

## I. Interpreting the Bible

- a. As literal interpretation and as moral tales.
- b. The Bible is an inspired word by God, but expressed in human language and according to human understanding.

## II. Arius and the Formation of Nicene Creed

- a. Arius (around 300 C.E.) was a Bishop of Egypt who held the view that Jesus was human being.
- b. Though he was a great and an ideal human being, but nonetheless he was not son of God. The title 'Son of God' was a courtesy title.
- c. This created a great confusion among the Christian communities.
- d. Therefore, the council was called at Nicea around 325 C.E. in which more than 300 Bishops were present. They formulated the Nicene creed which reads on...p.375 or 376 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph.
  - o Essence- Ousia - Substance

## III. Development of the Eastern Orthodox Church

- a. Eastern Orthodox Church developed in Greece, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania and Russia.
- b. This happened when Constantinople (Byzantine) was made new capitol of the Roman Empire by Constantine.
- c. Eventually, the Empire split into two divisions, East and West.
- d. Thus we find many doctrinal differences and differences in practice between the two Church traditions.
- e. Latin speaking Western church began to develop independently on its own.
- f. Greek speaking Eastern church continued on its own course.
- g. The Eastern church has always held to a decentralized consensus based model.
  - o Decisions regarding doctrines and practices made by local community members in consultation with patriarchs and bishops.
- h. In the Western church, centralized authority is vested in the Pope (The Western church includes at this point the Christians in the West as yet we had no Catholics and Protestants).
- i. The Eastern church holds that Jesus had two separate natures, not united in single person

- o Thereby they emphasize the divinity of Jesus
- j. The Western church held that divine and human were united in a single person.
  - o Thus, they emphasize more on human aspect of Jesus.
- k. The Eastern church emphasizes on Monasticism.
  - o They have great monastic centers.
- l. The Eastern church allows only icons in the worship, whereas the Western church allows statues.
- m. The Eastern church allows the marriages of bishops and ministers.
  - o In the Western church, ministers are not allowed to marry.
- n. In the Western church it is held that Father and Son generated the Holy Spirit.
  - o In Eastern church, one holds that Father generated the Holy Spirit.
  - o According to the Eastern church, the Latin word filioque ('from the Son') was added for no reason.
- o. In the Eastern church, when one is baptized his whole body is sunk into water.
  - o In the Western church it is done by sprinkling the holy water on the forehead.
- p. In the Sacrament of Eucharist (Lord's Supper), the Eastern church uses both wine and bread (symbolizing body and blood of Christ).
  - o In the Western church bread alone was used for many hundreds of years (today it is changing).

#### IV. The Protestant Reformation

- a. *To protest/bring the evidence*
- b. Western Church establishment had become rich from bequest of the rich and collection from local parish churches.
- c. Endowments of land and money was a natural form of piety in the hope that rich people and aristocrats would benefit in after-life.
- d. The indulgences became widespread.
- e. Instances of sex offence committed in the Church became common place.

- f. Saint veneration became wide spread.
- g. All these factors contributed to the formation of Reformation, which began with Martin Luther.

#### V. Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- a. Martin Luther presented his objections in the form of Ninety-Five theses, the main contentions of which are:
  - o Live by Faith (sola fides) and live by Scripture (sola scriptura)
  - o No authority of pope is required. Everyone is a minister and relate to God directly.

#### VI. The Essentials of Christian World View

- a. God the Father:
  - o This universe is the expression of the power and love of God.
  - o It embodies also the Judaic concept of God as being all knowing, powerful and one.
- b. Jesus Christ:
  - o He is ideal human being as well as manifestation of divinity.
  - o He is word (logos, substance) that expresses the divine nature and origin of Jesus.
- c. We humans are sinners and born in sin.
  - o For our sins Jesus was crucified.
- d. Holy Spirit:
  - o We as humans understand Godhead or Godhood as Holy Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - o They are three ways of understanding (the same) God.
- e. Life after Death:
  - o Heaven is the reward of the good, which is being in the presence of God.
  - o Being in his presence and beatitude is the greatest enjoyment we can ever have.