

Events:

Differences Between West and East

- From the earliest times in church history, there were differences between thought coming from the western church and the eastern church
- Here is a side-by-side comparison of some of the differences that existed in the 4th century:

Western Church	Eastern Church
Centered in Alexandria	Centered in Antioch
Docetist (Christ divine, not human)	Adoptionist (Christ human, not divine)
Platonic (essentials, ideals)	Aristotelian (particulars, realities)
Greek/Latin background	Hebrew/Asian background
Allegorical interpretation of Scripture	Literal interpretation of Scripture
Emphasis on ontology (being)	Emphasis on ethics (morals)
Mystical understanding of God	Rational understanding of God
Gnostic philosophy	Legalistic philosophy
No <u>real</u> atonement (Christ not human)	No <u>real</u> atonement (Christ not divine)
Spiritual (divine) Jesus	Historical (human) Jesus
Leads to Mysticism & Escapism	Leads to Self-Centeredness

- In 451 the Council of Chalcedon gave a primacy to the Bishop of Constantinople that was equal to the primacy of the Bishop of Rome further splitting the church
- In spite of working together in the early ecumenical councils and attempts to remain unified, these churches gradually grew further and further apart
 - Speaking Greek was eventually forbidden in the Roman church
 - Speaking Latin was eventually forbidden in the Eastern church
- Finally, in 1054, the so-called Great Schism between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church occurred when Pope Leo IX in Rome sent legates to Patriarch Michael Cerularius in Constantinople:
 - Leo insisted that the east recognize Rome as the head of the church
 - Cerularius refused
 - The legates, headed by Cardinal Humbert, excommunicated Cerularius
 - Cerularius in turn excommunicated Humbert and the other legates

Heroes:

Ambrose

- Born between 337 and 340 probably in Trier, Germany. Died 397.
- He is considered one of the four great Latin “Doctors of the Church” along with Augustine, Jerome and Gregory the Great
- His father was an imperial Prefect (governor) of Gaul. Ambrose studied in Rome and himself became governor of the area around Milan in 372, a city second only to Rome in Italy. He ruled until 374.

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- Ambrose became Bishop of Milan in 374. As governor, he went to a church assembly in order to prevent an expected uprising between the church and the Arians over who should succeed the bishop who had just died. Upon seeing Ambrose, the people demanded that he become bishop because his views were acceptable to both parties. He refused and hid at a friend's home. Later he received a letter from the emperor commending his appointment so he had to accept. He was then baptized into the church, ordained and installed.
- Ambrose gave his money and property to the poor. He studied the Scriptures diligently. His earlier training in literature, law and rhetoric helped him become a great preacher. He also became a great theologian and defender of orthodoxy.
- He battled Arianism even as the emperors turned away from orthodoxy. When commanded to turn over one of the churches in Milan to the Arians, he stated:

If you demand my person, I am ready to submit: carry me to prison or to death, I will not resist; but I will never betray the church of Christ. I will not call upon the people to succor me; I will die at the foot of the altar rather than desert it. The tumult of the people I will not encourage: but God alone can appease it.
- In 390, Emperor Theodosius killed 7,000 people in Thessalonica after they rioted and killed the governor for failing to release a great charioteer from prison before an important race. Ambrose excommunicated Theodosius, and the emperor had to do penance for several months before being readmitted to the Lord's Table.
- Augustine of Hippo considered Ambrose an excellent preacher, and Ambrose was instrumental in finally converting Augustine to Christianity

Jerome

- Born around 347 in Dalmatia. Died 420.
- He is considered one of the four great Latin "Doctors of the Church" along with Augustine, Ambrose and Gregory the Great
- He moved to Rome around 360 or 366 to study philosophy and rhetoric and to learn Greek and Latin. As an "active" student, he would go into the catacombs on Sundays to repent and remind himself of the terrors of Hell.
- He eventually converted to Christianity, and from around 373 to 378 traveled to Thrace, Asia and Syria. He became a hermit in a desert community and learned Hebrew from a converted Jew. He felt that the so-called Gospel of the Hebrews was the true Gospel of Matthew.
- He was ordained and studied in Constantinople under Gregory Nazianzus.
- He was attached to Damasus, Bishop of Rome, from 382 to 385 and became an indispensable aid
- He began translating the New Testament and Psalms from the Septuagint into Latin about this time.
- After Damasus died, Jerome was accused of immorality and for instructing a lady to follow an ascetic life, which soon resulted in her death. The Romans saw him

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as a callous man, so they exiled him from Rome, and he returned to Antioch in 385.

- He studied in Alexandria for a while and finally settled as a hermit near Bethlehem around 388, surrounded and supported by a few close friends.
- During the next 34 years he studied and wrote, including:
 - The Vulgate – probably his greatest work completed in 405, this is a Latin translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew (and/or Origen's Hexapla) and an updated version of an existing Latin version of the New Testament called the Vetus Latina
 - Several translations of several works by Origen and Eusebius
 - Biblical commentaries – Old Testament works on Ecclesiastes, Psalms, Daniel and the minor prophets, and New Testament works on most of the Gospels, several Pauline letters and Revelation
 - Several polemics and dogmatic writings against assailants of orthodoxy
 - Historical works including his De viris illustribus, which consists of short notes on the lives of 135 Christian authors from Peter to himself
- He is second only to Augustine in the volume of his writing in the early church
- He taught that those who substitute false interpretation of the Scriptures belong to the “synagogue of the Antichrist”
- In one of his letters to a priest he said, “Be ever engaged, so that whenever the devil calls he may find you occupied.”

Heresies:

Manichaeism

- Named for its founder Mani (210 – 276)
- A Gnostic belief system with elaborate systems of dualism and cosmology
- Mani believed that he was simultaneously the successor of Zoroaster, Buddha and Jesus. He called himself the “Paraclete”.
- He taught that humanity was caught in an intermediate “material” world that was neither fully light nor fully dark. Instead it was sort of a “smudge” (F.C. Burkitt).
- There were two types of adherents to this belief system
 - The “elect” (or “perfect”) were the priests who repudiated the darkness and led lives of celibacy and austerity and gave their efforts to teaching and preaching
 - The “hearers” (or “auditors”) were laypeople who were allowed to marry once, though sensual pleasure and having children were discouraged
 - The “hearers” served the “elect”
 - The “elect” received immediate happiness upon their death
 - The “hearers” hoped to be reincarnated as “elect”
 - All other non-believers were doomed to hell
- It appeals to people who feel an “inner struggle” within themselves since it purports to offer those people an explanation of the struggle

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- One notable Manichaeist was Augustine (354-430). He practiced it for nine years (374-389) before converting to Christianity (Confessions)
- No mention is made of a “final” defeat which may explain why it kept reappearing throughout history
 - It flourished in the third through seventh centuries in Syria and Persia especially and extending as far east as southern China
 - It arose again in the twelfth century in the “Albigensians” in southern France.

Donatism

- Named for the leader Donatus Magnus, Bishop of Carthage (315-355).
- Donatists were extreme “purists”. They believed that the church should consist only of saints and not sinners.
 - During the persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius (303-305) some priests had actually handed over Christians to the authorities to be tortured and also Christian writings to be burned
 - The official position of the church was that these “traditors” (those who handed over) could be forgiven by appropriate penance following the tradition established following the persecutions of Decius (250-251)
 - The Donatists said that penance for the traditors was not effective. These priests were unfit for leadership and administration of the sacraments.
 - They also maintained that any sacraments administered by these priests were invalid and sinful since the validity was through the administrator
- Emperor Constantine called for the Council of Aries (314), which ruled against the Donatists. They did not accept the ruling of the council, and they began to see Constantine as the devil. More laws were drawn up against the Donatists as time went on.
- Augustine battled the Donatists, and the church finally won out when it declared that the office of priest, not the incumbent priest himself, gave validity to the administration of the sacraments.
- The Emperor Honorius’s Secretary of State, Marcellinius of Carthage, finally denounced the sect as heretical in 409.
- It held on until well past the Islamic conquest of North Africa, and some believe that the schism between the church and the Donatists may have contributed to the weakening of the Carthaginian army against the Muslims.