

## Church History

### Lesson 21 - The Eastern Empire, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Rise of Islam

#### 1. Introduction - The History of the Church in the East

- 1.1. Often, church history classes in the West spend little time considering the history of the church in the East. This is done for at least two major reasons:
  - 1.1.1. People in the West are far more familiar with the history of the West, and so the events affecting the church in the East are much less familiar.
  - 1.1.2. People in the West are often unfamiliar with the Eastern Orthodox Church, and finds it's distinctive theology, practice and history difficult to grasp.
- 1.2. I think it is important to cover this history for several reasons
  - 1.2.1. The Eastern Church traces its roots back to all of the history we have been studying, and their development will help us understand our own development better.
  - 1.2.2. If we do not study this period some of the other major events of church history in the West (especially the split with Orthodoxy in 1054 and the Crusades) will seem to appear out of nowhere.
  - 1.2.3. The Eastern Orthodox Church is one of the major branches of the Christian Church in the world, claiming over 260 million adherents.
  - 1.2.4. Many of the Christians under persecution whom we support and pray for are from the churches of the East.
- 1.3. To cover this, we will look at three overlapping areas: the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire; the Eastern Orthodox church (and other churches of the East); and the rise of Islam.

#### 2. The Empire in the East

- 2.1. As we saw before, when Constantine become emperor in the early 300's, he moved the seat of his empire to Constantinople on the Bosphorus straits (the modern Istanbul in Turkey). Although there continued to be emperors situated in the West as well, these increasingly became subservient to the main emperor in Constantinople and then to the barbarian invaders, until the last Western Emperor was deposed in 476. After that, no single emperor ruled the Western empire again (though some such as Charlemagne would rule over vast portions of it.)
- 2.2. However, the empire in the East continued to be ruled by emperors until 1453 AD - almost 1000 years after the empire in the West ceased to exist! This Empire, which we often refer to as the Byzantine Empire, simply considered themselves the continuation of the Roman Empire.
  - 2.2.1. Justinian's court members still thought of themselves as ruling the Roman Empire; to call it the Byzantine empire is modern terminology, which (however) we will use. Latin remained the official language of government, even though the heart of the empire was the Greek Near East. - Ferguson, location 5991
- 2.3. However, while there were legal and family continuities, over time, the Byzantine empire came to be quite distinct from the old empire it grew from. For example, the dominant language of the Byzantine Empire was not Latin, but Greek. Furthermore, over time the Empire and the Church became unified in the manner dreamed of by Constantine.

- 2.4.** As the Empire in the West crumbled under the barbarian invasions we have discussed in the last few sessions, the Empire in the East maintained a sizable geography, even occasionally trying to reunite the Western and Eastern portions of the old Empire. However, in spite of brief periods of resurgence under leaders like Justinian, over time the empire slowly shrank as its former lands fell to other empires - especially the Muslims.
- 2.5.** The reign of Justinian
- 2.5.1.** Most historians find the high mark of the Byzantine Empire to be the reign of Justinian, who reigned from 527 –565.
- 2.5.2.** Justinian worked to regain lands lost to the barbarian tribes and reunite the Eastern and Western halves of the empire. In this he was successful - at least during his own life time.
- 2.5.2.1.** Justinian, the ablest emperor of the Byzantine Empire, restored its military glory by reconquering North Africa and Italy, rebuilt Saint Sophia, and codified the entire system of law. - Gonzales, location 5220
- 2.5.2.2.** Justinian sought to regain the lost lands of the empire. In this goal he was aided by the able general Belisarius. In 534 the Byzantines put an end to the Vandal kingdom in North Africa. The Gothic War, 553– 55, reestablished rule in Italy. In 554 a foothold was gained in Spain. These conquests drained the economic resources of the empire. The Lombards invaded Italy in 556 and weakened the Byzantine position. They gained control of the peninsula except for a strip of land (the garter on the leg of Italy) from Ravenna to Rome. - Ferguson, location 5993
- 2.5.3.** Justinian also worked to compile civil law. This project was also successful, and the resulting code, the Corpus Iuris Civilis, became the basis for European legal codes for centuries to come.
- 2.5.3.1.** Under Justinian there was undertaken a compilation of civil law, the Corpus Iuris Civilis (the editor in chief was Tribonian), which was to be the basis of legal codes in Europe for centuries. - Ferguson, location 5997
- 2.5.4.** Justinian also worked on the flourishing of art, culture, and great building projects - particularly the Hagia Sophia. These all flourished under his reign, and set patterns for centuries to come.
- 2.5.4.1.** Under Justinian (527 –565) the unique Byzantine blend of Roman law, Christian faith, and Greek (Hellenistic) philosophy—with a pinch of the Orient—came to tasteful excellence. In Byzantine art, greatly encouraged by Justinian, Christianity expressed its distinctively Eastern style. The familiar, physical world of human experience was subordinated to the supernal, transcendent world. And no work made heaven more real than the church building in the heart of the empire. - Shelley, location 2786
- 2.5.4.2.** When Justinian rebuilt Constantine’s Church of Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia, and consecrated it in 538, he exclaimed that he had outdone Solomon. The dome, said contemporaries, hung as it were by a golden chain from heaven, a link in the hierarchy rising from

the finite to the infinite and descending from the Creator to the creature. - Shelley, location 2790

- 2.5.5.** Justinian further united the emperor and the church. He viewed himself not only as the Roman Emperor, but also a Christian emperor. This was a full flowering of the vision of Constantine. This situation continued to develop in the East, as Emperors often spoke into church affairs, and the relationship between the church and the state developed in a manner very distinct from that in the West.
- 2.5.5.1.** Justinian took an active interest in church affairs. He was a good canon lawyer and theologian, so he entered church conflicts not as an outsider invading a foreign domain, but as an insider trying to fulfill better the duties incumbent upon him. He regarded the patriarch of Constantinople as his chief minister for ecclesiastical affairs. - Ferguson, location 6010
- 2.5.5.2.** Justinian never distinguished Roman state tradition from Christianity. He considered himself to be completely a Roman emperor and just as fully a Christian emperor. Here lay the source of his whole theory, the unity of the empire and the Christian religion. - Shelley, location 2796
- 2.5.5.3.** He defined the mission of the pious emperor as “the maintenance of the Christian faith in its purity and the protection of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church from any disturbance. - Shelley, location 2798
- 2.5.6.** As a result of his view of the role of the Emperor, Justinian sought to regain the loyalties of the Christians and churches that had objected to Chalcedon and its Christology. He did not realize how deep these roots ran, however, and actually created further divisions and problems by this effort, which eventually caused him to call another council at Chalcedon in 553 AD. In the end, however, his efforts failed and the churches which had broken away after Chalcedon refused to rejoin the Eastern Orthodox church.
- 2.5.6.1.** Justin was succeeded by his nephew Justinian, the ablest emperor of the Byzantine Empire, who restored its military glory by reconquering North Africa and Italy, rebuilt Saint Sophia, and codified the entire system of law. But he erred in thinking that he could regain the allegiance of his subjects who rejected the council of Chalcedon by condemning, not the council itself, but the writings of three Antiochene theologians who were particularly distasteful to those who rejected the council. What ensued is usually called “the controversy of the Three Chapters. - Gonzales, location 5220
- 2.5.6.2.** This created such a stir that eventually Justinian was forced to call a council, which gathered at Constantinople in 553. At Justinian’s prodding, the council, which eventually came to be known as the Fifth Ecumenical Council, condemned the Three Chapters. But this did not satisfy those who wished to see the decisions of Chalcedon withdrawn, and therefore Justinian achieved little for all his efforts. - Gonzales, location 5224
- 2.5.7.** By the end of Justinian’s reign, cracks were already starting to show in the newly vigorous Empire. The efforts to recapture the Western lands had been

very expensive, there was continued pressure from the empires to the East, and then the bubonic plague broke out, further weakening the Empire. Nonetheless, the reign of Justinian is clearly the high water mark of the Byzantine Empire.

**2.5.8.** After Justinian, although the Empire was slowly receding until its final collapse in 1453, the Emperors continued to view themselves as Christian Roman Emperors ruling over a Christian Roman Empire. They also often intervened in church affairs, which created a very different situation in the church in the East, to which we will now turn.

### **3. The Church of the East - The Eastern Orthodox Church**

**3.1.** By the time of the fall of the Western part of the empire in 476, the church was increasingly split between the east and the west. Although the church was formally unified as one church, and though Christians would have thought of only one church - even in organizational terms - in retrospect it is very clear that there were serious divides between the eastern and western church. The differences had long and deep roots in language, culture, politics, and theology. The fall of the Western Empire only exacerbated these differences until a formal split occurred in 1054. We will look at each of these briefly below.

**3.1.1.** Although in the last chapter our attention has centered on western Christianity, one must not forget that at the same time there was an eastern branch of the church. For Christians at that time, both East and West, the church was one. Historians, however, can now see that by the early Middle Ages the two branches of the church were drifting apart, and that the final schism, which took place in 1054, was long in the making. - Gonzales, location 5068

**3.1.2.** By the end of the sixth century the distinctive characteristics of the Eastern and Western churches had shaped two different ecclesiastical traditions, and in the East various subsets emerged. - Ferguson, location 5901

**3.1.3.** The symbol that East and West were headed in two diverging directions came in 395 when Emperor Theodosius the Great on his deathbed divided the empire between his two sons. Honorius received the West and Arcadius the East. Theoretically the empire continued to be one state with two emperors, but in practice, from that point on, the Eastern and Western roads inevitably diverged. - Shelley, location 2781

**3.2.** An overview of the differences between the Church in the East and West

**3.2.1.** The first difference between the western and eastern churches was language. In the west the dominant language was Latin, while in the east it was Greek. No two languages completely overlap, and over time this meant the same theological concepts were addressed using distinct terms that were not always truly interchangeable. This helped feed into differing theological traditions and emphases. For example remember the difficulties regarding describing the Trinity, and the importance of the Greek word hypostasis in the East - which of course does not exist in Latin.

**3.2.2.** The second difference between the East and the West was culture. The cultures of the East have always been distinct from those in the West, and this difference affected how the churches in the East developed their theology. For example, the East had a much stronger philosophical tradition

(since Greece was in the East) and thus theology in the East tended to be more philosophical, while the West tended to stress other aspects more.

**3.2.3.** The third difference, which is even larger than the first two, was the differing political situation in the East. In the West, after the capital was moved from Rome to Constantinople, and especially after the total collapse of the Western Empire, there was a power vacuum that was filled by the church. As we have seen in previous sessions, the church was often forced into assuming the functions normally assigned to government. In essence, the government was really under the church. As we have seen before, with the collapse of the Western Empire, the church stood alone as the unifying factor in the West. The church in the West was unrivaled in power, wealth, and prestige, and the church in the West often had to be the de facto governing authority simply to keep order and to keep society functioning. In the East, the Empire continued for another 1,000 years with a strong central government in Constantinople, and the emperors and their governors obviously had great power, wealth, and prestige. Furthermore, these Emperors viewed themselves as guardians and protectors of the Church, and thus often entangled themselves in the theological controversies. Thus the situation there was reversed - the church was firmly under the control of the government. This simply could not happen in the West since there was no longer a united empire in the West. This had a profound effect on the differences in the development of the church in the east and the west. Thus, in the West in general the Pope exercised authority over the Emperors, and they dared not cross him. In the East, however, the situation was reversed - ultimate power belonged to the Emperor, and the patriarchs needed to stay within the good graces of the Emperor.

**3.2.3.1.** Apart from the obvious cultural differences between the Latin-speaking West and the Greek-speaking East, the political course of events produced entirely different situations in the two branches of the church. In the West, the demise of the Empire created a vacuum that the church filled, and thus ecclesiastical leaders—particularly the pope—also came to wield political power. In the East, the Empire continued for another thousand years. It was often beleaguered by foreign invasion or by inner turmoil, but it survived. And its autocratic emperors kept a tight rein on ecclesiastical leaders. This usually led to civil intervention in ecclesiastical matters, particularly in theological debates. - Gonzales, location 5071

**3.2.3.2.** In official Byzantine doctrine, however, the state was compared to a body not in this early Christian sense, nor because all subjects of the empire had become genuine church members. The figure of the imperial body arose from pagan thinking. The state itself was conceived to be the only community established by God, and it embraced the whole life of man. The visible representative of God within it, who performed his will and dispensed his blessings, was the emperor. Thus, the old boundaries of the church were gradually effaced; the Christian community increasingly coalesced with Byzantine society as a whole. - Shelley, location 2806

- 3.2.4.** Finally, theology developed with different emphases in the East and the West. This distinction had begun quite early. As we have seen before, Tertullian and Origen had very different approaches to theology, and the streams that flowed from them in the East and the West continued to be quite distinct. Further, as we have seen before the differences between the Cappadocian Fathers and Augustine in their development of the doctrine of the Trinity eventually blossomed into a full rift between the two halves of the church. But these were by no means the only examples. Often, the two churches simply wrestled with different questions and thus developed different emphases over time. Given the difficulty of communication and travel between the East and West at this time, these differences only grew over time so that it became more and more difficult for the two sides to communicate with one another meaningfully.
- 3.3.** A brief overview of the Eastern Orthodox church
- 3.3.1.** To many Protestants, the Eastern Orthodox Church just seems like the Roman Catholic Church. Their leaders wear vestments, they practice many of the same events in the church calendar (Advent, Lent, Feast Days for saints, etc.), their buildings are full of icons, and they have a number of similar doctrines such as the perpetual virginity of Mary, asking the dead saints (including Mary) to intercede for us, they have a similar hierarchical church governing structure, etc. Their worship and practices “look and feel” similar to those of the Roman Catholic Church. However, upon closer examination even these areas have some big differences - they follow different church calendars, they stress different saints, the RCC tends to use statues while these are virtually forbidden in the Eastern Orthodox Church which uses a very specific form of painting, and the church governing structure is actually quite distinct. Furthermore, under these outward practices lie some quite distinct points of theology. I will try to briefly highlight just a few of these.
- 3.3.2.** A few points on the theology and practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church
- 3.3.2.1.** The governing structure of the Eastern Orthodox Church is distinct. Although the Patriarch of Constantinople is the honorary leader and first among equals known as the Ecumenical Patriarch, he does not have anywhere near the power of the Pope. In fact, each of the leaders in the various branches of Eastern Orthodoxy are virtually autonomous. Each of the branches of the Eastern church are known as autocephalous - from the Greek word meaning self-headed/governed.
- 3.3.2.2.** Each of the churches in the EO are often quite ethnic. For example, the Greek Orthodox church is almost entirely comprised of Greeks, while the Russian Orthodox Church is almost entirely comprised of Russians. Furthermore, while Latin was the universal language of worship for the RCC, the various churches of the East conduct their liturgies in their own language (Greek, old Slavonic, etc.)
- 3.3.2.3.** The churches of the East follow their own liturgy. This liturgy is distinct in form and theology from that of Rome, and traces its roots back to St. John Chrysostom (and other special liturgies date to St. Basil).

- 3.3.2.4.** Eastern orthodox theology tends to stress the incarnation. They lay great stress on humanity as the image of God, and the incarnation as central in God's work to restore that image. At the risk of oversimplifying, one could state that the East has tended to stress creation and the incarnation, while the West has tended to stress the effects of the fall and the crucifixion. This stress on the image of God and the incarnation had effects throughout the worship of the Eastern Orthodox church.
- 3.3.2.5.** The Churches of the East really tend to stress that in worship - and especially through the icons - heaven and earth are united. Icons are a type of "window" that links the worshipper on earth with the reality in heaven. For an Eastern Orthodox believer worship and prayer apart from icons is virtually inconceivable.
- 3.3.2.5.1.** An Orthodox believer does not consider these images of Jesus and the saints the works of men but as manifestations of the heavenly ideal. They are a kind of window between the earthly and the celestial worlds. Through the icons the heavenly beings manifest themselves to the worshiping congregation and unite with it. Thus, it is impossible to understand Orthodox worship apart from the icons. - Shelley, location 2720
- 3.3.2.6.** Note: the importance of icons in Eastern Orthodoxy relates back to the iconoclastic controversy of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The growth in the use of icons caused some to become concerned and several emperors in the 8<sup>th</sup> century sought to restrict their use, culminating when Constantine V called a council that forbade their use entirely. Along with theology there were other factors important in this decision: the rise of Islam (which forbade images of any kind) and the desire of some to curb the power of monks who strongly favored icons. The church was soon split between iconoclasts (those against images) and iconodules (those in favor of images). The iconoclasts tended to stress that they were a form of idolatry, while the iconodules stated that since Christ became truly and fully human, one could rightly represent Him, and to deny this should be done was tantamount to denying the incarnation. In the end, another council gathered at Nicea in 787 and stated that icons were a valid and important part of worship. Their reason lay in the importance of the incarnation as noted above, and also in a distinction between the greek words latria (worship which belongs only to God) and dulia (veneration which may rightly be given to others, and icons). This was difficult to express in Latin, and for a time the West did not follow this decision, though in the end many in the West did revert to the use of icons and statues as part of church life and worship.
- 3.3.2.6.1.** In a way, the controversy regarding the use of images was a final episode in the Christological debates. In the early church, there seems to have been no

objection to the use of images, for the catacombs and other early places of worship were decorated with paintings depicting communion, baptism, and various biblical episodes. - Gonzales, location 5240

**3.3.2.6.2.** Later, when the Empire embraced Christianity, several leading bishops expressed concern that the masses now flocking to the church would be led to idolatry, and therefore they preached, not against the images themselves, but against their misuse as objects of worship. In the eighth century, several Byzantine emperors took steps against images, and in 754 Constantine V called a council that forbade their use altogether and condemned those who defended them. - Gonzales, location 5243

**3.3.2.6.3.** The reasons for this decision are not altogether clear. Certainly, the presence of Islam, with its strong teaching against any physical representation, was a factor. Also, the emperors may have wished to curb the power of the monks, who were almost unanimously in favor of images. In any case, the entire Empire was soon divided between “iconoclasts”—destroyers of images—and “iconodules”—worshippers of images. - Gonzales, location 5246

**3.3.2.6.4.** The iconodules saw their position as a corollary of Christological orthodoxy. If Jesus was truly human, and in him God had become visible, how could one object to representing him? Furthermore, the first maker of images was God, who created humans after the divine image. John of Damascus, who was among those condemned by the council of Constantine V, argued: To depict God in a shape would be the peak of madness and impiety.... But since God...became true man...the Fathers, seeing that not all can read nor have the time for it, approved the descriptions of these facts in images, that they might serve as brief commentaries.\*Read more at location 5252

**3.3.2.6.5.** The controversy raged for years. The West simply refused to accept the imperial edicts, while the East was rent asunder. Finally, the Seventh Ecumenical Council gathered at Nicea in 787. This assembly distinguished between worship in the strict sense, latria, which is due only to God, and a lesser worshipful veneration, dulia, which is to be given to images. Although the iconoclasts regained power for a time, in 842 images were definitively restored—an event that many Eastern churches still celebrate as the “Feast of Orthodoxy.” In the West, the decisions of



the council of 787 were not well received, for the distinction between latria and dulia was difficult to make in Latin. But eventually the difficulties were overcome, and most Christians agreed on the use of images in church, and on the restricted veneration due to them. - Gonzales, location 5259

**3.3.2.7.** While the church in the West has tended to stress the legal aspects of salvation such as covenant and justification, the East has tended to stress these much less and has preferred more organic views of life and salvation, and especially the image of God. Thus, in the West the prime question has been “How can sinful man be reconciled to God?” whereas in the East the concern has centered more on the restoration of the image of God. Thus, in the West the question that was so central in the Reformation (“How is a sinful man justified before a holy God?”) is almost non-sensical to the Church of the East, and they think both sides are wrong precisely because they are focused on the wrong question. Rather than the Gospel solving a legal problem that has broken relationship, they conceive it more like a medicine to solve a sickness that has marred the image of God.

**3.3.2.8.** Finally, while the church in the West has until very recent times often lived under governments that were friendly to the Church and the Gospel, this was not true for the Eastern Church. Although the Byzantine Empire lasted until 1453, from the mid-600’s a huge number of Eastern Orthodox Churches lived, worshipped, and developed their theology under Islamic governments. This obviously had a great effect on these churches. To help understand this, we will now briefly turn to the rise of Islam.

#### **4. The Rise of Islam**

**4.1.** Islam arose in the early 600’s under the leadership of Mohammed. Mohammed was born in Mecca around the year 570 as a member of the dominant tribe in Arabia.

The religious landscape at the time included paganism, Judaism, and Christianity.

**4.2.** The major beliefs and practices of Islam

**4.2.1.** The oneness of God (and they think Christians believe in three gods because of a misunderstanding of the Trinity)

**4.2.2.** The five pillars -

**4.2.2.1.** Profession of faith (“There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet)

**4.2.2.2.** Prayer 5 times a day

**4.2.2.3.** Fasting (especially during Ramadan)

**4.2.2.4.** Alms-giving

**4.2.2.5.** Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)

**4.2.3.** The Scriptures and major writings of Islam

**4.2.3.1.** Quran - sayings of Mohammed based on revelations given to him

**4.2.3.2.** Hadith - writings containing the words, actions, or habits of Mohammed. These are second only to the Quran.

- 4.2.3.3. Sharia - the legal system of Islam, derived mainly from the Quran and the Hadith
  - 4.2.4. Islam, government and society
    - 4.2.4.1. Islam is an entire life system. It governs every aspect of both individual and societal life.
    - 4.2.4.2. In Islam there is really no separation of church and state, nor of church and society (banking, welfare, family life, etc.). Every aspect of life and society is governed by Islam and is intended to be uniform throughout society.
  - 4.2.5. Islam and other religions
    - 4.2.5.1. Islam believes that it is the only true religion, and that eventually it will rule the world.
    - 4.2.5.2. Islam originally gave a special, though subordinate, place to Christians and Jews as "people of the book."
    - 4.2.5.3. Originally Islam was more tolerant of other faiths within realms it ruled, but over time this has lessened until today when others faiths are often outlawed and punished in many Islamic lands.
- 4.3. Around 610, when Mohammed was 40 years old, he began receiving what Muslims believe were divine revelations through the angel Gabriel. These revelations, which later formed part of the Quran, instructed Mohammed he was to preach a monotheistic faith, warn everyone about the coming day of judgement, and decry the social injustices of his city. He won a number of supporters, but also created powerful enemies in Mecca. In 618 his powerful uncle died and he was forced to flee Mecca.
- 4.4. Mohammed fled to Medina where he claimed to continue receiving revelations. The sayings (surahs) received during this time stressed Mohammed as one of the long line of biblical prophets, but they also made distinctions between this new message and Christianity and Judaism. Soon, the Jewish tribes in the area began to oppose him, and there was also trouble from Mecca. This led to armed conflict. By 629 Mohammed had secured control of Mecca. He then died in 632.
- 4.5. After Mohammed died, a series of four Caliphs governed the Islamic state: [Abu Bakr](#) (632-634), [Umar ibn al-Khattab](#) (Umar I, 634-644), [Uthman ibn Affan](#), (644-656), and [Ali ibn Abi Talib](#) (656-661). These leaders are known as the "[Rashidun](#)" or "rightly guided" Caliphs in [Sunni Islam](#). They oversaw the initial phase of the [Muslim conquests](#), advancing through [Persia](#), [Levant](#), [Egypt](#), and [North Africa](#). (From Wikipedia). These leaders had an aura of religious authority, but did not claim to be prophets like Mohammed.
- 4.6. As seen above, Islam experienced rapid expansion during this time. Most of the lands were taken from the Sassanid (Persian) or Byzantine empires. Note that this coincided to the decline of the Byzantine empire after the reign of Justinian.
- 4.7. It may be surprising to us, but many of the Christians of the Byzantine Empire actually helped the Islamic nation against the Byzantine Empire. This was largely due to three reasons. First, some of the Christians were from churches that had been persecuted by the Byzantine Empire (in much of Egypt for example where the Copts were persecuted by the Eastern Orthodox Church and Byzantine Empire. Second, in almost all cases, the taxes levied by the Muslim rulers were actually less than those levied by the Byzantine rulers. Third, initially, Christians and Jews were allowed to continue to use their own laws and have their own judges. Thus, their

- day to day life did not change much when they came under the rule of Islam initially, and the main changes were beneficial - lack of persecution and lower taxes.
- 4.8. The growth of the Islamic kingdom continued virtually unabated so that by the early 800's they controlled the entire Middle east, parts of modern Turkey and Pakistan, and parts of Northern Africa. They had also made incursions into Spain, but their advance in Europe was halted in Spain.
  - 4.9. Eventually the lands conquered by the Muslims became predominately Muslim. This happened by a combination of people simply changing religions to curry favor with the new rulers, and then eventually through the use of increasing punishments and pressure for those who did not convert.
  - 4.10. This means that the church that continued to exist in North Africa, the Middle East, and into Asia faced very tough times. Though these churches have continued to this day, they have often been marginalized, and have faced persecution - at times very severe persecution - down to the present day.
  - 4.11. This has had a profound effect on these churches. They have a deep theology of suffering, from which we in the West would do well to learn. However, they have also often become insular, and lost evangelistic zeal to reach the Muslims around them.

**Next Class: Imperial Restoration, Continuing Decay, and Reform Movements in the West**  
**Reading: Chapter 28 (Imperial Restoration and Continuing Decay) and Chapter 29 (Movements of Renewal)**  
**Date: August 27**