

PRE-REFORMATION CHURCH HISTORY

(And its effect on the current Church Scene)

Those who are ignorant of History

Inevitably repeat the mistakes it records

Imagining they are making "Progress"

This booklet grew out of information obtained from "Valiant in Fight," B. Atkinson - Biblical / Evangelical view; and THE HISTORY OF SACERDOTAL CELIBACY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Vol I & II. 3rd revised edition. Dr Henry C. Lea - Liberal / Secular view. (ATK and LEA in the text.) Material from other Church Histories has been added to provide fuller, more accurate coverage. These books, and a lifetime of reading, confirm the outline as usefully true to such facts as are known. Some dates are inevitably approximate, but the order of events is beyond question. Only one point seems to be disputed - the nature of the Manichean religion.(See page 20.)

Protestant churches have arisen relatively recently, from attempts to return to New Testament teachings and ways. In the East there are a number of ancient "churches." In the Western World the Roman Catholic Church is the only church organisation that has a continuous history, which records its development/ degeneration from NT doctrine and practice. To show that its past decisions continue to determine Church doctrines and practices I've inserted quotes from one of its officially sanctioned publications - "My Military Missal," authorised by T.E.. Molloy, Bishop of Brooklyn, Dec 8, 1942. (MMM, in text.)

The choice of aspects of Church History dealt with, as well as the degree of emphasis, are my own, designed to help us to understand the situation around us in Christendom today, how it arose, and how to glorify our Lord and Saviour in it.

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The CHURCH is A VISIBLE SUCCESS

In fact History shows it to have been the greatest influence for good that this world has known. It has preserved and proclaimed the Gospel of Christ more and more widely in the world, and wherever that Gospel has reached, human sacrifices, cannibalism, slavery, indifference to human suffering, etc. have been either weakened or abolished.

It can rightly claim to be the world's most successful religion in that:-

- It is the most widespread religion in the world.
- It proclaims the highest and noblest concept of God
- It makes the highest moral demands on its followers
- It has had the most humanitarian effect - it is THE religion that has produced hospitals, orphanages, "Red Cross," Famine Relief, etc.
- It has had the most educational effect. Schools for the poor and Universities for the intellectuals have sprung up wherever it has gone. Although at times it has persecuted scientists, Science has developed and prospered under its wing. Science blossomed briefly under Islam, but barely existed under Eastern religions, etc.
- It has had the most democratic influence. In spite of State churches being allied to dictatorial kings Democracies came into existence only in Christianised countries. (In ancient Greece which is often referred to as the pioneer of democracy, the bulk of the population were slaves with no voting rights, etc)
- It has had the most successful commercial effect. Industry has become organised, efficient, and even in a fair measure beneficial to the whole population, in "Christian" lands.

BUT THE LORD NEVER INTENDED HIS CHURCH TO BE MERELY "The Best Religion." Many, perhaps all the above are God-honouring desired, and desirable "By-Products," or "Side effects," of what

essential heart of God's purposes for His people, Mt 22:36-40 Lk 10:25-37, 1 Jn Chapter 3. When we apply this "Love" test to the Church it's obvious that it has generally failed in its loving obedience to its Lord, and failed to display His love to the world CONSISTENTLY.

After Ephesus we're shown the church at Smyrna enduring persecution. The church at Pergamum settling down- *Katoikeo*= Becoming at home in, and surviving in a hostile world, by tolerating and being corrupted by those who followed Balaam's advice, Num 25:1-3; 31:16, and shared in the Heathen feasts, and sexual immorality of the world around them. Such adjustment to the world so as to make life more comfortable for Christians is a feature of the Church in all ages. It may seem common-sense, and excusable. God's view of it is stated bluntly in Jas 4:4-10

At Thyatira the church cheerfully tolerated religious doctrines and practices that paralleled those of Queen Jezebel - which almost abolished the true worship of God in Israel in Elijah's time. By adjusting religious beliefs and practices to those prevailing in the world around nominally under the authority of the Lord, and uniting with the civil power, such a Church could be a great power in the land. And, do much for the benefit of everyone. But it could not do the good God had called His Church to do. Inevitably its wealth and power would corrupt it and it would persecute those loyal to God's Word. 1 Kings 21 shows Jezebel disposing of an "inconvenient" man by accusing him of "Cursing God and the King." The "State-Church" often did just that, condemning as "Heretics" those who obeyed God/His Word.

The Sardis Church with its big reputation, and its spiritual deadness - only a few members walked with the Lord in white / purity - reminds us that the VISIBLE Church may be impressive, but in reality an almost empty shell. In contrast to this the Church at Philadelphia, with the human weakness of its members, and its weak position in the world, had an open door of fruitful witness given and maintained by God. And finally the Church at Laodicea,

illuminated by almost two thousand years of scholarship and folly. And we dare not judge any Church, or individual, confidently or harshly. We share the same humanity and the same capacity and inclination towards error and folly. We need to read and pray Psalm 19 often.

Besides, these seven letters make it very clear that it's to the Lord Himself all are answerable, Rom 14:4; 10-12. He alone sees things as they really are. In every Church, in every congregation each individual is challenged to OVERCOME what is not of the Lord Jesus Christ in his church setting. And, the Lord Himself is standing at the door knocking patiently, eager to be welcomed in into every aspect of every life, to share with us what He has to offer if we will share our unworthy resources with Him, Rev 3:20

Our Lord commands us to "Honour our Father and Mother" who gave us life, and not to curse - Kakalogo - To speak evil of, or critically of them, Mt 15:4. The Lord still requires this of us even when according to His command we have left them in obedience to His command, Lk 14:26-27.

In a similar way every Christian owes a general debt, under God, to the Church as a whole for preserving the Scriptures, and their Gospel, down through the ages. And a specific debt to whatever church setting brought us that knowledge - a loyalty to it that isn't entirely displaced by any subsequent spiritual progress. Our adult direct loyalty to the Lord may move us to a church-setting where He is more clearly proclaimed and more faithfully/ joyfully followed and obeyed. But, we don't honour Him by sneering at the church-setting we have outgrown.

Still, our loyalty to any church tradition must not be allowed to bind us to the truth. Much "Church History" is sanctified wishful thinking. E.H.. Broadbent's "THE PILGRIM CHURCH," no doubt shows a non-conformist bias in its willingness to take pleasure in persecuted or fringe church movements.

Church for harsh criticism. Having a Protestant background I've sought God's help to guard against my inbred prejudice (To some it may seem that I've gone too far in this.) The fact is that as the Catholic, and similar Eastern Orthodox churches, made up at least 95% of the Christian Church throughout most of the period being studied, and the history of the Catholic Church is the better known to us, it's inevitable that the majority of KNOWN failures are within it. A Protestant Historian made clear that some Biblical Doctrines remained within the Roman Catholic church, and that in every generation SOME Roman Catholic leaders preached them, whatever faults were obvious in the unbiblical Papal SYSTEM. **1.

Pope INNOCENT III, while determined to stamp out Bible-obeying Christianity as "Heresy," was fully aware of the state of the church that he led. In his address to the Lateran Council, 1215 he stated bluntly "The corruption of the people has its chief source in the clergy. From this arise the evils of Christendom: faith perishes, religion is defamed... justice is trodden under foot, heretics multiply, schismatics are emboldened, the faithless grow stronger, the Saracens triumph." THE AGE OF FAITH, W. Durant, P. 763

We must face the valid criticism of the past failures of the visible Church, and keep turning back to God's Word so that we constantly line ourselves up with His purposes, so that His power can work through us to accomplish them. Only then can we hope to bear credible witness to the power and grace of God which takes up and uses individual sinners, and transforms them into a measure of Christ-likeness. And which also stoops to work through flawed Christians and imperfect fellowships of Christians.

Footnote **1 HISTORY of THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION J.H. M. d'Aubigne. One volume edition R.T.S. 1846 P. 46. Distinguishes between "CATHOLICISM," which produced many worthy men and true Christians, and "POPERY" an erroneous and destructive system that dominated Catholicism. He sees Christianity as the religion of God, threatened by Hierarchism= the religion of Priests, and Rationalism= the religion of Man.

blood alone. Paul appointed elders, Acts 14:23 but it was God who made them elders -ultimately they were responsible to HIM, not Paul, Acts 20:28 Church Founders and Elders never OWN a Church, or have the right to dictate its future.

IV. 29 From outside the Church ruthless SPIRITUAL WOLVES will attack the flock. True shepherds will risk their lives to protect it. Those motivated by self-interest take avoiding action, Jn 10:11-13

V. 30 From within the Church SELF-SEEKING CHRISTIAN LEADERS will, perhaps unconsciously, perhaps to meet perceived needs, Adapt /Distort /Twist- Diastropho the Word of God as they preach it.

No one individual of us can PERFECTLY understand / proclaim God's Truth. God maintains the balance of doctrine by speaking through a variety of servants /body members who by virtue of their different gifts / functions / backgrounds see things differently. THE one essential for healthy growth is that everything said must be TRUTH (as given in Scripture,) spoken and listened to in LOVE, Eph 2:22, 4:11-16, 1 Pet 4:11. PRIDE will refuse to listen, and becomes more dogmatic, determined to get as many disciples for itself and its ideas as it can. This divides God's flock and distracts their gaze from the Lord. Often it destroys their LOVE for one another, and then all their work for God is empty show, 1 Cor 13:1-3.

VI. 31-36 The Church is protected by ALERT LEADERSHIP that spends itself constantly in Christ-like care of its members. Yet, confesses always that it's not its own sacrificial efforts, but God Himself and His Word which will build them up securely, 2 Cor 1:21-24, Eph 3:7-4:16, 2 Tim 3:14-17.

VII. 37-38 Their LOVING RESPONSE - what more could anyone ask for? It's easy to TALK Love, INTEND Love, yet to FORGET TO Love. A few years later, Paul wrote "All in Asia - Ephesus was its Capital - have turned away from me," 2 Tim 1:15. Our attitudes to His Servants and to the Lord are linked. The Lord's verdict 30 Years later was - "I know how patiently / hard you WORK for me, how loyal to my TRUTH, but LOVE FOR ME has faded - all you do is pointless without that I may as well remove the Lamp stand of your witness" Rev 21:7. (paraphrased.)

mercave. The roaring rush of the Lion towards game, pounces them into dashing off in the opposite direction where lionesses have already hidden, ready to pounce on them as they rush past.)

AD 34

JERUSALEM - Acts 8:1, after Stephen was stoned to death a great PERSECUTION arose against the Church at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered except the Apostles.

AD 54

THESSALONICA - Believers suffered persecution, just as earlier Jewish ones did, 1 Th 2:14. RIDICULE, VERBAL ABUSE, BEATINGS, LOSS OF PROPERTY, IMPRISONMENT, were all part of the normal expectation of Christian converts. "We kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction," 1 Th 3:3-4.

If we're loyal to our Lord and Saviour it shouldn't surprise us if people treat us as they treat Him, Jn 15:18-16:4. That's part of the Gospel / Good News!

AD 64

After the great fire in ROME, Nero falsely claimed that the Christians had started it. Many were thrown to the lions, burnt alive, etc.

AD 90

SMYRNA - Rev 2:9-10 "I know your tribulation and poverty, Satan is about to cast some of you into prison, but be faithful unto DEATH and I will give you the CROWN OF LIFE."

That sums up the Lord's message to the Church under persecution. Actual persecution, or the threat of it, was usual for the first 300 years.

Always under the Roman Empire it was a criminal offence to hold any meetings, except in authorised Temples, Synagogues, etc.

melted down, the silver sold back to the silversmiths. The Temple and the Government shared the price received.)

Footnote **2 (General background) HEATHEN VIEWS OF CHRISTIANITY

Quotes from "Christian History" mag Vol XV II, No 1

Pages 13-14. Pliny the Younger Gov Bithynia Circa AD 110 wrote to Emperor Trajan that when people were brought before him accused of being Christians, when they confessed they were, even under threat of punishment ordered them to be punished "For I did not doubt that, whatever it was they admitted, obstinacy and unending perversity certainly deserved to be punished." That unwillingness to do and to what a Roman official ordered showed a dangerous lack of respect to Roman authority. He called Christianity a "Contagious superstition." Cicero and Plutarch defined "superstition" as irrational religions which acted unpredictably - without due regard to the rites, rituals, and traditions of Rome. National religions were permitted as long as the worshippers also took part in official Roman religious rites and ceremonies.

Page 16. (Christians were accused of incest, - as married couples were referred to as being "Brothers and Sisters" And of Cannibalism because of the words "This is my body, take, eat," etc.) Marcus Minucius Felix wrote "For we were once the same as you blind and ignorant, our opinions were once the same as yours. We believed that the Christians worshipped monsters, ate the flesh of infants, and practised incest at their feasts. We did not understand that these tales were always being spread abroad by the demons, without examination or proof."

Page 16 Tatian "Why am I abhorred as a vile miscreant? If the emperor levies a tax, I am willing and ready to pay it. If I am a bondsman and my master commanded me to serve, I acknowledge my status and obey.... Only when I am commanded to deny my God will I not obey, since I would rather die than show myself false and ungrateful."

Pages 31-32 At first the attitude of the Pagan towards Christian Martyrs was of brutal mockery, but this changed slowly to a grudging respect. Galen, the Physician, about AD 200 criticised Christians for their ignorance and gullibility, but acknowledged their "contempt of death, and restraint in cohabitation." and their "self-control in matters of eating and drinking and their keen pursuit of justice [which is] not inferior to that of genuine philosophers."

A Christian response to these attitudes is given in the 2nd Century "Epistle to Diognetus" "Christians do not live apart in separate cities of their own.. they conform to ordinary local usage in their clothing, diet and other habits.. they take their full part as citizens, but they submit to everything as if they were aliens. Though.. in the flesh they do not live after the flesh.. their citizenship is above in the heavens. They obey the prescribed laws but in their own private lives they transcend the laws. They show love to all men - and all men persecute them. They are misunderstood and condemned; yet by suffering death they are quickened to life."

There were intermittent SPECIAL PERIODS OF PERSECUTION until:

AD 303

AD 400 onwards

Barbarian hordes of Germanic tribes over-ran the Roman Empire, stamping out Christian witness in some places - Eg Britain.

AD 623 onwards

Moslem Arab armies over-ran Syria, Persia, North Africa **5 most of Spain, etc leaving pockets of Christians in Egypt, Ethiopia, Israel, Lebanon, Armenia, Persia. Later Moslem Turks over-ran the Balkans wiping out or persecuting Christians.

Footnote **3 An estimate of the GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY

"Christian History" mag Vol XV II, No 1. Page. 26. (The figure for AD 100 is obviously too low in view of Acts 2:41, 4:4; 6:7, etc.)

AD 100 7,500 0.002% OF THE POPULATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

150	41,000	0.07	"	"	"	"	"
200	220,000	0.36	"	"	"	"	"
250	1,170,000	1.9	"	"	"	"	"
300	6,300,000	10.5	"	"	"	"	"
350	34,000,000	56.5	"	"	"	"	"

Footnote **4 Page 28. TERTULLIAN about AD 200 wrote that while pagan Temples spent their money "on feasts and drinking bouts," Christians spent theirs "to support and buy poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls destitute of means and parents, and of old persons confined to the house. AD 251 the Bishop of Rome in a letter to the Bishop of Antioch wrote that "more than 1,500 widows and distressed persons were in the care of his congregation." The Emperor Julian the Apostate (AD 361-363) wrote that "The impious Galileans support not only their own poor, but ours as well." There were an estimated 131 men in Rome for every 100 women. Female infanticide was common. A letter preserved from Hilarion to his pregnant wife ran "if it is a boy, keep it, if it is a girl, discard it." Celsus wrote that frequent abortions killed many women and made others barren. The Christian community practised neither abortion nor infanticide, and so attracted women to its higher ideals.

Footnote **5 A great deal of information about this can be gained by reading "THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY", by William H C Frend, published by Geoffrey Chapman, 1996.

11:13-15 We see from 2 Cor 11:2-6, that Satan's agents work at luring Christians away from direct dependence on the Lord, and the truth revealed in His Word. As I see it, Satan has BEGUN to win as soon as we become CHRISTIANS + anything - Brethren Christians / Baptist Christians; Charismatic Christians / Anti-Charismatic Christians; Capitalist Christians / Socialist Christians; Fundamentalist Christians / Liberal Christians; KJV-only Christians / Other-version only Christians; Creation in seven 24 hour days Christians / or not, etc. See Rom 16:17-18

Of course EVERY DETAIL OF GOD'S TRUTH MATTERS, BUT OUR LOYALTY IS TO CHRIST ALONE, WHO PURCHASED US WITH HIS BLOOD. In many details we must have each other to be answerable to Him, Rom 14:1-23 And in every situation ONLY WHAT WE ARE / SAY / DO IN UNQUALIFIED LOVE is of any value, 1 Cor 13:1-3.

DOCTRINAL BATTLE GROUNDS

1. (a.) THE PERSON OF CHRIST - HIS DEITY

2 Pet 2:1 "There will be FALSE TEACHERS among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies even DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM." Heresies- Hairesis= A Choosing a choice Heresy. A self-willed opinion. Anything which people CHOOSE to believe because it is what they want to believe. All of us are constantly drifting to the left or right of the straight path of God's Truth. This becomes HERESY when we insist that our ideas are right, and we refuse to listen to God's Word, to God the Holy Spirit, and to our Fellow-Believers

Any truth pushed beyond the statements of God's Word to a humanly logical conclusion becomes a Heresy.

AD 59

The RESURRECTION of Christ was apparently being denied by some of those associated with the church at Corinth, 1 Cor 15:12-17.

As a result they converted the Goths, and Lombards. As these converted-to-Arianism races later gave up the Arian heresy, perhaps this illustrates Phil 1:14-18 "In anyway Christ is preached - I rejoice"

The Deity of Christ is still a critical issue as Biblical Salvation is based on the Deity of Christ, Col 1:3-29

1. (b.) THE PERSON OF CHRIST - HIS HUMANITY.

AD 90

1 Jn 4:2 "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come IN THE FLESH is from God Every spirit that doesn't, is of Anti-Christ" (In 1 Jn 1:1-4 John had already made clear that his close contact with the Lord Jesus had assured him of the reality of the Lord's humanity.)

The early centuries saw a great deal of confused argument about the reality and precise nature of Our Lord's humanity. In our humanistic, man-glorifying / God-denying and God-despising age, the humanity of Jesus is generally taken for granted.

That Jesus as MAN took the sin and punishment of all mankind righteously on Him is made clear in Rom 5:12-19.

That He was truly MAN living on earth by the indwelling Holy Spirit in dependent trust and obedience to the Father in Heaven, and is now indwelling us, is our guarantee that we can confidently attempt to so live, Jn 15:9-11; Col 1:27.

His being truly MAN is our assurance that in our attempt to live for God / in fellowship with Christ in this world He's both a sympathetic, and competent High Priest on our behalf, Heb 2:10-18 4:14-5:10

AD 431

12

Church spent its energies persecuting those they accused of being Monophysites while those people, the Nestorians, took the Gospel to Siberia, China, India, Ceylon Being persecuted by the Greek orthodox made them far more acceptable to the Parthians / Persians, politically the enemies of the Greeks. THE PILGRIM CHURCH. E.H. Broadbent P. 71-84

(Similarly the Exclusive Brethren were the doctrinally precise - the Open, were Gospel preachers)

AD 700

Moslems over-ran North Africa wiping out Christians, while Churches fought over whether Christ had ONE, or TWO wills. ATK P. 77.

Footnote **6 Creeds - While concern to maintain Biblical Doctrine was a motive in establishing CREEDS, they didn't necessarily do this. Creeds enforced by the State did control who was in charge of Buildings, Funds and Congregations, but at the cost of State Policy, and Political Expediency being involved in their formulation. State-enforced orthodoxy could be followed by State-enforced opposite "orthodoxy" a generation later.

In any case CREEDS try to state the truth more clearly than God the Holy Spirit did in Scripture itself, 2Pet 1:20-21. Therefore they must go beyond Scripture. Preachers also do so in applying Scriptures to the lives and times of their hearers, but that's safer as the passing sermon is less likely to supplant the abiding text of Scripture than a Creed is.

As the mere fact of formulating and using a CREED amounted to a clarifying and improving on the doctrinal statements of the Word of God, it wasn't surprising that the task conveyed a challenge to Church Leaders to display their personal superiority over other leaders in intelligence and devotion to God. The CREED-formulating Councils inevitably occasioned the display of personal rivalries, factional in-fighting, and political manoeuvring to an unedifying degree. The orderly Government of the State as well as the Church was aimed at, and generally the winners were those who could convince the current Emperor that supporting them would be in his best interest. Along with the undoubted good achieved, these human factors in their formulation mean that Creeds DIVIDE Christians, and often trivialise doctrines, and laden with bitter controversy.

Theologians wrangled over whether Christ was of THE SAME SUBSTANCE, ONE SUBSTANCE, or A SUBSTANCE with the Father, instead of like Mary PONDERING over the incarnation IN AWE, Lk 219.

Alternatives to SALVATION BY PERSONAL FAITH IN CHRIST?

you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." VERDICT, Acts 15: 24-29 "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials; Abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood (EATING blood? or MURDER? - as in 2 Sm 16:7-8, etc.) from things strangled (eating them was eating their blood Gen 9:4-6; Lev 17:11-12) and from sexual immorality."

AD 53

Gal 5:2 "If you receive circumcision, Christ will be no benefit to you." Either we're saved by circumcision + PERFECT OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW, OR by FAITH CLAIMING THE PROMISE OF GOD, Rom 7:1-4; 11:6; Gal 3:10-14. Yet where to draw the line between Jewish and Christian practice was not always clear, 1 Cor 9:19-22 Paul, on one occasion, under pressure to please Jewish Believers, went back to LAW Ritual, Acts 21:20-26

WHAT WAS AT STAKE?

i. Any trust in Law-keeping was trust withdrawn from Christ, and it easily led to self-righteous legalism.

ii. If the non-Christian Jews accepted Christians as Jews, and their church as a Synagogue, the Christians had the protection of being a "Permitted Religion," under Roman Law. If not, every time the Christians met they were committing a crime under Roman law, as practising a religion for which permission had not been granted. Jews resenting the loss of members of their synagogue who had joined the Christians could report the illegal gatherings to the Roman authorities. This may be part of what was involved in Acts 17:6.

iii. Synagogues provided Welfare help, education, etc. for members

WHAT GOD DID ABOUT IT?

AD 70

grew out of Mahomet's contact with Jews and Ebionites, and Mani - the Manichean, also was influenced by Ebionites in his youth.

Sabbath and law-keeping heresies have continued down till today's Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists, etc. (For a full treatment of the relationship of the Law to the Gospel see Booklet "The Law, the Lord, & Us")

It has been said that "Man is incurably Religious." When all human cultures are surveyed it's obvious that it's natural for mankind to view Religion in terms of concrete things that they can do to merit the goodwill of Deities / Spiritual powers, "Evolution," etc and benefit from their favour. These things included rituals, prayers, fasting, self-torture, meditation, celibacy, vegetarianism, giving sacrificially, keeping taboos, wearing charms, making pilgrimages, etc. All Spiritual movements tend to harden into such "Religious Systems." In spite of all the work of the OT Prophets, Jewish Religion hardened into a system so distorted and divorced from God, Scripture, and reality, that it crucified its Messiah - Christ when He came.

While the Church broke free from the chains of Judaism, it didn't escape the pressure to provide a religion by which man by self-effort could find reason to be proud of, and confident in, himself.

When Christianity "Triumphed / Became Apostate," under Constantine, and claimed to be Christ's Kingdom on earth, it taught that God was done with the Jews for ever. This made it easy for Jews to be persecuted for their rejection of Christ. Yet the Church Organisation proceeded to set up a religious system modelled on the Christ-rejecting Jewish one - a system that included robed priests, holy places, religious rituals, sacrifices, pilgrimages, etc. This ignored the fact that in the NT the only positive mention of Religion- Threskeia, is in James 1:26-27, certainly not a "system." The others are Acts 2:6-5 and Col 2:18 See also BRIDGE (a) page 41.

AD 64

AD 400

PELAGIUS- "... denied original sin and taught that it was possible for individuals to live without sin and thus to merit salvation, and that there were cases in which this had taken place" ATK P.53

AUGUSTINE- Insisted on Original Sin and the need for regeneration BUT as he claimed that the ritual of Christian Baptism, even of babies, removed original sin and achieved this regeneration, it wasn't an effective barrier against "Salvation by Works" ideas when linked with "Salvation by Ritual" ideas.

AD 451

The Council of Ephesus condemned the Pelagian Heresy.

ATTACKING HERESIES - or doing anything else that takes our eyes off Christ in the Scripture - IS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. Time and time again the outward triumph of orthodoxy was followed by the adopting of that heresy to be the new orthodoxy.

So, the RC church soon taught /still teaches the SAVING EFFECT OF RITUALS and WORKS. About 1950 heard an RC. priest in a Greymouth (NZ) Radio Service preach on "The 7 roads to Heaven" listing lifestyles such as Self-Renunciation, Devotion, etc. The road of "Brotherly Good Comradeship," he said, was the best bet for the locals!

Preaching in Protestant Churches also includes "Salvation by works" ideas. In fact such ideas inevitably creep into our thinking even where they are most preached against - check your own experience

Supplementary note - The keeping of HOLY DAYS

that was the day on which the Jews met there. But to "Break Bread"/eat the LORD'S SUPPER, Christians met on the FIRST DAY of week - the Day Christ rose from the Dead, making it the LORD's DAY, the day when He demonstrated that He was LORD by rising from the dead, Jn 20:19, 26 Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2 (The Greek word for LORD'S- Kuriakos used of the Supper, and the Day in 1 Cor 11:20 Rev 1:10 is used in those places only.) This marked a whole new order -The Lord was FIRST, and CENTRAL in all aspects of life in the "New Creation." Christians were "Dead to the Law, married to Christ, to serve Him in the NEWNESS of the Spirit," Rom 7:1-6. The Sabbath and other holy days are no longer a matter of concern to us, Rom 14:5-12, Col 2:16-17. The Lord Jesus Christ, and His finished work, is our "Sabbath Rest," Heb 4:7-11. (SEE booklet God's Law, the Lord, & Us.)

AD 65

Col 2:16-17 "Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a holy day/religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

AD 107

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch as a prisoner on his way to Rome and martyrdom, wrote in a letter to the Christians in Magnesia "They (the Christians) have given up keeping the Sabbath, and now order their lives by the Lord's Day instead (the Day when life first dawned for us, thanks to Him and His Death.)"

AD 313

Emperor Constantine issued the EDICT OF MILAN which granted the Jews the right to keep the Sabbath, the Pagans the right to worship on their holy days, and the Christians the right to worship on the First day of the week/ the Lord's Day. This changed nothing, but gave State protection for each group to continue doing what they were already doing.

Alternative (b.)

Salvation by CORRECT PERFORMANCE OF RITUAL

Salvation by CORRECT PERFORMANCE OF the RITUAL of the "MASS"

At the Last Supper the Lord "Broke Bread," saying it was His body broken for them. He "Poured out wine," saying it was the New Testament- Diatheke (The Greek word used for the OT Hebrew Berith- Covenant) in His blood shed for us for the remission of our sins. He "Blessed- Eulogeo," (Mt 26:26 Mk 14:22 1 Cor 10:16) which has the same meaning as "Gave thanks- Eucharisteo" **7 (Mt 26:27, Mk 14:23 Lk 22:17, 19, 1 Cor 11:24) before doing each, and handed the bread and wine to the disciples for each of them to eat /drink.

This was a simple modification of the Jewish family Passover meal, when they remembered the fact of their deliverance from Judgment in Egypt, and the means used - the Passover Lamb that kept them safe from Judgment. So the Lord said His actions were to be repeated by us, as a remembrance of Him. A remembering that His body given, and blood shed on the Cross were the means of our redemption. As the Lord stood bodily among them they naturally understood that the bread and wine were REPRESENTING His body and blood not changed into it. This understanding continued as they kept the Lord's Supper in a simple, but solemn gathering of fellow-believers as in 1 Cor 11:20-27.

John in His Gospel apparently saw no need to describe the "Last Supper." Instead in Chapter 6 he records Christ speaking of Himself as the Bread of Life, broken to give men life. And that all who "Come" to Him, 6:35 "Look" to Him, 6:40 and "Believe" in Him, 6:29-35, 40 have satisfying eternal life. The Gospel is stated in varying ways so as to make it clear that there is not just ONE, CORRECT way of stating the complex spiritual truth.

Footnote **7 (Eucharisteo is not a mysterious word reserved for the action of a priest. It's used of the smug Pharisee in Lk 18:1. Eulogeo= to speak well of, is used of thanking, praising, or glorifying God, Lk 1:64, 28 etc, or asking Him to bless Lk 6:28 Rom 12:14 1 Cor 10:16)

To eat and drink is personal, and individual, something that one must do for oneself. So to make it shockingly plain that this is an individual,

all sacrificial death on our behalf, " Because by one sacrifice He has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy," and " there is no longer any sacrifice for sin," Heb 10:11-18

God in His wisdom expressed His will for us in such a form that obedient Christians functioning in different cultural settings may have different understandings as to what He wills for them as to the details of the form in which they worship and " show forth the Lord's death," 1 Cor 11:26 The Worship "in Spirit and Truth," He seeks, Jn 4:23 isn't a matter of the formal detailed carrying out of a single carefully-specified formula. The Lord left room for variety and reverent spontaneity.

But as the years passed, the Last Supper was changed into something totally different from that seen in the NT. It became THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS - with apparently in some sense Christ being created and offered again and again as Sacrifice for Sins. **8

Footnote **8 A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol II. Hans Lietzmann. P. 129 3 reasons for the Lord's Supper being called a Sacrifice 1. Thanksgiving and Prayer were the distinctive "Christian Sacrifices," Heb 13:15. 2. Bread, wine, etc were brought by the church members as gifts to the leaders, or for the poor, Heb 13:16. 3. Later some began to teach that the thanksgiving offered for the Bread and Wine transformed it into miracle-working sacrificial food for the church.

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY J.C. Robertson. P. 99 Irenaeus wrote that all Christian actions are sacrifices.

Tertullian referred to Jesus Christ as the Chief Priest of God the Father, who first offered Himself as a sacrifice to the Father, and then commanded this to be done as a commemoration of Himself. "Certainly the priest discharges the office of Christ when he proceeds to offer it as he sees Christ Himself to have offered." Cyprian, Letters, 6:26:3, 14. This idea was not adopted widely in the East until after 300.

NOTE That the idea of "The Sacrifice of the Mass" (and other so-called "Christian Doctrines") was introduced from the teaching of

West's Ed / XVI. 16 sq. and West's note p. 160 Glossary, p. 64- Haugs Essays, Bombay Ed., p. 239 Shayast b-Shayast XVII. 2 (West's Pahlavi Texts, Pt. I. p. 382 and West's note, p. 284.- Dadistan-i-Dinik, ch. XXVIII. - XXX (Pahlavi Texts, II. 58 sqq).- Plutarch de Isid. et Osirid. 46- Justin Mart Apdog II.)

P. 35 "Manes in combining Mazdeanism with Christianity, had adopted the Eucharist in the Mazdean form, and confined the use of the cup to the Priesthood and this lay communion in one element (bread/wafer only) became so well recognised as a test of Manichaeism that Leo the Great (5th Century) ordered the excommunication of all who received the sacrament after that fashion." Leon PP. I Serm. XLII. cap. 5. (Yet by the 11th and 12th centuries Lay communion in the RC Church was limited to the wafer - and this continued until very recently. Bible-lovers will see this recent change to Bible-obedience as being linked with the reading of God's Word in that church.)

It may seem strange, at first sight, that LEA is the only Church Historian who spells out the detailed closeness of the parallels between Manichaeism (and other Eastern religions) and the way Church ritual and customs developed during the period in which the two religions (Manichean and Christian) competed for the allegiance of the mass of the people. Those who do mention them, tend to suggest that the Church was the model for the parallels, not vice versa.

Out of loyalty to the Catholic system some Churchmen may have had no desire to see any such parallels. But the obvious reason is that the sources they used were limited to comments AGA INST what was known of the Manichean religion by Christians such as Augustine who met it in their own Christian setting. LEA quotes sources from its Eastern homeland where its full character was seen. That it adapted itself to Christianity is obvious, but it was largely Gnostic Christian heresy that it incorporated, and THAT owed its origin in part to Eastern religion.

I have studied God's Word for many years. What I have found there gives no support for the R.C. doctrine of the "Mass" so I can make no claim to an unbiased attitude. The simplest, most honest thing I can do is to print an

First: To adore Thee and give Thee the honor which is due to Thee confessing Thy supreme dominion over all things....

Second: To thank Thee for countless benefits received.

Third: To appease Thy Justice provoked by so many sins, and to make satisfaction for them.

Fourth: To implore grace and mercy for myself, for (name)**9, for all afflicted and sorrowing for all poor sinners, and for the holy souls in Purgatory. (300 days Indulgence)" For information about Purgatory, see page 43 For information about indulgences see page 42

P. 11. Priest kisses relic stone (Explained in note at the foot of page 11 - Priest ascends to Altar, Calvary itself, kisses martyr's relics in the altar stone.) & says "We beseech Thee O Lord by the merits of thy saints whose relics are here, & of all the saints, to graciously pardon all my sins."

P. 37. May this commingling and consecrating of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ avail us, who receive it, unto life everlasting Amen.

P. 42 Grant O Lord that what we have taken into our mouth we may receive with a pure mind, as a temporal gift, may it become to us an eternal remedy.

P. 48 Those who say AMEN sincerely to the prayer after Mass earn 10 years Indulgence (10 years less in Purgatory,) and an extra 7 years by saying "Have Mercy on us" 3 times.

P. 67. After receiving the Communion wafer, Christ remains in you for at least 15 minutes.

Footnote **9 That is the priest is to say the name of the person or persons for who this particular "Mass" is being offered for - on request, and paid for by those requesting this service on behalf of the deceased. LEA suggests that the idea of this so-called "Miracle" of Christ being repeatedly offered in the "Mass" as a sacrifice for sins, could be paid for and the supposed spiritual benefit applied specifically to any named person, was perhaps influenced by the fact that the Manicheans offered a similar service to their followers.)

Alternative (b2) Salvation by CORRECT PERFORMANCE OF the RITUAL of BAPTISM

Acts 8:38 "Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him." Even if Acts 8:37 is an explanatory addition rather than original, it indicates the way the Early Church saw the needed qualification for baptism at the time the scribe was writing.

AD 100? 150?

The DIDACHE records OF BAPTISM "...immerse in running water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Adding that if running water not available use ordinary water. If immersion impossible sprinkle water on the head three times) "Both baptiser and baptised should fast before the baptism.. the candidate should be told to fast for a day or two beforehand" (This assumes the person is old enough to do what he is told.)

AD 165

Justin Martyr (Martyred c. 165) wrote "... the washing of baptism was not a magical cleansing but an action symbolising the cleansing action of God within the believer." Quoted in "Christian History" mag Vol XV II, No 1P. 16

AD 185

INFANT BAPTISM first mentioned. The first mention of Christian sponsors/God-parents for infants being baptised. This idea originated with the worshippers of the Egyptian goddess Isis -they had such sponsors Infant baptism was not universal until the 6th Century. **10

Footnote **10 ATK P. 44."The true church is entered by a spiritual experience, an operation of the Holy Spirit in the individual heart which gives him regenerate life in response to faith in Gods Word. Those who composed the mass-movement of the 4th century neither desired nor possessed this experience The rite of baptism was substituted for the spiritual experience The inward was exchanged for the outward. Baptism itself came to be regarded as bestowing spiritual grace by a kind of magic although no such degrading word was ever mentioned in connection with a ceremony that now came to be thought of in the light of a "sacred mystery."

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Williston Walker. P 96. INFANT BAPTISM - Earliest mention Irenaeus AD 185. Not universal until 6th Cent Tertullian first to mention Christian sponsors /God-parents. This was also the practice of the worshippers of Isis.

AD 245-257

Bishop Stephen of Rome ruled that baptism by Heretics was effectual if the correct form was followed. This said in effect that it was the ritual saying of

There can be no requirement of sincerity on the part of the one being processed in the case of a baby being baptised, though it could be applied to its sponsors. The doctrine of Baptismal regeneration contradicts Jn 1:13 which says that the will of man - a decision to baptise / be baptised can't cause a person to be born again.

While the system set up to handle all situations was no doubt intended to teach and symbolise Bible Truth, and Biblically-minded Priests may struggle to make it do so, the inevitable effect was, and is, that of RITUAL replacing REALITY in men's thinking - CHRISTEN people, including infants and conquered nations - say that they're BORN AGAIN. In Loanda, Angola, stands the stone throne where the Bishops sat to Christen all slaves before they were loaded onto the slave ships. (This was supposed to ensure the slaves went to heaven instead of hell, so it was argued that enslaving them was really doing them a kindness!)

Footnote **11 HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Williston Walker. P. 97 Bishop Stephen of Rome 245-257 ruled that baptism by Heretics was EFFECTUAL if the correct form was followed. This view was contested by Cyprian of Carthage, etc but prevailed.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. K. S. Latourette. P. 198. Tertullian opposed baptism of infants until a child had made personal confession - OR better until after marriage.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY, Frend, P. 372-373 mentions that excavation of early churches in Aosta and Geneva showed that baptistries became smaller as christening replaced immersion.

Footnote **12 Anglican Prayer Books make a rather similar statement. A recent book issued in defence of the "Covenant Theology" of the Reformed-Presbyterian church argues that as the children of USA citizens remain citizens unless the children actively renounce that citizenship, so christened children of Christians remain Christians unless they actively renounce Christian Belief and Practice. The idea that, by their actions, Christian parents could ensure the eternal blessing of their children, appeals to our deepest natural instincts. It is argued that under the OLD Covenant by circumcising their children Jewish parents brought them into a Covenant Relationship with God. In fact only sons and purchased male slaves were circumcised, and the right to inherit the land of Israel was involved - there were no AUTOMATIC spiritual blessings. This is seen in that the Lord said to Nicodemus "You must be BORN AGAIN - Born of the SPIRIT," and the Spirit is subject to no man's control, Jn 3:1-8.

Alternative (b3)

all being nourished by the Spirit. 1 Cor 12:13 (The members of this invisible body exist in this relationship to Christ their Lord and each other, no matter what visible Church body they belong to.)

Those not indwelt by the Spirit of Christ aren't Christians, Rom 8:9. The proof of the Holy Spirit's indwelling is an effort at Godly living as set out in Rom 8. Such a lifestyle as that described in 1 Cor 5:11; 6:9-20 Eph 5:5; 1 Jn 3:1-12, etc is inconsistent with profession of faith in Christ. Those who indulged in any of the sins listed were to be banished from the church fellowship out into the world, Satan's territory, where their behaviour belonged 1 Cor 5:1-5. But if the person expelled WAS a genuine Believer they would repent, be forgiven and return to Godly living, 1 Jn 1:5-9, and be received back into Church fellowship, 2 Cor 2:5-8.

This is of course "unbusinesslike," and unsatisfactory for a Church organisation which wishes to supply a guaranteed service to its clients, and claim a monopoly in doing so. Therefore it arranged to CONFIRM all those who had been processed by infant, or other baptism, and teach that in being confirmed they had received the Holy Spirit.

MMM P. 89 "I believe that through CONFIRMATION we receive the Holy Spirit to make us strong and perfect as Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ"

The Anglican etc Prayer Books make similar statements. (As an Evangelical Anglican, Rev Charles Kingsley commented on the efforts of the Anglo-Catholics, Newman, Keble, Pusey etc as hastening to interpose between sinners needing Salvation, and a God who was eager to save them, all the accumulated rituals, routines, etc of the Roman Catholic church.

Alternative (c.) Salvation by HUMAN MEDIATORS

nearness to her Divine Son" (Dependence on Mary's mediation looms large in MMM, being featured on Pages 9, 21, 26, 31, 47, 59, 60, 61, 85, 96, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 117.)

It's right and natural for men to have an awe of God that makes them feel that in their sin and weakness they are unfit to come into His presence. But Scriptures such as 1 Tim 2:5-6; Rom 8:2-17; Heb 2:14-18; 4:12-5:10, 10:19-22 show us that the Lord Jesus Christ meets perfectly our need of a PRIESTLY MEDIATOR with God. As GOD He is fully aware of our situation and needs, and the outcome of every possible act of ours. He is perfectly in tune with the Father. As GOD He can give His full attention to every child of God at the same moment. As MAN He has experienced life as we know it, and has been perfectly qualified to act on God's behalf with us, and on our behalf with God, by that experience; Heb 2:10, 17-18; 4:14-5:10.

To presume that other imagined mediators will be more understanding and helpful, and to put them in the God-ordained place occupied by the Lord Jesus is an insult to Him and/or a denial of His Deity or Humanity.

Footnote **13 HISTORY of THE REFORMATION. J. H. Merle D'Aubigne. P. 15-16. When Pelagianism infiltrated the Church "it affirmed that the merits of the saints and martyrs might be applied to the Church. A peculiar power was attributed to their intercession. Prayers were made to them; their aid was invoked in all the sorrows of life; and a real iddlatry thus supplanted the adoration of the living and true God."

P. 17. "Christ was looked upon as a severe Judge prepared to condemn all who should not have recourse to the intercessions of the Saints, or the indulgences of the Pope. These mediators granted their intercession only to such applicants as had deserved well of the orders founded by them. For this it was necessary to do, notwithstanding God commanded in His Word, but to perform a number of works that brought money into the treasury," - or to pay the monks to do them for them.

CREEDS COUNCILS AND CONTROVERSIES Documents illustrating the History of the Church, AD 33-746. J. Stevenson. P. 202. Jerome wrote defending the kissing of the relics of martyrs, and lighting candles before them - Saying that doing so was like the pouring of ointment on Jesus.

shepherding and teaching leadership as BISHOPS/Overseers- Episkopos - Epi= Over. Skopos= To Look or Watch. In their watchful care and supervision they are answerable to the Lord Jesus as "BISHOP" of their souls, 1 Pet 2:21-25 5:1-4. A number of church-members are also DEACONS- Diakonos= active Workers with responsibilities. Their Ministry-Diakonia includes Ministering the Word of God, and Food relief to the poor, as in Acts 6:2, 4 where Diakonia is used of both. (Bishops are also called ELDERS- Presbuteros as maturity is essential for their work. Further information can be found in Acts 14:23 15:1-23 1 Tim 3:1-11; 5:17-20 Titus 1:5-9.)

AD 85-95

3 John- Diotrefes had asserted control over a local church.

AD 107

IGNATIUS, Bishop of Antioch, on his way to Rome and Martyrdom wrote to the Church at Ephesus "We must regard a Bishop as the Lord Himself." **14 His solution to heretical Doctrines and foolish practices was that no-one was to preach or try to serve God without the Bishop's approval. (By that time, instead of having several "Bishops" in small, recently-established churches as in Acts 14:23 there was only one Bishop for the thousands of Christians in Antioch. Plus one for each splinter group church.)

AD 140

At this date, unlike the Eastern Churches, the Church at Rome was still ruled by Elders collectively. **15 This disproves the Papal myth that an unbroken series of ruling Bishops/Popes existed at Rome. But by AD 200 churches everywhere seemed to be under one Bishop Soon BISHOPS were living and acting LIKE PRINCES, and being referred to as "Princes of the Church."

Footnote **14 EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITINGS. The Apostolic Fathers - Penguin Classics. P. 77. Ep. to Ephesians, etc.

Footnote **15 A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol II. Hans Lietzmann. P. 60 AD 140 We find a College of Presbyters in Rome at the head of the Church, and under them Bishops and Deacons as officers caring for the poor, widows, and orphans. By AD 200 it had a single Bishop as its head.

unforgivable sins after baptism as being adultery, blasphemy, murder, adultery, fornication, false witness and fraud. "Against Marcion 4,9." It was generally taught that relapsing ONCE into such a sin might be forgiven if duly repented. Kallistos declared that a Bishop could grant forgiveness for sins of the flesh after due repentance

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND PRACTICE IN THE EARLY CHURCH. E. de Pressense P. 124127. Callistus / Kallistos had been the steward of a Banker named Carpophorus, and when caught embezzling funds avoided being tried for the crime and sent to the mines by going to a synagogue and making a hasty and loud profession of Christianity. He was arrested and sent to Sardinia along with other Christians. He returned to Rome under an amnesty granted by Emperor Commodus to please his Mistress Marcia. Bishop Victor would not allow him to associate with the Church at Rome and sent him out of town. Hippolytus "Philosophoumena."

P. 127. AD 197 Viktor died, Zephyrinus became Bishop, and Callistus returned and supported him against Montanists and other conservatives who objected to lax treatment of wealthy and influential ladies and others who provided monetary support for the Church and some political protection, but ignored the moral requirements of Christianity. He enlisted the support of Sabellius and other gnostic-type liberals to expel the conservative critics, and encouraged Zephyrinus to declare that the Bishop had the right to forgive all and any sins.

P. 130. Up till his time Penitents had confessed their sins before the entire congregation, which witnessed their sorrow, and sanctioned their restoration. Now they confessed to an individual, who by right of his ecclesiastical office claimed to be able to hear the confession, and pronounce the absolution.

Tertullian declared that to forgive sins is the right of the Lord and Master, God, not of the servant, the priest De Pudicitia 21.

After Tertullian left Rome Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome decreed that the Bishop had the right as a priest to pardon sins called mortal such as adultery and sexual immorality. Tertullian wrote asking if the decree was to be placed over the door of brothels, under their vile advertising, as it better suited such a place than it did a church door. De Pudicitia 21

P. 136 Kallistos again declared that the Bishop, and he alone, had the right to forgive all and any sin. He closed his eyes to the obvious immorality of the distinguished ladies who supported him. Philosophoumena IX. 12. P. 461. (The support of wealthy, politically influential ladies of irregular morality was important to the church.)

He waived the rules that had been imposed on candidates for Ecclesiastical office. Second, or even third marriages no longer formed any bar to consecration to such positions. Philosophoumena IX. 12. P. 459.

P. 137. Kallistos decreed that a Bishop was appointed for life and could never be deposed even if he committed mortal sin. (This made OBTAINING the position all important, and carrying out moral and spiritual leadership, less so.)

EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, Abbe Duchesne. P. 214215. Confirms the circumstances of Kallistos life, with extra details supporting the general picture.

Commodus persuaded him to grant the amnesty under which Kallistos was freed from Exile. It was hardly polite not to call her a "Christian!" Such influential women had considerable power, and could be dangerous, Acts 13:50)

So Kallistos decreed:-

1. That the Church was not a community of the saved, so much as an AGENCY OF SALVATION, like the Ark, which had unclean animals in it as well as clean ones.

2. That a Bishop had the power to grant absolution for all sins when he considered that adequate repentance / penance had been made. (For the system of "Doing Penance" for sins that developed from this see **27 P.42)

3. That having married more than once, etc should no longer bar anyone from being appointed to an ecclesiastical office This defied 1Tim 3:2

4. That a Bishop was appointed for life, even if after his appointment he committed "mortal sin." i.e. a serious sin such as Murder, Adultery, etc which were/are considered to cut the sinner off from God's grace. When MORAL fitness for leadership can be ignored the door is open to unscrupulous people, motivated by personal ambition. Once the Church Hierarchy established themselves as being independent of secular Laws, and secular authority, there was no effective restraint of and when the leadership became corrupt **16

Footnote **16 HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Williston Walker. P. 113. Constantine's policy set up with the Council at Arles, A.D. 314 was that the church must meet in Council to settle its disputes - but under Imperial control and leadership.

CREEDS COUNCILS AND CONTROVERSIES. J. Stevenson. P. 142-144. Bishop / Pope Damasus wrote to the Emperor asking that charges against Bishops etc. be heard by a court of 15 neighbouring Bishops, any appeals being made to the Bishop of Rome, who was answerable to the Emperor, and could appeal to him. The Emperor replied generally favourably. The absolute right of the "Church" to hear any charges against clergy, etc. and to determine any punishment, became firmly established later.

AD 260-270

28

and installed as Bishop **17.

Ambrose made a positive contribution in many ways, but the manner of his appointment showed that being a Bishop had become a position of power in the world, and this position attracted ambitious, less worthy men. This is obvious in the actions of rival church factions and their "Bishops." In Rome on 26/03/66 supporters of Bishop Ursinius (those opposed to compromise with Arians and their denial of the Deity of Christ) were worshipping in the church of S. Maria Maggiore when they were attacked by supporters of Bishop/Pope Damasus (who favoured compromise with the Arians.) The attackers killed 16 men and women. **18

Footnote **17 A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol IV, H. Lietzman, P. 57.

Supporting alternative accounts being:

SAINTS AND SINNERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY. M. Strachey. P. 161 Ambrose was nominated Bishop by a child and elected by the enthusiastic acclaim of the crowd. He was ignorant of religious matters, wasn't even under Christian instruction preparing for baptism. Fled to his house, and to put them off, ordered prisoners to be tortured, openly invited some notorious prostitutes to his house, and when the crowd still insisted that he be bishop, fled at night in his coach. But the coachman got lost, and ended up at the city gates and the crowds captured him. He gave in when the Emperor approved, and was ordained as Bishop.

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY J.C. Robertson. P. 83 Ambrose, Governor of Liguria, a catechumen (under Christian instruction, but not yet baptised as a Christian) while trying to stop supporters of rival Bishop nominees from violent fighting, was nominated as Bishop by a child, and elected by popular acclaim - later baptised and ordained.

Footnote **18 A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol IV. H. Lietzman, P. 5052.

SAINTS AND SINNERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY. M. Strachey. P. 156 Confirms that Liberius had signed the heretical Decree of Rimini, but returned to orthodoxy when it was safe to do so. His supporters elected Damasus as Bishop. The supporters of his more orthodox rival Felix elected Ursinius. Confirms also that the supporters of Damasus murdered 134(?) of the supporters of Ursinius. Strachey also quotes a Heathen named Ammianus who wrote that such actions were worthwhile because if one succeeded in being Bishop of Rome a man could live "Free from care, enriched by the offerings of matrons, he could ride abroad in their carriages, wear sumptuous clothing, and serve banquets so lavish that they outdo the luxury of Kings." He suggested that the Bishops of Rome would be better if they were like some of the provincial Bishops who were moderate in their food, drink, and clothing and devoted themselves to piety.

The people's nickname for Damasus was "The Ladies' Ear-tickler," as he said what pleased the influential women. Cp 2Tim 4:3-4.

THE BIGGER THE CITY, THE MORE POWERFUL THE BISHOP

teaching that it was later supported by forged documents. ATK P. 6061.
**19 (That he is not mentioned in the Epistle to Romans shows that Peter had no association with Rome up till then, nor does any early Christian writer support the idea. As there were many Jews in the East who spoke the same language (Aramaic) as Peter, the East was the logical mission field for him, and he wrote an Epistle from one of its cities, Babylon, 1 Pet 5: 13

Footnote **19 A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. K. S. Latourette. P. 186 Leo 1st "Insisted that by Christ's decree Peter was the Rock, the foundation of the Kingdom of Heaven, set on a rock and loose, whose judgements retained their validity in heaven, and that through the Pope as his successor, Peter continued to perform the assignment which had been entrusted to him."

P. 341342."two other literary creations of this era, though largely forgeries, were made to strengthen the authority of the Papacy. 'The Donation of Constantine,' written probably in the middle of the 8th Century, purported to have been written in the 4th Century... it claimed that as a result of the Emperor Constantine being miraculously healed of leprosy through 'Pope' Sylvester 1st he made over to the 'Pope' and his successors his palace in Rome, all the city of Rome, and all the provinces and cities of Italy, or of the Western Regions." The second was the (written in the) mid 9th Century 'Decretals of Isidore.' These included some genuine material, but claimed to record all the decisions of Councils and Popes from Clement of Rome in the 1st Century, to the 8th century. These Decretals/decrees included the 'Donation of Constantine,' and the whole collection was designed to strengthen the Pope's claim to supreme authority.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION. J.H. Merle D'Aubigne. P.8. Rome was the largest, richest, and most powerful city in the world. Those used to looking to Rome for leadership in secular matters, were inclined to do so in religious matters - Western Bishops would sooner appeal to its Bishop than to local secular authorities. In the East the quarrelling factions naturally sought his support for their cause, and flattered him to obtain it.

P. 10. The Council of Nice in its 6th canon mentions three cities - Alexandria, Rome, Antioch - whose Bishops exercised a long-held authority over the churches of surrounding provinces. The political origin of this is seen in their Bishops being called "Exarchs," as the Civil Governors were.

P. 11. False decretals - In them the ancient Bishops are made to speak the barbaric Latin of the 9th century, and quite from Jerome's translation who lived a century or two after the writers. There is a letter supposed to be from Pope Victor in A.D. 192 addressed to Theophilus Archbishop of Alexandria who lived in A.D. 385

A HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Williston Walker. P. 135. Leo obtained an edict from Valentinian III ordering all to obey the Roman Bishop as having "The Primacy of St. Peter." See also THE RISE OF THE PAPACY, W. E. Beet, P. 170-171.

AD 538

"Three years after his (Pope Gregory's) death the Emperor Phocas, who was on good terms with the popes because of the support they had given to his accession - which had been attained by the murder of his predecessor - issued a set of decrees declaring Gregory's successors to be "the universal heads of Christendom, without obedience to whom no man could be saved." ATK P. 62 **20

Footnote **20 THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY W. C. Frend. Confirms the close association between the Popes, and the "Infamous" Emperor Phocas

P. 884 About A.D. 603 Pope Gregory ordered the statue of Phocas for the chapel of the Imperial Palace on the Palatine. While the Popes found this decree very useful, all historians seem to regard Phocas as lacking spiritual, moral or statesmanlike qualities, so that his decree was clearly politically motivated.

Archaeology provides Confirmation of the change in Church organisation and worship as is shown in this extract from THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY, William H C Frend, Published by Geoffrey Chapman 1996

P. 250 re the development of the Basilica Church building, which fitted the changed role of the clergy in leading worship

In the time of Tertullian c 200 The church "was an association or society (corpus) with a common religious feeding, unity of discipline, and bond of hope" meeting "to read the books of God," Apd 39,1 While the congregation was led by the presbyters and the Eucharist celebrated, anyone could be called upon to prophesy at a service which concluded with an meal (Agape) A house church with a table or raised platform for the gifts of the people as at Dura Europos, and an adjacent baptistry, would serve the needs of the community.

From the time of Cyprian (248-258) a radical change took place The position of the clergy was enhanced, that of the laity diminished. The raised semi-circular apse approached by steps would now accommodate the presiding presbyter (or bishop) The eucharistic liturgy was performed with the assistance of deacons within the sanctuary. This was closed off from the body of the church (the quadratum populi) which was the domain of the laity - sometimes men and women were separated by a broad central nave.

8th Century onwards.

This ruling was changed only recently when the Vatican Council under Pope John decreed that Christians not in obedience to the Pope were "Separated brothers in Christ," rather than heretics doomed automatically to hell.

HOLINESS ACHIEVED BY CELIBACY

AD 55

1 Cor 7:1-7. In Jewish society to be unmarried was something to be ashamed of. When the Disciples bluntly said that if you had to stick to the first woman you married, marriage sounded too big a risk, the Lord in reply said that Marriage wasn't for everyone, and some people might deprive themselves of Marriage in order to serve God's Kingdom, Mat 19:10-12 Paul said that he was one of these, that it was the best life he knew, and he'd be pleased to see everyone the same.

BUT he also declared that Marriage or Singleness were God's gift to individuals, given at His discretion, and either was to be lived to His Glory. If God gave a Believer the gift of being able to live in chaste singleness - Fine, and they had only the Lord to please in the choices they made, 7:32-35 But, Marriage was His provision for chaste living, for most Believers. Those who were Married had to consider pleasing their partners, as well as pleasing the Lord, and be generally available sexually to their partner, except when by mutual agreement they abstained for a time in order to concentrate on praying. In accordance with this, apart from Paul, it was customary for Apostles / itinerant servants of God to take their wives with them, as was their right, 1 Cor 9:5.

AD 65

The words God the Holy Spirit directed the Apostle Paul to use (2 Peter 1:21) in 1 Tim 4:1-5 are extremely harsh. But anyone who has waded through the sad and sickening chronicle of the results of the RC Church's persistent attempts to enforce Celibacy on its priests will realise that the language used is fully justified. In spite of the high ideals, and valiant efforts of many, the misguided attempt to honour God in an unnatural way that disobeyed this plain warning resulted all too often in priests becoming a corrupting influence in the community, or even lapsing into shameless profligacy. The indignant protests of reforming Popes, Bishops, Kings, etc bear witness to the tragic state of affairs, as clearly as do the words of those who mocked and sneered. See Pope Innocent's statement, page 6.

AD 325

The Council of Nicea, forbade any Bishop, priest, or deacon to have in their household any female companion who was not above suspicion. This did not refer to legal wives - such an interpretation was not suggested until the 6th century in the Catholic Church. LEA Vol 1. P. 4651, shows this convincingly by quoting Paphnutius, Athanasius, and Gregory of Nazianzum. In the Orthodox Church married Priests and Deacons have always been the general rule. **21

AD 332

The regional Council of Gangra declared Anathema on those who refused sacraments from a Priest because he was married. LEA Vol 1. P. 5859 **22 But pressure in favour of enforced celibacy for priests was building up

Footnote **21 The Archaeology of Early Christianity William H C Frend, Published by Geoffrey Chapman 1996 252 St Patrick's confession c 440, says that his father and grandfather had also been clergy.

Footnote **22 CREEDS COUNCILS AND CONTROVERSIES Documents illustrating the History of the Church, AD 337-461. J Stevenson P. 2. Confirms the nature of the Council of Gangra canons

JEROME'S Vulgate translation was useful. But, as an admirer of Eastern Religions (He claimed that Buddha was, like Christ, Virgin born LEA Vol 1.

guilt about sex, which no doubt coloured the attitudes of both of these men.
**23

AD 385

Pope Siricius decreed that only celibates could administer sacraments. Married clergy must separate from their wives. LEA Vol 1. P. 62 CAESAR and CHRIST. W. Durant P. 605

REASONS FOR ENFORCED CELIBACY FOR PRIESTS:

1. THEORETICAL - To set Clergy apart from laity with VISIBLE Holiness comparable to the Eastern religious ideas displayed by Manicheans, who were rivals to the Church. LEA Vol 1. P. 33 etc.

PRACTICAL - When Bishops became "Princes of the Church" responsible for large funds, they naturally lived like other princes. Establishing sons in life, and daughters' weddings / dowries were done generously - out of Church Funds. LEA Vol 1. P. 61.

Footnote **23 LEA, Vol 1. P. 69. When Jovinian argued against enforced celibacy, quoting 1 Tim 4:1-5, etc "The outraged church called upon its most unscrupulous polemic, St. Jerome, who indulged in the customary abuse which represented the schismatics as indulging in the grossest promiscuous licentiousness"

A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol IV. H. Lietzmann. P. 182. The "Refutation of Jovinian.. is not a judicious piece of writing, but full of perverse distortions and exaggerations so outrageous that his keenest supporters in the project felt ashamed." They recalled the copies and insisted he rewrite it so as to "avoid giving the appearance that praise and appreciation of virginity was necessarily conjoined with a low regard for, and even condemnation of, the married state: for that would border on the Manichean way of thinking."

His attempt to rewrite didn't succeed in doing this "he could only evaluate marriage in the light of the brothels he had known in his youth, and of the salacious images drawn from them, which only too often flickered in and out among the elements that constituted his religious life."

CAESAR and CHRIST. W. Durant P. 606 Augustine had been a Manichean for 10 yrs.

The AGE OF FAITH. W. Durant P. 65. Augustine's own writings record the sexual promiscuity of his youth, his more settled life with his mistress and their child, and his struggles with his sexual desires, and final renunciation of them.

AD 398

chastity of Priests. LEA and others seem able to justify their claim that generally their sexual misconduct was ignored, or pardoned, as long as they didn't LEGALLY marry.

AD 940

That for many years the celibacy rules had been largely ignored is seen by Otto the Great's edict prohibiting the sons of deacons, priests, and bishops from occupying the positions of notary, judge, or court. LEA Vol 1, P. 170

AD 1074

Pope Gregory VII held a synod which adopted a canon prohibiting the marriage of priests, ordering that no one in future should be admitted to orders without a vow of celibacy, and renewed the legislation of Nicholas II, which commanded the people not to attend the ministrations of those whose lives were a violation of this rule. LEA Vol I. P. 269 The rest of the chapter describes the civil and religious chaos that resulted as Bishops, priests, etc. guilty (or suspected) of breaking their vows had their property pillaged, etc. As a result OPEN marriage, etc. became once more generally banned. **24

(A related subject is abstinence from food/ dietary holiness. Until 50 yrs ago fish was the only meat Roman Catholics in NZ ate on Fridays. Vegetarianism, and abstinence from Tea, Coffee etc among SA's is now the main example of "Dietary Holiness" locally.)

Footnote **24 LEA Vol 1. P. 236. When married, or concubinary, clergy proclaimed the correctness of their position, and defended it by argument, they became worse offenders. "For the principles of the Church led irrevocably to the conclusion, that he who was guilty of immorality, knowing it to be wrong, was far less criminal than he who married, believing it to be right." (Their believing it right, made them guilty of "Heresy.") Cardinal Humbert of Silva-Candida referring to simony wrote "an immoral priest may be suspended, or tolerated in hope of amendment, but if he trenches on heresy, there can be neither hope nor mercy for him." adv. Simoniac. Lib III. c. 43. Peter Damiani applied this theory to the defenders of marriage with all his vigour. Opusc. XVIII. Diss ii. c. 9.

Word, but gives no new revelations that add to it or alter it. Some Individuals /Churches claiming to be CHARISMATIC have challenged this.

2ndCent

MONTANUS in Bythia, supported by 2 Prophetesses, proclaimed the "Age of the Holy Spirit," a "New Pentecost," miracles etc to revive the church. He prophesied that New Jerusalem would in his lifetime descend physically on a local Mountain. Montanists claimed their words were GOD SPEAKING. This caused a great stir, and some reviving of the church. Tertullian and others were influenced, but all the DISTINCTIVE claims of the Montanists proved to be nonsense. HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, W. Walker P. 5859

The book of Revelation which they claimed to be interpreting, the Bible, and the Church in general were discredited.

The ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH makes two claims:- 1. to be CHARISMATIC, (ie. The Miracles worked under its auspices are said to prove that its actions are in line with the will of God) with the right to ADD NEW DOCTRINES TO SCRIPTURE, and has done so over the years. The effect of this is obvious in the changes noted above, and the MMM quotes. But, it affects a much wider field of Church Organisation, and general doctrine. Eg. I well remember the fuss some 50 years back when it was decreed that from then on All Catholics MUST believe that the Virgin Mary was taken bodily to Heaven.

(See Booklet 1 Corinthians 12-14. Scripture states in 1 Cor 13, that PROPHECY ceased - while Faith in COMPLETED SCRIPTURE, hope, and love generated by it, remain until CHRIST RETURNS. At that time Faith is replaced by sight, and Hope by the experience of the reality hoped for, but LOVE remains. One of the Reformers, when challenged to prove his doctrines by miracles, stated the Protestant position, "We forge no new doctrines, but preach those proclaimed by the writers of the New Testament, which were accredited for all time by the miracles that they wrought.")

While it's true that the books which form the NT are superior in factuality and edifying content to those rejected as Apocryphal, the "Canon / RULE" which decided that they would be included was simply that they were known to have been written by an APOSTLE, or that the author was known by the Apostles, and the work approved by them as being God's Word.

Most NT books were widely known and accepted promptly. Naturally those written near the end of the life of the Apostles, Eg 2 Timothy, and 2 Peter, when persecution restricted their preaching, were less widely known, and took longer to be universally accepted. As these were written at the conclusion of the personal testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, and the transition to dependence on their written ministry, it is natural that they contain specific statements as to the nature of the Written Word of God - 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Pet 1:19-21; 3:15-16

When Martin Luther came to an understanding of ONE Scripture "The Just shall live by Faith" his life was transformed and a great revival was promoted. This is typical of the way God constantly revives, and redirects the work of His people, as they read and respond to HIS WORD.

A booklet in this series "God's Word in English," gives a great deal of information regarding the transmission and translation of God's Word.

We owe a tremendous debt to those monks who copied out the text of Scripture. As none of the originals remain, the manuscripts which they wrote are the basis for all modern translations of the Scriptures. But we must not imagine that Bible Study and Bible copying played a large part in the life of ALL monks. **25

Footnote **25 A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol IV, Hans Lietzmann. P. 153. The monastic "Sayings of the Fathers" rarely include anything from the Bible except that which neatly fits asceticism.

P. 154. Amun, Founder of Nitria monastery (Egypt) said about devotional reading, "It is preferable to use the sayings of the Fathers and not passages from the Bible; it is very dangerous to quote the Bible." Prayer was mostly mechanical repetition maintained by will power.

personal control as HEAD, 1 Cor 12:13 Col 1:18 It has never been visible on earth, but becomes so when Rev 21 is fulfilled.

Mat 16:18-21. Christ Crucified is THE BASIS ON WHICH THIS CHURCH IS BUILT. Peter's actions on the Day of Pentecost make this clear. He didn't offer himself as a foundation, but used his keys to open the door into the Church by proclaiming Christ as Saviour and Lord. He declared that the sins of the hearers were loosed from them / forgiven if they confessed Christ in Baptism, or remained bound to them if they refused Christ. (Their nation had crucified their Messiah / Christ. By being publicly baptised in water, those who now believed in Him / received Him proclaimed that they disowned this rejection, and now took their stand with Him.) The message of the Apostles and Prophets recorded in Scripture is FOUNDATIONAL, Eph 2:20 in that it brings Christ to mankind for acceptance, Rom 10:17.

Mat 16:22-23 SATAN OPPOSED CHRIST'S DYING ON THE CROSS, and he was able to use God's spokesman Peter as his own spokesman as well.

Down through History Satan has continued to use even the best of men to distort the message preached by the visible Church. Biblical Salvation is based on the Cross offered to men in Grace to be received by Faith alone. It results in a life lived in fellowship with Christ Crucified, Buried and Risen, and so, as a response to God's love, produces worship, good works, and Gospel witness to the world, Eph 2:10

Satan's distortion moved the Church's teaching towards a Salvation which men could EARN by working hard enough at religious or practical duties, with Grace being regarded as something which the Church Leaders could dispense or withhold at will, and so in God's Name RULE OVER CHRISTENDOM (The nations that professed Christianity as their religion) through the visible professing Church.

Mat 16:24 As well as being the foundation of the Church - the means by which sinners are saved and made members of it - THE CROSS MUST BE

His invisible Church Acts 2:47, i.e. all the Believers / Christians / God's children, in any locality, should meet in one congregation, as at Jerusalem in Acts 2. And the unconverted people be afraid to add themselves to the visible church congregation, Acts 5:13. While this may seldom be possible, the leadership God raises up should work towards achieving God's purpose in the measure that they can, Eph 2:19-22; 4:7-16; 1 Pet 5:1-4.

AD 313 THE HINGE POINT OF CHURCH HISTORY

The Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan removed all legal restrictions on Christians, and they could worship as they pleased - in fact people were encouraged to profess Christianity. Constantine was tolerant, unconverted, baptised on his death-bed. Heathenism in the Roman Empire was dying anyway, as Communism is in East Europe. See Footnote **3, page 10

AD 362

Julian the Apostate tried to return the religious situation of the Roman Empire to its earlier state by reviving Paganism and Judaism, but failed. Christianity became the cultured religion. "Pagan" came to mean "villager."

AD 394

Christianity was declared the sole State religion. It seemed that HEATHEN IMPERIAL ROME was DEFEATED, and that the Gospel of Christ had triumphed. But the reality was different - as the Lord had warned.

Mat 13:1-23 The progress of the true Church is a matter of SEED-SOWING and GROWTH.. The Gospel is GOOD SEED. People who hear are DIFFERENT SOILS.

Mat 13:24-30; 36-43 The Gospel is GOOD SEED sown in the field of the world, but other seed is sown.

MEN SLEPT. The human frailty of God's Servants - Be on guard!

THE ENEMY / SATAN. Sows seed of a "Look-alike WEED," with poisonous seeds.

PULL OUT? No, because it's impossible FOR US to tell always which are true Christians. Both to be allowed to grow till harvest. (Obvious weeds

incorporation of masses of unconverted members, and the acquisition of political power / wealth, as being the same as growth of God's Kingdom.

Mat 13 31-32 MUSTARD SEED is small - but this one was not content to be a mustard plant. It grew excessively into an impressive tree. The outward visible success of the Church encouraged Birds to rest in branches - and foul them up? Or as in Dan 4:12 simply that it provided the social framework in which all sorts of life found a home?

Mat 13 33 Invisibly the church changed its character as it expanded, as leavened dough ~~is~~ LEAVEN / Yeast IMPROVES Bread, from our point of view, makes bread much more pleasant to eat, but does so by a process of fermentation / corruption, and yeast-raised bread goes mouldy. Unleavened bread - Eg "Ship's Biscuit," may last for years.

Does LEAVEN represent evil? In the OT it was never offered to God in a burnt offering, Ex 23:18; Lev 2:11, etc. But it was brought as an offering and eaten by the priests, Lev 7:12-14, etc. Redemption from Egypt required the redeemed to eat only unleavened bread, (Ex 12 and 13) and for a week at every subsequent Passover celebration only unleavened bread was eaten.

Christ warned against the LEAVEN of religious doctrines, Mt 16:6, 12; Gal 5:7-9. We must purge out the LEAVEN of sinful behaviour, 1 Cor 5:6-8. In God's Word LEAVEN never pictures God, or Good at work elsewhere. All we say and do is to be transparently open, Rom 12:17; 2 Cor 4:2-4. The invisible work of the Holy Spirit isn't leaven, but like wind in coming to us, and the breath of life in us.

WHAT LEAVEN was introduced to make life easier for Christians - make it easier to bring the whole population under the control of the Church organisation? Christians feel the need for "BRIDGES," to establish contact with the Godless, reach out, and bring them into the Church. BUT Bridges work both ways. While they were effective in bringing the whole unregenerate population into the visible church, the leaven of human religious ideas involved, permeated and corrupted that church as a result.

THREE BRIDGES between the CHURCH and the WORLD:

BRIDGE (a.) - Self-Righteous HOLINESS.

ideas that the body, physical desires and pleasures were evil. He taught that the Elect / those enjoying higher life and mysteries must be celibate, never eat meat, and must get someone else to "kill" even the vegetables they ate; must fast, withdraw from life. And that any sinful indulgence by the rest of the ordinary followers didn't matter much.

He remodelled the Lord's Supper to become a "sacrifice" after the pattern of the Mazdean "Izeshne Sacrifice" in which only the priests, as "Elect / Holy," by his definition, were allowed the cup. See paragraph 3 page 20

The Church fought Manichaeism= Mani's teaching, and won against it OUTWARDLY, by adopting its Eastern religious ideas within its own framework, including Celibate robed monks with shaved heads, rosary prayers, hermits, wayside shrines, pilgrimages to Holy Places, etc.

When the Roman Catholic missionaries reached India, they were shocked to find the religious practices there were much the same as their own. They decided that they were the Devil's mirror image of the true! **26

Footnote **26 LEA Vol 1. P. 23 Many of the observances of Latin Christianity would seem to be explicable by derivation from Buddhism, such as monasticism, the tonsure, the use of beads, confession, penance and absolution, the sign of the cross, relic-worship, and miracles wrought by relics, the purchase of salvation by gifts to the church, pilgrimages to sacred places, etc etc. Even the Nimbus which in sacred art surrounds the head of holy personages, is to be found in the sculptures of the Buddhist Topes, and the Sangreal or Holy Cup of the Last Supper, which was the object of lifelong quest by the Christian knight, is like the Patara or begging dish of Buddha, which was the subject of many curious legends" (Bea's Buddhist Triptaka, pp 114 5.)

It is no wonder that when the good Jesuit missionaries of the 16th century found among the heathen of Asia so much of what they were familiar with at home, they could not decide whether it was the remains of a pre-existing Catholicism, or whether Satan, to damn irrevocably the souls of men, had parodied and travestied the sacred mysteries and ceremonies, and introduced them into distant regions. (Marini, Missioni di Tumkino, Roma, 1633, pp. 125, 481, 490)

A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, Vol II, H. Lietzman. P. 270 Mani proclaimed that Buddhism was limited to the East, Christianity to the West. His Religion was to extend to the East and the West by deliberately forming a bridge between the religion of the East, and the West. But, what Roman Catholic Christianity and Eastern religions held in common when they met in India, was almost entirely that which had existed in India hundreds of years before Christ was born.

wealth for the church **28as it could give no assurance of salvation to sensitive consciences. The consciences of others were hardened into a false confidence that the Priest was their paid servant like a Doctor, Lawyer, etc. When my father asked a neighbour if he ever prayed to God the reply came "Pray? ME Pray! What do you think I pay that old B... down at the Church for! If I dont end up in Heaven you wait till I get him - I have to pay him plenty!"

Footnote **27 HISTORY of THE REFORMATION. J. H. Merle D'Aubigne. P.15-16 "The system of Penance flowed immediately from Pelagianism. "At first penance had consisted in certain public expressions of repentance' before the re-admittance to the Church fellowship of those who had been excluded for public scandal. Then prolonged fasting, pilgrimages, whippings etc were added. Then Priests and Monks offered to do the penance for them. "For a seven weeks' fast" said Regino, Abbot of Prum. "you shall pay 20 pence if you are rich; 10 if less wealthy, and 3 if you are poor."

Pope Clement VII declared as an article of faith, the suggestion of Richard Hales, 13th century that one drop of the precious blood of Christ was sufficient to reconcile God to man. "But He shed it copiously, in order to form a treasure for His Church that eternity can never exhaust. The merits of the saints and martyrs further added to this treasure. Its keeping and management was confided to Christ's Vicar on earth. (The Pope.) He applies to each sinner, for the sins committed after baptism, these merits of Jesus Christ and the Saints, according to the measure and the quantity his sins required." "Somewhat later, to reduce this traffic to a system, they invented (probably under John XX II) the celebrated and scandalous Tariff of Indulgences, which has gone through more than forty editions." This was designed to list the price of forgiveness for all possible variations of sins.

Footnote ** 28 LEA Vol 1. P. 214-215. In 1046 Henry III swept aside three Popes - Benedict IX who had been appointed at the age of 10, and lived shamelessly, Silvester III appointed briefly by a faction in Rome, to replace him, and Gregory VI to whom Benedict IX had sold the papal dignity. He appointed Clement II to clean up the Italian Church where "From the blessing of the priest, to the nomination for a primacy, every ecclesiastical act was the subject of bargain and sale, reduced in many places to a regular scale of prices." He quotes Glaber, Roddph. Hist. Lib. v. c. 5.

WORKS of the Believer must pass through the TESTING FIRE which would show their true nature, and determine what could be rewarded in Heaven, 1 Cor 3: 10-15 And that God permitted His people to suffer fiery trials IN THIS LIFE, that purified them, 1 Pet 1: 6-7.

Extension of Footnote **28 HISTORY of THE REFORMATION. J. H. Merle D'Aubigne. P.15-16 A.D. 1300: BONIFACE VIII published a Bull, in which he declared that every hundred years all who made pilgrimage to Rome should receive a plenary indulgence" (An indulgence that remits the full temporal punishment incurred by a sinner.) Crowds eager to have their sins remitted came bringing rich gifts to Rome. The idea was such a successful source of revenue that the special "Jubilee Privilege" was made available every 50 yrs, then 33 years, and finally 25 yrs. (I know of a Motor-car-racing NZ. citizen who on such a year went to Rome and was said to have paid approx. \$200 for the privilege of not needing to receive the pre-death "Last Rites" if he was killed instantly.)

Then for the greater convenience of purchasers, and the greater profit of the sellers, both the Jubilee and its indulgences, were transported from Rome to every marketplace in Christendom."

THE OUTLINE OF CHRISTIANITY, A.S. Peake, K.G. Parsons. Vol II. P. 133. Confirms that the year 1300 was the first Jubilee

(Hist. of Civilisation Vol VI) THE REFORMATION. W. Durant P. 22. The complaint that finally sparked the Reformation was Indulgences. An Indulgence was not supposed to cancel the guilt of sins - this was supposed to occur when the Priest absolved a contrite penitent in the confessional. An indulgence was the remission of the TEMPORAL (This world, not Eternal) penalties incurred by sins whose guilt had been forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance. But people commonly understood it as wiping out the sin and its guilt, and the Indulgence Hawkers who earned a commission on every sale encouraged that idea. This convenient and popular view of Indulgences was widely held in spite of it being condemned by BONIFACE IX in 1392, MARTIN V in 1420, and SIXTUS IV in 1478.

Footnote **29 HISTORY of THE REFORMATION. J. H. Merle D'Aubigne. P. 15. The Philosophers of Alexandria had taught that men must after death pass through a fire that would purify them. This idea soon infiltrated the Church. Thomas Aquinas in his "Summa Theologiae" spelt out the details of its imagined torments.

"Farewell to the Flesh," when the "Flesh" - sinful human nature - was allowed a final fling before knuckling down to the penance of Lent leading up to Easter!.

Religious Processions, Pilgrimages, Holy Images, Relics, etc were given a "Christian" veneer. Feast days for "Gods" were replaced by Saint's Days. (The Pagan Greek/Roman Gods of Wine, the wife of one, and her father, had "Saint" added to their names and so became St Bacchus, St. Aura Placida, St. Demetrius, and St. Dionysius / Denis. And they kept their association with the wine harvest in October.) The Virgin Mary took the place of the pagan "Queen of Heaven" Goddesses. Magic Charms or rituals were introduced - Holy Water, Sign of Cross etc. ATK P. 71-4. **30

Rev 220 Gives God's verdict on this corrupting compromise. It is what Queen JEZEBEL did in changing Israel's religion to fit into it the popular worship of Baal /Asherah.

Footnote **30 CAESAR AND CHRIST, Will Durant P. 618619. Lists the religious customs and forms common in pre-Christian Rome that the Church took over: - "The stole, and other vestments of pagan priests, the use of incense and holy water in purifications, the burning of candles and an everlasting light above the altar, the worship of saints, the architecture of the basilica the law of Rome as the basis for Canon Law, and the title of Pontifex Maximus for the Supreme Pontiff."

THE AGE OF FAITH. W. Durant P. 745748. In general the church did not so much encourage superstitions as inherit them from the pre-Christian traditions of the Mediterranean world. The calendar of Saints replaced the Roman "Fasti," the Divinities dear to the people were allowed to revive under the names of Christian Saints. "The finest triumph of this tolerant spirit of adaptation was the sublimation of the pagan Mother-goddess cults into the worship of Mary. Here too the people took the initiative, rather than the church herself encouraged Mariolatry." Durant writes enthusiastically of the beneficial influence of the worship of Mary as adding beauty and kindness to the life of the church. He is unconcerned with any usurping of the position of Christ in relation to the Church.

advantage. The Church became an earthly Kingdom, able to give earthly rewards.

When the Roman Empire was shattered by Barbarian invasions in the 5th Century, the Roman Church, under Pope Leo the Great and his successors became the unifying power in both the Government and the Church throughout Western Europe. **31

Pope / Patriarch, helped by Church Councils, took total control over the Church. They suppressed any local Churches which set out to depend directly on Christ as Head, with His Word as guide. The "Church" took up a GOVERNING role instead of EVANGELISING. It could minister "Means of Grace" or withhold them. If any country wouldn't obey the Pope he placed it under an Interdict. No sins could be forgiven. Babies dying unchristened went to hell, etc - so the Church taught.

Late in the 11th Cent Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, had to come on pilgrimage across the Alps in mid-winter and stand barefoot outside the Papal Palace 2 days waiting for permission to enter and be forgiven.

King John of England was forced to pay tax to the then Pope.

All this was made fool-proof, and ENFORCED BY LAW, and so a large measure of stability was established for both the Church-ruled State, and the State-ruled "Church." As a result the Medieval world/Middle Ages in Europe has rightly been called both "The Age of Faith," and "The Dark Ages."

Footnote **31 A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. K. S. Latourette. P.340 Comment on the trend towards regarding the Popes as the successors of the Caesars. "On the one hand it gave the Church of the West a structural unity, helped to hold Europe together, and made for civilization. On the other hand it substituted, perhaps fatally, visible organisational unity for the unity of Love, and mixed the kind of power represented by the Roman Empire, with that of the Cross and the Resurrection."

When IMPERIAL ROME stopped persecuting Christians, RELIGIOUS ROME took over that role. This is why the Protestant Reformers, who were at times guilty of persecuting other Christians themselves, proclaimed that Religious Rome was portrayed in Revelation 17:5 as "Mystery Babylon, drunk with the blood of the Saints." (The Roman Catholic Church, naturally, insisted it was only Imperial Rome that was denounced.) **32

True Christians continued to honour God within the State Church, and outside it. The weight of the organised Church's power and authority was generally exercised AGAINST any Biblical Christianity. Its determination to suppress general access to God's Word was part of this.

Footnote **32 THE AGE OF FAITH. W. Durant P. 774-775. When they (The army obeying the Pope) captured the town of Beziers, the total population of 20,000 men, women and children were slaughtered - Catholic and Albigensians alike.

P. 784 While he (Durant) rejected many Protestant accusations against the INQUISITION he adds "Compared with the persecution of heresy in Europe from 1227 to 1492 the persecution of Christians by Rome in the first three centuries after Christ was a mild and humane procedure."

AD 726

Leo the Isaurian (apparently influenced by Paulicians in his youth), as Emperor in Constantinople, was an "Iconoclast." He ordered the destruction of all images /Ikons, as being a form of iddlatry, forbidden in Ex 20:4-5, etc. ATK P. 76 (This wasn't the only instance of a secular power trying to force the Church to obey the Scripture.)

AD 794

Emperor Charlemagne presided over the Council of Frankfurt. Under his leadership it rejected as superstition the religious value of Images, but permitted them as "ornaments." ATK P. 76 THE PILGRIM CHURCH, E.H. Broadbent P. 49

(a.) Missions from within the Visible Church

5th Cent.

St. Patrick's Missionary work in IRELAND.

7th Cent.

Irish Missionaries, "Saints" Columba, Gall, and Columbanus, carried the Christian Gospel to the heathen who had over-run Europe - Columbanus also rebuked the Pope for the luxury and moral laxity of the Papal court.

The King of Norway became Christian through his Irish Queen.

8th Cent.

From ROME Augustine went to the heathen South of England. In Germany Benedictine Monasteries offered civilisation to the heathen tribes, baptised them and harnessed them to the Roman Catholic Church.

9th Cent.

Cyril of Constantinople invented the Cyrillic alphabet to reach Slavs with the Gospel. Envoys of Kiev's King were more impressed by the Greek form of "Worship Services" than the RC so Russia became "Orthodox" rather than "Catholic." The Russian people remained largely unaware of Biblical truths.

11th-13th Cent.

47

A Crusader Hymn ends "Christian Godfrey we acclaim Saviour of Jerusalem." When he captured Jerusalem he "Cleansed" it by killing all Jews, Moslems, and some Orthodox Christians.

12th Cent

Bernard of Clairvaux, who wrote the hymn "Jesus the very thought of Thee" and others like him, were true Believers. He and Dominic (founder of the Dominican order of monks) tried to combat the Albigensian "Heresy" by teaching Christian Doctrine and urging Priests etc to live as Christians should. But they were locked into the "System," which refused to reform itself, and were compelled to persecute Albigensians, and order them to be killed. ATK P. 102 **33

13cent.

Joachim, a monk, distressed by the corruption of the Church and world, studied Prophecy and proclaimed that the end of the then World was near, and a new age of blessing would be brought in with bands of preachers spreading over Europe. ATK P. 8384 The establishment of the Dominican and Franciscan orders seemed to be a response to this. THE AGE OF THE REFORMATION. 1250-1550 S. Ozmet P.103113 A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. K. S. Latourette P.435

Footnote **33 HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCH. W. Walker. P. 254 "The Cathari (Albigensians) and Waldensians had a profound effect on the Medieval Church. Out of the attempt to meet them by preachers of equal devotion, asceticism and zeal, and of greater learning, grew the order of the Dominicans."

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. K.S.Latourette P. 455. Dominic was determined to follow Paul's example to win people by PREACHING. Dominican order established 1216.

THE PILGRIM CHURCH, E.H. Broadbent P. 8589. Gives considerable supporting detail with regard to the widespread nature, and varied character, of the Albigensian movement, and the failure of preaching against them - because of the corrupt lives of many of the Catholic clergy.

St Francis obtained from the Pope approval to recruit Missionaries travelling in the poverty of the Disciples as in Matthew 10 They carried

AD 1315

Raymund Lull was Martyred in Algeria by the Moslem rulers as a punishment for winning Moslems to Christ. The Pope had refused to support Missions to Moslems, when Lull had requested his support - the Pope preferred Crusades against them. **34.

AD 1484

John Lallier, Doctor of the Sorbonne (Paris University) declared that men should keep the commandments of God and the Apostles, and that the commandments of the lords of the church were only straw. Priests should be allowed to marry. And, that "since the time of Pope Sylvester the Romish church is no longer the Church of Christ, but a state church, a money-getting church." HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION, M. D'Aubigne, P. 32

AD 1498

Savonarola, a monk in Florence Italy, was burnt as a Heretic. He had proclaimed that none could be justified by their works, but only by receiving Christ's righteousness by faith. He had started a Revival which purified Florence HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION, D'Aubigne, P. 32 SAVONAROLA ITALIAN PREACHER AND MARTYR. Commissioner W.E. Oliphant

Footnote **34 THE REPROACH OF ISLAM. W.H.T. Gairdner. P. 226239 Quotes Lull "I see many knights going to the Holy Land beyond the seas thinking that they can acquire it by force of arms but in the end all are destroyed. It seems to me that the conquest of the Holy Land ought not to be attempted except in the way in which Thou and Thine Apostles acquired it, namely by love, prayers, and the pouring out of tears and blood!"

MISSIONS and ATTEMPTS AT REFORMING THE CHURCH
(b.) From outside the Visible Church

in Iraq, Iran, Samarkand, China, India, and Ceylon. Competition and persecution from Moslems, and general apostasy, had closed the witness in many areas by the year 1300. THE PILGRIM CHURCH. E.H. Broadbent P. 71-84

7th Cent

The PAULICIAN S, in the Taurus Mountains, Turkey, were more Biblical than the State-ruled Orthodox Church. They rejected "Ikons" and some ritual. ATK P. 6667. (Apparently they didn't believe that baptism made people Christians.)

AD 842

Many thousands of Paulician Christians were martyred by the "Orthodox Christian" Byzantine Empire. ATK P. 98

10th Cent.

The Byzantine Empire began persecuting the BOGOMILS in the Balkans. These had been converted by Paulicians who had been exiled there by the State. ATK P. 99 **35

AD 1119

Many in Bosnia and Herzegovina were converted FROM the RC Church by Bogomil missionaries. In obedience to Scripture the Altars and Crosses were removed from churches. The Priesthood of all believers was recognised. The country prospered as the Bible was preached and obeyed. ATK P. 100 101 records the sequence of events in Bosnia. THE PILGRIM CHURCH, E.H. Broadbent P. 61-66

Footnote **35 THE PILGRIM CHURCH. E.H. Broadbent P. 60 61. AD 1143 Two Cappodocian Bishops were deposed by the Greek Orthodox Church accused of association with Bogomil doctrines. The Bogomils were accused of teaching that Church Baptism wasn't efficacious (didn't make a man a Christian) and that nothing done by an unconverted man, although he had been baptised, was of any spiritual value."

12th Cent.

The ALBIGENSIANS in South France started to read and obey Scripture following contact with Bosnian Missionaries, apparently. They became

associating with Peter Waldo, but while he got his doctrine direct from the Scriptures, they could apparently trace their Bible-obeying ancestry right back to the early Church. HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION. Merle D'Aubigne. P. 30 Their Pastors copied out Scriptures and distributed them around Europe, and unobtrusively evangelised while itinerating as traders before taking up a pastorate at home.

These Revivals were ALL THE RESULT OF GOD'S WORD being read, believed, preached, and obeyed. Oddities or errors of doctrine were mixed in with the truth in such movements, as they were current in the "Official Church," from which the reviving new movements had sprung

The response of the Catholic Church was to cut off the source of Bible-based alternatives to their "Official Religion" - what they called "Heresy." They banned the Laity from possession of any Scripture unless special permission had been given them by their Bishop. As all Church services were in Latin, few could HEAR the Bible part of them either, and come to Faith, Rom 10:17. This left the RC church leadership free to ignore Bible Truth.

In 1965, after a 756 years Ban, Roman Catholics were permitted, and even encouraged to read the Bible, and so have become exposed to the Gospel. (We should all Thank God for this, and pray for those who read.)

Footnote **36 THE PILGRIM CHURCH. E.H. Broadbent P. 8992. Confirms the persistence of Waldensian Christianity, outside the "Catholic" church, from early church times. Quotes INNOCENT III as saying that "among the Waldenses educated laymen undertook the function of preachers." And, that "the Waldenses would listen only to a man who had God in him."

AD 1209

INNOCENT III ordered the King of France to lead a CRUSADE against the Albigensians, promising forgiveness for all sins and eternal blessings on all who helped - plus freedom to loot. ATK P. 102 The local Catholic

The Pope ordered the King of Hungary to conquer Bosnia and make the Christians there conform to Rome. Bosnia fought off his attacks.

Footnote **37 THE AGE OF FAITH. W. Durant P. 774775. When they (The army obeying the Pope) captured the town of Beziers, the total population of 20,000 men women and children were slaughtered - Catholic and Albigensians alike.

P. 784 While he (Durant) rejected many Protestant accusations against the INQUISITION he adds "Compared with the persecution of heresy in Europe from 1227 to 1492 the persecution of Christians by Rome in the first three centuries after Christ was a mild and humane procedure."

Footnote **38 ATK P. 103104. "The Inquisition was established experimentally in 1210 to crush the Albigenses, and was made a permanent institution by a papal decree nineteen years later. This decree is important because it contained a clause forbidding the possession of copies of the Bible to the laity, and charged the Inquisition with the duty of seeing this prohibition carried out."

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Williston Walker. P. 253. Because the Albigensians and Waldensians had made much use of the Scriptures the Synod of Toulouse forbade the laity to possess Scriptures except those in the Psalter and Breviary, and it especially banned translations. The decree applied locally, but similar considerations led to prohibitions in Spain and elsewhere. There was no UNIVERSAL ban issued in the Middle Ages.

THE PILGRIM CHURCH. E.H. Broadbent P. 8589. Inquisition commenced under Dominic, 1210.

THE AGE OF FAITH W. Durant P. 779. POPE GREGORY IV appointed a Board of Inquisition to be set up in Florence in 1227. Based on the 1224 legislation of Frederick II he formalised the Inquisition as part of the permanent law of the Church in 1231 (That a series of actions led to the formalising of the position of the Inquisition explains why different writers see different incidents as its commencement)

MEDIEVAL CHURCH HISTORY. Archbishop Trench. P. 227. "In the rules by which the Inquisition should be guided every principle of natural equity was outraged."

AD 1229

The HOLY INQUISITION. was established by Papal Decree as a permanent institution to carry out the extermination of all "Heresies and

property to the Inquisition

As a result the Leaders of the Inquisition had absolute power in this world, and claimed to have it in the world to come. Those it arrested were given two options: 1. DIE UNDER TORTURE, and automatically go to Hell.

2. RECANT - Confess that the accusations were true, but now repented of. This left them free to be burned to death, and later go to Heaven via Purgatory. ATK P. 112-119

The Inquisition was damnably effective in establishing the absolute authority of the Pope and "Church." And damnably destructive of spiritual, moral, social, and even commercial life everywhere it functioned.

AD 1291

The "HOLY INQUISITION" was established in Bosnia.

AD 1380

The "HOLY INQUISITION," was established in the Waldensian Valleys.

14th Cent

ENGLAND - Wycliffites/ Lollards. Wycliffe lectured at Oxford University. He criticized the corruption of the Church, and preached Salvation by Faith in Christ. He translated the Bible from the Vulgate Latin into English. Hundreds of copies were made of the NT and circulated. Wycliffe died in 1384.

AD 1399

Henry IV became King of England, with Church help - on condition he stamped out Wycliffe's "Heresy." But the taste for Scripture continued widespread in England. ATK P. 122

BOHEMIA - Students from Bohemia studying at Oxford carried Wycliffe's writing back home. John Huss, Rector of Prague University was converted. A Reforming movement there dating back to Joachim now became Bible based.

of Education as the author of the first teaching picture book for children.

(Later, Moravians became the first modern-style missionaries. John Wesley found assurance of Salvation through them.)

But weren't ALL OUTSIDE "The Church" Doctrinally Wicked, Sexually Immoral, etc?

The so-called "HERETICS" were human, like us, with their share of foolish ideas, and failures in their personal lives. Often they were accused of being "Manichean." The Albigensians WERE tainted with Manichean ideas about marriage - they seem to have valued celibacy perhaps even more than the established church did. But generally THE "SIN" for which "heretics" were persecuted and died was that of reading the Bible, believing it, preaching and obeying it.

As so much in the current Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches was obviously not Biblical, the existence of such Biblical Revivals was a threat to them. Most histories point out that the luxurious living and licentiousness of many of the Roman Catholic clergy was generally the cause of protest movements, and a motive for silencing them. Critics were branded "Damnably Heretics" and slandered in every way. They and their books were usually burned. Almost all we know of them was written by the State Churches who were trying to exterminate them as poisonous vermin for claiming it was possible to be Saved, be a Christian, get to Heaven, without absolute obedience to the Pope / Patriarch. That this was the situation is made painfully clear by the official records of a famous Church Council some points from which are summarised below.

1415 The COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE.

JOHN HUSS, and Jerome of Prague were charged with such "heresies" as condemning the immorality of the Bishops and Priests and teaching that their lives made their ministry useless (In this they agreed with the decree of Pope Gregory VII. LEA Vol I. P. 269) And teaching that

1. Declared to be the lawful successor of St. Peter, as Pope, Head of the Church, Vicar of Christ etc. LEA Vol 2 P. 3.

2. Accused of "Notorious incest, adultery, defilement, homicide, atheism." He freely confessed that he was guilty of these sins, and was deposed, and imprisoned. Before long he was released and made Dean of the Sacred College at Rome. LEA Vol 1:426427**39

Footnote **39 COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE - SACERDOTAL CELIBACY, LEA. Vol 1. P. 426427. quoting council records "Concil Constantiens, Sess XI., and Theod. a Niem de Vit. Joann XXIII. The Great Council of Constance had settled the great schism, by recognising Balthazar Cossa, John XX III, as the true Pope."

"When the Great Council of Constance in 1415 adopted the awful expedient of trying, condemning, and deposing a Pope (John XX III) the catalogue of crimes - notorious incest, adultery, defilement, homicide, and atheism - of which the fathers formally accused him, and which he confessed without defending himself, (Concil. Constantiens Sess XI) is fearfully suggestive of the corruption which would not only spawn such a monster, but could elevate him to the highest place in the hierarchy, and present him for the veneration of Christendom. It affords a curious insight into the notions of morality prevalent in the Papal court to observe that when he had as chamberlain to Boniface IX. scandalised Rome by openly keeping his brother's wife as a concubine, the remedy adopted for the disorder was to create him Cardinal and send him as Papal legate to Bologna. [Where his scandalous sexual immorality continued.] (Theod. a Niem de Vit. Joann. XXIII.) So obtuse were the sensibilities of the age that after his release from prison to which he had been confined by the fathers of Constance, his successor Martin V., consoled him in his degradation by creating him Dean of the Sacred College."

TO SUM UP - Christendom had fought Islam with earthly weapons - those of politics, persecution, and war. As a result, all that remained in Africa and Asia were dying pockets of Christianity in India, Iraq, Persia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Turkey, etc.

In "Christian" Europe ruthless persecution by the Roman "Catholic," and "Orthodox" Churches was effective in smothering dissent. All demands

length of all secular income belonged to the Church by Law, and a large amount passed on to the Papal court. An annual tax on every household - "Peter's Pence" - was paid direct to Rome.

In "Christian Europe" All appointments and the execution of all wills, had to be authorised by the Church, in order to be "legal," and the Church demanded substantial fees for doing this. Donations of property brought promises of forgiveness of sins, or remission of purgatory, etc etc. When the Church felt the need of extra money for building programmes, or to support its luxurious lifestyle, it increased the level of fund-raising until it became intolerable extortion **40

Footnote **40 THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY, W. Durant P. 765/768. "It has been calculated that the total annual income of the Papal See about 1250 was greater than the combined revenues of all the secular Sovereigns of Europe," "From England in 1252 the Papacy received a sum three times greater than the revenue of the British Crown." He bases this on "The Economic History of the Middle Ages" Thompson, P. 692.

He mentions items such as: The Church owned 20% of the land in England, 2% in Spain, 50% in Livonia (Poland) AND ALL CHURCH INCOME AND PROPERTY WAS FREE OF RATES / TAXES. Monasteries began as charitable and civilizing outposts founded for charitable reasons but became powerful and wealthy. The Abbey of St Martin of Tours owned 20,000 acres.

LEA Vol II P. 34. "When Diether was elected Archbishop of Mainz, in 1459, his envoys, sent to obtain his confirmation from Pius II, were faced with a demand for 20,500 florins - more than double the amount of annates previously assessed on the see. He refused to yield to the demand, but the Roman bankers had already advanced to the members of the Curia their shares of the spoils, and on his persistent refusal he was deposed by the Pope, and Adolf of Nassau appointed in his place leading to a bloody war and the devastation of the city and territory." Appell. Dom. Dytheri (Senckenberg, Selecta Juris T. IV. p.393).

A THOROUGH REFORMATION WAS DESPERATELY NEEDED!

(This booklet can give only a brief hint of what happened.)

A German monk, Martin Luther, was one of these.

He became the central figure for PROTEST against the state of the professing Church, and demands for its REFORMATION.

His natural and spiritual gifts and weaknesses, and those of the leaders of the German states, were in God's providence over-ruled to enable a more Biblical Church Order to be established - In which the Pulpit from which the Word of God was read and expounded became central. Protestants confess with shame that petty and bitter divisiveness has marred their witness but they have got God's Word out to the world, and it is bearing fruit world-wide.

In the RC. Church, the Altar and the "Sacrifice of the Mass" remained central, rather than the preaching of God's Word. But having to compete with "Protestant" Churches, slowly and steadily wore away at the worst excesses of the system.

No church, or individual, dare point a finger at another. Each must face the Lord, and His Word, as I have tried to do in writing this, Rom 14:4; 10-13 But, 1 Cor 13:1-3 has the last word, along with Jude 24-25

A Restatement - HOW DOES THE LORD BUILD HIS CHURCH ?

The foundation is the confession of who and what He is, and has done, recorded for us in the Scripture by the Apostles and Prophets, Eph 2:19-22 His church is built by our bringing God's Word to people, Rom 10:17, so that

ACTS 13:1-3, By Missionaries chosen by the Lord, Paul and Barnabas, sent out and supported by Churches. These used their initiative to find opportunities for preaching as they came to hand - Synagogue services, market places, hired buildings, casual meetings, an invitation to an intellectual club, Acts 17:19, providing work for refugees, Acts 18:1-3; court hearings, Acts 26 imprisonment, Phil 1:12-14; and shipwreck, Acts 27. In all this they accepted the Lord's over-ruling guidance when He chose to give it, Acts 16:6-10. And, when He chose to confirm the truth of their preaching by providing miracles, Heb 2:4, they made the most of their opportunity to point people to their Lord and His Gospel, Acts 3; 5; 9:36-43; 14:8-19; 19:8-11; etc.

BUT MOST SIGNIFICANT OF ALL. ACTS 1:8 "You shall be witnesses. in Jerusalem.." ALL who know the Lord are commissioned to be witnesses unto Him, of that knowledge, wherever they are.

ACTS 8:4. When persecution drove Christians out of Jerusalem, those scattered abroad preached the word wherever they went. It's WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK of ALL Believers attempting to witness that God raises up from among them gifted and great leaders, when He sees fit. In flourishing, triumphant times of success and popularity, and in dark days of bitter persecution at the cost of their comfort and their lives, the Lord has built His Church by the personal witness of every individual Believer, as they respond to what they learn of Him, Eph 4:16

SITUATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE WITNESS include:-
MISSIONARIES, sometimes self-supporting like Paul, 1 Cor 4:12

VISITORS to Jerusalem at Pentecost, later Ethiopian, etc. right down to modern tourists and overseas students.

Gospel, and INDIRECTLY through novels, plays, and songs. I had a friend who, isolated from all Christian contact, at 9 years of age was converted through taking up the prayer "Create in me a clean heart O God," which he found as he read a children's book

SECULAR TEACHERS- Two examples - "Christian History" mag Vol XVII, No 1. P. 20. Justin Martyr. martyred c. 165, as a youth interested in "Philosophy" was spoken to by an unknown old man on the beach at Ephesus, and, converted soon after. He set up a school in Rome where he presented Christianity as the true philosophy.

Origen (Sometimes rightly criticised for his doctrinal excesses - as are Augustine of Hippo, etc) taught Gregory Thaumaturgus the physical sciences, philosophy, ethics, and "the queen of learning" the Scriptures. But it was his embodiment of what he taught, Gregory judged, that most impressed him and his brother "And thus, like some spark lighting upon our most soul, love was kindled and burst into a flame within us - a love at once for the Holy Word, and the most lovely object of all, who attracts all irresistibly to Himself by His unutterable beauty, (As our Lord promised, Jn 12:32) and to this man, (Origen) his friend and advocate." (Words in italics are my own comments. E.R.)

CLASSES FOR ENQUIRERS- "Christian History" mag Vol XVII, No 1. P. 19. Hippolytus Circa 217 in "The Apostolic Tradition" wrote that inquirers were grouped into classes where teachers engaged them in dialogue with a view to their conversions. Before enrolling them in such classes they were questioned about their lives, and reason for wanting to become Christians - asked to "testify that they were competent to hear the word." He considered that some must change their occupations before instruction - Harlots, and licentious people/priests in cults, sculptors or painters of idols, teachers in pagan schools, astrologers and magicians etc/ actors, charioteers and gladiators/military commanders and civil magistrates. Those under such instruction were not allowed to take the Eucharist, until accepted as Christians and baptised. The Baptistery at Dura Europas (As with all other early churches) was designed for immersion..

APPENDIX - An Evaluation of Alternative Church Organisations

ALL new types of Churches BEGIN with the Word of God, and something of a work of God the Holy Spirit, but as with Israel in the OT, Deu 8:7-20 etc. any measure of success exposes them to increasing pride, self-assertion, complacency, and reliance on human and worldly gift, power, wisdom, and

Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches developed a "Paternal" system with a Pope / Patriarch at its head, and each parish under its Priest/Father. As a result God became viewed as distant. The individual church member was told not to depend directly on Bible reading and obeying, and talking over his concerns with God in Prayer. Instead he was told that the Church was his mediator, and mentor, the only channel of grace and blessing. The Fatherhood of God was to be experienced by him, only as an unquestioning and obedient child of the "Church."

This helped avoid individualistic follies, preserving an outward form of the spiritual organic unity which the Lord desired for His Body, the Church, 1 Cor 12:12-26. It brought real blessings to church members when the human mediators were Godly, wise, and kind, although it kept them in an infantile spiritual state. When the power of their position corrupted these mediators, it was a tragedy.

Under this system - ie System (a.)

When the congregation gathered, all eyes were on the "Altar" and what the Priest did there. It is right that the celebration of "The Lord's Supper," Mt 26:17-30 Mk 14:22-26 Lk 22:14-20 1 Cor 11:25-34 should be central to Christian Worship. But sadly, what the Lord Jesus intended to be a reminder of the once-and-for-all, all-sufficient work of Christ on the Cross on their behalf, Heb 10:1-14, became in their thinking a repetition of, or substitute for, it.

(b.) Mt 23:8, 10 "BE NOT CALLED RABBI / MASTER." At the Reformation the Protestant Churches broke free from the Pope-Priest-Altar system, and proclaimed their direct dependence on the Word of God. But, in defiance of Mt 23:8, 10 they shattered into rival, and at times warring sects under the banner of their "Rabbi / Master," Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, General Booth, Brother Branham or whatever.

Intellectualism, it poured out soul-destroying doubt into the minds of the congregations.

(c.) Mt 23:8. "YOU ARE ALL BROTHERS" - under the Fatherhood of God and the Lordship of Christ. Those who grasped this ideal formed simple non-denominational Bible-obeying Fellowships. The "Brethren" movement of the mid 19th Century is an example of those who abandoned clerical titles to meet simply as "Brothers." This revived the form of the NT local Church as a congregation of those born again by the Word of God, and the Spirit of God. They also realized from Scripture that having been so born again committed them to continuing to live individually and congregationally in direct dependence on the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

Directed attention away from Church creeds, catechisms, confessions, and prayer-books to the Bible - "One Faith."

And directed attention away from admission by baptism into rival church spheres, by human agents, to that of 1 Cor 12:13 - "One Baptism," Eph 4:5.

This, and an enthusiastic proclamation of Jn 3:16, was a blessing directly to many, and indirectly to many more through the boost it gave to many non-denominational Christian organisations.

Under this system - ie System (c.)

The central feature was gathering in the Lord's presence, Mt 18:20 around "The Lord's Table," at which all His Redeemed / all Believers from any and all denominational backgrounds were welcomed, Rom 15:7. With no organised form of "Service," they depended directly on the Lord to exercise individual brothers to contribute as described in 1 Cor 14:26-35 (Without contributions in Tongues and Prophecy as they believed such "Foundation Gifts" had passed away, being replaced by the completed / perfect written Scriptures which were to be expounded, 1 Cor 13:8-10. See Booklet 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14.)

Only under Godly and humble leadership could this function. Without that, pride in their "Non-sect, No human Head, Non-system system," soon shattered the movement into unbrotherly divisiveness, in defiance of the verse they aimed at obeying. (See booklet "A N Groves and the Early Brethren Movement - REFORMATION TOWARDS THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN.")

Today its main heirs are:

A paternalistic "Exclusive Brethren" system under its petty "Pope," capable of expelling members who use "sinful radio" even for transport tuck

(A third group endeavours to avoid these extremes, and maintain a position close to that from which the major "Exclusive Brethren" group deviated.)

Membership in an "Open Brethren" Assembly is seldom an easy and comfortable life, but it constantly challenges one to live by Faith, in fellowship with the Lord and His Word, Jn 15:1-17. And, the lack of creed or organisation means that there is nothing to hinder each congregation from discovering and obeying the will of God as revealed in His Word, Neh 8:14-18 (And no reason to continue functioning if liberal theology, or materialism gain power.)

Whatever the outward form in which the LORD'S Church has manifested itself, in any age, the preaching of God's Word has produced Godly men and women who built their lives on it, Mt 7:21-27.

Their lives and witness have ennobled and blessed those around them.

All of them have been grieved at the failure of their church to live in full obedient fellowship with the Lord and His Word to the Glory of God, and the blessing of Mankind.

Their steadfast endeavour has been to stir it up to do so. It is in their company, and with that purpose that I've written.

E Read, 8.10.93 Revised 15.2.99.

Criticisms, Additions and Corrections are welcomed.

Please feel free to use and reproduce any or all of this material in any way, to the Glory of God.

Other booklets:

Listening to the Lord: -

I and II Kings;	Habakkuk, Ruth, Haggai;	Matthew,
Romans;	I and II Corinthians;	Colossians;
I and II Thessalonians;	II Peter and Jude;	Revelation

Looking to the Word: -

Abortion Protests/Lessons from Sodom;	The Believer and Evil; .
God's Law, the Lord, and Us;	God's Word in English;
A N Groves and the Early Brethren Movement - Reformation towards the New Testament Pattern;	Guidance

Copies of all these are available free from the writer:

E. Read,
F2/55 Middleton Rd.,
Christchurch, 4.
New Zealand