When Atilla the Hun was ready to attack Rome, the Emperor told Bishop Leo that he would have to face him alone because the Emperor could spare no troops to come. A total match of unequals since Leo had little might, and Atilla was a mighty and successful warrior, but sickness and starvation were taking its toll on the Hun army. Atilla did not want to attack Rome and when Leo rode out to meet him, Atilla agreed to spare Rome and went back home to recover.

Leo and the Roman leaders declared Leo a great Bishop who had stopped Roman conquerors and he became the primary power among the Bishops (Primacy was key to power and respect).

Leo used that power and respect to influence the council of Chalcedon and heightened his influence ever more.

Council of Constantinople II (553)

- **Why?** Monophysite theology became popular again.
- **What happened?** The council denounced both Nestorians and Monophysites.



Some old ideas die hard. After Constantinople II, they just get Quieter. These heresies are still here today in modified, more subtle forms. The whole idea of separating God from Jesus and separating Jesus the Man from Jesus the God is still with us. Many people still cannot come to terms with the idea that Jesus was fully God and fully Man, and the natures are inseparable. It IS hard to understand from our limited human minds and knowledge, but nothing is too hard or difficult for God

Christ in the Creeds

- Creeds were Statements of Faith / Beliefs
 - We use Baptist Faith and Message today
 - Early Creeds were adopted to train / disciple new converts
 - Creeds were used to hold the truth of belief ever before both the Leaders and Laymen
 - Helped recognize errors if you know what you believe
- Creeds changed as heresies were challenged and beliefs firmed up.

The church was creating Creeds to be sure to both train and disciple new converts. Last week I gave you copies of both the early Roman Creed and the Apostles Creed, reproduced here for completeness.

Note the essence of the beliefs affirmed in the councils stated explicitly in the Creeds.

Rule of Faith was the first attempt at a written creed. It was later updated and called the Apostles Creed

Rule of Faith

Do you believe in God the Father, the Ruler of all things? Do you believe in Christ Jesus, God's Son, who was born by the Holy Spirit through the virgin Mary; was crucified under Pontius Pilate; died, was buried, and rose again on the third day alive from the dead; ascended into heaven; sat at the Father's right hand; and will come again to judge the living and the dead? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy church, and the resurrection of the flesh?

The Apostles' Creed (as usually recited today) - *The basic creed of Reformed churches, as most familiarly known, is called the Apostles' Creed. It has received this title because of its great antiquity; it dates from very early times in the Church, a half century or so from the last writings of the New Testament. This creed differs slightly in each denomination that uses it*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hell. (**Note correct translation is HADES, not Hell**)

The third day He arose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

As a side note: You probably know that Baptists do not generally recite creeds. We say we are not Creedal people. Why is that and why don't we do it?

Is there anything in the Apostles Creed that we disagree with? No, but any time you restate the faith and elevate the writing and reciting of the belief to the status of an article of Faith, you begin to add to what is considered holy. As Baptists we totally believe the ideas in the Apostles Creed but we deny them primacy of belief that we reserve for the Bible. We say we are "People of the Book" which means that whatever we do, whatever policies, traditions, rules, actions, etc are ALL subject to the final authority we have written down...the Bible.

In our BFM Document, the writers are always quick to point out that these ideas are affirmed by us but always subservient to the Bible. In our own church we affirm the 1963 copy of the BFM as our standard, instead of later versions because the later versions began to clarify social teachings and political statements which are already stated correctly by the Bible and do not need amplification and clarification (in our opinion).

Since we are a congregational church, we can make those decisions about ourselves and our statement of our Faith.

The Creed of Nicaea

- “We believe in one God, the Father, almighty creator of all things visible and invisible. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, God’s Son, begotten from the Father, uniquely begotten from the Father’s essence; God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God; begotten not created, of one essence with the Father.

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The Creed of Nicaea

- Through him all things were made, in heaven and earth; for us humans and for our salvation, he came down and was made flesh—was made human—suffered, and rose again the third day; he ascended into heaven and is coming to judge the living and the dead.

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The Creed of Nicaea

- We believe in the Holy Spirit. The universal apostolic church curses all who say, ‘There was a time when he was not’ and ‘Before he was begotten, he was not’ and ‘He came out of nothing,’ or those who pretend God’s Son is of another substance or essence or created or variable or changeable.”

This is the end of the Nicene creed.

The Beginnings of Monasticism

- Ascetic Lifestyles have been around for years. We have hermit types today and in the earliest Christian writings we see John the Baptist as a wilderness wanderer
- In the middle ages however this path to salvation became more popular and even widespread
- Who are they, and why did they start?
- Benedictine Monks, Franciscan Monks, Dominican Monks- all types of orders started appearing over the years

Ascetic life styles have been around for years. John the Baptist was a man who lived in the wilderness and was called by God for a dramatic purpose despite his chosen lifestyle.

Church Wealth and power was a major distraction to those who longed for a simpler life.

Today there is much disagreement on the Monk lifestyle and commitments, but who are they and why did they do it?

The Desert Monks

- After decades of persecution, now there no longer seemed to be any possibility of persecution or martyrdom.
- Many Christians
 - longing for a more demanding faith
 - retreated to the deserts, to live alone.



As a reaction to the easy lifestyle that was developing for Christians in the Empire, there was a group of Christians that longed for a more difficult path. A way to go through hardship that would keep them focused on Christ and His teachings.

Monasticism was the answer and various ways were started for this movement to take shape.

Benedict is the first accepted order of Monks within the church, the Benedictine Monks. Jesus went to the wilderness to

Fast and pray and we know the apostle Paul retreated for several years after Damascus to let the Lord work on him without

The distraction of the world interfering. So fasting, praying, withdrawing is not really new, but it was always temporary and not a permanent lifestyle (The Essenes were an ascetic order of Jews far earlier)

The Desert Monks

- They lived in extreme poverty, eating only enough to stay alive.
- These men and women became known as “monks” and “nuns,” from Latin terms that mean “alone” and “deny.”



monk (from [Greek](#): μοναχός, *monachos*, "single, solitary" is a person who practices religious [asceticism](#), living either alone or with any number of monks. Can be used for both male and female but normally reserved for Males

Nuns – A shortening of the word **Renunciant**

renunciation [ˌrɪˌnʌnsɪˈeɪʃən] **n**1. the act or an instance of renouncing or abstaining. Used for Females who renounced earthly pleasures to follow God. So a **Renunciant** is one who renounces something.

from Latin *renunciātiō* a declaration

Benedict

- Born in Nursia about 85 miles from Rome in late 5th Century
- No scholar but had the Roman gift of administration
 - Pulled vagabond monks together in an abbot to live in community, be totally self sufficient and work hard all day.
 - Community, Self sufficiency, and hard work were hallmarks of Benedictine order (Along with poverty, chastity, and prayer)
 - Revolutionize and popularized the movement
- Authority was absolute and allegiance was absolute to the Abbot who ran the monastery.

Jerome and the Latin Vulgate

- Jerome lived in the desert for two years before he realized he was not called to live alone.
- When he returned to Rome, the bishop asked him to create a reliable Latin Bible.



Jerome

Jerome had poured himself into Study and worked as a Benedictine Desert Monk for years translating scripture, and was called back to Rome by the Bishop of Rome to work on a Latin Translation of the Scriptures.

A wealthy widow named Marcella financed Jerome's translation.

Jerome, Marcella, and a friend named Paula embraced extreme self-denial—even to the point of refusing ever to bathe.

I am sure that after a while this asceticism was painful for all of them since there was no Air Conditioning and they probably shunned deodorants as well.

Self denial continues but Cleanliness is next to Godliness and hopefully some attention is paid to personal hygiene in the modern monasteries.

Jerome and the Latin Vulgate

- The Latin text that Jerome finished in AD 405 became known as the “Vulgate” (or “Common”) Bible.
- For nearly 1,500 years, the Vulgate was the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Vulgate is used to speak of this Latin Bible. It sounds like a religious word, but it really means “common”. This Bible was meant to be the translation used by the Roman Christian world and became the base of the Roman Catholic Bibles for nearly 1500 years.

There are still versions of the Bible around based on this base text, but while this was an extremely scholarly work, it suffers from some interpretation of the Greek texts in the New Testament to support the Roman Catholic traditions and power structure. There were also some translation errors in the texts, like all translations, that added to the problems for modern scholars.

The modern translations of the Bible based on the oldest manuscripts are better renderings of both the meaning and the intent of the original writers. Similarly, in the English world the original King James Bible has some unfortunate errors and mistranslations that skew our beliefs today in a literal sense. The NKJ, the NIV, the NRSV and other newer translations correct most of these problems. Styles differ in translations and some are word for word translations, and some are phrase translations, which effect the readability or precise meanings.

The Douay-Rheims version of the Bible, and the Original King James versions have their staunch adherents, there is an abundance of information on the web defending them as the true editions of the Bible, and still argument about the Apocrypha (Deutero-Canonical books as the Catholics call them).

The Sage of the Age – Augustine

- The Fall of the City of Rome
 - The city of Rome symbolized the strength of the Roman Empire.
 - Germanic tribes—known as “barbarians”—had been migrating south for decades, seeking farmland in the Empire.
- In AD 410, the unthinkable occurred: The city of Rome fell to the barbarian Goths.

The Greeks originally thought people in other languages sounded like they were saying “Bar bar bar” when they spoke, much like we say “Blah blah blah” when someone is talking that we are not listening to... This is how the term **Bar-bar-ians** came to be. We have refined the term to be more about behavior than sound of speech, but originally it those that speak a different tongue...an uncivilized tongue. The Latin term is Barbarous.

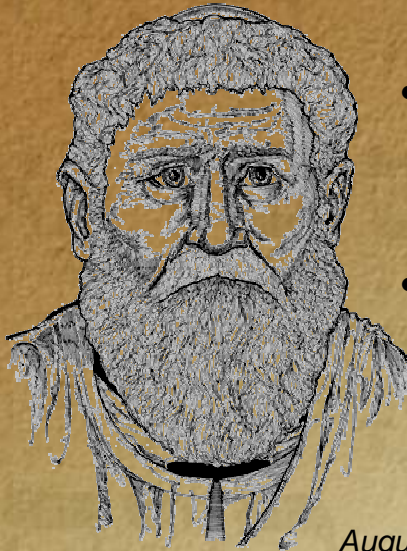
Dictionary definition

Barbarian is a term for an uncivilized person, often used pejoratively, either in a general reference to a member of a nation or *ethnos*, typically a *tribal society* as seen by an urban *civilization* either viewed as inferior, or admired as a *noble savage*. In idiomatic or figurative usage, a "barbarian" may also be an individual reference to a brutal, cruel, warlike, insensitive person.^[1]

The term originates in the ancient *Greek* civilization, meaning "anyone who is not Greek". Comparable notions are found in non-European civilizations.

Augustine is the man to address the Roman situation, and he does.

Augustine of Hippo



- Augustine wrote *The City of God* to help people to deal with the fall of Rome.
- Augustine had trusted Jesus years earlier, after reading Romans 13:14.

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, AD 354–430

Illustration by Stephen Hesselman

Romans were distraught both emotionally and physically at the fall of Rome. They had so much invested in the Pageantry and Power of Rome it was difficult to separate themselves from its fall. Augustine has come to grips with Rom 13:14 years earlier and used it as a basis to help the struggling Roman Christians.

Romans 13:14 (New International Version)

14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature (or the Flesh)

The book “City of God” by Augustine was huge help to the church and catapulted him to be a great thinker and helper of the times.

Augustine of Hippo

- According to Augustine, two realms seem to mingle on earth: the City of God and the City of Mankind.
- God's reign cannot ultimately be identified with any human regime; the City of Mankind will fall but only God's reign in his people's hearts will remain.

We understand and have heard sermons on how we (Christians) are pilgrims in the land, and that we are citizens of Gods kingdom, not the one we physically live within. We are passing through as the old hymn states, Just passin' through.

Even in the US, we need to separate our Government from our being. We are witnessing some radical changes to what we know as a free people and a people with their rights given by God and not Government. Whatever you think of that situation, we are pilgrims in this land, just passin' through. We should make it as good as we can, but ultimately we know there is a better life and way ahead of us. We can have assurance of the future because we know who holds it...not the government, but God.

This is a timely and needed message today, as it was in Augustine's day.

Augustine of Hippo

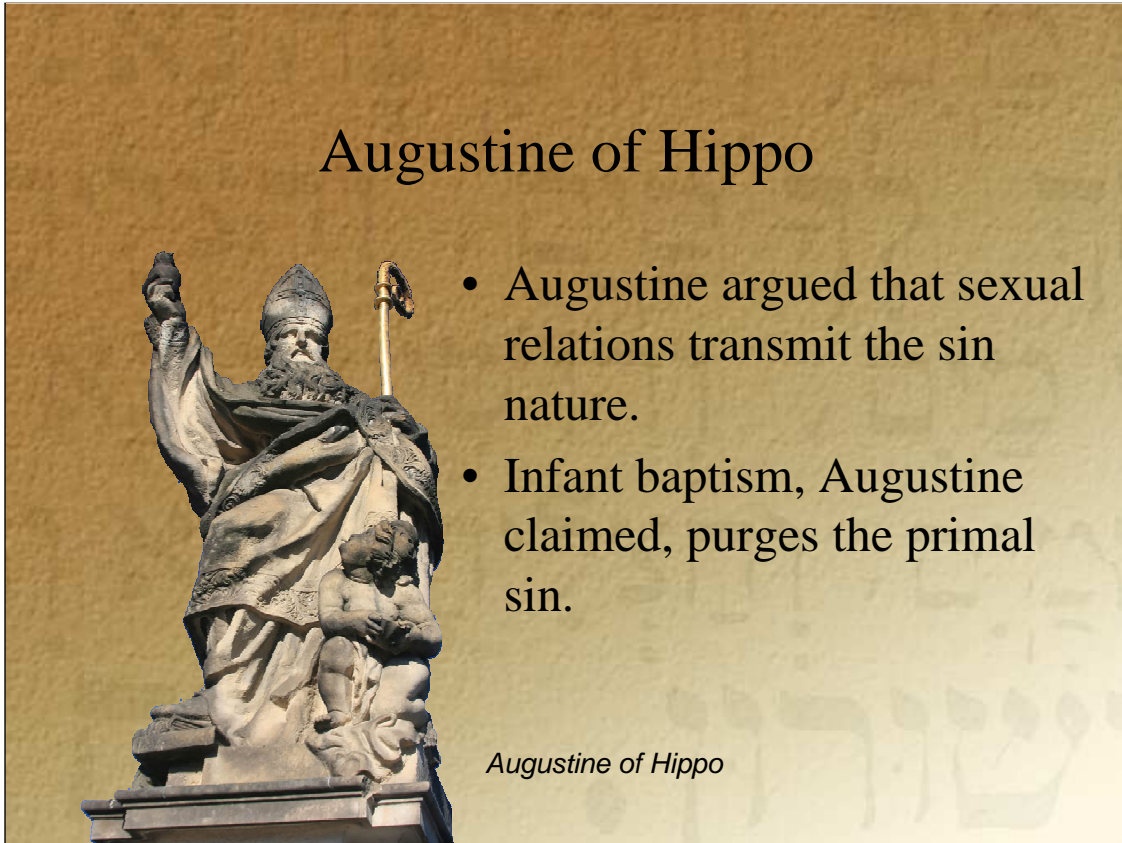
- Augustine also faced a crisis in his churches when a monk named Pelagius taught that human nature is not sinful.
- Augustine contended that the sin of Adam so completely corrupted all of humanity that no one naturally desires to do what is right.

It is interesting to see the heresies that were present in the church at this time. So much of the ideas that we are not sinful by nature but we are just following the innate desires that God created in us, underlies both the "Nature is God", pantheistic approaches then and now, and the deistic approaches we see prevalent since the times of the Age of Reason (still to come).

Some believe God is all around us, in the leaves, the animals, the environment, and in us. All we have to do is become one with them and the God in us will be made manifest. We are Gods but we need elevation to our natural state for us. Of course this idea sets the Creation up to be worshipped rather than the Creator, and denies any Lordship of Christ and Faith in Him as a prerequisite to Salvation.

Read Unitarian-Universalism pamphlet on beliefs

Augustine of Hippo



- Augustine argued that sexual relations transmit the sin nature.
- Infant baptism, Augustine claimed, purges the primal sin.

Augustine of Hippo

Image © Tiberiu Stan

We can see error sometimes but pick the wrong solution to correct them. In the mindset that the Bishops were representatives of Christ on Earth and that they spoke for God, the nice idea of Infant Baptism was created to wash away the sin nature and cleanse the child from the sexual impurity that brought them into the world anyway.

These pronouncements became tradition, and once ensconced, are very hard to unseat and replace no matter how ridiculous they are. In most Evangelical churches we dedicate babies in ceremonies, but they are symbolic of the parents intent to raise the child in a Christian Home using Christian principles, and the Church's intent to pray for this child

John Chrysostom



*John Chrysostom,
AD 344–407*

- While the west struggled against barbarians, Bishop John struggled to purify churches in Constantinople.
- His preaching was so eloquent he became known as “Golden Mouth” or “Chrysostom.”

While in Rome, Augustine was at work trying to fend off Barbarians and the heresies that were arising, in the East, there was a Bishop named John who was trying to refine and purify the Eastern branch of the Church.

John Chrysostom was an eloquent speaker which added to his name and reputation.

John Chrysostom

- Some priests were living with “spiritual sisters” who were somehow becoming “spiritual mothers.” John put an end to these arrangements.
- John consistently led his church to discipline errant church members, even wealthy and powerful members.

Sexual Impurity was beginning and there were clever ways to disguise activities but when children were born, it was pretty obvious how the priests and sisters were spending their time. Bishop John put an end to these practices.

He had the cross of being the disciplinarian to the church members were straying away, even those who were wealthy and influential.

As you might expect there were more councils to call and more ideas to get into the creeds and beliefs in the churches.

The Beginnings of the Papacy

- Writings as early as the second century had tried to confer primacy on the Bishop of Rome because two of the Apostles had been martyred there (Peter and Paul in ad 64)
- Bishop Leo's accomplishments in saving Rome from the Huns and the Vandals boosted his prestige and restored some of the power lost to the Bishop of Constantinople when Constantine moved his capitol city there
- Other Bishops, namely Eastern Bishops always disputed any notion by the Bishop of Rome for primacy.
 - A power struggle for centuries over the papacy and seat of authority for the churches.

Gregory the Great (540–604)

- Gregory was a powerful politician who gave everything away to become a monk.
- After serving the people of Rome during a plague, he was hailed as their new bishop.
- Gregory was the first bishop of Rome to gain the status that would later be linked to the title “pope.”

Gregory served the people as the mayor of the city and did a wonderful job. The current Bishop of Rome died in the plague that was sweeping the Empire that killed millions of people.

The cardinals wanted to name Gregory as the new Bishop of Rome, because he had been the Abbot of a local monastery, but he refused and fled to the countryside. They pursued him and caught up with him and convinced him that he was needed and he very reluctantly came back.

Gregory hated the pride and arrogance the role as Bishop brought along, as a monk, he accepted humble and meager ways.

Gregory. Being a monk, enlisted the Benedictine monks in an effort to bring Christ to the barbarian tribes in what we call Europe. He used the Augustine model to bring about salvation to the hinterlands. Gregory setup the administration procedures for guiding the church in these troubled times and through the prism of History, he has become one of the patriarchs of the Latin Church and certainly represents well the church in the middle ages.

He was born of a wealthy family but gave it up to follow Jesus as a monk. His talents were shining all around him and he was tapped to take several leadership positions from Abbot to Mayor of Rome (Prefect) at the age of 33.

He took on great issues like Defender of Orthodoxy. Missionary

Between Heaven and Hell (Eastern Orthodox)

- Differing Views of Salvation and Sin
- Official break between Eastern and Western church won't happen until the 11th century but key differences are appearing
 - Made in the Image of God
 - Icons and Iconoclastic thought
 - Forgiveness and salvation

We can all agree that Heaven is perfection and Hell is Rejection and living apart from God, but what does it take to get salvation. When you get it, how do you live in the “image of God”. When you sin, do you sin against man or God or the idea of the image of God.

Your answers depend largely on whether you came out of the Eastern church (Greek, Russian and other Orthodox Theology) or the Western Church (Catholic, Reformation, Congregational Theology).

Remember that Theology is different from Religion. If your Theology and concept of God is different, your Religion will be different.

Mission to the Barbarians

- Germanic and Scandinavian tribal clans ruled what we now call Europe. Most of the current European countries have a base from an earlier Germanic clan.
- We know of the Goths, the Visigoths, Vandals, Franks, the Angles, the Saxons, the Lombards, the Bavarians, and many many more.
- These tribes were warlike and were always fighting each other for territory and control of the land.
- As more arable land was needed, these “barbarians” moved further south and challenged the Romans for supremacy.
- The Bishop of Rome sent Benedictine monks into the land to evangelize the hoards and establish relationships.

This pacification and friendship treaties was successful and over time the barbarians became very weak Christians but each with their own Princes. Small kingdoms or territories existed everywhere, and hundreds of wars continued to be fought. The monks built monasteries and tried their best to convert and evangelize the warriors.

The beginnings or the Middle Ages and the fights to come were set up by this beginning of the mission to the barbarians

Next Weeks Study

Topic		Date
Part 1- Beginnings	√	5/5/2010
The Age of Jesus and the Apostles (30ad-70ad)		
Part 2 – Early Church	√	5/12/2010
The Age of the Universal Church (70ad – 312ad)		
Part 3 – Institutions Formed	√	5/19/2010
The Age of the Christian Roman Empire (312ad-590ad)		
Part 4 – Religion and the State		5/26/2010
The Christian Middle Ages (590ad-1517ad)		
The Age of Reformation (1517ad – 1648ad)		
Part 5 – Challenged by Expansion and Ideas		6/2/2010
The Age of Reason, Revival, and Progress (1648ad – 1914ad)		
The Age of Ideology (1914ad to Present)		

We will quit here and save our powder for next week to continue the discussion about the Middle Ages

Resources

- NIV Study Bible
- Eerdmans Handbook to the History of Christianity
 - by Tim Dowley editor
- Church History in Plain Language
 - by Bruce L Shelley (3rd Edition)

