



The Ancient Church

Study Guide

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Lecture Outlines

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

Lecture I

Introduction: Why Study Church History?

- I. The Bible and its Interpretation
- II. The History of Doctrine
- III. The Roots of Today's Church
 - A. In worship
 - B. In the sacraments
 - C. In the confessions
 - D. In denominations
- IV. Guarding Against Error
- V. The Ancient Church
- VI. The Importance of Studying the Ancient Church
 - A. Doctrine and theological heresies
 - B. Roots of Roman Catholicism
 - C. Nature of church government
 - D. History of preaching
 - E. History of hermeneutics
 - F. History of allegorical interpretation
 - G. History of missionary endeavor
 - H. Understanding the Eastern Church
 - I. Creeds of the church



Lecture Outlines

J. History of persecution

Philo Judeas (30/25 B.C. – 45/50 A.D.)

I. Theology and Anthropology

- A. The Old Testament fused with the best Greek Philosophy (i.e., Plato)
- B. Allegorical interpretation
- C. Denial of the Biblical nature of the fall

II. The Problem of History

- A. Creation of the world treat allegorically, i.e., not as a key event
- B. Therefore Christ's incarnation, i.e., breaking into history, as impossible

III. The Problem of Language

IV. The Logos Doctrine: the Logos of God: Two Functions

- A. Helps God in creation
- B. Helps us to approach God

V. The Possibility of a Triad

The Philosophical Schools of the Apostolic Age

Introduction: Exegetical methodology: literal, rational, allegorical

- A. The allegorical method
- B. Defense of the allegorical method
- C. Rules for interpretation
 - 1. Literal excluded when it contradicts or diminishes God
 - 2. Literal and allegorical side by side
 - 3. Allegorical meaning conveyed by particles, adverbs and prepositions



Lecture Outlines

4. Each word may have all its meaning apart from context
- I. The Stoics and Epicureans
 - A. Seneca (d. 65 A.D.)
 1. Brotherhood of human beings
 2. Moral and ethical behavior
 - B. The connections between the two schools
 1. Both searching for inner peace
 2. Both studying moral conduct
 - II. The “Platonists”: Plutarch (100 A.D.) and Marcus Aurelius (121-180 A.D.)
 - III. Gnosticism
 - A. Themes that run through all the schools
 1. Salvation brought through knowledge
 2. Antithesis between spirit and matter
 3. Delivery from the realm of matter into the spiritual realm by a savior
 - B. The different schools
 - C. The origins of Gnosticism



Lecture II

The Apostolic Fathers and Apologists

- I. The Apostolic Fathers (Title first used in the seventeenth century)
 - A. Clement of Rome, third successor of Peter(?); pastor in Rome 92-101
 - B. *I Clement* or *The Epistle to the Corinthians*
 1. Oldest Christian writing outside the New Testament to which a date and author are attested

Lecture Outlines

2. Describes dissension in the early church
- C. *II Clement* (not necessarily written by Clement)
1. A sermon
 2. A picture of the early church
- D. The Pseudo-Clementine literature
1. A collection of twenty little homilies
 2. No fully or correctly developed theology
- E. Ignatius of Antioch
1. Wrote seven letters on his way to martyrdom in Rome
 2. Affirms the deity and humanity of Christ and unity of believers
- F. Polycarp of Smyrna (d. 156 A.D.); may have known John the Apostle
- G. Papius of Hierapolis
- H. *The Epistle of Barnabas* (written 96-138 A.D.)
1. A theological tract, author unknown but not written by Barnabas
 2. Two main parts:
 - a. First seventeen chapters theoretical
 - b. The rest practical
- I. *The Shepherd of Hermes*
1. Book of revelations given to a shepherd
 2. Four visions, a transition, and section of parables/teaching
 3. Not fully trinitarian, equating Christ and the Holy Spirit
- J. *The Didache* (*The Lord's Instruction through the Twelve Apostles*); probably written 100/150 A.D. but lost to scholars until 1885
1. The first ten chapters, liturgical instructions for the church
 2. The last five chapters on discipline



Lecture Outlines

II. The Apologists

A. The time period: the second century; a time of persecution

B. Quadratus

C. Aristides of Athens, author of apology written to Trajan

D. Aristo of Pello, author of a tract defending Christianity against Judaism

E. Justin Martyr, most important apologist

1. A student of all the Greek schools of philosophy
2. Conversion by reading the Old Testament and writings of the Apostles
3. Originator of a school in Rome
4. Writer of important treatises
5. His theology:

Lecture III

- a. Of God
- b. Of the *Logos*, i.e., his Christology
- c. Of man: freedom of the will the outcome of the marriage of Greek philosophy and Scripture

F. Tatian the Syrian, a student of Justin Martyr

1. *A Discourse to the Greeks*
2. The *Diatessaron*, a harmony of the Gospels

G. Athenagorus of Athens

1. Defense of Christians
2. The resurrection of the dead
3. The doctrine of the subordination of Christ
4. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of the trinity

H. Theophilus of Antioch

1. A defense of Scripture as the Holy Word of God
2. The term *triad* used to describe the relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit



Lecture Outlines

I. Melito of Sardis

1. Development of the doctrine of the person of Christ
2. Development of the doctrine of original sin

III. The Interpretation of the Scriptures by the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists

A. The Apostolic Fathers:

1. Proclaimed all the words of the Bible to be inspired words of the Holy Spirit
2. Implemented apocryphal literature
3. Used a modified form of allegorical exegesis
4. Wrote in a style obviously inferior to New Testament writers

B. The Apologists

The Persecution in the Ancient Church over Two Hundred Years Ending in 312 A.D.

I. General Characteristics

- A. Historically from the Jews; then from Gentiles
- B. Exact number of persecutions not defined

II. Persecutions under the Jews

III. Persecution under the Roman government

- A. Domitian (81-96 A.D.)
- B. Trajan (98-117 A.D.)
- C. Antonius Pius (137/138-161 A.D.)
- D. Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.)
- E. Septimus Severus (193-211 A.D.)
- F. Decius (249-251 A.D.)



Lecture Outlines

G. The Diocletian Persecution (303-311/313 A.D.)

H. The edicts of toleration (311-313 A.D.)

IV. Analysis of the Persecution

A. Persecution not continuous but always possible

B. The Christian way of life: Christians known as killjoys

1. Christians were atheists: no visible gods in their worship
2. Christians were cannibals: "My body and blood"
3. Christians were incestuous: "Greet one another with a holy kiss"

C. Summary

1. Important theological points in this period
2. Persecution triggered by the mobs
3. No social status, a religion of the poor
4. Unpatriotic in terms of the society
5. Christians characterized as gloomy
6. Persecution first by the mobs; later by the government

D. What judgments can we make?

1. God's blessing did not manifest itself in material prosperity
2. Christianity had something to say to its culture
3. The church is purer the closer it comes to persecution
4. The absence of persecution in our society should call forth great praise and faithful service

Lecture IV

Irenaeus of Lyons (b. 140/161); the Last of the Church Writers Using Greek

I. His writing

A. *The Detection and Overthrow of the Pretended but False Gnosis*

B. *The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*



Lecture Outlines

II. His teaching

- A. His abundant use of Scripture
- B. The theory of recapitulation: i.e., Christ recapitulated all the stages of human life, requiring an age of 50 years.
- C. Called the father of Biblical theology

III. His exegetical method

- A. Use of Scripture
- B. Use of a simpler passage to understand a more complex passage
- C. His appeal to tradition to combat the gnostics
- D. His appeal to the whole of Scripture instead of isolated passages to refute heresies

Western Writers of the Third Century

I. Tertullian (155-220? A.D.), born in Carthage

- A. Prodigious writer, writing between 195-220 A.D.
- B. Head of the Montanists (later called Tertullianists)
- C. First significant writer in Latin
 - 1. Apologetical work
 - 2. Controversial treatises
 - 3. Moral works
- D. Analysis
 - 1. A brilliant man
 - 2. Extreme in some teaching
 - 3. Perceptive in analyzing the culture of his time
 - 4. Drew distinctions between Christianity and Greek philosophy
 - 5. Gave some places for errors in the Middle Ages



Lecture Outlines

Lecture V



- II. Hippolytus of Rome
 - A. Last Roman writer to use Greek
 - B. A bishop of Rome; held an anti-papal position
 - C. Gave insight into the development and conflict of the church
 - D. Died a martyr in 235 A.D.
- III. Novatian
 - A. A leading pastor in Rome in 200 A.D.; an opponent of Cornelius
 - B. Strong opponent in the problem of the “lapsed”
 - C. Stressed the importance of the sacraments
 - D. His contrived ordination as bishop of Rome and ex-communication
 - E. The schism in the church throughout the Roman empire for a century over the acceptance of the lapsed
- IV. Cyprian, an African from Carthage (b. 200/210)
 - A. Famous as a rhetorician-entertainer-informer
 - B. Converted in 246-248 and elected bishop of Carthage
 - C. Accompanied his congregation fleeing from the persecution
 - D. His actions debated in a synod in 251; the lapsed could seek penance and be given status of a catechumen
 - E. The plague resulting in persecution; the pastor ministry of Cyprian
 - F. The Edict of Valerian: the martyrdom of Cyprian in 258 A.D.
- V. Lactantius

Lecture Outlines

- A. A rhetorician employed by Diocletian in Bythnia
- B. In 303 his resignation and flight from the city
- C. Called by Constantine to tutor his son in 317



Eastern Writers of the Third Century

- I. Clement of Alexander (158-215 A.D.), perhaps born in Athens
 - A. Settled in Athens
 - B. Headed first seminary in the year 200
 - C. Fled from Egypt to Cappadocia
 - D. Formulated a method of theology
 - 1. An opponent of the orthodoxists
 - 2. Originator of patterns of theology of the Eastern Church

Lecture VI

- II. Origen (185-253 A.D.)
 - A. Early life: courageous, intelligent, ascetic
 - B. A teacher in Alexandria
 - C. A theologian and exegete of the Scriptures; 232-253 in Caesarea
 - 1. A prodigious writer: 800 known titles
 - 2. His hexapla
 - 3. His commentaries on all the books of the Bible
 - 4. Apologetical works, e.g., *Against Celsus*
 - 5. His theological work, 220-230; e.g., *First Principles*; the main defect, his platonic philosophy predominant
- III. The Alexandrian Interpretation of Scripture: Two Different Schools of Interpretation
 - A. Clement and Origen: the divine origin of philosophy

Lecture Outlines

1. Clement:
 - a. Only elemental Christianity found in literal interpretation
 - b. More depth of meaning in allegorical interpretation
2. Origen:
 - a. A strong doctrine of inspiration
 - b. The literal sense associated with Judaizing
 - c. The same position on allegorizing as Clement
 - d. The moral sense of Scripture: the application of Scripture to the soul

B. What is the meaning of the “allegorizing sense”?
“...concerns the secret mysteries of God’s activities toward human beings.”

Creeds in General: The Apostles’ Creed

- I. Creeds in General
 - A. Defined: A declaratory statement stereotyped in form and officially sanctioned by local church authorities.
 - B. Creeds not used extensively in the second and third centuries
 - C. Baptismal interrogations and answers from early days
 - D. Creeds developed to combat heresies and to function as public expression of the church’s belief
- II. The Apostles’ Creed
 - A. A variant of the Old Roman Creed (also a Greek version given in 340 A.D.); known today as the Apostles’ Creed
 - B. Used after baptism and later in personal devotions
 - C. *Descent to Hell*, first in 359 *To the Underworld*, introduced from the Eastern church



Lecture Outlines

Lecture VII

The Nicene Age (325-381 A.D.)

Introduction

- A. The political and social differences between the period preceding and during the Nicene age
- B. The rapid transition from a persecuted church to the official religion of the empire

I. Arius

A. Background, philosophical and theological

- 1. Review of the scholarly discussion of Arianism
- 2. Relation between Origen and Arius; Origen's contribution to Arianism
- 3. The main issue: the relation between the Father and the Son
- 4. Arianism derived from Origen's doctrine of subordination

B. Subordination as the key to Arian theology

II. Athanasius: a man of courage, perception and compassion

A. The Son is like and coterminous with the Father

B. The Son is eternally generated from the Father

C. Yet being Son and Father they are distinct; the Son is offspring

D. They are identical in being, in deity; God is both *monad* (unity) yet distinct

E. The Holy Spirit is one with God the Father and God the Son in a triad; He is consubstantial, eternal, indivisible; more closely related to the Son than to the Father

III. Alexander of Alexandria



Lecture Outlines

A. His life

1. The bishop of Alexandria (312 A.D.)
2. A member of the Nicene Council
3. His effort to bring Arius back to orthodoxy

B. His theology

1. The Father is unchangeable
2. The Son is one with the Father but distinct
3. The Son is the mediator between the Father and the world
4. The Trinity is a unity

IV. Eusebius of Caesarea

- A. Emphasized God as *monad*, less as distinct persons
- B. Moves more toward subordinationism
- C. The Son is power and wisdom, but secondary to the Father who necessarily preexists the Son
- D. The *logos* is similar and the only begotten by the Father

Lecture VIII

- E. The Son is consubstantial but still subordinate to the Father
- F. The Holy Spirit is a creation of the Son

V. The Theology of Arius

- A. God is absolutely transcendent
- B. The unity and transcendence prohibit distinctions within the divine nature
- C. God can have no real contact with the world
- D. He is unknowable, even to the Son
- E. The Son exists by an act of creation of the Father *ex nihilo*
- F. The Son does not share the essence of God (*homoioi oi*)



Lecture Outlines

G. The Son is *liable* to sin

H. “The Son of God,” a courtesy title, was an “adopted” son; “adoptionism”

I. The issue: Jesus is not true God; He is not true man; therefore He cannot be the mediator between God and man

J. The Holy Spirit is the last of the descending steps of divinity

K. He was disciplined by the synod

1. Ignored by Arius
2. His persistent teaching as the catalyst that resulted in the Council of Nicaea
3. Alexander’s two letters regarding the theology of Arius

VI. The Theology of the Age

A. Alexander of Alexandria, a bishop and pastor

B. Eusebius of Caesaria

C. Athanasius

1. Followed Alexander as bishop of Alexandria
2. Five times deposed from the bishopric and exiled
3. Passionately vindicated the deity of Christ
4. His writings:
 - a. Apologetics
 - b. Controversial treatises against Ariansism
 - c. Personal defense
 - d. Exegetical writing

The Nicene Creed, 325 A.D.

I. The Creed

A. Christology

1. Begotten by the Father
2. Of the one substance with the Father, *homo ousia*



Lecture Outlines

3. True God of True God
 - B. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381 A.D.)
- II. The Council of Nicaea: a worldwide ecumenical gathering
- A. Problems in Egypt



Lecture IX

- B. The celebration of Easter
 1. On the 14th of Nisan; the Quartodecimians
 2. On Sunday near the 14th
 3. The lunar date of the solar year
 4. Conclusion: always on Sunday but never on the 14th of Nisan
- C. Twenty Canons
 1. Clerical discipline
 2. Discipline of church members
 3. Division of the church into geographical areas; according to political divisions of the empire
 4. The proper way of ordination
 5. Hierarchy in church government: creation of "Metropolitans," i.e., bishops of large cities
 6. Excommunication as related to the "lapsed"
 7. The discipline determined:
 - a. To stand with the hearers for two years
 - b. To kneel with the kneelers for seven years
 - c. As attenders but not participants in the Lord's Supper for two more years
 - d. The proposal that all bishops be married men; proposal rejected

Lecture Outlines

PART II: FROM THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA TO 600 A.D.

The Period Between the Councils

- I. The Creed of the Dedication Council, Summer of 341 A.D.
 - A. Ninety-seven Eastern bishops' response to the action of the Western church restoring Athanasius and Marcellus
 - B. Confusion due to:
 - 1. Two languages and the difficulty of translation
 - 2. Easter church's leaning toward Arianism; therefore opposed to Athanasius
 - C. The creed itself Scriptural; therefore critical of Nicene Creed
 - D. The "unalterable" Son

Lecture X

- II. Council of Serdica, 343 A.D.
 - A. Called by Western bishops for a general Council
 - B. Constans concerned about the division of Eastern and Western churches
 - C. Only seventy-six Eastern bishops in attendance; later retired
 - D. A new assembly formed by Eastern bishops within the Western Council
- III. In 353 Constantius Made Emperor Over a Unified Empire Until his Death in 361
 - A. In the Eastern church, anti-Athanasian theology
 - B. An attack on the Nicene Creed
 - C. The rise in extreme Arianism: Anomeanism
 - 1. Aetius (d. 336) and Eunomius (d. 394)



Lecture Outlines

2. The created Son being unlike the Father, *anomis*
3. Counter reaction: drawing Eastern leaders back toward Athanasius

IV. The Creed of the Synod of Sirmium (357 A.D.)

A. Athanasius again expelled

B. *Homo ousios* (same substance as the Father) and *homoios ousios* (like the substance of the Father) forbidden

1. Favored Arianism
2. Rejected Creed of Nicaea

C. Constantius decrees the doctrine of *homoios ousios*, 360 A.D.

1. Outlaws all previous creeds
2. Uses the term *homoian* (like) as acceptable to both factions

The Council and Creed of Constantinople (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)

I. Political Events (360-381 A.D.)

A. The ploy of Julian the Apostate to let the churches destroy themselves

B. Gregory Nazianzen the leader for orthodoxy

C. Valens, successor to Julian and a rabid Arian

D. Theodosias the Great (379-395 A.D.)

1. The edict of acceptance of the Nicene Creed
2. Raises Gregory Nasianzen to bishopric of Constantinople
3. Drives Arians out of Constantinople
4. Calls all bishops to Constantinople in 381

E. Conclusion: at last the church comes into a state of unity and orthodoxy in 381

II. The Text and Council



Lecture Outlines

- A. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed a reworking of the Nicene Creed
- B. Two creeds upholding the same (orthodox) theology

The Cappadocian Fathers: Basic of Caesarea (330-379); Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394); Gregory of Nazianzus (329/30-390)

- I. The Godhead: the *ousia*, Essence, in Concrete Terms; One Substance (*monad*) in Three Modes of Being

Lecture XI

A. General characteristics

1. Twofold structure, monad yet triad, *hypostasis*
2. God the Father, the source of the other two persons
3. God the Son and God the Holy Spirit distinct

B. Unity within the Trinity: one God but three *hypostasis*, identical

1. Three persons, thus plurality
2. Each with “identifying particularities:
 - a. The Father’s: ungenerated (Alexander); Fatherhood (Basil)
 - b. The Son’s: generated, Sonship (Basil)
 - c. The Holy Spirit’s” sanctification (Basil)

II. Basil’s Trinitarian Formulations

A. *Ousia* and *hypostasis* defined; his chief contribution

1. According to Basil, the *ousia* (universal) and *hypostasis* (particular) each with its own particularities
2. The Persons of the Godhead are distinguished by their origin and relations to each other
3. The formula: The Godhead=*mia ousia, tres upostasis*, one essence, three particularities

B. The nature of the Holy Spirit

1. Inseparable from the Father and the Son



Lecture Outlines

2. Calls for complete worship
 3. His argument for the deity of the Holy Spirit
 - a. The testimony of Scripture verifies the Spirit's greatness, honor and worship
 - b. His association with the Father and the Son in whatever they accomplished in sanctification and deification
 - c. His personal unique relation to the Father and the Son
 4. The Spirit proceeds from the Son
- III. Gregory of Nazianzus: Emphasis on the Unity of the Trinity
- A. Clarifies the relation of the Father and the Son
 - B. First Greek theologian to clarify the relation of the two natures of the Son
 - C. Advanced theology of Basil: same concerning God the Father and the Son; same concerning the main characteristics of the Holy Spirit
 - D. The Holy Spirit consubstantial with the Father and with the Son
 - E. Emphasis on the unity of the Godhead with identical substance
- IV. Gregory of Nyssa
- A. Most advanced of the three Cappadocians in his contribution to the theology of the Godhead
 - B. Unity of the Godhead in *activity*
 - C. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, receives from the Son
 - D. An identity of energy in all three persons of the Godhead
 - E. Mutual relationship in the Godhead
- V. Epiphanius of Salamis (310/320 A.D. to 403 A.D.)



Lecture Outlines

- A. Affirms the deity of the Son and Spirit
 - B. Consubstantiality of the Son and the Holy Spirit
 - C. Mode of origin of the Son and the Holy Spirit
- VI. Summary of the contribution of the Cappadocians
- A. Unity of essence of the Godhead
 - B. Origin: Father source of the other two persons
 - C. General characteristics of the Godhead
 - 1. One Godhead exists simultaneously in three modes of being, or hypostises
 - 2. The Father is the source
 - 3. Conclusion: The persons of the Trinity are distinguished by their origin and relation to each other



The Western Church Fathers

- I. Fobedius of Agen
 - A. Reflects Western trinitarian thought
 - B. Emphasized unity of the three persons of the Godhead
- II. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (340 A.D. to 397 A.D.)

Lecture XII

- A. His life
 - 1. Trained for important government office
 - 2. Elected to bishopric of Milan (374) although only a catechumen
 - 3. An upright compassionate man, selling his wealth to help the poor
 - 4. Began an incipient separation of church and state
- B. His writing

Lecture Outlines

1. *On the Faith*, a defense of the deity of the Son against Arianism
2. On the Holy Spirit
3. Lectures on the mysteries
4. Lectures on the sacraments
5. A work on the duties of pastors



C. His theology

1. His anthropology: a mystical concept of the salvation of a person's soul: union of the person's soul with Christ, initiated by Christ, but with the person's participation in asceticism
2. Salvation: faith, works and grace
 - a. Faith and works as the products of grace
 - b. All goodness in the creature from outside the person
 - c. His struggle with divine grace and human will
 - 1) All good in man the work of divine grace
 - 2) Still the power in human will to receive or reject salvation
3. His doctrine of the church: the church as the medium through which we are brought into union with Christ
 - a. The church is one
 - b. Outside the church: heretics, i.e., defective in faith; schismatics, i.e., defective in love
 - c. The church is holy
 - d. The church is apostolic in faith and doctrine
 - e. The church is eternal
 - f. The church is built on the rock (Matt. 16:18)
 - 1) Sometimes Ambrose says Peter is the rock
 - 2) Sometimes he says the rock is Peter's faith
 - 3) Sometimes he says it is Christ Himself

III. Marius Victorinus (275/300-362 A.D.); the link between Greek thought and Latin theological speculation

A. His influence on Augustine

1. Innovator of the psychological doctrine of the Trinity

Lecture Outlines

2. God as beyond all being
 3. God being known through ignorance
 4. His doctrine of God interwoven with neoplatonic philosophy
- B. The *logos* is both Son and spirit
- C. The Godhead exists in triplicate:
1. Staying the same: the Father
 2. Going forth: the Son
 3. Coming back to the Son: the Spirit
- D. His analogy of the human soul to the Trinity: we have being, life and intelligence
1. The Father as essence, beyond all knowledge
 2. The Son as the revelation of the Father: the relationship is one of potency and action in consubstantiality
 3. The theory of eternal generation

Lecture XIII

4. The Holy Spirit as the voice of the Son, the link between the Son and the Father

John Chrysostom

- I. His life
 - A. An extreme ascetic
 - B. Held radical social ideas, selling luxurious church items to feed the poor
 - C. Not intimidated by nobility although persecuted
- II. His literature
 - A. His sermons
 - B. His treatises, e.g., on the priesthood and monastic life
 - C. His letters



Lecture Outlines

- III. His theology: pre-Augustinian, not as clearly defined
 - A. Original sin: “wounded by sin”
 - B. Salvation: Christ’s work counteracted the devil’s work
 - C. Atonement: efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice sufficient for the whole world
- IV. His exegesis
 - A. Greek his mother tongue
 - B. Use of the LXX instead of the Hebrew
 - C. Years of meditation and memorization of Scriptures; use of it in his writing
 - D. Doctrine of Scripture: The Holy Spirit speaks to us through Scripture in every part; inerrant
 - E. A follower of historical grammatical exegesis, probably his greatest contribution to the church
 - F. His definition of the different between “theory” and allegory, restraining allegory to certain passages
 - G. Advice to his congregation to interpret Scripture for themselves



The Antiochene Exegesis: Third and Later Centuries

- I. Three schools of exegesis
 - A. Literal and realistic: Tertullian and Cyprian
 - B. Allegorical: Origen and Alexander
 - C. Historical and grammatical: Chrysostom and Antioch

Lecture XIV

- II. Diodorus of Tarsus (d. 393 A.D.)
 - A. Commentaries on Old and New Testaments

Lecture Outlines

B. Emphasized the literal sense

III. Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 482 A.D.)

A. Rejected the theories of Origen but learned from him the importance of careful exegesis

B. Gave importance to minor parts of speech

C. Emphasized exegesis in relation to context

D. Taught concerning church organization:

1. Against hierarchical structure
2. Importance of church history
3. Scripture of slavery and women's rights

IV. John Chrysostom

A. Used the Bible as he found it

B. Saw the literal sense as the guide to conduct

C. Studied it for personal instruction

D. Made few errors in his interpretation

E. Studied the context for exegesis

F. Taught that the Scripture is clear to understand

Augustine of Hippo (354 A.D. to 430 A.D.)

I. His life

A. Born of mixed parentage, Christian mother, pagan Roman father

B. Educated in Carthage, a student of rhetoric and philosophy

C. Rose to occupy the endowed chair of rhetoric in Milan as a young man

D. A strong brilliant young man but rebellious against Christianity



Lecture Outlines

- E. At the death of his father he took a concubine who gave him a son
- F. After searching for meaning, he turned to Manicheism
- G. His radical conversion after reading the Bible
- H. His return to Africa and subsequently his appointment as bishop of Hippo
- II. His writings
 - A. His *Confessions*, the first Christian autobiography
 - B. Commentaries and sermons: exegesis was historical with some allegory
- III. His theology
 - A. On the Trinity: How do we know God? From the revealed Word concerning Jesus



Lecture XV

- B. Theophanies: appearances of the *Father* on earth
- C. Co-equality of the persons of the Trinity
 - 1. Relations among them not of degree
 - 2. Relations are of causality
 - 3. Double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son
- D. Distinctions in the Godhead are expressive of relation, not essence
 - 1. Best word to express the members of the Godhead: *persons*
 - 2. A tendency to Unitarianism, against which he warns his students
 - 3. Important: to hold in balance the complex teaching of Scripture, avoiding extremes in describing our God
- E. Analogies Augustine used, all inadequate

Lecture Outlines

1. The analogy of love
 - a. The person who loves, the object or person loved, and the love itself
 - b. The mind itself, the love of it and the knowledge of it
 - c. Four ways love reflects the Trinity
2. Memory, understanding and will, all equal
3. Our physical bodies: e.g., vision as an analogy of the Trinity, i.e., the object we see, the act of seeing, attention to what we see
4. A father, a wife and a son; a problematic analogy

IV. His Contribution to the Advance of Theology of the Trinity

The Church: Hierarchy and Discipline

- I. Clement, Bishop from 92-101 (*Bishop* is equivalent to New Testament *presbyter*.)
- II. Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians*, 110 A.D.; Only Presbyters and Deacons as in Paul's Time
- III. Ignatius: in his Letters, Three Office Bearers: Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Three interpretations:
 - A. The letters were forged
 - B. Genuine but interpreted from presbyterian perspective
 - C. A distinction in the use of *bishop* to refer to a higher office and *presbyter* to refer to a lower office

Lecture XVI

- D. A monarchical episcopalian form of structure
 1. Bishop as head of a single congregation
 2. Vicar of Christ
 3. No distinctions of order among the bishops
- E. Evaluation of this: there are no interpolations in his letters



Lecture Outlines

- IV. Writers of the Middle of the Second Century: Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origen
 - A. Earliest times: bishops (being pastors) and deacons
 - B. In the third century the development of the group of pastors, the presidents becoming bishops
 - C. One and a half centuries after Ignatius, the two terms, *bishop* and *presbyter* used indiscriminately
 - D. Approbation of the people required to name a bishop
- V. Cyprian
 - A. Distinguished between *bishop* and *presbyter*
 - B. Recognized the primacy of the bishop of Rome
 - C. Confrontation with Steven, Bishop of Rome
 - 1. The dispute on baptism
 - 2. Steven uses Matt. 16:18 to claim his primacy as bishop
 - D. Same passage used by Damasus in 382 in the midst of problems of church administration:
 - 1. As Bishop of Rome, the most important bishopric in the western church; also successor to Peter, according to Damasus
 - 2. Issued letters in the same form as the emperor, thereby assuming the same authority over the church as the emperor had over the empire
- VI. Pope Leo I (440-461)
 - A. Decree by Valentinian II that all bishops of western part of the empire submit to the authority of the pope
 - B. The disintegration of the Roman empire by the barbarians
 - C. Confrontation of Atilla with courage, with authority from the emperor, and with the Word of God
 - D. Leo's belief that Peter lived in him and spoke through him



Lecture Outlines

- E. "The dignity of St. Peter is not lacking even in an unworthy heir." –Leo I
 - F. A deterioration of the central authority of the western church coincidental with the demise of the Roman empire
- VII. Gregory the Great (590-604). Reassertion of Roman Authority
- A. Conversion of the Anglo Saxons through the monk Augustine of Canterbury
 - B. One of the four great teachers of the western church with Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome
 - C. Improvement of church liturgy
 - D. Summary regarding church offices
 - 1. In the New Testament: two functionaries, presbyter and deacon
 - 2. In earliest Patristic times: presbyter, bishop and pastor as synonymous terms
 - 3. From Ignatius three offices, bishop (a high pastor), presbyter and deacon
 - 4. A slow development of bishops as elected presidents of pastors
 - 5. The bishop of Rome as a result of the need for a uniformity of authority in all the scattered churches
 - 6. Leo's claim based on Matt. 16:18; the beginning of the papacy



Lecture XVII

The Church: Relations with the State

- I. Post-Constantinian Christianity (312-313 A.D.)
 - A. Positive effects of a church-state relation: from a persecuted minority religion to a state-sanctioned religion overnight
 - 1. Clergy exempt from public responsibility
 - 2. Church buildings built and endowed
 - 3. Fixed salaries for ministers from church and state
 - 4. More rights allotted women

Lecture Outlines

5. Abolition of gladiatorial shows
- B. Negative effects on the church: secularization. The church of the persecution and catacombs became the church of the palaces and prelates
1. A religion acceptable to the people
 2. Acceptable to the intellectuals
 3. Mixed with Greco-Roman culture
 4. As a result, a moral decline in the church
 5. The intrusion of politics into religion
 6. History of Christianity and history of western civilization inseparable
- II. Emperor/Church Relations (312/313 A.D.)
- A. As emperors had been heads of the pagan religions, they now were regarded as heads of the Christian church
- B. The church controlled doctrinal issues
- C. The state disciplined and ruled the people
- D. A new era was introduced: the persecution of heretics
1. At first excommunicated and exiled
 2. Later put to death
 3. Heathenism stamped out quickly
 4. Theodosius the Great (379-395): establishment of the Nicene Creed and the death penalty for pagans and heretics.
 5. In 380 the first sixteen edicts against heretics by Theodosius; orthodoxy of faith as important as loyalty to the state
 6. Church fathers historically in favor of punishment for heretics
- III. The Explicit Relation Between the Emperors and the Church
- A. Participation of Emperors in theological disputes, the punishment of heretics, nomination of bishops, issuing ecclesiastical edicts on their own



Lecture Outlines

- B. The new state regarded as the restoration of the Mosaic and Davidic theocracy
- C. Development of a hierarchy in the church parallel to the state: Emperor vs. Pope



Lecture XVIII

The Counciliar Epoch

Introduction: Up to and through 381 the Trinity conflict; then the struggle over the nature of Christ during this period and into the medieval age.

A. Four elements contained in orthodox doctrine of Christ

1. He must be true God
2. He must be true man
3. He must be one person
4. The divine and human in Christ must be united, yet distinct

B. Two conflicting schools of Christology influenced by methods of interpretation

1. The Alexandrian School: mystical and speculative; holding the two natures so united as to minimize the human identity
2. The Antiochene School: more sober and reflective; holding an abstract separation of the two natures

Note: To be observed, historically there were often two schools of thought taking opposite extreme positions while the Biblical orthodox teaching took a middle position.

C. Five important controversies in this era:

1. Apollinarian controversy at close of Nicene period: concerning whether Jesus assumed three parts of the human nature, i.e., did He have a human soul?
Apollinaris: human spirit in Christ replaced by the *logos*
2. Nestorian controversy: a rejection of the double personality of Christ

Lecture Outlines

3. Eutychian controversy: Jesus possessing only one nature, the human being assimilated into the divine
4. Monophysite: a reaction to the Eutychian theory
5. Monothelite (633-680): rejection of the doctrine of one will in Christ



I. Historical Events

Introduction

A. Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople (428-431 A.D.) (Antiochene)

1. Stressed distinction of the two natures of Christ
2. Did not deny His unity

B. Cyril (Alexandrian): the unity of the natures of Christ but no clarification of the distinctives of the two natures

C. What are the issues:

1. Full Godhead and manhood of Christ acknowledged; the issue, the relationship between the two natures
2. The manner of the unity in Christ; marks out levels of unity and distinction between them
3. Cyril's position: the efforts of the Antiochenes seen to be a danger to the unity in Christ
4. Result: a modern and an archaic way of defining the unity in the nature of Christ

D. Nestorius' thought and theology

1. Made the patriarch of Constantinople April 10, 428
2. Objected to the title "Mother of God" (*theotokos*, or Godbearer)
3. Arguing that Mary was mother only of the human nature of Christ making Christ to be the God-bearer rather than the God-man
4. Three letters from Cyril and one from Emperor Theodosius II demanding that he recant

Lecture Outlines

Lecture XIX

5. Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.)
 - a. A creed which underlined the Christology of the Creed of Nicaea
 - b. Cyril's second letter to Nestorius approved
 - c. Nestorius condemned and dispossessed of any dignity in the church
 - d. "That one and the same is the eternal Son of the Father and the Son of the virgin Mary, born in time after the flesh; therefore, she might rightly be called the "Mother of God"

II. From Ephesus to Chalcedon

A. Friends of Nestorius: John of Antioch, Andrew of Samosata, Theodoret of Cyrus

1. Theodoret's rethinking the accusations and theology of Cyril
2. The importance of this struggle

B. Cyril and friends prepared for debate

The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), Third Ecumenical Council

I. Main Events of This Period

- A. The "Robber Synod" (449)
- B. The disintegration of the church

II. The Council of Chalcedon

III. The Outcome

- A. The condemnation of Nestorius
- B. Four important statements
 1. The properties of the nature of Christ may be attributed to one person



Lecture Outlines

2. The suffering of the God-Man is true and infinite
3. It is the divinity, not humanity, that constitutes the root and basis of the personality of Christ
4. The *logos* did not unite with a distinct individual but with the substance of human nature



IV. Twenty-eight Canons

Lecture XX

Social Life Before 325 A.D.

- I. The Apostolic Age
- II. The Post-Apostolic Age: Social Issues
 - A. The issue of work: to be done well as a testimony and as a means of help to the unfortunate; the dignity of work
 - B. Proper conduct; a system of precepts; no stigma for slaves
 - C. Food and dress
 - D. Leisure time
- III. The Third Century
 - A. A list of prohibitions
 - B. Food, clothing, leisure

Worship in the Ancient Church

- I. In the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists
 - A. Baptism
 1. A rite of initiation into the Christian church
 2. Under running water or water poured on three times
 3. In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
 4. The baptized then robed in white
 5. Baptism as a means of conveying the Holy Spirit
 6. Baptism as a seal of the Lord's ownership

Lecture Outlines

B. The Lord's Supper

1. On the first day of the week
2. The reading of the "Memoirs of the Apostles" and "Writings of Paul"
3. A sermon
4. Public prayer, all standing and sometimes with raised hands
5. A kiss of peace
6. Prayer of thanksgiving for the bread and mixed wine
7. Passing of the bread and wine

C. The *agape* feast

D. An expression of penance before the Lord's Supper

E. Prayer

F. Fasting: only bread and water on two days a week

1. To discipline the body
2. To help the poor with food not eaten because of fasting

II. In the Third Century

A. Baptism

1. Modern conceptions
2. According to Tertullian, Cyprian and Hypolitus: the adult convert is "dipped" and gives a confession of faith
3. A fixed time once a year for baptisms
4. A variety of formalities in various areas
5. Symbolic of newness of life
6. Infant baptism practiced in some cases

B. Lord's Supper: similar to the services today

Lecture XXI

C. Church buildings: mainly houses adapted to the services; later buildings specifically constructed for worship

D. *Agape* feasts: "pot luck dinners" for fellowship; very little worship



Lecture Outlines

E. Penance

1. Serious sins publicly confessed
2. Some penitential activity to demonstrate true penitence
3. Forgiveness given by the church with restoration to fellowship

F. Certain sins (murder, adultery and idolatry) regarded irremissable

Decline of Discipline in the Post-Nicene Age

Introduction

- I. The Good and Bad Consequences of the Union of Church and State
- II. Treatment of the “Lapsed” in Times of Persecution and Afterward
- III. Civil Penalties Related to Church Penalties
 - A. The Priscillianists: the first bloody punishment of heretics
 - B. With the increase of discipline of heretics a decrease in the discipline for moral offenses
 - C. A crisis of discipline due to secularization and growth of the church
- IV. Church Leaders Who Stood for Proper Discipline, e.g., Chrysostom and Ambrose
- V. Self-Judgment as the Only Requirement in Taking the Lord’s Supper

Differences in Worship after Nicaea

- I. Baptism of Adult Converts
 - A. Emerged in water, sometimes descending three times into the water
 - B. Naked but afterwards dressed in white robes



Lecture Outlines

- C. Anointed with oil
- D. A confession of faith in Christ
- E. Renunciation of the devil
- F. No taking of the Lord's Supper before being baptized

II. The Lord's Supper

- A. A liturgifying of the sacrament after Nicaea
- B. Formal liturgies, in contrast to Reformation simplicity
- C. Little evidence for the doctrine of transubstantiation at this time

III. Church Calendar Establishing the Celebration of Important Events

- A. Date of birthday of Christ on December 25 to draw pagans from the celebration of birthday of the sun god
- B. Celebration of the forty days of lent
- C. Date of Easter
- D. Ascension feast forty days after Easter
- E. Pentecost ten days after Ascension Day

Worship in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries; Some Changes

I. Baptism: Six Functions in the Celebration of Adult Baptisms

- A. Undressing of the candidate
- B. Anointing with oil
- C. Renouncing of the devil and all his works
- D. Blessing of the water in the fount
- E. The immersion itself



Lecture Outlines

- F. The robbing in white robes
- II. The Lord's Supper
 - A. More formalized
 - B. More prayers before partaking of it; in the Eastern church more memorized litanies
 - C. Collection of gifts
 - D. Singing of psalms
 - E. The theology of the Lord's Supper
 - 1. Transubstantiation not generally accepted in the West
 - 2. Augustine: bread and wine as signs and symbols
 - 3. Chrysostom: belief in transubstantiation



Lecture XXII

Social Life in the Church after Nicaea

- I. Standards of Work Maintained; Money Lending Impermissible Employment
- II. Food Meant to Nourish the Body, Not as a Luxury
 - A. One meal a day vs. the Roman gourmet tastes
 - B. Prayer before the meal
- III. Clothing: Simplicity
- IV. Emphasis on Hospitality
- V. Charitable Works Stressed; Public Hospitals

Social Life in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries

- I. The Work Ethic Much Discussed
- II. Augustine on the Subject of Diet

Lecture Outlines

III. The Church Ineffective in Changing the Culture of the Time, e.g., the Theater

Christology in the Ancient Church

I. In 325, the Nicene Council

- A. Confessed the eternal pre-existent Godhood of Christ
- B. Excluded Arianism from the church

II. In 451 A.D. the Council of Chalcedon

A. Concerning the Second Person of the Godhead

1. A true incarnation of the *logos*
2. The motive of the incarnation, the love of God
3. The goal of the incarnation, the redemption of fallen humanity; the reconciliation with God
4. The incarnation: not a conversion of God into man nor a conversion of man into God
5. Not a humanizing of the divine nor the deifying of the human
6. Not an outward connection of the two but a union of humanity and deity in one person

B. The distinction between nature and person: three persons in one divine nature

C. The result of the incarnation: in the fullest sense, the Son of man yet the eternal Son of God in one person with one undivided self-consciousness

D. Duality of the natures continuing infinitely

E. Unity of the person: a unity in the distinction and a distinction in the unity

F. The whole work of Christ attributed to His whole person and not to one or the other nature exclusively



Lecture Outlines

Monasticism in the Ancient Church

Introduction: With the rise of the state religion there was a rapid growth of monasteries in the fourth century. It lasted for a thousand years. The motive for entering a monastery: an asceticism, a self martyrdom by zealous Christians.



Lecture XXIII

- I. Three Types of Monastic Life
 - A. Ministers in their congregations who lived like half-monks
 - B. Those who separated from all work and all interaction, clothing themselves in skins and eating bread and salt and living in caves
 - C. Those who lived in communes, engaged in manual labor and devotions
- II. The Monastic Life and the Augustinian Order Initiated by Augustine of Hippo
 - A. Monasticism regarded positively at first: a separation from the world
 - B. Problems with monasticism
 - 1. Extreme asceticism; e.g., one who slept standing and ate once a week; men who lived isolated lives
 - 2. Reason: to speak out against the culture
 - C. Normal monastic life: a structured life with devotions, meals, work in an ordered routine
 - D. Monastic life born in the East where weather favored living in caves, as opposed to living in monasteries in the West
- III. Benedict of Nursia (480-543 A.D.): an Illustration of Western Monastic Life; Originator of the Benedictine Order
 - A. Benedict's life and desire for a holy manner of living
 - B. Benedict's establishment of twelve monasteries

Lecture Outlines

C. Benedict credited with miraculous powers

D. Characteristics of Benedictine monks

1. An ascetic life without extreme rigor
2. Dress: cloth tunic with black hood
3. Fasting two days a week, i.e., eating one meal on those days
4. Silence during meals
5. Relinquishing of all material possessions



Post-Chalcedon Christology

I. Eutyches

A. His theology: human attributes of Christ assimilated into the divine; i.e., His body *not* consubstantial with ours, therefore not a human body

B. His followers called Monophysites (*mono*=one, *physis*=nature); i.e., Jesus had one nature with two parts after incarnation, not two natures, human and divine

C. One hundred years to resolve the Monophysite problem; i.e., in 553 by the Council of Constantinople

D. From this date the separation of the Monophysites

II. The Monothelite Controversy (*mono*=one, *thele*=will)

A. Does the Son of Man have a separate will and the Son of God another will?

B. The Second Council of Constantinople in 680: The Son had a human will and a divine will perfectly merged.

Lecture XXIV

Conclusion: a Review of Five Hundred Years of History

I. Review Questions

A. Why study the ancient church period? Herein we learn:

Lecture Outlines

1. About Biblical interpretation at the time
2. The history of the development of certain doctrines
3. The roots of today's church
4. Certain practical and theological errors

B. How is church history divided?

1. The Apostolic Fathers
2. The Apologists
3. The Pre-Nicene Age
4. The Post-Nicene Age
5. The Counciliar Epoch

C. Can you name the principal figures in each period?

D. Can you explain the major theological issues in each period?

E. Can you describe political, social and economic circumstances in each period?

F. Can you describe the exegetical methods and the schools of exegesis in each period?

G. What was the relationship between philosophy and theology?

II. Characteristics and Themes in the Various Periods

A. The ten Apostolic Fathers:

1. A passion for the Lord in persecution and martyrdom
2. A group made up of those coming out of Greek and Jewish societies
3. Great theological naivete

B. The Apologists

1. Christianity as an illegal religion
2. Christianity as a legitimate philosophy answering philosophical questions
3. Their main desire to be left alone

C. Early Biblical interpretation: the two above groups held to inerrancy but a mechanical form of inspiration



Lecture Outlines

- D. Persecution in the early church, but a time of spiritual richness and purity in the church
 - E. The problem of the “lapsed” and discipline
 - F. Important Eastern and Western writers
 - G. Irenaeus
 - 1. The theory of “recapitulation,” i.e., Christ in His humanity recapitulated all the stages of human life
 - 2. The beginning of the discipline, “Biblical theology,” a history of theological development
 - H. Western writers of the third century: Tertullian, Hypolitus, Novatian, Cyprian and Lactantius
 - I. Eastern theologians: Clement of Alexandria and Origen
- III. New Developments
- A. Creeds in the ancient church
 - 1. Baptismal statements
 - 2. The Apostles’ Creed
 - 3. The Nicene Creed/Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed
 - B. The Nicene Age: The Athanasius/Arius conflict
 - C. The Cappadocian Fathers in the East
 - D. Post-Nicene development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit
 - E. Antiochene School
 - F. Ambrose and Augustine in the West
 - G. Eastern discussion of Christology and the incarnation
 - H. The rise of hierarchy with the state/church relations





Review Questions

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

Lectures I – III

1. What practical benefits come from studying the ancient church?
2. Who is Philo Judaeus? How did he affect the early church?
3. Did philosophy affect the early church?
4. What were the philosophical schools of the Apostolic age?
5. Can you name three Apostolic Fathers?
6. What is an apologist?
7. What is the significance of Justin Martyr?
8. How did the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists interpret the Scriptures?
9. How many persecutions were there?
10. What were the general characteristics of the time of persecution?
11. What were the charges leveled against the Christians?
12. Was there a Christian way of life at that time? If so, how can you relate that life style to today?

Lectures IV – VIII

1. Can you name and describe two Western writers of the third century?
2. What is the Alexandrian interpretation of Scripture?
3. Were there any creeds before the Council of Nicaea?
4. What is the history of the Apostles' Creed?
5. Who is Arius? What did he teach?
6. Who is Athanasius? What does the phrase, "Athanasius against the world and the world against Athanasius" mean?
7. Who is Alexander of Alexandria?



Review Questions

PART II : FROM THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA TO 600 A.D.

Lectures IX – XIV

1. What were the political events between Nicaea and Constantinople?
2. Should politics affect the church?
3. What councils occurred between Nicaea and Constantinople?
4. What moved the church toward theological agreement at Constantinople?
5. Who were the three Cappadocian Fathers?
6. How did they advance theology?
7. Could you characterize their theology?
8. What was Antiochene exegesis of the Scripture?
9. Who were some of its practitioners?
10. Sketch the life of Ambrose of Milan.
11. Sketch the life of John Chrysostom.

Lectures XV – XIX

1. Sketch the life of Augustine.
2. How was the church organized in the first three centuries?
3. Who were Leo I and Gregory the Great? Why do we call them popes?
4. What word characterized church/state relations in the ancient church? (separation, union, mixture?)
5. Who was Nestorius? What is schism? Does it happen today?
6. What events led to the Council of Chalcedon?
7. What were the theological issues at stake at Chalcedon?



Review Questions

Lectures XX – XXIV

1. What was the church's attitude toward food, clothing and leisure in the pre-Constantinian age?
2. Is twentieth century protestant worship the same as that of the ancient church?
3. Describe a worship service in the pre-Constantinian church.
4. Is church discipline the same today as it was in the pre-Constantinian church? Explain.
5. Describe the development of discipline in the ancient church.
6. How many sacraments were there in the ancient church?
7. Were the sacraments observed in the ancient church in the same way they are today?
8. What was the post-Constantinian church's attitude toward social life?
9. Can you briefly describe the development of the doctrine of Christ in the ancient church? Write out the description.
10. Describe the development of monasticism in the ancient church.
11. What are some theological issues associated with the rise of monasticism?



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