

The Eternal Kingdom

Lesson #20

July 31, 2019

In our previous lesson we looked at the state of the church. We had noticed that various groups originated in the second century. The formal written word wasn't collected until the 5th century and as a result, the gospel was published orally from memory or copies of letters that were circulated about. The church was in a very vulnerable and volatile state at this time. It made it easy for false teachers to peddle their ideas and teachings to the masses. Unfortunately, groups would develop as a result of it.

Marcion

- Pronunciation: [**mahr**-shuh n, -shee-uh n, -see-uh n]
- Born 85 A.D. and the son of an elder in Pontus
- A wealthy ship owner
- Arrived in Rome 138 A.D.
- He was very generous and influential man
- His Biblical Views:
 - Thought the church was too legalistic
 - He rejected the value of the O.T. and viewed God differently in the O.T.
 - He only respected the Apostle Paul
- The church at Rome withdrew from him in 144 A.D.
- He wrote "Antithesis" or "Contradictions"
- He believed Paul's and Luke's writings as being credible
- He created the Marcionite church
- He created his own Canon (The Marcion Bible), 11 books

(Read book material).

Go through all bullets and discuss them.

Gnosticism

- Gnostic means “to know” [*nos-tuh-siz-uh m*]
- They relied on human wisdom rather than revelation from God
- Salvation was obtained via intellectual means
- Examples of their error:
 - The material world was evil and the spiritual was good which led to the worship of spirits like angels (Col.2:1-4, 18)
 - They combined various religious teachings (Jn.10:1-5; 1Cor.1:10)
 - They divided men into three classes 1. Material or animal, 2. Psychic, and 3. Spiritual
 - The O.T. was perverted and God was really the devil and the serpent was the true God
 - They believed in fulfilling fleshly desires in order to destroy their desires (Col.2:12; 3:1-10)

(Read book).

(Show and discuss bullets).

Docetism

- Pronunciation: [dō'sē,tizəm, 'dōsi-]
- Means “to seem”
- Christ seemed to suffer
- Jesus' incarnation and crucifixion were not actual facts
- What was Ignatius' response?

(Read book).

(Read bullets).

Why do you suppose the adherents of this sect didn't believe in the incarnation and crucifixion?

Ignatius response was to create a watch dog against error. He was “over correcting” and “over reaching”! What do we have elders for? (Acts 20:28)

Montanism

- Pronunciation: /'män(t)ə,nizəm/
- Montanus, the founder of Montanism, minimized leadership in the church but in exchange for direct revelation of the Holy Spirit
- Montanism relied on spiritual gifts and would resemble charismatic churches of today
- They believed in an earthly reign of Christ for 1,000 years
- They set a date for Christ's return
- Marriage was permissible but discouraged
- They were excommunicated in Asia Minor

(Read book).

(Read content on power point).

Their way of bucking authority was playing the "God said I could do it" card. This reminds me of a lady who started living with her boyfriend. She said God would want her to be happy and she sees nothing wrong with it. It also reminds me of the person who keeps making bad choices, they say they just going have to pray for God to show them an answer. My response is He has, it's called the Bible.

They believed that spiritual gifts still existed even when Paul said they would come to an end (1Cor.13:8-12). The last apostle to write inspired words died about sixty years before Montanism came into existence.

They were by all accounts post-millennialist. They believed Christ would set up his kingdom for a thousand years and then take the church home. They set dates for Christ's return (Mt.24:36).

Marriage was discouraged. They looked down on couples for marrying. Perhaps this goes back to Paul's writings to the saints in Corinth. (1Cor.7:7-8; 32-33). In response (1Cor.7:26; 28).

Their teachings were so radical, they were banned from the region of Asia Minor.