

February 22, 2023

## **The Church in the Medieval Era, AD 500-1500**

### **Review of the Patristic Era**

- Week 3 (Doctrine of Christ)
  - The Nicene Council of 325 AD
    - Arius of Alexandria (256-336) vs. Athanasius of Alexandria (297-373)
    - *Homoousios* – Christ is consubstantial (same essence) with the Father
  - The Chalcedonian Council of 451 AD
    - Eutyches (divine and human in one nature) and Nestorius (two people – one divine and one human).
    - Chalcedonian Definition (The Hypostatic Union)
- Week 4 (Doctrine of the Trinity) – three persons and one essence
  - Tertullian (c. 160-220)
  - Augustine (354-430)
  - Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329-390)
- Week 5 (Scripture & Tradition)
  - Source of Authority – Rule of Faith – Irenaeus (c. 120-c. 200)
  - Athanasius' Letter 39 (c. 367)
- Week 6 (Doctrine of Salvation)
  - Augustine (born with original sin) vs. Pelagius (born neutral)
  - Union with Christ: Substitutionary Atonement

**What/Who is the Church? Who are its leaders? How is it governed? What are the sacraments/ordinances? Etc.**

“In one holy catholic and apostolic Church” – Nicene Creed

## 1. *The Leadership of the Church*

### **Biblical Texts:**

- Acts 14:23 – And when they appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in who they had believed.
- Ephesians 4:11-12 – And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the unity of Christ.
- 1 Timothy 3:1-7 – The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach...
- 1 Timothy 3:8-13 – Deacons likewise must be dignified... For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.
- Titus 1:5-9 – “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint *elders* in every town as I directed you... <sup>7</sup> For an *overseer*, as God's steward, must be above reproach...

### **Brief History:**

Ignatius of Antioch (35 – 108) taught church leadership was threefold: **bishop, presbyter, and deacon**. Congregations formed around cities and eventually, by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the most powerful bishops were from the cities of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome. Over time Rome's authority grew, which led to Leo the Great (440-461) writing *Tome* (a letter), which lays the theological foundation for the papacy by looking to Matthew 16:19.

Gregory the Great (590-604) – is known as the first medieval pope

Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) – the birth of the papacy. “Believed the church to be at her best when she was under clerical control. He... took measures to end the practice of lords appointing their own bishops, of enforcing celibacy, and altogether restoring what they believed to be the New Testament ideal.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility did not receive an official declaration until Vatican I in 1870.”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Zachary M. Bowden, *Historical Theology For The Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2021), 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

## 2. *The Eucharist as The Center Piece of a Church Service*

### **Biblical Texts:**

- Luke 22:19 – And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 – For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” <sup>25</sup> In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### **Brief History:**

#### *The Radbertus (785-865) and the Ratramnus of Corbie (d. 868) Controversy*

“In his work *Concerning the Body and Blood of the Lord*, Radbertus followed Ambrose, concluding that the bread and wine present in the Eucharist were actually converted into the body and blood of Christ. The bread was no longer bread, and the wine no longer wine, even though they appeared the same. A miraculous transformation had occurred. The eating that was done, however, was done spiritually, and only among those who were true followers of Christ. Ratramnus disagreed. Writing against his old master in *Concerning Christ's Body and Blood*, he followed Augustine, contending that while Christ's flesh and blood were mysteriously present in the bread and the wine, the elements remained precisely that they were, bread and wine.”<sup>3</sup>

#### The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 – Called by Pope Innocent III (1198-1216)

“There is one universal church of the faithful, outside of which there is absolutely no salvation. In this church the priest and the sacrifice are both the same Jesus Christ. His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine. The bread is *transubstantiated* into his body and the wine into his blood, by God's power. This is so that we may receive of him what he has received of us in order to realize that mystery of unity. No one can affect this sacrament except a duly ordained priest.”<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Bowden, *Historical Theology*, 122.

<sup>4</sup> Able to find all the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council here – <https://pages.uoregon.edu/dluebke/Witches442/FourthLateran1215.html>

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) – “The presence of Christ’s true body and blood in this sacrament cannot be detected by sense, nor understanding, but by faith alone, which rests upon Divine authority. Hence, on Luke 22:19: *This is My body which shall be delivered up for you*, Cyril says: *Doubt not whether this be true; but take rather the Savior’s words with faith; for since He is the Truth, He lieth not.*”<sup>5</sup>

### **Preparation For Next Week:**

Read Article – <https://jgduesing.com/theology-in-the-medieval-era-w-madison-grace-ii-on-salvation/> (Attached to this document)

### **Further Resources:**

Duesing, Jason and Nathan Finn. *Historical Theology For The Church*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2021.

Duesing, Jason. *Seven Summits in Church History*. Nashville, TN: Rainer Publishing, 2016.

Ferguson, Everett. *Church History, Volume One: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.

Litfin, Bryan. *Getting to Know The Church Fathers: An Evangelical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

---

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae, Tertia Pars, 60-90* (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2012), Question 75, Article 1.