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of Nov. 2-72

lecture #5

post-apostolic Christianity

next week
Hog G shop
P. 66-78

The institutional church

By the end of the first cent. C.E. The church was beginning to develop as an institution.

in the N. T. the pastoral letters of I and II Tim, Titus, and the letters of James and Jude reflect this development.

the pastorals were written between 90 and 110 C.E. and show that there was already church officers such as bishops and elders which did not exist at the time of Paul. this is one of the ways scholars know they were not written by Paul.

There is a drastic change in the attitude towards women shown also by the end of the century. Whereas Paul said women could take part, and in fact were leaders in many cases, by the time of the pastorals there was a return to the status quo where women were told to keep silence and were not allowed to teach men, only younger women.] →

this is reflected in several interpolations in Paul's letters which attempted to give Pauline authority to this view. Particularly in I Cor 14:33b-36 where there is an obvious attempt to silence women.

the Letter of James reflects the fact that the faith of the Church was no longer considered a relationship with a person as in Paul but as a set of doctrine to be accepted

and believed in.

Thus even in the N. T. we see the changes leading to the catholic church.

By the end of the first cent. the church had spread throughout much of the mediteranean world. but it did not enjoy full legality and it was not granted the status of a licit religion under Roman law.

Nero in 64 C.E. initiated a persecution against the christians blaming them for burning Rome.

under Domitian in 95 C.E. a persecution arose in Asia Minor. Out of this the book of Revelation was written.

However, [the new religion spread rapidly in the 2nd cent following the trade routes of the empire. it spread from its starting place to Mesopotamia to the southern coast of Britain, on the Rhone and Rhine, along the eastern shores of the Adriatic and in N. Africa into Egypt as well as continuing to grow in Greece, Syria and Asia Minor.

this growth was mainly an urban phenomenon as most the rural areas remained pagan.] 1 p

there were some persecutions in this time but not until the emperor Decius in the third cent. was there systematic persecution.

from 250-259 the worst persecution and widest spread one was conducted with the idea of wiping out Christianity.

next [The 2nd cent. was the most significant for Christian

history. It was a time when the church had to put its beliefs and order into its internal organization.

it had to decide whether to remain a Jewish sect or was to become a universal religion addressing the gentiles. with much internal conflict, it decided on the later course.

There were four major issues of decision to the new religious movement which would eventually provide the basic direction of the church in the entire later period of its history.

The first major problem was the failure of the parousia or second coming of the lord.] as has been noted, [the church began as an apocalyptic sect expecting his immediate return. The writings of Paul, and those attributed to him, show a movement from imminent expectation to an acceptance of postponement.

the gospel of Luke is saying this and John, the last gospel, has the idea that the lord has already come, and we are living in his glorification now (realized eschatology).] 19

The post-apostolic church had a number of different ways of expressing faith and hope. in worship, the Eucharistic fellowship was a here and now relationship with the risen lord as well as an expression of hope in his second coming. this sacrament was conducted right from the beginning. This rite united Christ with his followers.

Baptism became the rite of initiation very early and these two sacraments along with ordination of clergy were all the church had until much later.

Christianity adopted Greek ideas along with Jewish. From the Jewish the idea of the Parousia and resurrection of the body, and from the Greek one of immortality and life with Christ in another world after death..

In Pauline literature we see both of these present. In fact Paul gives two different ideas in his authentic writings. In Cor. the idea of waiting till the resurrection to be with Christ, and in Phil. the idea that immediately on death, you will be with Christ.

Vigorous missionary activity was carried on in spite of the idea that the parousia was at hand.1

This was [the second problem facing the church. how do we handle the wisdom of the gentiles, mainly the Greeks..

The Church not only offered a sense of salvation to its converts, it also offered a definition of man and his world, and this definition of the meaning of man found itself in competition with the philosophy of the Greeks. this competition existed in an air of official and unofficial hostility.

in the 2nd cent. a group of Christian writers known as the Apologists arose to defend their doctrine.]

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there were many including Aristides, Justin martyr, Tatian, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian. they attempted to defend the faith and show its superiority to Greek philosophy. to do this, they made use of Greek ideas and thus introduced the Greek idiom into Christian theology.

for example, Justin Martyr (put to death in Rome in 165) speaks of the "Word" (Logos) and shows how this Greek idea of divine action in the world is fulfilled in Jesus. He sees the Logos as working teaching Greeks such as Socrates and Jews such as Abraham and Elijah so says all those who "lived by reason"! are in some way Christians. He does not stress the life of the historic Jesus except as the incarnation of the Logos and as the revelation of true philosophy.

Justin took a positive approach to Greek philosophy,

"Whatever has been uttered aright by any men in any place belongs to us Christians; for, next to God, we worship and love the Word which is from the unbegotten and ineffable God; Since on our account he has been made man, that, being made partaker of our sufferings, he may also bring us healing"

Clement of Alexandria saw philosophy as "necessary to the Greeks for righteousness, until the coming of the Lord," and after that as assisting "toward true religion as a kind of preparatory training for those who arrive at faith by way of demonstration."

this view meant with opposition as Tertullian, a Roman lawyer, found his pagan analogies in Roman law rather than Greek philosophy..

"What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem? What between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians?"

The mode of relationship started by the Apologists, however, persisted and the Church proceeded later to construct its theology on the basis of the Greek

philosophical heritage and using Greek philosophical language.

[The third problem facing the church was that of the relations between Christianity and Gnosticism.

Gnosticism appealed to many of the best minds in the early Church and at its height in the middle decades of the century threatened to infuse and change the beliefs of Christianity in a thoroughly substantial manner.

the church was weakly organized and its beliefs still largely undefined.]

we have already discussed some of the beliefs of gnosticism and seen some of the resemblances between it and the church.

these similarities made it easy for Gnostic meanings to penetrate the faith. [Christ was seen as the emissary of the good but hidden God sent to rescue men of spiritual character by revealing secret knowledge.]

While Paul was certainly not a gnostic, the Gnostics were able to use much in his teaching. for ex: in I cor 2:7 the idea of "a secret and hidden wisdom of God."

the god who was the creator of the world was seen as an evil deity or at best an inferior demiruage.

[Docetism or the idea that Christ only "appeared to be" a man but did not have human nature was the first major heresy the church had to contend with.] 14

Marcion was the major figure here. he was from Asia minor and converted to Christianity in Rome. Under the influence of a Roman Gnostic, Cerdo, he began to develop a gnostic Christianity. He was excommunicated from the Roman Church in 144. He then set up a separate church of his own, compiled a canon of Christian literature in which he accepted only the Gospel of Luke and ten Pauline epistles which he edited to meet his own Gnostic standards.

In fact, many gospels and epistles appeared in this time period and go to make up the N. T. apocrypha.

Marcion established his new church in part as a protest against the growing legalism in the church.

much of ordinary christian life had become legalistic as people tried to work out practical ways to live their faith.

the Didache or teaching of the twelve was the first church manuel. The writings of Hermas and early bishops known as the Apostolic Fathers also tried to put order into life. .

The church was both ascetic and marked by certain legalism.

Wednesdays and Fridays were days of fasting. Prayer and almsgiving were held in high regard. satisfaction as welll as repentance was necessary for the forgiveness of sin.

here [Gnosticism was Christianitys most dangerous enemy and threatend to distort and transform the meaning of the faith.

result was a Christian counterresponse in which the

Christian intellectual leadership took up the fight to defend the faith from what was seen as demonic subversion.

they responded in two areas: doctrine and organization.

in response to Marcion in 180 the Muratorian Canon ^{as The N.T.} was accepted by Rome and was pretty close to what it is now. It was finally confirmed at Hippo in 393 C.E. as we have it today.]

[Also a credal statement was developed which became known as the Apostles Creed in an attempt to state in formal language the content and import of the faith.

In response to gnosticism the organization of the church was the development of ecclesiastical institution.] p. 3 -

The Christian truth was seen to reside in the Church and the core of Church organization was the office of the bishop.

this form of leadership began early to give way to a single ruling figure, the bishop, probably because collegial leadership is always unstable and tends to give rise to a one-man form.

the crisis of gnosticism hastened this rise in power and Christian faith came to be seen as entrusted to "those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth" (Irenaeus, Against Heresies.)

The Roman Church was being accorded a certain strategic position in this transmission of apostolic faith since the church was set up by the two great apostles, Peter and Paul.

new [Christianity had to define its basic ideas and achieve some kind of uniformity with respect to gnosticism or it probably would not have survived, at least not as a powerful cultural force.

between 160 and 190 the church developed marked Catholic characteristics. there was a greater degree of union between churches, the older collegial leadership gave way to monarchical episcopate, the older charismatic freedom gave way to defined doctrine, and the clergy were emerging as a leading and intellectual stratum in the church and the laity were entering a kind of status of religious tutelage.] ||

the church based itself on apostolic succession of office and teaching. Thus the church repelled the Gnostic danger, but it changed itself considerably in the process.

In this struggle the rise of the church was characterized by explicitly defined doctrine, integrated organization and law.

the end of the 2nd cent. saw one catholic church thruout the empire and around it a number of sects calling themselves Christian as well but considered heretical and enemies of the faith by the catholic church.

new [the beginning of the 3rd cent. saw the emergence of the Church in the basic form which it maintained until the Reformation and which the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches maintain to this day.] 15

Bishops were seen as the guardians of orthodoxy while the laity were ignorant. At times later converts were

illiterate pagans or those born into the church who lacked the enthusiasm of earlier generations.

[this loss of spontaneity and the growing importance of structure led to protest in the church which was the forth problem

both in the 2nd and 16th cent., revolt was at the same time a reaction to an increasing worldliness in the church.

in the early church Christ was considered divine and worshipped with the Father.

by the beginning of the 2nd cent. christian thought had differentiated the Holy Spirit from Christ and had seen it as pre-existent with the Father and Son. This is seen in the Trinitarian baptismal formula found in Matt. 28.

With the failure of the parousia it was seen that the Holy Spirit would come and bring a more abundant life.] p. 4

thus this hope was expressed in Montanism around the year 156 Montanus announced himself to be the passive instrument

the end of the world was seen as imminent and the Montanists advocated that all should go to Phrygia, whence Montanus had come and where ecstatic religion was popular since the new age would start there.

an ardent ascetic discipline was advocated including celibacy, fasting, and abstinence from meat.

it became very popular and the bishops of Asia Minor called the first synods of bishops in church history to combat it around 170 C.E.

The Montanist doctrines were found in Rome around the

year 170 and remained for a long time a source of inner conflict in the Roman church.

Around the year 200 the great African apologist Tertullian became a montanist. The protest of Luther was similar and Tertullian anticipated Luther's reassertion of the priesthood of believers--"Are not even we laics priests?"

Women held an equal place with men in the Montanist heresy. In fact, it was two women who accompanied Montanus in his missionary activity. They had been priestesses of Cybele in Pyrgia.

Rise of Monasticism - show clip ~#10 tot 1000 yrs - 4:30

Monasticism is a form of protest and involves the founding of separate and special ascetic communities.

this phenomenon is found not only in Christianity but in Judaism and in non-biblical religions in most of the world.

Monasticism was a protest movement within the church expressing withdrawal from or rejection of the world and the church which compromises with the world with its sinfulness and halfheartedness.

It represents the attempt to live in harmony with the highest and strictest ideals of a religious tradition, to assert those ideals and form an ideal community of believers.

superior pagan spirits looked upon the world as morally

questionable and advocated a restrained and austere life seeing human fulfillment in contemplation rather than action.

this last idea was taken over by the Christians. The 2nd cent. looked upon a life of voluntary poverty, celibacy and contemplation as the Christian ideal and there were many who practiced it within the Church without separating themselves from the community.

this gave rise to a double standard and the church derived a higher and lower morality.

This expression of the more rigorous ideal led men into the desert where they led lives of extreme self-denial and self-torture.

Anthony (251?-356) an Egyptian who first took up the ascetic life in his native village but soon went to the wilderness, was the most important of these.

Many imitated him and the desert had many hermits following this extreme ascetic ideal.

Pachomius (292-346) changed this hermit life into a community life or cenobitic form when he established a monastery at Tabenna on the Nile between 315-320 and a convent for women somewhat later.

at one time he was said to have seven thousand men and women living under his rule in a number of congregations.

Pachomius' monastic idea gained considerable following and was reformed by Basil (330-379) who worked for its propagation from about the year 360 on.

Basil's monastic rule is the basic constitution of monasticism in the Eastern Orthodox Churches to this day.

Athanasius first brought monasticism to the west. he was an archbishop of Alexandria and a friend of Anthony's.

it was looked on with suspicion but met with the approval of some of the Latin Fathers such as Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome.

Western monasticism was disorganized until around 529 when Benedict of Nursia established the monastic rule since known as Benedictine and established his community at Monte Cassino, halfway between Rome and Naples.

Benedict built his way of life around worship and work. Worship took about 4 hours a day and work was both mental and physical and was concerned with both agricultural and intellectual endeavors.

The Benedictines became important transmitters of culture and their emphasis on worship made their monasteries centers for the development of liturgy and the development of the Christian culture of the early middle ages in which liturgy was a central element.

They made tremendous contributions to the progress of European agriculture in the early middle ages but their missionary work made Mt. Cassino the schoolmaster of Europe.

They and the sister monasteries went north and brought christianity to the Teutonic and Celtic peoples.

When civilization decayed after the fall of Rome monasticism looked even more attractive. from the

beginning, monasticism attracted the best people in the Church and after the foundation of the monastery at Cluny in eastern France in 910 and later it was even more attractive.

out of this monastery came a great reform movement called the cluniac reformation. it held the monastic ideal before the world, advocated celibacy and culminated in the election of the cluniac monk Hildebrand to the bishop of Rome, long since the central presiding and ruling bishopric of the Church.

as Gregory VII (1073-1086) he journeyed throughout much of western Christendom, purifying the church and struggling against the political domination of the church by the Christian emperor.

The Celtic Church - show #14 - 1st 1000 yrs - 4 min

in Ireland a version of the stricter Egyptian monasticism arose and flourished from the fifth to the seventh cent. in the Celtic British Isles.

it combined ascetic rigor of an extreme sort with the most arduous missionary work in the British isles and on the continent.

The Celtic church was in fact organized around monasteries rather than the bishops, and their episcopal sees and Celtic monasticism adapted itself to the Celtic clan system so that monasteries were also clan organizations and abbots were hereditary offices.

Irish monks played a strategic part in converting

Northern Europe but in the later consolidation of the church the better organized and moderate Benedictines proved superior.

The practice of private confession had developed among the monks of both East and West and the Irish missionaries of the 6th and 7th Cent. introduced the practice to the laity as a whole along with penitential literature which flourished in Ireland.

This practice replaced an earlier public confession of the community and became thruout the middle ages a long training school in introspection and self examination for individual christians.

The distinction between clergy and laity, a distinction of function became a difference of religious worth and dignity. With monasticism there arose a new distinction--between people formally seen as "religious" and

At first monasticism was a lay movement with anti-ecclesiastical potential but with the rules of Basil and Benedict monasticism was domesticated, so to speak.

the rules brought it not only within the Church but in the west especially put its huge religious energies at the Church's service.

by the 11th century a third division had arisen in the church in those who began trying to study and put order into canon law and theology.

This new type was exemplified in Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141), a monk, a Christian Platonist, and by his won

admission a man who loved all forms of learning sacred and profane. He represented the church as two peoples--one following the pope made up of clerics and monks, the other following the emperor made up of princes, nobles, knights and ordinary men and women, a representation that became more frequent in the 15th and 16th centuries.

the Christian tradition

By the 4th and 5th cent. the traditions of Christianity had assumed the major forms which would characterize them for many centuries to come.

the scriptures of both the Hebrew Bible and new Testament were considered the final revelation and became more important.

The development of Trinitarian ideas which became the distinctive core of Christian theology helped by the various creedal statements developed at the great councils.

the idea of apostolic authority in determining what was heresy and who could be ordained. as well as discipline.

Rome was early the largest and the pope (bishop of Rome) was primary in spite of oppositions in which the church of North Africa (Coptic) and later the Eastern Orthodox (11th Cent.) broke from Rome.

This trend to make the pope the highest authority culminated in Vatican I (1870's) when the pope was declared to be infallible in all matters of "faith and morals."

by the 4th and 5th cent. the Christian tradition of

worship and prayer and the here-and-now relationship to God thru Christ which flowers in later liturgical and mystical developments were well established.

the cultivation of Christian feeling in connection with the Mass and divine office, and the development of Xian Mysticism, represents a profound deepening of the spirituality of Western man and his relation to God.

also well established was the tradition of asceticism, self denial and an other-worldly orientation and a high estimation of virginity for men and women, of fasting and abstinence in the pursuit of perfection.

a dark suspicion of sexuality which exaggerated and exacerbated the problems of spirit and flesh throughout Christian history also came to the fore.

the reaction of the institutional church to the extremes of asceticism and self-denial was to officially speak for moderation and to be suspicious of extremes. This became characteristic of the church in these matters.

traditions of protest were also established as can be seen in the medieval sects such as the Cathari and Waldensians and later in the churches of the Reformation.

This tradition of protest was visible in two forms of expression

one in the groups which leave the great Church and pursue independently their own understanding of the Christian calling, and

two, those who remain within as religious orders and are reconciled to the life of the great Church but find for themselves a special, separate and often reforming status within (the Franciscans)

noticable to was the marked split between men of religion and men of the world which is characteristic of the west and which even the best efforts of the reformation can't overcome.

finally, the apocalyptic tradition out of which the church came keeps rising to the surface.

men continued to expect a second advent or an age of the Holy Spirit (Johachim of Fiore) and found in the catastrophes of each new age the events initiating the conditions of the coming of the New Jerusalem, a tradition constantly driven underground and rising again.

Montanist hopes in Pyrgia to Millerite hopes in New York (1843) to Jehovah witnesses. all have staked their hope on the second coming of Christ in their generation. Many groups today (mostly fundamentalists) still believe we are in the last years of the Christian Millinea.

Today's hopes are based on the fact that Israel became a nation in 1948 and it is believed that the generation which saw that event will see the parousia.

All of these trends in the Christian tradition were established by the 4th and fifth