HISTORY OF ECCLESIOLOGY

A. PATRISTIC PERIOD

1. APOSTOLIC FATHERS

The apostolic fathers represented the church as the people of God chosen for His possession. The church was seen as the true Israel. The relationship of the church to Israel may not have been well understood.

2. SECOND CENTURY

Attention began to be drawn to the external institution of the church. It was to be ruled by bishops who were looked upon as successors to the apostles. The church possessed the true tradition. Catholicity of the church was stressed. Local churches were regarded as parts of the universal church rather than separate units. Local churches were regarded as true churches as long as they were loyal and subject to the episcopate and the catholic church as a whole.

3. EFFECTS OF SECTS

The church deviated from its original purity. Worldliness and corruption increased during this period. This condition gave rise to several sects. These made holiness of its members a mark of the true church. The rise of heresies required a designation of the characteristics of the true church. This fixed attention on the outward manifestation of the church. In combatting these groups the church fathers emphasized episcopal institution of the church, as an external institution, ruled by bishops as direct successors to the apostles and possessing the true tradition. Local church became part of one universal church rather than so many separate units. They were regarded as true churches only as long as they were loyal and subject to the Catholic church as a whole.

a. GNOSTIC

One such group was the Gnostic. Their emphasis was on superior and special knowledge. Participation in redemption or victory over the world was to be gained by secret rites of Gnostic associations. Some disputed if this group was christian in any sense. They felt it was heathen religious thought with a christian colouring.

b. MONTANISM

Another such group was Montanism, around the mid 2nd century. They were named after Montanus who appeared in Phrygia (region of Western Asia Minor) around A.D. 150. They were a reaction against the innovations of Gnosticism. They themselves were characterized by innovations. They exalted special charisma for regular offices and officers. They taught now is the dispensation of the Spirit manifesting Himself
through prophets and prophetesses. They also taught the imminent return of the Lord. They spoke with "prophetic authority" against the laxity and worldliness of the church and insisted on ascetic practices. They were rejected by the first church Synod of Bishops in 160 because of fanaticism.

A third group that rose in the mid 3rd century is Novantianism. Novatius was defeated by Cornelius (a more liberal man) for election as bishop of Rome A.D. 251, so set up a rival congregation. Main point of contention was how to treat those who renounced Christianity under persecution. Novantianists took a rigid line and refused to reinstate any who had renounced in the face of persecution. They didn't share the prophetic claims of the Montanists but strove for the same purity in the church.

The final group we will take a brief look at is Donatism, a North Africa protest movement, standing for a holy church, purity of discipline and unflinching defiance of godless rulers. The time period is the beginning of the 4th century. They believed they were the true church and Catholics were apostate. Only their clergy free from deadly sin, could offer valid sacraments. Jerome later stated that Donatism was the true religion of Africa.

These groups made holiness of its members a mark of the true church. In combating them the church fathers emphasized episcopal institution of the church.

4. Cyprian's View (200 -258 A.D.)

He was the first to develop the doctrine of the Episcopal church. The bishops were chosen by the Lord as successors to the apostles. The church was founded on bishops who were lords of the church. A bishop could decide who belonged to the church, who could be restored to fellowship. In addition he conducted worship as priest of God, and in that capacity offered sacrifice.

Cyprian was the first to teach the priesthood of the clergy by virtue of their sacrificial work. The Lord's Supper was a sacrifice to God offered by the priest. The Bishops constituted a college called the Episcopate which represented the unity of the church, so the unity of the church was based on the unity of the bishops. All bishops were equal, there was no primacy for Rome in his teachings. Rebellion against the bishop was equal to rebellion against God.

Failure to submit to the bishop meant forfeiture of church fellowship and therefore salvation. True members will always obey and remained in the church, outside the visible church there was no salvation. He denied the validity of baptism by heretics. Those outside the church could not induct others into it. Only leaders who received the Spirit (He was received only in the church) could impart the forgiveness of sins.
Cyprian was the first to clearly give the idea of a Catholic church. He was the first to use the term Catholic. All branches of the church bound together by a visible and external unity.

5. Augustine's View of the Church

He followed the same general line as Cyprian. His struggle with the Donatists forced him to think more deeply on the essence of the church. His concept of the church does not harmonize with his concept of sin and grace (predestination).

On the one hand he sees it as the elect of God who have His Spirit, characterized by true love, a communion of the saints. It is important to belong, as a living member, to this church not just in an outward way. It is through the intercession of this community sins are forgiven and gifts of grace are bestowed. The real unity of the church is an invisible one. However it only exists in the Catholic church for there only the spirit works and love dwells.

On the other hand the true church is the catholic church which has apostolic authority, continuing by episcopal succession. It is universal, outside of it there is no salvation. It is the depository of divine grace distributed through the sacraments which are exertions of Divine energy. Sins are forgiven in baptism. The Lord's supper gives spiritual refreshments to the soul. He considered the church a mixed body, in which good and evil members have a place. Although he did acknowledge the two were not in the church in the same sense. They are destined for perfect purity in the future. The Donatists claimed he split the church in two, (mixed the church of the present, with the church of the future). He replied the universal church was pure, but the wicked could not be outwardly excluded but were inwardly. They belonged to the church but were not in it. Evil was a tumour of the body of Christ to be discarded. He had in thought the purity the Donatists sought to realize in actual life.)

His predestinarian views prevented him from going too far in sacramentalism.

B. Middle Ages

1. Emphasis on External Organization

The scholastics received the fairly complete ideas of Cyprian and Augustine, refining some points but there was no new development of ecclesiology. The church became closely knit, highly organized and an absolute monarchy. The seeds for this were present in Cyprian's view of the church, and in one aspect of Augustines view. The other idea of Augustine, that of the elect of God was not entirely ignored but neither did they give it due prominence. The emphasis was the church as an external institution. Two ideas became prominent in this time. The one was the primacy of Rome. The other was the identity of the church with the Kingdom of God.
2. Hugo of St. Victor

He taught there were two powers instituted of God to govern the people. The state was one the church was the other. Both governments were to be monarchial but the church was the higher power because which ministered to salvation, while the state ministered to temporal needs.

The head of the state was the king, or emperor, the head of the church was the pope. There were two classes of people in the church. The clergy who were dedicated to the service of God, were a special class. The other class was people from everywhere or walk of life. By implication if not clear precept these were a lower class subservient to the clergy.

3. Doctrine of Papacy Develops

Step by step the doctrine of the papacy developed until finally the Pope became virtually an absolute monarch. The growth of the doctrine was aided by the development of the thought the Catholic Church was the Kingdom of God on earth, and the Roman bishop was an earthly kingdom.

During the 4th and 5th Century the doctrine of the primacy of Peter develops. The teaching that Peter was the first bishop of Rome also developed at this time and was part of the progress of this doctrine.

This primacy was passed on to his successors in the Imperial city. Successive bishops encouraged this idea. The population accepted this doctrine because the Western Roman Empire had fallen and this gave the promise of the restoration of the ancient glories of Rome.

In 533 A.D. the Byzantine Emperor Justinian recognized the primacy of the Roman Bishop. Gregory the Great refused the title of Universal Bishop, claiming it anti-Christian. He did change the bishopric of Rome into a papal system. He stated "the whole church was committed to the apostle Peter. The Roman bishop inherited his authority, including the dominion of the Keys." He never called himself Pope. His successor Boniface III (607 A.D.) did accept the title, from Emperor Phocas. This brought the acceptance of the primacy of the bishop of Rome in the West. The East however continued to resist the doctrine. This marks the beginning of popery. The church received an external visible head, which quickly developed into an absolute monarch.

Monarch were to be subject to the church. The consuming ambition of Popes like Gregory VII (Hildebrand), Innocent III, and Boniface VII, promoted this idea. It became a fact of life and eventually subjects were encouraged to revolt against an monarch who displeased the Pope.
The Pope was regarded as the eternal and visible head of the church and the absolute monarch. This was aided by the idea the Catholic Church was the kingdom of God upon the earth. Therefore, the Roman bishopric was an earthly kingdom. The life of hermit and monks stood out as the ideal.

4. Results of Teaching the Church is the Kingdom

Everything (home, school, state, art, science, commerce and industry) was brought under the control of the church. All blessings of salvation come to man through the church, especially through the sacraments. This resulted in undue significance being given to church ordinances. Without the use of the ordinances salvation was impossible.

State religion brought insincerity and led to the secularization of the church. On the other hand persecution brought commitment. The church felt required to defend and define its relations to the kingdoms of this world.

The church became more interested in politics than in salvation. Worldliness dominated the church. Because the kingdom of God was superior in character it became natural for Roman pontiffs to demand emperors subjection to the church.

C. During and After the Period of the Reformation

1. Roman Catholic View Formulated

a. Formulated Officially After the Reformation

The view that the church was higher than civil authority was strengthened. High officials wanted recognition of the Papal system but many bishops were episcopal and insisted they derived their authority from Christ not the Pope.

b. Tridentine Catechism Defines the Church

"The body of all the faithful who have lived up to this time on earth, with one invisible head, Christ and one visible head the successor of Peter who occupies the Roman See."

c. 5 Points Concerning Roman Catholic Concept of the Church

i.) Visible Nature Emphasized

The word was incarnate. It did not descend to the souls of men but came in human flesh, and now He carries on His work through visible human medium. The church is the continuation of the incarnation. It is visible because of the incarnation of the Divine Word. Christ began the process choosing the apostles, and gave the primacy to Peter.

The Pope is Peter's successor and the bishops of the other apostles. The Pope possess direct and absolute authority. Bishops have a limited and derived authority.
ii.) Difference Between Teaching and Hearing Church i.e. clergy and laity

Clergy - is whole group of ministry with the Pope as head, called the teaching church.
Laity - is all the faithful who honour authority of lawful pastors, called the hearing church.

Basically to the clergy Roman Catholics ascribe the attributes of the church.

There is only one Catholic, Apostolic, infallible and perpetual church, denying all others the right to exist, therefore it tends to be intolerant of all others.

The laity is totally depend on the teaching church and only has part in the glorious attributes of the church in a derived manner.

iii.) Church is Body and Soul

Soul - those called to faith in Christ and united to Him by supernatural gifts and graces.
Not all the elect is in the soul (not yet baptized), nor are all who are elect in the soul, (some always fall away). Some who are not in the body of the church may be in the soul, such as catechumens with the necessary graces.

Body - Society of those professing true faith, whether just or sinners, it is exterior and visible.

Only baptized belong to the church, but some baptized such as catechumens do not yet belong.

iv.) In Church Grace Through the Clergy

In the church, through the clergy and legitimate offices of the church exclusively, Christ distributes the fullness of grace and blessing, He merited for sinners.

Therefore the church as an institution precedes organism, visible precedes the invisible. It gives the clergy superiority in the church.

v.) Church Exclusive Institute of Salvation (Ark)

The church (the exclusive institute of Salvation) has 3 functions

a) To propagate the faith by the ministry of the word.
b) To effect sanctification by sacraments
c) To govern believers according to ecclesiastical law under Christ. Only the clergy can do this.

Under Christ the Church is:

a) Only mediator of Salvation
b) The depository and distribution of grace for all men.
c) The only ark of safety for the entire human race.

The order of salvation becomes, the church leads men to the Word and to Christ, instead of God by the Word leads men to the church.

2. Lutherans

a. Rejected Infallible Church

They rejected the idea of an infallible and hierarchial church, special priesthood and magical sacraments. The Lutherans returned to the truth of the priesthood of all believers.

b. Spiritual Communion of Believers

They returned to the teaching that the church is the spiritual communion of believers in Christ. It was established by Christ and sustained by Him as its head.

c. Church in 2 Aspects

Luther was the first to make the distinction of visible and invisible church, pointing out these were not two churches but two aspects of the same church. This truth denied the church was essentially an external society, with a visible head. They believed the essence of the church was found in the invisible church. That is it was found in faith, communion with Christ, and in participation of the blessings of salvation through the Holy Spirit. The invisible church becomes visible by the pure administration of the Word and the sacraments, rather than the rule of bishops, cardinals or the headship of the Pope.

It was more important to them to be a part of the invisible church, but it is closely connected with membership in the visible church.

d. Church Gathered by the Holy Spirit

According to Lutheran doctrine Christ gathers His church by the Holy Spirit. The chosen means of this gathering is by the Word and the sacraments. Therefore the outward ecclesiastical society is necessary.

e. Church is Baptized Believers
The church consists of those believers who are baptized and belong to a priest or bishop in a city, whole land or entire world.

f. External Church Contains Variety of Believers

The external visible church will always contain hypocritical and wicked members who are not part of the spiritual (invisible) church. The Augsburg Confession states the visible church, is the congregation of the saints in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.

3. Anabaptist

a. Extreme Reaction
The anabaptists acted in extreme against the Roman Catholic doctrine externalizing the church.

Rome based the church organization of the Old Testament. Anabaptists on the other hand denied the identity of the Old Testament Church with the New Testament. The insisted on a church of believers only. They, many times scorned the visible church and means of grace because of their insistence on the spirituality and holiness of the church. Children have no place in the New Testament Church since they could not exercise or profess faith.

b. Visible Church Rejected

Many Anabaptists completely rejected the thought of the visible church and visible means of grace, by the sacraments. They insisted on the spirituality and holiness of the church.

c. Absolute Separation

Anabaptists demanded absolute separation of church and state. Some went so far as to declare a Christian could not be a magistrate, swear and oath or take part in war.

4. Reformed View
a. Similar to the Lutherans

The Reformed view is fundamentally the same as that of the Lutherans. They differ on some points, but agree that the real essence of the church is a spiritual entity, that is the invisible church. They did not seek the unity and holiness of the church in the ordinances of the church, such as offices, word, and sacraments as the Lutherans did, but in the communion of believers.

b. Holy Spirit not Limited

They held the Holy Spirit was not bound by ordinary means of grace. He could work when, where, and how He pleases. Luther had limited the Holy Spirit to work through the Word and the sacraments.

c. Invisible Church has 3 Senses

i. There is the Universal Church, which no one can see in all places at all times, therefore it is invisible.
ii. The elect will not be complete and visible until Christ's return.
iii. We cannot distinguish between true and false believers. The true church is invisible.

d. Marks of a True Church

The marks of a true church were the true administration of the Word, sacraments and faithful administration of church discipline.

e. Subjection

Calvin and other Reformed theologians fostered the idea of subjection of the church to the state.

f. Church Government

The Reformers established a form of church government with greater ecclesiastical independence and power than the Lutheran church.

Both Lutherans and Reformed maintained proper connection between visible and invisible church. Others did not, some sacrificed the visible for the invisible and vice versa.

5. Socinian and Arminian (7th Century)

a. Socinian

Socinians spoke of the invisible church but forgot about it in actual life. They conceived of Christianity as an acceptable doctrine.
b. Arminians

The Arminians were rationalistic in spirit, some even questioned the full deity of Jesus. They denied the church was explicitly invisible, communion of the saints making it primarily a visible society.

They robbed the church of its independence by yielding the right of discipline to the State. The only right they retained for the church was the right to preach the gospel and admonish its members.

6. Ladist

Jean de Lubadie founded an evangelical congregation at Middleburg in 1666.

a. Believers Only

They with the Pietists believed that only believers could belong to the true church. They disregarded the visible church. They were indifferent to the institutional church with its mixture of good and evil. The sought edification in clandestine religious meetings.

b. Pietists

The pietists insisted strongly on practical religion. The combated worldliness. They viewed the world itself as sin. Every awakened christian must avoid it lest he jeopardize his soul.

c. View of Institutional Church

They were indifferent toward the institutional church, its functions and sacraments. They gathered in private meetings.

d. Real Church Increasing

They saw the real church as ever increasing in such circles as the communion of those who shared special illumination of the Holy Spirit and agreed outwardly in their profession and life.

7. Methodists

a. Agreement with Others
Some circles of the Methodists agreed with the Ladists and Pietists. (Pietists reacted against rationalism, but did not contribute to the doctrine of the church). In some cases the Methodists cast reflection on the existing churches. Others adapted themselves to the life of these churches.

b. Led to Other Groups

Consistent applications of their principals led to groups like the Salvation Army. Converts were not a church, but a standing army of Jesus. These were to be distinguished from the world by a distinctive uniform and a special mode of life.

D. 18th Century and Beyond

1. Roman Catholics

a. Absolute Monarchy

During this period they move further towards the absolute monarchy. The move was more pronounced after the Reformation, in affirming the authority of the Pope.

b. Papal Infallibility

The Jesuits and Uhramontane party insisted on the doctrine of papal infallibility. The Gallicum party founded by Bossuet opposed this for 2 centuries.

In 1791, 1500 English catholics signed a statement denying papal infallibility as a dogma of the Roman Catholic church.

In 1870 the opposition of the Gallicum part was overcome and the Vatican Council in 1870 declared papal infallibility ex cathedra. That is when he is speaking as pastor and teacher of all christians. When he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals, as a doctrine held by the universal church, then through Divine Assistance promised him in the person of Peter, by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he enjoys fully the infallibility which the Divine Redeemer wished His church to have in defining doctrine touching faith and morals.

Therefore papal definitions are unchangeable. This and other issues have divided the Roman Catholic church, (Germans breaking off and forming their own church and monastic orders with often bitter rivalries, Dr.Codelinger an historian, as leader, and Dr. Reinkins as its first bishop), shows the unity of the church of Rome is a corporate uniformity rather than the unity of spirit and purpose.

2. Rationalism
a. Indifference

Those caught up in the rationalists movement were indifferent in regard to matters of faith. They downgraded the church to be on a par with human societies.

b. Denial

They denied that Christ intended to found a church in the received sense of the word.

3. Other Views

a. Schleiermacher

He taught the church was essentially a Christian community possessed by the same Spirit. He had little use for the distinction between visible and the invisible church. The essence of the church is Christian fellowship.

He also believed the more the Spirit penetrates the mass of believers the fewer divisions there will be and the more they will lose their importance.

b. Ritschl

He believed the Kingdom was the community of God's people acting from a motive of love. The church was the same community that met for worship. This he substituted for the distinction between the visible and invisible church.

He felt the name church came to mean the external organization in one function of worship. This function enables believers to become better acquainted with one another.

This view lead to the modern liberal idea of the church as a social centre, a human institution rather than the planting of God.

The history of the church composes the whole record of God's supernatural communication with men, His dealings with His people since the fall. God's ecclesia - called out ones.

SEE APPENDIX A

Tertullian became a Monatist in 201 A.D.
There were two women, Prisca and Maximilla who declared themselves as prophets. The felt they were the mouth piece of the Paraclete (Greek title in John for the Holy
Spirit). At times God spoke through them in the first person. Maximilla predicted there
would be no prophecy after her. Her predictions were not fulfilled.
Based on John’s gospel they taught the last and highest stage or revelation had been
reached.
They believed the age of the Paraclete had come. He spoke through Montanus now
that the end of the world was at hand.
Revelations given through Montanus mainly concerned those things in which scriptures
were not sufficiently ascetic. It seems most essential element in Montanism was
legalistic asceticism.
(asceticism = austere, severely abstinent, sever self discipline)
They had Holy Spirit led communities at Pepuza and Tymian named Jerusalem. The
scalded the unspiritual church for rejecting the Paraclete.
MAIN TEACHINGS
This is the last period of revelation and it opened with the coming of the Paraclete, thus
the present age is one of spiritual gifts especially prophecy. Montanus and his co-
labourers were
regarded as the last of the prophets bringing new revelations. Prophecy created discord
at a time when bishops were working towards united stable church, conforming to the
tradition of the apostles.
Montanists were orthodox and accepted the rule of faith. They strongly emphasized the
end of the world and because of this they insisted on strict moral requirements
(celibacy or at most single marriage, fasting, rigid moral discipline, food eaten dry).
They exalted martyrdom, absolutely forbade flight from persecution. Believed they
atoned for mortal sin by martyrdom. They spoke of gross sins committed after baptism
as being unpardonable.
They exalted the special charisma for regular offices and officers.
Montanus apparently stressed much outward adornment; dyed hair, stained eye lids,
ornaments. He played with tablets and dice, took usury and taught Christ commanded
the apostles to remain in Jerusalem 12 years, quoting Revelation. He claimed John
raised the dead at Ephesus.
Montanism embarrased the church. They held orthodox positions as opposed to
Gnostic speculations. It emphasized charismatic gifts especially prophecy), necessity of
keeping oneself unsotted from the world, nearness of the end, all these with a
scriptural emphasis. they relished persecution, demanded extreme self-denial (see
above).
They were rejected by the first church Synod of Bishops in 160 (the first Synod of
Bishops in history) because of fanaticism and the claim to higher revelation than
contained in the New Testament. They were fanatics, but not heretics, so the reason for
excommunication is uncertain.
Perhaps the claim of inspiration threatened the emerging new cannon of the New
Testament. They scolded the church for being unspiritual and refusing their view of the
Holy Spirit. They had excesses but they stood for the conviction that the Holy spirit was
as active in contemporary church as at the beginning. They believed greater not less
manifestations were promised for the last days.
Tertullian accuses the Bishop of Rome, Victor of accepting then rejecting Monatus.
Eusebius quoting Apolimarisi of Hieropoles
1. Montanus and Maximilla (woman prophetess) committed suicide although Apollinarus is uncertain of this.
2. States she (Maximilla) prophesied wars and political convulsions which were not fulfilled. Maximilla predicted "after me there will be no prophecy but the end."

Sect crushed by Emperor Justus 527 -565 A. D.

Novatianism was a small puritanical group that split from the church of Rome. Novatius after have been defeated by Cornelius divided members into schismatic parties. He went door to door seeking followers. He was accused of impiety and blasphemy. He also set aside water baptism, overturned faith and confession.

Novatius was a gifted theologian. One of the earliest Latin authors among the early christians. Several of his works survive, the most important dealing with the Trinity. He did not claim the prophetic powers that Montanus did but strove for purity of the church.

He was unsocial and savage in character (caused commotion in meetings when he was challenged). He denied aspirations to the episcopate, then sudden appeared as a bishop. He had gained it by trickery. He got 3 bishops in remote areas drunk, then had them ordain him. In time of persecution he refused to offer assistance to brethren in need. He claimed he no longer wished to be a presbyter for he now followed a different philosophy.

He used communion to force men to swear allegiance to himself. He held each man's hand refusing to let him go until he had (sworn allegiance). After partaking of the bread the person was to say "I will no longer return to Cornelius".

Novatius claimed the church had no power to forgive those who denied the faith during Diocletian persecutions, then sought re-admission into the church. Since the bishops re-admitted these and feeling a general laxity in discipline, they rebaptized those who sought to join them.

The personal character of Novatius left much to be desired. He went about ordaining bishops and deacons without authority. He defrauded widows, withheld money belonging to the church and kicked his wife causing her to have a miscarriage. When his father died of hunger in the streets, he would not bury him. One of his followers, Nicastraties accused him of fraud, stealing from the funds entrusted to him, including the church funds for widows and orphans. He is believed to have been martyred during the persecutions of Emperor Valerian about 258 A.D.

MAIN TEACHING
He was theologically orthodox. He soon built a network of small congregations, calling themselves Cathari (pure ones), to distinguish themselves from those considered polluted because of their lenient attitude toward sinners.

Novatianists required re-baptism as joining the only true church. They refused to participate in communion with people married more than one, even if they had been widowed. They rejected the possibility of penance for any major sin after baptism. They held the church had no power to forgive those who had denied the faith during the Decian persecution and sought re-admission into the church. Novatianists were treated as heretics until the edict granted by Constantine in A.D. 326. After that time they were allowed the right to own buildings and have burial places, but were still harassed by officious church men.

Nestorius attacked them in 428 A.D. at Constantinople but was restrained by the Emperor.

429 A.D. Celestine bishop of Rome deprived them of their building.

Donatus was bishop of Carthage from 313 to about 355 A.D. A bishop of Carthage named Caecilian was rejected (313 A.D) because he had been ordained by Felix of Apthungi. Felix had betrayed or handed over the Scriptures to the authorities in recent persecutions. This was viewed as apostasy, a rival was elected who was succeeded by Donatus in 313. Donatus was excommunicated in 314 A.D. He was represented to be the same as Novatus during the Diocletian persecutions.

Donatists believed they constituted the true church and Catholics were apostate. Only their clergy free from deadly sin could offer valid sacraments. Their church was the only valid catholic church. They insisted on rigorous ecclesiastical discipline and pure membership and rejected unworthy ministers.

Constantine sided with Felix and Caecilain attempting to force Donantists back into the church. Persecution and martyrdom strengthened their convictions. Further oppression under Constantine (347 -348) provoked the question, "What does the Emperor have to do with the church?" Yet they were the first to ask constantine to intervene in their dispute with Caecilian. Later they complained about it. This laid the precedent for government interference in church matters. In the East once the doctrine the Emperor was above the church was established it was never effectively challenged.

The persecution depleted their numbers but they were tolerated under Julian in the 360's. While protesting state interference in religious matters they courted the Emperor's favour.
A group of fringe Donatists called Circumcellians were wandering, violent warriors of Christ. Righting wrongs and intimidating wavering Donatists and Catholic clergy. They were devoted to martyrdom.

Donatists had become the dominate church in North Africa. It declined after Donatus, under his successor, Parmenian. They sided with revolts against Roman rule, suffering when they were put down.

Augustine effectively argued against them, with exhaustive historical and theological counter arguments.

Axerelius of Carthage organized effective action against them and used legal sanctions. Under Vandal rule (429 -533) Donatists and Catholics suffered together, this probably encouraged mutual acceptance.

Donatism flourished again, diverging less from Catholic body and survived in North Africa until the 7th century Moors invasion submerged it. It's repression in Augustine's time permanently weakened the church so it was unable to withstand the challenge.

Cyprian was a disciple of Tertullian. He was a rich and cultured man of Carthage, probably destined for high government office. He testified, "The second birth made me a new man by means of the spirit breathed from heaven". He dedicated himself to poverty, celibacy, and the Bible with such distinction that within 2 years he was made bishop of Carthage. He taught: He can no longer have God for his father who has not the church for his mother.

There were heretical groups in the world excluded by the churches as being church of Christ. This was agreed upon by the churches holding friendly communion with each other with out formal ties. Cyprian formed a general principle or doctrine of the visible and external unity of the church. He was the first to bring it out with clearness and exactness and contributed to the progress of error and corruption in the church and the growth of the papacy. he himself was an excellent man and righteous. he formulated this while standing for re-baptizing heretics upon repentance and returning to the church.

He was a church man, clear headed administrator but a simple theologian. His writings deal with practical church matters. he called regular church councils of bishops to put in practise his conviction that the church depended for its unity on their harmony and equality.
He tried to integrate Spirit dominated puritanism of Tertullian with the church of bishops. His pastoral zeal was shown by his assistance to people during the terrible plague of 252-254 A.D. His influence was immense and largely harmful to the Western church.

Cyprian' views were set amongst controversy. He was a man of noble character, who seems to have taken his views of divine truth more purely from scripture than many of the early writers. He did have errors such as sins subsequent to salvation being atoned for by penitence, almsgiving and good works. He was zealous to teach obedience to ecclesiastical authority. His teaching on this subject elevated the standard of episcopal domination. It must be remembered that the bishop of that day was very different from modern times. His view on the baptism as being absolutely necessary tended to corrupt the doctrine and pave the way for superstition in the sacraments.

Cyprian was involved in the controversy related to Novatian and his separation from the church over the re-admittance of those who failed in times of persecution. It seems that before the middle of the third century many joined the church who were not true believers in Jesus. Under the persecution of Emperor Decius these apostatized from the faith. When persecution ceased these sought readmission into the church. Cyprian and the church in general were inclined to readmit them upon their profession of penitence and submitting to penitential discipline. The number of applicants were so many, the church established the office of confessor. These were people who had suffered persecution and remained faithful. Those who had lapsed applied to them for readmission into the church without submitting to public penance. The system was open to abuse and pride was a factor among the confessors. Cyprian opposed this severely censoring the confessors for their abuse of the respect that was accorded them. He seems also to have given great stress to martyrs.

Cyprian took an active part in the baptism controversy. The churches of Asia generally held that baptism by heretics was void so those coming from that background need to be re-baptized. Rome and the Western churches recognized baptism by heretics as a valid baptism. Cyprian took the side of the Asian churches. The general position of both sides was that there should be not re-baptism. The controversy was whether a heretics baptism was in fact a baptism. The heretical groups of his day, were mostly ones that could not be considered churches of Christ. Many denied very foundation truths such as Divinity of Christ. Their baptism was justly rejected. Cyprian's view did not generally prevail in the church and soon lost ground.

Cyprian's stress on re-baptism led to some ideas about the unity and catholicity of the church. These laid down unscriptural and dangerous foundations. Originally these ideas were used to oppose the Bishop of Rome but were later used by Rome to construct and defend her hierarchial and exclusive system. During his time the churches throughout the world as far as they were able related to each other on friendly terms. The were warranted from regarding as heretics those not united with them, refusing to recognize them as churches of Christ. Cyprian began to lay down a general principle or doctrine. It was the first time it had been done with clearness or distinction. The doctrine was the idea of the catholic (universal) church. In his view it comprised of all
the true branches of the church of Christ and bound together by a visible and external unity. This was a contribution to the progress of error and corruption of the church and led to the growth of the Papacy. He is regarded as the author of the idea of the necessity of the whole church and all its branches, being bound together in an external and visible unity, the very foundation of the Papal system.

Cyprian did not hold to one visible head, possessing authority or jurisdiction over all its branches. Neither Cyprian nor anyone else at that time regarded the Bishop of Rome as the sovereign ruler of the church. Cyprian clearly and unmistakably taught that the visible unity of the church was embodied in the episcopate, (combination of bishops). Each bishop was independent in his area of responsibility, equal in power and authority to anyone of the other bishops. Together they were equal colleagues in the government of the church. He would never have sanctioned the modern pretensions of the Papal See.

Some of his statements were obscure. He spoke of primacy of rank or order though not of power or jurisdiction given to Peter over the other apostles as a symbol of the unity Christ imposed upon the church. He did not however ascribe any jurisdiction to Peter over the other apostles.

His view was that the church is now the Kingdom of God, whereas earlier Church Fathers had describe the Kingdom of God as the result of and goal of the churches development. Augustine believed the saints constitute the Kingdom, although he also applies the term to church leaders collectively. The kingdom is identical to the pious and holy, but it is also identical to the episcopally organized church.

The contrast between the city of God and the city of the world is between Christianity and heathenism, good and evil, saints and wicked, and within the church between spiritual and carnal, elect and non-elect. He never represents the evil world as equivalent to the State, but since the church was seen as the city of God, he may have thought of as evil as being embodied in the State.

Augustines idea that the external society of the faithful and the elect are the one and the same church raises many questions. Who are in the Church? - all the predestinate including those still unconverted.
- all believers including those who turn back
- all who take part in the sacraments

Which is the true church? - Externally baptized, or the spiritual elect or both, since there is no salvation outside either.

How is the church of the elect related to the church of the faithful? They are not identical, some of the faithful are not of the elect and are lost.

What about elect who never join the church?
If the one visible catholic church, is the true body of Christ, then are not the Donatists right in contending wicked persons and heretics cannot be tolerated.
If the church is founded on predestinating grace of God, how can they who have once received the grace of regeneration and forgiveness of sins in baptism, lose it again and forfeit salvation? If God if is the only absolute source of all grace, and dispenses it sovereigntly how can it be proper to ascribe this power to the visible church with its sacraments and make salvation dependant upon membership in that church?

14th General council of Chalcedon (451) Leo I emphasized the primacy of Peter over the apostles and apostolic succession. he claimed the right to give commands to the other bishops.

The notion the Catholic Church was the Kingdom of God on earth was greatly encouraged by two forgeries. The "Donation of Constantine" and the "Forged Decretals" both pushed on the people in the 9th century to prove the authority claimed by the Pope was conferred upon and exercised by their predecessors as far back as the 3rd century. This view led to the logical conclusion that all christian duties and activities must take the form of services rendered to the church. Natural and social life took on a one sided church character. Everything outside the churches control was secular and it's renunciation became a work of special piety.

The Council of Trent (1545 -1563) did not give a proper definition of the church. The reason was the highest officials of the church desired recognition of the papal system, a great number of bishops were episcopal in their beliefs. These were not ready to acknowledge all ecclesiastical authority belonged to the Pope. they rejected the idea they derived their authority from him. They held the bishops derived their authority directly from Christ. The clash of views made it wise to refrain from attempting to formulate the definition of the church.

Cardinal Bellarmine (1542 -1621) gave the clearest statement (of that day of the Roman concept of the church. "the company of all who are bound together by profession of the same christian faith," (eliminates unbelievers) "and by use of the same sacraments," (eliminates catechumens and excommunicated), " and are under the rule of legitimate pastors and principally Christ's Vicar on earth the Roman Pontiff." (eliminates schismatics or all other non R.C. christian groups)

Christ founded the church and guaranteed it against error, therefore it is infallible. Because of the indwelling Spirit it is impossible to err in faith or morals but conformed to word or tradition, so the faithful are obliged to believe what she believes, profess what she teaches and submit to her decisions." (Students Catholic Doctrine pg 89 )
Infallibility is collective in all the bishops united with the Pope. Together they constitute the teaching authority of the church. When differences of faith arise they must adhere to the church and submit to the decisions of the Pope as supreme pastor and teacher concerning faith and morals when he speaks ex cathedra.

Where there is no valid ministry there is no church. Protestants have no valid ministry therefore are not a true church. Catholics define the church as: Congregation of all the faithful, professing the same faith, partaking of the same sacraments, governed by lawful pastors under one visible head the vicar of Christ.

Catholic church is the one true church, it is incumbent upon men to enter her fold, believe all she proposes for our belief, make use of the means of grace she holds out to us, humbly submit to her authority.

Catholics have a 3 fold church - all one body
   i Church militant - on earth
   ii Church triumphant - in heaven
   iii Church suffering - in purgatory

Luther moved away from the external emphasis on the church and moved into the true internal nature of the church. He reacted against the Roman Catholic idea of the domination of the church over the State, and went to the other extreme and virtually made the church subject to the State in everything except the preaching of the Word. However he failed to be completely freed from the sacramental bondage of the Roman Catholic Church.

Their influence is seen in the Puritans. It was the Puritans who had such influence in forming the US constitution, thus the insistence on the separation of church and state. Our country had a much stronger Catholic influence therefore we have no such tradition.

1580 A.D. founder of unitarianism. He organized a Unitarian community in Poland. He was expelled from Poland 1658 A.D.

Arminius 1560 A.D. - 1609 A.D. He opposed Calvinism and was condemned by the Synod of Dort, 10 years after his death.
Pietist was the name given to protestant groups and individuals in Germany, who without leaving their churches declared the chief business of religion was the practice of piety, rather than correct doctrine. Some Pietist were:

Count Zinzendorf - a leader of the Moravians and under him it became a pietist movement.

John Wesley - Methodists were considered the most influential pietist movement. - The name later became attached to protestant groups who stressed personal christian experience and aroused religious awakenings in the church. - Concern for individual conversions and salvation caused great zeal for personal conversation. - endeavoured to separated the christians from the world by causing them to abstain from drinking, dancing, card playing and theatre.

It must then be accepted by the Roman Catholic Church universally.

Roman Catholics glory in their unity as opposed to the many churches of Protestantism, but it is more apparent than real.
The church is divided on papal infallibility, has many monastic orders with rivalries and bitter disputes, show they stand further apart than protestant denominations. There are the Reform, Los-von-Rom, and modernistic movements, showing it is a corporate uniformity rather than a unity of spirit and purpose.

A theologian, he issued his "Christian Dogma" in 1823.

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NOVANTIANISM

SEE APPENDIX B SEE APPENDIX Cc.

d. DONATISM

SEE APPENDIX B SEE APPENDIX C
SEE APPENDIX D