



THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

Lesson 45

1/29/20

(Welcome students).

(Introduce the book we've been studying).

THUS FAR...

- We have seen the church stray off course in various ways.
 - Organization
 - Original Sin
 - Baptism
 - Religious Holidays
- Rome vs. Constantinople

(Read and explain bullets).

This brings us to...

THE BATTLE OF THE BISHOPS

- **It was becoming obvious that Rome and Constantinople were opponents.**
- **According to our author, page 141, there were some contributing factors that made Rome excel: Prestige, Reputation, and the Mother church for mission work.**
- **According to our author, Leo I, a Roman bishop, soon to be viewed as Rome's first pope, was a successor of Peter, possessing the same powers Christ gave to Peter.**

Begin with 140 "The Battle of the Bishops" and read to page 142 top paragraph
"....exaltation of the Eastern bishop."

By this point and time, it was becoming apparent that Rome and Constantinople were rivals for power and strength. When Constantine set his eyes on Constantinople and left Rome, it would eventually create the perfect storm for division within the church.

However, Rome was the first place of allegiance to most church goers. She had everything going for her according to bullet #2. She garnered favor by most modern day emperors as well. This is witnessed in Valentinian's edict of 445 AD.

For all practical purposes, Leo I, is viewed by non Catholics as the first formal pope. This Leo I is not to be confused with emperor Leo I who reigned from 457-474.

Any comments or thoughts up to this point? Let's move on

THE BATTLE OF THE BISHOPS

- **Some emperors allegiance tilted towards Constantinople such as Justinian. Rome refuted it.**
- **Rome began to play the “Apostolic Succession” card to gain favor as being legitimate.**
- **When invaders opposed territories, Rome was looked to for guidance and support.**
- **By the time Gregory I was pope in 590-604, universal pope was official and the priesthood was established. It no longer resembled the first century church.**

Begin on page 142 “It looked...” and read to the end page 144.

Things to point out:

There’s a lot of moving pieces and parts to this story. You have public opinion seeming to favor Rome. You have emperors like Justinian casting his vote towards the East, Constantinople.

We then see Rome’s response when they play the apostolic card. This was a fancy way of saying, “our heritage and pedigree is purer than yours.” We can trace our origin back to Paul and Peter (NOT)!

Rome gained favor and support by way of showing strength against barbarian invasions.

By the time we come to the end of sixth century, the NT church was unrecognizable.

Food for Thought:

What is your estimation of the Christianity from the 1st century until 604 A.D.? How would you describe it?

How would you have reacted to Constantine’s involvement into the church? Don’t forget about the church being persecuted prior to his reign.

By the time we come to the sixth century, the church strongly resembled what we call “Catholicism” today. What have we studied thus far that would aid you in redirecting folks back to NT Christianity?

Let’s move on and now look at chapter 11, The Ecumenical Councils.

THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

- **What does the term ecumenical mean?**
- **How many ecumenical councils were there from 325 to 869?**
- **Why do Protestants reject all of the ecumenical councils that occurred after 451?**
- **Why were councils seldom held as time move forward?**

(Read page 145).

Ecumenical means universal.

There were a total 8.

The Protestants reject the councils beyond 451 because of the Pope's influence.

Let's look at the councils (NS).

The Councils were seldom held because the Pope was elevated to a position of ultimate authority and power.

COUNCIL OF NICAEA, 325

- **Constantine called this council on June 19, 325.**
- **Arius, a popular preacher from Alexandria argued that Christ was not eternal and His subsistence wasn't the same as God.**
- **Athanasius opposed Arius and eventually had him excommunicated.**
- **The topic of when Easter should be celebrated was resolved in this meeting.**
- **After Constantine's death, the Arians resurfaced and gained control, but lost it over time due to a lack of integrity.**

THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, 381

- **Emperor Theodosius convoked this council on May, 381**
- **There first decision was to validate the bishops decrees at Nicaea.**
- **A second major topic was the nature of the Holy Spirit. Who taught that it was subordinate to God and Christ? What did they conclude?**
- **A third topic was once again, the nature of Jesus regarding His humanity and divinity.**
- **Which bishop philosophized that Christ was both divine and human, but was condemned for minimizing the manhood of Christ?**

COUNCIL OF EPHESUS, 431

- **The divinity of Christ was still unresolved in the minds of some.**
- **In order to elevate Christ, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was called “the Mother of God.”**
- **Who denied the divine nature was truly united with the body of Jesus?**
- **What conclusion did the council reach?**
- **What was the unintended consequence of them calling Mary the Mother of God?**