

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

From the End of the Acts of the Apostles

To 2006

Prepared By Ken Willig

Especially for

The Men in the Thursday Morning

Bible Study At Troon

Glenn Moor Community Clubhouse

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And Friends

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THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

Prepared by Ken Willig. Content Has Been Researched From Numerous Sources As Described on Page 61.

This study of the History of the Church started with chapter one of the New Testament book, the *Acts of the Apostles*, where the Holy Spirit empowered and enlightened the Apostles to take the good news of Jesus Christ—the Gospel—to the world. **From the start of this study, the purpose has been to embolden you—your mind, heart and spirit—with the simplicity of the entire content of the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation—what it is and with nothing more needed to be added to it.**

As early as the first century, and even among the Apostles themselves, there arose disagreement (Acts 15) about whether something more than by grace alone—through faith alone, by Jesus Christ alone—something more was required for salvation. The Bible says that adding anything—good works, obeying the law—to the Gospel makes Jesus Christ of no value to you. Paul wrote: ***“Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised (or add works or obeying the law to faith alone as a condition for salvation) Christ will be of no value to you at all.”*** (Gal 5:2)

Without exception, from those days to the present, man has had an overwhelming felt need to get credit for something along the way. The truth that *“God did it all from beginning to end to save me”* leaves man wanting some credit for his role in his salvation. Additionally, man’s ego and pride, plus his desire for organization, structure, wealth, recognition, and power, has played a major role in adding *something more* to the Gospel. We will see, as we continue our study of Church history beyond the Acts of the Apostles, that little by little, even with noble intentions, men got off-track and less committed to the central issues. You will see in this document how these felt needs brought various strains of belief into the church and extensive corruption of the worst kind, corrupting the Gospel itself—even onto today.

My desire in our study of church history is that you would become more and more vigilant to protecting and communicating the essence of the Gospel without embellishment or compromise. That you would be mindful that corruption of the Gospel is not to be taken lightly or accepted for the sake of peace or in the name of tolerance.

If anything is added to this Gospel—good works, sacrifices, prayers, attending church, earning grace, indulgences, receiving sacraments, works of mercy, communion, tithing—as a requirement for salvation, then it is no longer the Gospel but rather *another gospel*, which is really no gospel at all. The consequences for accepting *another gospel* are much too severe. Consider and take seriously these words penned by the Apostle Paul:

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! (Gal 1:6-9)

Often, due to the pious and religious splendor and appearance of those who hold to and preach “another gospel” we are inclined to think, *“Well, perhaps they are right too—after all, look at how many followers they have”*—or some variation of that theme. We must be mindful that the Devil poses as the *angel of light* (2 Corinthians 11:14) and makes the “other gospel” quite alluring.

The purpose of this study is to strengthen your knowledge of the Gospel and of Church history that you will not even begin to succumb to such subjective and tolerant thought. Rather, you will be a beacon, a light of truth—true truth—among those who have been *thrown into confusion* and bought the lie—the *perverted gospel* and are *turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all.*

This study is based on Scripture alone—*sola scriptura*. As such, I urge you to do as the Bereans did, *“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”* (Acts 17:11) That is, search the Scriptures to see if what I say (have written here) is true. Thank you for allowing me the honor to bring this study to you. May we all be richly blessed in the process may all the glory be to God—*Soli Deo Gloria*.

See Appendix A, Pages 50 & 51, for a detailed description of the Gospel Unto Salvation.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

1. POST-ACTS CHURCH HISTORY: As you know, our Christian faith has its ancestry in the Hebrew religion. Jesus is the Messiah Who is the fulfillment of the promises made to the Old Testament people. Time and time again this relation is brought to mind in the Gospel of Matthew. Often when recording some incident in the life of Jesus he wrote, *“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets.”* (Mat 2:23)

When Jesus, through His preaching, His atoning death, and His resurrection, Jesus transformed the Old Testament

“Church” to the Church of the New Testament, He distinctly indicated the spiritual nature of this new institution. He did not arrange for an organization. Rather, He taught the principles upon which it should be built. He did not tell His disciples what the mechanical structure of the Church was to be. No, He sent them out to preach a salvation by faith in His name. Sola Fide.

When He was ready to leave this earth, **Jesus promised the Spirit of Truth who would lead the disciples into all truth.** Jesus stated that the coming of this Spirit was to be the prearranged sign that His followers should now go out from Jerusalem to the “*uttermost parts of the earth.*” (Ps 2:8) All of these teachings are evidences of the fact that this new Church was to be a spiritual entity one founded and directed by the Holy Ghost.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: You recall from our study of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we read, “*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1-4)*

This Day of Pentecost, which was in A.D. 31, was the **beginning** of the Christian Church. The disciples who had been trained by Christ for 3½ years had received the Holy Spirit and began to fulfill their responsibilities as apostles. The sending forth of God’s Spirit is the central meaning of Pentecost.

The entrance of Christianity into history is considered the most momentous of all of mankind’s historical events. It is the end of the old world and the beginning of the new.

It was a great idea of Dionysius Exiguus to date our era from the birth of our Savior. (Dionysius Exiguus, a monk from Russia who died about 544, was asked by Pope John I to set out the dates for Easter from the years 527 to 626. It seems that the Pope was keen to produce some order in the celebration of Easter. Dionysius decided to begin with what he considered to be the year of Jesus’ birth. He chose the year in which Rome had been founded and determined, from the evidence known to him, that Jesus had been born 753 years later.)

Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the prophet, priest, and king of mankind, is, in fact, the center and turning-point not only of chronology, but of all history, and the key to all its mysteries. Around Him, as the sun of the moral universe, revolve all-important events in the religious life of the world; and all must, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, contribute to glorify His name and advance His cause.

The history of mankind before His birth must be viewed as a preparation for His coming, and the history after His birth as a gradual diffusion of His spirit and progress of His kingdom. “*All things were created by him, and for him.*” He is “*the desire of all nations.*” He appeared in the “*fullness of time,*” when the process of preparation was finished, and the world’s need of redemption fully disclosed.

In Jesus Christ a preparatory history both divine and human comes to its close. In Him culminate all the previous revelations of God to Jews and Gentiles; and in Him are fulfilled the deepest desires and efforts of both Gentiles and Jews for redemption. In His divine nature, as Logos, He is, according to John, the eternal Son of the Father, and the agent in the creation and preservation of the world, and in all those preparatory manifestations of God, which were completed in the incarnation. In His human nature, as Jesus of Nazareth, He is the ripe fruit of the growth of humanity, with an earthly ancestry, which **Matthew (the evangelist of Israel) traces to Abraham**, the patriarch of the Jews, and **Luke (the evangelist of the Gentiles), to Adam**, the father of all men.

But as Jesus Christ thus closes all previous history, so, on the other hand, He begins an endless future. He is the author of a new creation, the second Adam, the father of regenerate humanity, the head of the church. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him also is realized the ideal of human virtue and piety. He is the eternal Truth, and the divine Life itself, personally joined with our nature; He is our Lord and our God; yet at the same time flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone.

Through Him is the reconciliation and fellowship of man with God; and we must expect no clearer revelation of God, nor any higher religious attainment of man, than is already guaranteed and actualized in His person.

The divinity of Christ, and His whole mission as Redeemer, is an article of faith, and, as such, above logical or mathematical demonstration. The incarnation or the union of the infinite divinity and finite humanity in one person is indeed the mystery of mysteries. What can be more glorious than God? What more vile than flesh? What more wonderful than God in the flesh?"

The divinity of Christ has a self-evidencing power that forces itself irresistibly upon the reflecting mind and historical inquirer; while the denial of it makes His person an inexplicable enigma—as such a source of problems to the world.

Pentecost: The first Pentecost which the disciples celebrated after the ascension of our Savior, is, next to the appearance of the Son of God on earth, the most significant event in Church history. It is the starting-point of the apostolic church and of that new spiritual life in humanity which proceeded from Him, and which since has been spreading and working, and will continue to work until the whole of humanity is transformed into the image of Christ.

We have but one authentic account of that epoch-making event, in the second chapter of Acts, which is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to his disciples of the promise of the Paraclete—the Spirit of truth—in John 16:13. The Holy Spirit is the One to lead them into the whole truth, and the entire history of the apostolic church is illuminated and heated by that Pentecostal fire.

That the true church as the Body of Christ began on the Day of Pentecost may be demonstrated in the following ways:

- **Christ Himself declared it would happen in the future.** (*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8*)
- It was founded upon the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and such an accomplished fact was not possible until Pentecost. (*Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. Galatians 3:23-25*)
- **There could be no church until:**
 - **It was purchased with Christ's precious blood** (*And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. Ephes. 5:25-27*)
 - **He arose to give it resurrected life** (*Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. [2] Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. [3] For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. Col. 3:1-3*)
 - **He ascended to be head over all things to the church** (*That raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in this world or in the world to come. And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and he gave him this authority for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with his presence. Eph. 1:20-23*), and
 - The Spirit came on Pentecost, through whom the church would be formed into one body by the baptism of the Spirit.
- The baptism of the Spirit prophesied by John (**Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16-17; John 1:33**) was still future at **Acts 1:5** (*“John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy*

Spirit.”) That it occurred between **Acts 1:5** and **Acts 11:16** *“Well, I began telling them the Good News, but just as I was getting started, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as he fell on us at the beginning. Then I thought of the Lord's words when he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'”* is evident by a comparison of these two verses. It is obvious that the Holy Spirit, who came at Pentecost, arrived to perform among His various ministries of regenerating, sealing, indwelling, and filling, His distinctive ministry for this age of baptizing into Christ, that is, into His Body, the church. (*Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Christ's body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit. (1 Cor 12:13)*)

- It was just as impossible, considering the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit, that the church would have been formed before Pentecost, as it was impossible that it should not have been formed after that date.
- FYI: There are other views as to the time of the founding of the church that include the period of Christ's earthly ministry, the days of Abraham, and the lifetime of Adam.

2. THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES

The church of the first three centuries, or the pre-Nicene age, possesses a peculiar interest for Christians of all denominations. It is the daughter of Apostolic Christianity, which itself constitutes the first and by far the most important chapter in its history, and the common mother of Catholicism and Protestantism. It presents a state of primitive **simplicity and purity unswayed by contact with the secular power**, but with this also, the fundamental forms of heresy and corruption, which reappear from time to time under new names and aspects, but must serve, in the overruling providence of God, to promote the cause of truth and righteousness.

AD 50 —APOSTOLIC JERUSALEM COUNCIL: Justification is by faith alone. The assembly of the apostles and elders, held in Jerusalem released Gentile converts from the necessity of circumcision and other observances of the Mosaic ceremonial law. (See Acts 15)

LAST HALF OF THE SECOND CENTURY
Two heresies (departures from the truth) became a serious menace: **Gnosticism** and **Montanism**.

Gnosticism: Christ never dwelt on earth in human form. The term "gnostic" derives from "gnosis," which means "knowledge" in Greek. The Gnostics believed that they were privy to a secret knowledge about the divine, hence the name. (Huxley coined "agnosticism" on the basis that all knowledge must be based on reason. We cannot rationally claim to have access to knowledge that is beyond the powers of the intellect.)

Montanism: An early Christian sectarian movement of the mid-2nd century A.D., named after its founder Montanus. He claimed to have received a series of direct revelations from the Holy Spirit and to be the Paraclete of the Gospel of John 14:16. Although the Christian church prevailed against Montanism within a few generations, this sect persisted in some isolated places into the eighth century. Some people have drawn parallels between **Montanism** and **Pentecostalism**. The most widely known Montanist was undoubtedly Tertullian.

Tertullian is a controversial individual within the history of the church. On one hand, he was the first great writer of Latin Christianity, known as the "Father of the Western Church". Tertullian was the theologian who introduced the term trinity (*trinitas*) to the Christian vocabulary. On the other hand, he left the orthodox Catholic Church late in his life and joined the unorthodox Montanists, a movement considered by many to have been a cult.

Communion In the early Church, before AD 200, the church held a symbolic view of communion—the bread and wine being **symbolic** of Christ's body and blood. *Transubstantiation* (see definition later in this document) was not an issue that was discussed.

NOTE: By the fourth century, the church drifted away from the original symbolic view of the Apostles and began to teach *transubstantiation*. It wasn't until then that the church changed her theology towards *transubstantiation*. (**More of this later herein.**)

Out of the Church's struggle with the heresies of Gnosticism and Montanism came three things: (1) a **creed**; (2) a **canon**; and (3) an **organization**. All three are of lasting significance in the Church.

The Creed: The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living 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 life everlasting. Amen. (The meaning of the word *catholic* here is *universal*.)

The Canon ("list") (i.e. **Canon is a law or code of laws established by a church council**): A list of the books that belong in the New Testament. In the Church's early struggle with the heresies, Gnosticism and Montanism, the Church always appealed to Scripture. The Church **identified** (not choose or named) those inspired by the Apostles as

having the authority of Scripture and thus those belonged in the New Testament.

The Council of Laodicea that took place around **AD 363-364** identified what would and would not be considered canon—what would and would not be included in the Bible or read at church. (Canon #60.) It omitted The Revelation from the NT. The Council of Laodicea was a regional synod (i.e. a council of church officials) of approximately 30 clerics from Anatolia, (now modern Turkey).

In **AD 397** the Synod of Carthage identified the 27 books that comprise the New Testament as canonical. But the Synod was not the canonizers of these books. These books had long since been distributed and were accepted and read in churches throughout the empire for some 300 years. The Synod simply identified those books that were accepted as Apostolic.

The Organization: Out of the Church's struggle with the heresies, Gnosticism and Montanism, came the organization of the episcopal form of church government. The officers were the elders (or presbyter—the Greek word for elder) and deacons. All had the same "rank." Over time, certain presbyters would take the lead and become an "overseer" (in Greek, *episcopos*, from which we get the word "bishop".) Gradually, all the *presbyters* came to subordinate to the *presbyter* who was the *overseer*, or *bishop*. Since churches were first established in cities and the city and its surrounding area was called a *diocese*, so the leading *presbyter* became known as the diocesan *bishop*.

NOTE: Church Government today: Today there are basically 3 forms of Church government, all of which claim to trace their roots to the NT. These are: 1. **Episcopal** (Bishops are officers, overseers); 2. **Presbyterian** (govern by a group of elected representatives); and 3. **Congregational** (govern by the local congregation).

Country people (people who lived outside of the city) were called heathens. The Latin word for country people is *pagani*, from which we get the word *pagan*. So the name *pagan* became equivalent to *heathen*.

The Church established itself as having the position of authority in defining the meaning of Scripture—the Bible. It exercised this through its rulers who were its bishops. Just exactly when the Church came to have bishops I do not know, but by the middle of the 2nd century, practically all Church-cities had bishops.

By the end of the 4th century, the churches in the various cities had become welded into one compact whole and they all had in common a creed and the canon of the NT as authoritative as Scripture, and the episcopal form of church government. Meanwhile, the numerous heretics had formed "Christian" churches of their own, so the authentic church, in order to distinguish itself from the heretical churches, called itself the *catholic* (or universal) church.

At first all bishops had the same rank. No bishop had any judicial power over another bishop. Then, in the course of time, the churches of five cities came to be regarded as having very special importance: Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome. Rome in the west and the other four in the east. Gradually, due to persecution and church growth, Jerusalem was eclipsed, especially after its destruction in AD 70 and under Hadrian again in AD 132-135. However, as the church in Rome grew in size and stature, the bishop of Rome, acquired power and supremacy over the other bishops and in that way, by about **AD 185**, was called (not an official title) *pope* (derived from the Latin word *papa*). **And the church then began to be called the Roman Catholic Church.**

3. AD 312 – Emperor Constantine

While preparing to go into battle, Roman Emperor Constantine looked up to the sun and saw a cross of light above it, and with it the Greek words "Ev Τουτω Νικα" ("By this, conquer!"). At first, Constantine didn't know the meaning of the apparition, but in the following night, he had a dream in which he believed that Christ explained to him that he should use the sign against his enemies. So, believing that the vision was from the Christian God, he decided he would become a Christian and made Christianity legal in the Roman Empire—temporarily ending the persecution of the Christians.

AD 313 —Emperor Constantine proclaimed the edict of Milan stopping the persecution of Christians and put Christianity on the same legal level with all other religions. He made Christianity the national religion. He declared himself a Christian, so those seeking favor with the Emperor declared themselves Christians too.

Deteriorations in the Church

When Constantine showered favors upon the Christian Church, thousands upon thousands heathens flocked into the Church without having become true Christians. A flood of worldliness engulfed the Church. They brought heathen ideas of worship along with them. All heathen religions and their priests had altars. They had gods, numerous images to worship. Soon the Church had them too—all heathen practices and rituals became rooted in the Church. Heathen beliefs were full of superstitions—these were transferred to pieces of the cross, relics, bones of saints, statues, fragments of clothing, etc. **The purity of Christianity—of the Church—was gone.**

Late 3rd and Early 4th centuries: Arianism began to arise in the late third and early fourth centuries. It was a Christological view held by followers of Arius, a Christian priest who lived and taught in Alexandria, Egypt, in the early 4th century. Arius taught that God the Father and

the Son were not co-eternal, seeing the pre-incarnate Jesus as a divine being but nonetheless created by (and consequently inferior to) the Father at some point, before which the Son did not exist.

AD 325—Council of Nicea: The Doctrine of the Trinity

The Council of Nicea was called by Emperor Constantine and attended by 300 bishops to deal with the Arianism controversy. The Council countered the Arian idea that Jesus was God's first and noblest creature by affirming that He was the same "substance" or "essence" as the Father. The distinction between Father and Son is within divine unity. So that the Son is God in the same sense as the Father is. In saying that Son and Father are "of one substance" and that the Son is "begotten, not made" (echoing Scripture: "only begotten", John 1:14, 18; 3:16; 18) the Nicene Creed adopted at the Council of Nicea, unequivocally recognized the deity of Jesus Christ.

AD 325 —The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

AD381 Council Of Constantinople: The council of Nicea failed to end the Arianism controversy regarding the deity of Christ. This council reaffirmed the belief of the Church as expressed in the Nicene Creed and also declared its belief in the deity of the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of the Trinity as a fundamental understanding of Scripture and of the Christian faith.

The belief of the Church in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God, was now fully established. This was the complete and final rejection of Arianism.

AD 390 At Nicene Theodosius the Great declared Christianity the state religion.

AD 394 Council of Carthage: Beginning with the Council of Carthage, the **concept and belief in the existence of both purgatory and prayers for the dead**, as found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria beginning in AD202 (and others subsequently), were upheld. (Neither concept is to be found explicitly in the Bible.) Belief in purgatory became a formal church doctrine in the 16th century, at the Council of Trent.

The historical emphasis of the church had been that Purgatory is a dreadful place of painful, long-lasting punishment with fire. The Church defines purgatory as: "*a place of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship, but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven.*"

4. AD 354 to 430 AUGUSTINE BISHOP OF HIPPO: Augustine, in the course of time, devoted his heart and soul to the service of the Church. He defended the teachings of the Church against heretics and those who would cause schism, or division, in the Church.

He remains a central figure, both within Christianity and in the history of Western thought in both his philosophical and theological reasoning. To this day, he is looked upon as an outstanding defender and expositor of Scripture. He defended the teachings of Christ against heretics. The controversies that occupied his time so much were the **Manicheans**, the **Donatists**, and the **Pelagians**. Against them Augustine developed his doctrine of the church and sacraments. He taught that the Catholic Church (of that time, of course) was the only church.

NOTE: Augustine's doctrine of divine **predestination** greatly influenced eloquent expression in the works of Reformation theologians such as Martin Luther and John Calvin who would look back to him as the inspiration for their avowed re-capturing of the Biblical Gospel.

Manichaeism: Augustine converted to Christianity from **Manichaeism**, which he passionately denounced in his writings, and whose writing continues to be enormously

influential among Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox theologians. **Manichaeism** was one of the major ancient religions of Iranian origin. The most striking principle of Manichee theology is its dualism that postulated two natures existed from the beginning: light and darkness. The realm of light lived in peace, while the realm of darkness was in constant conflict with itself. The universe is the temporary result of an attack from the realm of darkness on the realm of light, and was created by the Living Spirit, an emanation of the light realm, out of the mixture of light and darkness. The Manichees made every effort to include all known religious traditions in their faith. As a result, they preserved many apocryphal Christian works, such as the Acts of Thomas, that otherwise would have been lost. Mani was eager to describe himself as a "disciple of Jesus Christ", but the early Christian church rejected him as a heretic.

Donatists: Donatists were not heretics but they were schismatics, that is, they caused divisions in the Church. Their primary disagreement with the rest of the Church was over the treatment of those who forsook their faith during the Persecution (303–305) of Roman Emperor Diocletian, a disagreement that had implications both for the Church's understanding of the Sacrament of Penance and of the other sacraments in general.

The Donatists refused to accept the sacraments and spiritual authority of the priests and bishops who had fallen away from the faith during the persecution. Many church leaders had gone so far as to turn Christians over to Roman authorities and had handed over sacred religious texts to authorities to be publicly burned. These people were called *traditors* ("people who had handed over"). These *traditors* had returned to positions of authority under Constantine, and the Donatists proclaimed that any sacraments celebrated by these priests and bishops were invalid.

As a result, many towns were divided between Donatist and non-Donatist congregations. The sect had particularly developed and grown in North Africa. Constantine, as emperor, began to get involved in the dispute, and in **314** he called a **council at Arles in France**; the issue was debated and the decision went against the Donatists. The Donatists refused to accept the decision of the council, their distaste for bishops who had collaborated with Rome came out of their broader view of the Roman empire.

After the Constantinian shift, when other Christians accepted the emperor as a leader in the church, the Donatists continued to see the emperor as the devil. In particular, the birth of the Donatist movement came out of opposition to the appointment of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage in 312, because of his pro-government stance. In 317 Constantine sent troops to deal with the Donatists in Carthage, for the first time Christian persecuting Christian. It resulted in banishments and even executions. It failed completely and Constantine had to withdraw and cancel the persecutions in 321.

Pelagius: The teaching of a monk named Pelagius in the fifth Century. **He taught that man's will was and still is free to choose good or evil and there is no inherited sin** (through Adam). Every infant born into the world is in the same condition as Adam before the fall and becomes a sinner because he sins. This is opposed to the Biblical teaching that we are by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3) and that we sin because we are sinners.

Pelagians The theological doctrine put forward by Pelagius **denied original sin and affirmed the ability of humans to be righteous**. Augustine worked out the true doctrine concerning man and manner of his salvation. Augustine's concept of original sin was expounded in his works against the Pelagians.

Pelagianism is a belief that original sin did not taint human nature (which, being created from God, was divine), and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil with no Divine aid whatsoever. Thus, Adam's sin was "to set a bad example" for his progeny, but his actions did not have the other consequences imputed to Original Sin. Pelagianism views the role of Jesus as "setting a good example" for the rest of us (counteracting Adam's bad example).

Semi-Pelagianism is a softer form of Pelagianism, which taught that man has the capacity to seek God in and of himself apart from any movement of God's Word or the Holy Spirit. According to semi-Pelagianism, man doesn't have a complete capacity, but man and God could cooperate to a certain degree in this salvation effort: **man can (unaided by grace) make the first move toward God, and God then completes the salvation process**.

AD 431,2 Council Of Ephesus The theological doctrine put forward by Pelagius, which denied original sin and affirmed the ability of humans to be righteous **was condemned as heresy** by the Council of Ephesus in 431

AD 451 Council of Chalcedon: The Doctrine of the Incarnation: Some 600 hundred bishops were present. In the creed formulated by this council, which shares the same level of importance as the Creed of Nicea, the Church reasserted its belief in the full and complete deity of Christ, but now also confessed its belief in His equally full and complete humanity. Furthermore the Church confessed the existence of two natures in Christ: the human and the divine. Concerning the relation of these two natures to each other the church confessed that they exist in Christ without confusion, change, division, or separation. Finally, the church confessed that while Christ has two natures, He is one person, not two.

NOTE: The two Creeds of Nicea and Chalcedon are the expression of the most fundamental articles of the Christian faith. The Reformation in the seventeenth century shattered forever the unity of the Church in the West. But it did not reject these creeds, nor did it make any changes in them.

Page 9 of 56 This document has been developed by Ken Willig from numerous sources described on page 58

These two creeds remain today as the expression of the faith of the Greek, Roman Catholic, and most Protestant churches.

The Creed from Chalcedon

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

5. ENTERING THE MIDDLE AGES: AD 495

Roman Synod of 495 decreed the title of **Vicar of Christ** for Bishop of Rome by Pope Gelasius I.

By the end of the 5th century the following unscriptural doctrines and practices had become deeply rooted in the Church: **prayers for the dead**; a belief in **purgatory** (place in which souls are purified after death before they can enter heaven); the **forty-day Lenten season**; the view that the **Lord's supper as a sacrifice, and that its administrators are priests**; a sharp **division of the members of the church into clergy** (officers of the church) and laity (ordinary church members); the **veneration (adoration) of martyrs and saints**, and above all the **adoration of Mary**; the **burning of tapers or candles in their honor**; **veneration of the relics of martyrs and saints**; the ascription of **magical powers to these relics**; **pictures, images, and altars in the churches**; **gorgeous vestments for the clergy**; more and more **elaborate and splendid ritual** (form of worship); **less and less preaching**; **pilgrimages to holy places**; **monasticism**; **worldliness**; **persecution of heathen and heretics**.

Many of these practices remain in the Roman Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church and the Greek Orthodox Church to this very day—many rooted in **heathenism** from

the 4th Century but now called “*traditions of the early Church*” and venerated along with Scripture in determining *truth*.

AD 529 The Synod of Orange

On July 3, 529 a new church was dedicated at Orange (Arausio) in Gaul. Thirteen bishops were present. The dedication became more than usually significant when Caesarius of Arles asked the bishops to sign a statement. Caesarius, who had been in touch with Pope Felix IV, held Augustine's position. The thirteen bishops and some other people who were in attendance signed the document, and sent it to Rome. Eighteen months later, Pope Boniface II approved it, making it official church doctrine. That ended the Semi-Pelagian controversy for the time being. **The Synod of Orange condemned the teachings of Semi-Pelagianism as heretical—that it is up to the individual to accept or refuse God’s offer of grace.**

In assessing the synod of Orange, Philip Schaff writes: “The decisions of the council were sent by Caesarius to Rome, and were confirmed by pope Boniface II. In 530. Boniface, in giving his approval, emphasized the declaration, that even the beginning of a good will and of faith is a gift of *prevenient grace* (see page 36) while Semi-Pelagianism left open a way to Christ without grace from God. And beyond question, the church was fully warranted in affirming the pre-eminence of grace over freedom, and the necessity and importance of the *gratia praeveniens*.”

NOTE: Later we will discuss *Arminianism*. Notice the similarity between the condemned heretical teachings of **Semi-Pelagianism** and the teachings of Jacobus Arminius and *Arminianism* in the late 16th century. Jacobus Arminius asserted the compatibility of divine sovereignty with human freedom, denied John Calvin's doctrine of *irresistible grace*, and thus modified the strict conception of predestination. In this respect his teaching resembled that of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent. (More on Trent later.)

AD 590-604 Pope Gregory the Great, whom many consider the greatest pope ever, reformed church structure and administration. **He was among the first to assert the primacy of the papal office**, though he did not employ the term “*Pope*”, summed up the responsibilities of the Bishop of Rome as “servant of the servants of God”. Gregory's independent action in appointing governors to cities, providing munitions of war, giving instructions to generals, sending ambassadors to the Lombard king, and even negotiating a peace without consulting the Emperor's legate, Romanus, Exarch of Ravenna, mark the decisive acts that revealed the papacy as an **independent civil power**.

Gregory taught that the Lord’s supper is a repetition of the sacrifice on the cross (*Transubstantiation*). He also taught that the saints could be of help to us, to pray to them. And he taught that there is a **purgatory**. Gregory's pontificate saw the

development of the concepts of penance that became institutionalized in the later Church, that the purifying penance that the soul was to undergo in Purgatory could be begun in this life, through good works, obedience and Christian conduct, making the travails to come lighter and shorter. It was an optimistic outlook, which could make the Christian feel more secure about his future.

AD 607 Pope Boniface III, first Bishop of Rome to be titled “Pope” and “Universal Bishop” by decree of Emperor Phocas.

AD 687-691 Dome of the Rock built

AD 711-718 Islamic conquest of Iberia

AD 717-718 Second Arab siege of Constantinople

AD 718-1492 Reconquista, Iberian Peninsula retaken by Christendom

AD 800 King Charlemagne of the Franks is crowned first Holy Roman Emperor of the West by Pope Leo III.

AD 1046 Three bad popes who held office concurrently: At the Council of Sutri, Pope Silvester III was exiled, Pope Gregory VI was admitted to buying the papacy and resigned, and Pope Benedict IX resigned. The council appointed Pope Clement II to replace the three bad popes.

Entering the Middle Ages: The Church in the West (Italy, France, Netherlands, England, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Scotland, and Russia) had become largely Germanic. It had its origin among the Latin speaking Romans, but had passed on to the invading German tribes.

There was in the West a Church with Latin language and literature, but with the majority of its members belonging to the Germanic race. **The Germanizing of the Church marks a major turn in Church history.** For in a Church so made up of different elements, a process of fermentation was sure to set in. The empire in the East had lost Syria, Palestine, and Egypt to the Muslim Arabs.

But the Church, though feeble, remained in tact in Asia Minor and the Balkan Peninsula. The language in the East was Greek.

AD 1054 The Church is divided East and West: For more than 1,000 years all Orthodox Christians lived together in one Church, united in the bonds of a common faith. Then, in 1054, the Church was divided into the Greek Eastern and the Latin Western Church. Pope Leo

IX of Rome became involved in trouble with the patriarch of Constantinople.

In 1054, he sent representatives to Constantinople with a letter which they laid upon the high altar of St. Sophia Church. In that letter pope Leo IX excommunicated Cerularius, the patriarch of Constantinople, who in turn excommunicated the pope. **That was the schism (division) of the Church into the Greek Eastern and the Latin Western Church.**

AD 1073 Arabs Take Away the Eastern Empire Provinces: When in 1073 Hildebrand became pope as Gregory VII, the deep wound dealt by the schism between East and West was still fresh and bleeding. Gregory VII wanted to heal the wound. Not only was the Church divided, it was also torn by war and thousands of its members were conquered. Islam, like Christianity, had its origin in the East. The Muslim Arabs took away from the eastern Empire the provinces of Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa. From Africa they swept victoriously with the speed of a whirlwind through Spain into the heart of France. There, at Tours, their impetus advance was checked in 732 by Charles Martel. With the passing of the centuries, the Muslims lost their strength. They were supplanted in the East by the Turks who also were Muslims. By 1070 they had taken over from the Arabs, Palestine and Syria, had invaded Asia Minor, and were seriously threatening Constantinople itself and what there was left of the eastern Empire and Church.

AD 1096-1291 Eight to ten Crusades: First called by Pope Urban II at Council of Clermont against Islamic empire to reconquer the Holy Land for Christendom. Christian pilgrims who would go to the Holy Land, got along well with the Arabs until the Turks took the Holy Land away from the Arabs. The Turks were fanatics in religion. They hated the Christians because they were Christians. Pilgrims, upon their return home would complain of their bad treatment by the Turks. Their reports fanned the flames of resentment which had been smoldering for years.

This led Pope Urban II to motivate the Christians to go to the Holy Land and to rescue it from the hands of the Turks. To all those who would go **he promised a greatly reduced period of time in purgatory.** To those who would die, Urban promised heaven straight-away without stopping in purgatory.

Thousands accepted with wild enthusiasm: "*God wills it! God wills it!*" A cross was fixed to each person's sleeve. The Latin word for cross is *crux* from which we get the name *crusade* and the participants, *crusaders*. The first crusade got under way in AD **1096**. Most historians count 8 crusades and a tragic Children's Crusade. The crusades started with some semblance of just cause but soon became perverted and progressively became worse and worse over time. With intervals, they continued over 200 years without success. It wasn't until WWI that the English took Palestine away from the Turks.

AD 1198 to 1216 The Church Rises to Its Greatest Height of Power: Beginning with Pope Innocent III, the popes proclaimed to the world that they would tolerate no opposition from temporal power such as Kings, Emperors, Lords and Princes. All but the King of France acknowledged the pope as temporal and feudal lord—his vassals. They were fiefs of the Church.

AD 1205 The Rosary: Saint Francis of Assisi becomes a hermit, founding the Franciscan order of friars, renounces wealth and begins his ministry. The **Rosary** is reportedly given to St. Dominic (who founded Dominican order) by an apparition of Mary

AD 1215 The Lateran Council: Pope Innocent III declared two things he wanted: the conquest of the Holy Land and reform of the Church universal. It was ordered that Jews and Saracens should wear a distinctive costume. No Jews were allowed to hold public office which would give them authority over Christians. The living conditions of a very large portion of the clergy were deplorable, even though the Church had accumulated enormous wealth. The feeling that the Church was in need of more earnest reform was shared by many Christians.

AD 1274 Summa Theologiae, written by Thomas Aquinas, theologian and philosopher, landmark systematic theology which later became official Catholic doctrine.

6. AD 1294 – 1417 THE CHURCH DECLINES IN POWER.

AD 1049 – 1294 The second period of mediaeval Church history. This period begins with the rise of Hildebrand, 1049, (who was made Pope Gregory VII in 1073) and ends with the elevation of Boniface VIII to the papal dignity, 1294. In this period, the Church and the papacy ascend from the lowest state of weakness and corruption to the highest power and influence over the nations of Europe. It is the classical age of Latin Christianity: the age of the papal theocracy, aiming to control the German Empire and the kingdoms of France, Spain, and England. A striking feature of the Middle Ages is the contrast of the forces of extreme humility, as represented in monasticism, and the ambition for worldly dominion as represented in the papacy.

The popes stood on a much higher plane than the princes of their time and they claimed that the spiritual (Pope) has a right to rule over the temporal (princes of the world); the intellectual and moral interests are superior to the material and political. But the papal theocracy carried in it the temptation to secularization. By the abuse of opportunity it became a hindrance to pure Christianity.

Hildebrand (Gregory VII), in an attempt to free the Church from the bondage of the state, threatened to excommunicate

Emperor Henry VI. Henry in retort, met in the Council of Worms in 1076 and declared Gregory was no longer recognized as Pope. Gregory then excommunicated Henry. For political reasons, Henry then pretended submission.

The pope coveted both kingdoms, and he got what he coveted. But he was not able to hold the power he claimed over the State, and aspiring after temporal authority lost spiritual power. Boniface VIII marks the beginning of the decline and fall of the papal rule; and the seeds of this decline and fall were sown in the period when the hierarchy was in the pride of its worldly might and glory.

This period of two and a half centuries is a period of imposing personalities. Popes Gregory VII, Alexander III, and Innocent III. Its more notable sovereigns were William the Conqueror, Frederick Barbarossa, Frederick II, and St. Louis of France. Dante the poet illumines its last years. St. Bernard, Francis d'Assisi, and Dominic, the Spaniard, rise above a long array of famous monks. In the front rank of its Schoolmen were Anselm, Abelard, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Duns Scotus. Thomas à Becket and Grosseteste are prominent representatives of the body of Episcopal statesmen.

This combination of great figures and of great movements gives to this period a variety of interest such as belongs to few periods of Church history or the history of mankind.

AD 1305-1378 Rome as headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and seat of the Pope moves to **Avignon**, France. **By this time the popes were completely under the domination of the French Kings.**

John Wycliffe: An eminent theologian at Oxford. In 1376 he began to criticize the clergy. **He said that wealth and political power had so corrupted the Church that a radical reform was necessary.** He preached against abuses, expressed anti-catholic views of the sacraments (Penance and Eucharist), the use of relics, and Clerical celibacy. He called the pope the antichrist. **The Church, he said, should return to the simplicity of apostolic times.** He declared that the Bible rather than the Church should be the only rule of faith. But the Bible then was written in Latin and could not be read by the people. In order that Christians in England might be able to read the Bible for themselves, **Wycliffe translated it into the English language.** He died in **1384** in peace but the Catholic **Council of Constance in 1414** ordered his writings be burned and his body dug up and burned.

1380-1382 Wycliffe's Bible, by John Wycliffe, Translated the Bible into Middle English, 1st complete translation to English, included the apocrypha books. (NT in 1380, OT in 1382)

John Huss: In Bohemia John Huss accepted the teachings of John Wycliffe with enthusiasm. He became Dean of the theological faculty at the University of Prague and later was

made head of that institution. He too began to preach against the corruption in the Roman Catholic clergy. Huss taught many ideas which later became the main teachings of the Reformers. **He taught that the Church consists of the number of those who were predestinated.** He distinguished between being *in* the Church and being *of* the Church. **He taught that one could be *in* the Church but not be a real member of it—not a Christian. He taught that Christ alone is the head of the universal Church.**

Popes and Cardinals are not necessary to the government of the Church. **He condemned the selling of indulgences** as an abominable practice. **He was invited to the Council of Constance in 1414 and guaranteed safe conduct. However, once there, he was put in prison and later burned at the stake.**

1378 –1417 The Great Schism: The Italians wanted an Italian pope and the seat returned to Rome so they elected a new pope. Now there was one in Avignon and one in Rome. The popes denounced, excommunicated and anathematized each other. This is known as the *great schism*. Neither stepped down. So, in 1409 a council was called in Pisa and a new pope elected. The council deposed Roman Pope Gregory XII and deposed Avignon Pope Benedict XIII and elected Pope Alexander V (called the Pisan Pope). Yet, neither of the deposed popes would give up his office so **now there were three popes.**

1414-1418 Catholic Council of Constance, asked the three concurrent popes, Gregory XII, Benedict XIII, Pisan Pope John XXIII to resign their papal claims, then elected Pope Martin V; and condemned **John Wycliffe** and **John Huss** who was ordered to be burned at the stake.

1455 Gutenberg Bible, first printed Bible, by **Johann Gutenberg**

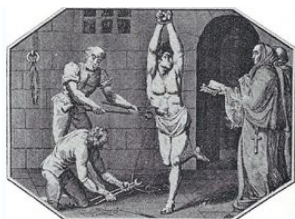
1460-1600 The Renaissance: A revival of learning in Europe. *Renaissance* means rebirth. This **period** saw a rebirth in knowledge. The renaissance marked the rebirth of humanism, and a revival in cultural achievements for their own sake. It was a period of learning. This learning was highly significant in furnishing the Reformation leaders with the historical background necessary to prove that the Church of their day had departed from the **simple faith of the apostles and early church fathers**, and had encumbered religious practice with innumerable forms, customs, and rituals **which had no significant place in the apostolic church.** It was during the period of the Renaissance that the popes built the Vatican in Rome.

Many of the popes of this era, especially Alexander VI, were very wicked men. Their splendid and luxurious court, their patronage of art and literature, and their great building projects, cost immense sums of money. By various schemes they managed to make great amounts of gold flow into the papal treasury from several countries of Western Europe. The luxurious manner of lifestyle of the popes and their

heavy exactions of money caused great dissatisfaction with the papacy.

1478 The Spanish Inquisition:

Established by Pope Sixtus IV, The **Spanish Inquisition** was started in 1478 by Ferdinand and Isabella to detect and punish those whose opinions differed from the doctrine of the Roman Church by eliminating so-called *heretics* in Italy and Spain by trials, torturing and martyring thousands of *heretics* (Protestant Christians).



It was under the direct control of the Spanish monarchy. The purpose of the Inquisition was the repression and extermination of *heresy*.

Its history presents what is probably the most revolting spectacle in the annals of

civilized Europe.

The representatives of the Roman Catholic Church appear, sitting as arbiters over human destiny in this world, and in the name of religion applying torture to countless helpless victims, *heretics*, and pronouncing upon them a sentence that they knew involved perpetual imprisonment or death in the flames. The cold heartlessness with which the fate of the Protestant *heretic* was punished resulted in relentless cruelties and thus gives profound evidence that the Protestant *heretics* were infinitely more Christian than their Roman Catholic arbiters. **It was finally abolished in 1834.**

1506 Pope Julius II orders the Old St. Peter's Basilica torn down and authorizes Donato Bramante to plan a new structure. Demolition was completed in 1606.

1512 to 1517 Indulgences. A Roman Catholic Church teaching of the need for indulgences was being pushed with fervor. Indulgences supposedly provided a way of buying up time one might have to spend in purgatory by the paying of money to the Roman Church. Pope Leo X (1513-1521) needed great sums of money to continue the building of St. Peter's Church in Rome, and to gratify his own extravagant tastes. (See Pages 16 and 17 for more details)

NOTE: Indulgences were conceived as a good way to raise money. A famous seller of indulgences, a Dominican monk named *Tetzel*, shamefully offered the people these Indulgences or cards of forgiveness. He would tell the people, ***"No sooner will the money clink in the box, than the soul of the departed will be free"*** (speaking of purgatory). He went way beyond that to say, ***"Even if a man had committed a foul sexual assault upon the Virgin Mary that he could get an indulgence if he paid the appropriate fee."***

(See Pages 13 to 15 for more details)

7. THE THRESHOLD OF THE REFORMATION

For more than three hundred years the Church had had violent turmoil in many areas. There had been the Albigenses and the Waldenses. In the fourteenth century Pope Boniface VIII was humbled, his successors were captives for seventy years, and then the papacy was rent by schism. In England Wycliffe and the Lollards caused great commotion, as did John Huss and the Hussites in Bohemia. Dominicans and Franciscans became a power in the Church. The inquisition was introduced. Heretics were burned, and their lands were devastated. In the first half of the fifteenth century three general councils were held.

The Turks conquered the Eastern Empire and captured its capital, Constantinople. The gorgeous Christian Church of St Sophia was made over into a Muslim mosque, the cross on its dome was replaced with the crescent, and the Greek Orthodox Church was forced to pass under the yoke of the False Prophet, as Mohammed was called. In the second half of the fifteenth century the paganizing Renaissance captured the papacy. The Brethren of the Common Life produced a Wessel and an Erasmus.

Many changes in customs and form of worship had been made in the Church since its birth at Pentecost. Some of these were the result of a natural development of liturgy and set pattern. Other changes, however, were of a more significant type; changes in doctrine, and even in the concept of the Church's mission and place in the world. Men had come to think of the Church as a hierarchy of officials, from parish priests to bishops to cardinals and to the pope. These were thought to be the rulers, not only of the Church as an organization, but also of the entire civilized world. They assumed that their place was between God and the people, commissioned by the former, to be obeyed by the latter.

From this position they not only served as administrative agents of the government, but also assumed for themselves the right to change or make new doctrine. **So there had come into the beliefs of the official Church many teachings not found in Scripture, but based on what men called holy tradition and announced as doctrine by the papacy.** Such teachings included the doctrine of **purgatory**, of **transubstantiation**, of **indulgences** and perhaps most significant, the doctrine of the **pope** as the direct apostolic successor of Peter.

Now when men of the Renaissance period began to look back into the history of the early church by studying the Church fathers, they noticed that these Fathers knew nothing about many teachings that had by now adopted as doctrine. They also began to read scripture in the original languages and found that the Bible itself frequently contradicted teachings that the Church had proclaimed basic.

So doubts arose in the minds of many leaders, particularly among the university men. These did frequently express their disagreement with the Church, but such action was extremely dangerous. The Church carried a sword, not for ornament,

but for use, and dissenters quickly felt the sting of the Inquisition.

When the Reformation broke over Europe, it came as a climax to the voices of these reformers, and at a time when the social, political, and intellectual climate was ready for a change. At this crucial point Luther entered the scene and led a movement that shook the Church to its foundations.

SACRAMENTS → JUSTIFICATION → PENANCE → PURGATORY → PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD → INDULGENCES → TREASURE OF MERITS → JOHANN TETZEL

There are definite linkages among these in the Roman Church. I have not been able to tie down the exact dates of origin and the circumstance that brought all of these about. But I am going to describe how they inter-relate and how they played into the Reformation. Stay with me on this one as they are inextricably interwoven.

Sacraments. The word is taken from the Latin term *sacramentum* that translates to the New Testament word for *mystery*. The Apostolic Church identified two such mysteries or ceremonies commanded by Jesus. The Apostolic Church and Historic Protestantism limits the number of sacraments to **two: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.**

Though Protestants recognize other rites such as marriage as special ordinances, they are not recognized as attaining the level of sacraments. **Sacraments are limited to:** (1) those ordinances directly instituted by Christ, (2) ordinances that are by their very nature significant, (3) ordinances designed to be perpetual, and (4) ordinances designed to signify, instruct, and seal the believers who receive them in faith.

By the 3rd Century, the Roman Catholic Church expanded the number of sacraments to **seven**. They are Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion (the Lord's Supper), Penance, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction. As you will see in a minute, the role of the sacraments in the RCC is to give grace—*indulgences*—to those who perform them—work for or earn them.

Justification: The Protestant and Biblical view of *justification* is that it is a one-time event good forever; that it comes through faith—faith in Jesus Christ alone for ones salvation and forgiveness of sins, and that it comes through grace alone.

The Roman Catholic Church holds that one is justified at Baptism—is regenerated—becomes a child of God—receives sanctifying or saving or justifying grace. When one is in the state of sanctifying grace he has the right to enter heaven—but it is not permanent. Because, when one sins he must go to confession—**Penance**—another sacrament of the RCC. In so doing, he is restored to being in the state of sanctifying grace.

Penance: This sacrament was defined by Rome as the *second plank of justification* for those who had made shipwreck of their souls. The initial grace of justification is communicated by baptism. That grace is lost when one commits mortal sin. Mortal sin, unlike venial sin, destroys or “kills” sanctifying grace. Penance is restorative; it restores the penitent to sanctifying grace. If one is **not** in the state of sanctifying grace, he is going to hell.

The sacrament of penance has three constituent parts: *contrition*, *confession*, and *satisfaction or atonement* for one's forgiven sins. *Indulgence* is given the penitent for the commutation of the act of *satisfaction*. Even though Penance leaves one in the state of sanctifying grace, he will not enter heaven until all required atonement is made for his sins—in this life or in **purgatory**. Should he die, others can pray for him or “earn” indulgences on his behalf to shorten his stay in **purgatory**.

Purgatory: A place where the dead sinner in sanctifying grace goes for his temporal punishment until his sins are expiated. When the Roman Catholic Church speaks of souls being in purgatory, they are referring to those that leave the body in the state of “sanctifying grace” and therefore have the right to enter heaven. Their particular judgment was favorable, although conditional provided they are first cleansed to appear before God. The condition is always fulfilled. The poor souls in purgatory still have the stains of sin within them.

This means two things. First, it means that the souls have not yet paid the temporal punishment due, either for “venial” sins, or for “mortal” sins whose guilt was forgiven before in Penance before death. One's time in purgatory, (no one knows how long—days, years, centuries)—can be shortened through prayers for them and/or through indulgences earned by themselves in advance of death or others on their behalf.

The Church did not significantly develop the doctrine of purgatory until later. (See AD 394 Council of Carthage and the 16th Century Council of Trent.)

Prayers for the Dead: Sometime in the early 3rd century, an unbiblical tradition of praying for the dead started beginning with Clement of Alexandria, and Cyprian (died in 258), and Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386). They taught that there should be prayers for dead Christians, as they must perform the remainder of any atonement required of them in another world—purgatory—a place of purging of their sins not yet totally atoned for. The classic text in the Apocrypha bearing witness to the belief of the Jewish people in the existence of a state of purgation where souls are cleansed before entering heaven is found in the apocrypha Book of Maccabees.

Indulgences: An *indulgence* is the extra-sacramental remission of the temporal punishment due in satisfaction of God's punishment for sins that have been forgiven in Penance. Indulgences are needed to expiate the temporal punishment that a sinner has in purgatory and therefore shorten the penitent's time in purgatory. A Catholic can

receive *indulgences* when performing certain good works, saying prayers for the dead, participating in certain ceremonies, and when giving alms for certain needs.

The pope authorized the distribution of *indulgences* for good works and one good work is **alms giving to the Church**. With the approval of the pope, individual bishops could sell indulgences to various individuals so that they could pay-off a portion, or all, of the temporal punishment of their designated deceased friend in purgatory or for himself as insurance. The practice of selling indulgences brought extensive corruption into the process. (Now, are you beginning to see how this all links together?) **But where did the pope get these extra good works that he could sell as indulgences?** He *found* them in the Treasure of Merits.

Treasure of Merits: Is a depository of good works that Christ, saints and clergy had performed in excess of their needs. (*Works of super-erogation* are those good deeds believed to have been performed by saints, or capable of being performed by men, over and above what is required for their own salvation.) The pope substituted these for the good works required of the individual believer. Proof of this substitution was in the indulgence itself, which was a piece of paper, like a piece of money or a check, that certified that the good works from the Treasury of Merit had paid off the "good works debt" of the designee.

The Treasure of Merits was confirmed in the Bull *Unigenitus* of Clement VI, 1343. In 1476 Pope Sixtus IV extended the scope of an Indulgence to the souls in purgatory. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, Indulgences had become a holy business (*sacrum negotium*) so complex as to demand the superintendence of the Banking House of Fugger. You can just imagine the corruption this led to—especially when it came time to build the Vatican; and the chief salesman was **Johann Tetzel**.

Johann Tetzel: It happened in 1517 that a Dominican monk named Johann Tetzel began to sell indulgences. He sold grace for money as dearly or a cheaply as he could. He had power from the Pope to offer forgiveness “even if someone had slept with the Holy Virgin Mary”, as long as a contribution would be put into the coffer. Furthermore, if anyone put money into the coffer for a soul in purgatory, the soul would leave purgatory for heaven in the moment one could hear “*the money clink in the box.*” Furthermore, it was not necessary to show remorse or sorrow or do penance for sins when purchasing indulgences or a letter of indulgence. He even sold indulgences for future sins. Such abominable things he did abundantly. He was merely interested in money for the Catholic Church’s treasury.

8. MARTIN LUTHER (1483 TO 1546)



Martin Luther was an Augustinian, German monk, priest, professor, theologian, and church reformer. Luther's study and research as a Bible professor led him to question the contemporary usage of terms such as penance and righteousness in the Roman Catholic Church. He became convinced that the church had lost sight of what he saw as several of the central truths of Christianity — the most important being **the doctrine of justification by faith alone**. (*Sola fide*)

He began to teach that salvation is a gift by God's grace alone through Christ alone received by faith alone. As a result of his lectures on the Psalms and Paul's letter to the Romans, from 1513-1516, Luther achieved an exegetical breakthrough, an insight into the all-encompassing grace of God and the all-sufficient merit of Christ. It was particularly in connection with Romans 1:17 "*For therein is the righteousness of God is revealed from faith, to faith: as it is written: 'The just shall live by faith.'*"

Luther came to one of his most important understandings, that the "righteousness of God" was not God's active, harsh, punishing wrath demanding that a person keep God's law perfectly in order to be saved, but rather Luther came to believe that God's righteousness is something that God gives to a person as a gift, freely, through Christ. Luther emerged from his tremendous struggle with a firmer trust in God and love for him. The doctrine of salvation by God's grace alone (*sola gratia*), received as a gift through faith alone (*sola fide*) and by Christ alone (*Solus Christus*) without dependence on human merit, was the measure by which he judged the religious practices and official teachings of the church of his day and found them wanting.

Martin Luther's spirit was stirred in opposition to the teachings by the Roman Catholic Church on indulgences. In his first official sermon against indulgences he said,

"And if some persons cry out that I am a heretic (for the truth I preach is very injurious to their cash-box), I am not much disturbed by their yellings. They are men of diseased and clouded brains - men who have never felt the Bible, never read the Christian doctrine, never understood their own doctors, and who rot beneath the rags of their idle opinions . . . God grant them and us a true sense! Amen."

What bothered Luther was that men were not changing their lives after paying for indulgences. Luther, when hearing confessions, would not grant absolution if the people would not forsake their sins. The people would take out their *notes of indulgences* and boast of the fact that they had already been forgiven. Luther would become infuriated with these people and say, "*Except ye repent, ye shall perish.*"

It was not the Roman Catholic Church or the pope Luther was attacking, but those impudent monks who were abusing the practice of indulgences. Luther wrongly believed that the Pope was on his side in this matter, and never dreamed that this would bring a reformation in the Church that would overthrow the pope in Germany.

AD 1517: The 95 Theses of Martin Luther Begins German Protestant Reformation

Luther, seeking for truth, set out to have a discussion about indulgences at Erfurt University. It was primarily designed to be a faculty discussion. The thesis began, "Out of love and zeal for truth, and the desire to bring it to light, the following theses will be publicly discussed at Wittenberg." On All Saints Day, October 31, 1517, he nailed his Ninety-five Theses (in Latin) to the church door at Wittenberg where vast crowds congregated. This document in essence stated: (1) that an indulgence can never remit guilt - God has kept that in his own hand; (2) it cannot remit divine punishment for sin as that also is in God's hand alone; (3) it has no efficacy for souls in purgatory; and (4) the truly repentant Christian has already received pardon from God, and needs no indulgence.

Martin Luther dealt the symbolic blow that began the Reformation when he nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Church. That document contained an attack on papal abuses and the sale of indulgences by church officials. Copies were made in German of the Latin Theses and printed off by the tens of thousands for circulation all over Germany. One historian of that day commented, "*In fifteen days they were spread over the whole of Germany, and in four weeks they had overrun almost all Christendom, as if the angels themselves had been their messengers, and had borne them to the eyes of men. No one would believe the noise they made.*"

Luther was thirty-four years old when this event happened. Luther never set out to break with the Roman Catholic Church; he simply wanted it to reform. He had often said, "*No crime or abuse can justify a schism.*" Luther was raised a Catholic and knew nothing else. He never intended to bring about a new church outside of the Roman Church. In fact, when Luther realized that the whole Church was against him, he had second thoughts about his actions:

"I began this affair in great fear and trembling. What was I, a poor, miserable, contemptible friar, more like a corpse than a man - who was I, to set myself up against the majesty of the Pope, before whom trembled not only the kings of the earth, and the whole world, but also, if I may so say, heaven and hell, constrained to obey the look of his eye?"

No one can know what my heart suffered in those first two years, and into what dejection I have often been plunged . . . However, after having gained the victory, by the Scriptures, over all contrary arguments, I at last surmounted, by the grace of Christ, with much anguish and labor, and with great difficulty, the only argument, which still stopped me, namely -

'It is necessary to hear the Church,' for I honored the Pope's Church from the bottom of my heart.'

When Luther posted his Theses, he unconsciously took the first step that led eventually to the Protestant Reformation, and to the formation of a new church, the Protestant Church. Luther himself a few years later declared, "*The Church has need of a Reformation. And this cannot be the work of a single man, such as the Pope, or of many men, such as the cardinals and the Fathers of the Councils, but it must be that of the whole world; or rather, it is a work which pertains to God alone . . . The dyke is broken, and it is no longer in our power to restrain the rushing and rolling floods.*"

Monks in Germany began immediately to attack Luther and his teachings. They made great accusations and cried for his death as a heretic. He was called "venomous," "Bohemian," "heretic," "seditious," "insolent," "audacious," "proud," etc. One monk said, "It is high treason against the Church to let such a horrible heretic live another hour. Up with the scaffold at once!" Luther would answer his opponents, "*Are you athirst for murder? I assure you, you will not frighten me either by your rhodomontades or by the threatening din of your words. Though I be killed, Christ lives, Christ my Lord and the Lord of all, blessed forever more. Amen!*"

9. THE REFORMATION: A NEW ERA IN WORLD HISTORY

We have come to a high point in the history of the Church. In 1517, and the years that followed, a series of events occurred which ushered in a new era in world history. In that period the power of Rome over the Christian Church was challenged, men broke away from its tyranny, and Christian liberty was at last restored.

The men who led the way in this great Reformation were men of strong faith and convictions, high intelligence, and great moral and physical courage. They risked their lives and sacrificed all ordinary pleasures to work untiringly for the purity and freedom of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The period of the Reformation was an exciting and heroic one. The people were no less courageous than their leaders. War and persecution did not turn them aside. It was a time of high thinking and perilous living.

In spite of all opposition from the Catholic Church, the Reformation spread—through Germany, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Norway, and Sweden. The fetters that had bound the people to a religion of guilt and fear had at last been broken, and the Church was once more free to worship God "in spirit and in truth."

In his theses Luther did not attack indulgences themselves, but only the abuses connected with their sale. Already Wycliffe and Huss had protested against these abuses. But the Church was quick to see that the thrust of Luther's protest was more far-reaching. By raising the question of indulgences, Luther,

guided by the Spirit of God, had laid his finger on the most sensitive spot in the whole Catholic system of his day.

It was from the sale of indulgences that the Church and its head, the pope, received an immense income. And furthermore, the Catholic system had declined to the point where it placed all importance on the sacraments and the priests.

The Roman Catholic Church held that only a priest could administer the sacraments; and without the sacrament of penance, without absolution and indulgences, there was no salvation. Man's salvation, his eternal happiness or distress, lay in the hands of the priests. And so the Church, through the priests, had a strong hold on the people. That is why, by raising the question of indulgences, Luther shook the Church. What he said in his theses loosened the priest's hold on the people. **Now the Church was not merely stirred. It was shaken to its very foundations.**

Before I outline the important events of the Reformation, I should sketch the elements of its teachings which all the leaders of the movement considered fundamental ones.

The Reformation leaders went back to the Apostolic Church, as described in the New Testament, to find there the spirit and practice of the Church as they believed it should operate. The republishing of the works of the early Church Fathers—Jerome, Cyprian, Origen and Athanasius—was a great aid to them. **Augustine** was a favorite of most of the reformers.

From these men they learned the simple character of the early Church and found it widely different from the adorned service of their own day. They therefore sought to eliminate the forms, customs, and traditions in the formal keeping of which men had come to trust for salvation, and to **stress the preaching of the Word as the Gospel of salvation by grace alone.**

Closely related to this aspect of reform was the stress on the *priesthood* of all believers. The Roman Catholic Church used the name *priest* for clergymen, which meant that they stood, as in Old Testament times, between man and God. The reformers spoke of all men as priests, personally speaking to God, without the mediation of the Church. This meant that men could go directly to God; **they did not gain salvation through the Church or a special "priest", but became members of the priesthood of all believers when they became a believer.**

All the reformers thought of the Church as the community of believers rather than the hierarchy of officials. This concept was already evident in Huss, one hundred years before Luther, and persisted all through the Reformation days. They thought of the Church as an organism, a living body of which each believer was a member; they did not think of it as an organization made up of officials. Organization they did consider necessary for efficient functioning, but they did not think of it as the dispenser of divine grace.

Wycliffe and Tyndale

Many church leaders in the days before the Reformation had urged the distribution of the Bible to the common people. **Wycliffe** had translated large portions of the Vulgate into English. **Tyndale** had translated the Bible into English. But the Roman Catholic Church had bitterly opposed unofficial translations and in 1535 **Tyndale** was tried for heresy and treason and then strangled and burnt at the stake. Much of **Tyndale's** work eventually found its way to the **King James Version** (or Authorized Version) of the Bible, published in **1611**, which, through the work of 54 independent scholars, is based primarily on **Tyndale's** translations.

All the reformers accepted the Bible as the final authority on all questions of faith and morals. **Luther** translated the whole Bible; **Zwingli** copied in handwriting all the letters of Paul from Erasmus' Greek text; Lefebvre translated the New Testament into French, as did John Calvin. Whether a reformation principle was to be accepted or not was determined by the support one could find for it in Scripture. That became the yardstick; and of course this led to a careful study of the Bible as the source for all religious teaching.

1518-1520 Luther's Struggle for Survival

At first the pope thought this was merely a squabble among monks, but he soon realized his mistake and summoned Luther to Rome in July 1518. To go would have meant certain death for Luther, so he refused. Luther was commanded to recant, but he answered the pope with a definite "no."

Luther found himself in an emotional struggle with Rome, for his mind told him the truth of Christ and the gospel, but his heart told him to be faithful to Rome. At one point he said, "I would rather die than retract what I feel bound to teach." Luther wanted to know the truth and to be corrected if he were wrong. In his various debates with heads of the Church, he said such things as:

"I appear before you as a submissive and obedient son of the holy Christian Church; and I admit that it was I who published the propositions and theses in question. I am ready to hear, in all obedience, what I am accused of, and, if I am deceived, to suffer myself to be instructed according to the truth";..... "As for indulgences, if it is proved to me that I am wrong, I am ready to be set right; one may pass over that, without being a bad Christian. But, as to the article of faith, if I gave way in the least, I should be denying Jesus Christ. On this head, therefore, I will not and cannot yield; by the grace of God, I never will";

"I declare that I honor the holy Roman Church, and that I will continue to honor it. I have sought the truth in public disputes; and all that I have said, I regard, to this very hour, as just, true, and Christian. Yet I am a man, and I may be deceived. I am, therefore, ready to be instructed and corrected in those things in which I may have erred."

1519: Luther at Leipzig. Disputation was arranged at Leipzig between Carlstadt, an enthusiastic but not always wise supporter of Luther, and John Eck, the papal champion. Luther took part, and Eck and Luther faced each other. As to debating ability, both were about equal. Eck backed Luther into a corner, getting him to admit publicly that the teachings of John Huss had been unjustly condemned. Eck made Luther take a stand on the side of a man officially condemned by the Church as a heretic. During this debate, Luther declared that the supremacy of the pope was unknown in the Scriptures, that it had grown up only in the previous 400 years, and that the General Councils had erred in giving their support of it. Luther had tremendously strengthened his position at Leipzig. He made his followers feel he was right. He also won many new followers, one of whom was Martin Bucer, who became an important leader of the Reformation, and who helped to shape the views of John Calvin.

1520: Luther At Leipzig, Luther had cast his die. He was fully aware of his position, and his break with the Roman Church was now imminent. During 1520, he wrote four major works that shook Europe to its roots: *On Good Works*, wherein he set forth that salvation is through **faith alone**; *To the Nobility of the German Nation*, which was a trumpet call to do away with the abuses fostered by Rome; *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, which exposed the false claims of the Roman Church that men could be saved only through the Roman system; and *Concerning Christian Liberty*, which dealt with grace and the Christian life.

On June 15, 1520, Pope Leo ratified and signed the bull (i.e. an official document issued by the pope) excommunicating Luther, and demanding all Luther's works be burned. Luther's first reaction to the bull was disappointment. He said, *"Hold my peace! I am willing to do so, if they will make others quid. If any one envies my post, let him take it. I am quite ready to rest, provided they do not require the Gospel to rest. There is nothing in the world that may not be obtained of me, provided they do not shut Christians out of the way of salvation. I am not frightened at any of their threats. I am not to be led away by their promises."*

Luther soon recovered his warrior-spirit, declaring,

"My resolution is taken. I despise Rome's fury, and I despise her favor. No more reconciliation, no more communication with her forever! Let her condemn and burn my writings. I, in my turn, will condemn and publicly burn the Pontifical Law, that nest of all heresies. The moderation I have shown, to this hour, has been useless; I renounce it!"

Luther, being a man of passion, wanted to show his contempt for the papacy and the bull of excommunication. Having arranged a bonfire outside Wittenberg, he went arrayed in the robes of his Order, amid a crowd of sympathizers from the University and the town, and publicly flung the bull of excommunication into the fire, burning the pope's words. He then stated, "The pope's decretals are the devil's excretals!"

When the bull was burning, they sang "We Praise Thee, O God."

It then got a little out of hand when the youth began to sing funeral dirges in honor of the burnt papal decretals and bull. By these actions Luther announced to the world that there was only death between him and the pope.

1521: Luther's Struggle at Worms The most powerful monarch on earth at this time was Spain's Charles V. His territories spread throughout Europe and the Americas. He was a fervent Roman Catholic, determined to create one worldwide-united empire and one worldwide united Church from which no one could dissent. He hated the Protestants, and would have killed them all, but he needed all the help he could get to fight the Turks on one front and Francis I of France on another. Charles V called the Diet of Worms in 1521, to which he invited the most important secular rulers in Europe. His purpose for Worms was to put down Luther. He invited Luther to Worms and promised his safe conduct to and from the Diet. Luther's friends urged him not to go, reminding him of what had happened to John Huss.

Luther replied, *"Though there were as many devils in Worms as tiles on its roofs, I would go."* The Diet was presided over by Charles V, who at this time was but twenty-one years of age. Luther was questioned about his books, and ordered to retract. The real question was whether or not he would recant. When the emperor demanded a plain answer, Luther asked for a day to think it over, explaining,

"As to the second - this being a question which concerns the faith and the salvation of souls, involving the Word of God, the greatest and most precious treasure on earth and in heaven - I should act imprudently if I replied without reflection. I might affirm less than the matter demands, or more than truth requires, and so incur guilt, according to the declaration of Christ: 'Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.' I therefore, with all submission, beseech his Imperial Majesty to grant me time, that I may answer without prejudicing the Word of God."

Luther clearly saw that the whole cause of Christ and the Reformation depended upon his answer. Just before he went into the Diet to give his answer, he prayed,

"Almighty God! Eternal God! How terrible is the world! How it gapes to swallow me, and how little confidence I have in thee! . . . How weak is the flesh, and how strong is Satan! If it is in what the world thinks powerful that I most place my hope, I am undone! . . . The bell is cast; the judgment is pronounced! . . . O God! O God! . . . O thou my God, aid me against all the wisdom of the world! Do this - thou must do it . . . Thou only . . . for it is not my work but thine. I have nothing to do in this: I have nothing to strive about with these great ones of the world. I, too, would fain pass happy,

tranquil days. But the cause is thine; it is just and eternal! O Lord, be thou my aid! Faithful God! Unchanging God! I rely on no man. It is in vain. Everything human is tottering and reeling; all that proceeds from man fades away. O God! O God! . . . hearest thou not? . . . My God, art thou dead? . . . No, thou canst not die; thou only hidest thyself. Thou hast chosen me for this work. I know it. Act, then, O God! . . . Keep thee by my side, for the name of thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who is my defense, my buckler and my fortress. Lord, where art thou? O my God, where art thou? . . . Come, come! I am ready! . . . I am ready to give up my life for thy truth . . . patient as a lamb, for the cause is just, and it is thine. I will not withdraw from thee, now or in all eternity . . . and though the world should be filled with demons, though my body, which is the work of thy hands, must bite the dust, be stretched on the ground, cut in pieces . . . reduced to powder . . . my soul is thine! Yes, I have thy Word for warrant of this. My soul is thine; it will dwell forever near thee . . . Amen! . . . O God, aid me! . . . Amen!

Luther, fortified by the grace of God and filled with the Spirit of God, faced the Diet and said,

“If the emperor desires a plain answer, I will give it to him. It is impossible for me to recant unless I am proved to be wrong by the testimony of Scripture. My conscience is bound to the Word of God. It is neither safe nor honest to act against one’s conscience. Here I stand. God help me. I cannot do otherwise.”

Luther was placed under the ban of the empire and condemned, but he was guaranteed safe conduct back to Wittenberg. To save his life, the Elector of Saxony secretly carried Luther off to the castle of Wartburg, and his enemies thought that he had perished.

Through his whole struggle at Worms, Luther had a few verses that kept coming to his mind: Matthew 10:18-20, 28, 33. *“Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. . . . Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. . . . Whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.*

10. LUTHER’S STRUGGLE AT WARTBURG

Luther spent one year at Wartburg, and it was there he really began to struggle with his own philosophy of how to establish a biblical Protestant church. He had condemned the institution of the Roman Catholic Church; yet he had put nothing positive in its place. Luther probably had some real moments of discouragement, for he was fighting 1500 years

of history. However, Luther again rose to the occasion. He began to translate the Bible into the German language. He knew the Reformation would never get off the ground unless the common people stood with it, and they could never support it unless they knew God’s Word. Luther, with the help of Greek scholar Melancthon, translated the Bible into German. Luther never put his name on any Bible, which shows that he was a humble man.

NOTE: This was just about the time that the printing press was invented, so that the Bible in German was printed *en masse*.

1522: LUTHER’S STRUGGLE AT WITTENBERG

On his return to Wittenberg from Wartburg in March 1522, Luther found the community in a frenzy of excitement because of the attacks of Carlstadt upon the rites and ordinances of the Church; the preaching of Claus Storch, an Anabaptist; and other fanatics from Zwickaw. Carlstadt was a radical who wanted the Reformation to move much more quickly, despite the potentially damaging consequences. Luther restored order, thus keeping his movement in the paths of moderation.

The revolt of the Nobles in 1523 and the Revolt of the Peasants in 1525 caused great distress to Luther and hampered his work. They were due to hard social and economic causes, but the Reformer was blamed. Luther foolishly urged the authorities to crush the Peasant’s Revolt unmercifully, and many of his followers were so alienated that they became *Anabaptists*.

ANABAPTISTS: 16th Century Europe.

Anabaptists were devoted students of the Bible who felt that the reformers were not moving fast enough in purifying the Church and applying the principles taught by the Scriptures. The term was coined by critics, who objected to the Anabaptist practice of rebaptizing adults who had previously been baptized as infants. Anabaptists believe infant baptism was not valid. They held that infant baptism and the close union between Church and State were at the bottom of all the terrible corruption in the Church. They also objected to easy membership into the Church by way of the State. They taught that Christians, as much as possible, should keep themselves separate from the world. They taught that believers should not hold government office, should not be a soldier, should not sue in the courts. They were considered radicals in their day.

1530: Luther’s Struggle at Augsburg: It became desirable for the Lutheran movement to declare officially its faith to the world. A doctrinal statement was drawn up, and handed to the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. This statement of the Lutheran faith has become known as the Augsburg Confession. It was the first confession or creed to

be formulated since the ancient Church formulated the Christian Faith in the creeds of the Ecumenical Councils.

AD 1530 Diet at Augsburg: In 1530, Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, called together the princes and cities of his German territories in a Diet at Augsburg. He sought unity among them to fend off the attacks of Turkish armies in Eastern Austria. He called upon the Lutheran nobility to explain their religious convictions, with the hope that the controversy swirling around the challenge of the Reformation might be resolved. To this end, Philip Melancthon, a close friend of Martin Luther and a Professor of New Testament at Wittenberg University, was called upon to draft a common confession for the Lutheran Lords and Free Territories. The resulting document, **the Augsburg Confession was presented to the emperor on June 25, 1530.**

1530 THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

NOTE: There are 28 articles to the Augsburg Confession. I am going to provide only four, the 2nd (Original Sin); the 4th (Justification); the 10th (The Lord's Supper); and the 18th (Of Free Will).

For the entire document see:

<http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/boc/ac/>

Article II: Of Original Sin.

Also they teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.

Article IV: Of Justification.

Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, Who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.

Article X: Of the Lord's Supper.

Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat the Supper of the Lord; and they reject those that teach otherwise.

Article XVIII: Of Free Will.

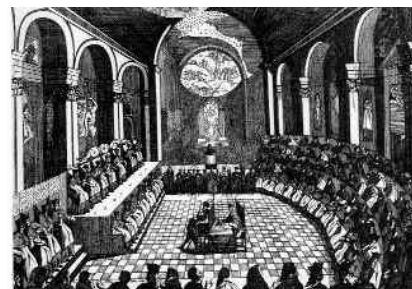
Of Free Will they teach that man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness, and to work things subject to reason. But it has no power, without the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness;

since the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2,14; but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Ghost is received through the Word.

These things are said in as many words by Augustine in his *Hypognosticon*, Book III: We grant that all men have a free will, free, inasmuch as it has the judgment of reason; not that it is thereby capable, without God, either to begin, or, at least, to complete aught in things pertaining to God, but only in works of this life, whether good or evil. "Good" I call those works which spring from the good in nature, such as, willing to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to have a friend, to clothe oneself, to build a house, to marry a wife, to raise cattle, to learn divers useful arts, or whatsoever good pertains to this life. For all of these things are not without dependence on the providence of God; yea, of Him and through Him they are and have their being. "Evil" I call such works as willing to worship an idol, to commit murder, etc.

They condemned the Pelagians and others, who taught that without the Holy Ghost, by the power of nature alone, we are able to love God above all things; also to do the commandments of God as touching "the substance of the act." For, although nature is able in a manner to do the outward work, (for it is able to keep the hands from theft and murder,) yet it cannot produce the inward motions, such as the fear of God, trust in God, chastity, patience, etc.

11. 1545–1563 Roman Catholic Church's Response to Reformation: Council of Trent



In reply to the Papal bull *Exsurge Domine* of Pope Leo X (1520), Martin Luther burned the document and appealed for a general council. In 1522, German diets joined in the appeal,

with Charles V seconding and pressing a council as a means of reunifying the Church and settling the Reformation controversies. Pope Clement VII (1523-1534) was vehemently against the idea of a council, agreeing with Francis I of France. After Pope Pius II in his bull *Execrabilis* (1460) and his reply to the University of Cologne (1463) set aside the theory of the supremacy of general councils laid down by the Council of Constance, it was the papal policy to avoid councils.

Pope Paul III, seeing that the Protestant Reformation was no longer a few preachers, but that various princes had joined in the new ideas, desired a council, but when he proposed the idea to his cardinals, it was unanimously voted against. Nonetheless, he sent nuncios (diplomatic representatives) throughout Europe to propose the idea. France and most of the German Protestants refused the invitation. Unable, however, to resist the urging of Charles V, the pope,

convened the council as exclusively Roman at Trent (at that time a free city of the Holy Roman Empire under a prince-bishop) on December 13, 1545; it was transferred to Bologna in March, 1547 from fear of the plague; indefinitely postponed September 17, 1549; reopened at Trent on May 1, 1551 by Pope Julius III; broken up by the sudden victory of Elector Maurice of Saxony over the Emperor Charles V and his march into Tyrol April 28, 1552; and recalled by Pope Pius IV for the last time January 18, 1562 when it continued to its final adjournment on December 4, 1563. It closed with "Anathema to all heretics, anathema, anathema."

The history of the council is divided into three distinct periods; from 1545 to 1549, from 1551 to 1552, and from 1562 to 1563. The last was the most important. The number of attending members in the three periods varied considerably. It increased toward the close, but never reached the number of the first ecumenical council at Nicaea, (which had 318 members), nor of the first of the Vatican (which numbered 744).

The decrees were signed by 255 members, including four papal legates, two cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty-five archbishops, 168 bishops, two-thirds of them being Italians. Lists of the signers are added to the best editions of the decrees. The Italian and Spanish prelates were vastly preponderant in power and numbers. At the passage of the most important decrees not more than sixty prelates were present.

There were two objectives of the council:

1. To condemn the principles and doctrines of Protestantism, and to define the doctrines of the Catholic Church on all disputed points.

It is true that the emperor intended it to be a strictly general or truly ecumenical council, at which the Protestants should have a fair hearing. He secured, during the council's second period, 1551-52, an invitation, twice given, to the Protestants to be present, and the council issued a letter of safe conduct (thirteenth session) and offered them the right of discussion, but denied them a vote. Melancthon and Johannes Brenz, with some other German Lutherans, actually started in 1552 on the journey to Trent. Brenz offered a confession, and Melancthon, who got no farther than Nuremberg, took with him the ironic statement known as the *Confessio Saxonica*. But the refusal to give to the Protestants the **right to vote** and the consternation produced by the success of Maurice in his campaign against Charles V. in 1552 effectually put an end to Protestant cooperation.

2. To effect a reformation in discipline or administration.

This object had been one of the causes calling forth the reformatory councils, and had been lightly touched upon by the Fifth Council of the Lateran under Pope Julius II and Pope Leo X. The alleged corruption in the administration of

the Church was one of the secondary causes of the Reformation. Twenty-five public sessions were held, but nearly half of them were spent in solemn formalities. The chief work was done in committees or congregations. The entire management was in the hands of the papal legate. The liberal elements lost out in the debates and voting. The council abolished some of the most notorious abuses, and introduced or recommended disciplinary reforms affecting the sale of indulgences, the morals of convents, the education of the clergy, the non-residence of bishops (also bishops having plurality of benefices, which was fairly common), and the careless fulmination of censures, and forbade dueling.

Although liberal evangelical sentiments were uttered by some of the members in favor of the supreme authority of the Scriptures, and justification by faith, **no concession whatever was made to Protestantism.**

- The church's interpretation of the Bible was final. Any Christian who substituted his or her own interpretation was a heretic.
- The relationship of faith and works in salvation was defined, following controversy over Martin Luther's doctrine of "justification by faith alone".
- The Bible and Church Tradition (not mere customs but the ancient Tradition that made up part of the Catholic faith) were equally authoritative.
- Indulgences were valid expressions of faith.

The doctrinal decisions of the council are divided into decrees (*decreta*), which contain the positive statement of the Roman dogmas, and into short canons (*canones*), which condemn the dissenting Protestant views with the concluding "*anathema sit*" ("let him be anathema" which means **that a person be accursed or consigned to damnation**).

The following are excerpts from the canons that were adopted at the Council of Trent (From 1545 to 1563). To view the entire outcome see web site <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html>

The Bull of Indiction in 1545 *The canons and decrees of the sacred and ecumenical Council of Trent,*

BEGUN UNDER THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF, PAUL III
IN 1545
AND CONCLUDING UNDER THE SOVEREIGN
PONTIFF, PIUS IV IN 1563
**THE FOURTH SESSION IN 1546 -- DECREE
CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES**

The sacred and holy, ecumenical, and general Synod of Trent, --lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic Sec presiding therein, --keeping this always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity itself of the Gospel be preserved in the Church; which (Gospel), before promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures,

our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by His Apostles to every creature, as the fountain of all, both saving truth, and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline **are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand; (the Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety, and reverence,** all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament--seeing that one God is the author of both -- as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession.

THE SIXTH SESSION IN 1547 DECREE ON JUSTIFICATION

CANON IX. -If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining the grace of Justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema.

CANON XI. -If any one saith, that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or even that the grace, whereby we are justified, is only the favor of God; let him be anathema.

CANON XII. -If any one saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or, that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema.

CANON XIII. -If any one saith, that it is necessary for every one, for the obtaining the remission of sins, that he believe for certain, and without any wavering arising from his own infirmity and disposition, that his sins are forgiven him; let him be anathema.

CANON XVI. -If any one saith, that he will for certain, of an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance unto the end, -unless he have learned this by special revelation; let him be anathema.

CANON XVII. -If any one saith, that the grace of Justification is only attained to by those who are predestined unto life; but that all others who are called, are called indeed, but receive not grace, as being, by the divine power, predestined unto evil; let him be anathema.

CANON XIX. -If any one saith, that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel; that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor prohibited, but free; or, that the ten commandments nowise appertain to Christians; let him be anathema.

CANON XX. -If any one saith, that the man who is justified and how perfect so ever, is not bound to observe the commandments of God and of the Church, but only to believe; as if indeed the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the commandments; let him be anathema.

THE FOURTEENTH SESSION IN 1551 ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENTS OF PENANCE

CHAPTER I.

On the necessity, and on the institution of the Sacrament of Penance.

If such, in all the regenerate, were their gratitude towards God, as that they constantly preserved the justice received in baptism by His bounty and grace; there would not have been need for another sacrament, besides that of baptism itself, to be instituted for the remission of sins. But because God, rich in mercy, knows our frame, He hath bestowed a remedy of life even on those who may, after baptism, have delivered themselves up to the servitude of sin and the power of the devil, --the sacrament to wit of Penance, by which the benefit of the death of Christ is applied to those who have fallen after baptism.

Penitence was in deed at all times necessary, in order to attain to grace and justice, for all men who had defiled themselves by any mortal sin, even for those who begged to be washed by the sacrament of Baptism; that so, their perverseness renounced and amended, they might, with a hatred of sin and a godly sorrow of mind, detest so great an offence of God. Wherefore the prophet says; be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin. The Lord also said; Except you do penance, you shall also likewise perish; and Peter, the prince of the apostles, recommending penitence to sinners who were about to be initiated by baptism, said; Do penance, and be baptized every one you. Nevertheless, neither before the coming of Christ was penitence a sacrament, nor is it such, since His coming, to any previously to baptism. But the Lord then principally instituted the sacrament of penance, when, being raised from the dead, He breathed upon His disciples, saying Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. By which action so signal, and words so clear, the consent of all the Fathers has ever understood, that the power of forgiving and retaining sins was communicated to the apostles and their lawful successors, for the reconciling of the faithful who have fallen after baptism. And the Catholic Church with great reason repudiated and condemned as heretics, the Novatians, who of old obstinately denied that power of forgiving. Wherefore, this holy Synod, approving of and receiving as most true this meaning of those words of our

Lord, condemns the fanciful interpretations of those who, in opposition to the institution of this sacrament, falsely wrest those words to the power of preaching the word of God, and of announcing the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER II.

On the difference between the Sacrament of Penance and that of Baptism

For the rest, this sacrament is clearly seen to be different from baptism in many respects: for besides that it is very widely different indeed in matter and form, which constitute the essence of a sacrament, it is beyond doubt certain that the minister of baptism need not be a judge, seeing that the Church exercises judgment on no one who has not entered therein through the gate of baptism. For, what have I, saith the apostle, to do to judge them that are without? It is otherwise with those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ our Lord has once, by the laver of baptism, made the members of His own body; for such, if they should afterwards have defiled themselves by any crime, He would no longer have them cleansed by a repetition of baptism--that being nowise lawful in the Catholic Church--but be placed as criminals before this tribunal; that, by the sentence of the priests, they might be freed, not once, but as often as, being penitent, they should, from their sins committed, flee thereunto. Furthermore, one is the fruit of baptism, and another that of penance. **For, by baptism putting on Christ, we are made therein entirely a new creature, obtaining a full and entire remission of all sins: unto which newness and entireness, however, we are no ways able to arrive by the sacrament of Penance, without many tears and great labors on our parts, the divine justice demanding this; so that penance has justly been called by holy Fathers a laborious kind of baptism. And this sacrament of Penance is, for those who have fallen after baptism, necessary unto salvation; as baptism itself is for those who have not as yet been regenerated.**

CANON I. --If any one saith, that in the Catholic Church Penance is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by Christ our Lord **for reconciling the faithful unto God, as often as they fall into sin after baptism; let him be anathema.**

CANON II. --If any one, confounding the sacraments, saith that baptism is itself the sacrament of Penance, as though these two Sacraments were not distinct, and that therefore **Penance is not rightly called a second plank (of justification) after shipwreck; let him be anathema.**

THE SEVENTH SESSION IN 1547: ON THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

CANON I. -If any one saith, that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ, our Lord; or, that they are more, or less, than seven, to wit, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; or even that any one of

these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament; let him be anathema.

CANON II. -If any one saith, that these said sacraments of the New Law do not differ from the sacraments of the Old Law, save that the ceremonies are different, and different the outward rites; **let him be anathema.**

CANON III. -If any one saith, that these seven sacraments are in such wise equal to each other, as that one is not in any way more worthy than another; **let him be anathema.**

CANON IV. -If any one saith, that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous; and that, without them, or without the desire thereof, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the grace of justification; -though all (the sacraments) are not indeed necessary for every individual; let him be anathema.

CANON V. -If any one saith, that these sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VI. -If any one saith, that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify; or, that they do not confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto; as though they were merely outward signs of grace or justice received through faith, and certain marks of the Christian profession, whereby believers are distinguished amongst men from unbelievers; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VII. -If any one saith, that grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is not given through the said sacraments, always, and to all men, even though they receive them rightly, but (only) sometimes, and to some persons; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VIII. -If any one saith, that by the said sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace; let him be anathema.

CANON IX. -If any one saith, that, in the three sacraments, Baptism, to wit, Confirmation, and Order, there is not imprinted in the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible Sign, on account of which they cannot be repeated; **let him be anathema.**

CANON X. -If any one saith, that all Christians have power to administer the word, and all the sacraments; **let him be anathema.**

CANON XI. -If any one saith, that, in ministers, when they effect, and confer the sacraments, there is not required the

intention at least of doing what the Church does; **let him be anathema.**

CANON XII. -If any one saith, that a minister, being in mortal sin, -if so be that he observe all the essentials which belong to the effecting, or conferring of, the sacrament, -neither effects, nor confers the sacrament; **let him be anathema.**

CANON XIII. -If any one saith, that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, wont to be used in the solemn administration of the sacraments, may be contemned, or without sin be omitted at pleasure by the ministers, or be changed, by every pastor of the churches, into other new ones; **let him be anathema.**

THE 13TH SESSION IN 1551 ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

CANON I. -If any one denieth, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but saith that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or in virtue; let him be anathema.

CANON II. -If any one saith, that, in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denieth that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood-the species Only of the bread and wine remaining-which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most aptly calls *Transubstantiation*; let him be anathema.

CANON III. -If any one denieth, that, in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist, the whole Christ is contained under each species, and under every part of each species, when separated, **let him be anathema.**

CANON IV. -If any one saith, that, after the consecration is completed, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the admirable sacrament of the Eucharist, but (are there) only during the use, whilst it is being taken, and not either before or after; and that, in the hosts, or consecrated particles, which are reserved or which remain after communion, the true Body of the Lord remaineth not; **let him be anathema.**

CANON V. -If any one saith, either that the principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the remission of sins, or, that other effects do not result there from; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VI. -If any one saith, that, in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship, even external of latria; and is, consequently, neither to be venerated with a special festive solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne about in processions,

according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of holy church; or, is not to be proposed publicly to the people to be adored, and that the adorers thereof are idolaters; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VII. -If any one saith, that it is not lawful for the sacred Eucharist to be reserved in the sacarium, but that, immediately after consecration, it must necessarily be distributed amongst those present; or, that it is not lawful that it be carried with honor to the sick; **let him be anathema.**

CANON VIII. -If any one saith, that Christ, given in the Eucharist, is eaten spiritually only, and not also sacramentally and really; let him be anathema.

CANON IX. -If any one denieth, that all and each of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they have attained to years of discretion, to communicate every year, at least at Easter, in accordance with the precept of holy Mother Church; **let him be anathema.**

CANON X. -If any one saith, that it is not lawful for the celebrating priest to communicate himself; **let him be anathema.**

CANON XI. -If any one saith, that faith alone is a sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist; let him be anathema. And for fear lest so great a sacrament may be received unworthily, and so unto death and condemnation, this holy Synod ordains and declares, that sacramental confession, when a confessor may be had, is of necessity to be made beforehand, by those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, how contrite even so ever they may think themselves. But if any one shall presume to teach, preach, or obstinately to assert, or even in public disputation to defend the contrary, **he shall be thereupon excommunicated.**

THE 22ND SESSION IN 1562 ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

CHAPTER II.

That the Sacrifice of the Mass is propitiatory both for the living and the dead.

And forasmuch as, in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass, **that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner**, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory and that by means thereof this is effected, that we obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid, if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence. For the Lord, appeased by the oblation thereof, and granting the grace and gift of penitence, forgives even heinous crimes and sins.

For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on

the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The fruits indeed of which oblation, of that bloody one to wit, are received most plentifully through this unbloody one; so far is this (latter) from derogating in any way from that (former oblation). Wherefore, not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those who are departed in Christ, and who are not as yet fully purified, is it rightly offered, agreeably to a tradition of the apostles.

CANON I. --If any one saith, that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat; **let him be anathema.**

CANON II. --If any one saith, that by those words, Do this for the commemoration of me (Luke xxii. 19), Christ did not institute the apostles priests; or, did not ordain that they, and other priests should offer His own body and blood; **let him be anathema.**

CANON III. --If any one saith, that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or, that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or, that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities; **let him be anathema.**

CANON IV. --If any one saith, that, by the sacrifice of the mass, a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the cross; or, that it is thereby derogated from; **let him be anathema.**

CANON V. --If any one saith, that it is an imposture to celebrate masses in honor of the saints, and for obtaining their intercession with God, as the Church intends; **let him be anathema.**

NOTE: "Let him be anathema" means that a person be accused or consigned to damnation.

12. THE REFORMATION CONTINUES:

France and the Huguenots: The Huguenots (origin of the name is not known) were French Protestants who were members of the Reformed Church established in France by John Calvin in about 1555, and who, due to religious persecution, were forced to flee France to other countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Protestant Reformation began by Martin Luther in Germany about 1517, spread rapidly in France, especially among those having grievances against the established order of government.

As Protestantism grew and developed in France it generally abandoned the Lutheran form, and took the shape of Calvinism. The new "Reformed religion"

practiced by many members of the French nobility and social middle-class, based on a belief in salvation through individual faith without the need for the intercession of a church hierarchy and on the belief in an individual's right to interpret scriptures for themselves, placed these French Protestants in direct theological conflict with both the Catholic Church and the King of France in the theocratic system which prevailed at that time.

Followers of this new Protestantism were soon accused of heresy against the Catholic government and the established religion of France, and a **General Edict urging extermination of these heretics** (Huguenots) was issued in 1536. Nevertheless, Protestantism continued to spread and grow, and about 1555 the first Huguenot church was founded in a home in Paris based upon the teachings of John Calvin. The number and influence of the French Reformers (Huguenots) continued to increase after this event, leading to an escalation in hostility and conflict between the Catholic Church/State and the Huguenots.

Finally, in 1562, some 1,200 Huguenots were slain at Vassy, France, thus igniting the French Wars of Religion that would devastate France for the next thirty-five years.

The Reformation in Switzerland Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin:

Ulrich Zwingli: 1484-1531 Swiss Reformer. Ulrich Zwingli was educated at schools in Basel and Burn, Switzerland, and Vienna, Austria. He became a parish priest in 1506 and, on becoming pastor of the great Minster Church in Zurich; he began to preach against the unscriptural practices in the Catholic Church. He made an open break with Rome in 1522 after studying the works of Martin Luther. The break was completed in 1525 when he replaced the Roman Mass with the first reformed communion service at his church.

Zwingli differed with Luther in his views on communion, in that he maintained that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic memorial only, and it is found in I Corinthians, chapters 7 through 9. He participated in armed warfare against the Catholic states around him, and died in battle, sword in hand, defending the Bible over tradition.

John Calvin: 1509-1564 Reformer. We now approach the life and work of John Calvin. He was the chief founder and consolidator of the Reformed Church of France and French Switzerland, and left the impress of his mind upon all other Reformed Churches in Europe and America. Revolution was followed by reconstruction and consolidation. For this task Calvin was providentially foreordained and equipped by genius, education, and circumstances.

John Calvin, a French scholar who became a leading preacher and dominant force in the Reformation of the 16th Century,

studied at the University of Paris and at the University of Orleans. He became dissatisfied with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and allied himself with the cause of the Protestant Reformation in 1532. When the king of France decided to settle the religious question in his country in favor of the Catholics, Calvin fled to Geneva, Switzerland, where his writings and lectures made Geneva the Rome of Protestantism. His *Institutes* of the Christian religion became the basis for the Presbyterian way of thought and church life. Calvinism is the main doctrine of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.

Luther's public career as a reformer embraced twenty-nine years, from 1517 to 1546; that of Zwingli, only twelve years, from 1519 to 1531; that of Calvin, twenty-eight years, from 1536 to 1564. The first reached an age of sixty-two: the second, of forty-seven; the third, of fifty-four. Calvin was twenty-five years younger than Luther and Zwingli, and had the great advantage of building on their foundation. He had less genius, but more talent. He was inferior to them as a man of action, but superior as a thinker and organizer. They cut the stones in the quarries; he polished them in the workshop. They produced the new ideas; he constructed them into a system. His was the work of Apollos rather than of Paul: to water rather than to plant, God giving the increase.

Calvin's character is less attractive, and his life less dramatic than **Luther's** or **Zwingli's**, but he left his Church in a much better condition. He lacked the genial element of humor and pleasantry; he was a Christian stoic: stern, severe, unbending, yet with fires of passion and affection glowing beneath the marble surface. His name will never rouse popular enthusiasm, as Luther's and Zwingli's did at the celebration of the fourth centennial of their birth; no statues of marble or bronze have been erected to his memory; even the spot of his grave in the cemetery at Geneva is unknown. But he surpassed them in consistency and self-discipline, and by his exegetical, doctrinal, and polemical writings; he has exerted and still exerts more influence than any other Reformer upon the Protestant Churches of the Latin and Anglo-Saxon races.

For a hundred years, he made little Geneva the Protestant Rome and the best-disciplined Church in Christendom. History furnishes no more striking example of a man of so little personal popularity, and yet such great influence upon the people; of such natural timidity and bashfulness combined with such strength of intellect and character, and such control over his and future generations. He was by nature and taste a retiring scholar, but Providence made him an organizer and ruler of churches.

The three leading Reformers were of different nationality and education. **Luther**, the son of a German peasant, was trained in the school of monasticism and mysticism, under the influence of Augustine, Tauler, and Staupitz, and retained strong churchly convictions and prejudices. **Zwingli**, the son of a Swiss country magistrate, a republican patriot, an admiring student of the ancient classics and of Erasmus, passed through the door of the Renaissance

to the Reformation, and broke more completely away from medievalism. **Calvin**, a native Frenchman, a patrician by education and taste, studied law as well as theology, and by his legal and judicial mind was admirably qualified to build up a new Christian commonwealth.

Widely as these Reformers differed in talent, temperament, and sundry points of doctrine and discipline, they were great and good men, equally honest and earnest, unselfish and unworldly, brave and fearless, ready at any moment to go to the stake for their conviction. **They labored for the same end: the renovation of the Catholic Church by leading it back to the pure and perennial fountain of the perfect teaching and example of Christ.**

Calvin was, first of all, a theologian. He easily takes the lead among the systematic expounders of the Reformed system of Christian doctrine. He is scarcely inferior to Augustine among the fathers, or Thomas Aquinas among the schoolmen, and more methodical and symmetrical than either. Melancthon, himself the prince of Lutheran divines and "the Preceptor of Germany," called him emphatically "the Theologian."

Calvin's theology is based upon a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He was the ablest exegete among the Reformers, and his commentaries rank among the very best of ancient and modern times. His theology, therefore, is biblical rather than scholastic, and has all the freshness of enthusiastic devotion to the truths of God's Word. At the same time he was a consummate logician and dialectician. He had a rare power of clear, strong, convincing statement. He built up a body of doctrines which is called after him, and which obtained symbolical authority through some of the leading Reformed Confessions of Faith.

Calvinism is more logical than Lutheranism and Arminianism. The Calvinistic system is identified with the Augustinian system, and shares its merit as a profound exposition of the Pauline doctrines of sin and grace.

Calvin was a legislator and disciplinarian. He consolidated the dissipating forces of Protestantism, and fortified it against the powerful organization of Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and the destructive tendencies of sectarianism and infidelity on the other. Calvin would, like his modern adherents in French Switzerland, Scotland, and America, undoubtedly be a champion of the freedom and independence of the Church and its separation from the State.

Calvin was intolerant of any dissent, either papal or heretical, and his early followers in Europe and America abhorred religious toleration (in the sense of indifference) as a pestiferous error; nevertheless, in their conflict with reactionary Romanism and political despotism, they became the chief promoters of civil and religious liberty based upon respect for God's law and authority. The solution of the apparent inconsistency lies in the fact that Calvinists fear God and nothing else. In their eyes, God alone is great, man is but

a shadow. The fear of God makes them fearless of earthly despots. It humbles man before God. The fear of God is the basis of moral self-government, and self-government is the basis of true freedom.

Calvin is still a living force in theology as much as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. No dogmatician can ignore his *Institutes* any more than an exegete can ignore his *Commentaries*. Calvinism is embedded in several confessions of the Reformed Church, and dominates, with more or less rigor, the spirit of a large section of Protestant Christendom, especially in Great Britain and North America. Calvinism is not the name of a Church, but it is the name of a theological school in the Reformed Churches. Luther is the only one among the Reformers whose name was given to the Church that he founded. The Reformed Churches are independent of personal authority, but all the more bound to the teaching of the Bible.

Calvinism is usually identified with Augustinianism, as to anthropology and soteriology, in opposition to Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism. Augustine and Calvin were intensely religious, controlled by a sense of absolute dependence on God, and wholly absorbed in the contemplation of his majesty and glory. To them God was everything; man a mere shadow. Blessed are the elect upon whom God bestows all his amazing mercy; but woe to the reprobate from whom he withholds it. They lay emphasis on the doctrines of sin and grace, the impotence of man and the omnipotence of God, the sinfulness of sin and the sovereignty of regenerating grace. They achieved the same victory, by the power of divine grace, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Their spiritual experience is reflected in their theology.

Calvin was brought up in the Roman Catholic Church, but fled from its prevailing corruptions to the citadel of the Holy Scripture, and became the most formidable enemy of the papacy.

The difference between Augustine and Calvin may be briefly stated in two sentences that are antagonistic on the surface, though reconcilable at bottom. Augustine says: "*I would not believe the gospel if it were not for the Church.*" Calvin would say, "*I would not believe the Church if it were not for the Gospel.*" The reconciliation must be found in the higher principle: I believe in Christ, and therefore I believe in the gospel and the Church, which jointly bear witness of him.

As to the doctrines of the fall, of total depravity, the slavery of the human will, the sovereignty of saving grace, Augustine and Calvin essentially agree; the former has the merit of priority and originality; the latter is clearer, stronger, more logical and rigorous, and far superior as an exegete. Their views are chiefly derived from Paul's letter to the Romans, and may be summed up in the following propositions: God has from eternity foreordained all things that should come to pass, with a view to the manifestation of His glory; He created man pure and holy, and with freedom of choice; Adam was tried, disobeyed, lost his freedom, and became a

slave of sin; the whole human race fell with him, and is justly condemned in Adam to everlasting death; but God in his sovereign mercy elects a part of this mass of corruption to everlasting life, without any regard to moral merit, converts the elect by irresistible grace, justifies, sanctifies, and perfects them, and thus displays in them the riches of His grace; while in His inscrutable, yet just and adorable counsel He leaves the rest of mankind in their inherited state of condemnation, and reveals in the everlasting punishment of the wicked the glory of his justice.

The Calvinistic system was adopted by a large portion of the Reformed Church, and has still able and earnest advocates. Calvin himself is now better understood, and more highly respected by scholars (French and German) than ever before; but the Arminians, the Quakers, and the Methodists have effectively opposed his predestination system.

Calvinism has the advantage of logical compactness, consistency, and completeness. Admitting its premises, it is difficult to escape its conclusions. A system can only be overthrown by a system. It requires a theological genius of the order of Augustine and Calvin, who shall rise above the antagonism of divine sovereignty and human freedom, and shall lead us to a system built upon the rock of the historic Christ, and inspired from beginning to end with the love of God to all mankind.

Calvinism, which embraces *Westminster Confession of Faith*, was imported and naturalized in America by the Puritans, since 1620, and dominated the theology and church life of New England during the colonial period. It found its strongest advocate in Jonathan Edwards—the great theological metaphysician and revival preacher—who may be called the American Calvin.

Its adherents include theologians such as John Knox, Francis Schaeffer, R. C. Sproul, Cornelius Van Til, Roger Nicole, James Boice, John Gerstner, and Alistair Begg.

13. 1646 The Westminster Confession of Faith.

During the English Civil War (1642-1649), the English parliament raised armies in an alliance with Scotland, against the forces of the king, Charles I of England. The purpose of the Westminster Assembly, in which 121 Puritan clergymen participated, was to provide official documents for the reformation of the Church of England.

The Church of Scotland had recently overthrown its bishops and adopted presbyterianism in the so-called Bishops' Wars. For this reason, as a condition for entering into the alliance with England, the Scottish Parliament formed the Solemn League and Covenant with the English Parliament, which

meant that the Church of England would abandon episcopalianism and consistently adhere to Calvinistic standards of doctrine.

The Scottish Commissioners who were present at the Assembly were satisfied with the Confession of Faith, and in 1647, the document was sent to the English parliament to be ratified, and submitted to the General Assembly of the Scottish Kirk. The Church of Scotland adopted the document, without amendment, in 1647. In England, the House of Commons returned the document to the Assembly with the requirement to compile a list of proof texts from Scripture. After vigorous debate, the Confession was then in part adopted as the Articles of Christian Religion in 1648, by act of the English parliament, omitting some sections and chapters. The next year, the Scottish parliament ratified the Confession without amendment.

In 1660, the restoration of the British monarchy and of the Anglican episcopacy resulted in the nullification of these acts of the two parliaments. However, when William III of England (William of Orange) replaced the Roman Catholic King James II of England, he gave royal sanction to Scottish parliament's ratification of the Confession, again without change, in 1690.

The confession is a systematic exposition of Reformed orthodoxy influenced by Puritanism and Covenant Theology. Neo-orthodox (Barthian) scholars routinely refer to it as *scholastic Calvinism*.

Its more controversial features include: Calvinistic predestination; the Covenant of Works with Adam; the Puritan doctrine that assurance of salvation is separable from saving faith, the Regulative principle of worship; and a Sabbatarian view of Sunday. Even more controversial, and reflective of the times in which it was written, it associates the Pope with the *Antichrist*, and views the Roman Catholic Mass as a form of idolatry.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is a Reformed confession of faith in the Calvinist theological tradition. Although drawn up by the **1646** Westminster Assembly, largely of the Church of England, it became the 'subordinate standard' of doctrine in the Church of Scotland and has been influential within Presbyterian churches worldwide.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH (1646)

Chapter I. Of the holy Scripture
Chapter II. Of God, and of the Holy Trinity
Chapter III. Of God's Eternal Decree
Chapter IV. Of Creation
Chapter V. Of Providence
Chapter VI. Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof
Chapter VII. Of God's Covenant with Man

Chapter VIII. Of Christ the Mediator
Chapter IX. Of Free Will
Chapter X. Of Effectual Calling
Chapter XI. Of Justification
Chapter XII. Of Adoption
Chapter XIII. Of Sanctification
Chapter XIV. Of Saving Faith
Chapter XV. Of Repentance Unto Life
Chapter XVI. Of Good Works
Chapter XVII. Of The Perseverance of the Saints
Chapter XVIII. Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation
Chapter XIX. Of the Law of God
Chapter XX. Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience
Chapter XXI. Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath-day
Chapter XXII. Of Lawful Oaths and Vows
Chapter XXIII. Of the Civil Magistrate
Chapter XXIV. Of Marriage and Divorce
Chapter XXV. Of the Church
Chapter XXVI. Of the Communion of the Saints
Chapter XXVII. Of the Sacraments
Chapter XXVIII. Of Baptism
Chapter XXIX. Of the Lord's Supper
Chapter XXX. Of Church Censures
Chapter XXXI. Of Synods and Councils
Chapter XXXII. Of the State of Man After Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead
Chapter XXXIII. Of the Last Judgment

See <http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html> for its entire content.

NOTE: Luther's protests against heresies, corruption and pagan practices that had infiltrated the Church, and his attempt to return the Church to its original Apostolic roots, as described in the Gospels and (as we have studied) in Acts, brought about the Reformation and divided Christianity into the Roman Catholic Church and Protestantism.

QUESTION: What was the most unfortunate outcome of the Reformation?

ANSWER: It was that the Reformation did not produce one monolithic universal church, instead a massive proliferation of Protestant churches.

14. DIVISIONS AMONG PROTESTANTISM:

The two leading divisions of the Protestant church are the **Reformed** church (Calvin and Knox, etc.) and the **Lutheran** Church. The theological belief that divided the two was not their respective positions on predestination or the inerrancy of Scripture—no—they both were in perfect agreement in those two areas of theology. Where they held significant divergence of views is with the Lord's Supper—the

Eucharist—the nature of the presence of Jesus Christ in communion.

VIEWS OF COMMUNION

There are significant divergent views of the Lord's Supper—the Eucharist—the nature of the presence of Jesus Christ in communion. There have been centuries of debate over the Church's understanding of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The disagreement focuses on **four** distinct views:

The 1st, the view of *transubstantiation* articulated by the Roman Catholic communion.

The 2nd, the doctrine of *consubstantiation* articulated by the Lutheran community.

The 3rd, the Reformed and Anglican affirmation of the *real presence of Christ* in the Lord's Supper through His divine nature, but not substantively.

The 4th, the *symbolic* memorial view espoused by Zwingli and by the majority of those in the Baptist and many evangelical communities.

Luther, Zwingli and Calvin were united in their rejection of Rome's doctrine of *transubstantiation* (the actual presence of the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ and no longer a presence of bread and wine) defined strongly in Trent's 13th Session in 1551.

Luther's view was *consubstantiation* whereby during the communion the fundamental "*substance*" of the body and blood of Christ are present *alongside* the substance of the bread and wine, that remain.

Zwingli's view was a *symbolic memorial* in which the believer pledges that he has been reconciled to God through Christ's shed blood.

Calvin's view was of a *mystical union with Christ*—that Christ is truly present (but not *bodily* as with *transubstantiation* and *consubstantiation*) but by the power of the Holy Spirit, the recipient being nourished by the body and blood of Jesus.

Transubstantiation: The process of *transubstantiation* is what occurs during the consecration at Mass. This process is defined by the word "*transubstantiation*" coined in the 13th century at the Fourth Lateran Council. The process itself is the transformation which the bread and the wine undergo to become the Divinity of Christ. It is a reenactment of Calvary. It is important to note that the process of *transubstantiation* is one of **total transformation**. The Catholic Church accordingly believes that through *transubstantiation* Christ is really, truly and substantially present and the bread and wine cease to be present even though what remains *appears* to be bread and wine. (Note: Pope Paul VI in 1965, in his *Mysterium Fide*, insisted that not only is the Roman Church Page 29 of 56 This document has been developed by Ken Willig from numerous sources described on page 58

committed to the substance of the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, but it is committed to the formula of it as well.)

The most serious problem (and there are numerous) with this view by the Roman Catholic Church is that at the Council of Trent, 13th session, in 1551, a doctrine was established, and remains in effect to this day, that states that if a Catholic does not affirm and believe that doctrine in its entirety, he or she is to be eternally condemned. Clearly, no one's salvation depends upon their view of Communion.

Consubstantiation is a belief, wherein Christ is substantively present with the substantive presence of bread and wine. In *consubstantiation*, the bread and wine remain bread and wine and are only "spiritually" transformed. Rather than the bread and wine becoming Jesus, Jesus is said to be "with, in and under" or alongside the bread and wine.

The Reformed and Anglican View holds that Christ is truly present through His divine nature, but not substantively. That the Lord's Supper was given to seal the promise for those who partake of the bread and wine in faith to truly partake of the body and blood of Christ in a mystical union.

Symbolic Memorial: "This *signifies* My body." (View held by the majority of those in the Baptist and many evangelical communities.) A symbolic memorial in which the believer pledges that he is a Christian and proclaims that he has been reconciled to God through Christ's shed blood.

In the New Testament, Communion is often referred to as the "*breaking of bread*."

AC 2:46 *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,*

AC 20:7 *On the first day of the week we came together to break bread.*

AC 20:11 *Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate.*

AC 27: 35 *After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat.*

We are not sure what the Apostles' view was of Communion. And whatever view you choose for yourself will not effect your salvation. But, one thing we know for sure about Communion is that those who receive it must do so with reverence and awe.

The Apostle Paul emphasized that the receipt of Communion must be done in a worthy manner. 1 CO 11:27-29 *Therefore,*

whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

NOTE: This is a key doctrine that will forever split the Church when it comes to the (a) Roman Catholic (b) the Lutheran (Protestant), and (c) the Reformed (Protestant) and (d) the Baptist and Evangelical (Protestant), views of Communion.

Consider these comments about the Reformation By R. C. Sproul

Frequently the Reformation is described as a movement that revolved around two pivotal issues. The so-called “material” cause was the debate over sola fide (“justification by faith alone”). The “formal” cause was the issue of sola Scriptura, that the Bible and the Bible alone has the authority to bind the conscience of the believer. Church tradition was regarded with respect by the Reformers but not as a normative source of revelation. The “protest” of Protestantism went far beyond the issue of justification by faith alone, challenging many dogmas that emerged in Rome, especially during the Middle Ages.

In a short time, the Reformation swept through Germany but did not stop there. Aided by the translation of the Bible in other nations, the reform spread to the **Huguenots** in France, to Scotland, England, Switzerland, Hungary, and Holland. **Ulrich Zwingli** led the Reformation movement in Switzerland, **John Knox** in Scotland, and **John Calvin** among the French Protestants.

In 1534 Calvin delivered a speech calling the church to return to the pure Gospel of the New Testament. His speech was burned, and Calvin fled Paris to Geneva. Disguised as a vinedresser, he escaped the city in a basket. During the next year, some two-dozen Protestants were burned alive in France. This provoked Calvin to write his famous *Institutes* of the Christian Religion, which was addressed to the King of France. His thought contained in the *Institutes* developed into the dominant theology for the international expansion of the Reformation.

The first edition of the *Institutes* was completed in 1536, the same year Calvin was persuaded by Farel to come to Switzerland to build Geneva into a model city of Reformation. In 1538 Farel and Calvin were forced to leave Geneva. He lived and ministered in Strasbourg for three years until he was recalled to Geneva in 1541.

Calvin’s theology stressed the sovereignty of God in all of life. His chief passion was the reform of worship to a level of purity that would give no hint to or support of the human penchant for idolatry. Geneva attracted leaders from all over Europe who came there to observe the model and be instructed by Calvin himself.

During this period, turbulence spread to England when King Henry VIII resisted the authority of Rome. In 1534 Henry became the Supreme Head of the Anglican Church.

He undertook the persecution of evangelicals, which escalated under “Bloody Mary,” causing many to flee to Geneva for refuge.

The persecutions were suspended under “Good Queen Bess,” Elizabeth I, whose stance provoked a papal bull against her in 1570. The Reformation spread rapidly to Scotland, largely under the leadership of **John Knox**, who served 19 months as a galley slave before he went to England and then to Geneva. In 1560 the Scottish Parliament rejected papal authority. In 1561 the Scottish Reformed “Kirk” was reorganized.

In the early 17th century, the Reformation spread to the new world with the arrival of the Pilgrims and colonies of Puritans who brought Reformed theology and the Geneva Bible with them.

Reformation theology dominated Protestant evangelicalism for decades but became diluted later under influences of **Pietism and Finneyism**.

By the end of the 20th century, Reformation theology declined dramatically in the Western world, being assaulted by 19th-century liberal theology on the one hand, and the influence of Arminian theology on the other. This was especially true in America.

In the present scene of American evangelicalism, Reformation theology is a minority report. The dominant strands of theology that reign in current evangelical circles are **dispensationalism** and **neo-Pentecostal charismatic** thought. The phenomenal spread and growth of **dispensational theology** in America is a fascinating chapter in church history. Having its roots in British Plymouth Brethren suppositions, dispensationalism spread rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fueled by the Bible School movement, prophecy conferences, and the preaching of men like D. L. Moody, dispensationalism gathered enormous popular support.

The American version of dispensationalism got a great boost by the publication of the Scofield Reference Bible. The Scofield Bible, with its study notes, served as a popular tool for the spread of dispensational theology. Men who had their roots predominately in Reformation thought forged this theology. This movement modified the themes of classical Reformed theology significantly.

The New Geneva Study Bible is the first distinctively Reformed study Bible in English to appear since the Geneva Bible in the 16th century. It seeks to recover the theology of the Reformation and provide a guide for the laity to understand its historically, doctrinally, and biblically rich system. Its importance to American Christianity is enormous. It is my hope that it will help guide English-speaking evangelicals back to their Reformation roots. More importantly, it is designed to call evangelicals back to the Bible itself and to their historic confessions of biblical theology.

In our day we have seen a revival of interest in the Bible and a renewed commitment to the authority and trustworthiness of Scripture. But the Reformation was more than a doctrine about the Bible. It was sparked by a deep and serious study of the Bible. It is not enough to extol the virtue of Scripture — we must hear the teaching of Scripture afresh. It is only by a serious and earnest recovery of biblical truth that we will be able to avoid falling into a new cesspool of heresy.

Pietism: The seventeenth-century reaction within Lutheranism against what it considered the cold, abstract, argumentative nature of Lutheran orthodoxy. Pietism stressed "the religion of the heart," an experiential, warm, affectional, and often sentimental, view of the Faith. Pietism later spread to the Reformed churches and it was a hallmark of **Wesleyanism**.

Finneyism: Charles G. Finney has been highly esteemed and accredited with far reaching influence in the history of American evangelicalism. Calvinists see him as the single greatest contributor to the corruption of evangelism. His noted "new measures" in his revivals, calling convicted sinners forward to occupy the front row of "anxious seats" in his meetings, initiated a process of change in the way sinners were dealt with culminating in today's "invitation system" as **exemplified in Billy Graham crusades**.

Calvinists see this as a cheapening of the offer of salvation (which it may very well be), a watering down of the demands of the gospel and an equating of the new birth by the Spirit of God with the merely physical act of going forward in a meeting. Millions are led to believe they are Christians by their coming forward or raising their hand instead of being truly repentant and believing and coming to a genuine experience of salvation.

Finney is against the primary doctrines of the total depravity of man (including the inability of man to repent and respond to the gospel without divine assistance), the predestination of every individual in eternity past to election to salvation, a limited atonement (Christ died only for the elect), irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints (a true believer can never ultimately be lost).

The only obedience God requires, in Finney's view, is the obedience of the one to be justified. Such a person cannot get it from anyone else, including the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very different view from that of the Reformation, which sees the model as God the judge acquitting and eternally accepting the sinner. This justification is based both on the gift of righteousness from Christ, as well as the full removal of the sinner's guilt because it was atoned for on the cross. The condition laid upon the sinner is faith, which is a non-meritorious resting upon the work of another and the receiving of the gospel promise. These are two extremely different views of salvation, the Reformation holding to Christ Alone (Solus Christus), and Finney's doctrine, a view of "sinner alone".

DISPENSATIONALIST THEOLOGY

Dispensationalism seeks to address what many see as opposing theologies between the Old Testament and New Testament. Its name comes from the fact that it sees biblical history as best understood in light of a series of dispensations in the Bible.

The seven dispensations:

- Of innocence (Gen 1:1–3:7), prior to Adam's fall,
- Of conscience (Gen 3:8–8:22), Adam to Noah,
- Of government (Gen 9:1–11:32), Noah to Abraham,
- Of patriarchal rule (Gen 12:1–Exod 19:25), Abraham to Moses,
- Of the Mosaic Law (Exod 20:1–Acts 2:4), Moses to Christ,
- Of grace (Acts 2:4–Rev 20:3 – except for Hyperdispensationalists), the current church age, and
- Of a literal, earthly 1,000-year Millennial Kingdom that has yet to come. (Rev 20:4–20:6).

Each dispensation is said to represent a different way in which God deals with man, often a different test for man. *"These periods are marked off in Scripture by some change in God's method of dealing with mankind, in respect to two questions: of sin, and of man's responsibility,"* explained C. I. Scofield. *"Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment—marking his utter failure in every dispensation."*

15. ARMINIANISM: Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609, Dutch Reformed theologian) studied at Leiden, Marburg, Geneva, and Basel and in 1588 became a pastor at Amsterdam. He undertook to defend the Calvinist doctrine of predestination against the attacks of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert, but as a result of the controversy he changed his own views of the doctrine. He was professor of theology at the Univ. of Leiden and he sought to win the Dutch Reformed Church to his views.

His teaching, known as **Arminianism**, was not yet fully developed, but he asserted the compatibility of divine sovereignty with human freedom, denied John Calvin's doctrine of irresistible grace, and thus modified the strict conception of predestination. In this respect his teaching resembled that of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent. Arminianism became a term of abuse among 17th-century Puritans. His ideas were formulated after his death into a definite system by his disciple, Simon Episcopius, who drew up the "Remonstrance."

In 1610, just one year after the death of Arminius, his followers drew up *Five Articles of Faith* based on his teachings. The "Arminians" presented these five doctrines to the State of Holland in the form a "Remonstrance" (i.e. protest). The Armenian party insisted that that the Beligic

Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism be changed to conform to the doctrinal views contained in the "Remonstrance." It was submitted by the Arminians to the Church of Holland in 1610 for adoption.

Subsequently, a national Synod was called to meet in Dort in 1618 for the purpose of examining the views of Arminius in the light of Scripture. The States-General of Holland convened the Great Synod on November 13, 1618. There were 154 sessions held during the seven months that the Synod met to consider these matters. It ended on May 9, 1619 with the Synod unanimously rejecting the teachings of Arminius, as they did not reconcile with the teaching of the Word of God, which they had definitely declared could alone be accepted by them as the rule of faith.

No doubt it will seem strange to many in our day that the Synod of Dort rejected as heretical the five doctrines advanced by the Arminians, for these doctrines have gained wide acceptance in the modern church. In fact, they are seldom questioned in our generation. But the vast majority of the Protestant theologians of that day took a much different view of the matter.

The *Five Articles of Faith* of Arminianism were rejected by reformed theologians with the so-called "Five Points of Calvinism," which are a summation of the judgments (or canons) rendered by the Synod of Dort and which were published as a point-by-point response to the five points of the Arminian Remonstrance.

John Calvin himself, who died in 1564, was a French Protestant theologian during the Protestant Reformation (after Luther) and was a central developer of the system of Christian theology called Reformed theology. He never used such a model as the 5 Points of Calvinism, and never combated Arminianism directly. These 5 points, therefore function only as a summary of the differences between Calvinism and Arminianism but not as a complete summation of Calvin's writings or of the theology of the Reformed churches in general.

But Arminianism was not to be conquered. Its strong emphasis on free-will, salvation for all, and resistible grace, continued to be influential, **finding perhaps its strongest proponent in John Wesley (an 18th century Anglican evangelist and founder of the Wesleyan movement), who wrote:**

There is an undeniable difference between the Calvinists and Arminians. The Calvinists hold that God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, to save such and such persons, and no others; and that Christ died for these, and none else. The Arminians hold, God has decreed, from all eternity, touching all that have the written word, "He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be condemned:" And in order to this, "Christ died for all, all that were dead in

trespasses and sins;" that is, for every child of Adam, since "in Adam all died."

The Calvinists hold that the saving grace of God is absolutely irresistible; that no man is any more able to resist it, than to resist the stroke of lightning. The Arminians hold that although there may be some moments wherein the grace of God acts irresistibly, yet, in general, any man may resist, and that to his eternal ruin, the grace whereby it was the will of God he should have been eternally saved.

The Calvinists hold that a true believer in Christ cannot possibly fall from grace. The Arminians hold, that a true believer may "make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;" that he may fall, not only fully, but finally, so as to perish forever.

ARMINIANISM: Five Articles of Faith

1. FREE WILL OR HUMAN ABILITY

Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but He does so in such a manner as not to interfere with man's freedom. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and perish. The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.

2. CONDITIONAL ELECTION

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon His foreseeing that they would respond to His call. He selected only those whom He knew would of themselves freely believe the Gospel. Election therefore was determined by or conditioned upon what man would do. The faith which God foresaw and upon which He based His choice was not given to the sinner by God (it was not created by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit) but resulted solely from man's will. It was left entirely up to man as to who would believe and therefore as to who would be elected unto salvation. God chose those whom He knew would, of their own free will, choose Christ. Thus the sinner's choice of Christ, not God's choice of the sinner, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

3. UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION OR GENERAL ATONEMENT

Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved but did not actually secure the salvation of anyone. Although Christ died for all men and for every man, only those who believe in Him are saved. His death enabled God

to pardon sinners on the condition that they believe, but it did not actually put away anyone's sins. Christ's redemption becomes effective only if man chooses to accept it.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN BE EFFECTUALLY RESISTED

The Spirit calls inwardly all those who are called outwardly by the gospel invitation; He does all that He can to bring every sinner to salvation. But inasmuch as man is free, he can successfully resist the Spirit's call. The Spirit cannot regenerate the sinner until he believes; faith (which is man's contribution) precedes and makes possible the new birth. Thus, man's free will limits the Spirit in the application of Christ's saving work. The Holy Spirit can only draw to Christ those who allow Him to have His way with them. Until the sinner responds, the Spirit cannot give life. God's grace, therefore, is not invincible; it can be, and often is, resisted and thwarted by man. Men can and do resist God's grace.

5. FALLING FROM GRACE

Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith. (Note: All Arminians have not been agreed on this point; some have held that believers are eternally secure in Christ—that once a sinner is regenerated, he can never be lost.)

ACCORDING TO ARMINIANISM:

Salvation is accomplished through the combined efforts of God (who takes the initiative) and man (who must respond)—man's response being the determining factor. God has provided salvation for everyone, but His provision becomes effective only for those who, of their own free will, "choose" to cooperate with Him and accept His offer of grace. At the crucial point, man's will plays a decisive role; thus man, not God, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.

Prevenient grace: A Christian theological concept embraced primarily by Arminian Christians who are influenced by the theology of John Wesley and who are part of the Methodist movement. *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* offers the following definition of *Prevenient Grace*: We acknowledge God's prevenient grace, the divine love that surrounds all humanity and precedes any and all of our conscious impulses toward God. This grace prompts our first wish to please God, our first glimmer of understanding concerning God's will, and our "first slight transient conviction" of having sinned against God. This grace also awakens in us an earnest longing for deliverance from sin and death and moves us toward repentance and faith.

When Arminians speak of such an "awakening," they are actually specifying the work of the Holy Spirit that arouses ones awareness of our sin, our accountability before God, and our need for forgiveness, salvation, and sanctification.

As the name suggests, *prevenient grace* is grace that "comes before" something. It is normally defined as a work that God does for everybody. He gives all people enough grace to respond to Jesus. That is, it is enough grace to make it possible for people to choose Christ. Those who cooperate with and assent to this grace are "elect." Those who refuse to cooperate with this grace are lost. The problem is that there is no clear and adequate basis in Scripture for this concept of a universal enablement, **it simply is not taught explicitly in the Bible.**

CALVINISM

Before I get in to the five points of Calvinism, I should explain that this is a very controversial subject. Many people have a very difficult time believing in these points, although each one is sufficiently shown as truth in the Bible. I just want to say that for many years I stumbled over the points of Calvinism but through teaching and investigating, I have come to believe them to be true. It is for each one to pray and ask God to guide them in learning the truth.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

1. TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free; it is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not—indeed he cannot—choose good over evil in the spiritual realm. Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ—it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature. Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation—it is God's gift to sinners, not the sinners gift to God.

2. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response or obedience of their part, such as faith, repentance, etc. On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected. These acts are the result, not the cause of God's choice. Election therefore was not determined by or conditioned upon any virtuous quality or act foreseen in man. Those whom God sovereignly elected He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ. Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

3. LIMITED ATONEMENT OR PARTICULAR REDEMPTION OR DEFINITE ATONEMENT.

There is a lot of confusion about this the most controversial of the five points. First of all, it does **not** mean that Christ's perfect life and bloody passion and death was not adequate to

save everyone. There is not a limit placed upon the value or the merit of the atonement of Jesus Christ. The atoning work of Jesus Christ is sufficient for all. Its meritorious value is sufficient to cover the sins of everyone. And certainly, anyone who puts their trust in Jesus Christ will receive the full measure of the benefits of that atonement. The Gospel is offered universally. It is offered to anyone who repents and believes. It is *sufficient* for all but *efficient* for some, namely only those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

What Limited Atonement does is separates it from those who believe in universalism. What this doctrine is concerned about is what was the original purpose, plan or design of God in sending Christ into the world to die on the cross. Was it the Father's intent to send His Son to die on the cross to make salvation possible for everybody? Or did God, from all eternity, have a plan of salvation by which according to the riches of His grace and His eternal election He designed the atonement to ensure the salvation of His people? The answer is that it was limited in its original design. Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them. His death was a substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners. In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith that unites them to Him. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, thereby guaranteeing their salvation.

4. IRRESTIBLE GRACE OR THE EFFICACIOUS CALL OF THE SPIRIT

In addition to the outward general call to salvation that is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The external call (which is made to all without distinction) can be, and often is, rejected; whereas the internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's cooperation for success. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ. God's grace therefore, is invincible; it never fails to result in the salvation of those to whom it is extended.

5. PERSERVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

All who were chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end.

Arminianism by J. I. Paker

Historically, Arminianism has appeared as a reaction against the Calvinism of Beza and the Synod of Dort, affirming, in the words of W. R. Bagnall, "*conditional in opposition to absolute predestination, and general in opposition to particular redemption.*" This verbal antithesis is not in fact as

simple or clear as it looks, for changing the adjective involves redefining the noun.

What Bagnall should have said is that Calvinism affirms a concept of predestination from which *conditionality* is excluded, and a concept of redemption to which *particularity* is essential; and Arminianism denies both.

The difference is this. To Calvinism predestination is essentially God's unconditional decision about the destiny of individuals; to Arminianism it is essentially God's unconditional decision to provide means of grace, decisions about individuals' destiny being secondary, conditional, and consequent upon foresight of how they will use those means of grace. To Calvinism, predestination of individuals means the foreordaining of both their doings (including their response to the gospel) and their consequent destinies.

To Arminianism it means a foreordaining of destinies based on doings foreseen but not foreordained.

Arminianism affirms that God predestined Christ to be man's Savior, and repentance and faith to be the way of salvation, and the gift of universal sufficient inward grace to make saving response to God possible for all men everywhere, but it denies that any individual is predestined to believe. On the Calvinist view, election, which is a predestinating act on God's part, means the efficacious choice of particular sinners to be saved by Jesus Christ through faith, and redemption, the first step in working out God's electing purpose, is an achievement which actually secures certain salvation--calling, pardon, adoption, preservation, final glory for all the elect.

On the Arminian view, however, what the death of Christ secured was a possibility of salvation for sinners generally, a possibility which, so far as God is concerned, might never have been actualized in any single case; and the electing of individuals to salvation is, as we said, simply God noting in advance who will believe and so qualify for glory, as a matter of contingent (not foreordained) fact. Whereas to Calvinism election is God's resolve to save, and the cross Christ's act of saving, for Arminianism salvation rests in the last analysis neither on God's election nor on Christ's cross, but on a man's own cooperation with grace, which is something that God does not himself guarantee.

Is Arminian theology Biblical? Can somebody who holds an Arminian view be a Christian?" John MacArthur's answer:

To put it simply, the debate of Calvinism and Arminianism falls along five simple lines that we all know about called T.U.L.I.P.: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and the Perseverance of the saints--T.U.L.I.P.

John Calvin rightly interpreted the Bible to teach that man is **totally depraved**. What that means, is that, not every human

being is as sinful as he could be or she could be, but that every human being is sinful to the point that they're incapable of altering their condition. That is to say, total depravity means you can't do anything to save yourself. You can't even make a right choice.

You cannot awaken your spiritual deadness. You can't give life where there is death. You can't come to a right conclusion on your own. Total depravity means that everyone is by virtue of their own will and their own power and their own choices, incapable of redemption. That's total depravity.

Arminius would say--Arminian theology, Pelagian theology, as it's also called--would say, "Man is capable." That while man is, in the general sense, a sinner; he has capacities within himself to choose to be saved. That is the debate. I don't think that's biblical. I think we are *dead* in trespasses and sin, and dead people don't make choices. Dead people can't make themselves alive. So, I think there is a clear distinction there.

In the case of **unconditional election**, you have the view in the Scripture that the people who are saved are saved because they were chosen by God apart from any merit of their own, apart from any condition. Whereas, typically, the person who holds Arminian theology would say that we are saved by acts of our own will. We have still the power to believe on our own, and therefore, when we choose to believe, we become elect. It isn't something that God determined in eternity past; it's something that occurs sort of 'de facto' or 'ipso facto,'--"after the fact."

And then you have **limited atonement**; in the typical reformed view, means that the atonement, in its actual work, the actual efficacy of the atonement, was only for the elect. That is, it's limited to those who believe and were chosen by God, whereas the Arminian side of it would say that everybody's sins have been paid for, all across the world, whether people believe or not. So that, in the end, Jesus paid the penalty for the sins of people who don't believe. That's a problem because if your sins are paid for already by Jesus and you go to hell, then that's double jeopardy.

And then you have **irresistible grace**, which is the idea that when the spirit of God works on the heart of a sinner, the sinner can't resist. Arminian theology would say the sinner *can* resist.

And **perseverance of the saints**, the last in the five points, is the idea that if you're saved, you're going to persevere to glory. Arminian theology says you might not--you could lose your salvation along the way.

So, they are diametrically opposed. The question comes, "Can somebody who holds an Arminian view be a Christian?" And I would hate to say they couldn't be. I really believe that it is possible to be Arminian and to be a Christian...to misunderstand your human capability, to misunderstand the election, to misunderstand the extent of the atonement, even to misunderstand the irresistible nature of

God's saving grace, and even to think you could lose your salvation. But, at the same time--while being confused or ignorant of those things--to know that you're a sinner and know that the only way of salvation is through Jesus Christ. I guess you could say that someone could be an Arminian and push those points far enough, where they could jeopardize my confidence that they really are a Christian. You could push the point of not being totally depraved far enough where you're actually being saved by your own works, by your own belief, by your own ingenuity, by your own self-induced faith. And you could get to the point where you could really wonder whether someone understands that it's all a work of God.

But, I think it would be going too far to say someone who holds an Arminian view, or anyone who holds an Arminian view, is, by virtue of that view, not a Christian.

I think there are people who just don't understand rightly those things, but who know they're sinners and who cry out in their sin for the Lord to save them. They don't understand how what they're doing works together with the great purposes and power of God, and consequently can't give God *fully* the glory He deserves for all of that, but **they could be genuinely saved, by hoping in Christ and Christ alone.**

16. CHRISTIANITY SPREADS TO NORTH AMERICA—THE NEW WORLD:

1494 Portugal and Spain had drawn up the Demarcation Line giving most of the western hemisphere to Spain. Since both these countries were strongly Catholic, the Central and South American countries today are predominantly Catholic.

1565 The Catholic Spaniards established St. Augustine, Florida, with the purpose of driving out the French Protestants who had settled in Florida to find religious freedom. Instead, the Spanish commander, De Coligny, reported that he had hanged—142 French protestant Christians with the inscription: "Not as Frenchman but as heretics."

1620 English Puritans, known as Pilgrims, established a colony in America at Plymouth Rock to escape religious pluralism in England. They were poor and humble folk.

The Puritans acquired the label because their primary goals were to "purify" the English church by removing all traces of Roman Catholicism in doctrine and ceremony. Most of their theological views were the same as orthodox Calvinism. Strongest in the 16th and 17th centuries, they advocated strict religious discipline and placed primary emphasis on the Bible rather than on traditions developed in the Christian community.

Eventually, authorities in England grew intolerant of the Puritans' extreme views and they were forced to seek refuge

elsewhere, particularly once the restoration of the Church of England occurred between 1660-1662. Some went to Holland and many colonized the northeastern part of the North America. Puritans became accepted in England in 1689 with the Act of Toleration.

The Pilgrims were members of English separatist congregations who fled what they regarded as religious persecution and settled in North America in 1620. English separatists were Protestants who believed that the Anglican Church still contained too much which was still Roman Catholic in nature. They wanted to reform the church to make it better, but no longer believed that to be possible and so "separated" from it, creating their own congregations where they could believe and worship as they felt proper.

The Pilgrims eventually tried to immigrate to Holland, which, after some difficulties, they managed to do. They tried to make a life there, but feared further hostilities between Holland and Spain and were not at all happy with the morals of the Dutch, and on September 6, 1620, they left England for North America on the ship *Mayflower*. They arrived off Cap Cod on November 21 and settled near Plymouth three weeks later. Their first winter was harsh, with almost half their members dying, but they received aid from Native Americans that allowed them to more easily survive. Their colony never grew very large and was eventually absorbed by the larger Massachusetts Bay Colony, but the symbolism of the Pilgrims fleeing persecution has remained strong in American history and mythology.

What is interesting about this, however, is the fact that they were not seeking religious freedom as it is ideally considered in modern America. They were, instead, seeking to establish their own church that would be supported and enforced by their own state. They were, in essence, trying to do unto others what they did not want done unto themselves. This desire for "religious freedom" which ultimately meant the freedom to impose one's own religion on others has been a common theme in American history.

1628 The Dutch Reformed Come to America. The Dutchmen were not to be outdone by their English neighbors across the North Sea. They established two meetinghouses in New Amsterdam. In 1664, when Peter Stuyvesant was an elder and governor of New Netherlands, this colony was captured by the English and renamed New York. The Dutch reformed were allowed to carry on unhindered.

1633 Galileo was forced by the Inquisition to renounce theories of Copernicus, the sun-centered theory of the solar system among them.

1638 The first Baptist Church in America was founded in Providence, Rhode Island, upon the principals of Roger Williams who was an advocate of the separation of Church and State, and complete liberty of religion. These

Baptist views were adopted by quite a few members of the Congregational churches in the older Puritan colonies.

1642 Catholics massacred Protestants in Ulster, Ireland.

1642 to 1649 Puritans and Presbyterians on one side fought with Anglicans and Catholics on the other side in the **English Civil War**.

1646 Presbyterianism was established as the national religion in England by the Long Parliament. This lasted through the English Civil War.

1647 George Fox founded the Society of Friends (Quakers), repudiating the use of violence and oath-swearing.

1652 The Quakers are a form of Protestant Christianity which was started by George Fox in **1652** and which emphasizes the spiritual aspect of Christian faith and experience. The label Quakers was a derogatory term given to the Society of Friends because of their habit of "quaking" during services. According to tradition, George Fox was in northwest England when he received a vision from God directing him that instead of simply obeying doctrines and rules he should instead focus upon the "Inner Light," or ability of every person to directly perceive the glory and love of God. All religious truth derives from this immediate perception of God. Quakers were numerous in the Pennsylvania Colony, founded by William Penn as a "Holy Experiment."

Penn wanted to find out to just what extent a civil government could be run according to the moral standards set forth by the Society of Friends without having to compromise. This also provided an important refuge for Friends both in Britain and through the colonies where they continued to suffer periodic bouts of persecution.

1683 Organized Presbyterianism in America was founded by Francis Makemie. He went up and down Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, preaching in the scattered settlements.

Age of Enlightenment and John Locke

The **Age of Enlightenment** refers to the eighteenth century in European and American philosophy, or the longer period including the Age of Reason. It can more narrowly refer to the historical intellectual movement *The Enlightenment*, which advocated Reason as the primary basis of authority.

The Enlightenment is often closely linked with the Scientific Revolution, for both movements emphasized reason, science, and rationality. Inspired by the revolution of knowledge commenced by Galileo and Newton, and in a climate of increasing disaffection with repressive rule,

Enlightenment thinkers believed that systematic thinking might be applied to all areas of human activity, carried into the governmental sphere in their explorations of the individual, society and the state. Its leaders, though many were religious, believed they would lead their states to progress after a long period of tradition, irrationality, superstition, and tyranny which they imputed to the Middle Ages. The movement helped create the intellectual framework for the American and French Revolutions, the Latin American independence movement, and the Polish Constitution of May 3; and led to the rise of classical liberalism, democracy, and capitalism.

The Enlightenment is matched with the high baroque and classical eras in music, and the neo-classical period in the arts; it receives modern attention as being one of the central models for many movements in the modern period.

The Enlightenment influenced the Jewish Haskalah, which in Western Europe and particularly in Germany resulted in the elevation and eventual replacement of Yiddish by Hebrew, as well as the Jewish reform movement.

The Enlightenment as a movement occurred in Germany, France, Britain, and Spain, but spread beyond. Many of the Founding Fathers of the United States were also heavily influenced by Enlightenment era ideas, particularly in the religious sphere (Deism) and, in parallel also to the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, in the governmental sphere with the U.S. Bill of Rights.

John Locke (August 29, 1632 – October 28, 1704) was an English philosopher. In epistemology, Locke has often been classified as a British Empiricist, along with David Hume and George Berkeley. Locke's ideas had an enormous influence on the development of political philosophy, and he is widely regarded as one of the most influential Enlightenment thinkers and contributors to liberal theory. His writings influenced both Voltaire and Rousseau and, along with those of many **Enlightenment** thinkers, the American revolutionaries as reflected in the American Declaration of Independence.

Locke's theory of mind is often cited as the origin of the modern self and was developed further by David Hume, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant. Locke was the first philosopher to define the self through a continuity of "consciousness." He also postulated that the mind was a "blank slate" or *tabula rasa*; that is, contrary to Christian arguments, Locke maintained that people are born without any innate ideas.

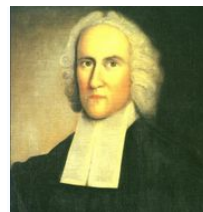
Locke taught that that Christianity was not consistent with reason. If you cannot explain it, then ignore it. He rejected the miracles in the Bible. He was a proponent on "natural" religion.

1720 to 1760 The Great Awakening American colonies experienced the *Great*

Awakening, involving widespread conversions to charismatic Protestant churches emphasizing personal piety and individual interpretations of the Bible.

The title **Great Awakening** is usually applied to the many revivals that occurred in the American colonies between 1725 and 1776. Wandering preachers who advocated personal responsibility in the interpretation of the Bible spread it, but scholars locate the origin with the preaching of **Jonathan Edwards**.

Hundreds of itinerant preachers wandered through the back woods of the American frontier, Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians, mostly. The primary emphasis was on personal, inner religion and represented a continuation of the earliest doctrines of the Protestant Reformation. This, in turn, probably led to people seeking greater say in politics as well, thus leading to more widespread support for the goals of the Revolution.



Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758 was a colonial American Congregational preacher and theologian. He is known as one of the greatest and most profound American evangelical theologians. His work is very broad in scope, but he is often associated with his defense of Calvinist theology and the Puritan heritage.

In 1731, Edwards preached in Boston the "Public Lecture" afterwards published under the title *God Glorified in Man's Dependence*. This was his first public attack on Arminianism.

The leading thought was God's absolute sovereignty in the work of redemption: that while it behooved God to create man holy, it was of His "good pleasure" and "mere and arbitrary grace" that any man was now made holy, and that God might deny this grace without any disparagement to any of His perfections.

In 1733, a religious revival began in Northampton, and in six months, nearly three hundred were admitted to the church. The revival gave Edwards an opportunity for studying the process of conversion in all its phases and varieties, and he recorded his observations with psychological minuteness and discrimination in *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton* (1737).

In 1734, Jonathan Edwards published *Discourses on Various Important Subjects*, the five sermons which had proved most effective in the revival, and of these none, he tells us, was so immediately effective as that on the *Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners*, from the text, "That every mouth may be stopped."

In the spring of 1735, the Northampton revival, which had spread through the Connecticut valley and whose fame had reached England and Scotland, was followed in **1739-1740 by the Great Awakening**, distinctively under the leadership of Edwards. It was at this time that Edwards became acquainted with **George Whitefield** and preached one of **Jonathan Edwards'** most famous sermons, "*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*" in Enfield, CT in 1741. This sermon is known as one of the greatest examples of the "fire and brimstone" style of preaching.

17. THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE IMPACT ON THE CHURCH

1765 The Stamp Act is passed by the English Parliament imposing the first direct tax on the American colonies, to offset the high costs of the British military organization in America. Thus for the first time in the 150 year old history of the British colonies in America, the Americans will pay tax not to their own local legislatures in America, but directly to England.

1770 - The Boston Massacre occurs as a mob harasses British soldiers who then fire their muskets pointblank into the crowd, killing three instantly, mortally wounding two others and injuring six. After the incident, the new Royal Governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Hutchinson, at the insistence of Sam Adams, withdraws British troops out of Boston to nearby harbor islands.

1775 The War for Independence broke out and the majority of both clergy and members of the Episcopal Church in New England remained loyal to England. In the Southern Colonies they took their stand on the American side. In the middle Colonies they were about equally divided.

Two-thirds of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were Episcopalians. The clergy were in a difficult position, having taken their ordination vow to support the king of England as the head of their church. John Witherspoon, an outstanding leader of the Presbyterians, was selected as a delegate to the Continental Congress and was the only minister among the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

John Wesley (June 17, 1703 – March 2, 1791) John Wesley declared openly that he was an Arminian and opposed Calvinism. He was an 18th-century Anglican clergyman and Christian theologian who was an early leader in the Methodist movement. Methodism had three rises, the first at Oxford University with the founding of the so-called "Holy Club", the second while Wesley was parish priest in Savannah, Georgia, and the third in London after Wesley's return to England.

The movement took form from its third rise in the early 1740s with Wesley, along with others, itinerant field preaching and the subsequent founding of religious societies

for the formation of believers. This was the first widely successful evangelical movement in the United Kingdom.

Wesley's **Methodist** Connexion included societies throughout England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland before spreading to other parts of the English-speaking world and beyond. He divided his religious societies further into classes and bands for intensive accountability and religious instruction.

1784 Methodist Church was founded by John Wesley (1703-1791) and **George Whitefield** (1714-1770) in England in the early 1770s. The name comes from the fact that Wesley sought to understand religion "by rule and *method*" and follow biblical teachings as interpreted by tradition and reason. During the Revolutionary War, Wesley's followers in America lacked leadership and the Anglican Church refused to ordain people to help him, so Wesley took the unusual step of ordaining some ministers on his own authority—this step was key in the creation of the Methodist church.

The first Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Baltimore on December 24, 1784. During this "Christmas Conference," Methodist preachers officially established Methodism as an independent denomination with the purpose "To reform the continent, and spread scriptural holiness through these lands." The Methodists, who had but recently made their appearance in America, found themselves in a difficult position too since John Wesley took the English side.

Methodists, under Wesley's direction, became leaders in many social justice issues of the day including prison reform and abolitionism movements. Wesley's strength as a theologian lay in his ability to combine seemingly opposing theological stances. His greatest theological achievement was his promotion of what he termed "Christian perfection", or holiness of heart and life. Wesley insisted that in this life, the Christian could come to a state where the love of God, or perfect love, reigned supreme in one's heart.

His evangelical theology, especially his understanding of Christian perfection, was firmly grounded in his sacramental theology. He continually insisted on the general use of the means of grace (prayer, Scripture meditation, and Holy Communion, etc.) as the means by which God transformed the believer. Throughout his life, Wesley remained within the Church of England and insisted that his movement was well within the bounds of the Anglican Church.

The most notable of Wesley's controversies was that on Calvinism. He was of the Arminian and expressed himself strongly against the doctrines of election and reprobation. The doctrines which Wesley emphasized in his sermons and writings are **prevenient grace**, (See page 36) present personal salvation by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and sanctification. He defined the witness of the Spirit as: "an inward impression on the soul of believers, whereby the spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are the children of God."

1789 Protestant Episcopal Church was founded in America as a branch of Anglicism.

In the 19th Century, the Church became acutely conscience of social problems—to the extent that it was in danger of losing sight of its central purpose. Increasing wealth and a new sense of leisure stimulated the building of beautiful churches and the founding of church colleges. Worship became more and more formal and theology more and more liberal. A reaction set in. Some broke away from established denominations and organized new churches where the form of worship was simple and the message was the Biblical doctrine of salvation by faith. Others left established churches to form religious sects or cults that were far from the teachings of the Bible.

1827 Mormon Church was founded by Joseph Smith as a result of reported visions of the Angel Moroni. Mormons claim to be “Christians” but Mormonism is a cult (a group devoted to beliefs or practices that are far outside mainstream Christianity). Officially known as Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Mormon Church was established by Joseph Smith (1805-1844) in 1830 in upstate New York, then again in 1831 in Ohio after he was forced to move.

During his lifetime Joseph Smith was not able to create a permanent home for his followers, and after his death most took the long journey to Utah under the leadership of Brigham Young (1805-1877), where they founded Salt Lake City and created a home. Mormon doctrines are based upon the *Book of Mormon*, *The Doctrine and Covenants*, and *The Pearl of Great Price*, all the product of communication with God and Mormons regard all of which as scripture on an equal level with the Bible.

1834 Spanish Inquisition was abolished.

1854 The Immaculate Conception of Mary: The Immaculate Conception was solemnly defined as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in his constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*, published December 8, **1854**. It is a Catholic dogma that asserts that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was preserved by God from the stain of original sin (born without a sin nature) at the time of her own conception. Specifically, the dogma says she was not afflicted by the lack of sanctifying grace that afflicts humankind, but was instead filled with grace by God, and furthermore lived a life completely free from sin. (It is commonly confused with the doctrine of the incarnation and virgin birth, though the two deal with separate subjects.)

According to the dogma, Mary was conceived by normal biological means, but her soul was acted upon by God (kept "immaculate") at the time of her conception. The Immaculate Conception was consecrated by Pope Pius XII in **1942**.

1872 The Jehovah's Witnesses was created by Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916 CE) but was renamed

Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. They claim to be “Christians” but Jehovah's Witnesses is a cult (a group devoted to beliefs or practices that are far outside mainstream Christianity). A basic doctrine of the group is that they should expect the immanent return of Jesus Christ, whose second coming has been fast approaching ever since the group started. Members are all ministers who engage in door-to-door evangelization but who also refuse to join the armed services, participate in politics, etc. Other characteristics of the denomination are a rejection of the Trinity, a completely literal reading of the Bible (in their own unique and not entirely accurate translation) and viewing Jesus' nature in a way similar to the early heresy of Arianism.

D. L. Moody (1837- 1899), was an American evangelist. After the Civil War started, he was involved with the U.S. Christian Commission of the YMCA, and ministered at several battlefields. In Chicago, Moody worked to start a Sunday school for children in the poorer parts of the city. He soon had over 1,000 children and their parents attending each Sunday. In **1862**, President Abraham Lincoln visited one week. The growing Sunday school congregation needed a permanent home, so Moody started a church in Chicago, the Illinois Street Church. When the church burnt down in the Great Chicago Fire, it was rebuilt within 3 months at a nearby location as the Chicago Avenue Church. In his preaching he stressed the Gospel of salvation through grace alone, through faith alone, through Jesus Christ alone.

It was in a trip to England that he became well known as an evangelist, to the point that some have claimed he was the greatest evangelist of the 19th century.

His preaching had an impact as great as that of **George Whitefield** and **John Wesley** within Britain, Scotland and Ireland. On several occasions he filled stadiums of 2,000 to 4,000 capacity. In the Botanic Gardens Palace, a meeting had between 15,000 to 30,000 people. This turnout continued throughout 1874 and 1875, with crowds of thousands at all of his meetings. During his visit to Scotland he was helped and encouraged by Andrew A. Bonar. When he returned to the United States, crowds of 12,000 to 20,000 were just as common as in England. President Grant and some of his cabinet attended a meeting on January 19, 1876. His evangelistic meetings were held from Boston to New York, to New England and as far as San Francisco.

1869-1870 First Vatican Council, 20th ecumenical, affirmed doctrine of papal infallibility (i.e. when a pope speaks *ex cathedra* on faith or morals he does so with the supreme apostolic authority, which no Catholic may question or reject).

Magisterium (from the Latin *magister*, "teacher") is a technical ecclesiastical term in Catholicism referring to the teaching ability and authority of the Pope and those Bishops who are in union with him. According to Catholic doctrine, the Magisterium is able to teach or interpret the truths of the

Faith, and it does so infallibly within the Sacred Magisterium.

The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. [1997], pt. 1, sect. 1, ch. 2, art. 2, III [#100]). **The teachings of the sacred magisterium are always infallible:** "Wherefore, by divine and Catholic faith all those things are to be believed which are contained in **the word of God as found in Scripture and tradition**, and which are proposed by the Church as matters to be believed as divinely revealed, whether by her solemn judgment or in her ordinary and universal Magisterium."

The power of the papacy, which had asserted infallibility of judgment and dominion over all departments of human life, was undermined by the mistakes, pretensions, and worldliness of the papacy itself, as exhibited in the policy of Boniface VIII, the removal of the papal residence to Avignon, and the disastrous schism which, for nearly half a century, gave to Europe the spectacle of two, and at times three, popes reigning at the same time and all professing to be the vicegerents of God on earth.

1896 Billy Sunday, American Presbyterian evangelist began preaching. His road shows attracted huge crowds and foreshadowed the future of evangelists and televangelists in modern America.

1901 American Standard Version of the Bible, a revision of the RV, was published. It included words/phrases preferred by Americans and follows Greek order of words.

1901 Pentecostal Church was formed in Topeka, Kansas in reaction to loss of evangelical fervor among Methodists and other denominations.

18. THE 20TH CENTURY: Modernism The years of World War I and those immediately following were boom years in the United States. Business thrived and money was plentiful. Men of wealth gave large gifts of money to their churches, and many costly and beautiful houses of worship were built. Two of the outstanding examples are the Riverside Drive Baptist Church and the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, both in New York.

In keeping with the beauty of the new buildings, worship was made more formal. The Preachers put on gowns and the choir members wore robes. A more dignified type of church music was introduced together with processionals and recessionals, music responses and chorals.

While the church service was thus made more elaborate, church attendance was declining, for in many cases the preaching of God's Word was disappearing. The heart had

been removed from the service. The churches had lost sight of their central purpose, to preach the Gospel. A **Liberalism** of that day, often called **Modernism**, led thousands of worshippers toward a vague, unfounded, and unsatisfying faith. Because in its teachings many feel-good, spiritual sounding, sentiments are included, it is often attractive to those who are not well grounded in Scriptural truth.

Present-day **Modernism** admires the books of the Bible as a marvelous collection of the sublime literature. But **Modernism** denies the virgin birth and the deity of Jesus Christ. It denies the truth that man is altogether sinful, and that Christ died on the cross to atone for man's sin. The present-day **Modernist** denies practically all the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. At the bottom of this lies the fact that the Modernist does not believe that the Bible is divinely inspired—that it speaks to man with divinely inspired, absolute, and final authority.

To the **Modernist** it was, and is, simply the record of the religious thoughts, emotions, and experiences of the ancient Israelites.

Modernists believe that there is no one ultimate authority in matters of faith. Truth is subjective. They have no use for the great creeds of the Church. They differ much among themselves. They say that every man is entitled to his own opinions, that truth is how they view what is true to them. In fact, to the Modernist those of us who are followers of Jesus, who believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, and the fundamental doctrines of the Church and its creeds, are bigots, intolerant radicals, racists, and hate mongers. Paul warned Timothy about Modernists when he said, "*For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. They will reject the truth and follow strange myths.*" (2 Tim. 4:3-4)

Modernists place man in the center of their lives instead of God. Under the influence of the theory of evolution they believe that the human race can in time develop into a state of ideal goodness and usefulness and happiness. All their hopes are pinned on man. Man is good and has within himself the power to live a good life and to build a better world.

Modernism is one of the great obstacles in the work of evangelization. The gospel of **Modernism** is another gospel than that of the Bible. **Modernism** cuts the very heart out of the true Gospel: man's need of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. It destroys the one true and great purpose of Christian missions—to bring the message of this salvation. And worse of all, **modernism** has infested the Church and its seminaries.

1910 Fundamentalism. In 1910, a series of twelve small volumes were published under the title, **The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth**. They were authored by leading evangelical churchmen and circulated free of charge among clergymen and seminarians.

Note: The word 'fundamental' or 'fundamentalist' should not be confused with that of a militant religious fanatic or the like, as often expressed by liberals, modernists, media and elsewhere.

The articles presented in *The Fundamentals* were written as a response to *modernism* and *liberal* theology of the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. They were written for ministers of the gospel, missionaries, Sunday School superintendents, to have at their disposal articles which would be useful in affirming and reaffirming the fundamental truths of Christianity in the face of ever increasing attacks against it.

There is still a great need today to reaffirm the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, especially when we consider "*The Jesus Seminar*," "*Evangelicals and Catholics Together*," the current push by the *Mormons* to present themselves as just another Christian denomination, and a host of other groups claiming to be *Christian* who deny these core truths. John MacArthur's book *Reckless Faith*, published by Crossway Books is an excellent, brief analysis of present day doctrinal compromise.

Mid-2nd Century-1930s-1980s
REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY and the
HOLOCAUST Anti-Semitic hatred from the Church.
(See Appendix B on Pg 47)

1949 Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

1950 The Assumption of Mary: Pope Pius XII, speaking ex-cathedra, proclaimed the Assumption of Mary (she was taken body and soul into heaven before she died) to be a Roman Catholic doctrine.

1957 United Church of Christ was founded by the ecumenical union of Evangelical and Reformed Christians with Congregationalists and was comprised of both Calvinists and Lutherans.

1962-1965 Second Vatican Council, 21st ecumenical, announced by Pope John XXIII in 1959, produced 16 documents that became official after approval by the Pope; purpose to renew "ourselves and the flocks committed to us" (Pope John XXIII).

1966 RSV Catholic Edition, a joint effort between Catholics and the Church of England, was published, representing a big step towards a common Catholic/Protestant Bible.

1971 New American Standard Bible was written, updating the ASV using recent Hebrew and Greek textual discoveries.

1978 New International Version published. It used eclectic Greek text, Massoretic Hebrew text, and current English style.

1979-1982 New King James Bible, a complete revision of the 1611 KJV.

1984 Italy ended Roman Catholicism as a state religion.

2000 Pope John Paul II offered apology and asked for forgiveness for Catholicism's history of "violence in the service of truth."

The pope's apology to Greek Orthodox Archbishop Christodoulos was a prayer to God for forgiveness "*for the occasions past and present when the sons and daughters of the Catholic Church have sinned by actions and omissions against their Orthodox brothers and sisters.*" John Paul, the first pope to visit Greece since before the Great Schism of 1054 divided the Eastern and Western churches, said Catholics of today feel "deep regret" over the Crusaders' sacking of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, in 1204, which remains a major Orthodox grievance.

The form of apology resembled one the Vatican offered to the Jews in 1998 for the failure of many Catholics to actively oppose the World War II Holocaust. Jewish leaders complained that the Vatican did not go far enough. But the Orthodox archbishop applauded the pope's call for forgiveness, embraced him and agreed to recite the Lord's Prayer together. In a letter to John Paul on his departure from Athens, Christodoulos said he was grateful for the "*brief but fruitful visit.*"

19. DENOMINATIONS & SECTS TODAY:

There are a wide variety of groups associated with Christianity. There are many mainline Christian denominations, orthodox movements, non-denominational and Bible teaching churches, and para-church groups. There are also numerous sects that have associated themselves with Christianity. Although the exact number of all denominations is not known, I am aware of close to fifty different (some say there are over 1,200). Numerous denominations' members consider themselves Christians but their denomination's beliefs are outside mainstream Christianity, such as the Amish, Mormons (Latter Day Saints), Jehovah Witnesses, Christian Science, Seven Day Adventists, and Unitarians. Some are actually cults—a religion or sect considered to be false, unorthodox, or extremist. For a listing of denominations and sects, visit: http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Religion_and_Spirituality/Faiths_and_Practices/Christianity/Denominations_and_Sects/

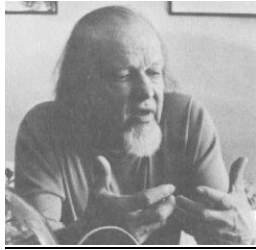
One does not become a Christian by joining a denomination or a church. Nor are all those who sit in the pews of any denomination Christians. (**See The Visible Versus The Invisible Church below.**) You know what one must truly

believe to become a Christian—(See Appendix A: The Gospel of Jesus Christ Unto Salvation)—nothing more—nothing less. **Adding or subtracting makes the Gospel another Gospel which is really no Gospel at all.**

This study of the *History of the Church* has been written to embolden you—your mind, your heart and your psyche—with the simplicity of the entire content of the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation—what it is and with nothing more needed to be added to it. (See Appendix A: The Gospel of Jesus Christ Unto Salvation on page 46.)

We have studied how, as early as the first century, and even among the Apostles themselves, there arose disagreement (Acts 15) about whether something more than by grace alone—through faith alone, by Jesus Christ alone—something more was required for salvation. All the information we need is found in the Word of God—the Bible—Sola Scriptura. This commitment will give all the glory to God—Soli Deo Gloria.

In our study of the Reformation, the “trigger” issue was indulgences. The *formal* issue was justification or salvation by faith alone. But the underlying, or *root or foundational issue* was the **authority of Scripture alone—sola scriptura.**



“Men today do not, perhaps, burn the Bible, nor does the Roman Catholic Church any longer put it on the Index, as it once did. But men destroy it in the form of exegesis: they destroy it in the way they deal with it. They destroy it by not reading it as written in normal,

literary form, by ignoring its historical-grammatical exegesis, by changing the Bible's own perspective of itself as propositional revelation in space and time, in history”.

Francis Schaeffer (1969)

The Visible Versus The Invisible Church

What do we mean when we make the distinction between the visible and invisible church? Starting around the 4th century - the expression “Visible Church” was referred to by theologians, not to a building, but to the members on the rolls of a local church. In other words, all persons who are members of a local church are considered to be a part of the **visible church.**

On the other hand, **the invisible church** refers to those persons who have actually been regenerated or quickened by the Holy Spirit, God's elect or true believers.

Augustine referred to the church as a mixed body, a visible people, but these people have both *weeds and wheat*, as described by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13. In other words, there is no such thing as a perfect church, and there will always be people in the church with bad motives or are there for wrong reasons. There will always be people who

claim to love Christ but whose heart is far from Him. *“Many, Jesus says, will say on that day, did we not do this and that in your name? Jesus will then say, “I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”* (Mt 7:21-23) These are descriptions of some people now sitting in your pew at your local church and Jesus says of them that he *never knew them!* Some persons are in church for show, to feel good, to be seen by men as pious, others perhaps for a social club or to show their ability to wax eloquent when discussing theology. These person's hearts are completely invisible to us, but of course, **they are not invisible to God and only He can know who is truly regenerate,** so we must be generous in our judgments.

20. My Personal Reflective Conclusion:

It is now October 2006 and I have just finished this document for our Thursday morning Pinnacle Forum weekly Bible Study group of 47 men. Participation ranges from 15 to 35 on any particular Thursday, with more during the winter season when the “snowbirds” are here in Scottsdale. This group has been meeting every week for six years. We have grown very close with one another. It is my privilege, honor and blessing to lead our time together with in-depth studies of Scripture. In the process of preparing our lessons, I learn more than those attending. I love it. Our Thursday morning study is the highlight of my week.

Over the course of a year, as we move from one topic or book in the Bible to the next, I ask the men what it is that they sense the Holy Spirit leading us to study. In May, it was suggested we begin with the *Acts of the Apostles* and continue with the history of the Church all the way up to today. By doing this, we would learn from Christian leaders of the past — how they persevered in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation despite powerful forces to the contrary, and resisted temptations to compromise its truth. This would help embolden us in our faith and heighten our vigilance in defending the integrity of the Gospel.

It has been a challenge for me to assemble a comprehensive, accurate, and yet brief history of the Church. For the last six months I have prayed, read books, listened to tapes, searched the web, and met with qualified teachers in order to assemble what is now the content of this document. It has been a major learning experience and a marvelous blessing. Now that the work is finished, I asked myself, *“Upon reflection, Ken, what is it that you are coming away with — impressions, knowledge, emotions, and discernment?”* Answer: *More than I thought I would.*

Amazingly, I have now studied all of history for all time — from the creation of the world in Genesis to October 2006. Not in-depth, of course. I am not a history buff or a pedigreed theologian. No, but I have a sense of knowing God more than I did— of knowing His ways a tiny bit more— *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa 55:8-10)*

However, I believe I better understand His plan and have a much greater appreciation for His faithfulness, His love, His frustrations, and His desires for all of mankind, and how man has gotten far off track from the beginning right through to today. How Satan — the clever Angel of light — has led leaders astray in ways that appeared religious and even holy. How thousands of people faithful to God have been persecuted, tortured, maligned, and killed because of their unwillingness to accept “*another gospel, which is really no gospel at all.*”

On a personal note, my emotions have been stirred. I was raised a devout and loyal Catholic — 12 years of Catholic schooling. I was an altar boy for 12 years, including college. At one point, I even considered becoming a priest. I was President of the Newman Club at Purdue. After graduation, I read the Scriptures at Mass and I taught Confraternity of Christian Doctrine for 13 years. Until age 43 I rarely missed Mass on Sunday or daily during Lent.

I was taught that one had to be a Catholic to get into heaven. I was discouraged from reading the Bible because, I needed a priest to tell me what it really means. I was told Martin Luther left the Catholic church because he wanted to get married, not because he was trying to reform its heretical teachings and practices. I was taught it was a mortal sin to read anything written by Martin Luther or John Calvin. And I believed and embraced it all, plus.

In my 40's, I was in and out of the confessional like it was a revolving door to have my sins absolved. At one point I believed that it was inevitable that, because of my sinful lifestyle, I was going to hell.

In 1977, at the age of 43, God convicted me of my sins and opened my heart to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation. It resonated deep within me from the instant I heard it. I responded. Through this spiritual rebirth, for the first time, I found peace with God through Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1) The guilt was gone. I was freed from the bondage of religion and the guilt that had enslaved me.

I love the line in the movie *Spanglish* when the daughter of the maid says to the head of the house, “*We know all about guilt. We're Catholic.*” Quite a profound line. For me, how true!

Do you recall from Acts how Paul — the Pharisee of Pharisees and one of the most devout and educated Jews of his day — was finally convicted of his sins by Jesus on the road to Damascus and how God opened Paul's eyes and heart to hear and accept the Gospel from Ananias (Acts 9)? Then what did Paul want to do? He wanted to tell all his Jewish brothers and sisters about this good news.

I feel the same way. I want to tell all my Catholic friends the good news too. But like Paul, they do not want to hear. (Then, I wonder, would I have been open to listen when I was

held captive by my Catholic religion? Probably not. What a shame.)

Do you recall when Martin Luther, a devout Catholic monk and ordained priest, discovered in the Scriptures the truth of the Gospel — justification by faith alone — and also was horrified by the corruption in the Church that he encountered? At that time, these heresies included selling indulgences to get relatives out of purgatory and the adoration of relics. Luther did not want to leave his beloved Catholic faith, but rather teach the Bible's good news to his Catholic brothers and sisters, and help rid the Church of its corruptions. What happened? Martin Luther's superiors excommunicated him and plotted to kill him.

I identify with Luther. Some people listen—others do not. As someone said to me once when I was showing him in the Bible the Gospel of salvation, “*Ken, right or wrong, I am Catholic and will always be Catholic.*” I wasn't asking him to stop being Catholic but rather to know that the Bible does not teach Christ plus works salvation or indulgences or purgatory, but salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, by Christ alone, which gives us peace with God for all eternity, guaranteed by the Holy Spirit. **Now that's good news!**

Born of many hours of diligent research, *The History of the Church* recounts irrefutable historical evidence of the spiritual battle that rages between the angel of light, the Devil (2 Cor 11:14), and the true light of the world, Jesus (John 8:12). Much of this cosmic battle occurs in the name of religion.

What absolutely frightens me, horrifies me — scares me to death — hurts and concerns me, and keeps me up at night in fervent prayer — is the consequences. We are not talking only about peace during this lifetime, no. The stakes are much higher than that. They are vast — scary — eternal — permanent.

I feel like Paul did. He was so worried about this that he said he would give up his own salvation for the sake of his brothers if they would only repent and acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah and be freed from the bondage of their religion.

“I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.”
(Romans 9:1-4)

I am not judging others or condemning anyone, but I feel responsible to illustrate, perhaps by this document, what their doctrine says.

Read again the Canons from Trent. Each one says that if you do not agree 100% with what every doctrine says, that you are to be eternally condemned. And I feel certain that if any Catholic gives a serious read to the canons and other statements of Trent, that they will not agree with what they

say. Some are so absurd that they are beyond comprehension.

For example, if one does not believe there are *seven* sacraments, he is to be eternally condemned. Is that absurd or not?

Or, if one believes in salvation by faith alone, by Christ alone, he is to be eternally condemned.

Is that absurd or not?

Or, if any one says, that in communion that the substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denies that the bread and wine are no longer present but have been totally changed into the actual Body and Blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, he is to be eternally condemned. Is that absurd or not?

Or, if any one says, that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or, that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or, that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities; he is to be eternally condemned. Is that absurd or not?

These are but a few examples of Roman Catholic Church additions to the Gospel. Consider this: If these Catholic beliefs are truly conditions unto salvation, then they are subsequent additions to the Gospel. And as Paul said, *if he or any angel from heaven adds anything to the Gospel*, then it is a *different Gospel, which is really no Gospel at all*, and such a person who does that is to be *eternally condemned*. (Galatians 1:11:6-9)

For a Catholic, it's a catch 22 — you are *eternally condemned* either way. My advice is to go with what God says — the Word of God — *sola scriptura*.

So, upon reflection, this is what I came away with — the impressions, knowledge, emotions, and discernment I gained from this study of Church History:

- A greater appreciation for the incredible patience and love of God;
- A sense of awe regarding how God works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His service;
- A desire to learn more about God through the Scriptures;
- A fear of how little by little, and in the most devious ways, Satan diverts men of noble desires from the truth. My need is to be constantly diligent;
- A greater disdain for sin — not simply the obvious ones — but the incremental ones where I take upon myself the role of God by relying less on Him for everything;
- A righteous anger toward religious leaders who abuse the trust their sheep have placed in following them, and a sincere concern for the punishment God has in store for them for misleading His sheep. For as God's Word says,

“Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness.” (James 3:1)

- An identification of my struggles with those of the Apostles and those who followed them in being faithful servants of God, especially when it is not popular;
- A special blessing by the Holy Spirit to have the opportunity to share what I have learned with men I love on Thursday mornings;
- A huge burden and anguish for those who, to this day, are held captive by religion and have never searched the Scriptures to see if what I say is true;
- A heart of praise for the mercy God has shown me and the ways He is using me, the worst of sinners, so that Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life;
- A humble heart in that in some small sense I am standing on the shoulders of numerous men who are the pillars of the Church, many of whom gave their very lives for writing the things I have written here about the simplicity of the Gospel unto salvation;
- An increased understanding of the importance of sticking to the basics — the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation — what it is, and nothing more. And to resist succumbing to the world's appeal for tolerance and compromise;
- A heightened fear that I could fall prey to temptations and sin in such a way that I could destroy this undeserved and significant platform that God has graciously given me, to teach his Word unabashedly and with great enthusiasm; and
- A greater love for the men I am honored to serve every Thursday morning.

And one more thing — which did not result from this study but that has been increasing within me. That is, how grateful I am that God got my attention so emphatically when I was told in 1983 that I had an incurable and fatal disease and had less than a year to live. How that led to the miracle of my heart transplant twelve years ago—how God subsequently convicted me during my prayer time, that I did not trust or obey Him—and that He would not use me significantly until I humbled myself, and trusted and obeyed Him. God really got my attention! He humbled me, and ultimately made me usable by Him for His glory. Who would have thought this would be possible?

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.



Ken Willig, October 17, 2006

Revised April 9, 2007

Now that you have finished this study of Church History, I asked you,

“Upon reflection, friend, what is it that you are coming away with — impressions, knowledge, emotions, and discernment?”

APPENDIX A

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST UNTO SALVATION

First, the bad news about our situation and need: When Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-7), he brought spiritual death upon him-self and his descendants — all of mankind, for all time. Adam was the perfect representative of mankind. He did not have a *sin nature* — that is, he could freely choose without being encumbered with a desire to sin. When Adam disobeyed God, sin entered the world and since then Adam's sin nature has been inherited by everyone. **Therefore, each of us is born a sinner, unable to understand spiritual truths because we are dead in our sins.** We are not sinners *because* we sin. Rather, we sin *because we are sinners* — sinners condemned to death.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. Romans 5:12

You were dead in your transgressions and sins. — Ephesians 2:1

There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.
Ro 3:10, 11

When we tell you this, we do not use words of human wisdom. We speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. But people who aren't Christians can't understand these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them because only those who have the Spirit can understand what the Spirit means. 1 Cor. 2:13-14

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them. 2 Cor. 4:3-4

Now, The Good News—The Gospel

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. — John 3:16

God demonstrates His own love for us in this; While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

But God, in His mercy quickened some — gave them spiritual life, regenerated them. He opened their hearts — gave life to those He chose so that they could understand spiritual truths.

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ. Col. 2:13

You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at

work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature, and we were under God's anger just like everyone else. But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so very much, that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. Ephes. 2:2-5

One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. Acts 16:14

Once we understand spiritual truth, we have the ability to acknowledge our sinfulness — and seek forgiveness from God. Then, when we acknowledge to God that we are sinners and we confess our sins and seek His forgiveness, God forgives us and purifies us from all unrighteousness.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him. Romans 4:7-8

And when we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior and ask Him to come into our life, He will do so and we will have a spiritual birth — be born again — unto salvation.

That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

I tell you the truth; whoever hears my Word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. — Jn 5:24

We are saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone and by Christ alone.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Ro 3:23, 24

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. — Romans 3:28

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:4-9

I tell you the truth, he who believes has eternal life. Jn 6:47

But now you have been set free from sin and have become enslaved to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but

the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 8:22, 23

THAT'S THE GOSPEL! Nothing more need be added. We were dead in our sins — God made us alive so we could understand spiritual truths, God gave us the free gift of grace to confess our sins, and the free gift of faith to confess Him as Lord and Savior, and He gave us eternal life. So, now we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. That's it! **The Gospel unto salvation.**

He brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. Acts 16:30-31

And those who have truly repented of their sins, confessed them to God, and truly invited Jesus into their lives, as both their Lord and Savior will never lose their salvation — they have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

And this is the testimony; God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. – 1 John 5:11-13

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. Romans 5:1, 2

You were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In Him, when you believed, you were marked with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession. Eph 1:13, 14

There are no works, no good deeds, **nothing** we must do or that need be added — not now or in the future.

Paul wrote: **"Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised** (or add good works or obeying the law to faith alone as a condition for salvation) **Christ will be of no value to you at all.** " (Gal 5:2)

Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. Ro 4:4, 5

What, then, was the purpose of the law? ...So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. – Galatians 3:19a, 24

The Gospel — nothing more needed to be added — and there is only one way — there is no other way of salvation — no other Savior. Our *eternal security* – that is, our assurance

that we will spend eternity with God in heaven despite our sinfulness – is found in justification by faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.

Jesus answered, 'I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.' – John 14:6

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. John 3:18

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

Now, a few words of caution: If *anything* is added to this Gospel—good works, sacrifices, prayers, attending church, earning grace, indulgences, receiving sacraments, works of mercy, communion, tithing—**anything**—as a requirement for salvation, then it is no longer the Gospel but rather *a different gospel, which is really no gospel at all.* This corruption of the Gospel is not to be taken lightly or accepted for the sake of peace or in the name of tolerance. The consequences for accepting “another gospel” are much too severe.

Consider and take seriously these words penned by the Apostle Paul: *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!* Galatians 1:6-9

APPENDIX B

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

In Genesis 12:1-3, God made this unconditional promise to Abraham: *"The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

Again in Genesis 13:14-17 *"The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."*

Then in Genesis 15:2-6 “Abram said, “O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.” He took him outside and said, “Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”

God then made His promises a covenant with Abraham. Genesis 15:7- 21 “He (God) also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.” But Abram said, “O Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?” Then God made a covenant with Abraham: Genesis 15:18 “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates”

Once again God confirmed His everlasting covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17:1-8: “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. **I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant** between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.” Continuing in Genesis 17:15-16: “God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”

Later God confirmed His covenant with Abraham and Sarah’s son, Isaac. Genesis 17:19: “Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.”

Later in Genesis chapter 27 is the story of how Isaac blessed Jacob and passed his inheritance on to Jacob. Then in Genesis Chapter 32 to Jacob wrestled with God and God changed his name from *Jacob* to *Israel*.

The above is a summary of the Abrahamic covenant—God’s contract with all the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel)—God’s promise to

Israel—the Jews—God’s chosen people. Jewish people rightfully claim the mantle of Israel through their physical descent from Abraham.

For most of history, from the middle of the second century through the middle of the twentieth century, the Christian Church has embraced an errant interpretation. The Church maintained that when the Jews rejected Christ as the Messiah, the Church replaced the Jews as the beneficiaries of the Abrahamic covenant. Thus the Church—the “true” spiritual descendants of Abraham—became the new Israel. That established the false belief for centuries that the Church superseded Israel as God’s chosen people. This view is called **Replacement Theology**.

Keep in mind that **Christianity was originally a Jewish religion**—a “sect” of Judaism. All the original apostles and writers of the New Testament were Jews, including the Gentile, Luke, who probably converted to Judaism. All the original Christians were Jews. God called the Apostle Paul to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. As you may recall, many of the apostles thought that for Gentiles to become Christians they first needed to become Jews by being circumcised. However, at the first Church council in Jerusalem where James the brother of Jesus presided, the apostles decided that circumcision was **not** required—only faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior—*sola fide*.

Separation between Judaism and Christianity began as a result of religious and social differences. There were several contributing factors: **1)** the Roman intrusion into Judea, and the widespread acceptance of Christianity by the Gentiles, complicated the history of Jewish Christianity; **2)** the Roman wars against the Jews not only destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem, but also resulted in Jerusalem’s relinquishing her position as a center of Christian faith in the Roman world; and, **3)** the rapid acceptance of Christianity among the Gentiles led to an early conflict between the Church and Synagogue. Paul’s missionary journeys brought the Christian faith to the Gentile world, and as their numbers grew, so did their influence, which ultimately disconnected Christianity from its Jewish roots.

Many Gentile Christians interpreted the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem as a sign that God had abandoned Judaism, and that He had provided the Gentiles freedom to develop their own Christian theology in a setting free from Jerusalem’s influence. Could it be He was showing us that Temple worship was no longer necessary as His Holy Spirit now resides in us (I Cor. 6:19), not in the Holy of Holies? After the Second Jewish Revolt (AD 133-135) put down by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, theological and political power moved from Jewish Christian leaders to centers of Gentile Christian leadership such as Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch. It is important to understand this change, because it influenced the early Church Fathers to make anti-Jewish statements as Christianity began to disconnect itself from its Jewish roots.

As the Church spread far and wide within the Roman Empire, and its membership grew increasingly non-Jewish, Greek and Roman thought began to creep in and completely change the orientation of Biblical interpretation through a Greek mindset, rather than a Jewish or Hebraic mindset. This resulted in many heresies, some of which the Church is still practicing today.

Once Christianity and Judaism began to take separate paths, the chasm became wider and wider. Judaism was considered a legal religion under Roman law, while Christianity, a new religion, was illegal. As Christianity grew, the Romans tried to suppress it. In an attempt to alleviate this persecution, Christian apologists tried in vain to convince Rome that Christianity was an extension of Judaism. However, Rome was not convinced. The resulting persecutions and frustration of the Christians bred an animosity towards the Jewish community, which was free to worship without persecution. Later, when the Church became the religion of the state, it would pass laws against the Jews in retribution.

As the years passed, Christianity became a dominantly Gentile religion. The antagonism of the early Christians towards the Jews was reflected in the writings of the early Church Fathers. For example, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon (c. AD 177) declared: "Jews are disinherited from the grace of God." Tertullian (AD 160-230), in his treatise, "Against the Jews," announced that God had rejected the Jews in favor of the Christians. Justin Martyr came on the scene as a Gentile convert in the early second century. He became an apologist first in Ephesus and then Rome. He was probably the first to claim the mantle of Israel for the Church. He wrote in his Dialogue With Trypho,

Dialogue 11, "We (Christians) have been led to God through this crucified Christ, and we are the true spiritual Israel, and the descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham who, though uncircumcised, was approved and blessed by God because of his faith and was called the father of many nations."

Further in **Dialogue 44**, "*You (Jews) are sadly mistaken if you think that, just because you are descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, you will share in the legacy of benefits which God promised would be distributed by Christ.*"

And in **Dialogue 119**, "*But we (Christians) are not only a people, but also a holy people, as we have shown already. `And they shall call them the holy people, redeemed by the Lord.' Therefore we are not a people to be despised, But God has even chosen us and He has become manifest to those who asked not after Him. `Behold, I am God,' He says, `to the nation which called not on My name.' For this is that nation which God of old promised to Abraham, when He declared that He would make him a father of many nations; And He has called all of us by that voice, and we have left already the way of living in which we used to spend our days, passing our time in evil after the fashions of the other inhabitants of the earth; and along with Abraham we shall inherit the holy land, when we shall receive the inheritance for an endless eternity, being children of Abraham through*

the like faith. For as he believed the voice of God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, in like manner we having believed God's voice spoken by the apostles of Christ, and promulgated to us by the prophets, have renounced even to death all the things of the world. Accordingly, He promises to him a nation of similar faith, God-fearing, righteous, and delighting the Father; but it is not you (Jews), `in whom is no faith."

Thus by the mid-second century, approximately one hundred years after Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, the Church abandoned Paul's struggle to preserve a special status for the Jews in favor of replacement theology. By this time the split between Judaism and Christianity had hardened, and the flow of Jewish converts into Christianity had largely stopped.

After 321, the writings of the Church Fathers changed in character. No longer was it on the defensive and apologetic, but aggressive, directing its venom at everyone "outside of the flock," in particular the Jewish people who could be found in almost every community and nation.

During this period, we find more examples of anti-Jewish bias in Church literature written by church leaders:

- Hilary of Poitiers (AD 291-371) wrote: "Jews are a perverse people accursed by God forever."
- Gregory of Nyssa (died AD 394), Bishop of Cappadocia: "the Jews are a brood of vipers, haters of goodness..."
- St. Jerome (AD 347-407) describes the Jews as "... serpents, wearing the image of Judas, their psalms and prayers are the braying of donkeys."

In the early 4th century, Eusebius wrote that the promises of the Hebrew Scriptures were for Christians and not the Jews, and the curses were for the Jews. He argued that the Church was the continuation of the Old Testament and thus superseded Judaism. The young Church declared itself to be the true Israel, or "Israel according to the Spirit," heir to the divine promises. They found it essential to discredit the "Israel according to the flesh" to prove that God had cast away His people and transferred His love to the Christians.

At the beginning of the 4th century, a monumental event occurred for the Church, which placed "the Church Triumphant" over "Vanquished Israel." In AD 306, Constantine became the first Christian Roman Emperor. At first, he had a rather pluralistic view and accorded Jews the same religious rights as Christians. However, in AD 321, he made Christianity the official religion of the Empire to the exclusion of all other religions.

This signaled the end of the persecution of Christians, but the beginning of discrimination and persecution of the Jews.

Already at the Church Council in Elvira (Spain) in AD 305, declarations were made to keep Jews and Christians apart, including ordering Christians not to share meals with Jews, not to marry Jews, not to use Jews to bless their fields, and not to observe the Jewish Sabbath.

Imperial Rome, in AD 313, issued the Edict of Milan, which granted favor to Christianity, while outlawing synagogues. Then, in AD 315, another edict allowed the burning of Jews if they were convicted of breaking the laws. As Christianity was becoming the religion of the state, further laws were passed against the Jews:

- The ancient privileges granted to the Jews were withdrawn.
- Rabbinical jurisdiction was abolished or severely curtailed.
- Proselytism to Judaism was prohibited and made punishable by death.
- Jews were excluded from holding high office or a military career.

These and other restrictions were confirmed over and over again by Church Councils for 1,000 years.

In AD 321, Constantine decreed all business should cease on "the honored day of the sun." By substituting Sunday for Saturday as the day for Christian worship/rest, he further advanced the split. This Jewish Shabbat/Christian Sunday controversy also came up at the first real ecumenical Council of Nicea (AD 325), which concluded Sunday to be the Christian day of rest, although it was debated for long after that. Overnight, Christianity was given the power of the Imperial State, and the emperors began to translate the concepts and claims of the Christian theologians against the Jews and Judaism into practice. Instead of the Church taking this opportunity to spread its Gospel message in love, it truly became the Church Triumphant, ready to vanquish its foes.

At the end of the 4th century, the Bishop of Antioch, John Chrysostom (Golden Tongued), the great orator, wrote a series of eight sermons against the Jews. He had seen Christians talking with Jewish people, taking oaths in front of the Ark, and some were keeping the Jewish feasts. He wanted this to stop. In an effort to bring his people back to what he called, "the true faith," the Jews became the whipping boy for his sermon series.

To quote him, *"the synagogue is not only a brothel and a theater; it is also a den of robbers and a lodging for wild beasts. No Jew adores God... Jews are inveterate murderers, possessed by the devil, their debauchery and drunkenness gives them the manners of the pig. They kill and maim one another..."*

One can easily see that a Judeo-Christian who wanted to hold on to his heritage, or a Gentile Christian who wanted to learn more about the parent faith of Christianity, would have found it extremely difficult under this pressure. Chrysostom further

sought to separate Christianity totally from Judaism. He wrote in his 4th Discourse, *"I have said enough against those who say they are on our side, but are eager to follow the Jewish rites... it is against the Jews that I wish to draw up my battle... Jews are abandoned by God and for the crime of deicide (killing God), there is no expiation possible."*

In 387, Augustine converted to Christianity and began a career of prolific writing that would make him the most influential Christian thinker of his day. Augustine's views became the official Church doctrine. When it came to the Jews, Augustine embraced replacement theology, declaring the Jews to be *"the House of Israel which (God) has cast off."*

Augustine thus elevated replacement theology to Church doctrine. It would take a tragedy on the scale of the Holocaust to cause Rome to reexamine this issue. Augustine, in his **"Sermon Against the Jews"**, asserted that even though the Jews deserved the most severe punishment for having put Jesus to death, they have been kept alive by Divine Providence to serve, together with their Scriptures, as witnesses to the truth of Christianity. Their existence was further justified by the service they rendered to the Christian truth, in attesting through their humiliation, the triumph of the Church over the Synagogue. They were to be a *"witness people"*—slaves and servants who should be humbled.

The monarchs of the Holy Roman Empire thus regarded the Jews as serfs of the chamber, and utilized them as slave librarians to maintain Hebrew writings. They also utilized the services of Jews in another enterprise - usury, or money lending. The loaning of money was necessary to a growing economy. However, usury was considered to endanger the eternal salvation of the Christian, and was thus forbidden. So, the church endorsed the practice of lending by Jews, for according to their reasoning, their Jewish souls were lost in any case. Much later, the Jewish people were utilized by the Western countries as trade agents in commerce, and thus we see how the Jewish people found their way into the fields of banking and commerce.

So, by the Middle Ages, the ideological arsenal of Christian anti-Semitism was completely established. This was further manifested in a variety of precedent-setting events within the Church, such as Patriarch Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, expelling the Jews and giving their property to a Christian mob. From a social standpoint, the deterioration of the Jewish position in society was only beginning its decline. During this early period, the virulent Judeo-phobia was primarily limited to the clergy who were always trying to keep their flocks away from the Jews. However, later, the rank and file, growing middle class would be the main source of anti-Semitic activity.

Replacement theology thus evolved into a rationale for persecution of the Jews. Exclusion from God's covenant led to exclusion from Christian society, and then led, too often, to exclusion from human

family and anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish violence and killings such as in the Spanish Inquisition.

The Reformation did not change Christians embracing replacement theology. Instead of rejecting replacement theology, Martin Luther embraced it. Some of the most anti-Semitic writings in the history of the Church came from Luther's pen. In 1543 he wrote, The Jews and Their Lies where he set forth a program for dealing with the Jews. It is a long document, here is but a small excerpt:

First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them."

Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. For they pursue in them the same aims as in their synagogues. Instead they might be lodged under a roof or in a barn, like the gypsies. This will bring home to them the fact that they are not masters in our country, as they boast, but that they are living in exile and in captivity, as they incessantly wail and lament about us before God.

Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them.

Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. For they have justly forfeited the right to such an office by holding the poor Jews captive with the saying of Moses (Deuteronomy 17:10) in which he commands them to obey their teachers on penalty of death, although Moses clearly adds: "what they teach you in accord with the law of the Lord." Those villains ignore that.

The result of these anti-Jewish teachings continued onwards throughout Church history, manifesting itself in such events and actions as the Crusades, the accusation of communion host desecration and blood libel by the Jews, the forced wearing of distinguishing marks to ostracize them, the Inquisition, the displacement of whole Jewish communities by exile or separate ghettos, the destruction of synagogues and Jewish books, physical persecution and execution. Ultimately, the seeds of destruction grew to epic proportions, culminating in the Holocaust, which occurred in "Christian" Europe.

The Holocaust: On July 8, 1933, the Vatican signed the *Concordat* with Hitler. This agreement was Hitler's first bilateral treaty with a foreign power, and it was for him a significant diplomatic victory. Under this agreement, the Vatican recognized Hitler's regime and agreed to remove the Catholic Church and the political parties affiliated with it from the political opposition. German Bishops were obligated to swear an oath of allegiance to the Nazi state. Throughout the war, even as news of atrocities and genocide

made their way into common knowledge, the Vatican never repudiated the *Concordat*.

There were some notable members of the confessing Church however, who opposed the Nazi regime. Martin Niemöller preached against the Nazi regime from the pulpit and spent eight years in a concentration camp, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer participated in the German resistance and was caught and hanged in 1945.

The closest thing to an apology by Rome took place at a press conference on March 16, 1998, Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Holy See's Commission For Religious Relations With the Jews, presented for publication the document, *We Remember: A Reflection On The Shoah*. (Shoah is the Hebrew word for Holocaust.) The document is long. Here is a portion that asks a profound question but that has never been fully answered by Rome:

But it may be asked whether the Nazi persecution of the Jews was not made easier by the anti-Jewish prejudices imbedded in some Christian minds and hearts. Did anti-Jewish sentiment among Christians make them less sensitive, or even indifferent, to the persecutions launched against the Jews by National Socialism when it reached power?

Any response to this question must take into account that we are dealing with the history of people's attitudes and ways of thinking, subject to multiple influences. Moreover, many people were altogether unaware of the "final solution" that was being put into effect against a whole people; others were afraid for themselves and those near to them; some took advantage of the situation; and still others were moved by envy. A response would need to be given case by case. To do this, however, it is necessary to know what precisely motivated people in a particular situation.

Within a generation of the end of the Holocaust of WWII, the Vatican officially renounced replacement theology. Rome's new approach to the Jewish people was one of many reforms to emerge from the Second Vatican Council. In 1965, the Council issued a declaration entitled *Nostra Aetate* addressing Rome's relationship with non-Christian religions. In the document the Vatican boldly and clearly rejected replacement theology. Here are excerpts:

God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues—such is the witness of the Apostle. In company with the Prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder"

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in

catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ.

Much like the Catholic Church, the Protestant world recognized the connection between replacement theology and the horror of the Holocaust. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, most major Protestant denominations have adopted resolutions clearly renouncing replacement theology. The Lutheran's led the way in 1950 when it declared that, "God's promise is valid for His Chosen People, even after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ."

The Presbyterian Church also noted the following when it rejected replacement theology in 1987: "*It is agonizing to discover that the church's teaching of contempt (for the Jews) was a major ingredient that made possible the monstrous policy of annihilation of Jews by Nazi Germany.*"

From its independence until WWI, the USA was characterized by a degree of theological uniformity. It was predominantly Protestant. When it came to the role of the Jews in God's plan for humanity, these evangelical Christians embraced replacement theology. The dual attack of evolution and higher criticism on those who held that the Bible was the inerrant Word of God shook evangelicals. Many responded by adjusting their faith in accommodation. This caused a fast growing movement called *modernism* or *liberalism*. These modernists developed approaches that no longer demanded an inerrant Bible. Truth became subjective.

Other Christians choose to confront it. Conservative Christians sought to purge the modernists from their ranks. These conservatives were commonly known as *Fundamentalists*. John Darby (Plymouth Brethren) whose ministry was in the 19th Century was, in a real sense, the first *Fundamentalist*. Darby's belief that the Bible was the inspired, infallible Word of God was central to his theology. His conservative theology resonated deeply with evangelicals and they embraced his teachings including his views on Israel including the rejection of both replacement theology and decide (killing God).

Fundamentalism quietly developed and grew. Fundamentalists built churches, schools, colleges, seminaries, mission boards, and publishing houses. With little fanfare, fundamentalism gained an influence over American Christianity until they became a political power in the 1980's.

From the early 19th Century, dissident Protestants began to embrace a literal translation of the Abrahamic covenant as an alternative to replacement theology. Under this theology, the Jews were never replaced—they still are the Israel who will inherit all that God promised in the Bible. Accordingly, the birth of the State of Israel is viewed as the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant and of numerous Biblical prophecies. In the 20th Century America, a domestic religious upheaval combined with the unprecedented tragedy of the Holocaust to transform this minority interpretation into the dominant Christian view. More than any single factor, the theological

shift—the decline of replacement theology in post WWII America—explains the rise of Christian Zionism.

As previously stated, Replacement Theology holds that the Church is the replacement for Israel, and that the many promises made to Israel in the Bible are fulfilled in the Christian Church, not in Israel. So, the prophecies in Scripture concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel to the Promised Land are "spiritualized" or "allegorized" into promises of God's blessing for the Church. Major problems exist with this view, such as the continuing existence of the Jewish people throughout the centuries, and especially with the revival of the modern state of Israel.

If Israel has been condemned by God, and there is no future for the Jewish nation, how do we explain the supernatural survival of the Jewish people over the past 2000 years despite the many attempts to destroy them?

How do we explain why and how Israel reappeared as a nation in the 20th century after not existing for 1900 years?

That Israel and the Church are different is clearly taught in the New Testament. The Church is completely different and distinct from Israel, and the two are never to be confused or used interchangeably. We are taught from Scripture that the Church is an entirely new creation that came into being on the Day of Pentecost, and will continue until it is transported into Heaven at the Rapture (Ephesians 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). The Church has no relationship to the curses and blessings for Israel. The covenants, promises, and warnings are valid only for Israel and have been in effect as part of God's plan during these past 2,000 years of dispersion.

The Bible teaches that after the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), God will restore Israel to the primary focus of His plan. The first event at this time is the Great Tribulation. (Revelation chapters 6-19.) The world will be judged for rejecting Christ, while Israel is prepared through the trials of the Great Tribulation for the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Then, when Christ does return to the earth, at the end of the Tribulation, Israel will be ready to receive Him. The remnant of Israel which survives the Tribulation will be saved and the Lord will establish His Kingdom on this earth with the capital as Jerusalem.

With Christ reigning, as King, Israel will be the leading nation, and representatives from all nations will come to Jerusalem to honor and worship the King—Jesus Christ. The Church will return with Christ and will reign with Him for a literal thousand years (Revelation 20:1-5).

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament support a premillennial understanding of God's plan for Israel. Even so, the strongest support for premillennialism is found in the clear teaching of Revelation 20:1-7, where it says, six times, that Christ's kingdom will last 1,000 years. After the

Tribulation the Lord will return and establish His kingdom with the nation of Israel, Christ will reign over the whole earth with Jerusalem as His capital, and Israel will be the leader of the nations. The Church will reign with Him for a literal thousand years.

TODAY: Evangelical Christians have erased all ambiguity regarding God's plan for the Jews and have restored to the Jews the central role in God's continuing plan for humanity. There is no backsliding to replacement theology. Of greater import is the identification with the Jews as they confront challenges to their survival in the world today. Evangelical Christians have become Christian Zionists and stand firmly with the Jews and the State of Israel.

Pastor John Hagee of San Antonio, an outspoken supporter of Israel, says that the motive for Christian Zionism is Christian theology. Christian Zionism is the product of the theological revolution that took place in 20th century America. The replacement theology that had dominated Christianity for so many centuries began a steep decline at the start of the 20th century, and the Holocaust dealt it a knockout blow.

Today, anger at the Jews over the Crucifixion has given way to gratitude to the Jews for providing Christians with Christ and the other fundamentals of Christianity. For many Christian Zionists, their work on behalf of Israel is an effort to repay the Jews for these very precious gifts. This change in emphasis from Christ's death to Christ's Jewish birth has largely coincided with the rejection of replacement theology. When Christian theology shifted its focus to the continuing election of the Jews, Christians likewise shifted their focus to the Jewish roots of their faith. Thus, while not a purely theological motive, gratitude toward the Jews flows directly from theology.

It is impossible for today's thoughtful Christian to feel such deep gratitude to the Jewish people and not be painfully aware of how scandalously this debt to the Jews has been repaid over the centuries. The flip side of gratitude to the Jews is a deeply-held, heartfelt remorse over the long history of Christian anti-Semitism. Many of the most passionate Christian Zionists are quick to express regret and even fury over the record of Christian persecution of the Jews.

For these Christian Zionists, **of which I am one**, the need to make amends for the past adds a sense of urgency to the task of supporting Israel today.

Clearly, a significant aspect to my intention to support Israel is my desire to do the will of my Father and receive His blessing. Consider these words from God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3: "*I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*"

How Do Replacement Theologians Argue Their Case? They Say:

1. To be a son of Abraham is to have faith in Jesus Christ. For them, Galatians 3:29 shows that son ship to Abraham is seen only in spiritual, not national terms: "*And if you be Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*"

Rebuttal: While this is a wonderful inclusionary promise for Gentiles, this verse does not exclude the Jewish people from their original covenant, promise and blessing as the natural seed of Abraham. This verse simply joins us Gentile Christians to what God had already started with Israel.

2. The promise of the land of Canaan to Abraham was only a "starter." The real Promised Land is the whole world. They use Romans 4:13 to claim it will be the Church that inherits the world, not Israel. "*For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*"

Rebuttal: Where does this verse exclude Abraham and His natural prodigy, the Jews? It simply says that through the law, they would not inherit the world, but this would be acquired through faith. This is also true of the Church.

3. The nation of Israel was only the seed of the future Church, which would arise and incorporate people of all nations (Mal. 1:11): "*For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, My Name shall be great among the nations, and in every place, incense shall be offered to My Name, and a pure offering for My Name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts.*"

Rebuttal: This is great, and shows that the Jewish people and Israel fulfilled one of their callings to be "*a light to the nations,*" so that God's Word has gone around the world. It does not suggest God's dealing with Israel was negated because His Name spread around the world.

4. Jesus taught that the Jews would lose their spiritual privileges, and be replaced by another people (Matt. 21:43): "*Therefore I am saying to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it.*"

Rebuttal: In this passage, Jesus was talking about the priests and Pharisees, who failed as leaders of the people. This passage is not talking about the Jewish people or nation of Israel.

5. A true Jew is anyone born of the Spirit, whether he is racially Gentile or Jewish (Rom. 2:28-29): "*For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the*

heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

and God did not break His covenant promises with Israel (Rom. 11:29).

Rebuttal: This argument does not support the notion that the Church replaced Israel. Rather, it simply reinforces what had been said throughout the Hebrew Scriptures [the Old Testament], and it certainly qualifies the spiritual qualifications for Jews or anyone who professes to be a follower of the God of Israel.

6. Paul shows that the Church is really the same "*olive tree*" as was Israel, and the Church is now the tree. Therefore, to distinguish between Israel and the Church is, strictly speaking, false. Indeed, people of Jewish origin need to be grafted back into the Church (Rom 11:17-23).

Rebuttal: This claim is the most outrageous because this passage clearly shows that we Gentiles are the "*wild olive branches*," who get our life from being grafted into the olive tree. The tree represents the covenants, promises and hopes of Israel (Eph. 2:12), rooted in the Messiah and fed by the sap, which represents the Holy Spirit, giving life to the Jews (the "natural branches") and Gentile alike. We Gentiles are told to remember that the olive tree holds us up and NOT to be arrogant or boast against the "*natural branches*" because they can be grafted in again. The olive tree is NOT the Church. We are simply grafted into God's plan that preceded us for over 2,000 years.

7. All the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament, unless they were historically fulfilled before the coming of Jesus Christ, are now the property of the Christian Church. These promises should not be interpreted literally or carnally, but spiritually and symbolically, so that references to Israel, Jerusalem, Zion and the Temple, when they are prophetic, really refer to the Church (2 Cor. 1:20). "*For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*" Therefore, they teach that the New Testament needs to be taught figuratively, not literally.

Rebuttal: Later, in this Teaching Letter, we will look at the fact that the New Testament references to Israel clearly pertain to Israel, not the Church. Therefore, no promise to Israel and the Jewish people in the Bible is figurative, nor can they be relegated to the Church alone. The promises and covenants are literal, many of them are everlasting, and we Christians can participate in them as part of our rebirth, not in that we took them over to the exclusion of Israel. The New Testament speaks of the Church's relationship to Israel and her covenants as being "*grafted in*" (Rom. 11:17), "*brought near*" (Eph. 2:13), "*Abraham's offspring (by faith)*" (Rom. 4:16), and "*partakers*" (Rom. 15:27), NOT as usurpers of the covenant and a replacer of physical Israel. We Gentile Christians joined into what God had been doing in Israel,

CONCLUSION: Had the Church understood the clear message of being grafted into the Olive Tree (Romans 11) from the beginning, the sad legacy of anti-Semitic hatred from the Church probably would have been avoided. The error of replacement theology is like a cancer in the Church that has not only caused it to violate God's Word concerning the Jewish people and Israel, but it made Christians into instruments of hate, not love, in God's Name. The church has not replaced Israel in God's plan. Replacement theology is **bad** theology. While God may be focusing His attention primarily on the church in this dispensation of grace, God has not forgotten Israel, and will one day restore Israel to His intended role for the nation He has chosen.

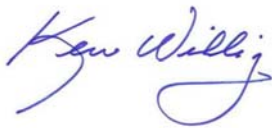
Once again in our study of the History of the Church, we see that the foundational issue or root cause of the bad theology of replacement theology is **the authority of Scripture**.

In our study of the Reformation, the “trigger” issue was indulgences. The formal issue was justification or salvation by faith alone. But the underlying, or root or foundational issue was the **authority of Scripture alone—sola scriptura**.

BE EVER MINDFUL OF THIS—every deviant theology, every heresy, every religious add-on, every liberal “accommodation” for sin—from approval of the homosexual lifestyle, to replacement theology, to Christian liberalism and apostasy in the Church, to Mariology, to indulgences, to purgatory, to supporting a woman’s right to choose abortion, to salvation by faith plus good works—every false teaching or doctrine no matter how appealing or religious appearing, is rooted in **the authority of Scripture** and its interpretation.

God’s word is God’s word. It speaks for itself. We are to understand it through *exegesis*—allowing the text to speak for itself—rather than reading meaning into the text (*eisegesis*). Had the early Church fathers held fast to God’s clear covenant with Abraham in Genesis there never would have been replacement theology and millions of Jews would never had been murdered.

Before undertaking this study, I had never heard of *replacement theology*. Now, I am appalled by what I have learned. It never ceases to amaze me how far and wide Christianity has strayed from its roots of the first century Church as we have studied in the Acts of the Apostles. Let this study be one more lesson of our need to constantly compare what we are taught with the Word of God. Memorize and practice this verse from Acts 17:11: *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul* (the Church, Ken Willig, my favorite pastor) *said was true.*



Ken Willig
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This document has been prepared for limited use and distribution. It is not for sale.