

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

Part I: The Ancient Church

Summary:

- I. INTRODUCTION.**
- II. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH.**
- III. THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.**
- IV. THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.**
 - A. The Sacrament of Baptism.
 - B. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
- V. CONCLUSION.**

I. INTRODUCTION.

Our study brings us yet to another turn in the road that seeks to blend systematic and historical theology. The purpose of the three lessons that will make up the unit on ecclesiology shall be to trace the major developments in the church from a structural viewpoint. The initial lesson shall focus upon the nature, offices, and ordinances as they emerged prior to the time of St. Augustine. Admittedly, the survey discusses the highlights.

II. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH.

How did the early church define the institution of which they were a part? This is the focus of our study; how did the early Fathers define the visible body of Christ?

A. The Church in the Apostolic Fathers

The Fathers have frequent references to the church both visible and universal. Clement of Rome (*Letter to the Corinthians*, 29) speaks to the church at Corinth as an "elect portion." Ignatius implies the head-body analogy when he wrote (*Letter to the Ephesians*, 17), "For this cause the Lord received ointment on His head, that He might breathe incorruption upon the church." He further adds that the Catholic Church is found wherever Christ is present. (*Letter to the Smyrneans*, 8), "Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal church."

The Epistle of Barnabas (5) calls the church "the new people":

"But He Himself endured that He might destroy death and show forth the resurrection of the dead, for that He must needs be manifested in the flesh; that at the same time He might redeem the promise made to the fathers,

and by preparing the new people for Himself might show, while He was on earth, that having brought about the resurrection He will exercise judgment. Yea and further, He preached teaching Israel and performing so many wonders and miracles, and He loved him exceedingly.”

Hermas (*Similitude*. 9, 17) speaks of the church as drawing its members from the whole world, gathered into one body:

“ ‘Because,’ saith he, ‘all the nations that dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed, were called by the one name of (the Son of) God. So having received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind, and one faith became theirs and (one) love, and they bore the spirits of the virgins along with the Name; therefore the building of the tower became of one colour, even bright as the sun. But after they entered in together, and became one body, some of them defiled themselves, and were cast out from the society of the righteous, and became again such as they were before, or rather even worse’.”

B. The Church in the Apologists

1. **Justin Martyr (ca. A.D. 100–ca. 165)** speaks of the church as “where those that are called brethren are collected.” He further views the believers as under the “new covenant,” the old having been abolished (*Dialogue to Trypho*, 11):

“ ‘There will be no other God, O Trypho, nor was there from eternity any other existing’ (I thus addressed him), ‘but He who made and disposed all this universe. Nor do we think that there is one God for us, another for you, but that He alone is God who led your fathers out from Egypt with a strong hand and a high arm. Nor have we trusted in any other (for there is no other), but in Him in whom you also have trusted, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. But we do not trust through Moses or through the law; for then we would do the same as yourselves. But now—for I have read that there shall be a final law, and a covenant, the chiefest of all, which it is now incumbent on all men to observe, as many as are seeking after the inheritance of God. For the law promulgated on Horeb is now old, and belongs to yourselves alone; but this is for all universally. Now, law placed against law has abrogated that which is before it, and a covenant which comes after in like manner has put an end to the previous one; and an eternal and final law—namely, Christ—has been given to us, and the covenant is trustworthy, after which there shall be no law, no commandment, no ordinance. Have you not read this which Isaiah says: Hearken unto Me; hearken unto Me, my people; and, ye kings, give ear unto Me; for a law shall go forth from Me, and My judgment shall be for a

light to the nations. My righteousness approaches swiftly, and My salvation shall go forth, and nations shall trust in Mine arm.”

2. **Aristides (ca. A.D. 125)** speaks of the church much like Barnabas as “a third race” or a “new race.” He explains that there are, besides pagans and Jews, a third category of people, Christians (*Apology*, 2):

“The Christians, then, trace the beginning of their religion from Jesus the Messiah; and he is named the Son of God Most High. And it is said that God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin assumed and clothed himself with flesh; and the Son of God lived in a daughter of man. This is taught in the gospel, as it is called, which a short time ago was preached among them; and you also if you will read therein, may perceive the power which belongs to it. This Jesus, then, was born of the race of the Hebrews; and he had twelve disciples in order that the purpose of his incarnation might in time be accomplished. But he himself was pierced by the Jews, and he died and was buried; and they say that after three days he rose and ascended to heaven. Thereupon these twelve disciples went forth throughout the known parts of the world, and kept showing his greatness with all modesty and uprightness. And hence also those of the present day who believe that preaching are called Christians, and they are become famous.”

3. **Irenaeus (ca. A.D. 140–202)** gathers together the main second-century ideas about the church and speaks clearer than his predecessors. Like his predecessors he regards the church as the new Israel (*Against Heresies*. 5, 32.2; 5, 34, 1). He stated in the latter:

“If, then, God promised him the inheritance of the land, yet he did not receive it during all the time of his sojourn there, it must be, that together with his seed, that is, those who fear God and believe in Him, he shall receive it at the resurrection of the just. For his seed is the Church, which receives the adoption to God through the Lord, as John the Baptist said: ‘For God is able from the stones to raise up children to Abraham.’ Thus also the apostle says in the Epistle to the Galatians: ‘But ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.’ And again, in the same Epistle, he plainly declares that they who have believed in Christ do receive Christ, the promise to Abraham thus saying, ‘The promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his seed. Now He does not say, And of seeds, as if (He spake) of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ’.”

Of this body he wrote (*Against Heresies*. 4, 33,7) that it is the “glorious body of Christ:”

“He shall also judge those who give rise to schisms, who are destitute of the love of God, and who look to their own special advantage rather than to the unity of the Church; and who for trifling reasons, or any kind of reason which occurs to them, cut in pieces and divide the great and glorious body of Christ, and so far as in them lies, (positively) destroy it—men who prate of peace while they give rise to war, and do in truth strain out a gnat, but swallow a camel. For no reformation of so great importance can be effected by them, as will compensate for the mischief arising from their schism. He shall also judge all those who are beyond the pale of the truth, that is, who are outside the Church; but he himself shall be judged by no one. For to him all things are consistent: he has a full faith in one God Almighty, of whom are all things; and in the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom are all things, and in the dispensations connected with Him, by means of which the Son of God became man; and a firm belief in the spirit of God, who furnishes us with a knowledge of the truth, and has set forth the dispensations of the Father and the Son, in virtue of which He dwells with every generation of men, according to the will of the Father.”

According to Irenaeus the church is endowed with mysterious powers which it exercises without charge and bestows grace which cannot be counted. And it is the unique sphere of the Spirit, Who has been indeed trusted to it, so that we can only attain communion with Christ there. This concept will be enlarged by Irenaeus’ disciple Cyprian, but there church is viewed as the depository of truth. He wrote (*Against Heresies*. 1, 10, 2):

“As I have already observed, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points (of doctrine) just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same. For the Churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same throughout the world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere, and enlightens all men that are willing to come to a knowledge of the truth. Nor will any one of the rulers in the Churches, however highly gifted he may be in

point of eloquence, teach doctrines different from these (for no one is greater than the Master); nor, on the other hand, will he who is deficient in power of expression inflict injury on the tradition. For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does one who is able at great length to discourse regarding it, make any addition to it, nor does one, who can say but little, diminish it.”

In a classic passage from Irenaeus, he wrote (*Against Heresies*. 3, 24, 1):

“Thus, then have all these men been exposed, who bring in impious doctrines regarding our Maker and Framer, who also formed this world, and above whom there is no other God; and those have been overthrown by their own arguments who teach falsehoods regarding the substance of our Lord, and the dispensation which He fulfilled for the sake of His own creature man. But (it has, on the other hand, been shown), that the preaching of the Church is everywhere consistent, and continues in an even course, and receives testimony from the prophets, the apostles, and all the disciples—as I have proved—through (those in) the beginning, the middle, and the end, and through the entire dispensation of God, and that well-grounded system which tends to man’s salvation, namely, our faith; which, having been received from the Church, we do preserve, and which always, by the Spirit of God, renewing its youth, as if it were some precious deposit in an excellent vessel, causes the vessel itself containing it to renew its youth also. For this gift of God has been entrusted to the Church, as breath was to the first created man, for this purpose, that all the members receiving it may be vivified; and the (means of) communion with Christ has been distributed throughout it, that is, the Holy Spirit, the earnest of incorruption, the means of confirming our faith, and the ladder of ascent to God. ‘For in the Church,’ it is said, ‘God hath set apostles, prophets, teachers; and all the other means through which the Spirit works; of which all those are not partakers who do not join themselves to the Church, but defraud themselves of life through their perverse opinions and infamous behaviour. For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace; but the Spirit is truth. Those, therefore, who do not partake of Him, are neither nourished into life from the mother’s breasts, nor do they enjoy that most limpid fountain which issues from the body of Christ; but they dig for themselves broken cisterns out of earthly trenches, and drink putrid water out of the mire, fleeing from the faith of the Church lest they be convicted; and rejecting the Spirit, that they may not be instructed.”

N.B. The church is viewed as the sole depository of truth, because it has a monopoly on the apostolic writings, the apostolic oral tradition, and the apostolic faith; this in contrast to the variegated teachings of the Gnostics. To illustrate the succession of “truth,” he cites the Church at Rome, the imperial capital (*Against Heresies*. 3, 3, 2):

“Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vain-glory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assembly in unauthorized meetings; (we do this, I say,) by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also (by pointing out) the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the succession of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolical tradition has been preserved continuously by those (faithful men) who exist everywhere.”

Rome is an ideal illustration of the universality of the church’s true teachings because representatives of many churches flock. Thus, there is some guarantee that the faith taught at Rome faithfully reflected the apostolic tradition. The crucial issue is the truth, not geographic supremacy or prominent leaders! Hence a succession of truth, not men!

4. **The Alexandrians. Clement (ca. A.D. 150–211/16)** understands the church to be primarily a gathering of saints for instruction and the hearing of the Scriptures. He further wrote (*Stromata*. 4, 9), “The earthly church is the image of the heavenly as we pray also ‘that the will of God may be done upon the earth as in heaven’.” He says of the visible church, “I call a church not a place, but the collection, congregation, of the elect;” this he derives from the idea of *ekklesia*. He speaks of the unity of the church in terms of truth-succession (*Stromata*. 7, 17):

“From what has been said, then, it is my opinion that the true Church, that which is really ancient, is one, and that in it those who according to God’s purpose are just, are enrolled. For from the very reason that God is one, and the Lord one, that which is in the highest degree honourable is lauded in consequence of its singleness, being an imitation of the one first principle. In the

nature of the One, then, is associated in a joint heritage the one Church, which they strive to cut asunder into many sects.

“Therefore in substance and idea, in origin, in pre-eminence, we say that the ancient and Catholic Church is alone, collecting as it does into the unity of the one faith—which results from the peculiar Testaments, or rather the one Testament in different times by the will of the one God, through one Lord—those already ordained, whom God predestinated, knowing before the foundation of the world that they would be righteous.

“But the pre-eminence of the Church, as the principle of union, is, in its oneness, in this surpassing all things else, and having nothing like or equal to itself.”

Hence, if one connects as co-ordinates gospel truth and the repository of truth (the church), then it is easy to understand the stress on no redemption outside the church.

Origen’s (ca. A.D. 185–253/4) definition of the church universal and particular is quite helpful (*Against Celsus*. 6, 48):

“In the next place, when the philosophers of the Porch, who assert that the virtue of God and man is the same, maintain that the God who is over all things is not happier than their wise man, but that the happiness of both is equal, Celsus, neither ridicules nor scoffs at their opinion. If, however, holy Scripture says that the perfect man is joined to and made one with the Very Word by means of virtue, so that we infer that the soul of Jesus is not separated from the first-born of all creation, he laughs at Jesus being called ‘Son of God,’ not observing what is said of Him with a secret and mystical signification in the holy Scriptures. But that we may win over to the reception of our views those who are willing to accept the inferences which flow from our doctrines, and to be benefited thereby, we say that the holy Scriptures declare the body of Christ, animated by the Son of God, to be the whole Church of God, and the members of this body—considered as a whole—to consist of those who are believers; since, as a soul vivifies and moves the body, which of itself has not the natural power of motion like a living being, so the Word, arousing and moving the whole body, the Church, to befitting action, awakens, moreover, each individual member belonging to the Church, so that they do nothing apart from the Word. Since all this, then, follows by a train of reasoning not to be depreciated, where is the difficulty in maintaining that, as the soul of Jesus is joined in a perfect and inconceivable manner

with the very Word, so the person of Jesus, generally speaking, is not separated from the only-begotten and first-born of all creation, and is not a different being from Him? But enough here on this subject.”

III. THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.

A. The Rise of Monarchial Government—Preserver of Truth

Much has been made of the shift in the second century from plurality leadership in the church to singularity, to an early episcopal form of government. Both in the New Testament and selected Fathers plurality was a common practice. For example, Clement of Rome clearly envisions a plurality (*Letter to the Corinthians*, 42, 44):

“The Apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. Christ, therefore, was from God, and the Apostles from Christ. Both these appointments, then, came about in an orderly way, by the will of God. Having, therefore, received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed their first-fruits, having proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterward believe. Nor was this a new thing; for, indeed, many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place: ‘I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.’

“Our Apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this cause, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those already mentioned, and afterward gave instructions that when these should fall asleep other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. We are of the opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterward by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ in lowliness of mind, peaceably, and with all modesty, and for a long time have borne a good report with all—these men we consider to be unjustly thrust out of their ministrations. For it will be no light sin for us, if office blamelessly and holily. Blessed are those presbyters who have gone before seeing their departure was fruitful and ripe; for they have no fear lest any one should remove them from their appointed place. For we see that ye

have displaced certain persons, though they were living honorably, from the ministration which had been honored by them blamelessly.”

The writer of the *Didaché* explicitly commands (15):

“Appoint (i.e., lay hands on), therefore, for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek, not lovers of money, truthful, and approved; for they also render you the service of prophets and teachers. Despise them not, therefore, for they are your honored ones together with the prophets and teachers.”

It is interesting that Clement and Hermas, both churchmen at Rome in the second century express an awareness of plurality of eldership/bishop in the church; there is no hint of a singularity of ruler in the church.

However, particularly in Ignatius of Asia Minor, perhaps where John’s Revelation 2–3 was prominent, a shift from plurality to singularity is stated with the implication that “the Church” is intrinsically related to “the bishop.” He is not only the first to employ the term “catholic,” but also the first to speak of this singularity. He tells us (*Letter to the Smyrneans*, 8):

“[But] shun divisions, as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God’s commandment. Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church. It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast; but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God; that everything which ye do may be sure and valid.”

Again, *To the Ephesians* he says (6):

“For some are wont of malicious guile to hawk about the Name, while they do certain other things unworthy of God. These men ye ought to shun, as wild-beasts; for they are mad dogs, biting by stealth; against whom ye ought to be on your guard, for they are hard to heal. There is one only physician, of flesh and of spirit, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true Life in death, Son of Mary and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The ecclesiastical shift is quite apparently from plurality to singularity; presbyters are divorced from bishops into a separate, plural, but subservient, office. *To the Magnesians* (2) he says:

“Forasmuch then as I was permitted to see you in the person of Damas your godly bishop and your worthy presbyters Bassus and Apollonius and my fellow-servant the deacon Zotion, of whom I would fain have joy, for that he is subject to the bishop as unto the grace of God and to the presbytery as unto the law of Jesus Christ.”

And *To the Trallians* (2):

“For when ye are obedient to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, it is evident to me that ye are living not after men but after Jesus Christ, who died for us, that believing on His death ye might escape death. It is therefore necessary, even as your wont is, that ye should do nothing without the bishop; but be ye obedient also to the presbytery, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ our hope; for it we live in Him, we shall also be found in Him. And those likewise who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks but servants of the Church of God. It is right therefore that they should beware of blame as of fire.”

It is not crucial to demonstrate that this became the ecclesiastical position in the Ancient Church; it is blatantly self-evident. What remains, however, is to say something as to the historic origins of this shift. It must be realized that a monarchical bishop was not recognized in Rome until after A.D. 140.

1. According to Hegesippus, who is quoted by Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History*. 2, 23) a precedent was set when Simeon succeeded James as leader over the church in Jerusalem.
2. Clement of Alexandria indicates that bishops were endowed with higher authority than presbyters beginning with the Apostle John (*Rich Man*, 42):

“And that you may be still more confident, that repenting thus truly there remains for you a sure hope of salvation, listen to a tale, which is not a tale but a narrative, handed down and committed to the custody of memory, about the Apostle John. For when, on the tyrant’s death, he returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos, he went away, being invited, to the contiguous territories of the nations, here to appoint bishops, there to set in order whole Churches, there to ordain such as were marked out by the Spirit.”
3. Tertullian (*ca.* A.D. 155–240/60) mentions the same origin of the shift so that the tradition must have been widespread (*Against Marcion*. 4, 5):

“Let us see what milk the Corinthians drank from Paul; to what rule of faith the Galatians were brought for correction; what the Philippians, the Thessalonians, the Ephesians, read by it; what utterance also the Romans give, so very near (to the apostles), to whom Peter and Paul conjointly bequeathed the gospel even sealed in their own blood. We have also St. John’s foster churches. For although Marcion rejects his Apocalypse, the order of the bishops (thereof), when traced up to their origin, will yet rest on John as their author. In the same manner is recognized the excellent source of the other churches.”

4. Further, it must be realized that the early church embraced the necessity of the shift from a desire to preserve the truth in the church against the “isms” and “ics” of the day. Tertullian stated that truth is validated by its universality in the church. (*Prescription Against Heretics*, 20):

“Immediately, therefore, so did the apostles, whom this designation indicates as ‘the sent.’ Having, on the authority of a prophecy, which occurs in a psalm of David, chosen Matthias by lot as the twelfth, into the place of Judas, they obtained the promised power of the Holy Ghost for the gift of miracles and of utterance; and after first bearing witness to the faith in Jesus Christ throughout Judea, and founding churches (there), they next went forth into the world and preached the same doctrine of the same faith to the nations. They then in like manner founded churches in every city, from which all the other churches, one after another, derived the tradition of the faith, and the seeds of doctrine, and are every day deriving them, that they may become churches. Indeed, it is on this account only that they will be able to deem themselves apostolic, as being the offspring of apostolic churches. Every sort of thing must necessarily revert to its original for its classification. Therefore the churches, although they are so many and so great, comprise but the one primitive church, (founded) by the apostles, from which they all (spring). In this way all are primitive, and all are apostolic, whilst they are all proved to be one, in (unbroken) unity, by their peaceful communion, and title of brotherhood, and bond of hospitality—privileges which no other rule directs than the one tradition of the self-same mystery.”

5. In the development of the bishop’s office, Irenaeus is of major importance for, unlike Tertullian or Origen, he attributes to bishops a certain special gift for the custody of the truth, a function of which Ignatius has nothing to say. He wrote (*Against Heresy*, 4, 26):

“Wherefore it is incumbent to obey the presbyters who are in the Church—those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father. but [it is also incumbent] to hold in suspicion others who depart from the primitive succession, and assemble themselves together in any place whatsoever, [looking upon them] either as heretics of perverse minds, or as schismatics puffed up and self-pleasing, or again as hypocrites, acting thus for the sake of lucre and vainglory. For all these have fallen from the truth.”

Again, he wrote (*Against Heresy*, 4, 33):

“True knowledge is [that which consists in] the doctrine of the apostles, and the ancient constitution of the Church throughout all the world, and the distinctive manifestation of the body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops, by which they have handed down that Church which exists in every place, and has come even unto us, being guarded and preserved, without any forging of Scriptures, by a very complete system of doctrine, and neither receiving addition nor [suffering] curtailment [in the truths which she believes]; and [it consists in] reading [the word of God] without falsification, and a lawful and diligent exposition in harmony with the Scriptures, both without danger and without blasphemy; and [above all, it consists in] the pre-eminent gift of love, which is more precious than knowledge, more glorious than prophecy, and which excels all the other gifts [of God].”

At this point in time, the bishop, an incorrupt guardian of the truth, was no longer the mere head of a local church; he has a relation to the Church Universal. He has a part in the episcopate which is one and single. The truth is guarded by the church as a “treasure in a precious vessel.”

At this point, Gonzalez has a remarkable statement concerning the nature of Apostolic Succession (*History*. 1, 151):

“What we have just summarized is that which may be found in early antiheretical writers such as Irenaeus and Tertullian. But one must point out that at this time the understanding of apostolic succession was still not such that succession is required to confer validity to the episcopal office. On the contrary, some bishops had that succession and others did not have it; but all their churches were apostolic because their faith agreed with the faith of the apostles as it had been preserved in churches whose bishops were

in their succession. Later, and through a development that would take several centuries, this doctrine of apostolic succession would be developed to a point that would never be recognized by those who first advocated it.”

B. The Importance of Cyprian of Carthage (ca. A.D. 205–258)

Although Irenaeus and Tertullian opposed the heretics by emphasizing the importance of the church and apostolic succession, neither of them took time to develop a doctrine of the church. Cyprian, the disciple of Irenaeus, is the first to do this and casts a sacerdotal shadow over it.

- 1. Cyprian and Unity.** Cyprian sees the unity of the church in the episcopate. The bishops are the successors of the apostles, and their authority, which derived from that succession, is the same that Christ granted to the apostles. Every bishop represents the totality of the episcopate. He wrote that each bishop is autonomous (*Unity of the Church*, 5):

“And this unity we ought firmly to hold and assert, especially those of us also prove the episcopate itself to be one and undivided. Let no one deceive the brotherhood by a falsehood: let no one corrupt the truth of the faith by perfidious prevarication. The episcopate is one, each part of which is held by each one for the whole. The Church also is one, which is spread abroad far and wide into a multitude by an increase of fruitfulness. As there are many rays of the sun, but one light; and many branches of a tree, but one strength based in its tenacious root; and since from one spring flow many streams, although the multiplicity seems diffused in the liberality of an overflowing abundance, yet the unity is still preserved in the source. Separate a ray of the sun from its body of light, its unity does not allow a division of light; break a branch from a tree—when broken, it will not be able to bud; cut off the stream from its fountain, and that which is cut off dries up. Thus also the church, shone over with the light of the Lord, sheds forth her rays over the whole world, yet it is one light which is everywhere diffused, nor is the unity of the body separated. Her fruitful abundance spreads her branches over the whole world. She broadly expands her rivers, liberally flowing, yet her head is one, her source one; and she is one mother, plentiful in the results of fruitfulness: from her womb we are born, by her milk we are nourished, by her spirit we are animated.”

No bishop has the right to dictate to other bishops; he postulates a federation of bishops that seek advice of one another, a parity of authority.

He does give priority to Rome because of the primacy of Peter. He wrote (*Epistle. 54, 14*):

“To these also it was not sufficient that they had withdrawn from the Gospel, that they had taken away from the lapsed the hope of satisfaction and repentance, that they had taken away those involved in frauds or stained with adulteries, or polluted with the deadly contagion of sacrifices, lest they should entreat God, or make confession of their crimes in the Church, from all feeling and fruit of repentance; that they had set up outside for themselves—outside the Church, and opposed to the Church, a conventicle of their abandoned faction, when there had flowed together a band of creatures with evil consciences, and unwilling to entreat and to satisfy God. After such things as these, moreover, they still dare—a false bishop having been appointed for them by heretic—to set sail and to bear letters from schismatic and profane persons to the throne of Peter, and to the chief church whence priestly unity takes its source.”

On the other hand, Cyprian refused to grant the bishop of Rome any jurisdiction whatsoever in the internal affairs of his diocese as seen as his response to Bishop Stephen (*Epistle. 70, 3*):

“Neither must we prescribe this from custom, but overcome opposite custom by reason. For neither did Peter, whom first the Lord chose, and upon whom He built His Church, when Paul disputed with him afterwards about circumcision, claim anything to himself insolently, nor arrogantly assume anything; so as to say that he held the primacy, and that he ought rather to be obeyed by novices and those lately come. Nor did he despise Paul because he had previously been a persecutor of the Church, but admitted the counsel of truth, and easily yielded to the lawful reason which Paul asserted, furnishing thus an illustration to us both of concord and of patience, that we should not obstinately love our own opinions.”

2. **Cyprian and Salvation.** Cyprian is adamant that salvation is only in the church, not in sacraments, but in truth. His staunch position must be viewed in light of the Novatian schismatics! He wrote (*Unity of the Church, 6*):

“The spouse of Christ cannot be adulterous; she is uncorrupted and pure. She knows one home; she guards with chaste modesty the sanctity of one couch. She keeps us for God. She appoints the sons whom she has born for the kingdom. Whoever is separated from the Church and is joined to an adulteress, is separated from the

promises of the Church; nor can he who forsakes the Church of Christ attain to the rewards of Christ. He is a stranger; he is profane; he is an enemy. He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother. If any one could escape who was outside the ark of Noah, then he also may escape who shall be outside the Church. The Lord warns, saying, 'He who is not with me scattereth.' He who breaks the peace and the concord of Christ, does so in opposition to Christ; he who gathereth elsewhere than in the Church, scatters the Church of Christ. The Lord says, 'I and the Father are one;' and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 'And these three are one.' And does any one believe that this unity which thus comes from the divine strength and coheres in celestial sacraments, can be divided in the Church, and can be separated by the parting asunder of opposing wills? He who does not hold this unity does not hold God's law, does not hold the faith of the Father and the Son, does not hold life and salvation."

Again, (*Epistle. 72, 21*):

"Can the power of baptism be greater or of more avail than confession, than suffering, when one confesses Christ before men and is baptized in his own blood? And yet even this baptism does not benefit a heretic, although he has confessed Christ, and been put to death outside the church, unless the patrons and advocates of heretics declare that the heretics who are slain in a false confession of Christ are martyrs, and assign to them the glory and the crown of martyrdom contrary to the testimony of the apostle, who says that it will profit them nothing although they were burnt and slain. But if not even the baptism of a public confession and blood can profit a heretic to salvation, because there is no salvation out of the Church, how much less shall it be of advantage to him, if in a hiding-place and a cave of robbers, stained with the contagion of adulterous water, he has not only not put off his old sins, but rather heaped up still newer and greater ones! Wherefore baptism cannot be common to us and to heretics, to whom neither God the Father, nor Christ the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the faith, nor the Church itself, is common. And therefore it behooves those to be baptized who come from heresy to the Church, that so they who are prepared, in the lawful, and true, and only baptism of the holy Church, by divine regeneration, for the kingdom of God, may be born of both sacraments, because it is written, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God'."

How can this church outside of which there is no salvation be defined and recognized? According to Cyprian, the church is recognized by its truth and unity. Although he affirms that truth is one of the characteristics, his opposition to schismatics led him to emphasize unity. He sees no truth without unity!

IV. THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

The Church's sacraments are those external rites, more precisely signs, which the Ancient Church believed conveyed an unseen sanctifying grace.

A. The Sacrament of Baptism.

From the beginning, baptism was universally accepted as the rite of admission to the Church; similarly, "it was always held to convey the remission of sins," wrote Kelley (*Early Christian Doctrines*, 194). Barnabas tells us, for example (*Letter*, 11):

"This He saith, because we go down into the water laden with sins and filth, and rise up from it bearing fruit in the heart, resting our fear and hope on Jesus in the spirit. And whosoever shall eat of these shall live for ever; He meaneth this; whosoever, saith He, shall hear these things spoken and shall believe, shall live for ever."

Justin Martyr wrote (*Apology*, 61):

"I will also relate the manner in which we dedicated ourselves to God when we had been made new through Christ; lest, if we omit this, we seem to be unfair in the explanation we are making. As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, 'Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mother's wombs, is manifest to all. And how those who have sinned and repent shall escape their sins, is declared by Esaias the prophet, as I wrote above; he thus speaks: 'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from your souls; learn to do well; judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow: and come and let us reason together, saith the Lord. And though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white like wool; and though they be as crimson, I will make

them white as snow; but if ye refuse and rebel, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it'."

Clement of Alexandria understands that it imparts regeneration (*Instructor*. 1, 6):

"The same also takes place in our case, whose exemplar Christ became. Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal. 'I,' says He, 'have said that ye are gods, and all sons of the Highest.' This work is variously called grace, and illumination, and perfection, and washing: washing, by which we cleanse away our sins; grace, by which the penalties accruing to transgressions are remitted; and illumination, by which that holy light of salvation is beheld, that is, by which we see God clearly. Now we call that perfect which wants nothing. For what is yet wanting to him who knows God? For it were truly monstrous that which is not complete should be called a gift (or act) of God's grace. Being perfect, He consequently bestows perfect gifts."

B. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The early church held to an ambivalency concerning the table, for they saw it both in terms of a spiritual reality and a thanksgiving. Of importance is that it focused on a past event, not an ongoing reality. The church conceived the eucharist with a natural and unconcerned realism. The *Didaché* states (9-10):

"9. But as touching the eucharistic thanksgiving give ye thanks thus. First, as regards the cup: We give Thee thanks O our Father, for the holy vine of Thy son David, which Thou madest known unto us through Thy Son Jesus; Thine is the glory for ever and ever. Then as regards the broken bread: We give Thee thanks, O our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou didst make known unto us through Thy Son Jesus; Thine is the glory for ever and ever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom; for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. But let no one eat or drink of this eucharistic thanksgiving, but they that have been baptized into the name of the Lord; for concerning this also the Lord hath said: Give not that which is holy to the dogs.

"10. And after ye are satisfied thus give ye thanks: We give Thee thanks, Holy Father, for Thy holy name, which Thou has made to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality, which Thou hast made known unto us through Thy Son Jesus; Thine is the glory for ever and ever. Thou, Almighty Master, didst create all things for Thy name's sake, and didst give food and drink unto men for enjoyment, that

they might render thanks to Thee; but didst bestow upon us spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Thy Son. Before all things we give Thee thanks that Thou are powerful; Thine is the glory for ever and ever.”

Ignatius says even more graphically (*Letter to the Ephesians*, 20): “Breaking one bread which is the medicine of immortality and antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ.” Justin wrote (*Apology*, 66):

“And this food is called among us *Eucharistia* [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, ‘This do ye in remembrance of me, this is My body,’ and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, ‘This is My blood;’ and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.”

The early church held the ambivalent position of a Eucharist that at once was real, yet symbolic; memorial, yet spiritual. Of the Lord’s Table Neve wrote (*History*. 1, 160): “In the day of Tertullian and Irenaeus and their predecessors it was altogether possible that a symbolical and in a sense a certain realistic conception of the gift in the Supper were not exclusive the one of the other.”

V. CONCLUSION.

The purpose of this lesson has been to initiate a study of ecclesiology by focusing upon the first three centuries of the church. The church was viewed as the body of Christ, saved ones who had received the washing of baptism, and as a continuation of Israel. The church witnesses a shift from plurality to singularity of leadership, the episcopate, which was both an autonomous federation of bishoprics and the sole receptacle of truth (hence, not salvation without the truth—the church). Hierarchical rule is explicitly rejected, even by Cyprian. The sacraments were viewed as grace conveyed: baptism the grace of regeneration and the eucharist as a memorial grace of sanctification.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH **Part II: The Ancient and Medieval Church**

Summary:

- I. INTRODUCTION.**
- II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SACRAMENTAL STRUCTURE IN THE CHURCH.**
 - A. The Ecclesiology of Augustine.
 - B. The Ecclesiology of Gregory I.
- III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE CHURCH.**
- IV. CONCLUSION.**

I. INTRODUCTION.

The study of ecclesiology is both an impressive and neglected area of scholastic endeavor. The area is so massive that even broad-brush strokes are enormous generalizations; a full course needs and should be devoted to the history of the theological development of the church! In this study, the function of these lessons is to create a general overview as a basis for further study.

In the previous lesson the focus was upon the church through the era of Cyprian (third century); this lesson shall focus upon the development of ecclesiology from the era of Cyprian through Gregory I and the beginning of the Medieval era. The focus shall be upon the nature of the church and the sacrament of the Eucharist which is so pivotal to an understanding of the Reformation and the Reformers.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SACRAMENTAL STRUCTURE IN THE CHURCH.

The two giant figures in the development of a high episcopalianism, Medieval ecclesiology, are Augustine and Gregory I, the latter actually sustained and reformed the former. To grasp the church after Cyprian in its ongoing sacramental development is to grasp these two men—one a theologian; the other a theologian-pope.

A. The Ecclesiology of Augustine (A.D. 354–430/31)

N.B. At the outset of the study of Augustine’s doctrine of the church, it is crucial to understand the contextual matrix of its development. As Cyprian reacted against the schismatic Novations in the third century, Augustine debated the separatist Donatists. Klotsch wrote (*History*, 115): “At the beginning of the fifth century Augustine entered the contest with the Donatists. The two questions that had given rise to the schism—(1) whether a church by tolerance of unworthy members within its pale lost the essential attributes of purity and catholicity, and (2) whether the character of a bishop affected his official acts—led Augustine to develop his conception of the church and the sacraments.”

In both Cyprian's case and Augustine's case they are fighting an error of truth in the people, dealing with the distinguishing mark of the church. For the Donatists, the mark of the church was holiness,

1. Augustine and the nature of the church. In his horrified reaction to the Donatist schism he argues these points.

- a) First, like Cyprian, he maintained that the true church is the one Catholic or Church universal because of geographic distribution throughout the world. To Petilian, the Donatist, he wrote (*Letter*, 2, 38, 91): "I too indeed have attained to a very slight knowledge of the Greek language, scarcely to be called knowledge at all, yet I am not shameless in saying that I know that *olon* means not 'one,' but 'the whole;' and that *kath' olon* means 'according to the whole:' whence the Catholic Church received its name, according to the saying of the Lord, 'It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth'."
- b) Second, the authority or apostolicity of the church is based on the apostolic succession whose successors are the bishops.

It is possible to point to an uninterrupted succession beginning with Peter. At this point Augustine accepted Cyprian's idea of the historic primacy of the apostolic chair, but he knows nothing of a special authority invested in Peter or his successors, simply Cyprian's "federation concept." Seeberg wrote (*History*. 1, 319), "Dogmatically there had been no advance from the position of Cyprian." Augustine wrote of Peter (*On Baptism*. 2, 1, 1): "Here is a passage in which Cyprian records what we also learn in holy Scripture, that the Apostle Peter, in whom the primacy of the apostles shines with such exceeding grace, was corrected by the later Apostle Paul, when he adopted a custom in the manner of circumcision at variance with the demands of truth. If it was therefore possible for Peter in some point to walk not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, so as to compel the Gentiles to judaize, as Paul wrote in that epistle in which he calls God to witness that he does not lie; for he says, 'Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not;' and, after this sacred and awful calling of God to witness, he told the whole tale, saying in the course of it, 'But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles, and not as do

the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, contrary to the rule of truth which the Church afterwards held, why might not Cyprian, in opposition to the rule of faith which the whole Church afterwards held, compel heretics and schismatics to be baptized afresh? I suppose that there is no slight to Cyprian in comparing him with Peter in respect to his crown of martyrdom; rather I ought to be afraid lest I am showing disrespect towards Peter. For who can be ignorant that the primacy of his apostleship is to be preferred to any episcopate whatever? But, granting the difference in the dignity of their sees, yet they have the same glory in their martyrdom. And whether it may be the case that the hearts of those who confess and die for the true faith in the unity of charity take precedence of each other in different points, the Lord Himself will know, by the hidden and wondrous dispensation of whose grace the thief hanging on the cross once for all confesses Him, and is sent on the self-same day to paradise, while Peter, the follower of our Lord, denies Him thrice, and has his crown postponed: for us it were rash to form a judgment from the evidence. But if any one were now found compelling a man to be circumcised after the Jewish fashion, as a necessary preliminary for baptism, this would meet with much more general repudiation by mankind, than if a man should be compelled to be baptized again. Wherefore, if Peter, on doing this, is corrected by his later colleague Paul, and is yet preserved by the bond of peace and unity till he is promoted to martyrdom, how much more readily and constantly should we prefer, either to the authority of a single bishop, or to the Council of a single province, the rule that has been established by the statutes of the universal Church? For this same Cyprian, in urging his view of the question, was still anxious to remain in the unity of peace even with those who differed from him on this point, as is shown by his own opening address at the beginning of the very Council which is quoted by the Donatists.”

- c) Third, the unity of the church is manifested in love and where there is not love and holiness there is no church. Outside of this one Catholic church, the body of Christ, there is no truth, no salvation. Separation from the Catholic Church is a renunciation of the Spirit of love; union with the church is essential to salvation. He wrote of unity as a prerequisite for the benefits of baptism (*Baptism*. 1, 12, 18): “And if it is mere madness to assert this, then let them confess that a man can be baptized with the true baptism of Christ, and that yet his heart, persisting in malice or sacrilege, may not allow remission of sins to be given; and so let them understand that men may be baptized in communions severed from the Church, in which Christ’s baptism is given and received in the said

celebration of the sacrament, but that it will only then be of avail for the remission of sins, when the recipient, being reconciled to the unity of the church, is purged from the sacrilege of deceit, by which his sins were retained, and their remission prevented. For, as in the case of him who had approached the sacrament in deceit there is no second baptism, but he is purged by faithful discipline and truthful confession, which he could not be without baptism, so that what was given before becomes then powerful to work his salvation, when the former deceit is done away by the truthful confession; so also in the case of the man who, while an enemy to the peace and love of Christ, received in any heresy or schism the baptism of Christ, which the schismatics in question had not lost from among them, though by his sacrilege his sins were not remitted, yet, when he corrects his error, and comes over to the communion and unity of the Church, he ought not to be again baptized: because by his very reconciliation to the peace of the Church he receives this benefit, that the sacrament now begins in unity to be of avail for the remission of sins, which could not so avail him as received in schism.”

Again, he is pointedly clear (*Baptism*. 4, 1, 1): “The comparison of the Church with Paradise shows us that men may indeed receive her baptism outside her pale, but that no one outside can either receive or retain the salvation of eternal happiness. For, as the words of Scripture testify, the streams from the fountain of Paradise flowed copiously even beyond its bounds. Record indeed is made of their names; and through what countries they flow, and that they are situated beyond the limits of Paradise, is known to all; and yet in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, to which countries those rivers extended, there is not found that blessedness of life which is recorded in Paradise alone. So, therefore, the baptism of the Church may exist outside, but the gift of the life of happiness is found alone within the Church, which has been founded on a rock, which has received the keys of binding and loosing. ‘She it is alone who holds as her privilege the whole power of her Bridegroom and Lord;’ by virtue of which power as bride, she can bring forth sons even of handmaids. And these, if they be not high-minded, shall be called into the lot of the inheritance; but if they be high-minded, they shall remain outside.”

Though Augustine did not place as much stress as Cyprian upon the divine right of the episcopate, he made the belief of the individual Christian depend upon the authority of the Catholic Church. He went so far as to declare that he believed the gospel only on the authority of the Catholic Church! Confronting the

Manicheans he wrote (*Epistle*, 5): “But should you meet with a person not yet believing the gospel, how would you reply to him were he to say, I do not believe? For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church. So when those on whose authority I have consented to believe in the gospel tell me not to believe in Manichaeus, how can I but consent? Take your choice. If you say, Believe the Catholics: their advice to me is to put no faith in you; so that, believing them, I am precluded from believing you;—you say, Do not believe the Catholics: you cannot fairly use the gospel in bringing me to faith in Manichaeus; for it was at the command of the Catholics that I believed the gospel;—Again, if you say, You were right in believing the Catholics when they praised the gospel, but wrong in believing their vituperation of Manichaeus: do you think me such a fool as to believe or not to believe as you like or dislike, without any reason? It is therefore fairer and safer by far for me, having in one instance put faith in the Catholics, not to go over to you, till, instead of bidding me believe, you make me understand something in the clearest and most open manner. To convince me, then, you must put aside the gospel. If you keep to the gospel, I will keep to those who commanded me to believe the gospel; and, in obedience to them, I will not believe you at all.”

N.B. It must also be recognized that Augustine saw the church as composed of “wheat and tares;” the reception of Baptism was a sign only, not the reality of salvation. He wrote (*Baptism*. 3, 17, 22): “But if this be so, why should it not also be the case that, as each man comes from heresy or schism to the Catholic peace, his sins should be loosed through their prayers? But the integrity of the sacrament is everywhere recognized, though it will not avail for the irrevocable remission of sins outside the unity of the Church. Nor will the prayers of the saints, or, in other words, the groanings of that one dove, be able to help one who is set in heresy or schism; just as they are not able to help one who is placed within the Church, if by a wicked life he himself retain the debts of his sins against himself, and that though he be baptized, not by this hawk, but by the pious ministry of the dove herself.”

Again (*Baptism*. 1, 9, 12): “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. What does it profit them, therefore, if they have both the voice of angels in the sacred mysteries, and the

gift of prophecy, as had Caiaphas and Saul, that so they may be found prophesying, of whom Holy Scripture testifies that they were worthy of condemnation? If they not only know, but even possess the sacraments, as Simon Magus did; if they have faith, as the devils confessed Christ (for we must not suppose that they did not believe when they said, 'What have we to do with Thee, O Son of God? We know Thee who Thou art'); if they distribute of themselves their own substance to the poor, as many do, not only in the Catholic Church, but in the different heretical bodies; if, under the pressure of any persecution, they give their bodies with us to be burned for the faith which they like us confess: yet because they do all these things apart from the Church, not 'forbearing one another in love,' nor 'endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,' insomuch as they have not charity, they cannot attain to eternal salvation, even with all those good things which profit them not."

In this sense Augustine can speak of the church visible and invisible. Salvation is only in the church, but many in the church are not saved. The Sacraments do not save! Salvation is only in the church because the truth is there. The Donatists were viewed as Christians because they were viewed as in the church, although they emphatically rejected the notion!

2. Augustine and the Sacraments. Augustine grappled with the sacraments within the context of the Donatist schism and the Pelagian era. The sacraments are gifts from God and the moral condition of the administrator cannot detract from the gift conveyed. He wrote (*Letter to Petilian. 2, 39.69*): "In this question you are speaking just as though we were at present inquiring what constituted a true priest, not what constituted a true Baptist. For that a man should be a true priest, it is requisite that he should be clothed not with the sacrament alone, but with righteousness, as it is written, 'Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness.' But if a man be a priest in virtue of the sacrament alone, as was the high priest Caiaphas, the persecutor of the one most true Priest, then even though he himself be not truthful, yet what he gives is true, if he gives not what is his own but what is God's; as it is said of Caiaphas himself, 'This spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied.' But it is unavoidable that you should be always in the wrong, so long as you do despite to the sacraments of God because of the faults of men, or think that we take upon ourselves the sacrilege even of your schism, for the sake of the sacraments of God, to which we are unwilling to despite in you."

Augustine divided the sacraments in two parts: the symbol and significance. The visible signs are symbols of an invisible content; in the

former, they are merely symbolical and, in the latter, there is an actual exertion of divine energy. Of baptism he wrote (*Baptism. 5, 21, 29*): “And so John too says, ‘They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.’ Wherefore God gives the sacrament of grace even through the hands of wicked men, but the grace itself only by Himself or through His saints. And therefore He gives remission of sins either of Himself, or through the members of that dove to whom He says, ‘Whosoever sins yet remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.’ But since no one can doubt that baptism, which is the sacrament of the remission of sins, is possessed even by murderers, who are yet in darkness because the hatred of their brethren is not excluded from their hearts, therefore either no remission of sins is given to them if their baptism is accompanied by no change of heart for the better, or if the sins are remitted, they at once return on them again. And we learn that the baptism is holy in itself, because it is of God; and whether it be given or whether it be received by men of such like character, it cannot be polluted by any perversity of theirs, either within, or yet outside the Church.”

N.B. Yet, Augustine recognizes that grace is only in Christ by faith, hence, the invisible reality is within the sacraments (*Letter to Petilian. 2, 4.9*): “Christ is not faithless, from whom the faithful man receives not guilt but faith. For he believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, that this faith may be counted for righteousness.”

On the Lord’s Supper, Augustine spiritualizes the rite as a salvation-sacrament through believing for believers. The gift that the eucharist conveys is the gift of life. This is a spiritual gift and the eating and drinking are spiritual processes. (**N.B.**—The elements are not sensual, but animated life by the Spirit in the elements.) He wrote (*Commentary on John, 25:12*): “They said therefore unto Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?’ For He said to them, ‘Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.’ ‘What shall we do?’ they ask; by observing what, shall we be able to fulfill this precept? ‘Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He has sent.’ This is them to eat the meat, not that which perisheth, but that which endureth unto eternal life. To what purpose dost thou make ready teeth and stomach? Believe, and thou hast eaten already. Faith is indeed distinguished from works, even as the apostle says, ‘that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law:’ there are works which appear good, without faith in Christ; but they are not good, because they are not referred to that end in which works are good; ‘for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth’.”

Again (*Commentary on John*, 26:1): “Wherefore, the Lord, about to give the Holy Spirit, said that Himself was the bread that come down from heaven, exhorting us to believe on Him. For to believe on Him is to eat the living bread. He that believes eats; he is sated invisibly, because invisibly is he born again. A babe within, a new man within. Where he is made new, there he is satisfied with good.”

Kelley wrote of Augustine (*Early Christian Doctrines*, 449): “He goes further than his predecessors in formulating a doctrine which, while realist through and through, is also frankly spiritualizing. In the first place, he makes it clear that the body consumed in the eucharist is not strictly identical with Christ’s historical body, and represents Him as saying, ‘You must understand what I have said in a spiritual sense. You are not going to eat this body which you see or drink that blood which those who will crucify me are going to shed.’ The historical body ascended in its integrity to heaven. In any case, the eucharistic flesh is not like ‘flesh rent asunder in a corpse or sold in the meat market.’ This crude idea was characteristic of the Capharnaïtes. Secondly, and more positively, the gift which the eucharist conveys is a gift of life. This is a spiritual gift, and the eating and drinking are spiritual processes. The eucharist body is not the sensible flesh; rather we receive the essence of this flesh, viz. the spirit which quickens it.”

N.B. Augustine’s view of the Lord’s Table is non-sacramental though spiritually real, being the gift of life!

B. The Ecclesiology of Gregory I (A.D. 540–604)

N.B. Between Augustine and Gregory I stands a massive figure and crucial political events which shaped later history, particularly the emergence of the hierarchical primacy of Rome.

1. Political event. Following the battle of Adrianople in A.D. 378, political Rome collapsed under the pressure of Attila and others. The bishops of Rome came to political and ecclesiastical prominence as preservers of the West. Their success brought prestige!
2. Leo I, the Great was the bishop of Rome from 440–61. He pressed the primacy of Rome being conscious of inherited Petrine prerogatives as the head of the church under Augustine’s City of God. He wrote (*Sermons*. 3, 3): “The dispensation of Truth therefore abides, and the blessed Peter persevering in the strength of the Rock, which he has received, has not abandoned the helm of the Church, which he undertook. For he was ordained before the rest in such a way that from his being called the Rock, from his being pronounced the Foundation, from his being constituted the

Doorkeeper of the kingdom of heaven, from his being set as the Umpire to bind and to loose, whose judgments shall retain their validity in heaven, from all these mystical titles we might know the nature of his association with Christ. And still to-day he more fully and effectually performs what is entrusted to him, and carries out every part of his duty and charge in Him and with Him, through Whom he has been glorified. And so if anything is won from the mercy of God by our daily supplications, it is of his work and merits whose power lives and whose authority prevails in his see. For this, dearly-beloved, was gained by that confession, which, inspired in the Apostle's heart by God the Father, transcended all the uncertainty of human opinions, and was endued with the firmness of a rock, which no assaults could shake. For throughout the Church Peter daily says, 'Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God,' and every tongue which confesses the Lord, accepts the instruction his voice conveys. This Faith conquers the devil, and breaks the bonds of his prisoners. It uproots us from the earth and plants us in heaven, and the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it. For with such solidity is it endued by God that the depravity of heretics cannot mar it nor the unbelief of the heathen overcome it."

Next to Augustine Gregory I stands at a major crossroads in the development of Medieval ecclesiology. Klotsch wrote (*History*, 117): "Leaning entirely upon the great Augustine, Gregory transferred the old doctrine of the church into the new ecclesiastical forms which grew out of national readjustments . . . The dwarfed type of Christianity which finds expression in Gregory's writings became the religion of the Middle Ages."

3. Gregory and the nature of the church. Gregory understood the church to be the kingdom of heaven—one, holy, and universal—although it is composed of "wheat and tares." Salvation is limited to the institution where the unity of love exists. Seeberg summarizes Gregory when he wrote (*History*. 2, 26): "The holy universal church proclaims that God cannot, except within it, be truly worshiped, asserting that all who are without its bounds will by no means be saved (*Mor.* xiv. v. 5; *Ep.* xi. 46). Only the church's sacrifice avails; only its members are in the valid bond (*compages*) of love; only is its martyrdom meritorious (*Mor.* xxxv. 8.12; xcii. 26.40). Separation from the church proves lack of love (*Mor.* xviii. 26.41f.). But everything upon which the necessity of the church to salvation depends lies in the hands of the "officers" (rulers, *regentes*, and subjects, *subditi*, *Mor.* xxx. 6.23; iv. 31.61; reg. past. ii. 6; in reg. vi. 2.21). Binding and loosing are prerogatives of the clericals. And 'whether the pastor binds justly or unjustly, nevertheless the pastor's declaration (*sententia*) must be revered by the multitude' (*Ev.* ii. 26.5f.). They watch over the lives of those under them (*subditi*), lead them to repentance, dispense absolution (*Mor.* xi. 14.22; xiii. 18.21; dial. ii. 23), present the

sacrifice, etc. For the accomplishment of her work, the church lays claim to the aid of the unchristianized state. 'The holy church, because she is not sufficient in her own strength, seeks the assistance of that rhinoceros' (Job 39:9), i.e., the prince of this world (*Mor.* xxxi. 5.7)."

- N.B.** Gregory greatly extended the ecclesiastical power and prestige of Rome. He recognized the supremacy of his episcopate, but would not take the title of Father (pope). To the bishop of Constantinople, he wrote (*Dialogues.* 5, 44): "Consider, I pray thee, that by this rash presumption the peace of the whole Church is disturbed, and that it is in contradiction to the grace poured out on all in common; in which grace thou thyself wilt be able to grow so far as thou thyself will determine to do so. And thou wilt become by so much the greater as thou restrainest thyself from the usurpation of proud and foolish titles; and thou wilt advance in proportion as thou are not bent on arrogation by the humiliation of thy brethren. . . . Certainly Peter, the first of the Apostles, was a member of the holy and universal Church; Paul, Andrew, John—what are they but the heads of particular communities? And yet all are members under one Head. And to bind all together in a short phrase, the saints before the Law, the saints under the Law, the saints under grace, all these making up the Lord's body were constituted as members of the Church, and not one of them has ever wished himself to be called 'universal.' . . . Is it not the fact, as your fraternity knows, that the prelates of this Apostolic See, which by the providence of God I serve, had the honor offered them by the vulnerable Council of Chalcedon of being called 'universal'? But yet not one of them has ever wished to be called by such a title, or seized upon this rash name, lest, if in virtue of the rank of the pontificate, he took to himself the glory of singularity, he might seem to have denied it to all his brethren."
4. Gregory and the structure of the church. Gregory was essentially a gifted administrator who organized and gave structured form to the church.
- a) **The Mass**, a sacrifice. Gregory conceived of the Eucharist as a real transubstantiation, though a non-meritorious sacrament, by stressing the actual alteration of the elements through the act of consecration a sacrament of the altar, a continually repeated sacrifice. He wrote (*Dialogues.* 4, 58): "Living in himself immortally and incorruptibly, he is for us again immolated in this mystery of sacred oblation. For there his body is taken, his flesh is broken for the salvation of the people, his blood is poured out, not now into the hands of unbelievers, but into the mouths of believers. Hence we consider what is the nature of this sacrifice for us, which always repeats for our absolution of the passion of the Only-begotten. For who of the believing can have a doubt that in the very hour of the immolation the heavens are opened at the voice of

the priest, that the choirs of angels are present in that mystery of Jesus Christ, that the lowest things are associated with the highest?' . . . Also ev. ii. 37.7. 'The host offered with the tears and benignity of the sacred altar pleads in a peculiar way for our absolution, because He who, arising by His own power, now died no more, through it in His mystery suffers again for us'."

- b) **Purgatory.** Gregory appears to have borrowed from Cyprian and Augustine in advocating the doctrine of the interim state. Commenting on Matthew 12:32 Gregory stated (*Moralia*. 4, 39), "In this sentence it is given to understand that many sins can be remitted in this world but also many in the world to come."
- c) In addition, Gregory introduced **ritualism, chants, into the church and a stress on miracles.** "Wonderful things are to be believed by faith, and not searched by reason; for if reason could show them before our eyes they would no longer be wonderful" (*Moralia*. 6, 15). This has led Gonzalez to conclude (*History*. 2, 72): "In summary, Gregory is an indication of the manner in which, in the midst of a period of political and intellectual decline. Augustine's theology was accommodated to popular faith in two main ways: by mitigating the most extreme aspects of the doctrines of grace and predestination, and by making room for superstitious beliefs and practices."

N.B. With Gregory the shift from "federated" bishops is all but complete; he assumes supremacy or primacy although he rejects the title pope (universal).

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE CHURCH.

Of the seven sacraments that gained currency in the Medieval Church, which was dogmatized at Trent in the sixteenth century, the Eucharist, as a continual sacrifice, was most hated and repudiated by the Reformers. Because of this fact, it would do us favorably to focus upon the origins and development of the Eucharist as "the Mass."

A. The Development of the Eucharist to Origen

Religious scholars indicate that prior to the late third century the Lord's Table was conceived as a dualism, both a real and a symbol sacrament. It did not have a transubstantial connotation, although there was a deep realism.

1. **Irenaeus (ca. A.D. 140–202)** the bishop of Lyons, understood that the Holy Spirit unites the Logos with the elements and makes them something

that they were not before, namely, the body and blood of Christ. Neve wrote (*History*. 1, 160): “This is not meant to be transubstantiation but it is the union of the Logos with the elements that makes these the body and blood of the Lord.” Irenaeus wrote (*Against Heresies*. 4, 18, 5, 6):

“5. Then, again, how can they say that the flesh, which is nourished with the body of the Lord and with His blood, goes to corruption, and does not partake of life? Let them, therefore, either alter their opinion, or cease from offering the things just mentioned. But our opinion is in accordance with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn established our opinion. For we offer to Him His own, announcing consistently the fellowship and union of the flesh and Spirit. For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it received the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly; so also our bodies, when they receive the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to eternity.”

“6. Now we make offering to Him, not as though He stood in need of it, but rendering thanks for His gift, and sanctifying what has been created. For even as God does not need our possessions, so do we need to offer something to God; as Solomon says: ‘He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord.’ For God, who stands in need of nothing, takes our good works to Himself for this purpose, that He may grant us a recompense of His own good things, as our Lord says: ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you. For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked and ye clothed Me; sick and ye visited Me; in prison, and ye came to Me.’ As, therefore, he does not stand in need of these [services], yet does desire that we should render them for our own benefit, lest we be unfruitful; so did the Word give to the people that very precept as to the making of oblations, although He stood in no need of them, that they might learn to serve God; thus it is, therefore, also His will that we, too, should offer a gift at the altar, frequently and without intermission. The altar, then, is in heaven (for towards that place are our prayers and oblations directed); the temple likewise [is there], as John says in the Apocalypse, ‘And the temple of God was opened;’ the tabernacle also; ‘For, behold,’ He says, ‘the tabernacle of God, in which He will dwell with men’.”

N.B. The elements are conceived as real and Christ really present. However, it is for Christians, not as a medium of forgiveness, but thanks for forgiveness. Christ is not re-sacrificed thereby removing venial sins. Luther adopts this view as held by Irenaeus. It is a real sacrifice of praise!

2. **Tertullian (ca. A.D. 155–240/60)**, lawyer of Carthage, advocated a similar realism though at times, manifested as symbolic interpretation (*Against Heresies*, 4, 40): “He likewise when mentioning the cup and making the new testament to be sealed ‘in His blood,’ affirms the reality of His body. For no blood can belong to a body which is not a body of flesh. If any sort of body were presented to our view, which is not one of flesh, not being fleshly, it would not possess blood. Thus, from the evidence of the flesh, we get a proof of the body, and a proof of the flesh from the evidence of the blood. In order, however, that you may discover how anciently wine is used as a figure for blood, turn to Isaiah, who asks, ‘Who is this that cometh from Edom, from Bosor with garments dyed in red, so glorious in His apparel, in the greatness of His might? Why are thy garments red, and thy raiment as His who cometh from the treading of the full wine-press?’ The prophetic Spirit contemplates the Lord as if he were already on His way to His passion, clad in His fleshly nature; and as He was to suffer therein, He represents the bleeding condition of His flesh under the metaphor of garments dyed in red, as if reddened in the treading and crushing process of the winepress, from which the labourers descend reddened with the wine-juice, like men stained in blood. Much more clearly still does the book of Genesis foretell this, when (in the blessing of Judah, out of whose tribe Christ was to come according to the flesh) it even then delineated Christ in the person of that patriarch, saying, ‘He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes’—in His garments and clothes the prophecy pointed out his flesh, and His blood in the wine. Thus did He now consecrate His blood in wine, who then (by the patriarch) used the figure of wine to describe His blood.”

N.B. The Fathers emphasized “realism” in the context of refuting Docetism and Gnosticism. These movements would explain that emphasis!

3. **Origen (ca. A.D. 185–253/54)**, teacher at Alexandria, was the first to set forth a purely symbolic view of the Eucharist. He wrote (*Commentary on Matthew*, 8:5):

“That bread which God the Word declares to be His body is the nutritious word of souls, the word proceeding from God the Word . . . And that drink . . . is the word thirst-quenching and splendidly inebriating the hearts of those who drink it . . . For not that visible bread which He held in His hand, did God the Word call His body, but the word in whose sacrament

(*mysterium*) that bread was to be broken. And not that visible drink did He call His blood, but the word in whose sacrament that drink was to be poured out. For the body or blood of God the Word, what else can it be than the word which nourished and the word which delights the heart?

“The word of Christ, of which the elements are a symbol, is, therefore, the effectual thing in the eucharist..

N.B. The Origenist interpretation of the Christological debate (Apollarianism) was discredited and, unfortunately, in some instances, Origen’s interpretation of other doctrines as well. Hence, there was a departure from “symbolism” to a stronger realism that included the idea of an actual sacrifice.

B. The Development of the Eucharist after Origen

1. In the East

a) **Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. A.D. 315–85)** had a developed transubstantiation, though non-meritorious, view of the Lord’s Table. He considered the Eucharist upon the invocation of the priest, to be the very body and blood, but most uniquely that it was a spiritual sacrifice of propitiation (the latter phrase is most decisive!). He wrote (*Catechetical Lectures*. 22, 3): “3. Wherefore with full assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of Bread is given to thee His Body, and in the figure of Wine His Blood; that thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mayest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are distributed through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, we become partakers of the divine nature.”

Again (*Catechetical Lectures*. 23, 7, 8):

“7. Then having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual Hymns, we beseech the merciful God to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before Him; that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ, and the Wine the Blood of Christ; for whatsoever the Holy Ghost has touched, is surely sanctified and changed.”

“8. Then, after the spiritual sacrifice, the bloodless service, is completed, over that sacrifice propitiation, we entreat God for the common peace of the Churches, for the welfare

of the world; for kings; for soldiers and allies; for the sick; for the afflicted; and, in a word, for all who stand in need of succor we all pray and offer this sacrifice.”

- b) **Gregory of Nyssa (d. 395)** clearly teaches that the elements are transformed and, most particularly, that salvation grace is thereby obtained (*Catecheism*, 37): “Rightly, then, do we believe that now also the bread which is consecrated by the Word of God is changed into the Body of God the Word. For that Body was once, by implication, bread, but has been consecrated by the inhabitation of the Word that tabernacled in the flesh. Therefore, from the same cause as that by which the bread that was transformed in that Body was changed to a Divine potency, a similar result takes place now. For as in that case, too, the grace of the Word used to make holy the Body, the substance of which came of the bread, and in a manner was itself bread, so also in this case the bread, as says the Apostle, ‘is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer;’ not that it advances by the process of eating to the stage of passing into the body of the Word, but it is at once changed into the body by means of the Word, as the Word itself said, ‘This is My Body.’ Seeing, too, that all flesh is nourished by what is moist (for without this combination our earthly part would not continue to live), just as we support by food which is firm and solid the solid part of our body, in like manner we supplement the moist part from the kindred element; and this, when within us, by its faculty of being transmitted, is changed to blood, and especially if through the wine it receives the faculty of being transmuted into heat. Since, then, that God-containing flesh partook for its substance, and support of this particular nourishment also, and since the God who was manifested infused Himself into perishable humanity for this purpose, viz. that by this communion with Deity mankind might at the same time be deified, for this end it is that, by dispensation of His grace, He disseminates Himself in every believer through that flesh, whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending Himself with the bodies of believers, to secure that, by this union with the immortal, man, too may be a sharer in incorruption. He gives these gifts by virtue of the benediction through which He trans-elements the natural.”
- c) **John of Damascus (d. 794)** formulated and finalized the doctrine of transubstantiation for the Eastern Church. John taught, that by virtue of consecration, the elements are transformed into actual body and blood of Christ. Seeberg wrote (*History*. 1, 302): “The eucharist (is conceived) in light of the ‘unbloody mystic God-appearing sacrifice’ as a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ which

only a priest can administer and which is efficacious for the living and the dead.”

2. In the West. Neve wrote (*History*. 1, 164): “It was Augustine who threw back for centuries the development in the West towards transubstantiation. And it was the authority of this church father that has kept transubstantiation from being a unanimously adopted dogma absolutely in the Roman Catholic Church.” Augustine advocated both a “realism” and a “symbolism,” but not a grace-giving regenerative rite. His theological impact was immense in the West.

The church did progressively come to a purely sacramental view at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and is perhaps best expressed by Aquinas. He wrote (*Summa Theological*. 3, 76.1): “I answer that, It is absolutely necessary to confess according to Catholic faith that the entire Christ in this sacrament. Yet we must know that there is something of Christ in this sacrament in a twofold manner: first, as it were, by the power of the sacrament; secondly, from natural concomitance. By the power of the sacrament, there is under the species of this sacrament that into which the pre-existing substance of the bread and wine is changed, as expressed by the words of the form, which are effective in this as in the other sacraments; for instance, by the words—This is My body, or, This is My blood. But from natural concomitance there is also in this sacrament that which is really united with that thing wherein the aforesaid conversion is terminated. For if any two things be really united, then where ever the one is really, there must the other also be: since things really united together are only distinguished by an operation of the mind.”

Aquinas then says that it actualized forgiveness of venial sins (*Summa Theologica*. 3, 79.4): “I answer that, Two things may be considered in this sacrament, to wit, the sacrament itself, and the reality of the sacrament: and it appears from both that this sacrament has the power of forgiving venial sins. For this sacrament is received under the form of nourishing food. Now nourishment from food is requisite for the body to make good the daily waste caused by the action of natural heat. But something is also lost daily of our spirituality from the heat of concupiscence through venial sins, which lessen the fervor of charity, as was shown in the Second Part (II-II, Q. 24, A. 10). And therefore it belongs to this sacrament to forgive venial sins. Hence Ambrose says (*De Sacram.* v) that this daily bread is taken as a remedy against daily infirmity.”

PARENTHESIS: The first council to explicitly affirm the eucharist as a work of supererogation, a duty that obligates God to forgive sin, is the Council of Florence (1455). It affirmed the Eucharist, as well as six other sacraments (baptism, confirmation, marriage, penance, orders, and Extreme Unction).

The Council of Florence (1438–45). In the context of the turmoil caused by John Huss (burned, 1415) the church articulated clearly the meritorious nature of the sacraments. Though Peter Lombard enumerated seven sacraments, this council makes them explicit for the first time (i.e., the number and benefit).

“There are seven sacraments of the New Law, viz. baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and marriage. These are quite different from the sacraments of the Old Law, which did not cause grace, but foreshadowed the grace that was to be bestowed solely through the passion of Christ. Our sacraments, however, not only contain grace, but also confer it on those who receive them worthily. The first five have been ordained for the spiritual perfection of every individual in himself, the last two for the government and increase of the whole Church. Through baptism we are spiritually reborn; through confirmation we grow in grace and are strengthened in faith. Having been regenerated and strengthened, we are sustained by the divine food of the eucharist. But if we become sick in soul through sin, we are healed spiritually through penance, and healed spiritually as well as physically, in proportion as it benefits the soul, through extreme unction. Through orders the Church is governed and grows spiritually, while through marriage it grows physically.

Three elements are involved in the full administration of all these sacraments, viz. things as the matter, words as the form, and the person of the minister performing the sacrament with the intention of doing what the Church does. If any one of these is lacking, the sacrament is not effected. There are three of the sacraments, baptism, confirmation, and orders, which imprint on the soul an indelible character, i.e., a kind of spiritual seal distinct from the others. They are not, therefore, to be received more than once by the same individual. The rest, however, do not imprint a character and may be performed more than once.”

And, finally, the Canons of the Council of Trent are quite explicit of creedal Romanism, the official unalterable position of the church (Canons II, V, and VI):

“Canon II—If any one saith that, in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denieth that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body; and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood—the species only of the bread and wine remaining—which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most aptly calls Transubstantiation: let him be anathema.

Canon V—If any one saith, either that the principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is not the remission of sins, or that other effects do not result therefrom: let him be anathema.

Canon VI—If any one saith, that, in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship, even external of latria; and is, consequently, neither to be venerated with a special festive solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne about in procession, according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of the holy Church; or, is not to be proposed publicly to the people to be adored, and that the adorers thereof are idolaters: let him be anathema.”

IV. CONCLUSION.

The purpose of this lesson has been to trace the unique ecclesiastical characteristics of the late Ancient and Medieval Church. Pivotal in the structure of the Romish church were Augustine, with his concept of unity (based on apostolic succession and the primacy in Rome), although he rejected hierarchicalism and sacrificial sacramentalism, Leo I with a stress on primacy and Gregory I who actualized that primacy and substantively organized the fabric of Romish theology. He embryonically organized the ecclesiology of the church that would be defined and delineated in the Medieval era. The doctrine of non-meritorious transubstantiation received currency in the East and ascendancy in John of Damascus. In the West, progress was slowed by allegiance to Augustine until the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and, finally, at the Council of Trent where a meritorious notion of the real presence was dogmatically taught. Enormous changes in ecclesiology will become evident in the great Reformation which is now before us!!