

IV. Adventures in Church History Through the week

A. Introductory Note

The scope of this study is impossibly large and I have selected five items of particular interest to me (selfishness is a pedagogical privilege) to share with this audience. Any one of them is a course in itself and the brevity of treatment does not suggest a lessening of importance.

B. The Ages of the Church

1. The founding period (33AD?--313)

- a. The purpose of God...
- b. The promise of the Lord: Matthew 16
- c. The coming of the Spirit Acts 2:1 ff
The church, as a body politic, is born at Pentecost.
- d. The rapid spread of the message:
 - the movements of the Apostles (traced quickly)
 - the witness of the martyrs (Stephen and onward)
 - the growth of the fellowship Acts 2:41, 47
 - the development of missions Acts 13

e. Threats to the testimony:

- internal Acts 5:2 ff and 6:1
- external Acts 4:16 ff
- schismatic inclination 1 Corinthians 1

These factors will multiply in the decades following the birth of the church and in some measure continue to this very day.

- f. Summary note: The peculiar characteristic of the church in this period was the general concept of unity of spirit and oneness in intention. It was not perfect then...but better realized than ever since so far as the totality of the church is concerned. You will sometimes see it on a smaller scale today when either disaster or opportunity will come to a part of the family.

2. The Imperial Period (313-476)

- a. Around 300 Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into an East/West system. An emperor ruled in each section and that is why we call it the Imperial Age. The time slot will end with the fall of Rome in the West although the eastern Empire will continue for nearly a thousand years....gradually getting weaker

in every age there are some who are true, some who are not, and a lot who are confused

Publicly { *disagreement authority* }

Church { *Unity*, *Oneness*, *Common Cause* } *Edict of Milan*