

Session One - Councils, Creeds and Catechisms

I. Early Christian Church Councils

A. The first Council of the Christian Church took place in Jerusalem and included all of Christ's Apostles (Acts 15:1-29). Also in attendance were Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Barsabbas and others. This Jerusalem Council is not counted in the ecumenical councils of the Church which began after the Roman persecutions ended, and of which seven are considered binding by both the eastern and western churches.

B. The first seven ecumenical Councils (and the Council of Jerusalem) were responsible for fighting off various heresies which threatened to divide and destroy the Church and their decisions gave us the theological tenants most Christians believe about God and Christ today.

C. Most of these councils were held in the eastern part of the empire, i.e., Jerusalem, Nicaea, Ephesus, Constantinople, Chalcedon, etc., and the attendees, though both eastern and western, were predominantly from churches in those areas. Dates are important here - note the shift to Roman Rule - also an important factor in the Schism

II. 49 A.D. Council of Jerusalem

A. Exempted all pagan converts from the laws of Judaism.

B. Since the Church and all the rest of the House of Israel were bound for an exile to Babylon that would last almost 2000 years, this decision had the net effect of exempting all Christians from the laws of the Torah and from virtually all other Jewish restrictions and traditions.

III. First Ecumenical Council - 325 A.D. Council of Nicaea

A. Held in Bithynia in Asia Minor and overseen by the Roman Emperor Constantine proclaimed the true manhood and true divinity of Jesus Christ and decreed the doctrine of the Trinity.

B. It was from this Council that the Nicene Creed begins to be formulated.

C. The Council was held to counter the heresy of Arius who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Second Ecumenical Council -381 A.D. First Council of Constantinople

- A. The belief in the Holy Spirit was added to the Nicene Creed.
- B. Condemned Apollinarian's heresy that Jesus lacked a soul

V. Third Ecumenical Council -431 A.D. Council of Ephesus

- A. Was held to counter the heresy of Nestorius and deposed Nestorius as Patriarch of Constantinople.
- B. This Council reaffirmed the Church's doctrine of incarnation and its position that the Word of God was made man.
- C. Where Nestorius taught that in Jesus there were two separate persons, the Council decreed that in Jesus there was one person with two natures.
- D. Nestorius also taught that Mary was the mother of Christ, but not the mother of God. The Council rejected this idea and upheld the Church's position that Mary was, indeed, the mother of God. (Theotokos)

VI. Fourth Ecumenical Council -451 A.D. Council of Chalcedon

- A. Was held to counter the Monophysite doctrines (which argued against the two natures of Christ) as well as to reaffirm the Church's position in opposing the Nestorians.
- B. Chalcedon also clarified the Church's position with respect to its doctrine concerning the true nature of Christ. This Council defined the final elements in the Trinitarian formula by declaring that Christ existed in two natures, without mixture or change, without division or separation, but that His two natures were held in union in one person without losing the separate distinction of either nature.
- C. Held in Bythnia in Asia Minor, the Council of Chalcedon was attended by 600 mostly eastern bishops.

* **HOMOIOUSIOS** - the first non-Biblical word used to describe theologically God or God's action - a source of a huge fight.

The Second Council of Constantinople

VII. Fifth Ecumenical Council -553 A.D. Second Council of Constantinople

A. Was held to counter the continuing heresy of the Nestorians

VIII. Sixth Ecumenical Council -680 A.D. Third Council of Constantinople

A. Defense against the continuing Monotheists

B. Affirms that Jesus has both a human Will and a Divine Will

*** NOTE THE CONTINUATION OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SAME ISSUES - NOTHING HAS CHANGED - THE EVEIL ONE CONTINUES TO WORM HIS WAY INTO THE HEARTS OF BELIEVERS**

IX. Seventh Ecumenical Council -787 A.D. Second Council of Nicaea

A. Called to heal breach beginning to widen between East and West

B. Vindicated the veneration of images (Icons)

*** FILIOQUE**

In 869 A.D. a fourth Council of Constantinople was held to try to avert a schism which had developed between the western and eastern churches over a western decision to place the phrase 'and from the son' into the Nicene Creed regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Greeks felt that the Holy Spirit came only from the Father. The Western Church, bowing to centuries of pressure, finally inserted into the creed the Church's official position that the Holy Spirit came to us through both the Father and the Son. The term used was called 'Filioque'.

The ensuing controversy split the western and eastern churches into two opposing camps, where they have remained ever since.

X. What is an Ecumenical Council?

A. Western Church one called by the Pope

B. Eastern Church one called for by the Patriarchs of Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem

XI. History of Catechisms

A. The Didache

1. Discovered in 1883 - mentioned early in Church writings
2. Dated 65 A.D. - 80 A.D.
3. St. Paul in Corinthians notes early instructions on Baptism and Holy Eucharist

B. The Creeds from the Councils

C. Gregory the Great - Bible, Missal and Calendar

D. Council of Trent - Response to the Continental Reformation

E. Baltimore Catechism - An example of teaching Catechisms

F. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992) - A. Response to the modern turn of the church after Vatican II

XII. Typical Structure of Catechisms

A. The Apostles and or Nicene Creed

B. The Sacraments

C. The Decalogue

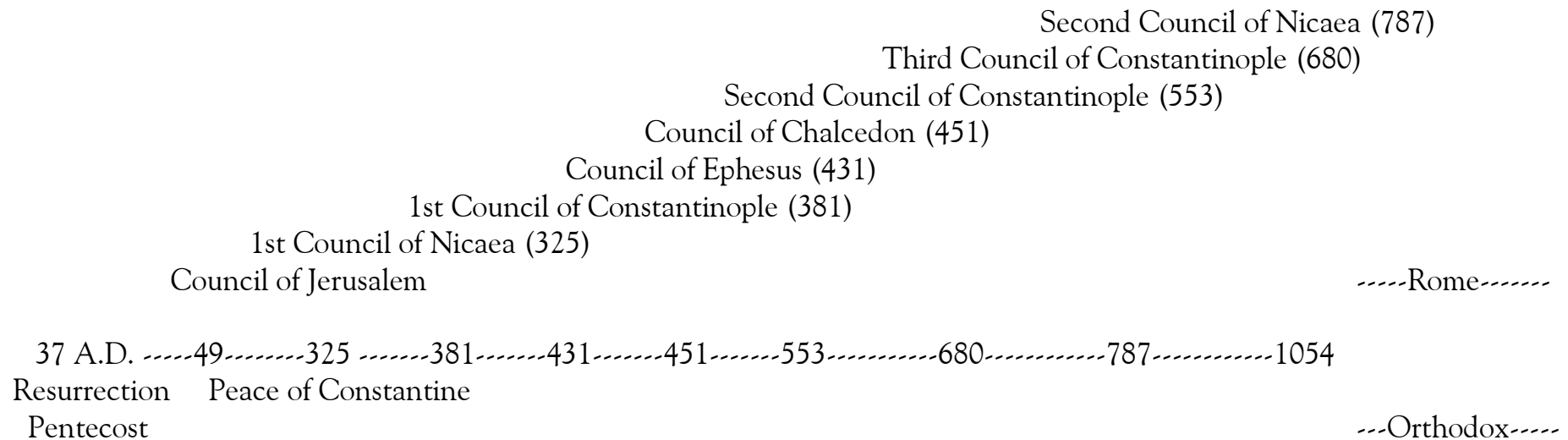
D. Prayer, especially The Lord's Prayer.

XIII. The truth of Timelines

A. Conecting the dots of History

B. One Church?

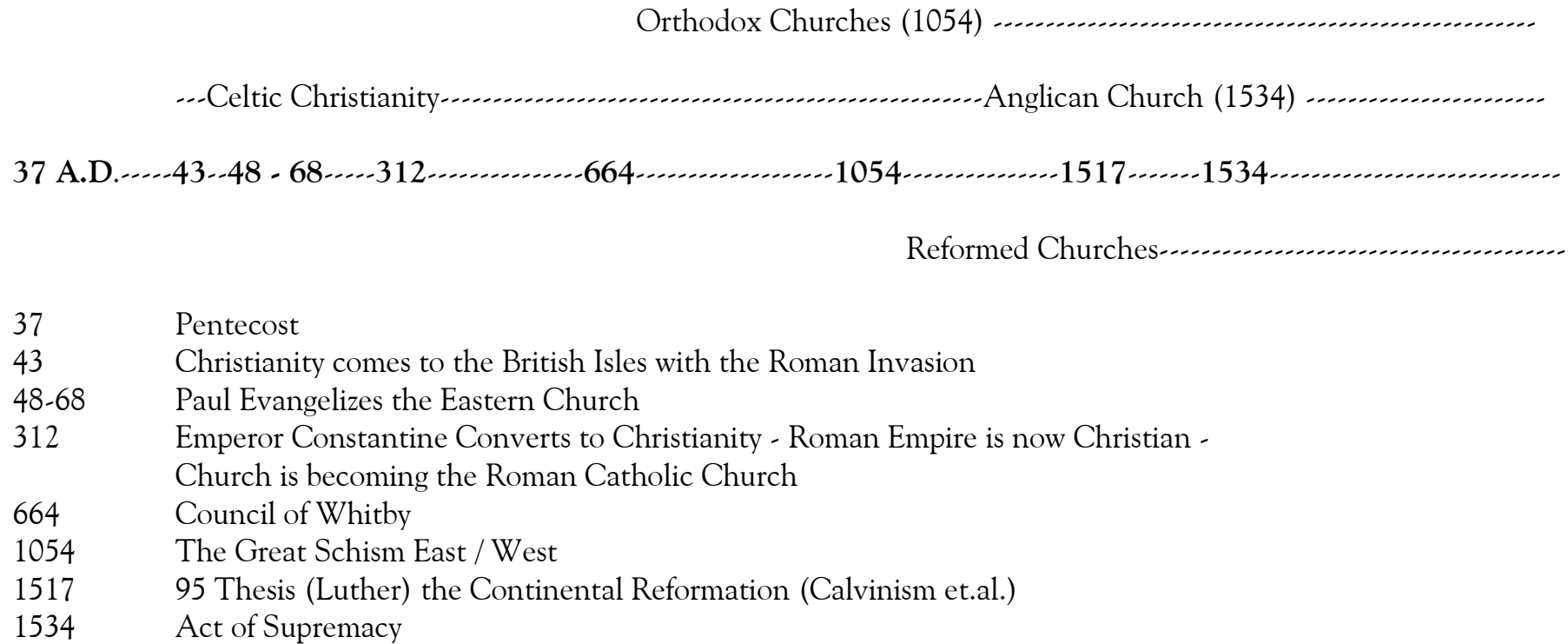
History Timeline the Ecumenical Councils



Rome and the Orthodox Split

49 A.D.	Jerusalem	- Christians did not have to be Jews first
325	I Nicaea	- The Divinity of Christ
381	1 Constantinople	- The Divinity of the Holy Ghost
431	Ephesus	- Christ the Incarnate Word - Mary as the Mother of God
451	Chalcedon	- Christ has both a Divine and human nature
553	2nd Council of Constantinople	- Christology and Trinitarian Theology
680	3rd Council of Constantinople	- Jesus had a divine will and a human will
787	2nd Nicaea	- Vindicates the veneration of images

History Timeline II



History Timeline III

The Separation of the Church in England
 The Years of Royal and Religious War
 Norman Conquest - Monastic Renewal
 The Movement of Structured Organization
 The great Edict of Pope Gregory
 Celtic Monastic Movement
 Celtic Christianity

43 A.D. ---303-----596----664----1066-----1086----1170 ----1207---1209---1213----1215---1381----1509---1517--1521--1534

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|---------|--|
| 43 A.D. | - Rome invades British Isles - Christianity comes to Britain - Roman Rule remains until 383 A.D. |
| 303 | - First English Martyr Alban |
| 596 | - St Augustine of Canterbury sent to England by Pope Gregory- Division by Diocese not Monastery |
| 664 | - The Council of Whitby - Gregorian Calendar and Missal |
| 1066 | - Norman Conquest and the renewal of the Monastic Orders |
| 1086 | - Domesday Book - an accounting of the wealth of the kingdom -civil and religious |
| 1170 | - Archbishop Beckett murdered for apposing the Kings rule over the church |
| 1207 | - Innocent III appoints Archbishop Stephen Langton - King refuses |
| 1208 | - England under Interdict |
| 1209 | - Cambridge University Founded - Innocent excommunicates King John |
| 1213 | - John submits to Rome and is reinstated King by Innocent |
| 1215 | - The Magna Carta Signed |
| 1381 | - Wycliffe denies true presence in the Holy Eucharist - dismissed from Oxford |
| 1509 | - Henry VIII becomes King |
| 1517 | - Luther's 95 Thesis - the Reformation begins |
| 1521 | - Henry Becomes Defender of the Faith for his support of the faith against Luther |
| 1534 | - The Act of Supremacy - Henry becomes head of the church in England |

Nicene Creed with Scriptural Notes

I believe (Romans 8:8-10) in one God (Deuteronomy 6:4) the Father (Matthew 6:9) Almighty, (Exodus 6:3) Maker of heaven and earth, (Genesis 1:1) And of all things visible and invisible: (Colossians 1:15-16)

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, (Acts 11:17) the only-begotten (John 1:18) Son of God; (Matthew 14:33) Begotten of his Father before all worlds, (John 1:2) God of God, Light of Light, (Psalm 27:1,John:12) Very God of very God; (John 17:1-5) Begotten, not made; (John 1:18) Being of one substance with the Father; (John 10:30) By whom all things were made: (Hebrews 1:1-2) Who for us men and for our salvation (I Timothy 2:4,5) came down from heaven, (John 6:33,35) And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, (Luke 1:35) And was made man: (John 1:14) And was crucified also for us (Mark 15:25) under Pontius Pilate;(John 19:6) He suffered (Mark 8:31) and was buried: (Luke 23:53) And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: (Luke 24:1) And ascended into heaven, (Luke 24:51) And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: (Mark 16:19) And he shall come again, with glory, (Matthew 24:27) to judge both the quick and the dead; (acts 10:42, II Timothy 4:1) Whose kingdom shall have no end. (II Peter 1:11)

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, (John 14:26) The Lord, (Acts 5:3,4) and Giver of Life, (Genesis 1:2) Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; (John 15:26) Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; (Matthew 3:16,17) Who spake by the Prophets: (I Samuel 19:20) And I believe One (Matthew 16:18) Holy (I Peter 2:5,9) Catholic (Mark 16:15) and Apostolic Church: (Acts 2:42) I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: (Ephesians 4:5) And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: (John 11:24) And the Life of the world to come. (Mark 10:29,30)

Amen. (Psalm 106:48)

