

Hello. /This is our second lecture on “Church History.” /In our last lecture, we learned about the age in which the Apostles, Jesus’ disciples, lived.

Chapter 2: The Post-Apostolic Age

I. Introduction

/1. The period is from 100 to 313 AD. /We call this age the Post-Apostolic Age or the Ante-Nicene Age.

/2. Persecution and martyrdom happened in this period.

/The persecution that began with Emperor Nero lasted for 250 years. /Famous martyrs include Ignatius, /Polycarp, and Cyprianus.

/3. We call the church of this time the Catholic Church.

/This expression is different from today’s Roman Catholic Church. /It refers to the holy assembly that is mentioned in the Apostles’ Creed. /The word “Catholic” means “involving all” or “universal.” /The meaning was given to unite the church to be victorious under persecution. /It was in this situation and time that the Apostles’ Creed was written.

/4. The development of ideas.

/Evangelism flourished even amidst all kinds of persecution. /This proves that Christianity is a religion that has life. /During the time, Greek philosophy, Eastern religions, and Jewish legalism began to stir up ideological confusion. /Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism, among other philosophies, created a mixed Christian religion.

II. The Spread of Christianity

/1. Christianity spread even further during this age. The expansion of the church was centered on the following place. /The gospel spread from Jerusalem to Syria, Antioch, and even Asia Minor. /Afterwards, the church expanded to reach the region of Greece. /It also entered Egypt and Alexandria, and finally, the Roman Empire.

/2. Factors contributing to the expansion of the church. /First, there was the work of the Holy Spirit. /Next, believers’ evangelism efforts played a role. Kings and people of nobility became members of the church as well. /People did charity and volunteer work for the poor, they persevered in persecution, and their refined moral lifestyles played a large role in the growth of the church.

III. Persecution of the Church

/1. Several factors caused the persecution of the church.

/a. There was misunderstanding. /People thought that Christians were immoral people who gathered in caves and committed lewd acts. They also thought Christians ate their children during communion. /Some argued that the gods were angry because of the Christians, that the Christians brought upon disaster. /However, these were the reasons that were given on the surface, but the real reason is as follows.

/b. People of the Roman Empire considered the nation to be the greatest thing, but Christians put God at the center of their lives. /For these various reasons, the Roman Empire came up with various policies to oppose Christianity. /First, the Roman Empire forced people to worship the emperor.

/It believed that Christian worship was an act of political defiance against Rome. /Because Christians did not serve in the military, persecution of Christians was more severe.

/2. Methods of persecution

/First, they gave people scriptures and sacred objects and had them destroy them. /Rome also kicked Christians out of society and even had them killed.

/The Roman Empire used documents to oppose Christian doctrine. /They also used appeasement, saying they will forgive Christians of their past sins if they deny Christianity.

/3. The results of persecution.

/Because of persecution, believers came to know Jesus as their Savior with more certainty. /Also, the canon was completed. /Additionally, Christians worked harder to make God's word known to the world.

IV. The Ten Persecutions

/I will briefly talk about the ten major persecutions of Christianity.

/1. Emperor Nero's Persecution (54-68 AD). /Emperor Nero blamed the Christians for setting fire to Rome. Paul was martyred during this period.

/2. Emperor Domitian's Persecution (81-96 AD). /Hearing that Christians were establishing a new nation within the Roman Empire, Domitian persecuted Christians. /As a consequence, believers built catacombs and lived in the underground caves.

/3. Emperor Trajan's Persecution (97-117 AD). /Emperor Trajan persecuted Christians because he thought Christianity was a secret organization that was causing social disharmony. /Ignatius was killed by beasts to be martyred.

/4. Emperor Hadrian's Persecution (117-138 AD). /He persecuted Christians for no other reason than that he hated Christianity.

/5. Emperor Marcus Aurelius' Persecution (161-180 AD). /Marcus Aurelius held Christianity in contempt because of plagues and famine. /Justinus and Polycarp were martyred during this time.

/6. Emperor Septimius Severus' Persecution (205-211 AD). /He persecuted Christians because he believed Christianity was outrageous. /Irenaeus and Origen's father were martyred during this time.

/7. Emperor Maximinus' Persecution (235-238 AD). /There was a great earthquake at this time. /The Christians were blamed for this. /Two bishops of the time were sent as slaves to a gold mine.

/8. Emperor Dicus' Persecution (240-251 AD). /They believed that people became poor because of Christianity. /Origen received a severe sentence, and Cyprianus ran away.

/9. Emperor Valerian's Persecution (253-260 AD). /He persecuted Christians because he thought they were the cause of disease and famine. /Cyprianus, who had fled, returned and was martyred.

/10. Emperor Diocletian's Persecution (284-305 AD). /Galerius, who was Caesar at the time, slandered the emperor. /The church of Nicomedia was destroyed. /Saint Gadarius died in prison.

V. Christianity received Ideological Attacks

/1. Lucianus of Samosada persecuted the church. /He was a man who lived from 120 to 200 AD. /He belonged to the Epicurean school. /In order to criticize Christianity's lifestyle and customs, he wrote "The Death of Peregrini."

/2. Celsus was against Christianity. /This person belonged to the Platon school and leaned towards the Epicurean school as well. He rejected Christianity with his writing "The True Word." /Origen wrote to argue against Celsus. He wrote a book called "Against Celsus."

/3. The Birth of Neo-Platonism. /Neo-Platonism formed because people feared that Rome's traditional religions would disappear because of Christianity. /By adding religious elements to traditional philosophy, they succeeded in creating a mysterious philosophy. /Important scholars include Plotinus and Porphyrius.

/(1) Let me tell you about Plotinus (208-269). /He tried to harmonize God who is within him and God who is in the universe. /We call this pantheism.

/He argued that in the process of returning to God, people reach a state of virtue, eros, and ecstasy. He said that when this happens, the person becomes one with God.

/(2) I will tell you about Porphyrius. (He died in 304). /Porphyrius supported polytheism. /He wrote 15 books attacking Christianity. /He claimed in his books that the New Testament and Old Testament are different from each other.

/He said that the Apostles had conflicts and strife among themselves. /He also argued that Jesus is a liar. /However, because Neo-Platonism tried to replace religion as a philosophy, it failed

VI. The Fathers

/1. Who are the Fathers? /The Fathers are the immediate disciples of the Apostles. /They were people who carried the legitimacy of the church. /They played an important role in the history of developing doctrine.

/2. There are four types of Fathers. First, the Apostolic Fathers. /Second, the Apologists. /Third, the Greek Fathers. /Fourth, the Latin Fathers. Let me first talk about the Apostolic Fathers.

VII. The Apostolic Fathers

/The Apostolic Fathers were the immediate disciples of Jesus' disciples. /Let us take a look at several representative figures.

/1. Clement of Rome. /Clement was a famous elder of Rome who lived during the end of the first century. /His writings include the "First Epistle to the Corinthians." /One fourth of this letter was quotes from the Old Testament. /The letter contains commands, such as do not envy, be humble, and obey the law. /The letter also talks about his certainty about the resurrection and teachings about loving one another.

/2. Ignatius. /Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch. /He became food for beasts as he was martyred. /Ignatius advocated the unity of the church, the authority of the Bishop, and the glory of martyrdom. /He wrote seven epistles while being transported to Rome.

/3. Polycarp. /Polycarp was the Bishop of the church of Smyrna. /He was a disciple of John the Apostle and a friend of Ignatius. /Polycarp was martyred in the year 155. /He left his work "Epistle to the Philipppians."

/4. Papias. /Papias was Bishop of Bereugia, and he was martyred in the year 150. /His major work of writing is "Explanation of the Lord's Discourses," which is written in five books. /His writings do not remain, but they are quoted in "Church History," which was written by the church historian Eusebius. /Papias also left behind a piece on the Millennial Kingdom.

/The four aforementioned figures are very well known people. However, we do not know much about the following Apostolic Fathers, for we only have their works of writing.

/5. Hermas the Shepherd. /People believe it is the Hermas who is mentioned in Romans 16:14. /It is similar to the future literature of Pilgrim's Progress.

/Apart from that, we have "The Gospel of Barnabas," "Epistle to Diognetus," and "Didache," or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."

VIII. The Theology of the Fathers

/1. Christology. /Christology is doctrine concerning Jesus. /The Fathers believed in Jesus' human nature, but they emphasized his divinity more.

/Today, orthodox Christianity emphasizes both Jesus' divinity and human nature, but the Fathers' theology stressed Jesus' divinity even more. /Clement of Rome said that Christ is the majestic scepter of God.

/He said, "Christ is God, he is our God." / "He was with the Father before creation, and then he was made known to us." /This is identical to what the Apostle John believes. /We too have this faith.

/Hermas believed in Christ's preexistence. /It is the idea that says that Christ existed before eternity.

/2. Doctrine of the Trinity. /Back then, they did not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity as we know of today, but they did have a faint idea of doctrine of the Trinity. /Ignatius referred to "believers" as building materials. /He compared the "cross" to an engine that lifts up. He compared the "Holy Spirit" to rope.

/Clement said, "The apostles were filled with full certainty by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the word of God, with the assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went out announcing the advent of the kingdom of God."

/3. Doctrine of Atonement. /Doctrine of atonement is about soteriology, which is about how people are saved. / "The Lord shed his blood to show us the way of life." / "Jesus died to give us the grace of the forgiveness of sins through repentance, /and the Almighty God makes righteous those who believe." /They believed that salvation is received through faith.

/4. The Millennial Kingdom. /They believed that the second coming was something that was to happen in the near future. /They explained that Christ would be king on this earth for a thousand years.

IX. The Apologists

/The Apologists defended Christianity against those who rejected it.

/1. Justinus. /Justinus was born in the year 125 and lived until the year 166. /He became a believer after the following happened. /He was walking along the beach when an old person appeared and gave him the Old Testament book, saying that this book was fulfilled by Jesus. Justinus became a believer after this incident. /He wrote "The First Apology," "The Second Apology," and "Dialogue with Trypho."

/2. Aristides. /Aristides was an Athenian. /He defended Christianity by writing to Emperor Hadrian, who was opposed to Christianity. /He explained the characteristics of the true God, asking the question, "What is the real God like?" He also attacked pagan mythology in his writing.

/3. Quadratus. /Quadratus submitted a defense to Emperor Hadrian, /saying that a man who was healed by Jesus is still alive. /This was around the year 126.

/4. Tatianus (110-172). /Tatianus was Justinus' disciple. /He lived in Rome. /He wrote "Address to the Greeks" and "Diatessaron." "Diatessaron" means "biography."

/5. Athenagoras. /Athenagoras was born in Athens, and he wrote "A Plea for Christians" and "Resurrection of the Dead."

/6. Melito. /Melito was Bishop of the church of Sade in Asia Minor, and he criticized Greek mythology.

X. The Greek Fathers

/The Greek Fathers were not Greek people, but they were people divided into the theologians of Asia Minor and the Alexandria School.

/1. The theologians of Asia Minor

/ (1) Irenaeus. /Irenaeus was born some time between the year 115 and 119. /He was Bishop of Gaul. /The region of Gaul is the region of modern-day France. /He was a gentle, prominent, and well-learned scholar.

/Irenaeus evangelized Lyon, France, and almost everyone living there became a believer. /Let us look at Irenaeus' theology. /He honored the traditions of the Apostles and respected the standards of faith.

/He said about God, "Of His own free will, He created all things, since He is the only God." /He also said, "The universe that God created is good."

/He said the following about Jesus Christ: "God expresses himself through Christ, who is the Logos." /He said that Christ forever dwells with the Father. /He said, "I do not know how Christ was born." /Irenaeus had the following idea about the Holy Spirit: / "The Holy Spirit is included with God the Father and the Son."

/ (2) Hippolytus. /Hippolytus was Irenaeus' disciple, a well-learned man. /In 1842, French scholar Villemain found Hippolytus book "Against all Heresies" in a monastery on the Assos Mountain of Turkey.

/2. The Alexandria School

/ (1) Pantaenus. /Pantaenus received an education in Stoic philosophy. /He went to India and preached the gospel of God.

/ (2) Flavius Clemens. /Flavius Clemens is not the Clemens of Rome. /He studied under Pantaenus and taught theology for twelve years, from the year 189. /In the year 202 when Emperor Septimius Severus persecuted the church, he fled to Antioch. /He served in the church by writing and preaching. /He died in Alexandria in 213, /and he left behind his works "Exhortation to the Greeks," / "Paedagogue," and the "Stromata."

/(3) Origen. /Origen is also called Origenes. /He was born in Alexandria in 185.
/Alexandria is a port city in Egypt. /At the age of 18, he succeeded Clemens to become
theology professor. /Due to a surgery conducted during his youth, he was a eunuch.

/In the year 254, he died in prison. /Let us summarize his theology. /Origen tried to
interpret and harmonize the truth of Christianity with philosophy. /He said that the Father
and the Son are one, saying that they are of the same nature, the same character.

/He believed in the preexistence of souls. /We traditionally believe in traducianism.
/Regarding the afterlife, Origen believed in purgatory. /He said hell is a finite place.
/However, this is not a biblical belief.

/Influenced by Plato, his view of the universe said there is an idea world and a physical
world. /His view of revelation made him interpret the Bible metaphorically. /Today's
orthodox belief is that the Bible is to be interpreted literally and historically, not
metaphorically. /Concerning salvation, he believed in Universalism.

<Approximately 8 lines deleted>

/This concludes the second lecture on "Church History." /Thank you.