



THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

Lesson 41

January 1, 2020

(Express gratitude to Mike Wilson for filling in for me last week).

Mike informed me that you made to the “Summary of Part Two”. With that, let’s begin reading pages 123-124.

SUMMARY OF PART TWO

- **We witnessed that through the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists, the church became corrupt.**
- **The apostles teachings and writings revealed as much.**
- **There were some Christians who were faithful unto Christ, but many were persecuted.**
- **The church went through many changes ranging from its organization to its appearance.**
- **The solution that addressed any controversy in the church could be found in the sacred scriptures.**

(Review all bullets).

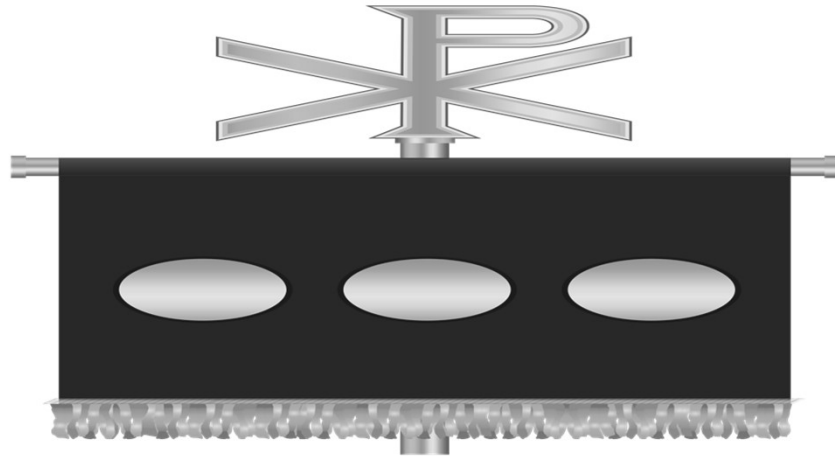
INCREASE OF ERROR 313-787A.D.

- **The Influence of Constantine**
 - Was educated in the court of Diocletian 292 A.D.
 - His father, Constantius was governor of Britain, Gaul and Spain. He favored Christianity. Helena his wife was a convert.
 - Roman empire was ruled by four leaders. After the death of Constantius, Constantine took his place and emerged as soul emperor of the West.
 - Constantine attempted to unify the West, while on his way to Rome he claimed to see a vision "By this conquer."
 - By 323, Constantine became the sole emperor of Rome.
 - Prior to becoming the emperor, when he did battle against Rome, he fought with 40,000 soldiers against one hundred and seventy thousand soldiers, and he won!
 - The sign of the cross took on significance with Constantine.

(Post the slide and read this section. There are no questions, just information).

(After reading the last bullet regarding the cross, go to next slide showing the cross and flag).

CONSTANTINE AND THE CROSS



The Chi Rho are the first two Greek letters of the word Christ. This was adopted as an official insignia by the Roman Emperor Constantine. This flag was carried into battles by the Roman army under Constantine. There were also coins or currency with the symbol on it as well.

SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH

- **He authorized elaborate church buildings to be constructed with funds from the government and ministers be paid (Consider the Edict of Milan pg.97-98).**
- **What example do we have of him taking “a hand in all internal affairs” regarding religious matters?**
- **Who were Crispus and Fausta, and what do we know about them?**
- **What did Constantine issue and edict against?**
- **What was Constantine's view of working on Sunday?**

(Read bullet #1).

Bullet #2

He involved himself in the debate between Donatus and Caecilian in an attempt to keep unity.

Bullet #3

Crispus was Constantine's son, and Fausta was his wife. There are many rumors as to why he had them executed. For the record, Crispus was not Fausta's son. They were actually pretty close in age. Some of the rumors surrounding them was sexual immorality between them. It has been said the Crispus rejected her advances at one point, she became so angry that she had him executed. This sounds similar to Joseph's story with Potiphar's wife (Gen.39). Eventually, Constantine discovered her evil deeds and drowned her in tub of water.

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

- The city of Nicaea hosted a council of bishops in 325 A.D. to resolve matters of disputed doctrine, namely the nature of Christ as it relates to God.
- Ironically, Constantine called himself the bishop of bishops, albeit he was not even converted to Christ as he served as the chairman.
- It mattered not to Constantine what the Bible taught, that which mattered to him was unity be achieved.
- When persecution ended, the church fought over opinions.

(Read bottom of page 129-130 top paragraph).

(Read bullets and make comments).

“**Arianism** is a nontrinitarian^[1] Christological doctrine^{[1][2][3]} which asserts the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who was begotten by God the Father at a point in time,^[1] a creature distinct from the Father and is therefore subordinate to him, but the Son is also God (i.e. God the Son).^{[1][4]} Arian teachings were first attributed to Arius^{[1][3]} (c. AD 256–336), a Christian presbyter in Alexandria of Egypt. The term "Arian" is derived from the name Arius; and like "Christian", it was not a self-chosen designation but bestowed by hostile opponents—and never accepted by those on whom it had been imposed.^[5] The nature of Arius's teaching and his supporters were opposed to the theological views held by Homoousian Christians, regarding the nature of the Trinity and the nature of Christ. The Arian concept of Christ is based on the belief that the Son of God did not always exist but was begotten within time by God the Father.^{[1][4]}

Agenda and procedure

The agenda of the synod included:

The Arian question regarding the relationship between God the Father and the Son (not only in his incarnate form as Jesus, but also in his nature before the creation of the world); i.e., are the Father and Son one in divine purpose only or also one in being?

The date of celebration of Pascha/Easter

The Meletian schism

Various matters of church discipline, which resulted in twenty canons

Organizational structure of the Church: focused on the ordering of the episcopacy
Dignity standards for the clergy: issues of ordination at all levels and of suitability of behavior and background for clergy

Reconciliation of the lapsed: establishing norms for public repentance and penance

Readmission to the Church of heretics and schismatics: including issues of when reordination and/or rebaptism were to be required

Liturgical practice: including the place of deacons, and the practice of standing at prayer during liturgy^[38]

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

- **According to our author, where had the earlier teachers failed?**
- **Alexander of Alexandria taught on “The Unity of the Trinity”. Who disagreed with his teaching and why?**
- **What view did Arias hold?**
- **Arias was labeled “a false teacher” and had to leave Alexandria. Who took him in?**

(Read pages 130 to 131 paragraphs 2-4).

(Read slide and answer questions).

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

- **Who wrote about the history of the church covering a span of 322 to 427?**
- **What purpose did Arias give for being persecuted?**
- **Because the disagreement was so sharp, Constantine ordered all the bishops assemble to resolve the matter of Christ's nature. How many bishops attended the meeting?**

(Begin reading on pg 131 "Theodoret, bishop...") and read to page 132 paragraph ending with "... of all doubtful topic.").

(Read bullets).

Although our author doesn't mention it, the meeting lasted from May 20 – June 19. Almost one month exactly to the day.

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

- **How many bishops disagreed with the final creed that was created?**
- **Who were the two men who were “outstanding spokesmen” against Arius?**
- **As a result of the councils decision, what happened to Arias?**
- **How many bishops continued with Arias?**
- **Who did Eusebius (the church historian) favor?**

(Read page 132 begin with paragraph “It is interesting... AND END WITH ... variation of change on page 133 top paragraph).

(Read bullets).