

Ancient Period – from the close of NT Canon to Gregory

I The Period of Augustine

- the environment of the period was similar to that of the world today
- culture in crisis – cultural uniformity, cosmopolitanism, civil state was dominant formative force, classical humanism VS Christianity
- A. Roman Empire**
 - most complex/sophisticated, Christianity = a positive position to influence the culture
 - **Result** - through colonization Christianity spread and became a worldwide presence
- B. Augustan Peace** – was a worldwide peace
 1. **Political unity** – local structures remained as long as they adhered to Roman Empire
 - Example = Jewish Sanhedrin
 2. 200 years of uninterrupted peace – except for Jewish Christians in Palestine (70 AD)
 3. **Cultural Condition a)** trade and commercial enterprise grow because of elaborate road system and charted sea routes (Paul’s Missionary Journeys spread Christianity)
b) Common Language – Greek = trade language, **c)** common culture – uniformity, cities became great trade centers
 4. Moral Conditions – corrupt, gladiators, abortion, life was cheap
 5. Religious Condition – indifference aristocracy/intelligencia, state religion allowed no new religion, interest common people (syncretism and eclectic)
 6. Genius of Augustan Peace – designed to serve the people, protected society & people
 - negative – Roman idea that it would never end, cosmic savior = Roman officials
 7. Church suffered persecution because of **atheism** (no idols), **cannibalism** (body and blood in Lord’s Supper), **incest** (brother/sister meeting in secret), **treason** (no **emperor veneration**) Nero and Marcus Aurilius

II. Apostolic Fathers (100-120 AD) period of persecution

- not theologians, no dogma is developed, writings not about theological truths, very young Christians, Polycarp and Barnabas “**Didache**” =confessional/catechism manual, **Hermas**-visionary, **Clemente** the 3rd Bishop of Rome wrote a letter to Corinthian church w/message of patience, peace and hospitality, **Ignatius of Antioch** – wrote to Polycarp, monotheistic w/ triadic language, Christ is divine and human, a real death and resurrection gave reason for martyrdom

III. Apologists (120-180 AD) period of less persecution

- refute false accusations, present certain beliefs, literary letters intended to reach emperor
- Justin Martyr – most prolific apologist, resurrection includes body and soul, Logos was central theme (immanent God in the flesh), everyone has a little seed of the Logos in them

III. Deviating Movements = attacks from w/i the church

- A. Gnosticism- had superior knowledge/truth of scripture, emphasis on spirit of Christ over physical/human sense, had secret superior philosophical knowledge revealed to elect only
 - Spirit world = God pneuma, Material world = soul and matter, Demiurge created the world dark, evil. Christ brings salvation through knowledge coming from Spirit world
 - Simon the Sorcerer, Cerinthus (knew Paul in Ephesus), Basilides (Christian Gnostic)
 - Neg. – God is not creator, Creation is evil, superior Christians, Docetism
- B. Marcionism – antithesis b/tw Law and gospel, canon includes Paul’s writings and part of Luke, NO OT, creation was destined for destruction and salvation through Christ is for souls only, No salvation for body because they come from earth which is evil
- C. Montanism – Christ is coming back as soon , apocalyptic, ascetic
- D.

IV. Anti Gnostic Fathers (180-220 AD)

- Hegesippus Hellenistic Jew traveled and accumulated rules of faith and writings from true churches, condensed rule of faith = a yardstick to determine canon
- Irenaeus – contact w/ Polycarp and Apostle John, knows canon, apostolic fathers, tradition and gives us a complete canon of scripture
- Tertullian anti Gnostic Greek writer, trained in rhetoric, his clever logical arguments give vocabulary to the church (trinity – 1 substance , 3 persons)
- Hippolytus – “Noetus”, develops rule of faith led to Apostles Creed, clarifies canon

V. Gnostic Crisis to Conversion of Constantine

- decline of Roman Empire b/c of defective assumption of deification of emperor, is impossible
- emperors began to care only about personal satisfaction, chaos in leadership increased anxiety
- Religious consequence – **1)** many looked to religion for solace and comfort **2)** supernatural religions appear **3)** mystery religions – Manicheism an eastern spirituality **4)** Neo- Platonism – ascetic and monastic as they strive to attain union w/ the Divine

A. Christian Church during crisis of 3rd century

1. Church experienced phenomenal growth, meaning and purpose were rediscovered in structure and order monastics established in midst of chaos. **a) anchorite** – hermits **b) cenobite - Benedictine rule** – specific set of rules for monks, church growth in quality and numbers covered every strata (poor, educated)
2. Church became a state w/I the state, will support state but refuse to fight or hold office
3. Persecution at hands of Decian w/ a required participation in the civil religion, and Diocletion’s attempt to eradicate the church (The Divine Oracles of Persecution) resulted in schism in church (Donatists – how to handle Christians who lapsed in their faith)

B. 3rd Century development of Doctrine

1. Anti Nicene thought – **1) Modalistic Monarchianism** – unity and oneness of god in deity of Christ, **Noetus** – Father and Son are different modes of the same deity, **Sabellianism** – 3 different modes exist. Creation and law = Father, redemption=Son, current period of grace=HS, these 3 modes unable to exist simultaneously. **2) Dynamic Monarchianism** – unitarian ideas **Paul of Samosata** – God is one unity w/ 2 chief attributes, dynamics or energies. One is the divine logos or ability to reason and the other is the HS or holiness that gives humans a moral sense (Jesus was adopted by God as his son b/c he had a greater portion of these 2 attributes).
2. Tertullian – trained in law and rhetoric, introduced language of trinity, justification, sanctification, **Doctrine of God** – at creation God generates the Son and HS = trinity which have source in father at creation. They are not co-eternal.
3. Alexandrian Fathers- combined Jewish thought with Greek thought and culture
 - a) **Clement of Alexandria** – harmonize Greek philosophy and Christianity, screws it up and result is Gnostic Christians are better than normal Christians, Christ is Divine > human
 - b) **Origen** – God = source of everything, is part of spiritual world, Son as a derivative of God created the HS, a creature belonging to divine realm. God created human souls for his own glory. **Father > Son > HS** subordination. Everything returns to deity.

VI. Constantine to Gregory the Great

- ##### A. Edict of Milan (312) – Christianity is legalized, religious freedom for all, **NO** deified Caesars,
- environment changes from one of conflict to one of cooperation, Christianization of civil state and society, Constantine establishes a safe congenial place of hope for Christians,
 - set structure for Middle Ages – ceasarpapism, Caesar = Pope, Law of Christ = Civil Law, no separation of Church and State, results in a mixed Christianity that is no longer pure
 - Constantine enabled Christianity to grow and have a huge impact/influence in shape of culture
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B. Doctrinal Development

- 1. Trinitarian Thought** – Nicene controversy pitted School of Alexandria with its allegory and Platonic view of Christ as deity **VS** School of Antioch with its grammatical/historical Aristotelian view of Christ as humanity
 - 2. Council of Nicea (325)** – homo-ousios Christ is same essence as God, **Athanasius vs Arius**, Christ is begotten of the Father, has a beginning and is not divine/eternal
- homoi-ousios Christ is like/similar essence as God
 - 3. Constantinople Creed (381)** – eastern church said HS begotten from Father as was Jesus, western view was that Jesus proceeded from the Father and HS proceeds from Father and Son = **the Filioque**
 - 4. Council of Chalcedon (451)** – is Jesus God or man, School of Antioch view is Jesus had 2 natures and 2 persons (human & divine) **Nestorianism**, School of Alexandria Jesus had 1 nature and 1 person, a tertium quid – Jesus is melding of divine and human and is neither one **Monophysites**, Jesus had 2 natures in 1 person, Godman Jesus by Theotokas (Mary as mother of God **Cyril of Alexandria**)
 - 5. Constantinople 553** – continues to struggle with Christ divine/human nature
 - 6. Constantinople 681** –
- C. Gregory the Great** – bridged ancient and medieval period, enhanced power of papacy and the church, church lands organized into powerful Papal States, church became involved in civil matters, civil and ecclesiastical authority were joined together
- tribes invade Roman Empire but Christianity remains, Islamic invaders are stopped at **Battle of Tours in 732**, Medieval missions supported by papacy caused Christianity to become the dominant religion in a world of numerous religions, church had power, mass conversions led to superficial faith, enhanced simple ideas and emphasized purgatory, reduced faith to superstition w/ miracles, angels, and relics
- D. Mission Impulse** – Ireland to Scotland to England to continent, St Patrick (Irish) converted captors, ecclesiastical formation = monastery w/ Abbot as head over priest and bishops, power was in monastery, this is different than continent where Pope has all the power, **Columba** went to England to continent, **Willibrord** – went from Gaul to Netherlands, **Boniface** – Frisians to Germany
- D. Investiture struggle** – church envisioned one vast empire called the Roman Catholic Church, church gained wealth and power through land, struggle over who had power and authority to invest bishops into office, the pope or the emperor, **Otto I** became Holy Roman Emperor and pope was under emperor, Otto I could appoint bishops for his benefit rather than the church
- 1. Cluny Abbot movement** – back to NT get rid of lay investiture
 - 2. Concord of Worms** – Emperor relinquished right to invest bishops, bishops could be appointed w/o civil control but required civil attention, civil had some influence yet