

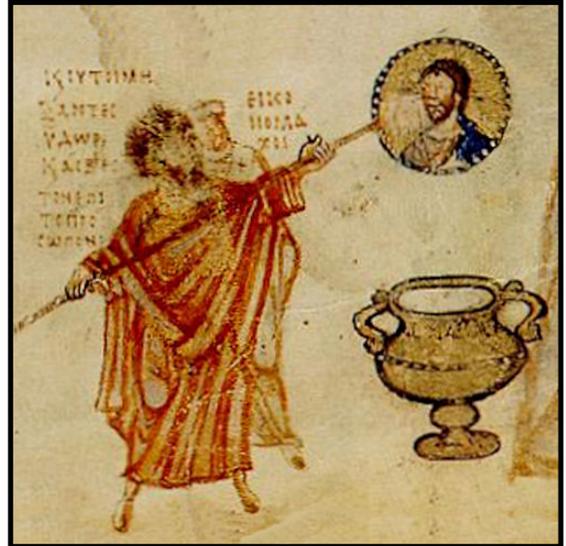
{ Lecture 16 }

THE CHURCH OF THE MIDDLE AGES (Part 2)
Key Figures and Events from the Fifth to Fifteenth Centuries

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V. **The Iconoclast Controversy Erupts in the East** (730–842)

- Debate broke out in the Eastern Church over the use of icons (images that depicted Christ and other biblical saints); those who endorsed the use of icons were known as *iconodules* while those who opposed the use of icons were *iconoclasts*
- As the use of icons became more and more prevalent, controversy erupted as to their use; for example, in 695 the Byzantine emperor Justinian II minted gold coins with the face of Christ on them



- The iconoclast controversy was, in large part, an extension of the Chalcedonian debate regarding the nature of Christ.
 - The iconoclasts were convinced that the two natures of Christ could not be adequately represented in an image, sculpture, or painting. To make an icon was to only represent his human side, and thus separate the human from the divine. Thus, they asserted that icons should be rejected. This was all the more true, they believed, because the Second Commandment forbids the use of images, and the Old Testament forbids any worship of idols.
 - The iconodules, on the other hand, believed that the incarnation superseded the Second Commandment, since Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. Moreover, they argued that the icons were not idols (which are physical representations of false gods) since icons represent actual people.
- Around 730, Emperor Leo III ordered that an icon of Christ (which was prominently featured at the entrance to the palace of Constantinople) be replaced with a simple cross. Part of his motivation seems to have been

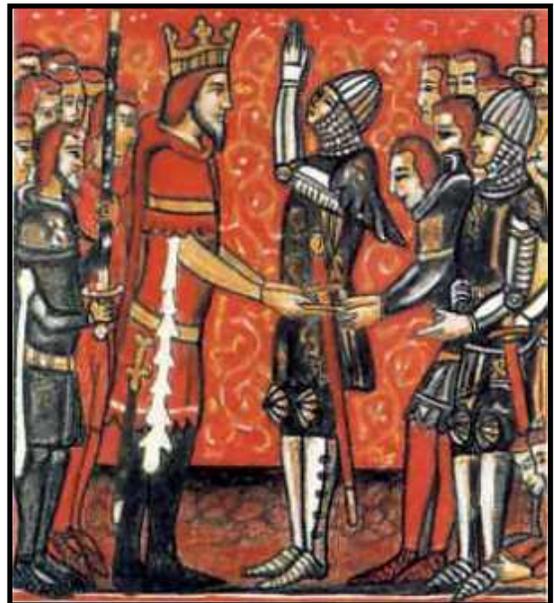
superstitious—Leo thought some of his recent military setbacks may have come from an overemphasis on the veneration of icons throughout the empire.

- A ban was placed on icons and Germanus I, the Patriarch of Constantinople, lost his position. When news of this reached the West, Pope Gregory III condemned Leo's actions.
- When Leo died in 740, his son Constantine V (741–775) established the iconoclast position as dogma at the Council of Hieria in 754. Constantine actively worked to rid the empire of icons and many were destroyed.
- Against Constantine's policies, an underground movement of iconodules began to grow, of whom the most prominent voice was John of Damascus (a Syrian monk whose writings remain very influential in modern Eastern Orthodox circles)
- Constantine's son, Leo IV (775–780) continued his father's iconoclastic policies. However, his wife Irene was secretly an iconodule. When Leo IV died, she became a co-regent with their son Constantine VI.
- Irene organized a new church council, known as the Second Council of Nicea (787) which overturned the ruling of the Council of Hieria and took the title, "The Seventh Ecumenical Council." The Eastern Orthodox Church considers this to be the last ecumenical church council. The Roman Catholic Church also participated in the council (Pope Adrian I sent two legates to represent him), and therefore recognizes the council as ecumenical.
- But the iconoclasts were not done. In 814, emperor Leo V again reinstated a ban on icons (probably again motivated by military interests—fearing divine displeasure for excessive veneration to icons). Soon appeals were being made to the iconoclast council of 754.
- Leo was succeeded by his son, Michael II, and grandson, Theophilus. When Theophilus died in 842, his wife Theodora became co-regent with their son Michael III. In 843, Theodora had icons restored in the empire (following in the footsteps of Irene from fifty years earlier).
- Icons have featured as a primary part of Eastern Orthodox theology and practice ever since.

VI. **The Western Church Crowns a Holy Roman Emperor** (Charlemagne [742–814])

- While the Eastern Church was arguing about icons, the Western Church was making official inroads with the Franks.
- By the late 6th century, Francia had emerged as a powerful kingdom in what had once been part of the Western Roman Empire
- In 687, a man named Pippin of Herstal became the sole governor of the Franks (under the token reign of the Merovingian kings)
- Pippin's son, Charles Martel, succeeded him as the governor. Charles is best remembered for defeating Muslim forces in 732 at the Battle of Tours (and thus halting the advance of Islam into Europe)
- Charles's two sons (Carloman and Pippin the Short) succeeded him in governing the Frankish kingdom. When Carloman stepped down from his post, Pippin the Short was anointed King of the Franks in 754.
- Thus, the Merovingian dynasty ended and the Carolingian dynasty (named for Charles Martel) began. The transition was supported by both Pope Zachary and Pope Stephen II after him.

- Charlemagne, the oldest son of Pippin the Short, began his reign in 768. He co-ruled the empire with his brother Carloman until 771 when his brother died.
- In 772, Pope Hadrian demanded that the Lombards give certain lands back to the papacy. The Lombards refused and began to take Papal lands. Their armies headed for Rome.
- The pope appealed to Charlemagne who brought his armies to the pope's defense. The Lombards were defeated



- In 799, Pope Leo III was run out of Rome; he came to Charlemagne and convinced the Frankish king to bring him back to Rome and restore him; after being restored in December, 800, Leo crowned Charlemagne the "Emperor of the Romans" on Christmas Day
- This was considered a major offense by the Byzantine rulers ***(Class note: Constantine V)*, who considered themselves to be the true rulers of the Roman

Empire. Charlemagne, for his part, sent ambassadors to Constantinople to propose marriage to Irene, but the people of Constantinople would not allow it.

- Charlemagne spent most of his reign at war, expanding the territories of the Frankish Empire, and converting many of the Germanic tribes to Nicene Christianity.
- Charlemagne's reign ushered in a renaissance of sorts, as the learning of the monasteries made its way into the Frankish culture.

Christopher Catherwood: One of the major legacies of North African Christianity remains with us, although now in the twenty-first century this phenomenon has begun a sharp decline. This is monasticism.

The notion of living cut off from the rest of the world, in isolation from it, was unknown to the early church and indeed contradicts Scripture since Christians are supposed to be salt and light in the communities in which God has placed them. . . . Historians differ as to when monasticism began, but most of them think it was around the fourth century, in northern Africa. Monasticism had been practiced in Asia for a long time—Buddhist monasteries date back for centuries, for example, and similar eastern imports include the halo around the heads of saints in pictures, which is also Buddhist in origin.

Initially the movement began with hermits living on their own in the desert. These include Anthony (256–356) and Simon Stylites (c. 390–456) who became famous for his unusual lifestyle of living on the top of a pillar.

Monasticism as we know it probably started around 320 with a community in the Egyptian desert founded by Pachomius, who lived about 290–346. This community became distinguished when the great Bible translator Jerome translated its rules into Latin. Bible memorization was compulsory to gain entrance, and anyone illiterate wishing to join was taught to read and write.

We must as Protestants be fair to some of monasticism's greatest achievements. The monks were careful to preserve the written Word of God, and we owe the survival of countless collections of Scripture to the monks who did so much to perpetuate them and protect them, especially in the West, from marauding pagan invaders.

When the barbarian invasions came at the end of the Roman Empire in the west (and those of Islam two centuries later), it was often the libraries of the great monasteries that helped preserve not just the Scriptures but Western civilization itself. This was especially so in Europe, as all other forms of knowledge, especially secular, had been utterly destroyed. The achievement of Martin of Tours (who died in 397) in bringing the monastic movement to the West is therefore historically

very important, as monks preserved literacy at a time when the invaders were illiterate.

By 800 and the accession to the new Holy Roman Emperor of its first ruler, Charlemagne, the preservation in monasteries of so much learning created a major outpouring of knowledge, usually described as the Carolingian Renaissance. Countless documents from Roman times were rediscovered, and it is more than likely that many monasteries had actually preserved the Latin originals, which were then copied en masse and distributed throughout the empire. (*Church History: A Crash Course for the Curious* [Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2007], 70–72.)

- How are evangelicals to assess this period of Christian development?

Christopher Catherwood: In western and central Europe, the great edifice of Roman power collapsed, with nothing solid to succeed it until 800. In that year the ruler of the Franks, Charles the Great (*Carolus Magnus* in Latin; Charlemagne), declared himself to be Holy Roman Emperor, a title that was to last for over a thousand years, down to 1806.

One key point needs to be made for us as evangelical Christians: do we believe that no one was saved, born again, and went to heaven in that thousand-year period? . . . [I]t is important to contemplate this theologically. We rightly revere, look back to, and defend the Reformation. But in so doing we need to be careful about saying that there were no Christians over so long a prior time frame. Surely we cannot say that whatever the doctrinal quirks of the medieval church, and we will not deny them, no one was redeemed for over a millennium.

What secular historians call Late Antiquity—the time between the fall of Rome [in 476] and the origins of the Holy Roman Empire—was a period of slow but steady conversions as pagan peoples heard the gospel for the first time and became Christians. We have looked at some of this already in considering how England became Christian, and the same gradual process took place in other parts of western Europe as well. . . . Brave monks would venture into the great forests, some would be martyred, and others proved successful, with one of the biggest tribes, the Franks, converting around 496.

When we talk of peoples becoming Christian, we need to recall that similar large-scale conversions of people groups still occur, often now in less developed parts of the world. We may feel more comfortable with individual conversions, and one does wonder at the authenticity of so many in a single ethnic or similar group professing faith simultaneously. Yet it does seem that such things can be genuine if God is truly behind them.

Also growing rapidly at this time was the power of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, since it was his office that was the one major remnant from the days of the Roman Empire, along with the order and stability that

empire brought with it. Now that western Europe was cut off politically, culturally, and increasingly theologically from the other powerful centers of ancient Christianity, those who deemed themselves the Pope's equals were far removed, and the Pope's power in western Europe grew accordingly. (*Church History: A Crash Course for the Curious* [Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2007], 59–61.)

VII. The Papacy Grows More and More Corrupt (800–1000)

- Adrian I (772–795)
 - He ruled over a state church and was first to be called Holy Father
 - He taught Nepotism (the giving of authority to own relatives.) He tried to put his own cousins into office.

- Leo III (795–816)
 - He succeeded Adrian. Upon coming to the office, he made an allegiance with Charlemagne (742-814, Emperor in Rome) by sending him the keys to Peter's tomb.
 - In 799, followers of Adrian met Leo in the streets of Rome and assaulted him with the goal of depriving him of his eyes and tongue.
 - Leo III fled to Charlemagne who reinstated him in Rome.
 - Charlemagne (immoral man) then came to pray before Peter's altar of prayer.
 - In December 800, Leo III crowned Charlemagne with the imperial crown.
 - This marks the unofficial beginning of the Holy Roman Empire; the actual beginning of the Holy Roman Empire came in 962, with Otto I (the Great) of Germany, being crowned by Pope John XII as emperor.
 - A "Divine Theocracy" between Leo III and Charlemagne

- Paschal I (817–824)
 - He was responsible for murdering 2 officers to get elected.

- No investigation was allowed because the "Pope has power over souls of men."
- Adrian II (867–872)
 - The Pope has an illegitimate son from the wife of Legate Eleutherius.
 - Legate Eleutherius stole the pope's daughter (40 year old maid). He later murdered the pope's wife and daughter.
- Others:
 - Stephen VII (896–897), lasted 2 years and then was murdered by John IX.
 - John IX (898–900), lasted 2 years and then was killed by Leo V.
 - Leo V (903), lasted 2 months and then was murdered by Christophocus.
 - Christophocus (903–904), became pope for one year and then was deposed.
 - Sergius III (904–911), killed Christophocus and was pope for 7 years.
 - John XIV (983–984), was murdered. The 10th century was the darkest of Dark Ages.
- Summary
 - The papacy was totally degraded from 880–1000. This was one of the most barbaric periods in history with 30 popes reigning less than 2 years each.
 - From the time of Martin II (882–884) on, the papacy became the "bone of contention among rival factions." Popes murdered each other. Leo V (903) reigned two months and was murdered by his chaplain.

VIII. **The Church of the Roman Empire Officially Splits in Two** (1054)

*** (Class note: This is the Great Schism)*

- History

- The Eastern and Western Church had experienced tension and distancing for some time (in part due to various theological disputes and a difference in language—the East spoke Greek, the West spoke Latin)
- In 1054, tensions reached their height between Pope Leo IX and Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople.
- Leo sent (*year 1054*) delegates to Constantinople demanding that Cerularius recognize the Church of Rome as the head of all the churches. Cerularius refused.
- As a result, Cardinal Humbert (the leader of the Roman delegation) excommunicated the Patriarch. In turn, the Patriarch excommunicated the Roman legates.
- These events are generally regarded as constituting the Great Schism between the East and the West. However, when Western Crusaders besieged and sacked Constantinople in 1204, the breach became irreparable.
- Still, there were attempts at reunification, in 1274 at the Second Council of Lyon and in 1439 at the Council of Florence. When Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453 attempts at reunification ended, at least until modern times.
- Major theological divisions center on the *Filique* Clause and papal authority

Four Distinctive Emphases in Eastern Orthodoxy

- In the West, there is an emphasis on sin, grace, justification, salvation, and the sacraments.
- In the East, the emphasis is on different distinctives.
 1. Mystery (*apothaticism*)
 - An emphasis on negative theology, the shadow rather than the light; though there is revelation, there is also mystery.

- The Eastern Church celebrates, emphasizes and adores the mystery. The Western Church is always trying to understand the problem; the Eastern Church prefers to maintain the mystery and worship God as a result.

2. Tradition

- In the Western Church, the Reformation eventually questions the church's emphasis on tradition.
- In the Eastern Church, there has never been a check placed on tradition.
- In the East, tradition is considered the witness of the Spirit. (The Eastern Church believes the Spirit inspired the Seven Ecumenical Councils, such that the miracle of Pentecost occurred again at each of those councils.)
- Thus, the Ecumenical Councils are considered to be on par with Scripture. To change the confessions of these Councils is viewed with the same concern as changing the Scripture. In the Eastern mind, there is no such thing as *sola Scriptura* (or a closed canon) because God continues to speak through the church.

3. Theosis

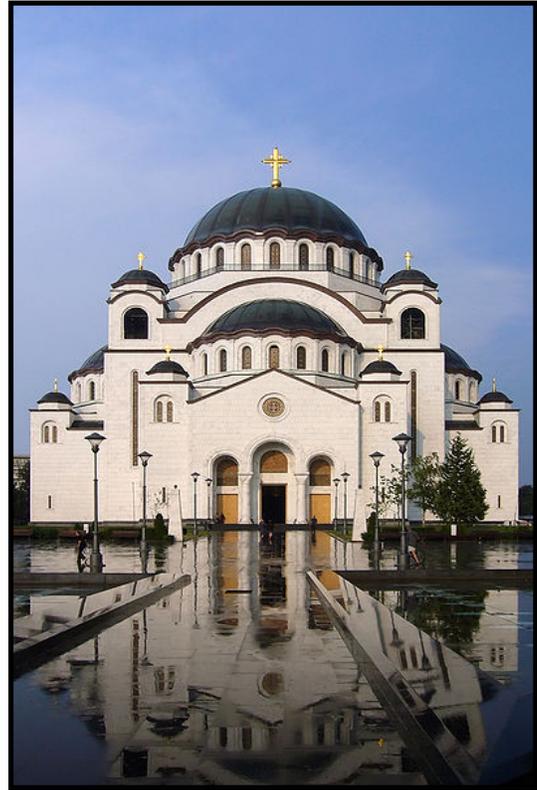
- This is a Greek term referring to “deification” and is really the summary of Eastern Orthodox understanding of salvation
- Sinful man is changed to become “like God”
- This concept is often expressed more strongly than this: God became man so that man might become God
- Western theologians are uncomfortable with the strong expressions of this idea in Eastern theology—because the language is suggestive of heresy; in the West, the mystics use similar language and are accused of pantheism

4. Icons

- Images of Christ and the saints are present everywhere as objects of veneration
- The Eastern Church generally portrays Christ in His power (as the King and Judge), whereas the West generally portrays Him suffering on the cross
- The use of icons caused great controversy in the East in the 8th and 9th centuries

- Basic Facts about Eastern Orthodoxy

- They call their church the “original church”. The church from which all other Christian churches evolved.
- Sunday is the day of worship, and Christmas is celebrated on December 25. However, the Orthodox Church differs on the date of Easter.
- “Saints Day” celebrations are very important to Orthodox individuals and families.
- Only men can be priests in the Orthodox Church, and priests are allowed to marry and have a family; however, they are not allowed to go up in the hierarchy if they marry.



- Most Orthodox homes have an “icon corner.” It is an area set aside for prayer and reflection. These icons have been blessed and therefore are treated with the utmost respect.
- Orthodox men and women typically wear crosses that are of special significance, because it was given to them as a gift from their god-father at their baptism. The cross is always worn for the rest of their lives.
- Orthodox Christians wear wedding bands on their right hands and cross themselves from right to left, not left to right as other “denominations” do. They do this because of the belief of always wanting to be on God’s “right” side, and not on God’s left as He separates the sheep from the goats.
- Orthodoxy does not have three dimensional statues or crucifixes with the body of Christ affixed. Often there will be a clover design on the tip of the cross or three horizontal bars as in the Russian Orthodox cross.
- Many Orthodox Christians also carry an article of faith called a prayer rope (a knotted strand of silk or wool). They serve as “aids” in prayer.

- In the Orthodox Church it is disrespectful to sit with your legs crossed. Arms are to be kept crossed or hanging down by a person's side, and hands are not to be kept behind the back.
- In the Orthodox Church there is the belief that the space inside the church is very sacred.
- There are three groups within the Eastern Orthodox Church:
 - Oriental Orthodox Churches
 - Coptic Orthodox
 - Ethiopian Orthodox
 - Armenian Orthodox
 - Syriac Orthodox
 - (Byzantine) Orthodox – known as national churches
 - Greek, Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, Albanian, Georgian, Czechoslovakian, Polish, American and many others
 - Eastern Catholic Churches (all use the name “catholic” because they accept papal authority)
- Key Doctrines in Eastern Orthodoxy
 - Salvation
 - Justification (saved from sin and death) is **through** baptism, which they call their personal Golgotha.
 - At baptism one is saved, but must continue to “work out” their salvation for the rest of their lives by daily serving, loving, obeying, and following Jesus.
 - Man is seen as seen as basically good, but in a fallen state because of sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve.
 - Even though mankind is fallen and corrupt, we are not dead in sin.
 - Mankind has a free will that is able to cooperate with God to bring out conversion and justification.

- Jesus' death for sinners brought forgiveness and opened the way to salvation, however a person has to be justified by becoming righteous in a life of works and then receives eternal life as a reward. (In other words, God only justifies the righteous, not the unrighteous)
 - In Orthodox theology salvation is seen as a process and not a legal declaration by God. It's is about re-establishing man's communion with God.
 - Orthodoxy has always emphasized the more positive aspect of salvation. Salvation is not only justification or forgiveness of sins, but also for the renewing and restoration of God's image in man.
- Sacraments
- According to Orthodoxy, the Sacraments bring God's grace and power to each Christian.
 - Every Sacrament puts the Christian in touch with Jesus and gives the power of the cross and the Resurrection.
 - The Sacraments are the kiss of God where He pours out the riches of His love for us.
 - The Sacraments are the ways in which we come into intimate personal contact with Jesus today.
 - Just like Roman Catholicism, there are seven Sacraments in Orthodoxy:
 - Baptism
 - Confirmation
 - The Eucharist
 - Confession
 - Holy Orders
 - Holy Matrimony
 - Holy Unction
 - The normal word for sacrament in the Orthodox Church is the word "mystery."

- The mysteries in the Orthodox tradition means specific services that convey grace given by God directly or indirectly to His church through the Holy Spirit.
 - It is through these mysteries that the regenerating, justifying, sanctifying and redemptive grace of God is given to the faithful.
- The Bible
- The Orthodox Church rejects *Sola Scriptura*—they teach that a belief in the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* would only cause error because the truth of the Bible cannot be separated from the traditions from where it came.
 - They affirm that the only true way to interpret the Scriptures is within the church
 - They teach that it is the Holy Spirit abiding in the Church Who is the Proper Interpreter of the Bible.
 - They believe that God established the Church as the Body of Christ to interpret the Bible authoritatively (cf. 2 Peter 1:20–21)
 - They teach that complete infallibility in the interpretation of the Bible hasn't been given to individuals but to the entire Body of Christ.
 - They affirm that the interpretations of the Ecumenical Councils and the articles of faith formulated from those councils are authoritative and serve to explain the true meaning of the Bible. (They think of themselves as “The Church of the Seven Councils.”)
 - They also affirm that Scripture *and* Tradition go hand in hand with interpreting the Bible
 - They teach that God is revealed in the Bible.
 - They teach that the Bible is a blueprint for life.
 - They affirm the purpose of the Bible as revealed in John 20:31.

- According to Orthodoxy, the Bible is not there to teach science but spiritual truths about God and man.
 - They affirm that since the Bible is a library of books containing many literary forms, it **must not** always be interpreted *literally*.
 - They view the Bible as an icon “full of grace”, but they do not venerate the text of Scripture in an adulterous way.
 - Orthodoxy doesn't not believe that every word of the Bible was dictated by God word for word and then written down verbatim by the person who wrote each book. They affirm that the Bible is the *record* of truth not *truth itself*.
 - Basically, the Orthodox Church sees itself as the “custodian” of the Bible when it comes to interpretation.
- Icons
- Icon comes from the Greek word “eikon” which means *image*.
 - In the Orthodox Church icons have three functions:
 - to create reverence in worship
 - to instruct those who are not able to read
 - to serve as an external link between the worshipper and God
 - The reasoning behind the Orthodox Church's use of icons:
 - The Orthodox Church wanted a way in which to express to people the idea of Jesus Christ embodied. Icons could then serve to appeal to the most important of one's senses: the eyes.
 - The Orthodox Church insisted that icons could be used because God became a man. They reason that in the Old Testament any graven image was an idol, but when God became man in the person of Jesus it was not unlawful to make a picture of Him (Jesus).
 - Icons are one of the most distinctive features of Orthodoxy.

- The Orthodox Church and Christians insist that they do not *worship* icons, but rather they have *reverence* or just *venerate* them as symbols.
 - In traditional Orthodox practice, homes have a “God-shelf” in the form of an icon. This is for the purpose of reminding the family that God is present (in Orthodoxy icons symbolize God’s presence) in the home and to function as a place to pray.
 - In Orthodoxy icons function as a reminder of the supernatural life, and appeal to morality, and conscience.
 - According to Orthodoxy, the best icon of God is man, because man is made in God’s own icon (image). The Orthodox Church sees each person in the church as a living icon.
 - The goal in life for the Orthodox Christian is to become like God. It begins with baptism when the restored image is given, then proceeds from the restored image to the likeness of God. However, the likeness of God is not given, they have to work for it always by God’s grace.
 - Through the icon the Orthodox Christian represents Christ, who through His incarnation restored God’s image in man. So the purpose for Orthodox Christians is to develop the gift they received at baptism, and proceed from the image of God to likeness of Him.
 - When an icon is blessed by the priest it becomes like a sacrament. According to Orthodoxy, to deny the icon is deny the very foundation of salvation.
- Saints
- The Orthodox Church defines a saint as one who makes God’s goodness attractive, and make it easier for others to believe in God.
 - Orthodoxy teaches by remembering and honoring the saints they celebrate what the Holy Spirit accomplished through them.
 - Saints with a capital “S” are those who have been officially canonized by the Church., and saints with a lower case “s” are all those who are baptized, committed Christians.

- Orthodox Christians “call upon” Saints for support, asking for intercession in and through Christ. Saints are not mediators, Christ is. Saints are just intercessors. Therefore they don’t pray *to* Saints, but ask the Saints to pray *for* them.
- Mary, in the Orthodox Church, (*Theotokos*—Mother of God) is venerated because of her Son. She is the first of the Saints who leads the church in an ongoing intercession to the God-head.
- Orthodox Christians even venerate the bodily remains of the Saints. According to the Orthodox Church, the Saints are not worshipped; only venerated.