

From Ancient Church to Medieval Church

Sources

G. S. M. Walker, *The Growing Storm: Sketches of Church History from AD 600 to AD 1350* (1961)

Nick Needham, *2000 Years of Christ's Power*, vol. 3, *The Middle Ages* (2016)

Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 2nd ed. (2000)

Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 4

I. Fall of Rome

A. Fall of the western empire

1. Barbarian successor states
 - a. Image: Toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image
 - b. Collection of mostly Arian kingdoms
 - c. Example: Recared & Visigoths in Spain → Arians who converted
 - d. Importance of Franks
 - 1) Conversion of Clovis: Trinitarians over Arians
 - 2) Basis for France → Charlemagne
2. Ongoing significance of Latin
 - a. Initially a common language (e.g., Jerome & Vulgate)
 - b. Remained language of scholarship & worship
 - c. Problem: Exclusive use in worship

B. Continuance of the eastern (Byzantine) empire

1. Image: Citadel
 - a. Preserving "orthodox" doctrine & practice
 - b. Protecting Europe against Islam
 - c. Preserved learning → Byzantine text-type
2. Problems of Caesaropapism
3. Notable Father: John Chrysostom
 - a. Unhappy Patriarch of Constantinople (398-404)
 - 1) Clashed w/ imperial family
 - 2) Career demonstrates dangers of Caesaropapism
 - b. "Golden-mouthed": Outstanding preacher
 - 1) Homilies & commentaries
 - 2) Most quoted of the church fathers
 - 3) Grammatical-historical methodology

II. Latin Church Fathers

A. Context

1. Dealing w/ fall of Rome & aftermath
2. Not as profound theologically (except Augustine)
3. Latin Fathers more practical, less speculative than Greeks

B. Ambrose of Milan

1. Clashes w/ Theodosius
2. Popularized eastern Trinitarian views in the west

C. Jerome

1. Life
 - a. Profound scholar, prickly personality

- b. Secretary to Pope Damasus
- 2. Promoted asceticism as path to holiness (virginity, celibacy)
- 3. Translated Vulgate
 - a. Learned Hebrew to translate
 - b. Became standard Latin version
- D. Augustine
 - 1. Autobiography: *Confessions*
 - a. Son of mixed marriage in North Africa
 - b. Followed Manicheanism (dualistic religion) for a time
 - c. Eventually converted
 - 1) Attracted to Ambrose of Milan
 - 2) Struggled philosophically & morally
 - 3) Converted in a garden in Milan
 - d. Made bishop of Hippo
 - 2. Donatist Controversy: Church and sacraments
 - a. Donatists: Key Issues
 - 1) Sacraments of unworthy priests are worthless
 - 2) Schism (division) a legitimate means to holiness
 - b. Augustine's Response
 - 1) Sacraments' value independent of one who administers
 - 2) The Church
 - a) A mixture of saved ("wheat") & unregenerate ("tares")
 - b) Schism in visible church a sin
 - c) But also roots of concept of "invisible church"
 - 3. Pelagian Controversy: Sin & grace
 - a. Pelagius's Views
 - 1) No original sin
 - 2) Sufficient grace for humans to exercise free will
 - 3) Humans → same nature as unfallen Adam
 - b. Augustine's Views
 - 1) Original sin: corruption & guilt
 - 2) Free will bound by sin
 - 3) "Doctor of Grace": Complete dependence on divine grace
 - 4) Church (e.g., Gregory the Great) severely modified these views
 - 4. Just War Theory: Requirements
 - a. Just purpose for war
 - b. Proper authority to wage war
 - c. Love must guide conduct
 - 5. *City of God*
 - a. Response to sack of Rome by Alaric (410)
 - b. Answered charges blaming Christians
 - c. God's church is not tied to "Eternal Rome"
 - d. History is God's sovereign building of His church
- E. Pope Gregory I, the Great
 - 1. Last of the ancient fathers, first of the medieval doctors
 - 2. Marked shift to medieval