



A SURVEY OF THE REFORMATION

ITS HISTORY & DOCTRINE

The Heights Church, 9/14/14
created by Bob Hayton



A SURVEY OF THE REFORMATION

OUTLINE & PLAN OF ATTACK

WHY STUDY HISTORY?

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

~George Santayana

The Life of Reason, vol. 1 (1905)

WHY STUDY THE REFORMATION?

- American Christians suffer from **historical amnesia**.
- Remembering church history will **safeguard us from error** now. Examples: Jehovah's Witnesses (Arianism), Evangelicals & Catholics Together.
- The Reformation was the **virtual recovery of evangelical doctrine** – and we are still being blessed because of this (often forgotten) event.
- Studying the doctrine of the Reformation may help us **reform the Church today**, and recover the passion for God that characterized that era.

HISTORY

1. **Intro & Overview of Church History**
2. Forerunners of the Reformation
3. The Protestant Reformation
4. Puritanism & the Legacy of the Reformers

DOCTRINE

5. Reformation Doctrine: The Big Picture
6. Total Depravity & Irresistible Grace
7. Unconditional Election & Particular Redemption
8. Perseverance of the Saints & Answering Objections
9. The Other "Points" of Calvinism
10. Why the Reformation Matters Today



OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY

DOCTRINE & TRADITIONS DEVELOP

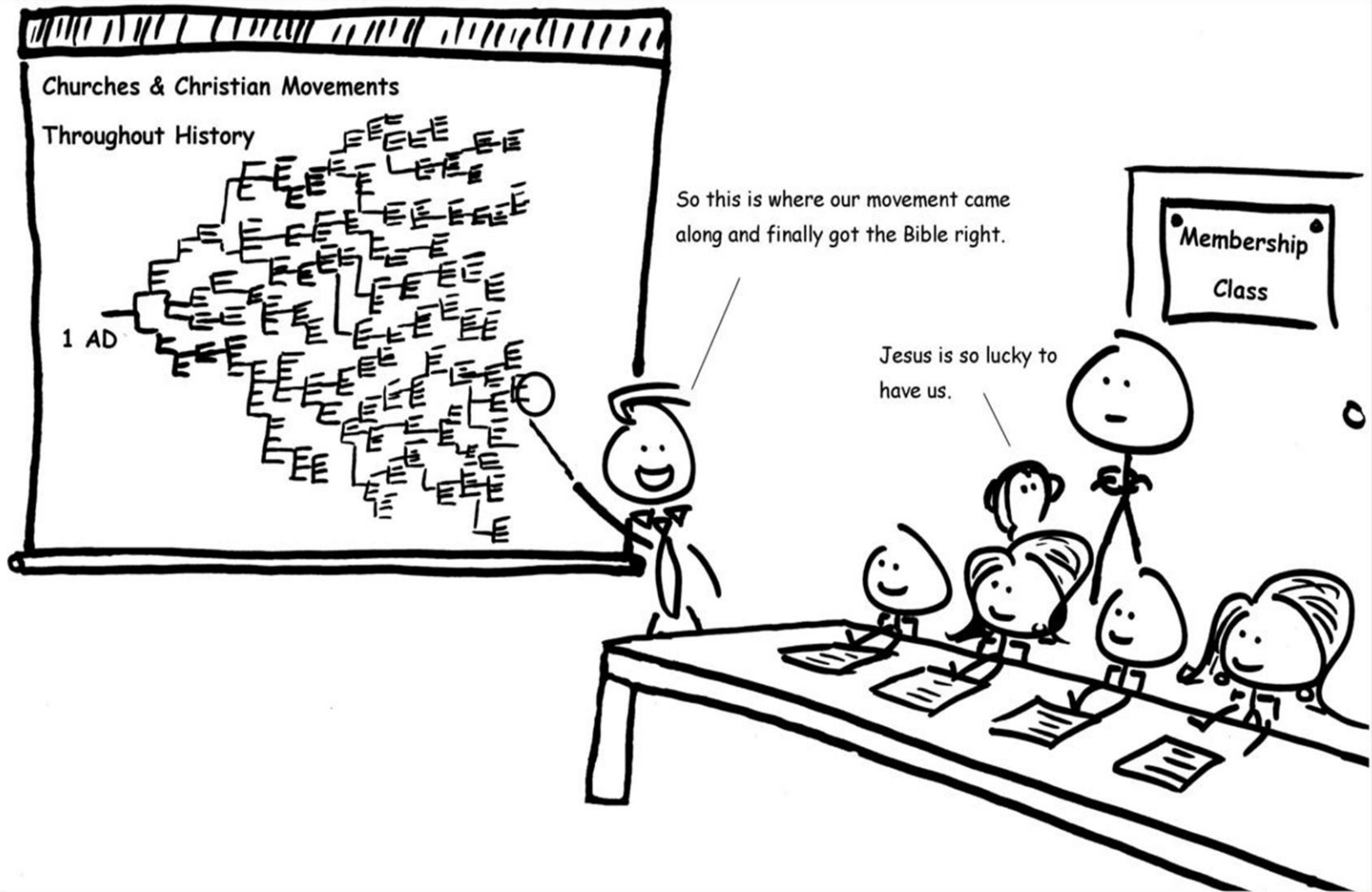
OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY

- Approaches to Studying Church History
- Persecutions & the Spread of the Church
- Church Fathers: Encouraging, Defending & Protecting the Church
- The Progressive Development of Doctrine
- Controversies & Heresies



APPROACHES TO STUDYING CHURCH HISTORY

INTRODUCTION



NOT SO HUMBLE APPROACH TO HISTORY

from the Tom's Doubts cartoon by Saji
www.stthomasthedoubter.tumblr.com

BAD APPROACHES TO STUDYING CHURCH HISTORY

- ***What's Church History?*** – total bliss, church is about innovation and adaptation
- **Restorationism** – the true faith was lost by years of church tradition, we (our group) has recovered it [think Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Church of Christ, Apostolic Church, some Pentecostals]
- **Negative view** – views the early & medieval church with heavy suspicion, effectively church history starts with the Reformation
- **Positive view** – Our church dogmas today are overly “modern,” we should recover the pristine church which was much more open to different theologies

A BALANCED, BIBLICAL APPROACH

- **Christ has not forsaken his Church** – Matt. 16:18, Matt. 28:18-20
- **Progressive Revelation & Progressive Development of Doctrine** – more on this later, but see John 14:26, 16:13
- **Avoids “snobbery”** – time and culture limits what we understand of history, different emphases for different times, we can learn from the early church (care for poor, desire for spiritual life, shunning of worldly goods, high view of sin and doctrine, high view of the church)
- **Recognizes importance of historic orthodoxy** – Scripture seen through the lens of the church fathers & ecumenical creeds – just like the Reformers did.
- **Humble approach** – above all seeks to learn from history and recognize that there may be areas where we have to change, in our understanding too.



PERSECUTIONS & THE SPREAD OF THE CHURCH

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 313)

EARLY PERSECUTION

- Early Jewish persecution (Herod and others)
- Nero – July 16, A.D. 54
- Domitian – A.D. 95
- Trajan/Hadrian – A.D. 111-138 (sporadic)
- Aurelius/Severus/Maximinus – A.D. 161-211 (sporadic)
- Decius/Valerian – A.D. 249-260
- Diocletian – A.D. 303 (systematic extermination of churches and books)

SPREAD OF THE CHURCH

- Rapid growth during the age of the Apostles, church tradition says Mark went to Africa, Thomas to India, Paul reached Spain.
- Missionaries continued, Augustine (not of Hippo) evangelized Britain, and others went everywhere.
- Persecution accelerated the spread. Tertullian said: **“The blood of the Christian [martyrs] is the seed [of the church]”**
- By the early 300s, about 1 in 10 people in the Roman empire considered themselves Christians.
- There wasn't much time to develop traditions and doctrine carefully amid the many persecutions, however.

CONSTANTINE'S CONVERSION:

The End of Official Roman Persecution

- Emperor Constantine: **vision of a cross** “in this sign conquer” before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. (A.D. 312)
- “We have determined, with sound and upright purpose, that no-one at all should be denied the liberty to choose and follow the religious observances of the Christians. Each person shall be given the freedom to devote his mind to whatever religion he thinks best for himself, so that in everything God (whom we worship freely from our hearts) may show us his usual care and favour.” ~The Edict of Milan (A.D. 313)



CHURCH FATHERS:

Encouraging, Defending & Protecting the Church

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 500)

APOSTOLIC FATHERS

Purpose: to exhort & edify the church

- **Clement**, bishop of Rome A.D. 95 (1 & 2 Letters of Clement to Corinthians)
- **Ignatius**, bishop of Antioch A.D. 110 (seven letters to churches, including Ephesus, Rome, Philadelphia, Smyrna and a letter to Polycarp)
- **Polycarp**, bishop of Smyrna and disciple of John the Beloved A.D. 155 (letter to the Philippians, & a famous story of his martyrdom told in a letter from the church of Smyrna)
- **Papias**, bishop of Hierapolis and another disciple of John A.D. 125
- Other influential books widely read: The Shepherd (pastor) of Hermas, *Didache* (Teaching of the 12 Apostles)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 9

APOSTOLIC FATHERS' WRITINGS

- The books called today “**The Apostolic Fathers**” were early Christian bestsellers.
- “Eighty-six years I have served him, and he never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?” ~ Polycarp (Martyrdom of Polycarp)
- “[Paul] wrote you letters that will enable you, if you study them carefully, to grow in the faith delivered to you” (Polycarp’s letter to the Philippians)
- “by this [Rahab’s scarlet thread] they made it clear that it was by the blood of the Lord that redemption was going to come to all who believe in God and hope on him” (1 Clement)

~ *The Apostolic Fathers* edited by Mark Galli
(Moody, 2009), pgs. 138, 25, 127

THE APOLOGISTS

Purpose: to defend the faith

- **Justin Martyr**, Christian philosopher, A.D. 150 (wrote apologies to the emperor Antoninus Pius & Marcus Aurelius, and wrote a dialogue with Trypho the Jew, martyred in A.D. 163)
- **Tatian**, a convert of Justin, A.D. 160 (most famous for the *Diatessaron*, an early “harmony” of the four Gospels – presented as one narrative, also wrote against paganism)
- **Tertullian**, “father of Western Theology”, of Carthage, A.D. 200 (numerous writings, wrote against Gnostic heresy, was the teacher of Cyprian, and the oldest Latin writer to use the term “Trinity”)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 14

THE POLEMICISTS

Purpose: to attack error

- **Irenaeus**, bishop of Lyons, France, disciple of Polycarp, A.D. 185 (wrote *Against Heresies* a systematic rebuttal of Gnosticism, also known for his *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*)
- **Hippolytus**, disciple of Irenaeus, elder at the church of Rome, A.D. 200 (wrote *Refutation of All Heresies* another answer to Gnosticism, also known for criticizing several bishops of Rome over moral & doctrinal concerns)
- **Cyprian**, bishop of Carthage, A.D. 250 (wrote against Novatianism – a splinter group that refused to admit those who had recanted under persecution back into the church even if they repented, he also defended Christianity against paganism)

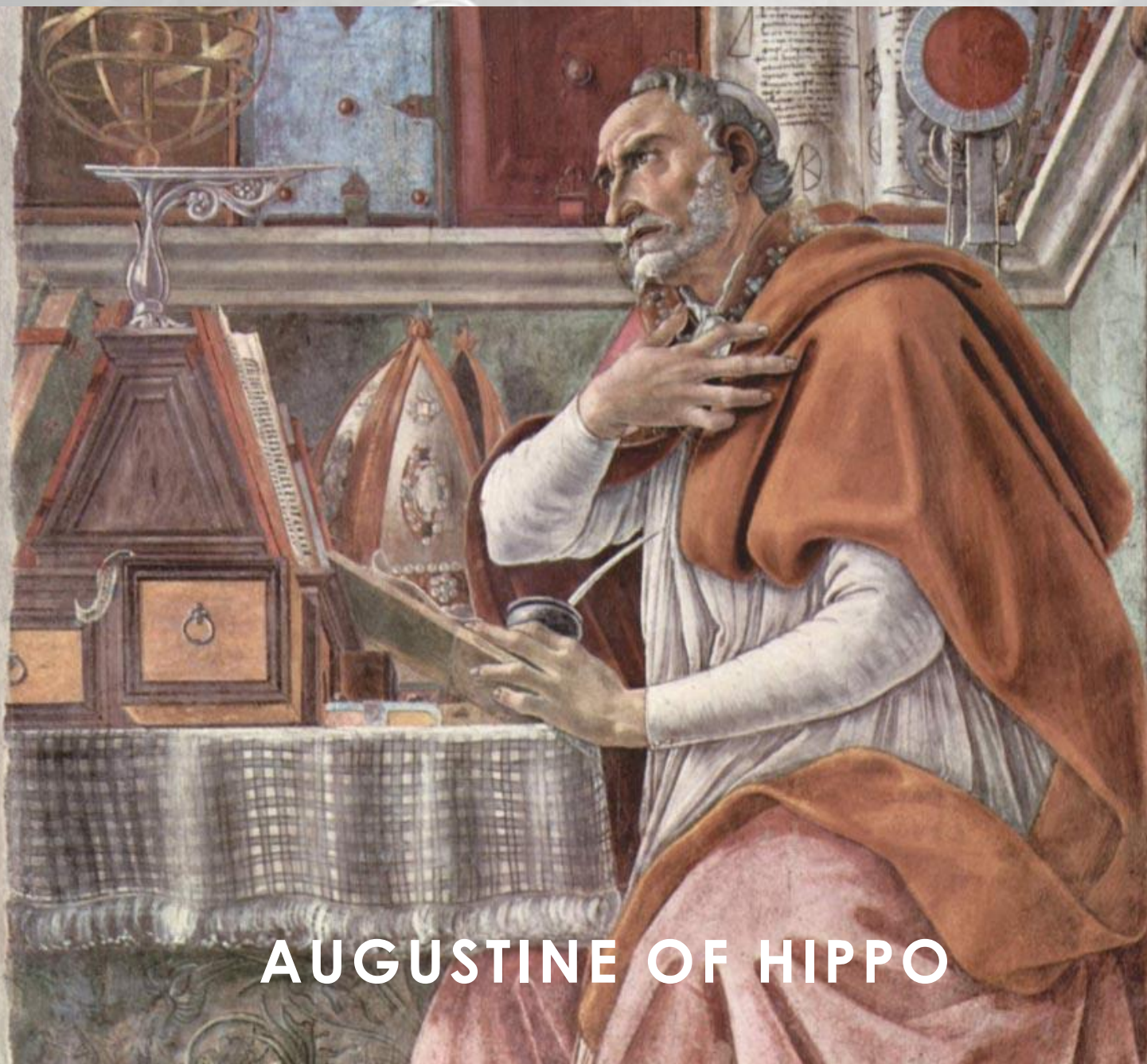
~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 17

THE EARLY THEOLOGIANS

Purpose: to develop methods of biblical interpretation

- **Clement** of Alexandria A.D. 180 (led the Alexandrian school for training of converts to Christianity, developed allegorical interpretation, mixed Greek thought with Christianity, one of the “inventors” of purgatory)
- **Origen** of Alexandria/Caesarea A.D. 230 (led Alexandrian school before going to Caesarea and starting his own, one of the greatest minds in the world in his time, compiled the *Hexapala*—Hebrew-Greek parallel Bible, often fanciful interpretations, wrote first Systematic Theology we know of)
- **Athanasius**, bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 360 (chief defender of Trinitarian theology vs. Arianism, *Athanasius Contra Mundum* – *Athanasius against the world*)
- **Jerome**, theologian and writer of Rome/Bethlehem, A.D. 390 (wrote commentaries on nearly the whole Bible, best known for translating the Vulgate – Latin Bible, direct from the Hebrew)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 19



AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

THE EARLY THEOLOGIANS

Purpose: to develop methods of biblical interpretation

- **Ambrose**, bishop of Milan, A.D. 385 (well known writer, oft-cited by later authorities, championed congregational singing and writer of many hymns, including “Savior of the Nations Come”)
- **Augustine**, bishop of Hippo and student of Ambrose, A.D. 400 (greatest and most widely read Church Father, influenced Roman Catholic doctrine on the church as well as Protestant doctrine on election and salvation, known for his *Confessions*, *City of God*, and *On the Trinity* among numerous other works)
- **John Chrysostom**, of Antioch/Constantinople A.D. 390 (well known for his preaching, “father of grammatical, historical interpretation”)

~ adapted from *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1994), pg. 19



THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 1100)

PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Doctrine is what Scripture teaches. (“Doctrine” = “teaching.”)
- The early church’s **understanding** of the doctrine of Scripture **grew** over time. Just as God progressively revealed more and more truth in Scripture, the Church progressively grew in the area of different doctrines.
- Heresy would challenge the status quo, the church would collaborate and meet in a council to discuss the new teaching, and orthodox creeds and statements or confessions would result, clarifying doctrine and expelling error.
- Examples:
 - **Theology & Christology** (Church Councils & Creeds, A.D. 300-600)
 - **Soteriology** (Reformed Confessions & Catechisms, A.D. 1400-1600)
 - **Ecclesiology** (Denominational Confessions, A.D. 1600-1800)
 - **Eschatology** (Niagara Bible Conference articles, A.D. 1800-now)
 - **Bibliology** (Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, A.D. 1900-now).

A.D. 100	A.D. 200	A.D. 250	A.D. 300	A.D. 367
<p>27 NT books have all been written.</p> <p>Collections of all Paul's letters were made.</p> <p>by A.D. 150, the four Gospels were brought together</p>	<p>Muratorian canon: [used by church of Rome]</p> <p>-4 Gospels -Acts -Paul's 13 Letters -James -1&2 John -Jude -Rev. of John -Rev. of Peter -Wisdom of Solomon</p> <p>For private use: -Shepherd of Hermas</p>	<p>Origen's NT: -4 Gospels -Acts -Paul's 13 Letters -1 Peter -1 John -Rev. of John</p> <p>Disputed: -Hebrews -James -2 Peter -2 & 3 John -Jude -Sh. of Hermas -Letter of Barnabus -Teaching of the 12 Apostles (<i>Didache</i>) -Gospel of the Hebrews</p>	<p>Eusebius' NT: -4 Gospels -Acts -Paul's 13 Letters -1 Peter -1 John -Rev. of John (authorship in doubt)</p> <p>Disputed but well known: -James -2 Peter -2 & 3 John -Jude</p>	<p>Athanasius' NT: [also fixed by Council of Carthage (397)]</p> <p>-4 Gospels -Acts -Paul's 13 Letters -Hebrews -James -1 & 2 Peter -1, 2 & 3 John -Jude -Rev. of John</p> <p>To be excluded: -Sh. of Hermas -Letter of Barnabus -Gospel of the Hebrews -Rev. of Peter -Acts of Peter -Teaching of the 12 Apostles (<i>Didache</i>)</p>

~adapted from *Church History in Plain Language* by Bruce Shelley (Thomas Nelson, 1995), pg. 67

MAJOR CHURCH COUNCILS

Statement	Council
Christ is fully divine	Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325)
Christ is fully human	Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381)
Christ is a unified person	Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431)
Christ is human and divine in one person	Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451)

~ *Church History in Plain Language* by Bruce Shelley (Thomas Nelson, 1995), pg. 141

THE APOSTLES CREED (c. A.D. 300)

“I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.”

~ *Systematic Theology* by Wayne
Grudem (Zondervan, 1994), pg. 1169

THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (A.D. 451)

“We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood...

THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (A.D. 451)

...one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.”

~ *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem
(Zondervan, 1994), pg. 1169-1170



CONTROVERSIES & HERESIES

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY (A.D. 100 – A.D. 1100)

MAJOR HERETICAL GROUPS

- **Gnostics** – emphasized wisdom for the enlightened, dualistic, mystic, denied Jesus' humanity
- **Montanists** – followed Montanus, a schismatic leader teaching asceticism/legalism, spiritually elite, some charismatic practices.
- **Monarchians** – “rule of one” / monotheists who often taught modalism (Father is the only true personality in the godhead, Son and Spirit are more like attributes or modes of the one God's existence)
- **Manicheists** – followers of Mani, a gnostic-like, dualistic, mystical form of Christianity. It was a pervasive error for a while, and may have influenced the strong division between clergy and laity, role of priests as intermediaries, and foster asceticism
- **Donatists** – rejected those who had recanted the faith under persecution, and viewed the baptism/ordinations of defective priests as invalid. (Novatians merged with Donatists.)

MAJOR HERETICAL GROUPS

- **Arians** – followed Arius in denying Jesus' full deity. Nicene Council in A.D. 325 condemned Arianism, but later Arians grew in prominence to where Athanasius fought almost single-handedly against until the Council of Chalcedon vindicated his position and espoused full-fledged Trinitarianism.
- **Nestorians** – followers of Nestorius, denied that Jesus had two equal natures, downplaying his humanity. Monophysites had a similar view, that Jesus only had 1 nature (divine) - this view was influential in the East, until Islam eventually took over.
- **Macedonians** – followed Macedonius in rejecting the full deity of the Holy Spirit.
- **Pelagians** – followers of Pelagius who was a British monk who taught that Adam's sin did not make sin a necessity for his offspring. There could be holy people. Man's will is so free that he needs just education and direction to follow after God. Semi-pelagians took a moderate Pelagian view, and though officially condemned at the Council of Orange, this grew to be the dominant Roman Catholic view of man's free will.

RISE OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

- **The Rise of the Papacy** – the rise of bishops as first among equal pastors in a city, was natural. Smaller cities and their pastors looked to the larger city. Certain cities became especially prominent: Rome, Alexandria, Antioch (all places connected to Apostles). Then later Constantinople (due to it being “New Rome”).
- **The Popes** – gradually the bishops of Rome took more and more power. Gregory the Great (540-604) greatly solidified the papacy. He was unassuming, genuinely godly, and took the leadership seriously. Worked to help the poor and standardize the church practices. He promoted missionary activity, but also promoted asceticism.
- **More Spreading** – the Christianization of the Pagan tribes in England, France, Hungary, Russia and elsewhere resulted in a large increase in the size of Christendom from the 600s through 1000, even as Islam was spreading.

CHURCH SCHISMS

- A.D. 251 – Novatius was a rival “bishop of Rome” (or “pope”), and his followers held tenaciously to his claim for a few hundred years.
- A.D. 500s – In the East, some sectors of the church never accepted the Council of Chalcedon (remaining monophysites or nestorians)
- A.D. 1073 – West & East split: “the Great Schism”
 - Iconoclast controversy (for a time the East rejected all images and pictures/icons as vehicles of worship)
 - Still today statues are not used in churches in the East, just pictures.
 - Dispute over the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father alone (East view) or the Father and Son (West view)
 - The Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome refused to submit to each other. And politics and cultural differences played a role. Emperor over the church in the East, Emperor under the church in the West.