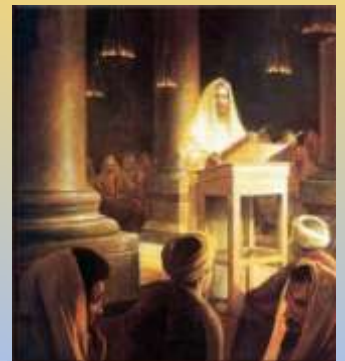


Internal Pressure # 2

A.D. 100-325

Alogoi

- Logoi is logos in the plural, and “a” means non.
 - Thus, they argued that there is not a plural logos – The Word, God, etc. Only the Father is Logos.
- If only God the Father was the Logos, then Jesus could not be the Logos according to this solution.
 - They actually rejected the Gospel of John and Revelation because Jesus is said to be the Logos.
- The church rejected this heresy rather quickly.
- Others will create more complicated solutions that will gain followings.

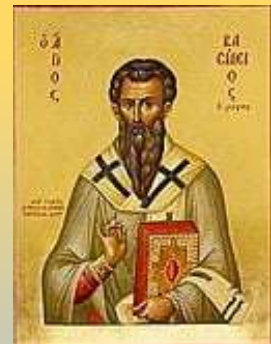


Adoptionism

- This was a claim that Jesus was the adopted son of God, not the eternal Son of God.
 - This teaches He was born a regular human with no divinity, but became divine when He was baptized and God publicly declared Him to be His Son in whom He is well pleased.
- Christ's divinity was only temporary – from baptism to crucifixion. It was lost as He cried, "My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?"
 - Some Gnostics taught the same thing.
- Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch in 270, declared this his position. It is a form of Dynamic Monarchianism.
 - God is one, but adjusts and temporarily becomes two, but then goes back to one.
- This view was rightly rejected. It cannot explain the virgin birth, resurrection, ascension, and second coming.
 - These place Christ as divine before baptism and after the crucifixion.

Sabellianism/Modalism

- This was explained on preceding slides.
 - This is also called Modal Monarchianism and is associated with Sabellius who adopted this view around A.D. 200.
 - There is one God, but he appears in three modes. He is not three persons.
- Proponents used John 10:30; 14:8-9; and 16:7 to support their view.
 - A closer look (especially in Greek) repudiates their interpretation of these passages.
- Some churches today hold onto this heresy (e.g., United Pentecostal Church).



Subordinationism

- Jesus is deity, but not the Deity. In other words, He is a lesser god to the true God.
 - As such, Jesus is not equal to the Father and is not the same essence or substance as Him.
 - Arius was the most famous proponent of this in the early church. Jehovah Witnesses hold this view today.
- This is based on Jesus being submissive to the Father. They equate submissive with subordinate, but there is a big difference.
 - Submissive refers to roles, but subordination refers to being.
 - They misuse John 14:28 seeing Jesus' statement of submission as that of subordination. If He was subordinate, He is less than the Father in being and is not equal in deity (parent/child analogy).
- The Scriptures undoubtedly make Jesus the God and equal to the Father.



Biblical Position

- We affirm the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4
 - God is a Trinity – One God existing simultaneously in three persons who are all the one substance/essence of God and are equally God.
 - Matt 3 demonstrates all three to exist simultaneously at Christ's baptism (against Modalism).
 - Matt 28:19 demonstrates God to be triune – “baptize in the **name** of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” (Against Adoptionism and Subordinationism)
 - Paul gives his benediction with all three mentioned in 2 Cor 13:13.
 - Romans 1:7 calls the Father God, Romans 9:5 calls Christ God (and man), and Acts 5:3-4 calls the Holy Spirit God.
- The church officially codifies this truth at Nicaea in AD 325.



Schisms over Doctrine and Practice

- Montanism.
- This movement arose in the thick of the church's battle against Gnosticism.
- It was founded when a young convert to Christianity named Montanus in Phygria, Asia Minor around AD 170, started to prophesy.
- Two "prophetesses" joined him: Priscilla and Maximilla.
 - They claimed the Holy Spirit was speaking to the church in a new way by speaking directly through them. They would even speak in the 1st person while speaking for the Spirit. They thought this was a fulfillment of John 14:16; 16:12-13.
 - They referred to their movement as the New Prophecy.
 - They offered no new doctrinal revelations. Instead, they insisted on the nearness of the Parousia. Maximilla prophesied that after her, there will be no more prophecy and the end will come.



Montanism

- Because they believed the end was imminent, they stressed a strict moral code.
 - Absolute ban of second marriages regardless of the circumstance; obligation to frequent fasts and xerophagies (eating only dried foods); veiling of virgins; denial of forgiveness of sins for serious sins after baptism; a command to never try to escape persecution, but a necessity to embrace martyrdom.
 - Thus, their new teachings were mainly in terms of ethics.
- Visions, revelatory dreams, speaking in tongues, and ecstatic prophetic utterances abounded among them.
- It spread throughout Asia Minor, Italy, France, and North Africa.
- The Catholic Church rejected them, and they were excommunicated in multiple local councils of bishops (first such councils we know of).
 - Irenaeus advised that the church go easy on them and keep them as insiders, but the rest of the church disagreed.
 - Notable opponents of Montanists: Apologist Claudius Apollinarius, bishop of Hierapolis in Phygria; Apologist Miltiades; Serapion of Antioch; Clement of Alexandria; Roman theologian Hippolytus.



Montanism

- The most famous Montanist was Tertullian.
- They survived until the 5th century. Then they were wiped out by the institutional church now wedded to government power.
- On what grounds did the Catholic Church declare Montanism heretical?
 - Their enthusiasm and ecstasy looked like spiritual drunkenness.
 - The Montanist interpretation of John 14:16; 16:12-13 is wrong. It was fulfilled at Pentecost, not 140 years later in just three people.
 - Montanism unnecessarily caused division in the church when the church was trying to maintain unity in their battle with Gnosticism. Thus, it was subversive.
 - Montanist prophecies did not come true. For example, after Maximilla died, around AD 179, Jesus did not return.
 - Montanists were arrogant against Catholics, seeing them as carnal Christians since they refused to believe their prophecies. They would only respect those who agreed with them.
 - A minority of Montanists embraced the Sabellian heresy, and so the orthodox church unfairly used that as ammunition against the whole movement. That would be like treating all Pentecostalism as if it is Oneness Pentecostalism.

Montanism

- Movements making claim to the sign gifts arose many times in church history.
- Montanists were the first. How are they different than Pentecostals and Charismatics?
 - Pentecostals do not share Montanist ethical demands.
 - Montanism did not argue for a special baptism of the Holy Spirit as a distinct second experience for all believers.
 - These differences repudiate the Pentecostal claim that these are their spiritual ancestors.
 - However, the tongues, prophecy (and repeated false prophecy), and ecstatic enthusiasm are shared by both groups.



Montanism

- This raises the question as to whether the gifts ceased after the Apostles.
 - The answer is more complicated than cessationists and continuationists admit.
 - In the second century, Irenaeus teaches they were clearly still around even at the end of the century, but his wording hints that it is not normative in every church.
 - In fact, it didn't happen in his church. But he knew of it happening.
 - Origen in the third century also claimed some people had such gifts, but it was far less common.
 - For Montanist claims to stand out, the sign gifts could not have been normative in each local church, otherwise, there would have been nothing spectacular about their claims.
 - This means after the Apostles, the sign gifts ceased to be an ordinary part of local church life, but there were still traces of them in a few churches and a few orthodox theologians.

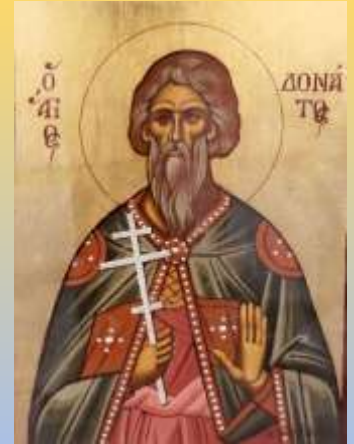
Novatians

- In the 3rd century, a man named Novatian was concerned with what was going on in Rome.
 - A man named Cornelius was chosen to be the bishop of Rome, and he allowed deserters from persecution to return – people who turned over Scripture to be burned and denied Christ.
 - Novatian opposed this and said they should not be allowed back in. He also wanted to be the bishop of Rome.
- He broke away and caused a church split calling for a pure church. Many Montanists flooded to his side, and his movement grew as Novatianist churches sprung up all over North Africa.
 - The Montanists saw him as a champion reminiscent of Montanus.
- This movement lasted until the 5th century.



Donatists

- This movement was started by a man named Donatus in Carthage in the early 4th century just after Diocletian's persecution.
- He rejected the authority of the new bishop of Carthage, Caecilian (appointed in AD 311).
 - Donatus argued that the ordination of Caecilian was invalid since the man that ordained him turned over Bibles to the authorities to be burned during the Diocletian persecution.
 - Donatus wanted to be the bishop of Carthage himself. The church took Caecilian's side. The ordination stood.
 - Those who were not very Roman tended to support Donatus.



Donatists

- He broke away from the church, and his followers (Donatists) claimed to be the true church. He was appointed as a rival bishop in Northwest Africa against Caecilian.
 - They even appealed to Constantine to recognize them as the true church in an attempt to recover property lost during the persecution.
 - He allowed tribunals of bishops to decide, and they ruled against the Donatists. This led to fist fights in the streets and destruction of property between the two sides.
 - In AD 316 Constantine ordered African gov. officials to exile the Donatists for causing a schism. He assumed they would rejoin the Catholic Church rather than be expelled. They continued to resist. In 321, he canceled the decree.
 - For the next 100 years, the North African church would be bitterly divided between the two.
 - Constantine's attempt to use state power to coerce dissenting Christians back into fellowship with the institutional church was the first time this happened in history. It set a dangerous precedent that would be followed many times in the future.



Lessons for Today

- Moral and doctrinal laxity is a legitimate concern among Christians.
 - Many churches have low standards and attract many unregenerate people and keep them unregenerate.
 - Other churches overreact and in the name of purity become legalistic with far too many hedges around the Law. It becomes very difficult to become a church member.
- Schismatic attitudes are also a concern.
 - Christians cancel other Christians for relatively small disagreements. This was the Donatist mistake.
- We must aim for a biblical balance—high moral and doctrinal standards without legalistic burdens.

Conclusion

- There were a number of internal pressures that attacked the church from within had long-term negative effects.
 - Apostolic succession led to sacramentalism and sacerdotalism.
 - The cult of relics and veneration of the saints started light, but it grew into baptized paganism.
 - Mariolatry slowly emerged.
- Debates about the nature of God introduced many heresies, some that will wreak havoc, and some that still exist today.
 - One positive effect is it forced the church to define and describe the Trinity in very precise terms that are faithful to biblical teaching.
- Schisms weakened the church in a time when it was already being attacked by both persecution and heresy.