

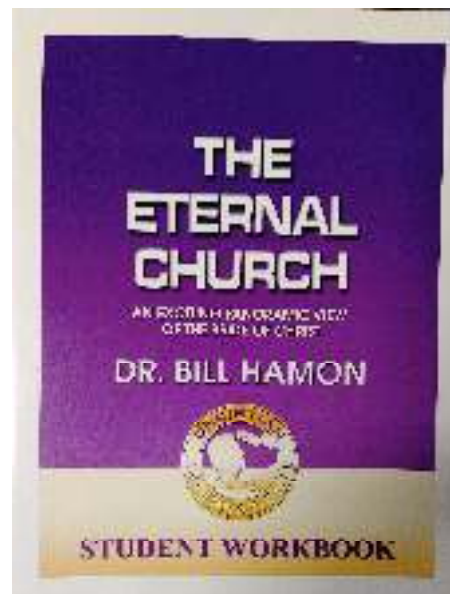


THE ETERNAL CHURCH BIBLE STUDY

PRESENTED BY APOSTLES ALAN & RENNEE DAWSON

WRITTEN BY DR. BILL HAMON, CHRISTIAN INT'L MINISTRIES

THIS WORKBOOK WRITTEN DR. BILL
HAMON



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

A. THE CHURCH IN TRANSITION

1. MANY THINGS CONTRIBUTED TO THE CHURCH'S DETERIORATION.

1. A. WE ARE GOING TO BRIEFLY INVESTIGATE THOSE THINGS WHICH HAD A **DIRECT BEARING** ON THE DETERIORATION OF THE **SPIRITUAL CHURCH.**

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

- ▶ **PERSECUTION** HAD THE EFFECT OF **PURIFYING-** AS **POPULARITY** HAD THE AFFECT OF **POLLUTING**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

C. MOST CHURCH HISTORIANS AGREE THAT THE **EDICT OF TOLERANCE** WAS THE MOST DAMAGING TO THE *SPIRITUAL CHURCH* EVEN THOUGH IT BROUGHT LIFE AND LIBERTY TO THE *STRUCTURAL CHURCH*. THE *STRUCTURAL CHURCH* PROSPERED GREATLY WITH IT NEW-FOUND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE, POLITICAL POWER, AND MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

2. TRANSITION OF THE CHURCH FROM THE SPIRITUAL TO STRUCTURAL.

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

- A. CONSTANTINE'S EDICT GRANTED **FULL LIBERTY OF CHOICE OF RELIGION**
- B. CONSTANTINE'S VISION **OF THE CROSS WITH THE WORDS "IN THIS SIGN CONQUER" ABOVE THE CROSS.**

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

C. AS A RESULT OF CONSTANTINE'S VICTORY, HE:

1. **FAVORED CHRISTIANS**
2. **MOVED THE CAPITAL FROM ROME TO CONSTANTINOPLE**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

D. CHRISTIANITY IS MADE THE STATE RELIGION 70 YEARS LATER UNDER THE COMPULSORY ACT OF EMPEROR THEODOSIUS. HIS DECREE FORCED ALL ROMAN EMPIRE SUBJECTS TO FORMALLY ACCEPT CHRISTIANITY IN ORDER TO:



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

- ▶ **MAINTAIN THEIR CITIZENSHIP**
- ▶ **HOLD OFFICE**
- ▶ **CARRY ON A BUSINESS**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

AS A RESULT OF THIS COMPULSORY ACT:
**FINAL BLOW TO THE MESSAGE OF
REPENTANCE AND CONVICTION OF SIN,
SPIRITUAL REBIRTH AND THE NEED FOR
TRANSFORMED LIFE TO BECOME A
CHRISTIAN.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

E. MILITARY SPIRIT OF ROME ENTERS THE CHURCH-

FORCIBLY SUPPRESSED ALL OTHER RELIGIONS.

PROHIBITED IDOL WORSHIP



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

F. SPIRITUAL VS STRUCTURAL- **STRUCTURAL CHURCH WAS ENHANCED AND THE WORLD WAS BLESSED IN ITS PHYSICAL MORAL AND SOCIAL LIFE.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

G. SIMPLICITY LOST-

1. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH BEGINS TO CHANGE: **FROM THE SIMPLICITY OF GREAT EXHUBERANT PRAISE, REJOICING TO NO ELABORATE PRAISE AND WORSHIP**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

2. WHEN THE ROMAN EMPIRE WAS OVERTHROWN IN A.D. 476 BY THE GOTHs, VANDALS AND THE HUNS, THEY GENERALLY RECEIVED CHRISTIANITY BUT THIS FURTHER FILLED THE CHURCH WITH **PAGAN PRACTICES.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

H. AT THE MERCY OF THE
CLERGY (SEE INSTRUCTORS
NOTES)

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

3. PAGAN CUSTOMS AND CHRISTIAN RITUALS

A. PAGAN CUSTOMS HAD ENTERED THE CHURCH LIKE THE MILITARY SPIRIT HAD.

EXAMPLE: SUN WORSHIPPERS OBSERVED THE BIRTHDAY OF THE SUN GOD WITH THE 25TH OF DECEMBER.



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

B. VENERATION OF MARY- **WORSHIPPING MARY WAS PROBABLY STIMULATED BY THE SIMILARITY OF FEMALE DEITIES IN PAGAN RELIGIONS.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

C. PETITIONING DEPARTED SAINTS – THE
“CULT OF DEPARTED SAINTS AND
MARTYRS” GREW RAPIDLY BETWEEN **300**
A.D. TO 400 A.D.



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

D. MANY OTHER PAGAN CUSTOMS AND OLD JEWISH CEREMONIAL RELIGIONS CONTRIBUTED TO THE DETERIORATION AND THE COMPLICATION OF THE SIMPLICITY IN WORSHIP OF THE SPIRITUAL FIRST-GENERATION CHURCH.

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

SUCH THINGS AS:

- ▶ **CANDLES**
- ▶ **INCENSE**
- ▶ **GARLAND**
- ▶ **HOLY DAYS**
- ▶ **ELABORATE PRIESTLY ROBES, GARMENTS, SIGNS & SYMBOLS**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

4. THE DETERIORATION OF THE MINISTRY
**AS THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST LESSENERED IN THE
CHURCH, THE HUMAN DESIRE FOR
PRESTIEGE AND POWER INCREASED.**

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

5. CENTRALIZATION OF CONTROL:

A. **CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE LOCAL CHURCHES WERE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER, SHEPHERDED BY A GROUP OF PASTORS.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

**B. THE JURISDICTION OF THE BISHOP
CAME TO INCLUDE NEIGHBORING
TOWNS AND COUNTIES.**

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

6. DEVELOPMENT OF “FATHERS”

A. BISHOPS OF THE EARLY CHURCHES WERE KNOWN AFFECTIONATELY AS “PAPA” (FATHER) **IN ABOUT 500 A.D., “PAPA” BEGIN TO BE RESTRICTED TO THE USE BY LOCAL BISHOPS AND BECAME RESERVED FOR THE BISHOP OF ROME.**

THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

7. CHURCH STARTED FUNCTIONING ON SATAN'S KINGDOM PRINCIPLES

A. DURING THE YEARS OF THE DARK AGES, THE WICKEDNESS AND CORRUPTION OF HUMANITY CAUSED BY A STRUGGLE FOR **RELIGION, AND POLITICAL POWER, WAS UNBELIEVABLE.**



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

8. FOLLOW GOD, NOT MAN!

B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

1. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THE DARK AGES
SCRIPTURES: **1 TIM. 4:1-4, 2 PETER 2:1-3, 3;15 2 THESS. 2:3, 10-12**

B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

2. THE 'ISMS' OF THE CHURCH

A. THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN **A GROUP OF DEDICATED AND LOYAL SAINTS AND LEADERS**, BUT IN THE DARK AGES, THERE WERE A VERY **SMALL REMNANT**

B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

B. BECAUSE CHRISTIANITY BROUGHT CONVERTS FROM EVERY RACE AND NATION, THESE CONVERTS BEGAN INTERPRETING CHRISTIANITY IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR PAST **EXPERIENCES** AND **UNDERSTANDING** OF THEIR OWN GODS. MANY SEGMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY WERE INTEGRATED WITH GREEK AND ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHIES AND FABLES. SOME OF THE ISMS THAT CREATED THE GREATEST CONTROVERSIES WITHIN THE CHURCH WERE:

GNOSTICISM

MANICHAISM

MONTANISM

MONARCHIANISM

ARIANISM

NESTORIANISM



B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

C. MANY OF THESE 'ISMS' RELATING TO THE GOD-HEAD STILL EXIST TODAY!

1. SOME OF THEIR COUNTER PARTS TODAY ARE: **JESUS ONLY, OENESS, TWONESS, TRINITY**



B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

D. OTHER 'ISMS' TODAY:

1. GNOSTICISM HAS ITS MODERN-DAY COUNTERPART IN SOME OF THE TEACHINGS OF **JEHOVAH WITNESS, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND UNITARIAN**



B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

2. MONTANISM HAS ITS PRESENT-DAY COUNTERPART IN THE
**PENTECOSTAL AND
CHARISMATIC GROUPS**



B. DETERIORATION THROUGH ISMS AND SCHISMS

3. READ ABOUT THE EBIONITES AND HOW THEY WERE DIFFERENT

C. DEVELOPMENT OF "CATHOLIC"

- A. **CATHOLIC MEANS- THROUGH THE WHOLE, GENERAL, UNIVERSAL ALL INCLUSIVE.**
- B. THE CHURCH THAT EXISTED BETWEEN A.D. 300 TO A.D. 500 IS MORE CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE **MODERN HISTORIC PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN DOCTRINE & PRACTICE**



C. DEVELOPMENT OF “CATHOLIC”

C. AFTER A.D. 500, THE CHURCH BEGN ITS
MOVE TO CORRELATE MORE WITH THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



C. DEVELOPMENT OF “CATHOLIC”

4. ISMS OF THE STATE CHURCH

A. BECAUSE OF THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH'S INVOLVEMENT WITH HEATHEN CUSTOMS, AND ITS DESIRE FOR POLITICAL AND MATERIALISTIC GAIN, ITS ‘ISMS’ PROBLEM WAS:

C. DEVELOPMENT OF “CATHOLIC”

- ▶ **PAGANISM**
- ▶ **MATERIALISM**
- ▶ **RITUALISM**
- ▶ **FORMALISM**

C. DEVELOPMENT OF “CATHOLIC”

5. COMPARISON TO EARLY CHURCH ACTIVITIES AND BELIEFS

- ▶ **JUSTIFIED BY FAITH**
- ▶ **CLEANSING OF SIN BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS**
- ▶ **PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS THRU A BORN AGAIN EXPERIENCE**
- ▶ **RECEIVED THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST & PRAYING IN THEIR OWN SUPERNATURAL LANGUAGE**

C. DEVELOPMENT OF “CATHOLIC”

6. FROM NEW BORN TO FULL GROWN

A. THE EARLY CHURCH WAS NOT MATURE IN THEIR **DOCTRINE** AND **PERFORMANCES** BUT THEY WERE THE ‘BABY CHURCH’ WHICH HAD ALL THE ELEMENTS THAT WOULD BE PERFECTED AND MATURED

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FROM NEW BORN TO FULL GROWN

B. HOWEVER, WITHIN 500 YEARS OF EXISTENCE, THE CHURCH HAD LOST ALL THESE **EXPERIENTIAL TRUTHS**.



7. RESTORATION OF TRUTH OR REACTIVATION OF ERROR

ONE SHOULD KEEP AN OPEN MIND THAT EVERYTHING TAUGHT AND MANIFESTED DURING EACH OF THE RESTORATION PERIODS IS EITHER A RESTORATION OF BIBLICAL TRUTH OR A REACTIVATION OF A FALSE DOCTRINE WHICH DEVELOPED DURING THE DETERIORATION OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

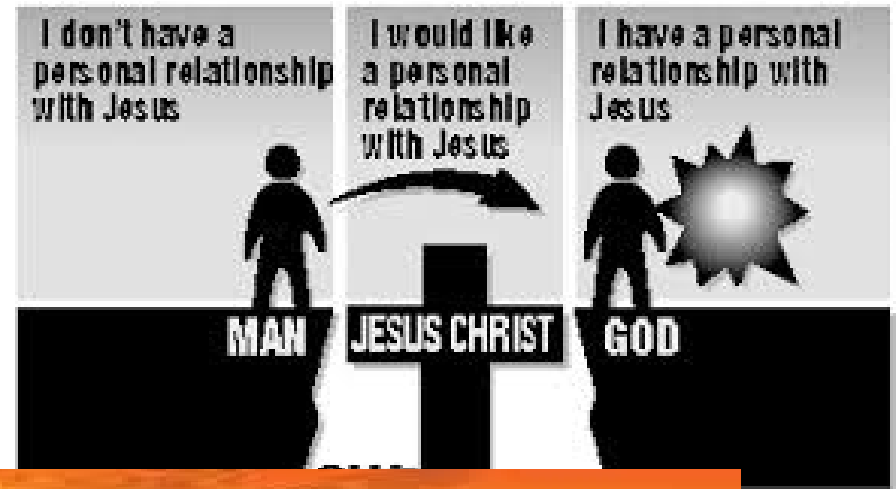
LET'S REVIEW THE EARLY CHURCH ACTIVITIES & BELIEFS

JUSTIFIED
means
"just-as-if-I'd"
never sinned

For He has made them who know not sin to become sinners for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.
2 Corinthians 5:21

JESUS CHRIST
**THE BLOOD OF
JESUS CHRIST
"HIS SON"
CLEANSETH
US FROM ALL
SIN** 1 JOHN 1:7

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C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

1. MEDIEVAL CHURCH OF THE DARK AGES
 - A. HISTORICALLY – **THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH DARK AGES WAS FROM THE FALL OF ROME A.D. 476 UNTIL THE FALL OF CONTANTINOPLE A.D. 1455**

THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

B. CULTURALLY- IT WAS FROM THE TIME WHEN THE CIVILIZED WORLD WAS OVER RUN BY UNEDUCATED BARBARIANS IN THE 5TH CENTURY UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE RENASSANCE IN THE 15TH CENTURY.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

2. THE CHURCH'S DARKEST HOUR

A. IT NOT ONLY DETERIORATED
DOCTRINALLY BUT ALSO **MORALLY.**



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

B. THE 200 YEAR PERIOD JUST PRIOR TO AN A LITTLE AFTER THE 1,000 IS CALLED BY HISOTRIANS THE “**MIDNIGHT OF THE DARK AGES.**”

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

C. THINGS THAT WERE EVIDENCED AMONG THE CLERGY AND THROUGHOUT CHRISTENDOM WERE SUCH THINGS AS:

- ▶ **BRIBERY**
- ▶ **CORRUPTION**
- ▶ **SIMONY**
- ▶ **IMMORALITY**
- ▶ **BLOODSHED**



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

D. THIS APOSTATE AND IDOLATROUS
CONDITION IN THE CHURCH
CONTRIBUTED TO THE BIRTH OF THE
ISLAM RELIGION.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM





C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

ISLAM MEANS SUBMISSION AND
OBEDIENCE TO THE WILL OF GOD

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

3. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF ISLAM

A. IT IS REPORTED THAT WHEN MOHAMMED FIRST CAME IN CONTACT WITH CHRISTIANS IN SYRIA HE WAS FILLED WITH HORROR AT THE AMOUNT OF IDOLS IN THE CHURCH. AT THE AGE OF 40, HE WENT INTO A CAVE TO THINK AND PRAY, AND THERE IT IS SAID THAT HE HAD A VISION AND THAT GABRIEL APPEARED TO HIM AND TOLD HIM THAT GOD WANTED HIM TO GO AND TEACH ALL HIS FELLOW

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

**ARABS HIS REVELELATION. HE FLED TO
MEDIAN (THE SAME PLACE MOSES HAD
FLED JUST TWO MILLENIA BEFORE) AFTER
THOSE OUTSIDE HIS IMMEDIAT FAMIY AND
HIS FRIENDS REJECTED HIS NEW RELIGION
AND TRIED TO KILL HIM.**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

THERE HE BEGAN TO TEACH AND BUILD A FOLLOWING BASED UPON HIS NEW RELIGION CALLED ISLAM, MEANING SUBMISSION AND OBEDIENT TO THE WILL OF GOD. THOSE WHO FOLLOWED HIS TEACHING WERE CALLED “MOSLEMS” OR “MUSLISMS”

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

HE RETURNED TO MECCA WITH HIS MILITANT CONVERTS WITH A PASSION TO DELIVER MANKIND FROM THE COMPLICATED IDOLATROUS WAYS OF WORSHIP THE CHURCH HAD IMPOSED UPON THE PEOPLE. HE DESTROYED 360 IDOLS IN MECCA AND A.D. 622 IS RECOGNIZED AS THE YEAR OF THE BIRTH OF ISLAM.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

4. CONVERSION FROM MERCY TO MIGHT

AT FIRST, CONVERTS TO ISLAM WERE MADE THROUGH FRIENDLY PERSUASION BUT SOON THEY TURNED TO THE SWORD. THEY HAD A FANANTIC ZEAL THAT HELPED THEM CONQUER THE WHOLE NORTH AFRICA, WESTERN ASIA AND JERUSALEM.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

B. MOHAMMED APPEARED AT A TIME WHEN THE CHURCH HAD BECOME PAGANIZED WITH THE WORSHIP OF IMAGES, RELICS MARTYRS, MARY, AND THE SAINTS. (IN A SENSE, THE ISLAM'S REVOLT WAS AGAINST THE IDOLATRY OF THE "CHRISTIAN WORLD").

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

C. WITHIN 110 YEARS, MOSLEMS HAD SWEEPED NATION AFTER NATION UNDER THEIR CONTROL UNTIL THEY TRIED TO CONQUER CONSTANINOPLE, THE GATEWAY TO EUROPE.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

5. THE MOSLEMS STOPPED

- A. **THE MOSLEM'S MARCH AGAINST CONSTANTINOPLE WAS STOPPED BY THE CHRISTIAN ARMY LED BY EMPERIOR LEO II.**
- B. **NOT SUCCEEDING IN CONSTANTINOPLE, THE MOSLEMS TRIED TO ENTER EUROPE THROUGH SPAIN AND FRANCE. HERE THEY WERE STOPPED AT TOURS.**



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

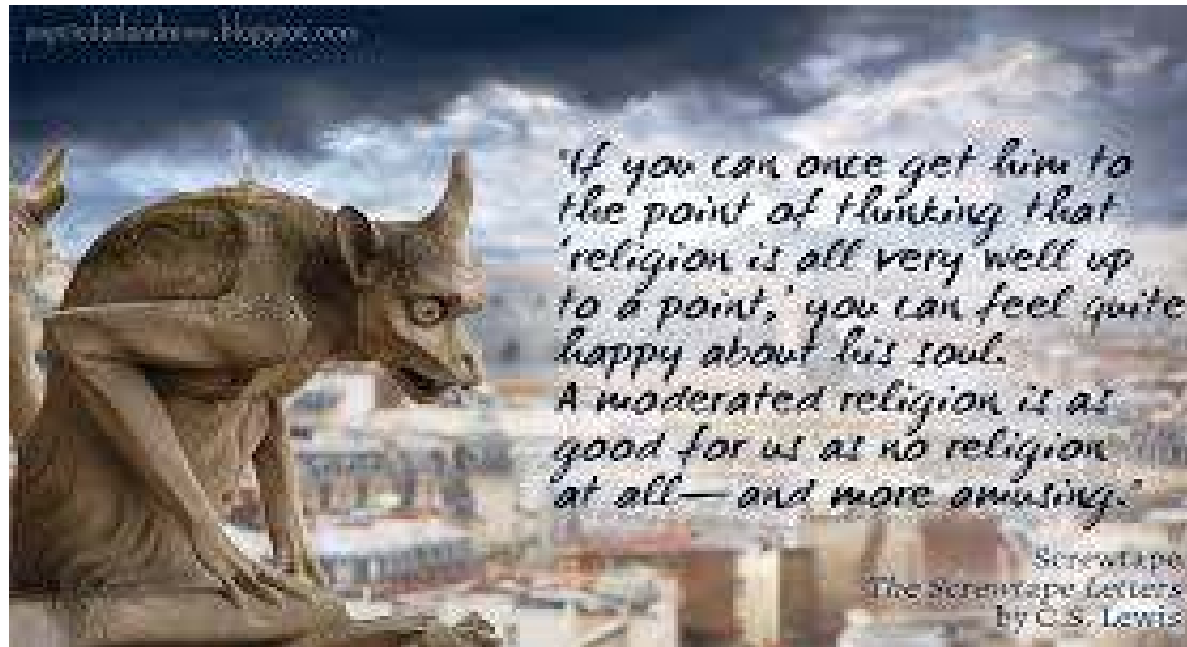
5C. **THEY THEN RECEDED BACK TO THE ARABIAN-DOMINATED WORLD WHERE THE MOSLEM FAITH IS STILL IN CONTROL TO THIS DAY.**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

5D. THE BARBAROUS TREATMENT OF CHRISTIANS IN PALESTINE LED TO THE CRUSADES WHICH LASTED SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS DURING THE DARK AGES.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

6. THE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

- A. **THE MOSLEM FAITH PRODUCED A RELIGIOUS, HARD, DOMINATING SPIRIT IN ITS ZEALOUS FOLLOWERS.**
- B. **THEIR FOLLOWERS WERE MOTIVATED MORE OUT OF **HATE OF UNBELIEVERS** OF ISLAM THAN LOVE FOR THE SOULS OF UNBELIEVERS.**



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

6C. THEIR RELIGION WAS PROPAGATED BY THE SWORD AND ENCOURAGED SLAVERY, HAREMS AND THE DEGRADATION OF WOMANHOOD.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

6D. **THEIR GREATEST ERROR AND PROOF THAT THEIR FAITH WAS NOT BORN OF GOD, WAS THE FACT THAT THEY MADE JESUS NO MORE THAN A JEWISH PROPHET, INFERIOR IN EVERY RESPECT TO MOHAMMED.**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

6E. THEY BELIEVE IN THE ONE TRUE GOD (IN ARABIC ALLAH) OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, BUT THEIR CONCEPT OF GOD IS DISTORTED. THEY THINK OF HIM AS A FIERCE, RELENTLESS ORIENTAL DICTATOR, WITH NO LOVE FOR HUMANITY OUTSIDE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PROPHET.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

7. COUNTERFEITS WITHOUT FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS

A. THERE ARE 3 GREAT RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY THAT ACCEPT THE OLD TESTAMENT BIBLE AS THE REVELATION OF THE TRUE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE: **JUDIASM, ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY.**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

7B. ANY RELIGION OR SO CALLED CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION, THAT MAKES JESUS LESS THAN GOD, **DELETES THE NECESSITY OF THE REDEMPTION WORK OF CHRIST ON CALVARY.**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

8. MEDIEVAL MONASTERIES

A. THE DARK AGES SAW THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOUR MONASTIC ORDERS BETWEEN THE 6TH AND 13TH CENTURIES. THERE WERE THE:

- **BENEDICTINES**
- **CISTERIANS**
- **FRANCISCANS**
- **DOMINICANS**

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

8B. THE MONKS FROM THESE MONASTERIES BECAME THE **MISSIONARIES** WHO TOOK THE GOSPEL TO MANY HEATHEN NATIONS.

EXAMPLE: **ST. PATRICK WHO EVANGELIZED IRELAND IN THE 5TH CENTURY.**



C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

8C. THE MONASTERIES WERE THE ORIGIN OF BOTH THE **MODERN HOSPITAL AND THE HOTEL** WHICH GREW OUT OF THE HOSPITALITY GIVEN TO THE TRAVELERS.

C. THE EFFECT OF ISLAM ON CHRISTENDOM

BENEDICTINE MONASTERY



FRANCISCAN MONASTERY IN WASHINGTON DC

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

1. WHERE WAS GOD? **MAN'S COMPREHENSION OF THE WAYS OF GOD ARE VERY LIMITED. ISAIAH 55:8,9**



D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

2. GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN TAKES PRIORITY OVER THE PROCESS

A. WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT CONSIDERING THE MANY MILLIONS OF SAINTS WHO WERE MARTYRED IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE METHOD DURING THE FIRST 300 YEARS THAT GOD CONSIDERS SUFFERING AND DEATH FROM A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE.



D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

2B. PSALMS 139:15 DECLARES THAT GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING FROM THE BEGINNING TO END AND HE HAS NUMBERED THE DAYS OF THE CHURCH.

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

3. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY – MAN'S WILL

A. DID JESUS LEAVE THE CHURCH TO ITS OWN WAYS FOR 1,000 YEARS? WHY DIDN'T GOD KEEP THE CHURCH DOCTRINALLY RIGHT, MORALLY PURE, AND VICTORIOUS OVER ALL HER ENEMIES? COULD IT BE THAT GOD HAS DECREED THAT HE WILL NEVER OVERRULE MORTAL MANS WILL IN RELATION TO SERVICE TO HIM?

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

4. GOD WANTS MATURE SONS

A. **GOD DOESN'T WANT A KINGDOM OF SLAVES OR ROBOTS. HE CREATED US IN HIS OWN IMAGE AND LIKENESS AS A COMPATIBLE CREATURE CAPABLE OF CREATIVE THOUGHTS, A FREE SPIRIT WITH A SEPARATE WILL. HE DESIRES SONS NOT SUBJECTS.**

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

4B. HE DOES NOT WANT LABORERS AS CHILDREN WORKING FOR HIM, HE WANTS SONS AND DAUGHTERS WHO WILL CO-LABOR WITH HIM.

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

4C. HE WANTS THE CHURCH TO GROW TO MATURITY (EPH. 4:11-15) AND WITH THIS MATURITY COMES A WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH GOD BECAUSE WE WANT TO.

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

4D. GOD HAS PROVEN THROUGH HISTORY THAT HE WILL ENLIGHTEN AND PERFORM ACCORDING TO THE HUNGER, RECEPTIVITY AND RESPONSE OF HIS PEOPLE TO THE MOVING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.



D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

5. JESUS LIMITS HIMSELF TO THE CHURCH

A. JESUS BY FOREKNOWLEDGE, AND THE N.T. WRITERS BY DIVINE INSPIRATION DECLARED THAT THERE WOULD BE A GREAT FALLING AWAY. THEREFORE, JESUS ALLOWED THE CHURCH TO GO INTO THE DARK AGES, BUT WE DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL THE REASONS WHY.

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

5B. ONE THING IS CLEAR AND THIS IS JESUS IS NOT COMING FOR A CHURCH THAT LOOKS LIKE THE CHURCH OF THE DARK AGES. THE CHURCH HE IS COMING FOR IS WITHOUT SPOT, WRINKLE OR BLEMISH. A BRIDE IN THE PRIME OF LIFE.



D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

6. RAPTURE NOT BACK DOOR ESCAPISM

A. "WHEN JESUS COMES TO TRANSLATE HIS CHURCH, IT WILL NOT BE GOD HEAVENLY HELICOPTER COMING TO AIR-LIFT THE SAINTS OUT BEFORE THEY BACKSLIDE OR BEFORE THE DEVIL HAS OVERRUN THEIR CAMP."



D. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

6B. **JESUS CANNOT BE INTIMIDATED!
HE WILL NOT BE THREATENED BY THE
ACUSER OF THE BRETHEN,**



6B. THE MYSTERY OF THE DARK AGES

HE WILL COMPLETE THE BUILDING OF HIS BRIDE TO HIS SATISFACTION AND WILL NOT COME FOR HER UNTIL SHE HAS GONE THROUGH TIMES OF RESTORATION.(ACTS 3:19-21)

THE CHURCH WAS RETARDED IN HER GROWTH FOR 1000 YEARS BUT SHE IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF BEING RESTORED



THE DETERIORATION OF THE CHURCH

END OF SESSION 3