

These are notes that Dr. Bray provided to us on which the Church History 1 class is based. The **audio follows this outline in general**, but does **not include** the Introduction section or some of the points that are written out in this outline. We have indicated where the outline corresponds to the audio, and we have made this complete outline available for your benefit.

Introduction: What is church history?

1. The Discipline: Two different approaches:

- A. Church history is the work of God's Holy Spirit in the life of his people. It is the story of the new Israel, called by God out of every tribe and nation.
- B. Church history is the story of a religious institution (or series of institutions) with a particular social identity and purpose.

Both approaches contain important aspects of the truth. As a scientific discipline, 'church history' really began in the first half of the nineteenth century, and it has concentrated more on B than on A. A would now be called the 'doctrine of the church' or 'ecclesiology'.

2. Major exponents of church history.

August Neander (Neumann) (1789-1850). He was a German Lutheran who believed that the church started out as A and ended up as B. His views were taken up and developed by Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930). The basic belief is that the church has been corrupted, and church history is an attempt to find out when and how that happened.

John Henry Newman (1801-90). An Anglican who in 1845 converted to Roman Catholicism, largely because of his study of church history. He believed that the church is a single, divine society which has been preserved in faithfulness since apostolic times, even as it has grown and developed new insights into the truth. The agent of this preservation is the papacy, the living voice of the apostles in the church. Thus A is manifested in B, as long as B = Roman Catholic Church. Corruption is characteristic of heresy (including all forms of Protestantism).

Kenneth Scott Latourette (1884-1968). An American Evangelical historian. He believed that the church has been a mixed multitude from the beginning. It has never been totally corrupt, but neither has it been miraculously 'preserved' by the papacy or any other human agency. A is the invisible, eternal church to which all true believers belong, and which never changes - it really has no 'history'. B is the visible sphere of God's action on earth. Ideally, all members of B should belong to A, but in practice this is not the case. B manifests A to varying degrees, but never perfectly.

II. When did the visible church on earth begin?

1. With Abraham. This was the view of Paul, Calvin and the covenant theologians of the seventeenth century.

The advantages of this view are:

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- it preserves the unity of the two testaments.
- it gives meaning to God's revelation before the coming of Christ. - it offers a way of applying the OT law to Christians today.

The possible disadvantages are:

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- it may lead to a downplaying of the uniqueness of Christ.
- it may lead to a literalistic application of the OT law to Christians.
- it may lead to a complete spiritualization of the church, discounting history altogether.

2. With the incarnation of Christ. This is the traditional Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox view.

The advantages of this view are:

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- it is thoroughly Christ-centered.
- it avoids spiritualizing the church.
- it makes it possible to see the institutional church as the 'body of Christ'.

The possible disadvantages are:

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- it is inflexible, leaving no room for the corruption of the visible church.
- it has problems integrating the bodily ascension of Christ into its perspective. - it leads to an application of OT ceremonial laws to NT worship.

3. With Pentecost. This is the general view adopted by scientific historians today.

The advantages of this view are:

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- it stresses the 'new work' of God in Christ, over against the OT.
- it distinguishes the life of the church from the earthly life of Jesus. - it emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in the church.

The possible disadvantages are:

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- it tends to ignore the OT.

- it tends to separate the church from the earthly life of Jesus. - it tends to assume that the apostles created the church.

Our proposal: A modified version of 3. This does justice to the newness of the NT, and to the fact that Christianity is not just a peculiar form of Judaism. At the same time, we must take on board the important affirmation of 1, that we are the children of Abraham and that the OT is a valid revelation from God. The Biblical basis for this view can be found in a passage like Hebrews 1:1-3. We must also recognize the main point of 2, which is that the church can only be studied as a visible manifestation of God's people and that A is revealed in B, even if we must reject the claim that B is a full and complete (uncorrupt) manifestation of A.

Lecture 1: The World of the First Christians

I. The socio-political background

The OT was rooted in a world bounded by Mesopotamia (Iraq) to the east and Egypt to the west. This is seen also in the birth narratives of Jesus, where the wise men came from Mesopotamia and the holy family fled to Egypt. Jesus himself never moved outside the historic boundaries of ancient Israel.

1. The Roman Empire. This was the chief political fact of Jesus' time, but it was a recent phenomenon. The Romans conquered Palestine in 63 BC and ruled it through client kings until AD 6, when part of it was placed under direct administration. However, client kings of the Herodian family continued to rule parts of the country until AD 70. This is why, when Jesus was born, Herod the Great was ruling in Jerusalem, but when he was crucified, Jerusalem was the capital of a Roman province, while Nazareth was ruled by another Herod.

Constitutionally speaking, Rome was a city republic, of a type familiar in Ancient Greece. But as its empire grew, Rome was willing to grant citizenship to people who were not ethnically 'Roman' and who had never even visited the capital city. This had the effect of turning the city-state into a world empire, even though the institutions which governed it remained basically unchanged.

The emperor was the commander-in-chief of the army and the first citizen (princeps) of the state. He was not a god, but his predecessor was deified at death, so he could be called the 'son of a god' and venerated accordingly. In practice, this allowed him to be a dictator for life. Augustus (27 BC - AD 14) was the first emperor of this type, and was on the throne at the time Jesus was born.

2. The Greek language. This was the common tongue of the Roman empire, though it was not the official language (which was Latin), nor was it generally spoken in Palestine. The Assyrians and the Persians had favored Aramaic, a language closely related to Hebrew, as the official language of their empires, and in Jesus' day it had become the spoken tongue of Palestine. Greek had spread after the conquests of Alexander the Great (338-23

BC), who left behind him a string of Hellenistic cities where it was the everyday language. Alexandria and Antioch were typical examples of these. In Jesus' day it was the trade language, and had become the home language of overseas (diaspora) Jews, like Saul of Tarsus. It was the language of the NT and of the early church.

3. Mobility. The conquest of the Mediterranean region by Rome eliminated threats of piracy etc., and made travel relatively efficient and safe. It fostered the development of an urban culture based on trade - the world of the Apostle Paul (but NOT of Jesus). Jews were very prominent in this development, and may have accounted for about 25% of the population of Alexandria. There were Jewish synagogues all over the Mediterranean, which worshipped in Greek and attracted some local people ('God-fearers') as well.

4. Literacy. A high percentage of people in the Roman Empire could read and write - perhaps as many as 50%. Books were expensive, but letter-writing was common, and monumental inscriptions were numerous. This favored the spread of a 'book religion' such as Judaism, and later Christianity.

II. The religious scene

1. Greek and Roman polytheism had virtually merged and expanded to incorporate the gods of the subject peoples. Roman religion (as opposed to Greek) retained elements of an ancestor cult.
2. Mystery religions from the east penetrated special groups (soldiers in particular) and operated like secret societies, with initiation rites. Many people thought Christianity was one of them.
3. Judaism had a number of competing sects - Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, even Samaritans. Christians were closest to the Pharisees, though deeply hostile to their approach to the law. Rabbinic Judaism was also developing at this time (Mishnah).
4. Philo of Alexandria (d. AD 50) was a Jew who tried to harmonize Greek and Hebrew thought. He supposed that the Greek philosophers had stolen all their best ideas from the OT, and wrote allegorical commentaries on Genesis to prove his point.
5. Greek philosophy had a number of schools, of which Stoicism was the closest to Christianity. There was also a lively Platonic tradition, which the early Christians opposed. In Greek terms, philosophy was generally anti-religious because it was rational, whereas pagan religion was not.

III. Christianity and its surrounding culture

1. Christianity appealed to educated Gentiles because it was a historical religion, unlike paganism.
 2. Christianity could reconcile philosophy and devotion, the rational and the non-rational, which split Greco-Roman culture in two.
 3. Christianity preached a message of forgiveness for sin, available to all who repent and believe.
- It spoke of a God of love who came to save, not to condemn his people.

4. Christianity lacked complex laws and rituals; it was relatively easy to join (unlike Judaism). 5. There was no discrimination inside the church - masters and slaves were on an equal footing, as were women, Gentiles and so on.
6. The NT appealed to the Greeks as literature, especially the Gospel of John, which is one of its masterpieces. Luke was also widely respected as a historian. The Bible was a public document, open for general inspection by everyone, not a secret code which only the initiated could understand.

Lecture 2. Relationship Between Jesus and the Church

I. Did Jesus start the church?

1. Roman Catholics say YES. According to them, Jesus came to earth and left the church - his body - behind. In the mass, the body and blood of Christ are re-presented each time the priest offers the sacrifice.
2. Liberal Protestants say NO. According to them, Jesus was a Jewish teacher who had no thought of ever founding anything. The church came about because his followers decided to perpetuate his memory, not because he wanted it to happen.

What does the Bible say?

In favor of YES:

- A. Jesus chose twelve disciples.
- B. Jesus sent seventy men out to do missionary work.
- C. Jesus healed the sick and proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God.
- D. Jesus said that he would send another comforter to take his place and do even greater things in the future.

In favor of NO:

- A. Jesus remained within Judaism and never sought to replace its structures or rituals.
- B. Jesus never organized a community of his own.
- C. Jesus resisted the Messianic claims made by his followers.

Our answer:

Jesus did not found a church as part of his earthly mission, but he prepared the way for it.

- A. He chose his disciples for a purpose.
- B. He foresaw the coming of the Spirit and predicted a future for the disciples on earth.
- C. He taught a new approach to the law which would inevitably lead to a breach with Judaism at some point.
- D. His death and resurrection changed the course of history. after that, he prepared his disciples for their future mission.

II. The apostles

An apostle was first of all one who witnessed the resurrection. This is why Junia is called an 'apostle' in Romans 16:7. The NT distinguishes between 'apostles' and the Twelve. We restrict the term to the latter nowadays.

The disciples of Jesus automatically became apostles (except Judas, of course). The replacement for Judas was chosen by lot from among those who had witnessed the resurrection (Acts 1:25-6). Paul became an apostle extraordinary when he was granted a vision of the risen Christ (Acts 9). Without that, he would not have been able to substantiate his claim to apostleship.

III. Pentecost and the Jerusalem church

This was the feast of the first-fruits, the beginning of the church's mission. 3000 people were converted and the Jerusalem church was started on this day. Many of the 3000 must have gone back to their homes elsewhere, but we hear next to nothing about that. The Jerusalem church practiced a form of primitive communism (Acts 2:41-7) but it did not work and the experiment was abandoned. This was the first example of the church's imperfection in human terms.

At an early stage the church had to divide the ministry into preaching (apostles) and social welfare and administration (deacons). (Acts 6:1-4). This is proof that the church could develop its structures according to necessity, and was not bound by some pre-ordained plan.

IV. Relations with Judaism

Almost all the first Christians were Jews and at first they maintained Jewish customs. Some Jews were tolerant of them and were prepared to wait and see what would happen, e.g. Gamaliel (Acts 5: 33-40).

Other Jews however, were intolerant and persecuted the church almost from the beginning. Saul of Tarsus was one of these. Stephen the deacon was their first victim (Acts 6:9 - 7:10).

The church claimed the OT as its own, but re-interpreted it in the light of Christ and his teaching. This led to the abandonment of the sacrificial system of Judaism, but many Jewish practices remained embedded in church life.

The church began to define itself over against Judaism in AD 48-9, at the famous council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). There it was decided that Gentiles could become Christians without becoming Jews first. In his letter to the Galatians, written about this time, Paul explained how the Jewish law was now obsolete, and very soon observance of it fell away in the churches.

After the destruction of the Jewish temple in AD 70, Christianity and Judaism went their separate ways, often with great hostility between them.

Lecture 3: The spread of the church

I. Evangelism

We know relatively little about how the Gospel spread in the first few centuries, but the NT gives us some guidelines about the very beginning.

1. The apostles went to the synagogues to preach, divided them and then started a congregation out of those who believed their message.
2. Individual Christians witnessed to whoever they could, whenever they got the chance - Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch.
3. Christianity had rural roots in Palestine, but elsewhere it was mainly an urban phenomenon. Mission was done through the medium of Greek; there was little attempt made to translate anything into the local languages. Paul lived in a world of traders, and his main concern was to spread the word as widely as possible - others could be left to do the follow-up later.

II. Paul

He was the apostle to the Gentiles, though in fact most of his converts seem to have been Jews living among the gentiles, rather than Gentiles themselves. Nevertheless, they formed a bridge to the wider community.

Paul began his missionary work in Galatia and gradually moved westwards from there. He established several churches in Greece and had plans to go to Rome and Spain, though whether he ever got that far is uncertain.

Paul organized his churches and arranged for them to govern themselves by appointing elders (or delegating others like Timothy and Titus to do that). But he always remained available for consultation, and felt free to manage his churches from afar. Local churches ran their own affairs but they were also conscious of belonging to a worldwide church for whose welfare they were responsible. Paul collected money for the Jerusalem church and took it there himself - despite the great risk he faced in so doing.

III. Peter

The first of the apostles, and the most controversial. He led the church at Jerusalem in the early days, but was reluctant to forgo Jewish practices and admit Gentiles as equal members of the community. God had to speak to him directly about Cornelius (Acts 10) and Paul also challenged him about his attitude. Peter was clearly not infallible!

Later on we find him in Antioch, but where did he go from there? This is a mystery, but it is of the greatest importance for church history because of the claims of Rome, which are still being pressed today.

Peter probably died in Rome as a martyr sometime after AD 64 (the great fire of Rome).

There is a very early tradition marking his grave in the Vatican cemetery (under the present St Peter's cathedral) and no other place has ever claimed this honor. But if the evidence that he died there is fairly secure, it is very different about the claim that he lived there. When Paul wrote to Rome (AD 57 or so), there was no sign of Peter, and it seems highly unlikely that he founded the Roman church. When Paul got to Rome himself (AD 62 or so) there was still no sign of Peter anywhere, which suggests that if he did go to the city voluntarily (and not as a prisoner) he could not have been there very long.

The Roman church claims:

- A. Peter was the chief apostle and Christ's successor in a special sense.
- B. Peter founded the Roman church and died in Rome, making it the most important church.
- C. Peter has passed on his apostolic powers to his successors, who are living apostles today. Of these claims, only part 1 of A and part 2 of B have any substance to them. The all-important C has no historical backing whatsoever - we do not even know who Peter's successors were, or if there were any!

IV. John

Another mystery figure! He drops out of the narrative very early, and we know little or nothing about his career that can be substantiated by reliable evidence. However, there are five NT books which are associated with 'John', and it is generally assumed that at least two of them (the Gospel and 1 John) have a real association with the apostle. It is also generally agreed that he died in Ephesus, where Polycarp of Smyrna (70-156) had known him. 2 and 3 John were written by the same person, but was he the apostle? Revelation is the most controversial of all, though it is quite possible that the apostle was indeed exiled on Patmos in the mid to late 60s.

V. Others

Mark is supposed to have been Peter's secretary, and is credited with having founded the church at Alexandria.

Andrew supposedly turned up in Patras (Greece) and may have evangelized there.

Thomas is supposed to have gone to India - not proved, but not impossible either.

By AD 70 (the end of the NT period) there were certainly flourishing churches in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece and Rome. There may have been churches in Mesopotamia and India, but we cannot be sure about this. But the great mystery is Egypt. There should have been a flourishing church in Alexandria, and perhaps there was, but the NT is silent about this. It is especially frustrating, because Egypt has proved to be by far the richest source of documentary evidence (papyri) about the early church, including the oldest fragments of the Gospels.

IV. The Jews and persecution

The Jews had a history of persecuting deviant sects in so far as they could do so. The Samaritans, for example, had long been shunned by them. But Jews had no right to put anyone to death; the most they could do was to hand people over to the civil authorities for punishment, as they did with Jesus.

The Jews persecuted Christians because:

- A. They thought that Jesus' claim to be God was blasphemous, and the Christians' claim to be Jewish was intolerable. (It would not have mattered so much if the Christians had been Gentiles.)

B. They were afraid of assimilation to the wider culture, which would be the death of their own heritage and identity. This is in fact what happened to Jewish Christians, who seldom (if ever) transmitted their Jewish inheritance to their children, once they were converted to Christ.

It later became a standard Christian belief that the Jews were the main instigators of anti-Christian persecution, though whether this was understood historically or contemporaneously is not clear.

V. The Gentiles and persecution

The first indication we have of Christians being persecuted by the state comes in AD 49, when the emperor Claudius ordered the Jews out of Rome because they were rioting over one 'Chrestus'. Priscilla and Aquila were among those who fled; they went to Corinth. Serious persecution began with the great fire of Rome in AD 64, which the emperor Nero blamed on the Christians. Christians in Rome were rounded up and put to death, but how far the persecution spread is unknown.

There may have been a persecution under the emperor Domitian in AD 95-6, but the evidence is unclear.

In 112-13 the governor of Bithynia (Pliny the Younger) asked the emperor Trajan what to do about Christians. They were to be punished, but not sought out deliberately for persecution.

The first systematic persecution occurred under Marcus Aurelius in AD 177.

There was another major persecution under the emperor Decius in AD 251 and finally the so-called 'great persecution' under the emperor Diocletian in AD 303-5.

Persecutions were sporadic and (usually) fairly ineffective, but they left a lasting impression on the church.

(audio stops here. Continues at Lecture 4: The Latin church: Tertullian. One class meeting was cancelled due to weather.)

VI. The theology of martyrdom

To deal with persecution, Christians developed a theology of martyrdom which went as follows: A. Jesus foretold persecution, so it was inevitable that it would occur. B.

Persecution was the result of faithfulness to the Gospel.

C. A person who died for the faith would automatically go to heaven.

D. Martyrdom was to be welcomed as an evangelistic opportunity as well. E. Martyrdom should be anticipated by a life of self-discipline (asceticism). F. Persecution was a sign that the end of the world was near.

Later on, this theology developed in some aberrant ways:

A. It was believed that martyrs were especially holy people, who could be prayed to.

B. It was believed that martyrdom was the only way to cleanse sins committed after baptism. C. It was believed that martyrdom should be actively sought by true believers.

D. It was believed that those who were not persecuted were not being truly faithful to Christ.

VII. Intellectual opposition to the Gospel

Many Jews and pagans objected to the Gospel for intellectual reasons. Jews could not accept the idea of a divine incarnation, nor could they approve of abrogating the Mosaic law. They disputed with Christians over the right understanding of the OT.

Christians mainly used the Septuagint (LXX) translation of the OT, which Jews came to believe had been corrupted. Christians, on the other hand, accused Jews of a slavish literalism which ignored the spiritual meaning of the Biblical text.

Greeks tended to reject Christianity on the grounds that it was an irrational superstition. Such people usually rejected all religion, and thought that Christianity's claims to be rational were absurd.

About AD 178 Celsus wrote a detailed refutation of Christianity, which was in turn refuted by Origen about forty years later. The main arguments were:

A. The world is very old but Christianity is very new. How can it be the absolute truth?

B. Christianity preaches that the created world is good, not evil. How do we explain suffering?

C. Christianity preaches a divine incarnation, but if matter is evil, how can this be?

Christianity won out because it was historical; its claims were open to refutation, which was not forthcoming. Also, it was coherent, offering a synthesis of philosophy and religion which paganism had failed to achieve. The key thing about Celsus is that he was arguing on ground chosen by Christians - they were already setting the intellectual agenda.

In the early third century we find Plotinus (204-70) reworking Platonism to make it a mystical experience. Was he trying to provide an alternative to Christianity?

Early Christian writings

I. The apocryphal New Testament

Many people circulated writings attributed to apostles or their companions, but most of these were rejected. In a few cases (Hebrews, 2 Peter, Jude, Revelation) there was some debate before the books were finally accepted as truly apostolic, but on the whole, the divide between the canonical and the non-canonical is fairly clear.

Non-canonical writings tend to be less well organized, more mythological and more legalistic than their canonical counterparts. Many of them were unknown until the discoveries in Egypt in the twentieth century, particularly at Nag Hammadi (1946). See Craig Evans, *Noncanonical writings and NT interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1992) for a complete list and explanation.

Some of the sayings of Jesus recorded in these writings may be genuine, but we have no way of knowing for sure (apart from the ones found in the canonical Gospels). Today,

many of the weird theories about Christian origins are taken from these writings, on the (unproved) assumption that they are authentic.

These books show the need which the early church had for a canon of Scripture; a body of literature which could be accepted as authentically inspired by God for the use of the church.

II. Post-apostolic epistles

After the death of the apostles, their immediate successors continued to write epistles to different churches, instructing them in the ways of the faith. They are full of information about church life, which was becoming much more structured about this time. Many of them were regarded as inauthentic because of this; they are sometimes lumped together under the label 'early Catholicism', which is supposed to be a sign of the corruption of the primitive message of Jesus.

Prominent among these writers are Clement of Rome (about AD 95), Polycarp of Smyrna (70-156) and Ignatius of Antioch (died about 120). Ignatius in particular is important because of his advanced theories about bishops in the church.

III. The apologists

1. Justin Martyr (c. 100-65). Three of his books survive - two 'apologies' and a dialogue with the Jewish rabbi Trypho (Tarphon). His first apology is an attempt to win philosophers over to the faith by developing the logos doctrine. According to Justin, Plato and the rest were blind men seeking the truth; they stumbled across its outline but were unable to discern what it was.

The second apology is an argument from persecution, which is supposed to prove that truth (always unpopular) lies with the Christians. In his dialogue with Trypho, Justin argues against Judaism, mainly on the ground that it is unspiritual in its interpretation of the Bible.

2. Athenagoras of Athens (fl. c. 177). He wrote an apology addressed to the emperor Marus Aurelius and a book about the resurrection. In the former work, he defended the faith against charges of cannibalism, atheism and incest. In the latter, he justified the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, always a difficult idea for pagans to accept. He was the first person to use the word *trinitas* (Trinity) of the Godhead.

3. Melito of Sardis (fl. c. 170). He wrote an apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius, and on a number of other subjects, such as baptism and the date of Easter. He tied the latter very closely to the Jewish Passover - a fact which made him particularly anti-Semitic. He believed that Easter should be celebrated on the Jewish Passover, and not on a Sunday, but he lost this argument. He is also the first person we know of who made a pilgrimage to Palestine.

IV. Irenaeus of Lyon (d. 200)

The last and greatest of the apologists, he was a student of Polycarp in Smyrna, and went from there to Lyon about AD 178. He was the church's first real theologian, because he attempted to systematize the Christian faith. His only surviving work is a lengthy treatise

against heresies, which he analyzes according to the so-called 'rule of faith', a handlist of doctrines which he saw as constituting the basis of Christian orthodoxy.

1. The rule of faith. This was a digest of Biblical teaching, but it did not yet have a fixed form. Perhaps it originated in baptism, when candidates were asked to confess their beliefs, but this is not entirely certain. It does seem, though, that our Apostles' creed is a development of one form of the rule of faith.

2. The canon of Scripture. Irenaeus is the first person to speak of a New Testament, which he places on a par with the OT. He also insists that there are no more than four canonical Gospels.

3. Recapitulation. This was Irenaeus' great contribution to the doctrine of redemption. He had a cyclical view of time, and believed that in the end, all things would return to the beginning. The incarnation of Christ occurred at the lowest point of the cycle, and began the process of returning to the source.

V. Conclusion

Most of the writings of this period were composed to meet particular needs - as were the NT books. Only slowly did it become apparent that a more systematic approach would be needed.

N. B. Most of the books from this period, even those ostensibly written to non-believers, probably circulated almost entirely within the church. Few (if any) non-Christians would have read them, or even been aware of their existence. The aim was to strengthen believers more than it was to convert unbelievers (despite appearances to the contrary).

Heresy and orthodoxy

I. The modern debate

This has been encapsulated by Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and heresy in earliest Christianity*, originally published in German in 1932 and translated into English in 1972. Bauer, following Harnack, said:

A. The early church was a pluralistic society, with many different, competing beliefs.

B. Christian unity was based on devotion to Jesus, the risen Christ. It was an experience rather than a set of beliefs.

C. After about 150, an organized group within the church staged a takeover on the basis of an 'orthodoxy' which they invented to justify their power. They excluded those who disagreed with them, and called them 'heretics'.

D. 'Heresy' (i.e. diversity) lasted longest in remote places, which were relatively isolated from the central churches where the takeover occurred. Finds from Upper Egypt are thus probably truer to the spirit of earliest Christianity than the writings of well-known theologians like Irenaeus.

Bauer's thesis has been decisively refuted by H. E. W. Turner (*The pattern of Christian truth*) and J. N. D. Kelly (*Early Christian creeds; Early Christian doctrines*). They say:

- A. There has always been a pattern of Christian truth, even if it has not always been closely defined and not everyone has subscribed to it. The Trinity is a good example of this.
- B. Christian unity was based on confession, which necessitated the articulation of experience, and therefore doctrine.
- C. There is no evidence for any organized takeover of the church at any period in its history. If pluralism had really existed at the beginning, it is far more likely that the church would have evolved into different, competing sects, but this did not happen. Christian doctrine evolved over time; it was not imposed as a political program within a defined time limit.
- D. Heretics fled to remote places where they could escape detection. What we find there proves nothing about the general trend of Christian belief in the church as a whole.

II. Jewish-based heresies

These flourished within the Jewish Christian orbit, and derived mainly from a desire to keep as much of the OT law as possible. They tended:

- A. to want to impose the law (e.g. circumcision) on Gentile converts.
- B. to deny the incarnation of the Son of God in Jesus Christ.

The so-called 'Ebionites' are supposed to have been a Jewish-Christian sect, possibly of Essene or Qumranic origin. They rejected Christ's divinity and also the epistles of Paul, because they seemed to be 'anti-Jewish' in their rejection of the law. The Ebionites were ascetics, vegetarians and apparently dualists as well - not very typical Jews!

III. Gentile-based heresies

These tended to want to combine elements of Greek philosophy with Christian ideas. Normally, it was the former which provided the framework into which the latter were supposed to be integrated.

1. Marcion (d. 144). He was a preacher from Pontus (Asia Minor) -who went to Rome about 117, where he divided the church by his ferociously anti-Semitic preaching. He denied that Yahweh was the father of Jesus, calling him the 'creator' ('demiurge') instead. He rejected the OT completely, and much of the NT as well, because it was too Jewish. In the end, he restricted the canon to Luke and the Pauline epistles. He was eventually refuted by Tertullian, who pointed out that Luke and Paul were also very Jewish - Marcion's pretended distinction did not hold up in practice, and he ended up by contradicting himself.

2. Valentinus and Basilides (c. 140). They tried to assimilate Christian belief to a hierarchy of pseudo-philosophical concepts which they regarded as emanations of the divine being. They played with words like *pleroma* (fulness) and *nous* (mind), which they found in the NT and lifted out of context. Today their views are lumped together as 'gnostic', because of their belief in a higher *gnosis* or 'knowledge' and 'gnosticism' has become a major theme in the study of the early church.

3. Montanus (c. 170). He was an advocate of the so-called 'new prophecy' which was the revelation of the Paraclete to him and two prophetesses (Priscilla and Maximilla). They predicted the end of the world and the descent of the New Jerusalem at a place in Asia Minor called Pepuza. Montanus also regarded his sayings as divinely inspired, on a par with the OT and NT. It was a 'Johannine' heresy and greatly impressed Tertullian (and also John Wesley) because of its strict spiritual discipline.

IV. The Syriac church

This developed in Aramaic-speaking Syria and may have had links with Qumran. It was claimed that King Agbar IX of Commagene had corresponded with Jesus himself - unlikely, but it may testify to an independent origin for the church. Its most important early theologian was Tatian, who had been a pupil of Justin Martyr in Rome but who later returned to Syria. Tatian tried to reduce the four Gospels to a single narrative, in his famous Diatessaron, written about 170. Its main characteristic is its strong ascetic bias. For example: 'I am the true vine' becomes 'I am the fruit of the tree of the earth', because Tatian was against alcohol. He also believed that perpetual virginity was a mark of true holiness.

(Audio continues here)

Lecture 4: The Latin Church

I. Origins

Christianity reached Rome within a decade or so of the resurrection of Jesus, but Rome's church was Greek-speaking until about 250. Nevertheless, it remained the major church in the Latin-speaking world, without serious rivals anywhere else.

Churches appeared in Gaul (now France) and Spain before 200, but they too were mainly Greek speaking at first. The earliest Latin-speaking churches were therefore in North Africa, based primarily in the capital city of Carthage (near modern Tunis).

It is possible that the North African church had direct contact with Jewish Christianity and was influenced by that, but most scholars believe that it was simply a transplant from the Greek-speaking world. There was no real translation of the Bible until after 375, when Jerome produced his Vulgate, but portions of Scripture were put into Latin from time to time, and are now being collected as the so-called Vetus Latina (Old Latin Bible). The North African church was a church of martyrs. An unknown group of peasants perished at Scilli in 180, and Perpetua and Felicity died together in 203. Their stories became part of the founding legends of the church, mainly thanks to Tertullian, the first important Christian Latin writer.

II. Tertullian (fl. c. 186-212)

He was born to a well-to-do pagan family and received a good education, with stress on Roman law. He was converted in adult life, but his relations with the church were never easy and he seems to have broken away from it about 207. He was deeply impressed by

the Montanists, but whether he was converted to the sect is unclear. He died about 220 and was revered by everyone in the North African church as 'the master'. He was eventually condemned as a heretic in the late fifth century, but this does not seem to have made any difference to his popularity or reputation.

1. He was a patriotic Roman. He disliked Greeks, and filled his pages with references to the ancient Roman heroes as examples of endurance and faith - even though none of them was a Christian. He also thought highly of the Vestal Virgins at Rome, and saw in them a model of purity for Christian women.
2. He was a rigorist. His writings are full of complaints about the church which he regarded as being too lax in its discipline. In particular, he thought that people who ran away in times of persecution should not be re-admitted to the church.
3. He did not believe in infant baptism, but he was not a Baptist. His reason for this view had nothing to do with faith, but everything to do with sin. To baptize an infant was to cleanse the infant from sin, but the child ran a serious risk of sinning later in life. So it was best to postpone baptism until a riper age, when youthful energy was spent and the time to settle down had arrived. This eventually led to a widespread practice of deathbed baptism!
4. Philosophically, he was a materialist and closely allied with the Stoics. He believed that everything, including spirit, was really just highly refined matter. In this respect, he was almost unique among the early Christian writers.

Tertullian wrote an enormous amount on every conceivable subject, so his writings are an important source of information about the mentality of the early church. His special interests included:

- A. the historicity of Christianity. His interpretation of the Bible was literal, not allegorical.
- B. the soul of man. He believed that Christ had to have had a human soul.
- C. the role of women in the church. Women were temptresses and dangerous.
- D. prophecy and its fulfilment. Montanus was a voice from God.
- E. purity and sanctification. This is the key which explains his whole theological outlook.

He recognized three types of virginity:

- A. natural, from birth. Good, but not meritorious.
 - B. post-baptismal, from the time of conversion.
 - C. spiritual, within the context of formal marriage (but without intercourse).
- The third was the best and highest form, because it involved the greatest struggle against temptation.

He was also a major exponent of the doctrine of the Trinity.

1. The Godhead is primarily ONE. God = holiness.
2. The three persons of the Godhead are the three HOLIES in the one HOLINESS. (Isaiah 6:3).
3. The relations of the three persons were explained in terms of Roman law.

Tertullian invented or adapted most of our theological vocabulary - words like trinity, person, substance all go back to him.

Tertullian believed that the end of the world was due any minute. He told women not to get pregnant, because they might end up being pregnant in eternity if Jesus were to come back during the next nine months!

Tertullian is the founder of Latin Christianity. Even today, many of the things we talk about, and many of the problems we discuss, can be traced back to him - for better or for worse!

Lecture 5. Origen and the eastern Christian tradition I. Origen (c. 185-254)

Born to a Christian family in Alexandria and educated there. He later fell out with the bishop and moved to Caesarea Philippi, where he established a famous school. He died as a result of injuries suffered in persecution.

Origen was by far the most brilliant and productive early Christian writer, but most of his work has disappeared, because in 553 he was condemned for heresy and his writings were generally destroyed. But enough survives (sometimes under other names, and mostly in Latin translation) to enable us to get a good picture of his thought.

1. Biblical interpretation. Origen was the first Christian to write systematic Biblical commentaries. He derived the technique from Philo of Alexandria and his own mentor, Clement of Alexandria, who introduced Philo to the Christian world. Basically, this method corresponds to human nature and works as follows:

Body: Literal sense of Scripture. Soul: Moral sense of Scripture. Spirit: Spiritual sense of Scripture.

The literal sense was to be preferred if it did not contradict moral or spiritual principles. But if it did, it had to be transcended. For example, references to God's eyes or to his anger could not be understood literally. In such cases, a 'spiritual' meaning had to be looked for. This is allegory.

For Origen, the OT is almost entirely allegorical in its Christian interpretation. He did not deny the literal sense, but thought that sticking to it was a form of Judaizing. What mattered was discovering the spiritual principles underlying the text and applying them to the Christian life. On the other hand, he learned Hebrew and was a very good textual critic. It was important to get the literal sense right, because it provided the clues necessary to solve the riddle of the moral and spiritual senses.

2. Sin and salvation. For Origen, sin was a weakness or inadequacy in human nature, not disobedience. The purpose of the Christian life was to overcome this inadequacy by

spiritual exercises (discipline). Celibacy played an important part in this; in fact, Origen is supposed to have castrated himself in order to get away from temptation! The world was a mirror image of heaven, but corrupted by being an image of the reality, not the reality itself. This is Platonism, which was Origen's philosophical background. The human soul fell at the time of creation, but Christ's soul escaped this fate, and came into Jesus along with the divine Son of God. Souls are eternal, and they may return to earth in a later life. Origen was later condemned for this belief in reincarnation.

3. The Trinity. Origen believed that the Trinity was basically a way of experiencing God. The Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, showing us the Son. The Son reveals the Father, who alone is truly God. However, the Son and the Holy Spirit have a derived divinity - the Son by 'generation' and the Holy Spirit by 'procession' from the divine essence. In this way, he could say that the Son was truly God, but at the same time he was still inferior to the Father. It was an inadequate solution to the Trinitarian problem and would cause great difficulties later on.

II. The eastern Christian tradition

It is closely connected with Greek thought, especially with Platonism. In Origen's time, this was being revived and developed by Plotinus (204-70) into what we now call Neoplatonism. Put simply, Neoplatonism was the transformation of a philosophy into a religion. It has very close affinities with Christianity, and the two were frequently mingled (even confused) for many centuries. Nevertheless, there were some respects in which Platonism and Christianity were fundamentally incompatible:

Platonism	Christianity
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The world is eternal	The world is created
Time is cyclical (no end)	Time is linear (it will end)
Matter is evil	Matter is good
Salvation means escape from the body	Salvation means resurrection of the body

This explains why almost all eastern Christian writers wrote commentaries on Genesis 1-3. In their eyes, the creation was the single most important Christian doctrine. It also explains their very different concept of sin and the choice of philosophical vocabulary which they made to express their theology. For example, a word like mediator came to mean 'intermediary being' rather than 'negotiator' as it does in legal language. Christ therefore is seen more as someone who stands on a scale of being somewhere between us and God, than as someone who pleads with God on our behalf.

N. B. The eastern Christian tradition is a different development from anything in the west. Compared with it, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism are two sides of the same coin. It may use the same language as we do, but tends to mean different things by it.

Lecture 6: The Legalization of the Church

1. The NT. Generally speaking, the NT writers were not hostile to Rome. Paul accepted that the emperor was God's servant (Romans 13). Only in Revelation do we find a picture of Rome as the whore of Babylon, but the apocalyptic tenor of the text makes it hard to say that this was 'antiRoman' in a political sense.
2. Rome as a totalitarian state. The empire could absorb many different religions but it could not tolerate an alternative view of the world, unless that view remained within a small circle (Judaism). Christianity was aggressively evangelistic, and therefore a threat to the spiritual basis of the Roman state.
3. The third-century crisis. After AD 180, the empire went into decline and by 285 it was in a serious condition of internal decay. People looked around for someone to blame, and Christians, as dissidents who could not accept the system, were often blamed. At the same time, the church made enormous gains in the period 200-250. Trouble drove many people to look for their salvation elsewhere, and the church had an answer to meet their need.
4. The recovery of 285. Diocletian, who was emperor from 285-305, wanted to tackle the crisis once for all and initiated a drastic program of internal reform. To him, the church was enemy number one, and he persecuted it accordingly. People were ordered to hand over (tradere) their Bibles to be burnt, and those who did so were called traditores or traitors. But when he abdicated on 1 May 305, there was a succession struggle which did not end until Constantine (d. 337) imposed his rule in 324. By that time he had enlisted the church as an ally, and may even have become a Christian himself.

II. Constantine the Great

He succeeded to his father's claim to be emperor in 306, when his father, one of Diocletian's designated successors, suddenly died. He was in Britain at the time, and it took him six years to reach Rome, which he captured on 28 October 312. The night before, he had a vision of a cross in the sky, and determined that if he were to be victorious, he would reward the Christians accordingly. In February 313 he issued the Edict of Milan, making Christianity a legal religion - though only in those parts of the empire which he controlled (the west mainly).

Was Constantine a true believer? This question is endlessly debated. He probably had a superstitious kind of belief, but he was not baptized until he was on his deathbed.

However, he did many things to favor Christians. In particular:

- A. he made Sunday an official holiday (321).
- B. he exempted the clergy from paying taxes.
- C. he moved the capital of the empire to Byzantium, which he refounded as a Christian city (11 May 330) and named for himself - Constantinople (now Istanbul).
- D. he called a council of bishops to meet at Nicaea (325) in order to sort out Christian doctrine.

III. The impact of legalization

1. The church became a recognized corporation in Roman law, which gave it the right to own property. Church affairs were regulated by law, and the state enacted legislation to this effect.
2. Christianity was tolerated, but it was not the official state religion. Pagans were left in peace.
3. Christians were free to evangelize and to educate their children.
4. The church was reorganized along Roman imperial lines. Rome, Alexandria and Antioch were recognized as the most important churches (Nicaea, 325) and territorial dioceses were created corresponding to the Roman provinces. Bishops began to dress like civil officials.

IV. Donatism

Not everyone was happy with legalization. In North Africa, many Christians believed that toleration was the result of compromise - true Christians would always suffer persecution. The church was in turmoil over the problem of those who had been traitors in the great persecution, but who now sought to be readmitted. What should be done with them? The church leadership advocated readmission after penance, but this too was seen by many as a compromise. The church was heading for a split when Caecilian (a moderate) was elected bishop in 311 or 312.

Caecilian rebuked a woman called Lucilla, because she venerated a martyr's bone (and expected him to do the same). She started bribing the clergy and Caecilian was deposed in favor of Majorinus, who died shortly afterwards (313). He was succeeded by Donatus, who took the church into schism.

Meanwhile, Caecilian had appealed his case to Constantine, who acknowledged him as the rightful bishop and dispensed his supporters from paying tax. Majorinus also appealed to Constantine, but the case was referred to the bishop of Rome (Miltiades), who ruled in favor of Caecilian. This was upheld in 314 at the council of Arles, and troops were deployed to force Donatus and his followers back into the church. It was the beginning of a schism which was to last almost 400 years. The whole of North Africa was divided by it, but Donatus never received any support from elsewhere.

Donatists needed persecution and they thrived on it. They could not make the transition to a new order of things and were trapped by their past.

V. Arianism

Arius preaching in Alexandria that Jesus was not the eternal Son of God. He was a creature who has a special place in relation to God, but was not God in the strictest sense. In 324, Constantine arrives, the church is legalized and Constantine realizes he must deal with a division within the church due to heresy. He convened the council of Nicea to deal with this problem.

(Lecture 6 ends here)

The imperial church

I. The role of the emperor

He was the source of law and the arbiter of disputes, including church ones. Bishops and other church officials were subject to his authority, but only in the secular sphere. The emperor had no right to make doctrine, nor could he function as an ordained minister in the church. Nevertheless, Eusebius of Caesarea, the great historian of this period, regarded Constantine as the thirteenth apostle, and the emperors subsequently bore this title - isapostolos, 'equal to the apostles'. Though chosen by the senate (in reality by the army), the emperor now had to be crowned by the church - a new, religious dimension which had not previously existed. This gave the church power to control the morality of the emperor, which it frequently tried to do.

II. Rome versus Constantinople

As the ancient capital, Rome was the most important church. But after 330, Constantinople was a serious rival to its position. To protect itself, Rome declared that it was the most important church NOT because it was the capital but because it was the church of Peter, the first and greatest apostle.

Many of the old Roman nobility refused to convert to Christianity. They remained the last defenders of paganism, along with the philosophers of Athens, who were not finally disbanded until 529. As a result, a new governing class came into being, one which had close ties to the church.

Opposition to Christianity crystallized in the career of Julian the Apostate (361-3), who tried to return the empire to paganism and who renewed the persecution of Christians. It was too late, and when he died the whole project was forgotten.

III. The state religion

Christianity was made the official state religion on 27 February 380. This had very serious effects on both the church and the empire.

A. It forced the church to define who belonged to it and who did not. Heresy now became a form of treason.

B. It forced the state to Christianize civil life. Pagan ceremonies and oaths were abolished and laws were changed to accommodate Christian sensitivities. In particular, slaves were treated better and women were given some basic rights. The Olympic Games were closed down and many pagan temples became churches (like the Parthenon in Athens).

C. It led to the persecution of pagans, who could no longer occupy important state offices. It also produced a number of convenient conversions among people who were determined to hang on to their positions.

D. It tied the destiny of the state to that of the church. Many people interpret this as a state takeover of the church, but the reality was more the other way. The church could not

be controlled by the state, and when doctrinal controversies erupted, the state was in a difficult position.

Eventually, in spite of constant attempts to moderate and contain the differences of opinion, the state had to follow the majority in the church, and this weakened the empire in the long run.

IV. The spiritual reaction

Many Christians were unhappy about the closeness of church and state, and sought to preserve the traditional ideals of a distinctive Christian life. To do this, they turned to monasticism, which boomed in the fourth century. Originally an affair of hermits in the Egyptian desert, by 400 it was spreading across Europe and developing the communal characteristics with which we are most familiar today. Its greatest advocate in the west was Benedict of Nursia (480-547), who developed a rule of life which became the basis for all subsequent monasticism in the west.

V. East and west

In the east, the empire survived (though it got increasingly smaller as time went on) until 1453. But in the west, it collapsed almost immediately, leaving a void in the administration which the church was expected to fill.

The bishop of Rome (now the pope) was recognized as the eastern emperor's deputy and given authority over the barbarian kings of the west. This was the beginning of the secular jurisdiction of the papacy.

In many places, the church took over the administration of civil law, especially matrimonial and probate jurisdictions. When this happened, Christian standards were imposed. Divorce became illegal, and the consent of the parties was demanded for a marriage to be valid.

Education, such as it was, became the province of the church. This meant that secular learning was undervalued and knowledge was increasingly contained in the monasteries. Eventually, universities would spring from them, and even today there are aspects of university life which reflect these medieval origins - the dormitory concept, for example.

Lecture 7: Church Doctrine from Nicea to Constantine

I. Origins

1. The legacy of Origen. He had left the eastern church with a doctrine of Christ who as Son of God was subordinate but equal to the Father - a combination which does not make sense.

2. Arius wanted to work out a systematic doctrine of God. Could the Son be called the Father and vice versa? If not, there must be some substantial difference between them.
3. Paul of Samosata, condemned in 268, had already tried to solve the problem by saying that Jesus was adopted by God as his Son (probably at his baptism), thereby making Jesus the first Christian. Arius saw the inadequacy of this, and tried to find another solution.

II. The Arian doctrine

1. The Son of God was a divine creature. He was created in time, but he was not just a man adopted by God. He was a special being - neither God nor man in an absolute sense, but something inbetween. His Biblical justification came from Proverbs 8:22-36, which everyone at that time regarded as referring to Christ.
2. Arius thought that his solution could connect God and man in the right way. Christ could suffer and die because he was not fully God, but at the same time he could save the human race because he was not just a man either. To Arius, this was getting the best of both worlds, but in fact it was having neither.
3. Arianism was appealing because it was simple and logical. Even today, many people would rather say that Jesus is the Son of God (whatever they mean by that) than that he is God himself.

III. The first council of Nicaea (325)

Alexander of Alexandria opposed Arius and excommunicated him in 318. Nothing happened until Constantine conquered the east in 324, and ordered a church council to meet and sort it all out.

The church was not happy with this, and met independently at Antioch in the winter of 324-5. There the bishops hammered out a policy which they took to Nicaea the following summer.

The council was presided over by the emperor, which is why it is called 'ecumenical' (from oikoumene, the word used to mean 'empire'). In fact, most of the sessions were chaired by Bishop Hosius of Cordoba (Spain), although almost all of the 318 bishops present were from the east.

The council declared that the Son was homoousios (consubstantial) with the Father, which was a direct contradiction of Arius, who was condemned.

The council's decision split the church in two. Arius had many followers who refused to give up, and they formed a dissident underground for the next two generations.

IV. Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296-373)

The great enemy of the Neo-Arians party was Athanasius, who became bishop of Alexandria in 328. He fought tooth and nail for the narrow interpretation of Nicaea, and was exiled five times for his pains. The emperor Constantius II (337-61) wanted to compromise along Eusebian lines, but Athanasius saw that this was impossible.

In exile, Athanasius was sent to the west, where he quickly rallied support and became the living symbol of orthodoxy. His book on the incarnation of Christ is still a classic today, despite certain faults which were to appear later on. However, his reputation was secure in the west, and his political activities established an alliance between Rome and Alexandria (against Constantinople) which lasted for more than a century. He died before Arianism was finally defeated, but his followers maintained his position, which triumphed at the first council of Constantinople in 381.

The establishment of orthodoxy to 381 I. The doctrine of Athanasius

1. His main Biblical basis was the prologue to John's Gospel, especially verses 1 and 14. 'The Word was God' established the full equality of the Father and the Son. 'The Word became flesh' explained what the incarnation meant.
2. In Jesus Christ, there was the one hypostasis of the Son of God, who added human flesh to his divine nature. the big question was: what did Athanasius mean by the word 'flesh'? Was this just the material skin and bones, or did it also include the soul? Athanasius was not very clear about this. It seems that he believed that Jesus did have a human soul, but he could not explain why this should be so. The problem comes from the belief that soul and spirit were essentially the same thing. If the human soul is a small part of the divine spirit (the image of God in us), why did Jesus, who was fully God, need to have one? He had no real answer to this, and it was to cause a lot of trouble later.
3. Athanasius' real strength lay in his Trinitarian doctrine, where the homoousios came into its own. The Son of God was not an inferior or subordinate being, but eternally present with the Father in the one Godhead. The incarnation was a choice freely made by the Son, in order to fulfil the wishes of the Father and redeem mankind. Athanasius understood that our redemption depends on this inner relationship between the Father and the Son inside God.
4. Athanasius never said much about the Holy Spirit, but this gap was filled by his great contemporaries from Cappadocia, in Asia Minor.

II. The Cappadocian fathers

This is the collective name given in the west (in the east they are called 'the three hierarchs') to the bishops Basil of Caesarea (c. 329-79), his friend Gregory of Nazianzus (330-95) and his younger brother, Gregory of Nyssa (330-95). (The places are the cities where they were bishops.)

1. Basil the Great (c. 329-79). He studied Neoplatonism at Athens and this affected his later work. His main contribution to theology was over the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which he elaborated for the first time. His theology of the Spirit was subsequently incorporated into the creed of the first council of Constantinople in 381.

Basil was also concerned to harmonize different approaches to the Trinity. He concluded that the Greek hypostasis and the Latin persona must mean the same thing, which opened up the way towards a reconciliation of the two traditions.

2. Gregory of Nazianzus (330-90). He was a more complex character than Basil, and something of a mystic. From 378 he ministered in Constantinople, where he denounced Arianism in the run-up to the council of 381.

He is famous for explaining the incarnation of Christ as: 'What has not been assumed has not been healed.'

He also believed that the Holy Spirit is fully God, and defined his identity as one established by his 'procession' from the Father.

3. Gregory of Nyssa (330-95). Basil's younger brother and the great disseminator of Cappadocian thought. He was a prolific writer and mystical theologian. Today he is remembered for his sacramental theology. He believed that the effects of Christ's redemption are conveyed to us through the sacraments. He also thought of hell as a place of purification, and seems to have been a kind of universalist.

III. Hilary of Poitiers (c. 315-68)

A Westerner, he defended Athanasius and was exiled to Phrygia for his pains (356). There he met the Cappadocians and got interested in their theology. Hilary translated their thought into Latin, introducing a few new words along the way (existentia, subsistentia). His main importance is that he was the channel through whom Augustine of Hippo (354-430) absorbed Cappadocian theology.

IV. Marius Victorinus (mid-fourth century)

A Neoplatonist philosopher who in 355 converted to Christianity and became a major anti-Arian writer. Along with Hilary, he laid the foundation for Augustine's later achievements.

V. The Nicene creed

This is the name given to the creed which was (probably) formulated at or shortly after the first council of Constantinople in 381. It became the touchstone of later orthodoxy and is still widely used today. The original creed spoke of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father, but did not mention the Son, a 'defect' that was remedied in sixth-century Spain. The addition of the Latin word Filioque ('and from the Son') was never accepted by the eastern church and it remains a cause of division to this day.

Lecture 8: The Latin church - Jerome and Augustine

I. General characteristics

1. Latin Christianity was rooted in Roman legal concepts and had a sense of cohesion not found in the Greek east. However, Rome was not regarded as the dominant center until the fourth century.
2. The Roman church was much more conservative than the others, mainly because it was in closer touch with the Greek-speaking world. It used Greek until about 250, and was reluctant to accept North African ideas.
3. In the mid-third century the Roman church was divided by internal schism. Two of the schismatics, Hippolytus and Novatian, have become well known through their writings. Hippolytus has left us a fairly complete communion liturgy and Novatian developed the doctrine of the Logos beyond what Tertullian had said.
4. After the Decian persecution of 251, Rome became much more central to the life of the Latin church. It prided itself on its theological orthodoxy, and tried to act as the main arbiter in church disputes elsewhere in the western empire.

II. Jerome (c. 345-420)

A Roman aristocrat, he was a great linguist (knowing both Greek and Hebrew) and from 373 lived mainly in the east. He returned to Rome (382-6) but then established himself at Bethlehem where he surrounded himself with devoted followers - mostly single women! In 375 he was asked by the pope to translate the Bible into Latin, which he did. His translation was excellent, and for centuries it was the official Bible of the Latin church. He translated the OT directly from the Hebrew, which he regarded as more authentic than the Greek version. Along with Origen, he was the greatest Biblical scholar the ancient world produced.

Jerome started out as a disciple of Origen, but he soon rejected allegorical exegesis and became one of Origen's bitterest enemies. He attacked Evagrius Ponticus (345-99) for his supposed belief in sinless perfection, and sniffed out the latent Platonism of the Origenists.

III. Ambrose of Milan (c. 339-97)

The prefect (mayor) of Milan, he was made bishop in a day in 374, when the local populace clamored for his election, even though he was still a layman. He took his duties very seriously and became a noted preacher, teacher and evangelist. He even wrote hymns and encouraged public participation in worship. His most famous convert was Augustine of Hippo, who always attributed his spiritual formation to the ministry of Ambrose.

In 388 Ambrose confronted the Emperor Theodosius I over his massacre of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, and forced him to make public repentance. It was a sign of where true power in the Roman empire now lay.

As a writer, Ambrose was very allegorical, and few of his works are read today. However, an unknown commentator on Paul, whose work was preserved under

Ambrose's name, is now recognized as one of the greatest Biblical commentators of all time. Erasmus dubbed him 'Ambrosiaster', and that is how he is known today.

IV. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

By all standards of measurement, far and away the greatest of the Latin church fathers. Augustine was a great synthesizer of ideas, and his writings became the basis for medieval theology. In fact, it is often said that the Reformation was really a conflict between Augustine's doctrine of grace, upheld by Luther, and his doctrine of the church, upheld by Rome.

The child of a Christian mother and a pagan father, he was educated on Neoplatonism and became a follower of Mani, a Persian dualist thinker. He took a concubine and taught rhetoric for many years at Carthage, but was converted in 386, during a visit to Milan. His Confessions, written between 397 and 401, tell the story of his conversion and have become one of the great classics of Christian literature.

In 396 he became bishop of Hippo in North Africa and devoted himself to the serious study of the Bible. This changed his outlook from one of optimism to pessimism about human nature, and he began to see the weakness in much contemporary preaching and belief.

1. The first heresy he encountered was Donatism, which was still going strong in North Africa. Augustine argued that there could never be a pure church on earth, because the church's purity is eschatological. He also believed that heretics and schismatics should be coerced into the church, for their own good!
2. The second great heresy he encountered was Pelagianism. Pelagius was a British monk who lectured in Rome about 418, and taught that man could choose faith of his own free will. Few people saw anything wrong with this idea, until Augustine launched his attacks on it. This controversy forced him to develop his understanding of God's grace, of original sin, and of the need for infant baptism.
3. His first great doctrinal work was on the Trinity (399-419), which remains the classic exposition of that doctrine to this day. He developed the idea that God is a Trinity of Love in which all three persons are equal and bound to each other by bonds of mutual affection.
4. He also wrote a great book on Biblical interpretation, which he called Christian doctrine. It is a subtle and systematic exposition of the meaning of the Biblical text, and explores the symbolic significance of language. It accepts the need for some kind of 'spiritual interpretation' but shies away from the extremes of allegory which were then current.
5. He rewrote human history in his massive City of God, which remains one of the great works of western civilization. He dissects paganism and replaces Roman history with the Biblical narrative, explaining how the two cities (of God and of the devil) have co-existed and struggled with each other from the beginning. History will come to an end when the city of God finally triumphs. Christians must therefore look ahead to the future, and not be hindered by thoughts of some past 'golden age' which will never return.

Lecture 9: Antioch and Alexandria

I. The Christian east

Unlike the Roman west, the east had no single center that dominated everything else. Antioch and Alexandria, both of which had been founded in the time of Alexander the Great, competed for the attentions of the Greek world, and there were several other important cities as well - especially Athens and (later) Constantinople, which eventually eclipsed the others.

II. Alexandria

In many ways, this was the most important center of Jewish culture in the ancient world, and therefore a natural base for the early church, even though it is not mentioned at all in the NT.

1. It was the place where the OT was translated into Greek and commented on by Philo.
2. It was the home of Clement and Origen, and thus the center of allegorical interpretation.
3. It was the city of Athanasius, and therefore the great bulwark of orthodoxy in the east. The Alexandrian theological tradition was the mainstream of the eastern church, from which others departed to varying degrees.

At the heart of Alexandrian thought was its Christology, which can be summed up as Logos-sarx or Word-flesh (John 1:14). This means:

A. The Logos, Son of God, is the subject/agent of the incarnation. B. The Logos took on human nature in the form of 'flesh'.

The problem is how to define 'flesh'; in particular, to decide whether it included the human soul.

The soul was important to the ancients because:

A. It was regarded as a spark of the divine fire, the image of God in us. B. It was the seat of the mind and the will, and therefore of sin.

If Jesus did not have a human soul, he could not have had a human mind or will either, and therefore he could not have sinned.

This was the conclusion drawn by Apollinarius (d. c. 390), one of Athanasius pupils. He argued that if the Logos was God, he had no need of his own image, and so he simply took the place of the human soul in Jesus. On the cross, it was the flesh which suffered and died, but not the divine Spirit, which caused a reaction. If only the flesh suffered and died, but not the soul, then only OUR flesh is redeemed, but not our souls - and what is the point of that? In the end, Apollinarius was saying that our sins have not been forgiven or atoned for because the incarnate Logos had no way of taking them on himself. He tried to get around this by developing the notion of a 'transfer of properties' (communicatio idiomatum) from the spirit to the flesh and vice versa. It merely led to confusion.

A compromise was worked out by Didymus the Blind (d. 398), who claimed that Jesus did have a human soul and that he could use it in order to take away our sins, and also that he could be tempted - but could not sin. This was rejected, because temptation without the possibility of sin is meaningless.

III. Antioch

Less important than Alexandria as a cultural center, but the capital of Roman Syria and a major church in the NT. The followers of Jesus were called 'Christians' here for the first time, and it was Paul's first mission base. It produced Ignatius, an important witness to early Christian church life, and Paul of Samosata, the first Christian bishop to be recognized as a civil governor (260-72). It was also the place where the bishops convened six months before the first council of Nicaea (324-5). It had a famous theological school, where Arius apparently studied. Its Christology is best characterized as Logos-anthropos (Word-man).

1. Diodore of Tarsus (d. c. 394). He taught a literal reading of Holy Scripture and stressed the full humanity of Christ, as essential to our salvation. This brought him into conflict with Apollinarius. He was also the instructor of John Chrysostom (d. 407), one of the greatest preachers of the ancient world and a leading propagandist of Antiochene thought. Diodore said that Jesus the man received from his divine nature all that he needed at each stage of his life, so that the boy was not an old man in a child's skin, etc. He also stressed the need to find a way for Jesus to have suffered which did not implicate the Logos, but which did allow for a genuine 'dark night of the soul'.

2. Eustathius of Antioch (late fourth century). He said that Jesus was a 'God-bearing man'), an odd phrase which smacks of adoptionism, but is not meant to!

3. Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428). Another pupil of Diodore, and a masterly commentator on Scripture. He rejected not only Apollinarius, but the whole Alexandrian approach to Christology, which he thought reached its logical culmination in Apollinarius' thought. What Theodore proposed instead was:

A. The two natures of Christ have independent, autonomous existences (hypostases). B. These natures were joined together in the womb of Mary.

C. The conjunction of the natures produced a single person (prosopon), Jesus Christ.

D. Jesus could suffer only in his humanity, but it must be a genuine and complete suffering hence the need to stress the full humanity of Christ.

What Theodore could not explain was: HOW did the natures come together? Who or what was the agent of the incarnation? Was Jesus a single conscious being or some kind of divine-human schizophrenic? When he said 'I am the bread of life', was he talking as man or as God? And so on.

Lecture 10: From Constantinople (381) to Chalcedon (451)

I. The main actors

1. Alexandria. Relying mainly on the Athanasian heritage, but damaged by Apollinarius and fearful of Antioch and its influence at Constantinople.
2. Antioch. Relying mainly on its literal Biblical exegesis and the need to maintain Christ's full humanity. Supported by the Cappadocians and influential at Constantinople, but essentially a 'reactive' Christology, unable to match the coherence of Alexandria.
3. Rome. Allied with Alexandria since the days of Athanasius, but with its own, independent Christological tradition. Saw itself (and was occasionally accepted by others) as the mediator in the debate.

II. Nestorius (c. 381-451)

His life spanned the period of controversy. He began as a teacher in Antioch in the mold of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In 428 he became bishop (patriarch) of Constantinople, much to the consternation of Alexandria. The following year he condemned the 'Apollinarians' at Constantinople, but to Alexandrian ears, this implicated them in heresy, since the Antiochenes thought all Alexandrians were basically Apollinarian. But Nestorius was soon caught in a heresy of his own. Asked whether Mary was the mother of God or not, he replied:

A. Mary is the mother of God.

B. Mary is the mother of man.

These two must be held in balance, so it is best to say: C. Mary is the mother of Christ. This is pure Theodore, but it was rejected because on this basis, there would have been a baby Jesus even if the Holy Spirit had NOT entered the womb of Mary.

III. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444)

He was Nestorius' great antagonist and became bishop of Alexandria in 412, having already taken part in the overthrow of John Chrysostom at Constantinople in 403. He denounced Nestorius' doctrine and appealed to Rome for support. The pope (Celestine) called a council at Rome in August 430 which backed Cyril and told him to convey the news to Nestorius.

Cyril did so, but added twelve condemnations (anathemas) of his own, which Rome knew nothing about. This prompted Nestorius to ask the emperor (Theodosius II) for a council, which met at Ephesus in 431. Cyril's doctrine was: 'one incarnate nature of God the Logos'. Compare this with what eventually (in 553) became the orthodox formula: 'one nature of God the incarnate Logos'. The difference lies in the word 'nature' - is it 'one' BEFORE or AFTER the incarnation? Cyril said BEFORE, making it unclear whether Christ's humanity could be regarded as a 'nature' in its own right.

Cyril was strong on the transfer of properties idea, and said that the Logos united humanity to himself. But by 'humanity' he seems to have meant an ensemble of distinctive characteristics rather than a complete human being. Whatever else was true,

according to Cyril, Christ's humanity was NOT a hypostasis in the same sense that the Logos was.

The council of Ephesus upheld Cyril and condemned Nestorius, who had to flee, but this did not solve the problem. Antioch continued to object that the formula of Cyril obscured the full humanity of Christ, and eventually Cyril got the message. In 433 he signed a 'formula of concord' with two Antiochenes (Theodoret of Cyrus and Andrew of Samosata), which said that the Logos assumed a complete humanity, not just bits and pieces. This was the position when Cyril died in 444.

IV. Eutyches and Flavian

Eutyches was a follower of Cyril who gave a series of lectures in Constantinople in 446, attempting to explain the master's theology of 'out of two natures, one nature'. He claimed that although Christ was fully incarnate, he was not really made 'man'. 'Nature' could not mean 'being', because the humanity was not a separate being, nor could it be 'hypostasis', for the same reason. Once again, we see the humanity without the hypostasis! Flavian, bishop of Constantinople at the time, condemned Eutyches and offered the following formula:

Out of two natures, one prosopon and one hypostasis.

He sent this formula to Rome, appealing to Pope Leo, who replied with his famous Tome. This was accepted at the council of Chalcedon in 451 and became the touchstone of later Christological orthodoxy, though at the price of losing both the Nestorians and the Alexandrians (who became a separate, 'monophysite' church).

V. Leo and Chalcedon

Two principles dominate their thought:

A. The person of the Son of God is the subject of the incarnation (Alexandria). B. Jesus is a man in the fullest sense (Antioch).

How are these to be reconciled? First of all, person/hypostasis/prosopon (now all the same thing), is not to be understood as a manifestation of nature, but as a principle of being in its own right. Jesus is not the divine nature manifested as a person, but a divine person who possesses a divine nature.

In the incarnation, the divine person acquires a second, human nature, becoming its hypostasis as well. Divine and human natures are not joined by a transfer of properties, but by the common personhood of the Son, who is the hypostasis of both. In answer to the question: Did God suffer and die on the cross?

Cyril and Nestorius would both have said NO. God cannot suffer and die.

Leo and Chalcedon say YES, as long as we understand this as follows: The divine person of the Son of God suffered and died in his human nature.

So we see that the compromise between Antioch and Alexandria actually goes beyond either of them, and it is therefore not too surprising that it was rejected by both!

Lecture 11: The Council of Chalcedon and the End of the Roman Empire

I. End of the Roman Empire

A. The time Rome was ruled by a single person was Theodosius who died in 395.

B. Empire divided into two parts

1. Western half went to his elder son Honorius. He set up his kingdom in Ravenna

2. Arcadius ruled in Constantinople

C. Difficulties in the West

1. After Nicaea, Arians continued to spread their message. Many members of the imperial family were sympathetic to it, and after 363 there were openly Arian emperors for a few years. Their most important convert was a Goth called Wulfila (Ulphilas), who became an Arian Christian sometime after 330. He translated the Bible into his native Gothic and converted the barbarian tribes north of the Danube. In 378, these tribes invaded the empire and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Roman army, ironically killing the last Arian emperor Valens. They then moved westwards, sacking Rome in 410 and finally settling in Spain, Italy and North Africa, which became independent Arian kingdoms.

The barbarian tribesmen there were Arians, but the vast majority of the population was not. They were both Romans and Catholics (i. e. members of the universal church), and it is from this time that the association between Rome and universal orthodoxy became fixed in Western Europe.

Inside the empire, Arianism was technically illegal, but a number of people tried to interpret the homoousios doctrine in an Arian sense, creating a kind of Neo-Arianism. Foremost among them was the church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea. He proposed a 'compromise' according to which homoousios would be interpreted to mean 'of like substance', rather than 'of the same substance'. The Greek word for this is homoiousios, and the struggle developed into one over 'the iota of difference' between the two doctrines.

Human beings are homoiousioi with each other - similar, but not identical. But as there is only one God, that option is not available in his case. To say that Father and Son are homoiousioi is to say that there are two gods, not just one.

II. The barbarian invaders

These were either pagans or Arians, having been converted by Wulfila in the fourth century. They break down as follows:

A. The Ostrogoths in Italy. Arians, conquered by Justinian in 536-54.

B. The Visigoths in Spain. Arians converted to Catholicism at the third council of Toledo (589).

C. The Vandals in North Africa. Arians conquered by Justinian in 532-4.

D. The Franks in Gaul (France). Pagans converted to Catholicism in 497.

E. The Burgundians in Gaul. Pagans converted to Catholicism shortly after the Franks.

F. The Angles and Saxons in Britain (England). Pagans converted to Catholicism from 597.

The Franks became particularly trusted allies of the papacy, because they had never been Arians and because they were too far away to have to worry about Justinian. This alliance was to bear considerable fruit later on.

I. The oriental churches

Chalcedon marked the final point of no return for the Nestorians and the church of Alexandria. The former withdrew from the Roman empire and went to Persia, where they were welcomed and allowed to set up churches. In the subsequent centuries, they spread all over central Asia and even got to China about 700. But they never received any form of state support and in later centuries they were persecuted. A few Nestorians still survive (mainly in Iraq and in western countries) but the church is now almost dead.

The Alexandrians had a happier future. The Egyptian church (now called Coptic) still exists in that country and has spread to Ethiopia. It also managed to conquer most of Syria during the sixth century, where it was known as the 'Jacobite' church, after its great evangelist, Jacob Baradaeus (d. 578). It spread to India, where it still exists. The Armenian church also adopted Alexandrian Christology, but later (622) and it remains a somewhat distinct form of monophysitism.

III. The Roman Empire

The towns were largely evangelized by 400 but the countryside took longer. The word 'paganus' means 'country person', as does its English translation, 'heathen' - somebody who lives on the heath, or scrubland outside the town. The barbarian invasions after 400 drove many townspeople into the countryside, and they took their faith with them.

After 451, the eastern empire was in turmoil, because of the defection of Egypt and later Syria. Constantinople controlled them politically, but not spiritually - a situation that could not last. In 482 the **Emperor Zeno** published a document called the **henoticon**, which he intended as a compromise with the monophysites. The Henoticon denounced Chalcedon, said that Nicaea I and Constantinople I were enough, and canonized the memory of Cyril of Alexandria. Unfortunately, this was perceived at Rome as an attack on Leo, who had formulated the theology of Chalcedon, and the result was a schism with the west, which was not healed until 518.

After 476 Italy slipped out of the emperor's control, which made the Henoticon unenforceable at Rome. Moreover, The pope (Felix III) was supported in his -resistance by the monks of Constantinople. But in 493 a new barbarian king took over in Italy (Theodoric) and he wanted to be recognized by the emperor, who said that he could be - if he accepted the Henotikon. This produced a new round of negotiations, but there was no real reversal of policy until a palace revolution in Constantinople brought Justin I to power in 518.

Justin I and his nephew Justinian I (527-65) were Latin-speakers (rare at Constantinople) who wanted to reconquer the west. To do this they needed all the help they could get, so they made peace with the pope, even granting him jurisdiction in legal affairs over the

whole of the former western empire. This was the beginning of the papacy's claim to temporal rule.

Justinian I is also famous for his codification of Roman law, which contains a great deal of ecclesiastical legislation.

The theological fallout after Chalcedon

I. Different perceptions

To Rome and the west, Chalcedon was definitive, and has always remained so. Its Christology is our Christology, and further discussion has seemed to be unnecessary. But in the east, Chalcedon was just the next round in an ongoing theological battle about the person and natures of Christ. The Henoticon was an attempt to resolve the problem, but it collapsed with the revolution of 518.

H. Justinian's theology and politics

Justinian I (527-65) tried to tackle the monophysite problem in different ways:

1. He tried persecution, which did not work. His own wife (Theodora) supported them!
2. He tried compromise, but more carefully than Zeno had done. He would not condemn a whole council, but chose instead to condemn the so-called 'three chapters'; three books of a clearly Antiochene (Nestorian) slant. These were:
 - A. The complete works of Theodore of Mopsuestia.
 - B. The book of Theodoret of Cyrus against Cyril of Alexandria.
 - C. The letter of Ibas of Edessa to Mari of Hardasir.

Unfortunately, B and C had both been declared orthodox at Chalcedon, so Rome refused to agree to : this. However, Rome was now back under imperial rule, so the pope was invited to Constantinople, where he agreed to the condemnations, which were endorsed by the second council of Constantinople in 553. However, the monophysites were becoming ever more extreme, denying Christ's humanity altogether in some cases, and Italy was never really reconciled to the decisions of 553. So the monophysite problem remained unsolved when Justinian died.

III. Theologians of this period

1. Leontius of Byzantium. He developed the doctrine of enhypostasia, to explain how a human nature could have a divine hypostasis.
2. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. A Syrian monk (perhaps) who developed a mystical theology based on Neoplatonism, which became very popular in the middle ages. God in his essence was unknowable, but his 'energies' were communicated to the enlightened.
3. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662). He developed Pseudo-Dionysius in a more orthodox direction and tried to act as a mediator with the western church. He was persecuted for his opposition to the emperor's pro-Monothelite policies.

IV. Heraclius (610-41)

The next round in the debate came under the rule of Heraclius I. He came up with the idea that there were two natures in the incarnate Christ (Chalcedon) but that there was only one 'energy' or will in him. This was developed by a monk called Sergius (d. 638) and propagated by the emperor as a new compromise. It was accepted in Armenia, Alexandria and even Rome - though there is some doubt about the last of these. The opposition was led by a Palestinian monk called Sophronius.

In 638, Heraclius published a book called the *Ecthesis*, which was supposed to explain this new compromise theory, known to us as monothelism. In the same year, Sophronius opened the gates of Jerusalem to the invading Muslims, apparently convinced that orthodoxy was safer under them than under the emperor. Rome repudiated the *Ecthesis* in 640, and most of the west was soon in an uproar over it. It was finally abrogated in 648, when the new emperor, Constans II, replaced it with his *Typos*. Pope Martin I did not like that either, and was hauled off to Constantinople, put on trial and sent into exile (653). In the end, monothelism was condemned at the third council of Constantinople in 681, and this decision was generally accepted in the west. By that time, the monophysite provinces were all under Muslim rule, so the political urge to compromise had disappeared, and nothing further was attempted.

V. Iconoclasm

This was the brainchild of the Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717-41). Leo thought that the empire was losing ground because its faith was corrupt, and the widespread use of icons caught his censorious eye. In 726 he ordered them all to be destroyed, which provoked an uproar. Rome objected, causing Leo to remove the Balkan provinces from its jurisdiction (733). More significantly, large sections of the people resisted his destructive attempts, and the policy never really caught on - except in the army and among some sections of the aristocracy, which gave iconoclasm an extended life. It was condemned at the second council of Nicaea in 787, but reemerged for a while after 811 and was not finally killed off until 843.

The theological issue at stake: could Jesus be painted? As a human being, obviously yes. But would the painting be a picture of God? This was the nub of the issue, and there is no very obvious answer to it. In 787 it was decreed that as Jesus was God in human flesh, a picture of him would be a picture of God - but only in human flesh. Pictures were to be respected, but not venerated. It was different in 843 - then veneration of icons became official policy and modern Orthodox piety was born.

VI. John of Damascus (c. 675-749)

A Greek Christian who lived under Muslim rule and was even prime minister to the Muslim caliph. He was the great synthesizer of eastern Orthodox theology, and strongly defended the use of icons in the church. He was also a champion of Dionysian-style mysticism and one of the first Christians to attempt a serious refutation of Islam.

Lecture 12: Rural Evangelism and Challenging the Norms of Society

I. Invasion of the Barbarians

- A. People moved to rural areas to avoid destruction and violence in the cities
- B. Christianity spread from urban areas to rural
- C. Challenging the societal norms –
 - 1. Easy in Rome for a man to divorce a woman, so the church started regulating marriage to protect women. Emphasized mutual consent for marriage and binding marriage to protect women.
 - 2. Slavery – couldn't abolish it because of the economic necessity but tried to limit it
 - 3. Pagan temples

II. Monasticism

This spread rapidly after 400. In the east it retained its primitive character, but in the west it soon became highly organized and politically powerful. Main centers were:

A. Movement of people to purify the Church

- 1. Alexandria – people moving into the desert, following examples of Moses, apostle Paul, etc. People saw this in the Bible as a way to go into the desert to have an experience with God.
- 2. Athanasius emphasized the spiritual value of withdrawing from the world. Anthony wrote a biography of Antony, someone who did this.
- 3. Monochos – someone who went to the desert to live alone
- 4. Erymete –
- 5. Community monastics and hermit monastics
- 6. Opportunity for women to express themselves

C. The French riviera. Here Vincent of Lerins (d. c. 450) mounted opposition to Augustine's anti-Pelagian crusade. His watchword was that catholicity is what has been believed everywhere, by everyone at all times. Man makes the initial response to God and is helped by grace thereafter. This was a fatal weakening of Augustinian teaching, but it was canonized at the council of Orange in 529 and became typical of later monastic spirituality.

D. Monte Cassino, founded in 529, became the hub of benedictine monasticism in Italy and beyond. Nearby, Cassiodorus (d. 570) founded another monastery at Vivarium, which became the greatest library of the early middle ages.

E. Ireland. Evangelized by monks, here the monastery took the place of the city and became the center of church life in general. Even today, many towns in Europe have 'minster' (or 'munster') in their names, as a reminder that they grew up around monasteries.

(Lecture 12 audio ends)

Advance and retreat

I. Christianity in AD 600

Converted: the former Roman empire, Ireland, Armenia, Ethiopia. Penetrated: Scotland, England, central Asia, India, Persia, Arabia.

II. The Celtic church

This came into being by accident. Roman Britain was converted to Christianity at the same time as the rest of the empire (fourth century). But after AD 410 it was cut off by barbarian invasions and the British people were slowly driven westwards.

Meanwhile, one of them, Patrick, was captured by Irish raiders and sold into slavery. After seven years he escaped and returned to Ireland as a missionary (432). By the time he died, Ireland was on the way to becoming fully Christian.

One of Patrick's disciples, Columba, took the mission to Iona (568) and began to evangelize what is now Scotland. By 650 it was halfway down England as well, and looked as if it might take over the whole country.

Because of its isolation from Rome, the Celtic church had retained some out-of-date practices. Most important of these:

- A. A different tonsure for its monks (important in a church which was mainly monastic).
- B. A different way of calculating the date of Easter.

III. The conversion of England

In 597 Augustine of Canterbury (d. 604) arrived from Rome with a commission from Pope Gregory I (590-604) to set up two bishoprics - one in London and the other in York. The York one eventually got started about a generation later, but London was too exposed to attack and so Augustine went to Canterbury instead. On 25 December 597 he baptized 10,000 of the king's warriors in the River Medway - the beginning of the English church.

Further evangelism proved more difficult. Augustine tried to win over the British but he was tactless and unsuccessful. Slowly the different English kingdoms accepted the new faith, but it was not until about 660 that the last bastions caved in.

This left a dual system of Christianity in Britain - the Roman church in the south and the Celtic church everywhere else. A great debate was held at Whitby in 664, when the local king opted for Rome because it was more universal. Gradually the Celtic church retreated, until the last one (Wales) accepted Roman customs in 716.

But the new Anglo-Celtic church was not like any other in Christendom. It was heavily influenced by Irish monasticism and by the missionary spirit of Patrick and his followers. It also had a great love of learning, brought to Ireland from Spain and preserved there when the rest of Europe was in chaos and disorder.

Theodore of Tarsus was archbishop of Canterbury (669-90). He was a Greek, and introduced Greek learning to the English. This was not popular with Rome, which feared Theodore and thought he might be a heretic, but it opened the door towards a great flowering of literature in England.

Bede (673-736) was Theodore's star pupil and the greatest mind of his age. He wrote Bible commentaries which remained in use until the Reformation. He also wrote a remarkable history of the English church, and created 'England' as a cultural concept long before it achieved political unity.

Writing in English also began to appear at this time. It was mostly poetry to begin with (Caedmon and The dream of the rood), but there was also some Bible translation (King Alfred). So important was this English renaissance that Alcuin, a monk of York, was invited to go to the court of Charlemagne in 782, to become in effect, the Frankish ruler's minister of education.

IV. English and Irish missionary work

Once England was converted, the English and Irish missionaries turned their attention to the unevangelized parts of northern Europe. Before long there were monasteries all over the place, operating as mission bases.

Boniface (680-754) was the most famous missionary of his time. Originally called Wynfrith, he was an Englishman who went to Germany to preach the Gospel. He founded the German church, but was martyred at Fulda in 754. He was soon followed by others, and before long the whole of Germany was evangelized - by the English! Later on (nearer the year 1000), the same happened in Scandinavia, which English missionaries also spearheaded the advance.

V. Retreat

Christianity lost most of the Middle East and North Africa to Islam in the seventh century. More people have converted from Christianity to Islam than the other way round - that has been true from the beginning. Why?

A. Islam is a simple creed. It does not have the complex theology of Christianity.

B. The Christian church was divided and one part was persecuting another. This did not seem like the 'truth' at work!

C. Islam used force to propagate its message. Holy war is an Islamic tenet to a degree unknown in other religions.

Most of the people in the conquered territories remained Christians for many centuries, but gradually Islamic pressure persuaded the majority to convert. Today only pockets of Christians are left - in Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt mostly.

The rise of the papacy

I. The Roman church

1. It was definitely of NT origin, but its links with Peter are uncertain.
2. It was the only NT church in the Latin west.
3. As the political capital of the empire, it was the natural center for the church as well.
4. After 330, the bishops of Rome made theological efforts to justify their position.
5. Rome took pride in its unflinching orthodoxy, seen most clearly at Chalcedon in 451.
6. In 519 the Emperor Justin I granted the bishop of Rome ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the west.

Lecture 13: The Restoration of the Roman Empire and the Barbarian Kingdoms

I. The Franks

King of the Franks, Clovis, married a Christian woman. They were the first pagan barbarians to become Catholic Christians (497) and accepted the Roman version of Christianity.

II. Gregory the Great (590-604)

He was a Roman aristocrat who took charge of the church and reorganized it as a missionary enterprise. His main project was the conversion of England, which was brilliantly successful.

Gregory introduced monastic spirituality into ordinary church life. He wanted all his clergy to be celibate, so that they could be employed more effectively.

He was a prodigious writer and composed an impressive commentary on Job, which is actually a treatise of ethics and became very popular in the Middle Ages.

Gregory gave the papacy a prestige which it had previously lacked; he was the first truly monarchical bishop of Rome.

III. Setbacks

After Gregory's death, the papacy declined.

1. Pope Honorius was implicated in the monothelete heresy (634), which compromised the tradition of unfailing orthodoxy.
2. Pope Martin I was arrested and removed to Constantinople.
3. Emperor Constantine II visited the city in 664 and forced the pope to knuckle under to his rule. As long as the emperor could intervene in Italy, the papacy was insecure as a temporal institution.

IV. Change of fortune

The last time the papacy did what the emperor wanted was in 681, when it ratified the third council of Constantinople. Ten years later there was another council held in Constantinople, called the council in Trullo, because it was held in the imperial palace of Trullum, which tried to enact disciplinary canons for the church. Among other things,

these allowed a married clergy but insisted on a monastic episcopate, and the use of unleavened bread (azymes) in communion was condemned as being 'Judaistic'. Rome rejected these canons, which it regarded as being anti-Roman.

The emperor (Justinian II) tried to force his will on the pope, but the army - mostly composed of locals - revolted and refused to carry out his orders. Rome was free. Subsequent controversies, especially iconoclasm, loosened the ties still further, though there was as yet no official break with Constantinople.

In 751 the Lombards, a barbarian tribe which had invaded Italy in 568, conquered Ravenna, the seat of the Byzantine exarch (governor) of Italy. Rome was now exposed to attack, and no help from the east was forthcoming.

The pope appealed to the Franks, who invaded Italy, crushed the Lombards, and set the pope up as an independent ruler (754). This was the beginning of the Papal States, which lasted until 1870.

Meanwhile, Boniface had gone to Rome in 718 to ask the pope to support the German mission. This brought Germany into the papal orbit, and confirmed Rome's position as a missionary headquarters.

Also at this time, plainsong (Gregorian chant) was developed under Pope Gregory I (715-31), opening the way to a new and stabilized form of worship which also derived from Rome.

V. Legitimacy

The roots of papal power over the secular rulers of the west lay in the papacy's claim to be the granter of legitimacy. Any ruler recognized by the pope had to be recognized by everyone else. But if the pope decreed that a particular ruler was illegitimate, others had the right to attack him and overthrow his rule. This pattern persisted until the Reformation, though it gradually weakened as time went on.

Legitimacy was enshrined in the coronation ceremony, borrowed from Constantinople, but imposed in every European state. The coronation is a religious service, representing the conferral of divine legitimacy on the secular ruler. This system still exists in the United Kingdom. It is possible to be king without being crowned, but not for long. If the church refuses coronation (as it did to Edward VIII in 1936), the king has little choice but to abdicate.

V. The rise of the Franks

The Franks had a royal family (the Merovingians) which was regarded as sacred, but which became inbred and incompetent, so that real control passed to ministers - the so-called 'mayors of the palace'. One of these, Charles Martel, was responsible for the great victory over the invading Muslims at Poitiers in 732, which made him (in the eyes of many) the great savior of the church.

Charles' son Pippin (or Pepin) wanted to make himself king, and in 751 he polished off the last of the ancient Merovingian line. The pope agreed to recognize this, but only if Pippin would come to his aid and polish off the Lombards - which Pippin duly did. That

was the beginning of a lasting alliance. The result was that the Pope was given land which was referred to as the Papal states, which made the Pope a temporal ruler. Pippin's son and successor was Charles the Great (742-814), whom we know as Charlemagne. He became sole ruler in 771 and proceeded to establish an empire covering most of western Europe. His capital was at Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle).

(Lecture 13 audio ends)

VI. Theology and politics

Charlemagne insisted that his empire should be completely Christian. This led him to force conversions in northern Germany. He also identified the extension of his power with the extension of the Gospel.

He claimed equality with the eastern church and empire, though (of course) this claim was not accepted there. In 794 he convened a council at Frankfurt which denounced the second council of Nicaea (787) and rejected the veneration of icons.

Charlemagne promoted the Filioque doctrine, and his theologians even claimed that the eastern church had fallen into heresy by rejecting it! He also advocated the claims of Rome to be the chief see in Christendom, though this did not mean that he was a slave to the pope's wishes - on the contrary, he did everything he could to control the pope as much as possible.

On 25 December 800 he had himself crowned Holy Roman Emperor in St Peter's, Rome. This established his vision of church-state relations for the next 1000 years - the Empire did not come to an end until 1806.

Charlemagne did his best to revive learning, but in 812 he issued a decree allowing sermons to be preached in the *lingua rustica*, or common tongue of the people. This was the first time that anyone officially accepted that the ordinary people no longer spoke Latin.

III. After Charlemagne

Charlemagne had only one son, so his empire remained intact until he died in 843. It was then divided into three parts, and considerably weakened. Viking raids from Scandinavia did huge damage in the north, and in 911 the Vikings established themselves permanently in northern France -

Normandy ('north-mandy') to this day. The church suffered greatly during this time, with many monasteries being burnt to the ground. It was the true dark age, from which there was to be no real recovery until about the year 1000.

IV. Theologians and controversies

1. Gottschalk (c. 805-69). He revived Augustinian thought and taught a doctrine of double predestination, which made him very unpopular. He was opposed and condemned at a council of Mainz in 848.

2. Ratramnus (d. c. 868). He supported Gottschalk and also wrote against a realistic interpretation of the eucharist, which was then being advanced by Paschasius Radbertus, the first theologian to speak of what would later become the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Ratramnus also defended the Filioque clause and linked it to the primacy of Rome. His belief was that if Rome approved of something, it must be right. However, Rome did not introduce the clause into its liturgy until 1014!

3. John Scotus Eriugena (c. 810-77). A Scot or Irishman who became familiar with the mystical tradition of the Pseudo-Dionysius and introduced it to the west. He thought that the world was a manifestation of God's being, and believed that the incarnation was essential for restoring our contact with the divine Word. Eriugena was one of the few people of his time who knew Greek.

The 'three languages' heresy. This appeared about the same time, in reaction to the proposed translation of the Bible into Slavonic. The argument was that there were only three languages in which God could be worshiped - the three languages which appeared on the cross. But:

Hebrew was the language of the Jews, who were unbelievers. So it was no good.

Greek was the language of heretics (who rejected the Filioque clause). So it was no good.

That left only Latin - the sole language of the western church until the Reformation, and the sole language of the Roman Catholic church until the 1960s.

Lecture 22. The medieval church

I. Basic facts

1. The Christian world was mostly confined to Europe, since Asia and Africa were lost to Islam. It did not include Spain (also Islamic), but it did cover what is now Turkey.

2. The Christian world was internally divided between east and west. The line ran through the Balkans (between Croatia in the west and Serbia in the east), Transylvania and between Poland and Russia.

3. The church pursued the evangelization of northern and eastern Europe until the last country (Lithuania) was converted in 1386.

4. Rome was the undisputed center of the west and Constantinople was the same in the east. But civil government had collapsed in the west, giving the church the responsibility of administering the law to a much greater extent than in the east.

II. Evangelization

1. The western church evangelized Germany, Scandinavia, Hungary and Poland. It also took over the Byzantine mission to Moravia and penetrated the area of present-day Croatia and Bosnia.
2. The eastern church evangelized Bulgaria, Moravia (for a time), Romania and Russia. its great evangelists were the Greek brothers Cyril (d. 867) and Methodius (d. 885), from Thessalonica, who became the 'apostles to the Slavs'. They translated the Bible and the church services into Slavonic, giving the eastern churches a language they could understand in worship and distancing them from the Greek world.
3. The western church undertook the reconquest of Spain from the Muslims. This began in the time of Charlemagne and continued intermittently for centuries, culminating with the fall of Granada in 1492. Spanish Christianity came to have a decidedly military flavor, which carried over into the later conquest of Latin America.

III. The decline of the papacy

About 850 a monk in Rome created the so-called 'forged decretals' which purported to state that the emperor Constantine had given the pope rule over Rome and the west in 330, when he went to Constantinople. These forgeries were not exposed until about 1450, and were used as the basis of papal claims to rule the west for most of the middle ages. The decretals had little influence at first because the collapse of Charlemagne's empire in the late ninth century removed the political stability which had protected the popes. They now became the playthings of the Roman gangs, who vied with each other for the 'honor' of electing their candidates to the throne of St Peter. Sometimes a pope would only last a few days before he was bundled off by a rival gang!

The Holy Roman Empire revived under a new dynasty, the Ottonians. In 962 Otto I was crowned in Rome, and brought the papacy under his control. Otto III (996-1014) went even further and decreed that the pope was his vassal - he held the papal lands only at the emperor's pleasure. Otto also forced the pope to make liturgical and other reforms (some of which were good and necessary, of course) which further weakened the papacy as an independent institution.

IV. The papal recovery

This was the work of the monastery of Cluny (France), where a number of monks had become concerned at the sorry state of the papacy. They plotted to get their own candidate elected as pope, and then they would push through a far-reaching plan of structural reform.

They succeeded in 1049, when Leo IX was elected. Leo did not live long (to 1054) but he managed to appoint gifted administrators - Humbert and Hildebrand. Humbert was tactless, and on a mission to Constantinople in 1054, he excommunicated the patriarch for failing to recognize papal supremacy! (The excommunication was formally lifted in 1965, but the two churches remain separate). Hildebrand was more successful, and eventually he became Pope Gregory VII (1073-85).

When the Emperor Henry III died in 1056, Germany fell into confusion and the pope took advantage of this to change the system of election. From 1059 there was to be a college of cardinals who would elect the pope - not the street gangs of Rome. This removed the election from the realm of popular politics and made it possible for the church to control its own leadership.

In 1075 a dispute broke out with the Emperor Henry IV over the question of 'lay investitures'. Basically, the issue was: who appoints the bishops - the king or the pope? The pope won the battle, and in 1077 Henry IV was forced to do penance in his bare feet (in the snow) at Canossa - a famous episode which typifies the subordination of the state to the church and the new papal revival. However, Gregory overreached himself by supporting a rival candidate to Henry's throne, and the tables were turned - he died a prisoner of Robert Guiscard, the Norman invader of Sicily, in 1085.

V. The balance sheet

By the late eleventh century, the papacy was poised to become the ruler of Europe, despite the reverses suffered by Gregory VII. This was because:

- A. The church controlled the legal system, such as it was.
- B. The church controlled education, such as it was.
- C. The church was universal, whereas secular rulers were merely local.
- D. The papacy was elected, not hereditary. This meant that the best person available for the job could be chosen, and there was no danger of an inadequate son succeeding his father.

As long as the papacy stayed united and elections were kept out of secular hands, the popes could play off the various rulers against one another, but they could not touch him.

Lecture 23. Islam and the crusades I. The rise of Muhammad (c. 570-632)

1. Arabia had escaped civilization before the time of Muhammad. It was a desert country of little value, but it was fought over by Rome and Persia, who both sponsored their own tribal clients. Many Jews and Christian heretics found refuge there, because they were not persecuted as they were in the Roman empire.

2. Mecca was a great pagan religious center because it possessed the black stone - a meteorite which was worshiped by the locals.

3. Muhammad was a visionary who thought he was a new prophet. He wanted to be accepted by the Jews and/or by the Christians, but they both rejected him. He began to record his visions - the beginnings of the Qur'an.

Muhammad was forced to flee from Mecca in 622 - the famous hijra, which became the beginning of the Islamic era. He went with his followers to Medina, where he became embroiled in local politics. Eventually, he managed to take over Medina and from there he led an expedition to capture Mecca. He succeeded brilliantly, and by the time of his death he had conquered the whole of Arabia.

II. Early Islam

This was a simple creed, designed to appeal to uneducated desert nomads. Apart from a few simple rituals, there was nothing to hold Islam together, but these rituals had a strange, binding force. Any pagan who was not a Muslim had a choice - conversion or death. Jews and Christians were allowed to keep their religion, but they became second-class citizens (dhimmi), who had to pay taxes to keep the Islamic army going.

Within two generations, Islam had conquered the Middle East, Persia, Egypt, North Africa and Spain. The successors (caliphs) of Muhammad made their capital at Damascus, where they ruled until 750. In that year there was a palace revolution, and a new dynasty took over, moving the seat of government to Baghdad. (At this point, Spain broke away from the empire.)

However, even before this, there had been an internal schism in Islam. In 656 the caliph Othman was murdered by Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, who was hailed by his followers as the messiah. Ali was soon defeated politically and his son Hassan was killed too, but their followers (the Shi'ites) continue to believe that their savior, the twelfth imam, will return and save the world. Today they are dominant in Iran and southern Iraq, and are generally regarded as more militant than most Muslims, who are called Sunni (followers of the 'way').

Early Islam was finally checked at Constantinople, which withstood a siege of three years (716/18) and at Poitiers in the west (732). After that, the Arab empire stabilized and gradually declined.

III. Culture and beliefs

The Arabs sponsored a great medieval culture, but little of it was due to them. They took over things from other people - science from the Greeks, mathematics from the Indians, law from the Romans, and so on. What they did was synthesize these things and transmit them to other nations. Thus, our 'Arabic' numerals are really Indian, but they would not have got to -us had they not been passed on via the Arabs.

The Arabs were also very tolerant of Greek philosophy (much of which they translated into Arabic) and Judaism. In Spain and in Sicily, especially, there were mixed populations where it was possible for these ideas to be communicated to the Christian world. Much of our knowledge of Greek science, for instance, comes through the Arabs - it was only later that western Europeans started learning Greek directly.

Generally speaking, the Arabs left Christians alone and allowed them to travel freely to Palestine, to visit the holy places. But in the eleventh century this changed when the Turks, a newly-converted Asian tribe, invaded the Middle East. They blocked the way to the holy places, and very nearly annihilated the eastern empire at the battle of Manzikert (1071). This caused a panic in the east, and the emperor in Constantinople was forced to appeal to the pope for military aid.

IV. The crusades

These began as an attempt to shore up the tottering eastern empire, which never viewed them in any other light. But the westerners did not want to do that - they wanted to reconquer the holy land for Christ. The eastern empire, which had lost Palestine in 638, thought this was a crazy idea, and they were amazed when it succeeded. The crusaders entered Jerusalem in 1099 and immediately massacred all the non-Christian inhabitants. The crusader states which then came into being lasted (in part) until 1291, though Jerusalem was recaptured by the Arabs in 1187. They were a complete disaster, because they alienated the eastern church, they forced the Arabs to turn against the local Christians (who might be traitors and surrender to a Christian army) and they failed completely in the longer term. Today the Middle East is more Muslim than it has ever been, with the exception of Israel, a country which most of the Arabs see as a modern equivalent of a crusader state - to be annihilated when the opportunity comes.

Lecture 24. Medieval thought and theology

I. The Greek world

The eastern empire was by far the most cultivated Christian state in the world until the twelfth century. Its scholars preserved the learning of antiquity and engaged in subtle theological debates. Its greatest scholar and theologian was Photius (c. 820-95) who was patriarch of Constantinople twice (858-67; 877-80).

1. Photius was a great scholar and clever theologian. He elaborated the eastern church's objections to the Filioque doctrine, and these have continued to be taken seriously ever since. His main points were:

A. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone (John 15:26). If he proceeded from the Son as well, there would be two sources of divinity and the Godhead would be divided.

B. The original creed did not have the word and it was added illegitimately. No church had the right to alter the creed without universal approval.

2. The Bogomils were a dualistic sect (Manichees of a sort) who originated in the east and were forcibly transported to the Balkans, where they rapidly converted a number of the locals. They were popularly known as Bulgars, from Bulgaria, and in the west, this word became a term of abuse - bugger. Nevertheless, they won a large number of converts in southern France, where they were known as Cathars, and they were not finally removed until they were massacred in 1215.

3. The Russians embraced eastern Christianity with enthusiasm and adapted it to their own needs. However, it was to be many centuries before they would produce original thinkers of their own.

II. Italy

A crossroads of cultures, Italy was to play a leading role in the revival of learning in western Europe.

1. Law schools were started about 1080 at Ravenna and Bologna. In the latter of these, a monk called Gratian produced a concordance of canon law (1140), which became the basis of the church's legal system and remains influential even today.

2. Joachim da Fiore (1145-1202). He revived interest in millenarianism and identified the persons of the Trinity with epochs in human history. The 'third Reich' is a direct descendant of his mystical speculations, as is the idea that the pope is the antichrist, though Joachim himself thought the exact opposite - he identified the emperor as antichrist!

III. France

This was the true heartland of medieval culture. Most of the leading crusaders were French, and their language became the trade language of the Mediterranean (the lingua franca). Among the leading French thinkers were:

1. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109). Born at Aosta in northern Italy (but French-speaking), he went to Normandy where he became abbot of Bee. Later (1093) he became archbishop of

Canterbury. He is famous for his attempts to resolve the problems caused by the interplay of faith and reason. His basic approach was one of 'faith seeking understanding'. He was also the person who developed the satisfaction theory of the atonement, which was later refined by Martin Luther into the penal substitutionary doctrine which we know today.

2. Nominalists and realists. The first nominalist was Roscelin (c. 1050-1125), whom Anselm accused of tritheism. He emphasized particulars over universals. He was followed by William of Champeaux (1070-1121), who held that species are differentiated in each individual, and to some extent by Peter Abelard (1079-1142), who nevertheless recognized that universals existed - but only as predicates, not as principles. Abelard also denied objective existence to sin - for him, it was merely a bad attitude or intention.

3. Gilbert de la Porree (1076-1154). He developed Trinitarian doctrine in a way which made relations into substances in their own right. He was condemned for this!

4. Peter Lombard (d. 1160). He wrote the Sentences, which became the standard theological textbook of the Middle Ages, employing the question and answer method of discourse. He was also responsible for numbering the seven sacraments.

5. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153). Monk and reformer, he was a great preacher and some of his allegorical sermons on the Song of Solomon are still widely read as devotional literature today. He started a new monastic order - the Cistercians.

6. The Victorines. Hugh (1096-1141) and Richard (d. 1173) of St Victor, along with a number of other monks there, developed a new, rationalistic form of Biblical interpretation. They were leading philosophers of their time, and helped to make Paris (where St Victor was) the major university center in Europe.

IV. Thomas Aquinas (1226-74)

The greatest systematic thinker of the Middle Ages. He was confronted with a revival of interest in Aristotle, and decided that the best thing to do would be to integrate him into a Christian world view. He created two distinct levels of knowledge - the secular (Aristotle) and the sacred (Bible). Faith and reason, church and state, university and

monastery - they became distinct and opposing categories. Nevertheless, his *Summa theologiae* remains the greatest theological synthesis which the Middle Ages produced.