

TWELVE POINTS OF LIGHT

POINT 5: EAST - WEST SCHISM - CHURCH ORTHODOXY

INTRODUCTION

- A. Historical perspective - 500 to 1000 A.D.
 - 1. Fall of the Roman Empire - end of 5th c.
 - 2. Rapid rise of Islam - 7th c.
 - 3. Conversion of much of Germany - 8th c.
 - 4. Controversy over use of icons - 9th c.
 - 5. Invasions of the West by pagans - 10th c.

- B. Development of the Catholic Church
 - 1. Organization
 - a. Apostolic succession
 - 1) Irenaeus, at the end of the 2nd century, stated that the Apostles transmitted accurately what had been taught them by Christ.
 - 2) Apostles appointed bishops as successors over churches and passed on what was entrusted to them by Christ

 - b. Administration by bishops
 - 1) Bishops were regarded as successors to the apostles.
 - 2) A single bishop was assigned a given city or area.
 - 3) Archbishops or metropolitans were bishops in larger cities who exercised authority over bishops in their area.
 - 4) Bishops in Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome were called patriarchs.

 - c. Distinction between clergy and laity
 - 1) In the first century every Christian was held to be a priest to God.
 - 2) By end of second century, the clergy had become a separate order.

 - 2. Increasing importance of Rome
 - a. With the move of the administrative government from Rome to Constantinople, the church in Rome was not overshadowed by the Emperor and his court.
 - b. By late 5th c., the Bishop of Rome (Pope) was being promoted as having preeminence over other bishops.

 - 3. Doctrinal Concerns
 - a. Issues after Augustine
 - 1) Grace
 - 2) Predestination
 - 3) Eucharist
 - 4) Penance

 - b. Tradition - according to Vincent of Lerins, "Scripture is the basic source of true doctrine. But, since its meaning is difficult to discover and may be variously interpreted, the Lord has given tradition as a means to determine what is to be believed."

 - c. Gregory the Great, Pope from 590 - 604
 - 1) Purgatory-satisfaction for sin doesn't take place only in this life.
 - 2) Mass as a sacrifice in which Christ is offered anew for the living and those still in purgatory.

- 3) Emphasis on miracles, angels and demons.
- 4) According to Gonzalez, *His roots are in the teaching of Augustine but "the fundamental spirit of Augustine has vanished, and superstition gained supremacy. Everything is coarser, more fixed, ordinary. The controlling motive is not the peace of the heart which finds rest in God; but the fear of uncertainty, which seeks to attain security through the institutions of the church.*

d. Rise of Monasticism

- 1) It represented a triumph of ideas which the Catholic Church had earlier denounced as heretical.
 - a) Legalism - the belief that salvation can be earned or deserved, which is opposed to grace and had been rejected with Ebionism.
 - b) Conviction that flesh is evil which was prominent in Gnosticism, Marcionites, and Manichaeism.
- 2) It spread widely in the fourth and fifth centuries, especially in the East.
- 3) Some practiced extreme austerity
 - a) Pillar Saints - they lived on top of pillars. Simeon Stylites lived on a pillar for 36 years
 - b) Some monks lived in cells so small that they could neither lie at full length nor stand at full height.
 - c) Extreme ascetics were called *athletes of God*.

C. Importance of East-West Schism

1. Undermined the meaning of *Catholic Church*
 - a. Earliest known use of the term in letter by Ignatius to the church in Smyrna, *wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.*
 - b. By the end of the 2nd century, the word *catholic* increasingly meant universal and orthodox.
2. Contradicted reasons for development of Catholic Church
 - a. Unite all Christians in conscious fellowship.
 - b. Preserve and transmit the Gospel in its purity.
 - c. Bring all Christians together in a visible *Body of Christ*.
3. Produced two main factions which consider themselves "catholic"
 - a. Roman Catholic Church in the West
 - b. Greek Orthodox Church in the East
4. According to Latourette, *...in the process of defining the faith and of developing an organization, bitternesses arose which were a ...contradiction of the love which is the chief evidence of Christian unity.*

THE EAST - WEST SCHISM

A. Grounds for the schism

1. Cultural traditions
 - a. West - Latin language and Roman culture
 - b. East - Greek language and Byzantine culture
2. Rivalry between Rome and Constantinople
 - a. East resented growing claims of jurisdictional authority by popes in Rome.
 - b. West opposed Caesaropapism (the subordination of the church to a secular ruler) in Constantinople.
3. Differing customs
 - a. Bearded clergy in the East and clean-shaven in the West
 - b. Fasting on Saturdays during Lent in the West
 - c. Celibacy of the parish clergy in the West and married clergy in the East
 - d. Use of unleavened bread in the West and leavened bread in the East
 - e. Custom of the Greek Church to rebaptize those from the West who wanted to come into its fellowship.

4. Doctrine

a. Veneration of icons in Eastern Orthodoxy

1) Justification

- a) They teach and remind the faithful of the great events of salvation, and move them to do good.
- b) John of Damascus claimed that they are a means of grace, *for the power of that which they represent is communicated through them to the person who contemplates and venerates them.*

2) *Iconoclastic Controversy* led by Pope Leo III in 725

- a) He believed that the veneration of images and of the relics of saints was idolatry and that the notion of the intercession of saints and of the Virgin was false.
- b) Icons were removed but restored March 11, 842, and came to be a symbol of orthodoxy in the entire Eastern church, which still celebrates it as the *Feast of Orthodoxy*.

b. Filioque

1) Introduction

- a) Combination of Latin words meaning, *and from the Son*.
- b) It was added to the Nicene Creed by the 3rd Council of Toledo in 589, *I believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and Son*.
- c) It was accepted by the Western church by the end of the 4th c. but not authorized for general liturgical use before the 11th c.

2) Conflict

a) Eastern Church

- 1] Believed the change was made unilaterally, thereby altering a creed approved by early ecumenical councils.
- 2] Lent itself toward an inappropriate christological position in which the Son is given equal responsibility to that of the Father whose primacy is compromised.
- 3] They stood by the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, *who proceeds from the Father*.

b) The Western church

- 1] Concerned by the rise of Arianism
- 2] Believed the addition makes more precise the intended meaning of the creed.

c) The issue has never been settled and still divides East and West.

B. The combatants

1. Pope Leo IX

- a. French bishop elected pope in 1048
- b. Intended to reform the papacy and the entire church
- c. In the 1040's, confusion developed in southern Italy which had been under Byzantine rule until Normans conquered the region.
 - 1) Eastern bishops were replaced by Western bishops.
 - 2) People complained of conflicting customs.

2. Patriarch Michael Cerularius

- a. Became the patriarch of Constantinople in 1043
- b. Closed the Latin churches in Constantinople in response to the problems in southern Italy.
- c. Took issue at the West's use of unleavened bread and took up the issue of Filioque.

3. Cardinal Humbert

- a. He was the cardinal legate of Pope Leo IX.
- b. Sent by the Pope to deal with the conflicts with Cerularius.

C. The events

1. Cerularius ignored Humbert.
2. Humbert went to Hagia Sophia and placed a bull of excommunication on the altar.
3. Cerularius condemned Humbert.

- D. Complete schism
 - 1. Took almost 200 years
 - 2. Violent anti-Latin riots took place in Constantinople in 1182.
 - 3. Western knights ravaged Constantinople in 1204.

CONCLUSION

- A. *Catholic* in Catholic Church was no longer all-inclusive.
- B. Eastern and Western churches split primarily over cultural and political differences.
- C. Other churches (monophysite) split on theological grounds.
 - 1. Issue of dual nature of Christ.
 - 2. Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, and Syrian churches hold to a single divine nature of Christ.
- D. The one *catholic* or universal mark of a believer was clearly stated by our Lord, *By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

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