

Church History, Lesson 14

(This lesson is based on The Story of Christianity by Justo Gonzalez.)

Monastic and Papal Reform...

- All of the corruption in the Papacy that we talked about last week made people long for reformation and renewal!
- Starting in 909 reform among the monasteries began with a movement known as the “Cluniac Reforms”.
 - In 909 Duke William III of Aquitaine started a small monastery. He called on an old friend to lead the community. He also deeded land directly to the possession of the pope for the monastery. This meant that the local lords and bishops could not interfere with the workings of the monastery.
- The papacy came to Leo IX in 1049. He also promoted reform. His two primary goals was to end the buying and selling of high positions in the church and to promote / require clerical celibacy. His successor, Gregory VII combined these two goals into a “two pronged” program. However, this worked against him. The wealthy and powerful benefited from the buying and selling of high religious office, and many sincere and lowly priests still had wives at this point in Catholic history. They became allies in working against Leo’s reforms.
- Eventually, this conflict led to an open dispute between Pope Gregory VII and the emperor, Henry IV. Henry deposed and replaced the Bishop of Milan. He did this because of a riot by extremists who were trying to inforce clerical celibacy. Gregory excommunicated Henry and condemned him to hell if he didn’t repent. Eventually, Henry spent 3 days begging for an audience with the pope before he was allowed to enter the papal castle and receive pardon. Once the pardon was granted Henry returned home to a civil war, which was the pope’s fault because he supported those in rebellion against the emperor. Eventually Henry won the civil war, and then marched on Rome. Gregory had few allies at this point, except for the Normans in southern Italy, but he had excommunicated them also!
- Henry V took his father’s place in 1106. The conflict over the emperor’s power to appoint bishops continued. At one point, the emperor took the pope prisoner along with several cardinals. He eventually returned them to Rome and the pope officially crowned Henry V as emperor.
- Eventually, mostly because a new pope, Calixtus II, was a relative of the current emperor, the conflict came to an end at the Concordat of Worms in 1122. Bishops would no longer be appointed by the emperor. But they would be elected in the presence of the emperor or his representatives. In this way, the buying and selling of high religious offices mostly came to an end and clerical celibacy became universal in the Catholic Church.
- All of this served to increase the power of the papacy.

The Crusades...

- In 1095 Pope Urban II declared the first crusade. The hope was to relieve Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire of Muslim pressures (and thus unite the Western and Eastern Church) as well as retake Jerusalem from the Muslims.
- The crusaders besieged Antioch before attacking Jerusalem. There was a weird episode where a seer received a vision that the spear which pierced Jesus’ side was buried in Antioch. He actually led

them to a spot and when they dug they found a spear! This made the soldiers feel that they had the approval of God, consequently they fought fanatically and were victorious!

- These armies seemed to be proud of the fact that didn't violate the Turkish women who were left behind by the Turkish army but instead only ran them through with spears! ☹️

- This Crusade besieged Jerusalem starting in June / July of 1099. In July, the Crusaders received news that

■ Cities
 ■ Main routes followed by first crusade
 ~ River



a large Arab army was approaching. They begged God to bless their invasion, they even marched around the city barefooted as a sign of penitence.

- When the attack began, the resistance was very strong. However a single knight was able to gain a position on the walls of Jerusalem and he helped others over. As the breach grew, all of the resistance melted away. All of the defenders of the city were killed. The Crusaders also killed many civilians, raped women, and bashed many babies against the walls of the city!
- Of course, there were many crusades that followed. The initial success of the first Crusade was mostly because the Muslims were divided. No other Crusade was as successful, except the "Crusade" to retake the regions of Spain controlled by Muslims.
- The second Crusade involved children "because God values innocence". Most of these children starved or were taken as slaves along the way.
- **Consequences of the Crusades –**
 - Because of the emphasis on the Holy Land, European Christians gave more thought and devotional emphasis to the life of Christ.
 - Also, Europe was flooded with "relics" such as pieces of the "True Cross", bones of patriarchs, teeth of Biblical figures and so forth from the Holy Land.
 - The Crusades also gave rise to "orders", such as the Templars, that weren't monastic but instead were made up of warriors who had sworn allegiance to their leaders. Long after the Crusades some of these orders continued to hold great power.

The Zenith of Medieval Catholicism...

- **The "Mendicant Orders" (begging monks)**
 - Because the Crusades reopened trade routes, commerce began to compete with land as the means of wealth. This led to the rise of cities, which required a restructuring of traditional "parish ministry". Monasticism had always adapted easily to new challenges. Now, "mendicant monks" lived among the people in the cities.
 - Franciscan Monasticism – absolute poverty

- Dominican Monasticism – didn't withdraw from the people, tried to convert Muslims and Jews, refuted heretics, and emphasized study.
- **Growing power of the Papacy** – Innocent III (1161 – 1216) became the most powerful pope in history. He claimed that the relationship between religious and civil authority was like the sun and the moon -- like the moon receives its light from the sun, the civil authorities receive their power from the religious authority (the pope)!
 - Innocent constantly intervened in politics.
 - His interventions indirectly led to the signing of the Magna Carta in England.
 - Innocent also called the "Fourth Lateran Council" which codified several things:
 - The doctrine of transubstantiation
 - Condemned reform movements like the Waldensians, the Albigensians, and others
 - Ended the forming of any new monastic orders
 - Required papal approval for introducing any new relics
 - Required all Jews and Muslims in Europe to wear clothing that distinguished them from Christians
 - Priests were not allowed to charge for administering communion
 - established "episcopal inquisition" i.e. bishops were required to seek out and destroy heresy in their district...
- **Theological Activity... the rise of "Scholasticism"...**
 - **Anselm of Canterbury** – Anselm spent most of his life exiled from Canterbury because of conflict, you guessed it, with the civil authorities.
 - He elevated reason in his theological pursuits... For example...
 - Anselm expressed the reason for the incarnation in his treatise "Why God Human?"
 - This is well expressed by Justo Gonzalez in The Story of Christianity - The importance of a crime is measured in terms of the one against whom it is committed. Therefore, a crime against God, sin, is infinite in its import. But, on the other hand, only a human being can offer satisfaction for human sin. This is obviously impossible, for human beings are finite, and cannot offer the infinite satisfaction for the sins of all humankind. (page 313) Anselm went on to state that only by the eternal, infinite Word becoming human could this dilemma be solved. Only a divine human could pay the infinite price required by human sin.
 - **Peter Aberlard** – Peter Aberlard contributed to scholasticism by emphasizing "differences" in the conclusions of the Bible as well as theological writings of the past. His purpose was not to discredit the Bible of the church fathers, but to emphasize that theologians weren't proving anything by just quoting an authoritative text. He challenged theologians to find ways to reconcile these theological variations.
 - **Peter Lombard** – Peter Lombard contributed to scholasticism by writing a systematic theology titled Four Books of Sentences.
 - **The Rise of Universities** was associated with the rise of cities which in turn was associated with a commerce economy.
 - **Thomas Aquinas** – Thomas Aquinas decided to become a Dominican monk. His mother and brothers tried to dissuade him by locking him in the family castle for 1 year.
 - Eventually he became a leading theologian of the time. He contributed to Christian theology by showing that some theological truths are accessible through both reason and revelation, for example the existence of God.