THE GREAT SCHISM—1054 A.D.
Division Between East and West

Study 6

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INTRODUCTION

In 1054 a sharp, longstanding rift, opened out into a great schism. Division between East and West, and thus, the development of ‘The Orthodox Church’—apart from Rome and the Reformed Churches—really took place in three stages, each about 500 years apart:

1. **First Stage 431—590**
   - 431 Council of Ephesus condemns Nestorius
   - 451 Council of Chalcedon condemns Eutyches
   - 484 Roman synod excommunicates Acacius of Constantinople
   - 537 Dedication of new cathedral of Hagia Sophia, Constantinople
   - 553 Second Council of Constantinople condemns the ‘Three Chapters’
   - 590 Gregory the Great becomes Pope in Rome

   “The Nestorian Church of Persia and the Five Monophysite Churches of Armenia, Syria (the so-called ‘Jacobite’ Church), Egypt (the Coptic Church), Ethiopia, and India. The Nestorians and Monophysites passed out of western consciousness…”

2. **Second Stage 1054**
   From 1009 the Patriarchs in Constantinople ‘no longer included the name of the Roman bishop in the diptychs’ or the formal lists maintained at Constantinople of the other patriarchs living and dead whom Constantinople recognized as doctrinally sound’. Papal power and the filioque clause were primary reasons. It was added by the Frankish church [a Synod in 809] to the Nicene Creed without consent of the East, expressing that: the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (and the Son) [= filioque], in Latin. In Rome, Pope Leo IX (1048-1054) took up a reforming position, and tried to exert his power and will, over the other regional centres. Bishops had been relating to Rome, in a ‘first among equals’ relationship. That ended.

3. **Third Stage 1453—1517**
   In 1453 Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire (Islam). The Orthodox Church was not involved in the Reformation, when, in 1517 - Luther nails his 95 theses to the Wittenberg church door, sparking Protestant Reform, and Counter-reformation.


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1. Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, Penguin Books, 1963, p. 12 (Ware: English convert to Orthodoxy)
2. List of Bishops to be prayed for (past and present) - to remove a name meant, out of communion!
1054—A VERY SIMPLIFIED SUMMARY OF DIVISIONS

Timothy Ware writes of the differences between East and West:

From the start Greeks and Latins had each approached the Christian Mystery in their own way. At the risk of some oversimplification, it can be said that the Latin approach was more practical, the Greek more speculative; Latin thought was influenced by juridical ideas, by the concepts or Roman law, while the Greeks understood theology in the context of worship and in the light of the Holy Liturgy. When thinking about the Trinity, Latins started with the unity of the Godhead, Greeks with the threeness of the persons; when reflecting on the Crucifixion, Latins thought primarily of Christ the Victim, Greeks of Christ the Victor; Latins talked more of redemption, Greeks of deification… These two distinctive approaches were not in themselves contradictory; each served to supplement the other, and each had its place in the fulness of Catholic tradition. But now that the two sides were becoming strangers to one another—with no political and little cultural unity, with no common language—there was a danger that each side would follow its own approach in isolation and push it to extremes, forgetting the value in the other point of view.  

The following table helps us to see a few of the divergent emphases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROME</th>
<th>CONSTANTINOPE / ALEXANDRIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clement (originally from North Africa)</td>
<td>Tertullian - Carthage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Eastern Orthodox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic to other philosophies</td>
<td>Challenged pagan culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Speculative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lex-Law-Juduricial</td>
<td>Worship &amp; Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity of Godhead as One - Trinity</td>
<td>Three Persons - Trinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ the Victim</td>
<td>Christ the Victor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redemption</td>
<td>Deification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome - Papal Supremacy</td>
<td>First Among Equals: Alexandria, Antioch,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constantinople, Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ecstasies, no miraculous ‘gifts’ of</td>
<td>Use of Holy icons and images - revered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Spirit, no demonology, no preoccupation with the imminent ‘second coming’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE CONVERSION OF THE RUSSIANS

Orthodoxy was bolstered when adopted as Russia’s official religion (988-1917). A number of churches existed in around Kiev Rus, around 900. Grand Princess Olga was baptized in 954 AD and visited Constantinople 3 years later. Her son Svyatoslav had an illegitimate son, Vladimir through a concubine. He became Prince of all the Russians. Finding that they would not adopt a unifying pagan religion, he and they became baptised into Christianity. He first sent emissaries to compare Muslim, Roman, Jewish, and Greek worship, finding the worship in Constantinople to be ‘the most beautiful’. Accompanying his selection of this new faith was a new bride—Anna, sister of the Byzantine Emperor!

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4 Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church, p. 48—49
THE CRUSADES SEALED THE EAST—WEST SCHISM

The Crusades—seven major and 2 smaller ones—took place in Europe, for some 200 years. For centuries, people made peaceful pilgrimage to worship at the birthplace of Christ. Initially, the spread of Islam in the seventh century did not interrupt that taking place, and by the tenth century, bishops were organising large groups for visits to the Holy Land. In about 1065, some 7,000 people set out from Germany on a peaceful visit.

However during the eleventh century the fanatical Seljuk Turks came into Jerusalem and seized it from their fellow Muslims. They also swept north into Asia Minor.

At the battle of Manzikert (1071), the Turks captured the eastern Emperor and scattered his army. Christians were in trouble—but their response would bring unforeseen evil too.

The Crusade movement began in 1095, some 40 years after the East-West Schism. The Crusades were launched when Pope Urban II, in a type of revival-reform mode, pronounced: *Deus Volt!* It was ‘God’s will’ that Jerusalem and the Holy Land be rescued from Islam. Already Urban’s own territory had violence within the ‘feudal system’, and enforced peace was regularly used. Urban had some genuine pious hopes and ideals:

‘to drain violence from Europe by enlisting nobles with their warring knights, squires, and peasant foot soldiers, to rescue for Christianity the sacred sites taken by Muslims in the Holy Land while at the same time providing assistance to the Byzantine Empire and the Orthodox Church’.  

However, sinful people, and unwise sinful political decisions would soon make such a war *in the churches name*, impossible to justify for followers of Jesus. So-called Christians engaged in rape, plunder and shocking atrocities. Christians sawed open dead bodies in the search for gold; Cannibalism - they ate their enemies - the taste was *better than spiced Peacock*; Children went on Crusades, and were captured by traders, for slavery in Africa; Shelley writes:

For seven centuries Christians have tried to forget the Crusades, but neither Jew nor Muslim will allow them to do so. In our liberated generation it is easy to dismiss the whole bloody affair as insane religious bigotry, forgetting the context in which it occurred. But the crusaders were human beings, so their motives, like our own, were mixed and often in conflict. The word crusade itself comes from ‘taking the cross’ after the example of Christ. Thus, on the way to the Holy Land the crusader wore the cross on his breast. On his journey home, he wore it on his back. The crusaders were fully aware of the spiritual rewards Urban promised them, including full forgiveness of their past sins… For Urban and the popes who followed him the Crusades were a new type of war, a Holy War.

Overview of the Crusades:

1. The First Crusade, 1099—succeeded in capturing Jerusalem, but many were slaughtered in the brutality, including Jews, Arab Christians and Muslims. This first wave of Western knights also stopped off at Constantinople on the way to Jerusalem—but instead of help they brought further trouble to the weakened city.

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6 Mark Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, 139
7 Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, (Updated 2nd Ed.), Word, Texas, 1995, p. 188
2. The Second Crusade, 1147—Jerusalem was on the brink of destruction, so a crusade was called by hymn-writer, and mystic Bernard of Clairvaux. It achieved nothing. In 1187 Saladin, Sultan of Egypt and Syria gave the Muslim’s victory.

3. The Third Crusade—total remission of sins promised for going, in pure devotion. Its leaders were the famous Richard the Lion Heart of England, Philip Augustus of France, Frederick Barbarossa of Germany. Saladin said Richard could marry his sister, and have Palestine as a present—the proposal shocked the Europeans. They settled on a 3 year truce, and Christians could have free access to Jerusalem.

4. The Fourth Crusade, 1204—mere plunderers monopolised the outfit, and poisoned relationships between East and West, so much that it can be held that this was the breaking point, more so than 1054. Venetians, French, and Flemish soldiers went to Constantinople and took the city, with murder, rape, breaking wine cellars for refreshment... Palaces and hovels alike were entered and wrecked. Wounded women and children lay dying in the streets. They never went to Jerusalem. The Latin Empire was set up in Constantinople (but Innocent III was furious). Note, that, later in 1453, Constantinople fell to the Turks.

5. The Fifth Crusade 1215—1221, was an attempt to conquer Egypt; but they were defeated, and they accepted an 8year peace deal for Europe.

6. The Sixth Crusade, 1228—was under Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor

7. The Seventh and Eighth (Louis IX of France). The Ninth crusade ended at Acre in 1291, when ‘the land where Jesus walked fell to those who denied his deity’.

THE SUBVERSION OF CHRISTIANITY

Terrible things happened prior to, and through these 200 years, and beyond them. Jacques Ellul claims that when Charlemagne (800 onward) forced the Saxons to be converted, this was imitating Islam; and the 9th and 11th centuries were a subversion of Christianity:

‘the Crusade is an imitation of the jihad. Thus the Crusade includes a guarantee of salvation. The one who dies in a holy war goes straight to Paradise, and the same applies to the one who takes part in a Crusade. This is no coincidence; it is an exact equivalent.

Certainly, genuine human activity, in the interchange in trade, learning and ideas, still took place between Christian and Muslim peoples. However, Ellul asserts that, Islam not only brought, apricots, cherries and irrigation methods into France, they also brought Muhammad’s law and Aristotle’s philosophy, which deeply corrupted Christian thinking; and this corrupt thinking, instead of being transforming (Rom. 12:1-2) then lead to many subversions of what Jesus brought in his life to the world, and his church including:

1. Incarnation is revelation - God’s law is grace. Islam returns to God’s legal will.
2. The Islamic legal spirit penetrates deeply into government and the church.
3. War in inherent in Islam, and false religions have to be destroyed.
5. Mysticism, Fasts, Slavery, strict submission to God’s will—emphasis not freedom, women (no souls said Islam), colonization and yes, commerce!

8 Mark Noll, Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity, p 141
9 Bruce L. Shelley, Church History in Plain Language, (Updated 2nd Ed.), Word, Texas, 1995, p. 191