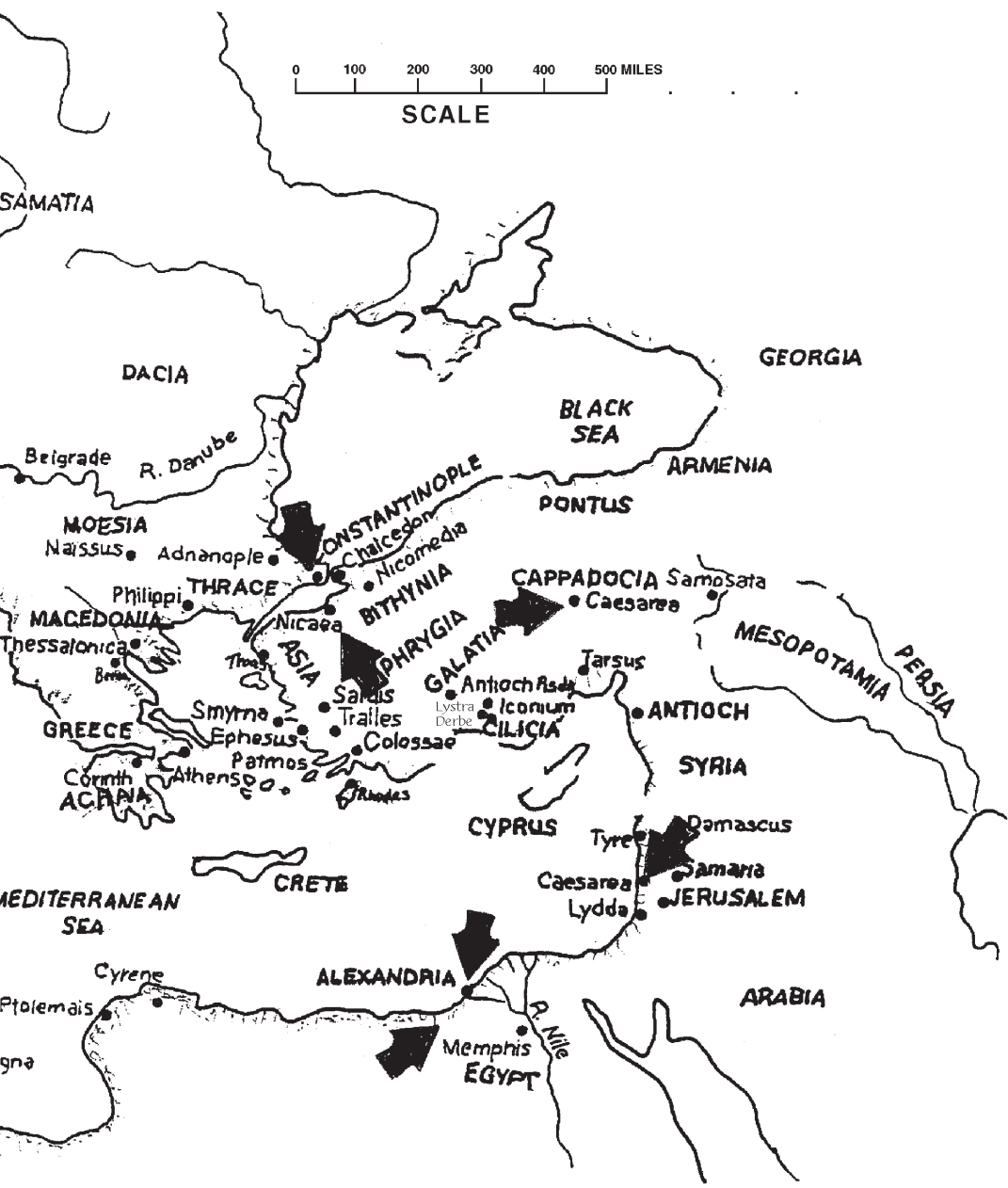
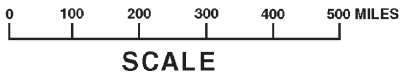




CHAPTER XVI 250 A.D. - 381 A.D. Page 274

WHAT CAUSED THE MOTHER OF ALL CHURCH FIGHTS

Apostolic Constitutions (Rules), Antony the Monk, Fear of Holy Spirit in Formal Church, Emperor Constantine, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius, Arianism, Nicean Council 325 A.D. Hilary of Poitiers, Basil of Caesarea, Cappadocia, Martin of Tours, and Council of Constantinople 381 A.D.



CHAPTER XVI WHAT CAUSED THE MOTHER OF ALL CHURCH FIGHTS
250 AD. - 381 AD.

In my opinion, the Mother of All church Fights started with the publication of the Constitutions of the Holy apostles, or Apostolical Constitutions. These writings came about in the later part of the third century and were probably after Emperor Gallienus (254 - 283 A.D.) rescinded the edict against the Christians in 260 A.D. At this point the formal church became a legal entity in the Roman Empire.

The Constitutions were a compilation of rules for the formal church which was supplemented from time to time. Most scholars agree the first seven books were published in the last part of the third century. *ANF Vol 7, pp 389-390. Krabbe, who wrote an elaborate treatise on the origin and contents of the Apostolical Constitutions, tried to show that the first seven books were written "towards the end of the third century." The eighth book, he thinks, must have been written at the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth. . . The purpose of the whole, in his view, was to confirm the episcopal hierarchy, and to establish the unity of the Catholic Church on the basis of the unity of the priesthood, etc.* The very name Constitutions of the Holy Apostles was an attempt to show the validity of the formal church and its doctrine.

The main question for me was why were they written and published in the first place? These are explicit rules and exhibited the rigid hierarchy of the formal church at that time. Looking back on various writings of the New Testament, as well as those of the Church Fathers, there was always a reason or stimulus to publish works at a particular time. For instance, Paul wrote Galatians and Corinthians after he was made aware of the Judaizer threat to the ekklesia-church. The reason I believe for publishing the Apostolical Constitutions was the formal Church after years of being organized and having developed an extensive layered hierarchy was beginning to show cracks in its armor. There were many Tertullians out there who knew the Word. They knew and had experienced Matthew 16:18 where Jesus said, "on the revelations from God, I will build my ekklesia." They knew what Jesus

meant when he said in Luke 10:21, "I thank you Father, you have revealed this to babes and unlearned", and from their experiences, they knew why Jesus said in Matthew 23:10, "call no man Father for you have one Father in heaven." There were people leaving the formal church and reforming into their own cells. In these small cells, Christians were experiencing again the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The ekklesia-church was trying to reemerge from the choking formalism of the formal church.

When Paul realized the Judaizers posed a threat to the Body of Christ and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, he put in writing the ways the Holy Spirit worked in the ekklesia meetings for all the Christians. The formal church now faced a similar problem, only in an opposite way, in that there were people call "Monks" who were withdrawing from the formal church. The hierarchy decided it was time to put in writing the rules and workings of the formal church and by this intimidate those who were looking for more spirituality and were dissatisfied with the formal church.

The Constitution began by describing the Catholic (world) Church. ***ANF Vol 7, pp 391. The Catholic church is the plantation of God, and His beloved vineyard; containing those who have believed in His unerring divine religion; who are the heirs by faith of His everlasting kingdom; who are partakers of His divine influence, and of the communication of the Holy Spirit; who are armed through Jesus, and have received His fear into their hearts;*** The word Catholic meant only the world church at this time.

The Constitutions elevated the bishop to insurmountable heights. ***ANF Vol 7, pp 398. Let him be prudent, humble, apt to admonish with the instructions of the Lord, well-disposed, one who has renounced all the wicked projects of this world, and all heathenish lusts; let him be orderly, sharp in observing the wicked, and taking heed of them, but yet a friend to all, just, discerning; and whatsoever qualities are commendable among men, let the bishop possess them in himself. . . For you bishops are to be guides and watchmen to the people, as you yourselves have Christ for your guide and watchman. Do you therefore become good guides and watchmen to***

the people of God . . . the watchman is the bishop, who is set in the Church, who is obliged by his preaching to testify and vehemently to forewarn concerning that judgment. If ye do not declare and testify this to the people, the sins of those who are ignorant of it will be found upon you. This placed tremendous responsibility on the bishop, probably more than God intended for one-man. For the bishop, this huge responsibility was carried a step further by ignoring the Body of Christ. ***ANF Vol 7, pp 399 . . . O bishop, endeavour to be pure in thy actions, and to adorn thy place and dignity, which is that of one sustaining the character of God among men, as being set over all men . . . and so sit in the church when thou speakest, as having authority to judge offenders. For to you, O bishops, it is said: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*** Jesus in Matthew 16:19 and 18:18 made this statement, "whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." He meant this for the Body of Christ, not one individual. Because Jesus' ekklesia was to be built on revelations from God (Matt 16:18), the ekklesia-church (Body of Christ) would always be in agreement with God.

The Constitutions set up a definite pecking order. ***ANF Vol 7, pp 401 and 404. For it is not equitable that thou, O bishop, who art the head, shouldst submit to the tail, that is, to some seditious person among the laity, to the destruction of another, but to God alone. For it is thy privilege to govern those under thee, but not to be governed by them . . . As to a good shepherd, let the lay person honour him, love him, reverence him as his lord, as his master, as the high priest of God, as a teacher of piety for he that heareth him, heareth Christ; and he that rejecteth him, rejecteth Christ.*** Compare this to what Jesus said in ***Luke 10:21 . . . You have concealed these things (relating to salvation) from the wise and understanding and learned, and revealed them to babes---the childish, unskilled and untaught. Yes, Father, for such was Your gracious will and choice and good pleasure. and Matthew 23:8-11. But you are not to be called rabbi (teacher), for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call any one (in the church) father, for you have one Father, Who is in heaven. And you must not be called masters (leaders), for you have one Master (Leader), the Christ. He who is greatest among you***

shall be your servant. I don't think Jesus had a need for the kind of leadership related in the Constitutions for his ekklesia .

Paul in light of his description of the Body of Christ and the problem he had with the Judaizers would have taken exception to these statements. **ANF Vol 7, pp 409. You, therefore, O bishops , are to your people Priests and Levites, ministering to the holy tabernacle, the holy Catholic church; . . . You are to the laity prophets, rulers, governors, and kings; the mediators between God and His faithful people, who receive and declare His word, well acquainted with the Scripture. Ye are the voice of God, and witnesses of His will, who bear the sins of all, and intercede for all;** This sounds a lot like the Judaizers. The Judaizers used the Law and the Temple instead of the Holy Spirit and here they were using one-man (bishop) instead of the works of the Holy Spirit.

Another statement that bothered me and I'm sure would have bothered Paul was "the bishop is the keeper of knowledge". **ANF Vol 7, pp 410 . . . the bishop, he is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in the several parts of your divine worship. He is the teacher of piety;** We don't need someone to keep knowledge for us because we have knowledge from the Word of God. We also have it in the Body of Christ with the Spiritual Gifts such as the Word of Knowledge and Word of Wisdom. With all these sources, I believe Apostle John was right when he said in **AB I John 2:27. But as for you, (the sacred appointment, the unction) the anointing which you received from Him, abides (permanently) in you; (so) then you have no need that any one should instruct you. But just as His anointing teaches you concerning everything, and is true, and is no falsehood, so you must abide---live, never to depart (rooted in Him, knit to Him) just as (His anointing) has taught you (to do).** Here the Holy Spirit instructs us concerning everything. If anyone had tasted the freedom of the ekklesia-Body of Christ, you could see how they would be dissatisfied with the formal church and being completely dominated by the bishop.

Since the edict from Gallienus (260 A.D.) made Christianity legal, one of the first endeavors of the formal church was to build their own

buildings. Whether this was the will of God, I do not know, but what happened was the formal church was effectively separated from the public. *ANF Vol 7, pp 421. And first, let the building be long, with its head to the east, with its vestries on both sides at the east end, and so it will be like a ship. In the middle let the bishop's throne be placed, and on each side of him let the presbytery sit down; . . . and let the women sit by themselves, they also keeping silence . . . In like manner, let the deacon oversee the people, that nobody may whisper, nor slumber, not laugh, nor nod; for all ought in the church to stand wisely, and soberly, and attentively, having their attention fixed upon the word of the Lord.* This showed the meetings were well-organized and had a set schedule of events. The formal church became a powerful social organization taking care of their own needy while at the same time imploring its members not to be idlers. The formal church dwelled mostly in the physical realm and had, next to nothing spiritual, much less the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Constitutions discussed the role of women and denied them any role in the organization. *ANF Vol 7, pp 427 and 429. We do not permit our "women to teach in the church," but only to pray and hear those that teach; for Our Master and Lord, Jesus Himself, when He sent us the twelve to make disciples of the people and of the nations, did nowhere send out women to preach, . . . But if in the foregoing constitutions we have not permitted them to teach, how will any one allow them, contrary to nature, to perform the office of a priest? For this is one of the ignorant practices of the Gentile atheism, to ordain women priests to the female deities, not one of the Constitutions of Christ.* In the formal church with all its organizational levels, there was no room for women. The pagan temples with women priestesses continued in the public places; however, the services of the formal church were now enclosed in a building and the women would no longer be mistaken for the hetaira or temple priestess by the passing public. For this reason, Paul's evangelistic purposes for not permitting women to speak or take charge in any way were no longer applicable in the formal church. Certainly after Emperor Constantine, who later declared the pagan temples illegal, there was no longer any reason to muzzle the women in the formal church. However as we can see from

the Constitutions, the organization was much too rigid for this to ever happen.

I'm afraid this type of reasoning continues even today. By this reasoning more than one half of the membership will forever be regulated to the status of laity. This kind of organization has a real need for the laity because if one was going to be in charge, he needed someone to be in charge of and to be under his authority. Jesus said He wanted servants in His ekklesia and He didn't want anyone to be called father, teacher or master (Matt 23:8-9). Once the stigma of the public woman was removed, there was no excuse that women could not participate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ.

Because of the "Monks" in the desert and people leaving the formal church to join them, the Constitutions challenged those who might disagree or be seditious with the bishops. ***ANF Vol 7, pp 450. Let us therefore, beloved, consider what sort of glory that of the seditious is, and what their condemnation. For if he that rises up against kings is worthy of punishment, even though he be a son or a friend, how much more he that rises up against the priests! For by how much the priesthood is more noble than the royal power, as having its concern about the soul, so much has he a greater punishment who ventures to oppose the priesthood, than he who ventures to oppose the royal power, although neither of them goes unpunished.*** This was a strong condemnation and warning to those who had left and was meant to scare those who remained in the formal church.

Since Pentecost there was no need for a priest or king to stand between man and a personal relationship with God. Jesus told the disciples in John 14:17, "I will be in you" after Pentecost because of the Holy Spirit. This is the relationship with God that kings, priests or bishops cannot fulfill in mankind. That was why mankind's potential relationship with God changed at Pentecost. Jesus died for their sins and because of their trust they were made worthy. The Holy Spirit came into them at Pentecost. As long as the Word of God says this, there will always be people who want to see and hear from God themselves. And we must also remember, God desires to manifest Himself to man. So regardless of how much organization and hierarchy would

be placed between man and God, their relationship will always survive and express itself in time. Jesus said in Matt 16:18, "His ekklesia will survive and not be overcome by the "Gates of Hades". These "Gates" are the organizational powers that govern and they will always try to dominate Jesus' ekklesia.

After the fight died down somewhat in 355 A.D., Athanasius wrote "The Life of Antony" about one of these men who left the formal church. His name was Antony, and he was born in 260 A.D. His parents were Christians and he attended a formal church. When he was eighteen, his parents died and left him to take care of a younger sister. While attending the formal church he heard what Jesus said to the rich young ruler in Matt 19:2 ***NPNF 2, Vol 4, pp 196. If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor; and come follow Me and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Antony, as though God had put him in mind of the Saints, and the passage had been read on his account, went out immediately from the church, and gave his possessions of his forefathers to the villagers--they were three hundred acres . . .*** It is interesting to note, he gave to the poor of the village rather than to the formal Church. He was probably dissatisfied with the formal church and its choking formalism.

After committing his sister to a convent with faithful virgins, Antony went into solitude to perfect his discipline or Christian life. He was constantly in prayer and noted how these people with him had piety toward Christ and showed mutual love for each other. He studied the Word and subjected himself to the good men whom he visited and saw where they surpassed him in zeal and discipline. Satan tempted him many times but he held to his walk with the Lord. He gained strength by remembering the words of Paul the apostle. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 198. He at least gave no thought to the past, but day by day, as if he were at the beginning of his discipline, applied greater pains for advancement, often repeating to himself the saying of Paul: 'forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before.'*** After a time, he left the vicinity of the village and went further away to the tombs. When he arrived he could not stand because of blows from demons. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 198. Nor was the Lord then forgetful of Antony's wrestling, but was at hand to help***

him. So looking up he saw the roof as it were opened, and a ray of light descending to him. The demons suddenly vanished, the pain of his body straightway ceased, and the building was whole. But Antony feeling the help, and getting his breath again, and being freed from pain, besought the vision which had appeared to him, saying, 'Where were thou? Why didst thou not appear at the beginning to make my pains to cease?' And a voice came to him, "Antony, I was here, but I waited to see thy fight; wherefore since thou hast endured, and hast not been worsted, I will ever be a succour to thee, and will make thy name known everywhere.' Having heard this, Antony rose and prayed, and received such strength that he perceived that he had more power in his body than formerly. And he was then about thirty-five years old. This vision from God assured Antony that God had some big plans for him.

From the tombs, Antony moved to an old fort in the mountains of the desert. His friends would visit, but Anthony remained in seclusion. One time his friends thought he was dead, but they could hear him singing, "let God arise and let His enemies be scattered" (Psalms 68:1). After almost 20 years of solitude his acquaintances came and nearly tore off the door by force. What they saw as Antony emerged was a completely different person than what they imagined after years of deprivation. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 200 . . . Antony, as from a shrine, came forth initiated in the mysteries and filled with the Spirit of God. Then for the first time he was seen outside the fort by those who came to see him. And they, when they saw him, wondered at the sight, for he had the same habit of body as before, and was neither fat, like a man without exercise, nor lean from fasting and striving with the demons, but he was just the same as they had known him before his retirement. And again his soul was free from blemish, for it was neither contracted as if by grief, nor relaxed by pleasure, nor possessed by laughter or dejection, for he was not troubled when he beheld the crowd, nor overjoyed at being saluted by so many. But he was altogether even as being guided by reason, and abiding in a natural state.*** Antony was filled with God's Holy Spirit. This is the single most impressive thing that can happen to a man. (Remember how Peter changed after Pentecost and Paul after Damascus. Here he

was filled with love for his fellowman and at the same time loved God and was open for anything the Lord had for him.

Antony began to pray for healing for people who came to visit him. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 200. Through him the Lord healed the bodily ailments of many present, and cleansed other from evil spirits. And He gave grace to Antony in speaking, so that he consoled many that were sorrowful, and set those at variance at one, exhorting all to prefer the love of Christ before all that is in the world.*** The people were excited, here the Lord was manifesting Himself through Antony, and it was right there and then and not sometime in the distant past. He persuaded many to embrace the solitary life. The people could see the ekklesia-church of Jesus and the teachings of the Apostle Paul were alive and well albeit out in the desert. Antony preached to the other monks as the cells multiplied in number. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 200 . . . he persuaded many to embrace the solitary life. And thus it happened in the end that cells arose even in the mountains, and the desert was colonized by monks, who came forth from their own people, and enrolled themselves for the citizenship in the heavens . . . One day when he had gone forth because all the monks had assembled to him and asked to hear words from him, he spoke to them in the Egyptian tongue as follows: 'The Scriptures are enough for instruction, but it is a good thing to encourage one another in the faith, and to stir up with words.*** He told them he would share his knowledge and what experience had taught him, but they must encourage one another. We can see this would make the formal church very nervous. Antony agreed with the Apostle John when he said in 1 John 2:27, "you have the unction of the Holy Spirit; you have no need for someone to instruct you." This certainly went against the Apostolic Constitutions and the formal church.

He told the other monks about the kingdom of Heaven. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 201 . . . for it is not far from us, nor is it without ourselves, but it is within us, and is easy if only we are willing . . . For the Lord aforetime hath said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." Wherefore virtue hath need at our hands of willingness alone, since it is in us and is formed from us. For when the soul hath its spiritual faculty in a natural state virtue is formed. And it is in a natural state***

when it remains as it came into existence. To me Antony showed some deep insight and great theology. Because we are created in God's image, our original state was like Him. What we need is the Holy Spirit, so we can live in that original Godly state. We sure don't need someone like a priest between us and God.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit were at work among the monks just like in Paul's ekklesia-Body of Christ. Here Antony discussed the Gifts of discerning of spirits. **NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 202. Thus there is need of much prayer and of discipline, that when a man has received through the Spirit the gift of discerning spirits, he may have power to recognize their characteristics: which of them are less and which more evil; of what nature is the special pursuit of each, and how each of them is overthrown and cast out.** This was the reason for the Gifts in the first place, to use God's manifestations for man's benefit.

I'm sure there was some talk in the formal church, saying the monks bragg about healing people. **NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 206. 'And it is not fitting to boast at the casting forth of the demons, nor to be uplifted by the healing of diseases: nor is it fitting that he who casts out devils should alone be highly esteemed, while he who casts them not out should be considered nought. But let a man learn the discipline of each one and either imitate, rival, or correct it. For the working of signs is not ours but the Saviour's work:** This was a great answer for those who say, people do the healing. Antony told the critics to either imitate, rival, or correct, but don't just stand there and be critical. This was the Savior's work not mans. Antony went on and told the other monks, the Christian was empowered to defeat the demons. He said to be mindful of the Lord and rejoice in Him. This will keep Satan discomfited and confused.

The true Body of Christ was alive and working in the desert through the monks. When they came together, they all rejoiced and praised the Lord. **NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 208. While Antony was thus speaking all rejoiced; in some the love of virtue increased, in other carelessness was thrown aside, the self-conceit of others was stopped; and all were persuaded to despise the assaults of the Evil One, and marvelled at the grace given to Antony from the Lord for the discerning of spir-**

its. So their cells were in the mountains, like tabernacles, filled with holy bands of men who sang psalms, loved reading, fasted, prayed, rejoiced in the hope of things to come, laboured in almsgiving, and preserved love and harmony one with another. These cells were the true ekklesia-church of Jesus and He said it would not be overpowered by the "Gates of Hades". The true Body of Christ would not co-exist with the organization and hierarchy of the formal-church.

The people of the formal church had to look on these spiritual happenings in the desert with wonderment; however, since the organization and hierarchy were paramount, there was no thought of change, only how do we overcome this problem? This was analogous to the attitude of the Jewish High Priest, Sadducees and Pharisees when Jesus came as the Savior of the world.

We are now at about 300 A.D. and the dichotomy within Christianity was an ongoing situation; however, in 303 A.D., Emperor Diocletian became more of a problem for the formal church than the monks in the desert. He began an intense persecution of the Christians. The reason was probably because the formal church had become so well-organized the Roman officials were suspicious of their motives. Several of the formal church leaders were martyred during this time.

In 305 A.D., Constantius, Constantine's father and Gallienus became emperors of the divided empire. They issued an edict of toleration for the Christians. This edict said you Christians can have your meetings but you must remain loyal to the empire. One thing to remember, there were approximately five million Christians at this time.

In 306 A. D., Constantine became emperor of the western portion of the empire. While battling another would-be emperor, a vision came to him from God and he saw a cross in the sky. He perceived it as a sign from God that he would win the battle. Constantine was victorious in the battle of Milivan Bridge and, from that time, he was a believer in the one and only God.

Constantine and Galerius, the Emperor of the East, issued a joint toleration of Christianity in 312 A.D. This was the edict of Milan and it

provided funds to rebuild and restore property of the formal church. This was wonderful news for the formal church. The Christians have at last an emperor who was not against them but actually on their side.

In 313 A.D., a man named Eusebius became the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. Not much is known about his background, his parents, or his education but according to himself, he became acquainted with Constantine in 296 A.D. when Constantine was an aide to Diocletian. Eusebius is undoubtedly the most controversial figure, to the theological scholars in the history of the church. Opinions vary all the way from a pure political hack, to a saint, who was a fine historian. We must keep in mind Eusebius was a part of the formal church which had long since left out the workings of the Holy Spirit. The formal church as we saw from the Apostolical Constitutions had almost regressed back to the Judaizers and copied the temple-type worship where the priest occupied a position between the laity and God. At this time what was irritating the clerics of the formal church and this included Eusebius, was that at last the Emperor was on the side of Christianity and out in the desert there was these odd people (monks) practicing the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which was entirely foreign to the formal church. The formal church didn't need a problem such as this at this time.

In 314 A.D., Eusebius because of his previous relationship with Constantine received a letter authorizing him to the lofty position of directing the funds for the building and repairing of the churches. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 511. With respect, therefore, to the churches over which you yourself preside, as well as the bishops, presbyters, and deacons of other churches with whom you are acquainted, do you admonish all to be zealous in their attention to the buildings of the churches, and either to repair or enlarge those which at present exist, or, in cases of necessity, to erect new ones. "We also empower you, and the others through you, to demand what is needful for the work, both from the provincial governors and from the Praetorian Praefect. For they have received instructions to be most diligent in obedience to your Holiness's orders. God preserve you, beloved brother."*** This showed Eusebius was favored by Constantine and elevated him to position of power in the joint venture between the emperor and the

formal church. Eusebius, in 315 A.D., at Constantine's request, delivered the dedication address of the new formal church building at Tyre. Eusebius, in one of his essays, described the building in great detail. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 375. For when he had thus completed the temple, he provided it with lofty thrones in honor of those who preside, and in addition with seats arranged in proper order throughout the whole building, and finally placed in the middle the holy of holies, the altar, and, that it might be inaccessible to the multitude, enclosed it with wooden lattice-work, accurately wrought with artistic carving, presenting a wonderful sight to the beholders.*** Notice the altar was not accessible to the multitude. From the construction of this building it was obvious Constantine didn't believe in the ekklesia-church or maybe he hadn't been informed of its existence. Eusebius went on to describe a statue of Jesus within the altar area. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 378. But the great and august and unique altar, what else could this be than the pure holy of holies of the soul of the common priest of all? Standing at the right of it, Jesus himself, the great High Priest of the universe, the Only Begotten of God, receives with bright eye and extended hand the sweet incense from all, and the bloodless and immaterial sacrifices offered in their prayers, and bears them to the heavenly Father and God of the universe.*** There was Jesus standing bright eyed with extended hand. This was probably the beginning of statues in the church. You have to wonder if maybe Constantine was copying the pagan temples to some degree. By having these statues, the worship of God was directed to these images rather than depending on the revelations directed by the Holy Spirit.

In 315 A.D., Athanasius, a member of the formal church in Alexandria, decided to see for himself the spiritual happenings out of the desert. His parents were wealthy and he received an excellent Greek education. He probably attended the Christian school in Alexandria where in years past, Origen and Clement had taught the catechumens.

Athanasius, who was seventeen when he went to the desert, told of his relationship with Antony the monk. By this time Antony was a famous person in the Christian world. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 195. . . . I hastened to write to your piety what I myself know, having seen him many***

times, and what I was able to learn from him, for I was his attendant for a long time, and poured water on his hands; in all points being mindful of the truth, that no one should disbelieve through hearing too much, nor on the other hand by hearing too little should despise the man. Obviously Athanasius was very impressed and was happy to carry water for him. By this time there were streams of people desiring an audience with Antony for his reputation had spread throughout Christendom. I'm sure Athanasius witnessed several healings and saw many signs and wonders. One man, an officer named Martinian brought his daughter to Antony. Antony didn't even come out of his house but told the man, "If you believe on Christ whom I serve, go and according as you believe, pray to God and it shall come to pass." Martinian called on Jesus and his daughter was healed. It seemed wherever Antony went, he improved everybody's faith. He told them to look out after each other and at the same time be responsible for yourselves and your own spiritual progress. This didn't sound like the formal church where the bishop was responsible for all things. Everyone wasn't healed that he prayed for, but Antony always gave the Lord credit and encouraged the sufferers to be patient.

Anthony had a vision similar to what Paul described in Eph 2:2 where he could see himself and the powers of Satan in the air. He could also see that these satanic powers were powerless against him because of his relation with the Lord. The other monks told many stories about Antony. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 213. For once, when about to eat, having risen up to pray about the ninth hour, he perceived that he was caught up in the spirit, and, wonderful to tell, he stood and saw himself, as it were, from outside himself, and that he was led in the air by certain ones . . . Then forgetful of eating, he remained the rest of the day and through the whole of the night groaning and praying. For he was astonished when he saw against what mighty opponents our wrestling is, and by what labours we have to pass through the air.*** And he remembered that this is what the apostle said, 'according to the prince of the power of the air.' When he came out of the vision he groaned and prayed all night. Antony was praying in the spirit (tongues) and with understanding. Athanasius, I'm sure witnessed all of these events. What happened to Athanasius in the desert with Antony, we can only speculate; however, we do know he referred to

himself as one of those "babblers" in a letter to some monks in 358 A.D.

Athanasius went back to the formal church a changed man. He had seen the Word of God in action in the desert and he recognized the truths of the New Testament. In 318 A.D., he was made deacon of the Alexandrian Church and published two works, "Contra Gentes (Against the Heathen)" and the "Incarnation of the Word". Both of these writings were masterpieces in theology and all the scholars agree on this point. Because he was only twenty years old, it showed that Antony the spirit-filled monk had imparted spiritual knowledge and understanding to Athanasius far beyond his years. His writings contrasted greatly with other church men of his day and gave him much influence within the formal church.

In "Against the Heathen", Athanasius compared the pagan gods with the Creator. He said the Truth comes from the Creator by His word. We know God by His word not by some statue. This was probably in reference to the statue of Jesus in the new church building at Tyre. He went on to describe the Kingdom of God as being not afar off or outside ourselves but within us. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 20 . . . Moses also taught, when he said: "The word" of faith "is within thy heart." Which very thing the Saviour declared and confirmed, when He said: "the kingdom of God is within you." For having in ourselves faith, and the kingdom of God, we shall be able quickly to see and perceive the King of the Universe, the saving Word of the Father.*** Athanasius said if I have the Kingdom of God within me, I don't need a bishop to be between God and myself.

By this time, 318-320 A.D., Athanasius sensed a move in the formal church to reduce the role of Jesus. Here he elevated Jesus to His rightful place. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 26 . . . but, because He is good He guides and settles the whole Creation by His own Word, who is Himself also God, that by the governance and providence and ordering action of the Word, Creation may have light, and be enabled to abide always securely . . . "for He is the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of all Creation, for through Him and in Him all things consist, things visible and things invisible, and He is the Head of the***

Church," as the ministers of truth teach in their holy writings. NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 28. For just as by looking up to the heaven and seeing its order and the light of the stars, it is possible to infer the Word Who ordered these things, so by beholding the Word of God, one needs must behold also God His Father, proceeding from Whom He is rightly called His Father's Interpreter and Messenger. NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 29 . . . For like as He is the Father's Word and Wisdom, so too condescending to created things, He becomes, to impart the knowledge and apprehension of Him that begat Him, His very Brightness and very Life, and the Door, and the shepherd, and the Way, and King and Governor, and Saviour over all, and Light, and Giver of Life, and Providence over all . . . But in and through Him He reveals Himself also, as the Saviour says: "I in the Father and the Father in Me:" so that it follows that the Word is in Him that begat Him, and that He is begotten lives eternally with the Father. Athanasius showed here he had a deep understanding of Jesus' place in the Trinity. This would come in handy in the coming battles within the formal church. He was well prepared for the debate of the position of Jesus in the God-head. Athanasius said he knew the Son of God was living and active because of what was happening in the desert. *NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 53. For the Son of God is "living and active," and works day by day, and brings about the salvation of all. But death is daily proved to have lost all his power, and idols and spirits are proved to be dead rather than Christ, so that henceforth no man can any longer doubt of the Resurrection of His body . . . For it is plain that if Christ be dead, He could not be expelling demons and spoiling idols; for a dead man the spirits would not have obeyed. But if they be manifestly expelled by the naming of His name, it must be evident that He is not dead;* Athanasius knew this to be true because he had witnessed some of these miracles in the desert with Antony.

God wanted to show himself to man and Athanasius said he did this by His works. *NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 65. As, then, if a man should wish to see God, Who is invisible by nature and not seen at all, he may know and apprehend Him from His works; so let him who fails to see Christ with his understanding, at least apprehend Him by the works of His body, and test whether they be human works or God's works.*

And if they be human, let him scoff; but if there are not human, but of God, let him recognise it, and not laugh at what is no matter for scoffing; but rather let him marvel that by so ordinary a means things divine have been manifested to us. . . In all probability there were those in the formal church who scoffed at the works of the monks in the desert. Athanasius said if you don't believe come and see for yourself. We see God by his manifestations. Recalling what Antony had said before, Athanasius ended his writings by saying. "Search the Scriptures and the true knowledge of them so that you may imitate the works of the saints and know what was revealed to them by God." This is excellent advice for us today.

Alarmed by Athanasius and his newly published works, the hierarchy of the formal church made its move against the works of the Holy Spirit in the desert. This was done to prevent the spread of this movement to the formal church. To do this, Satan with his wily ways would not face the Holy Spirit head-on, but rather chose to question the placement of Jesus in the God-head. This was the first shot fired in the 'Mother of all church fights'.

The Trinity was well-established in Christianity since Tertullian, who had coined the term in 200 A.D. No one had really questioned the validity of the Trinity since that time. However, not since Montanism (in 175 A.D.) had the synagogue-like, formal church faced the reality of the Holy Spirit at work among Christians like what was happening with the monks in the desert. Even though the monks were outside the formal church, these happenings created a real challenge for the leadership.

Who was the leadership? As they say today, if you follow the money you will find the one in charge. If you followed this path, you went straight to Eusebius of Caesarea. He was in charge of dispensing the Emperor's money to the various formal churches and because of this he wielded unusual power and authority.

The new doctrine put out by the leadership declared Jesus not to be equivalent to God. He was made a creature that had no existence prior to his birth. This sounds absurd today, but when you realize what

they were trying to do, you can see their reasoning. The leadership was afraid of the Holy Spirit and how It might change the formal church. Eusebius as we will see in his "History of the Church" exhibited amazing ignorance of the Word of God. So it was not at all far-fetched to have this new doctrine emanating from him or someone like him.

A lowly presbyter named Arius was chosen to deliver this new doctrine called Arianism in no other than Athanasius' home church in Alexandria. Arianism, by reducing Jesus to a creature, had the effect of making the Holy Spirit some sort of angelic being instead of a part of the God-head. The leaders could then ridicule the works of the Holy Spirit in the desert as being not on the same high level as the one true God. Today, our high church is viewed much the same way. That is, being above the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Alexander the bishop of Alexandria and Athanasius a deacon vehemently opposed Arius and his new doctrine. Alexander assembled the brethren, the presbyters and deacons of Alexandria and they decided to excommunicate Arius and his cohorts from the church in 321 A.D. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 71. Wherefore they have been excommunicated and anathematized by the Church. We grieve for their destruction, and especially because, having once been instructed in the doctrines of the Church, they have now sprung away . . . And we have made this known to your piety, dearly beloved and most honoured fellow-ministers, in order that should any of them have the boldness to come unto you, you may not receive them . . . for it becomes us who are Christians to turn away from all who speak or think anything against Christ, as being enemies of God, and destroyers of souls;*** This was from an encyclical letter written to the surrounding churches from Alexander the bishop in Alexandria. Many scholars believed most of the letter was written by Athanasius because it debunked Arianism in such a clear and complete manner.

Shortly after the Arians were excommunicated Bishop Alexander received a letter from Constantine the Emperor. This letter was in all probability written at the behest of Eusebius of Caesarea; because I'm

sure he was angry about the excommunication reported in the Alexandrian Church. This letter was in Eusebius' book called the "Life of Constantine". Eusebius prefaced the letter with his own comments. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 515. The people of God were in a truly flourishing state, and abounding in the practice of good works. No terror from without assailed them, but a bright and most profound peace, through the favor of God, encompassed his Church on every side. Meantime, however, the spirit of envy was watching to destroy our blessings, which at first crept in unperceived, but soon revelled in the midst of the assemblies of the saints. . . . Hence it was that a mighty fire was kindled as it were from a little spark, and which, originating in the first instance in the Alexandrian church. . . . Nay, so notorious did the scandal of these proceedings become, that the sacred matters of inspired teaching were exposed to the most shameful ridicule in the very theaters of the unbelievers.*** He was genuinely surprised there was so much opposition to the new doctrine of the Arians. This showed how ignorant Eusebius was about the Word of God. He went on to condemn the Alexandrian church for making such an issue of Jesus. He also indicated he and his cohorts around the emperor were embarrassed because those in the theaters were even discussing these matters.

In Constantine's letter to Alexander, which was probably composed by Eusebius, he mainly wondered why all the commotion over such an insignificant matter. Imagine how you would feel if you were in Bishop Alexander and Athanasius' place. You feel like you have saved Christianity from a terrible fate and the emperor chastised you for causing so much trouble. I'm sure Constantine had no idea of the problems created by the Arian doctrine.

Eusebius again made his comments concerning the letter from Constantine. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 518. In this manner the pious emperor endeavored by means of the foregoing letter to promote the peace of the Church of God. . . . The evil, however, was greater than could be remedied by a single letter, insomuch that the acrimony of the contending parties continually increased, and the effects of the mischief extended to all the Eastern provinces. These things jealousy and some evil spirits who looked with an envious eye on the prosper-***

ity of the church, wrought. This showed how little regard Eusebius had for the Trinity. To him this opposition was from jealousy as some evil spirit. He feared this spirit would destroy the prosperity of the formal church. Eusebius was more surprised by the rigid opposition because he certainly didn't think Athanasius and Alexander would have the courage to stand against something coming from the emperor. All he wanted to do was put down the influence the monks had on the formal church.

Antony, the spirit filled monk from the desert, heard of this conflict and made an appearance in Alexandria. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 214. In the same manner also he loathed the heresy of the Arians, and exhorted all neither to approach them not to hold their erroneous belief . . . and once also the Arians having lyingly asserted that Antony's opinions were the same as theirs, he was displeased and wrath against them. Then being summoned by the bishops and all the brethren, he descended from the mountain, and having entered Alexandria, he denounced the Arians, saying that their heresy was the last of all and a forerunner of Antichrist. And he taught the people that the Son of God was not a created being . . .*** Antony made his position crystal-clear in his condemnation of the Arian beliefs. It was amazing these Arians would go so far as to lie about Antony's beliefs. While Athanasius was escorting Antony out of the city, a woman brought her child to him. Antony prayed and the child was made whole for the unclean spirit had gone forth.

In 321 A.D., as a part of the ongoing church fight, Eusebius of Caesarea composed the "History of the Church". This was probably the most controversial document in all the writings of early Christianity. The main problem was scholars tried to make it history, when in actuality "the History of the Church" was used as a weapon in the ongoing spiritual battle within the church. I believe the reason Eusebius wrote the "History" at this time was to make sure Constantine stayed on his side and to negatively influence the Christian's on the role of the Holy Spirit in the formal church. Why else would he relate the history of the church and leave out the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. In fact he failed to mention nearly all the spiritual events in the early days of the church and only mentions the

divine spirit a few times in the whole book. It was obvious Eusebius' view of church history was so colored by his opposition to the workings of the Holy Spirit in the desert, that most of his theological views can be safely ignored.

The work was probably thrown together in a hasty manner because according to scholars there are so many chronological errors and these would not have been tolerated by real historian; however, there is one thing we must remember and that is, this history and Eusebius were probably Constantine's main source of information on Christianity.

In the first book of the "History of the Church", Eusebius elevated Jesus to a point, but not quite to the God-Head. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 87. But it is a great and convincing proof of his incorporeal and divine unction that he alone of all those who have ever existed is even to the present day called Christ by all men throughout the world, and is confessed and witnessed to under this name, and is commemorated both by Greeks and Barbarians, and even to this day is honored as a King by his followers throughout the world, and is admired as more than a prophet, and is glorified as the true and only high priest of God.*** By this time (321-324 A.D.), Eusebius knew the opposition was building against the Arian position (Jesus not quite God) among the formal churches. He took care not to go overboard and challenging the anti-Arian forces.

In the second book of the "History", he discussed early Christianity without mentioning Pentecost but chose instead to emphasize Simon Mangus in the story of Phillip and the Samaritans. ***NPNF 2, Vol 1, pp105. But at this time, being amazed at the wonderful deeds wrought by Phillip through the divine power, he feigned and counterfeited faith in Christ, even going so far as to receive baptism. And what is surprising, the same thing is done even to this day by those who follow his most impure heresy.*** Of course this was where Simon offered Peter money to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Eusebius used this to imply the people in the desert were using the Holy Spirit in an impure way.

He went on to tell how the Christians that were spread throughout the Empire had rejected polytheism. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 107. They renounced with abhorrence every species of demoniacal polytheism, and confessed that there was only one God, the creator of all things, and him they honored with the rites of true piety, through the inspired and rational worship which has been planted by our Saviour among men.*** Eusebius was careful to note that "rational worship" was planted by the Savior and by inference condemned the spiritual happenings in desert.

In the "History of the Church", Eusebius devoted more than thirteen pages to the castigation of Montanism. Although Montanism lasted only twenty five to thirty years as a viable movement, it represented to Eusebius the actions and beliefs of the monks and the people who supported them (Athanasius). Eusebius believed and felt the move of the Holy Spirit personified by the monks was a real and immediate danger to the health and well-being of the formal church.

The Montanist Movement (174-205 A.D.) in Phrygia was in its time a response and rebellion to the synagogue-like meetings. The synagogue-like meetings had replaced many of the ekklesia-churches and the Montanists were a revival of the spiritual ways of the ekklesia-church. I think Eusebius was absolutely right in his assessment that this revival may be happening once again. The only difference was the monks were outside the formal church and Eusebius wanted no part in their spiritual ways.

Eusebius started with a bang against the Montanist. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 229. The enemy of God's Church, who is emphatically a hater of good and a lover of evil, and leaves untried no manner of craft against men, was again active in causing strange heresies to spring up against the Church. For some persons, like venomous reptiles, crawled over Asia and Phrygia, boasting that Montanus was the Paraclete, and that the women that followed him, Pricillan and Maximilla, were prophetesses of Montanus.*** These were the main characters of Montanism and the Phrygians was another name for the movement. He related the writers who wrote against the Montanist and one of these was in anonymous writer. How smug do you have to

be in order to use an anonymous source in a history book? *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 229-230. Against the so-called Phrygian heresy, the power which always contends for the truth raised up a strong and invincible weapon, Apolinarius of Hierapolis, whom we have mentioned before, and with him many other men of ability, by whom abundant material for our history has been left. A certain one of these, in the beginning of his work against them, first intimates that he had contended with them in oral controversies. He commences his work in this manner.* Apolinarius according to Eusebius lived during that time of the main characters of Montanism. However, Eusebius infers the anonymous source also lived during the time of Apolinarius and most of Eusebius' tirade against the Montanist came from this anonymous source.

The anonymous source went after the Montanist with vengeance stating Montanus had an unquenchable desire for leadership. *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 231. There first, they say, when Gratus was proconsul in Asia, a recent convert, Montanus by name, through his unquenchable desire for leadership, gave the adversary opportunity against him. And he became beside himself, and being suddenly in a sort of frenzy and ecstasy, he raved, and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the Church.* Obviously these people were speaking in tongues and prophesying as Gifts of the Holy Spirit. It was also obvious these gifts were not customary in the synagogue-like churches of that area. The synagogue-like churches would not accept these spiritual manifestations and the Montanist were debarred from communion. The anonymous source continued to vilify the Montanist; however, most of the stories were silly and in all probability nothing more than rumors.

Here we come to a big problem for Eusebius' truthfulness. A man named Asterius Urbanus wrote a treatise against Montanism in 232 A.D. This treatise is almost word for word the same as the anonymous writer as quoted by Eusebius. What this means, Eusebius plagiarized Urbanus' writings, in order to have someone against Montanism living during the time of Montanus. By the time Urbanus wrote his writings about Montanism in 232 A.D., the synagogue-like church was becoming very formal as exemplified by the Apostolical

Constitutions. The formal church had no use for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit at that time.

Eusebius ended his "History of the Church" by praising the fact the formal church was at last free of tyranny and basked in the glory of having a pious emperor. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 387. All fear therefore of those who had formerly afflicted them was taken away from men, and they celebrated splendid and festive days. Everything was filled with light, and those who before were downcast beheld each other with smiling faces and beaming eyes . . . Edicts full of clemency and laws containing tokens of benevolence and true piety were issued in every place by the victorious emperor. Thus after all tyranny had been purged away, the empire which belonged to them was preserved firm and without a rival for Constantine and his sons alone.*** Eusebius included praise for the sons along with Constantine because someday he knew he would have to deal with them.

After Constantine's letter to the Alexandria Church criticizing them over the Arian issue, more rumblings began to be heard from the direction of the Emperor. Eusebius said the Emperor was upset because an envious spirit had disturbed the peace in Alexandria and that he was not angry but saddened by the controversy. Remember at this point Constantine was receiving most all his information about this controversy from Eusebius. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 521. To God alone, the almighty, was the healing of these differences an easy task; and Constantine appeared to be the only one on earth capable of being his minister, for this good end. For as soon as he was made acquainted with the facts which I have described, and perceived that his letter to the Alexandrian Christians had failed to produce its due effect, he at once aroused the energies of his mind, and declared that he must prosecute to the utmost this war also against the secret adversary who was disturbing the peace of the Church. Then as if to bring a divine array against this enemy, he convoked a general council, and invited the speedy attendance of bishops from all quarters . . .*** This came from Eusebius' "Life of Constantine". He said the Emperor decided to have a meeting of the bishops from all quarters to look at this problem. The place selected was Nicaea in Bithynia which was not far from Constantinople. I'm sure there was considerable trepida-

tion among the bishops concerning this meeting because they knew where the Emperor was getting his information. Most, I'm sure held the Trinity in high esteem and weren't looking forward to the possibility of disagreeing with the Emperor regardless of how they felt about the monks in the desert or the Arians.

The council in 325 A.D. brought together more than two hundred and fifty bishops and included their presbyters, deacons and others. Eusebius said the number was beyond computation. It was the first time in Church history where this many leaders came together in one place. Eusebius described the entrance of Emperor Constantine as being very impressive. *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 522. And now, all rising at the signal which indicated the emperor's entrance, at last he himself proceeded through the midst of the assembly, like some heavenly messenger of God, clothed in raiment which flittered as it were with rays of light, reflecting the glowing radiance of a purple robe, and adorned with the brilliant splendor of gold and precious stones. Such was the external appearance of his person; and with regard to his mind, it was evident that he was distinguished in piety and godly fear.* It was obvious Eusebius just could not get over having an Emperor that professed to be a Christian.

Eusebius himself delivered the opening remarks expressing thanksgiving to the Almighty God on behalf of Emperor. The Emperor delivered a short message and said according to Eusebius, he wanted them to have a common harmony of sentiment. Constantine said internal strife within the Church was more evil and dangerous than any kind of war or conflict. His desire would be completely fulfilled when he saw all united in one judgment and a common spirit of peace and accord amongst them all.

When the meeting was opened to discussion to deliver opinions, Eusebius said a violent controversy arose at the very commencement. Eusebius didn't say much about the results of the meeting especially as it related to the Arian controversy. That was probably because he didn't like the results.

Several historians like Socrates, Sozoman, and Throdoret related the results of the meeting. Most all agreed that Athanasius carried the day against the Arians. In Socrates' "Ecclesiastical History", he told about the debate. ***NPNF 2, Vol 2, pp 8-9. Many of the laity were also present, who were practiced in the art of reasoning, and each eager to advocate the cause of his own party. Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, as was before said, supported the opinion of Arius, together with Theognis and Maris; of these the former was bishop of Nicaea, and Maris of Chalcedon in Bithynia. These were powerfully opposed by Athanasius, a deacon of the Alexandrian church, who was highly esteemed by Alexander, his bishop, and on that account was much envied, as will be seen hereafter.*** The historian Sozoman gave his account of the meeting. ***NPNF2, Vol 2, pp 253 Many of the bishops who were then assembled, and of the clergy who accompanied them, being remarkable for their dialectic skill, and practiced in such rhetorical methods, became conspicuous, and attracted the notice of the emperor and the court. Of that number Athanasius, who was then a deacon of Alexandria, and had accompanied his bishop Alexander, seemed to have the largest share in the counsel concerning these subjects.*** As could be seen from his own writings, Athanasius knew the Word of God so well that the Arians with their dreamed up beliefs were no match for him. Athanasius had received the Holy Spirit out there in the desert with Anthony and now the Spirit revealed the Word to him in those debates. In his own writing "Defense Against the Arians", Athanasius told how much hatred was developed against him because of his strong stand. This hatred continued to hound Athanasius throughout his lifetime, mainly because of Eusebius' influence with the Emperor and his crowd.

Although nervous at the beginning, the other bishops were strengthened by Athanasius' strong stand against the Arians. Socrates reported the decision of the group. A creed was agreed on that elevated Jesus back to the God-head and went completely against the Arian cause. This was what became known as the "Nicæan Creed". ***NPNF2, Vol 2, pp 10. This creed was recognized and acquiesced in by three hundred and eighteen (bishops); and being, as Eusebius says, unanimous in expression and sentiment, they subscribed it. Five only would not receive it, objecting to the term homoousios, 'of the same***

essence,' or consubstantial: Three hundred and eighteen to five! Eusebius of Nicomedia was one of the five, but Eusebius of Caesarea eventually voted in favor knowing full well the battle was not over. This vote should have put the problem to rest; however, when you have a five hundred pound gorilla (Emperor) on your side it was hard to admit defeat.

When the council was at the point of being dissolved, the Emperor had all the bishops come together on an appointed day and he addressed them in a farewell speech. According to Eusebius, the emperor wanted to make sure no contentiousness and disputations remained after the Council; however, it sounded like he wanted to let some air out of the Athanasius' balloon. *NPNF2 , Vol 1, pp 526 . . . to avoid contentious, disputations, amongst themselves, and not to be jealous, if any one of their number should appear pre-eminent for wisdom and eloquence, but to esteem the excellence of one a blessing common to all. On the other hand he reminded them that the more gifted should forbear to exalt themselves to the prejudice of their humbler, brethren, since it is God's prerogative to judge of real superiority. Rather should they considerately condescend to the weaker, remembering that absolute perfection in any case is a rare quality indeed?* This was an obvious dig at Athanasius for being so learned about the Scriptures and probably was the beginning of the onslaught against him directed by Eusebius of Caesarea. Even though the count was three hundred eighteen to five, the battle was far from over for Athanasius.

In 328 A.D. Athanasius was selected bishop of Alexandria. This was after Alexander the previous bishop had died. The people of the church were overjoyed; however, there were rumors from the Arian crowd that he had been elected clandestinely in a secret place. *NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 103. For they say, that 'after the death of bishop Alexander, a certain few having mentioned the name of Athanasius, six or seven Bishops elected him clandestinely in a secret place:' and this is what they wrote to the Emperors, having no scruple about asserting the greatest falsehoods. Now that the whole multitude and all the people of the Catholic church assembled together as with one mind and body, and cried, shouted, that Athanasius should be Bishop*

of their Church, made this the subject of their public prayers to Christ, . . . Not a word did they speak against him, as these persons represented, but gave him the most excellent titles they could devise, calling him good, pious, Christian, an ascetic, a genuine Bishop. It's interesting they mentioned he was in an ascetic (monk). Evidently the church at Alexandria had nothing against the monks, probably because Athanasius and Antony had shown to be such good examples. An interesting note about Athanasius comes later from one of his letters written to other monks in 358 A.D. *NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 563-564 But like good money-changers, be satisfied with the reading; but read it repeatedly if you desire to do so. For it is not safe that the writings of us babblers and private persons should fall into the hands of them that shall come after. Salute one another in love, and also all that come unto you in piety and faith.* Here Athanasius referred to himself and the monks he was writing to as "babblers". Obviously this indicated they all spoke in tongues. This letter was written at a later date where Athanasius felt much safer about referring to himself as a "babbler." So we see Athanasius spoke in tongues and was in everyway like those monks in the desert. I'm sure Eusebius realized this and he was determined all along to somehow banish Athanasius from the formal church.

Eusebius' next move occurred in 332 A.D. when through his influence with the Emperor, an edict was issued declaring five heresies illegal. They were Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulians and the Cataphrygians (Montanist). The first four were, of course, true heresies; however, Montanism had mainly been called a heresy by Eusebius. This was clearly a move by Eusebius to thwart any arguments in favor of the workings of the Holy Spirit in the desert. He had the cooperation of the emperor of the Roman Empire to accomplish his goal. Constantine issued an edict declaring these heresies, including Montanism, illegal in the Roman Empire. This was the first time the church and state combined to persecute citizens for their religious beliefs. This illustrated the advantage of having the five hundred pound gorilla on your side. *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 539-540. "Understand now, by this present statue, ye Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulians, ye who are called Cataphrygians, and all ye who devise and support heresies by means of your private assemblies, . . . All your*

counsels are opposed to the truth, but familiar with deeds of baseness; full of absurdities and fictions: and by these ye frame falsehoods, oppress the innocent, and withhold the light from them that believe. . . .For as much, then as it is no longer possible to bear with your pernicious errors, we give warning by this present statute that none of you henceforth presume to assemble yourselves together. We have directed, accordingly, that you be deprived of all the houses in which you are accustomed to hold your assemblies: and our care in this respect extends so far as to forbid the holding of your superstitious and senseless meetings, not in public merely, but in any private house, or place whatsoever. . . . that you be positively deprived of every gathering point for your superstitious meetings, I mean all the houses of prayer, if such be worthy of the name, which belong to heretics, and that these be made over without delay to the catholic Church; that any other places be confiscated to the public service, and no facility whatever be left for any future gatherings; in order that from this day forward none of your unlawful assemblies may presume to appear in any public or private place. Let this edict be made public." By this Constantine said these heretics gathering places would be handed over to the Catholic Church or confiscated for public services. In other words if you acted like a Montanist, all your property could be confiscated and you would be banished from the Church. Eusebius said that as a result of this edict the whole Church was compacted into one harmonious whole and no heretical or schismatic body anywhere continued to exist. This would certainly keep the monks in the desert away from the formal church and would be a major weapon against the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the "Church Fight".

Imagine how this edict affected Athanasius and for that matter the three hundred plus bishops who followed his lead and voted against the Arians. Everyone would have to watch what they said or wrote in the face of this edict. I'm sure some of the bishops got cold feet and decided to join the Arian cause.

Meanwhile in 333 A.D., Antony the monk had a vision and delivered a prophecy concerning the Arians. He obviously had no fear of the edict. *NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 217-218. Once as he was sitting and work-*

ing, he fell, as it were, into a trance, and groaned much at what he saw. Then after a time, having turned to the bystanders, with groans and trembling, he prayed, and falling on his knees remained so a long time. . . . And with many groans he spake as follows: 'O, my children, it were better to die before what has appeared in the vision come to pass.' And when again they asked him, having burst into tears, he said, *"Wrath is about to seize the Church, and it is on the point of being given up to men who are like senseless beasts. For I saw the table of the Lord's House, and mules standing around it on all sides in a ring, and kicking the things therein, . . .* Antony was speaking in tongues and delivering a prophecy for which the Montanists were condemned back in 175 A.D. and which was illegal at this time because of the Emperor's edict. His vision showed mules and beasts kicking at the altar in the Lord House. Antony went on to declare his opposition to the Arians. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 218. Only defile not yourselves with the Arians, for their teaching is not that of the Apostles, but that of demons and their father the devil; yea, rather, it is barren and senseless, and without light understanding, like the senselessness of these mules.*** Little did they know the Arians would plunder and defile the church in Alexandria in less than two years.

The enemies from on high continued to plague Athanasius. In 333 A.D., a new meeting was called by the Emperor to be held in Caesarea. ***NPNF 2, Vol 2, pp 275. The plots of the enemies of Athanasius involved him in fresh troubles, excited the hatred of the emperor against him, and stirred up a multitude of accusers. Wearied by their importunity, the emperor convened a council at Caesarea in Palestine. Athanasius was summoned thither; but fearing, the artifices of Eusebius, bishop of the city, of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, and of their party, he refused to attend, and for thirty months, although pressed to attend, persisted in his refusal.*** This was an obvious attempt to get Athanasius to say something where his enemies could use the new edict and brand him a Montanist. Athanasius was in a very precarious position because if he defended the "monks", he would have been branded as a heretic. He knew better than to go to Caesarea where the one in charge would be Eusebius of Caesarea. By refusing to attend Athanasius aroused the wrath of the Emperor. Buoyed by this, the Arians made all sorts of allegations against

Athanasius. One was that he murdered a fellow bishop named Arsenius and they produced an arm supposedly belonging to the victim.

Another meeting or synod was called by the Emperor in Tyre, south of Caesarea. There was no question this one was aimed at Athanasius because the Emperor pointed out you must come if commanded. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 551. Meantime should any one, though I deem it most improbable, venture on this occasion to violate my command, and refuse his attendance, a messenger shall be despatched forthwith to banish that person in virtue of an imperial edict, and to teach him that it does not become him to resist an emperor's decrees when issued in defense of truth.***

The meeting in 335 A.D. in Tyre was a joke. Athanasius produced Arsenius whom he had supposedly murdered with both his arms intact, but this had no influence with the participating Arian bishops. As the meeting wore on, Athanasius feared these bishops might become his murderers. ***NPNF2, Vol 2, pp 276. On finding that he could not remain in Tyre without peril of his life, and that there was no hope of obtaining justice against his numerous accusers, from judges who were inimical to him, he fled to Constantinople. The Synod condemned him during his absence, deposed him from the bishopric, and prohibited his residing at Alexandria, lest, said they, he should excite disturbances and seditions.*** Incidentally, where were all these Arian bishops at the council of Nicaea? Evidently the edict was having the desired effect coming from the five hundred pound gorilla.

By this time Constantine was not interested in justice but only in peace and the best way to accomplish that was to banish Athanasius from Alexandria. Eusebius of Caesarea had at last won the battle. Athanasius was banished all the way to the Gauls which was present day France. This spoke volumes to the rest of Christianity. Politically you don't cross Eusebius and the Arians and get by with it. There would be a strong incentive to rethink Arianism for many of the leaders of the formal churches who were not well grounded in the Word.

In 337 A. D. the great Emperor Constantine died leaving behind a legacy that will live for all time. He changed the face of the Roman Empire from a pagan centered society to one where the formal church became a part of almost every citizen's life.

Because he was the Emperor, it is very hard to evaluate his life as a Christian. There was no question he saw vision from God during the battle of Milivan Bridge. Constantine also did away with all the pagan practices over the empire and encouraged people to believe as he did in the one and only God. Unfortunately, because he was the Emperor, he did not have the time to sort through and find out for himself his own true beliefs. He depended on people like Eusebius for most of his knowledge and ended up being used as a tool for the Arian cause. I don't think he had any idea which side of the controversy was in line with God's Word and viewed the "Mother of All Church Fights" merely as a problem for his emperorship.

I believe in his letter to the King of Persia we see the most truthful confession of his beliefs in God. This letter in all probability was not tampered with by Eusebius. ***NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 543. "By keeping the Divine faith, I am made a partaker of the light of truth: guided by the light of truth, I advance in the knowledge of the Divine faith. Hence it is that, as my actions themselves evince, I profess the most holy religion; and this worship I declare to be that which teaches me deeper acquaintance with the most holy God; . . . For his pleasure is in works of moderation and gentleness: he loves the meek, and hates the turbulent spirit: delighting in faith, he chastises unbelief: . . . I CANNOT then, my brother, believe that I err in acknowledging this one God, the author and parent of all things . . . For I myself have witnessed the end of those who lately harassed the worshippers of God by their impious edits. And for this abundant thanksgivings are due to God that through his excellent Providence all men who observe his holy laws are gladdened by the renewed enjoyment of peace. . .*** Of course since he was writing to another king, his statements about his beliefs would be naturally more formal; however, you don't see a confession that Jesus died for his sins. It was more like an Old Testament confession of his belief in God. This, I'm sure, came

from the Arians from whom he received most of his teaching during his time as emperor.

Another inward view of Constantine came from his planned funeral services where his coffin was placed in the middle of twelve empty coffins. This, of course, depicted a scene where he belonged in the midst of the twelve apostles. *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 555. He accordingly caused twelve coffins to be set up in this church, like sacred pillars in honor and memory of the apostolic number, in the center of which his own was placed, having six of theirs on either side of it.* This probably meant he considered himself at least as important to Christianity as the twelve apostles of Jesus. We will, of course, never know how close Constantine was to his Maker, but he certainly had a very high opinion of himself.

Eusebius of Caesarea in his "Life of Constantine" described the emperor's reaction to his baptism. He decided to be baptized after he became ill. *NPNF2, Vol 1, pp 556. Thus was Constantine the first of all sovereigns who was regenerated and perfected in a church dedicated to the martyrs of Christ; thus gifted with the Divine seal of baptism, he rejoiced in spirit, was renewed, and filled with heavenly light: his soul was gladdened by reason of the fervency of his faith, and astonished at the manifestation of the power of God.* If we can believe Eusebius, Constantine had some sort of spiritual experience during his baptism because he was astonished at the manifestation of the power of God.

Prior to his baptism, Constantine divided the empire among his three sons. Constantine II was allotted the area of Gaul or most of Europe, Constantius was in charge of the East, which included Syria and Palestine and Constans received the middle portion which included Italy and Africa.

Almost immediately after the death of Constantine, Constantine II sent Athanasius back to his formal church in Alexandria. Ever the politician, he told them it was always his father's intention to return their bishop but that he exiled Athanasius in order to save his life.

In 339 A.D. from a circular letter of Athanasius we learn the Arians were becoming stronger politically and more numerous. They prevailed on the Perfect of Egypt to remove Athanasius once more from his church in Alexandria. The Arians were able to install Gregory from Cappadocia as his successor. Athanasius described his feelings during this time. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 92-93. Our sufferings have been dreadful beyond endurance, and it is impossible to describe them in suitable terms; . . . the Perfect of Egypt puts forth a public letter, bearing the form of an edict, and declaring that one Gregory from Cappadocia was coming to be my successor from the court . . . he was himself an Arian, and was sent by Eusebius and his fellows of the Arian party. For you know, brethren, that Eusebius and his fellows have always been the supporters and associates of the impious heresy of the Arian madmen, by whose means they have ever carried on their designs against me, and were the authors of my banishment into Gaul.*** There was no question these moves were being directed by the Arians at a very high level which of course was Eusebius of Caesarea. Athanasius went on and described what happened to the church in Alexandria and its members. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 93-94. . . . Gregory, a man too of no respectable character, and moreover supported by Eusebius and his fellows, and therefore full of zeal against the Church; this person, by means of promises which he afterwards fulfilled, succeeded in gaining over the heathen multitude, with the Jews and disorderly persons, and having excited their passions, sent them in a body with swords and clubs into the churches to attack the people.*** The Arians had taken off the gloves in this church fight. They were using anyone to persecute the Christians who were opposed to them. Using these ruffians, the Arians also persecuted virgins and the monks. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 94. For holy and undefiled virgins were being stripped naked, and suffering treatment, which is not to be named, and if they resisted, they were in danger of their lives. Monks were being trampled under foot and perishing; some were being hurled headlong; others were being destroyed with swords and clubs; others were being wounded and beaten.*** This proved the point the Arians did not approve of the monks or any of their beliefs. These Arians had completely changed the outlook and ministry of the formal church. From this point most all of the formal

churches became a political tool for the Arians and their political ambitions.

Meanwhile Antony the monk, close to one hundred years old by now, made one last desperate trip out of the mountains. He did this to stand up for Athanasius and condemn the Arians. ***NPNF2, Vol 3, pp 128 Before this time in the reign of Constantius the great Antonius had acted in the same way in Alexandria, for he abandoned the desert and went up and down the city, telling all men that Athanasius was the preacher of the true doctrine and that the Arian faction were enemies of the truth. So those godly men knew how to adapt themselves to each particular opportunity, when to remain inactive, and at rest, and when to leave the deserts for towns.*** This came from Theodoret's "Ecclesiastical History". This was the last we hear of Antony as he died several years later in 355 A.D. in his own cell in the mountains.

In the year of 340 A.D. Eusebius of Caesarea died. Arius the instigator of Arianism died in 336 A.D. and Eusebius of Nicomedia died in 337 A.D. Time had eliminated most of the original principals of the Arian party. What remained of the Arian party was a power hungry group who could not by any stretch of the imagination be considered Christians. At their zenith, the Arians controlled a majority of the formal churches. Being a bishop of a formal church was more of a political plum than anything associated with Christianity. They had succeeded in completely removing the Holy Spirit from most of the formal churches.

I'm sure Athanasius thought many times about the prophecy of Antony concerning the Arians taking over the church. Athanasius wrote a discourse from Rome in 340 A.D. Since Eusebius was dead, Athanasius felt he could promote the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. He said the Gifts were given to man and the Arians meant to eliminate the Holy Spirit. That's why they discredited the Son. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 435. And when it is said, 'all power is given unto Me,' and 'I received,' and 'Wherefore God highly exalted Him,' these are gifts given from God to us through Him . . . For this was the reason of His becoming man, that, as being given to Him, they might pass on to us. For of such***

gifts mere man had not become worthy; and again the mere Word had not needed them; the Word then was united to us, and then imparted to us power, and highly exalted us. . . Since then, the Word being in flesh, man himself was exalted, and received power, therefore these things are referred to the Word, since they were given on His account; for on account of the word in man were these gifts given. And as 'the Word became flesh,' so also man himself received the gifts which came through the Word. Here Athanasius sounds like Antony the monk or Paul the apostle. This showed his willingness to test the edict about being branded a Montanist. He said Jesus as a man had the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and now man has received the Gifts through the Word which, of course, was Jesus. Athanasius probably felt more free at this point than any time since being with Anthony when he was seventeen years old. He was able to show the power of the Holy Spirit which revealed a vast gulf between what he believed and the beliefs of the Arians of the formal church.

After Gregory the Arian bishop at Alexandria died in 345 A. D. and Constans the Emperor for that region died in 346 A.D., Athanasius was allowed to return to Alexandria. The people of Alexandria were ecstatic at his return. They realized what they had been missing. Many gave themselves to prayer and many embraced the monastic life. This was what Athanasius had envisioned for the church--for it to be like the monks in the desert. This was a taste of the ekklesia-church that Jesus wanted and Paul proclaimed in his teachings. During this time at Alexandria Athanasius became more and more bold in his preaching and writing against the Arians and in favor of the workings of the Holy Spirit.. There was no Eusebius lurking around the emperor waiting for Athanasius to say something that could be used against him.

Athanasius in Discourse III explained how we have the Holy Spirit in us and that caused God to be in us. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 406. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit. Therefore because of the grace of the spirit which has been given to us, in Him we come to be, and He in us; and since it is the Spirit of God, therefore through His becoming in us, reasonably we are, as having the Spirit, considered to be in God, and thus is God in us.*** This was the same as what Jesus said in John 14:17. By

356 A.D. Athanasius had riled the Arians and emperor Constantius with his preaching and writings to the point where he was exiled once more from his church.

Encouraged by the emperor, the Arian forces took over the Church at Alexandria by force. They installed a man named George as bishop who according to Athanasius was not even a believer. Athanasius told the members not to listen to the Arians and implied who ever had the money could become a bishop of the churches. They again pillaged the monks and monasteries; however, more people were recognizing the Arians for what they were, merely ruffians with no beliefs except for their own benefit. They were even beginning to have disagreements among themselves.

At about the same time of the shameful debacle in Alexandria, on the opposite side of the empire, there were Christians who began to preach and write against the Arians. One such man was Hilary of Poitiers in Gaul. He was born in 300-315 A.D. in the area of Poitiers and made bishop in 350 A.D. at a relatively mature age.

In the west, especially near the frontier, the churches were much less formal and more like the monks of the desert. In fact a former soldier named Martin met Hilary and was greatly influence by his Christianity. He subsequently became a monk and was gifted by God with a healing ministry. Hilary was himself a very spiritual man and believed the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were needed in the formal church. He couldn't understand how the Arians had become such a strong force in the formal church. In fact he started a campaign by writing to Emperor Constantius criticizing the way he favored the Arians. Hilary was subsequently exiled from his church to Asia for his troubles. I'm sure Constantius had enough problems with the popular and powerful Athanasius in Alexandria without dealing with this small-town bishop from Poitiers.

While in exile, Hilary composed his "On The Trinity". It was a stinging rebuttal of the Arian beliefs and was supported by the Word of God. Evidently Hilary had not heard about the old edict promoted by Eusebius that Montanism was an illegal heresy. In his "On The Trinity"

Hilary saw the ultimate goal of the Arians was to make the Holy Spirit ineffectual by making Jesus a creature and not on par with God. ***NPNF2, Vol 9, pp 52-53. Similarly certain teachers of our present day assert that the Image and wisdom and Power of God was produced out of nothing, and in time. They do this to save God, regarded as Father of the Son, from being lowered to the Son's level. They are fearful lest this birth of the Son from Him should deprive Him of His glory, and therefore come to God's rescue by styling His Son a creature made out of nothing, in order that God may live on in solitary perfection without a Son born of Himself and partaking His nature. What wonder that their doctrine of the Holy Ghost should be different from ours, when they presume to subject the Giver of the Holy Ghost to creation, and change, and non-existence. Thus do they destroy the consistency and completeness of the mystery of the faith. They break up the absolute unity of God by assigning differences of nature where all is clearly common to Each; they deny the Father by robbing the son of His true Sonship; they deny the Holy Ghost in their blindness to the facts that we possess Him and that Christ gave Him.*** The Arians' main problem was that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were active out in the desert with the monks. Hilary, I believe, knew and understood what the monks were doing in the desert,

Hilary went on and said the manifestations of the Spirit were profitable to mankind and he enumerated all of the Gifts to the Body of Christ. ***NPNF2, Vol 9, pp 146. He bids them wait for the promise of the Father of which they had heard from His lips. We may be sure that here we have a reference to the Father's same promise . . . or by the working of miracles, that what we do may be understood to be the power of God, or by prophesy, that through our understanding of doctrine we might be known to be taught of God . . . Thus in all these things distributed to each one to profit withal there is the manifestation of the spirit, the gift of the Spirit being apparent through these marvellous advantages bestowed upon each.*** By these manifestations mankind has a marvelous advantage for life on this earth. Hilary made a beautiful statement of how the ekklesia-Body of Christ was to benefit man. These Gifts were present with the monks and Hilary wanted them for the formal church.

Hilary made such a nuisance of himself he was exiled back to where he came from in Poitiers. In 361 A.D. he and the monk, Martin of Tours teamed up once more and continued a close relationship until Hilary's death in 365 A.D. Obviously, Hilary, in spite of his beliefs, was probably not free to operate in the Holy Spirit at his formal church. Probably, that was why he built a monastery for Martin of Tours so they would be free to operate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in a place separate from the formal church.

After 362 A.D. in the last years of Athanasius' life, he was expelled two more times from his church in Alexandria. It all depended on how much influence the Arians had with the many emperors who came and went during this period.

In his "Treatise on the Synods", Athanasius made sure the people were aware about who were the major players in the Arian heresy. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 458-459. This is a part of what Arius, Eusebius and his fellows . . . And Eusebius of Nicomedia wrote over and over to Arius, to this effect, 'Since your sentiments are good, pray that all may adopt them; for it is plain to any one, that what has been made was not before its origination; but what came to be and his fellow vomited from their heretical hearts. And before the Nicene Council took place, similar statements were made by has a beginning of being.'*** And Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine, in a letter to Euphratation the Bishop, did not scruple to say plainly that Christ was ***not true God.*** Athanasius knew Eusebius of Caesarea was the real power behind the Arian movement. He had the ear of the emperor and used that influence to promote the Arian position wherever possible. He said Eusebius did not hesitate to say Jesus was not God.

In 367 A.D. because of his statue and his age, many of his colleagues urged Athanasius to set down the books of the Word to be in the Canon and accredited as Divine. I know of no other Church Father who would be better qualified to do this job. I believe this to be one of the great God-given miracles of Christianity, especially in light of the recent Arian fiasco, that we have the Word of God canonized in its present form. ***NPNF2, Vol 4, pp 552. Again it is not tedious to speak of the (books) of the New Testament. These are, the four***

Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Afterwards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, written in this order. The first, to the Romans, then two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then to the Philippians; then to the Colossians; after these, two to the Thessalonians, and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John. These are fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone is proclaimed the doctrine of godliness. Let no man add to these, neither let him take ought from these. Thus was the Bible canonized in its present form. Athanasius spent the rest of his years in Alexandria proclaiming the Trinity and condemning the Arian beliefs. He died in 373 A.D.

Basil of Caesarea in Cappodocia took up the cause of Athanasius after he was made bishop in 370 A.D. Before that he had been a monk and had probably met Athanasius out in the desert of Egypt. In 374 A.D. he composed his "On The Spirit" in order to inform the most ignorant formal church members about the Holy Spirit. He started by telling them about the ancient times when God did things through the Spirit. *NPNF2, Vol 8, pp 25. Whether you wish to examine ancient evidence; ---the blessings of the patriarchs, the succor given through the legislation, the types, the prophecies, the valorous feats in war, the signs wrought through just men;---or on the other hand the things done in the dispensation of the coming of our Lord in the flesh;---all is through the Spirit . . . And is it not plain and incontestable that the ordering of the Church is effected through the Spirit? For He gave, it is said, "in the church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps governments, diversities of tongues," for this order is ordained in accordance with the division of the gifts that are of the Spirit . . . They, then, that were sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption, and preserve pure and undiminished the first fruits which they received of the Spirit, are they that shall hear the words "well done thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been fruitful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."* He explained the Holy Spirit

established the ekklesia-church and the Body of Christ receiving the Gifts from the Holy Spirit. He then instructed them to use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit like the faithful steward in Matt 25:2. Basil debunked the argument about there being no new revelations. This was used against the Montanist and it is used by some today. ***NPNF2, Vol 8, pp 40-41 Of the beliefs and practices whether generally accepted or publicly enjoined which are preserved in the Church some we possess derived from written teaching; others we have received delivered to us "in a mystery" by the tradition of the apostles; and both of these in relation to true religion and have the same force. And these no one will gainsay; ---no one, at all events, who is even moderately versed in the institutions of the Church. For were we to attempt to reject such customs as have no written authority, on the ground that the importance they possess is small, we should unintentionally injure the Gospel in its very vitals; or, rather, should make our public definition a mere phrase and nothing more.*** He pointed out revelations were the vitals of the Gospels. It was what Jesus said in Matt 16:18, "On these revelations I will build My ekklesia." Basil pointed out, because of the lack of the Holy Spirit most of the formal churches had turned into political institutions with people pushing for the chief places. Although discouraged, he said eventually the true knowledge will be supplied by the Holy Spirit. He died at age fifty in 379 A.D.

The stalwarts like Basil, Hilary, and especially Athanasius fought a life-long battle against the forces sent by Satan to discredit the Holy Spirit. The formal church survived this battle, but it lost a lot in the process. It was fragmented with many different and varying beliefs; however, the Arian movement was no longer a threat to the entire formal church. Because of this the "Mother of All Church Fights" had now come to an end. The Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D. put the seal on this victory. The battle with the Arians had driven Jesus' ekklesia underground, but by the time it was over many people realized the Gates of Hades - (forces of organizational control) -- had not overcome His ekklesia.

In the eastern part of empire, the formal church would be forever tainted by the blight of the Arians. Because of their own unbelief, the Holy

Spirit was never allowed to minister and therefore there was no connection to God. Consequently, the formal church controlled by the Arians went the way of the world with leaders only interested in their own personal gain and a membership stranded in hypocrisy. Does this sound like some of today's formal churches? What kind of arrogant audacity is involved when known child molesters are allowed to remain in positions of responsibility? Or when a practicing homosexual living with another homosexual in an open relationship aspires to and is named head of one of the oldest Christian organizations. Obviously, like the Arians, the Holy Spirit has been completely shut out and without the Holy Spirit, there's no connection to God.

By 381 A.D. the people (laity) were beginning to see how corrupt the Arians had made the formal church. Churchmen like Athanasius, Basil and others by their writings and witness gained influence with the rank and file by their stand for the Holy Spirit. Even though both Athanasius and Basil were deceased by the time of the council, their influence continued in the discussions and resulting creed. There were 150 bishops who agreed on a creed to strengthen the role of the Holy Spirit. According to the creed, the Holy Spirit was definitely part of the Trinity because it proceedeth from the Father and receiving of the Son.

The Nicean Creed agreed to in 325 A.D. only mentioned the Holy Spirit. After saying, "we believe in Jesus" many different ways, it went on to say, "and in the Holy spirit." In Constantinople they agreed on a creed which went into a fair amount of detail about their beliefs on the Holy Spirit. ***NPNF2, Vol 14, pp 164. And we believe in the Holy Ghost, who spake in the Law, and preached in the Prophets, and descended at Jordan, and spake in the Apostles, and indwells the Saints. And thus we believe in him, that he is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the perfect Spirit, the Spirit the Comforter, uncreate, who proceedeth from the Father, receiving of the Son, and believed on.*** This completely refuted the Arians who at this point were beginning to question the existence of the Holy Spirit. The creed could have been stronger on the Holy Spirit; however, because many of the bishops were from the formal churches with many Arian members, it was a miraculous step in the right direction.

Martin of Tours continued to carry on a ministry of the Gifts such as healing with signs and wonders throughout his area. He was compared to Antony the "great monk" from the desert region of Egypt. After Martin was made bishop in Tours in 372 A.D., he combined the cells of the monks with his formal church. I daresay this was not the ordinary formal church. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit were active because of the influence of the monks. ***NPNF2 Vol 11, pp 91. There was the same humility in his heart, and the same homeliness in his garments. Full alike of dignity and courtesy, he kept us the position of a bishop properly, yet in such a way as not to lay aside the objects and virtues of a monk. Accordingly he made use, for some time, of the cell connected with the church; but afterwards, when he felt it impossible to tolerate the disturbance caused by the numbers of those visiting it, he established a monastery for himself about two miles outside the city.*** Evidently many people were curious and visited this church because it was more like the Apostle Paul's ekklesia-church they had heard about in the "Bible". Through Martin's teachings and influence many bishops were produced for the surrounding towns. ***NPNF2 Vol 11, pp 9. These, though far differently brought up, had forced themselves down to this degree of humility and patient endurance, and we have seen numbers of these afterwards made bishops. For what city or church would there be that would not desire to have its priests from among those in the monastery of Martin?*** These bishops would have been very different from the Arian leaders and would have created a more receptive atmosphere for the Holy Spirit. Martin was probably able to continue this ministry of the Holy Spirit because Tours was on the edge of the frontier. I'm sure this spiritual freedom reached to the southwest into Spain, to a man named Priscillian. He and his group began to let the Holy Spirit minister in their formal churches.

Martin destroyed many pagan temples in his area and built church buildings in their place. Once when he was tearing down a temple, a group of heathens rushed him in a rage. One raised his sword and Martin stopped and offered him his neck. ***NPNF2 Vol 11, pp 11. And when one of them, bolder than the rest, made an attack upon him with a drawn sword, Martin throwing back his cloak, offered his bare neck to the assassin. Nor did the heathen delay to strike, but in the***

very act of lifting up his right arm, he fell to the ground on his back, and being overwhelmed by the fear of God, he entreated for pardon. Obviously he too was "slain in the spirit". The would-be assassin was greatly affected by this and in all probability became a believer.

Sulpitius Severus in his 'Life of St. Martin', relates one miracle after another that happened as a result of Martin's ministry. He said, "Scarcely any sick person came to him for assistance without at once being restored to health."