


Lessons

- Introduction and Overview
- Spread of Christianity
- Church and State – Persecution and Adoption
-  • Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy Part I (Apologists, Heresies, and Canon)
- Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy Part II (the Ecumenical Councils)

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

The Apologists

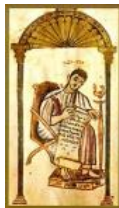
- Focus is defending Christianity externally – to Pagans and Jews, not others claiming Christianity
- Some effort spent refuting base rumors about Christian behavior (e.g., cannibalism, incest, unpatriotic, etc.) discussed in previous material
- Other adversaries included cultured pagans who made some effort to learn about Christianity and looked at Christians as intellectually inferior, lower class people
 - Why is your omnipotent God such a busybody in individual affairs?
 - If our gods are false, why not worship them? Are you afraid they are true?
 - How can Jesus be good? He was a prisoner condemned by legitimate Roman authorities.
 - Why would God visit earth – doesn't he know everything? Can't he deal with evil without doing it personally?
 - Why be willing to leave the certainty of this life for the uncertainty of a resurrection?
 - At the final resurrection, what happens to bodies burned or otherwise destroyed?

1 Peter 3:15 - "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

The Apologists

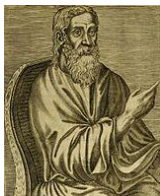
Apologist	Timeframe	Works / Focus
Justin Martyr (Samaria, Ephesus, dies in Rome)	100-165	2 <u>Apologies</u> – “Christian Philosophy” – the connection between Christianity and classical philosophy (e.g., supreme being, life beyond physical death, etc.). John 1:1, 14 Word = Logos = [universal] Reason. Jesus, the universal reason, became flesh. Dialogue with Trypho (Hellenistic Jewish Rabbi) – Civil discussion on Christianity and its relationship to Judaism. Justin’s personal testimony and how the Old Testament points to Christ (II Corinthians 3:13-16). Trypho’s parting words – “I confess I am delighted with our discussion. We have found more than we expected, more indeed than we possibly could have expected. And if we could do this more frequently we should be greatly helped in searching the Scriptures themselves. But since you are on the eve of departure and expect to sail any day, please remember us as friends when you are gone.”
Tatian (Assyria)	120-180	<u>Address to the Greeks</u> – Frontal assault on ancient Greeks and all they consider valuable (language has multiple dialects, academics and philosophies stolen from elsewhere, gods are immoral & inferior) and defense of “barbaric” Christians.
Athenagoras (Athens)	133-190	<u>A Plea for the Christians</u> – Plea for rights for Christians written to Marcus Aurelius. On the Resurrection of the Dead – Sustained defense of the doctrine of the resurrection.
Theophilus of Antioch	Died ca. 185	3 books <u>To Autolycus</u> (educated, earnest pagan friend) – doctrine of God, interpretation of scripture, Christian life



Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

The Apologists

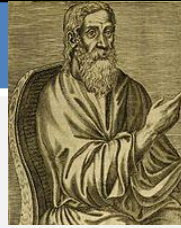
Apologist	Timeframe	Works / Focus
Clement of Alexandria	150-215	<u>Exhortation to the Pagans</u> – Philosophy is to Greeks as Law/Prophets to Jews. Both given to lead to ultimate truth revealed in Christ.
Tertullian (Carthage)	155-240	<p><u>Apology (Defense)</u> – Disputes pagan punishment of Christians. Refutes the charges brought against Christians (e.g., cannibalism, incest) indicating that the pagans are more guilty of these than are the Christians. Goes on to describe how Christians really behave.</p> <p>No mixing of Christianity and philosophy but he was familiar with philosophers' works.</p> <p>Joins the Montanist movement early in the 3rd Century</p>
Origen of Alexandria	184-253	<p><u>Against Celsus</u> – Rebutts Celsus' writing, <u>To Reason</u>, that questions things such as the virgin birth, the mental prowess and class status of Christians, the incarnation, Christian's loyalty to the emperor, etc.</p> <p>Early "whole bible" study of scriptures (geometry of scripture). Against biblical "cherry picking". Scripture interpreted in literal, moral, and spiritual (or allegorical) sense. Ability to see spiritual sense given by Holy Spirit.</p> <p>First to set forth comprehensive intellectual framework of the Christian faith – <u>First Principles</u>.</p> <p>Something of a Universalist – all creatures, including Satan, will one day be restored to communion with God.</p>
Minucius Felix	Died ca. 250?	<u>Octavius</u> – Dialogue between Christian (Octavius) and pagan (Caecilius). Pagan argues against Christianity intellectually, Christian refutes point by point. Winsome tone. Caecilius becomes a Christian!



Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Internal Debate on the Role of Greek Philosophy in explaining Christianity to Greeks

Clement of Alexandria



Background

- From Alexandria the **Greek intellectual center**
- Passionate about defending and sharing the gospel

Position

- Take what is good from the old Greek philosophers
- Own the philosophical works – not as equal to scripture but as a “school master” leading to the gospel. **OT is to Jews as Philosophy is to Greeks.**
- “If someone needs food, let him milk the sheep. Let him shear the wool if he needs clothing. In this way **let me benefit from the fruit of Greek erudition.**”
- “**For the Hellenes one must become a Hellene** in order to win them all. **One must offer to those who demand it the kind of wisdom with which they are familiar so that as easily as possible they can make their way through their own world of ideas to the belief in the truth.**”

Tertullian



Background

- From Carthage, Africa
- Passionate about defending and sharing the gospel
- Lawyer, gifted speaker, dogmatic
- Church in **Carthage suffering from persecution, apostasy, syncretism**

Position

- The Christian should withdraw from the world as much as possible
- “What then has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What has the academy to do with the church? What have heretics to do with Christians? Our instruction is from the porch of Solomon who himself handed down that **the Lord is to be sought in simplicity of heart. Away with those who produce Stoic, Platonic, and Dialectic Christianity.** We have **no need of curiosity after we have Christianity, nor of inquisitiveness after we have the Gospel.** Since we believe we desire nothing else to believe. **For the first thing we believe is that there is nothing else we ought to believe.**”
- “I believe because it is absurd. God’s Son has died. That is credible because it is foolishness. And He was buried and is risen. That is certain because it is impossible.”

1 Corinthians 9:22 – “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

Colossians 2:8 – “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Definition of Terms – In Terms of Time, Eternal or Finite

- God's Truth
- Doctrine
- Orthodox Doctrine
- Heretical Doctrine

Questions (in context of Christian church history)

- Which came first orthodox doctrine or heretical doctrine?
- Did heretical doctrine contribute to the definition of orthodox doctrine?

Augustine of Hippo 354-430 in *Confessions* – “The rejection of heretics brings into relief what your church holds and what sound doctrine maintains.”

1 Corinthians 11:19 – “For there must be also heresies [factions] among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy - Gnosticism

Timeframe	Definition / Characteristics	Notes
<p>Pervasive before Christ and after (including in NT times).</p> <p>“Christian” Gnosticism becomes prominent in 2nd Century.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="401 325 1236 429">1. Dualism – Good spiritual god. Bad and/or foolish God who created the material world. Material = evil or unreal; spirit = good. <li data-bbox="401 436 1236 468">2. Salvation is by secret knowledge – Gnosis = Knowledge <p data-bbox="401 511 1236 582">When bad God created material world he accidentally put a spark of the divine into humans.</p> <p data-bbox="401 625 1236 696">Salvation by escaping the material to the spiritual through knowledge.</p> <p data-bbox="401 739 1236 771">Where does Jesus fit in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="401 778 1236 849">- Docetism – Jesus from the spirit world. He appeared to be man but was not. <li data-bbox="401 856 1236 963">- Came to teach us the way out of our material world into the spiritual world. Crucifixion and resurrection of no consequence. <p data-bbox="401 1006 1236 1038">Multiple steps required to get from material world to spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="401 1045 1236 1116">- Secret word of knowledge required to overcome gate keeper at each step 	<p data-bbox="1269 325 1864 468">There were many varieties of Gnosticism – some unrelated to Judeo-Christian theology, some related to Judaism, some related to Christianity. We are focusing on the latter.</p> <p data-bbox="1269 511 1864 654">Most knowledge of Gnosticism prior to 1945 from Christian heresiologists. Much more detail found in Nag Hammadi (Egypt) texts discovered in 1945.</p> <p data-bbox="1269 696 1864 839">Very powerful among the intellectuals of the time. Calhoun equates, “Gnosticism teaches such and such” with modern day, “Science tells us such and such”.</p> <p data-bbox="1269 882 1864 1003">Gnosticism was a significant threat to the early church. In some manifestations it survives today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1269 1011 1410 1042">- New Age <li data-bbox="1269 1049 1864 1120">- Those who hold to “Gospel” of Thomas in addition to or instead of the canonical gospels

I Timothy 6:20 - “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science [or contradictions of knowledge] falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”

II John 7 - “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy – Gnosticism and the Apostle's Creed

God all powerful made the material world

I believe in **God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth**, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, **born of the Virgin Mary**, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

Jesus was born a human – He's not just a spirit

[He descended into hell.]

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Catholic (universal) church vs. only those with special "knowledge"

I believe in the Holy Spirit, **the holy catholic church**, the communion of saints, the **forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body**, and the life everlasting.

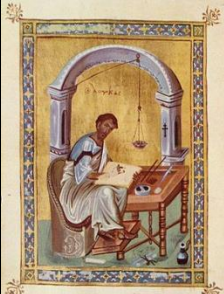
Amen

Gnostics loathed the physical body

Salvation by forgiveness of sins vs. Gnostic salvation by knowledge.


Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy - Marcionism

Timeframe	Definition / Characteristics	Notes
<p>Began ~144 AD in Rome.</p> <p>Lasted ~300 years in the West; in some forms considerably longer in the East.</p> 	<p>Yahweh (God of Hebrew scripture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arbitrary (attention showered on His chosen people) and vindictive - Created the material world out of ignorance or evil motives - Not the father of Jesus <p>God, Loving Father of Christians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Above Yahweh - Wants only to be loved - Gives everything, including salvation, freely - No judgment, the loving God will forgive us all <p>Jesus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not born of Mary (he'd be subject to Yahweh) - Appeared as grown man during reign of Tiberius <p>Scriptures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OT scriptures not for Christians - Epistles of Paul (who really knew Jesus) and Luke's gospel (Luke was a friend of Paul) comprise Marcion's scripture - Other Christian writings plagued by Jewish views - References to OT by Paul, Luke due to Judaizers subverting the message and were removed 	<p>Similarities with Gnosticism.</p> <p>Marcion was the son of a bishop (on the north coast of Asia Minor) but Marcion had a severe distaste for Judaism and the material world.</p> <p>Marcion founded his own church (schism) with his set of scriptures.</p> <p>Marcionism is attacked by Tertullian (often with heavy sarcasm) and others.</p>

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy - Montanism

Timeframe	Definition / Characteristics	Notes
<p>Begins post 155 Persists into the 6th Century</p>	<p>Emphasis on the Holy Spirit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Montanus' movement claimed they were the beginning of a new age (dispensation). - As Christ marked a new covenant, so Montanus and followers marked the age of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit still speaks and what he speaks should be understood as the words of God. - Who is He speaking through? Me, Priscilla, and Maximilla. <p>Opposition to the new prophecy is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some Montanist oracles sound like bible passages, others go beyond that (e.g., "I am the mouth piece of God") <p>Imminent return of Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coming soon to Phrygia, Asia Minor (Montanus' home town) 	<p>Montanus was a pagan priest converted to Christianity ~155.</p> <p>He, along with two women (Priscilla and Maximilla) begin prophesying claiming they were possessed with the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>In context, by mid 2nd century, miracles and prophesying had abated so there is some rationale in Montanus' claims that the church had moved away from the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Some similarities to modern day Pentecostalism.</p>
	<p>Emphasis on rigorous moral life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More rigorous moral life required, just as sermon on the mount was more rigorous than the OT. If one sinned he could not continue in the church. - Some followers believed rigorous moral life included celibacy. 	

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Orthodoxy – The New Testament Canon

- Orthodox Christians recognized the OT Scriptures as Canon from the beginning
- Factors indicating good candidate for inclusion in NT Canon
 - External – When was it written and by whom?
 - ❖ An apostle or acquaintance of an apostle was desired
 - Internal – Was it gracefully stated and consistent with other canonical writings?
 - Was it used by the early church in worship?
- Recognition of pieces of NT Canon happened early but an official designation of the complete Canon was a gradual process mainly through consensus
 - Early on writings used in service varied across regions
 - Four gospels (of many) first to be recognized widely – John slowest to gain acceptance
 - Acts and Pauline Epistles (end of 2nd Century)
 - Later consensus on shorter books at end of current canon
 - Though consensus was likely achieved earlier, a letter from Athanasius in 367 is often considered the first “official declaration” of the final canon
 - ❖ Same list published at councils in Hippo (393) and Carthage (397)

II Peter 3:2 - “That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior:”

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Orthodoxy – The New Testament Canon

100 AD	200 NT used in the Church at Rome	200 NT used by Origen	300 NT used by Eusebius	400 NT from the Council of Carthage
<p>NT written but not collected and defined as scripture</p> <p>Gospels and Paul's letters quoted by likes of Polycarp and Ignatius</p> <p>Paul's letters collected late in 1st Century</p> <p>Matthew, Mark, Luke brought together by 150</p>	<p>Four Gospels</p> <p>Acts</p> <p>Paul's Letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Romans - I & II Corinthians - Galatians - Ephesians - Philippians - Colossians - I & II Thessalonians - I & II Timothy - Titus - Philemon <p>James</p> <p>I & II John</p> <p>Jude</p> <p>Revelation of John</p> <p><i>Revelation of Peter</i></p> <p><i>Wisdom of Solomon</i></p> <p>Shepherd of Hermas (private, not public use)</p>	<p>Four Gospels</p> <p>Acts</p> <p>Paul's Letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Romans - I & II Corinthians - Galatians - Ephesians - Philippians - Colossians - I & II Thessalonians - I & II Timothy - Titus - Philemon <p>I Peter</p> <p>I John</p> <p>Revelation of John</p> <p>Disputed – Hebrews, James, II Peter, II & III John, Jude, The Shepherd of Hermas, Letter of Barnabas, Teaching of Twelve Apostles, Gospel of the Hebrews</p>	<p>Four Gospels</p> <p>Acts</p> <p>Paul's Letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Romans - I & II Corinthians - Galatians - Ephesians - Philippians - Colossians - I & II Thessalonians - I & II Timothy - Titus - Philemon <p>I Peter</p> <p>I John</p> <p>Revelation of John (questioned authorship)</p> <p>Disputed but well known – James, II Peter, II & III John, Jude</p>	<p>Four Gospels</p> <p>Acts</p> <p>Paul's Letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Romans - I & II Corinthians - Galatians - Ephesians - Philippians - Colossians - I & II Thessalonians - I & II Timothy - Titus - Philemon <p>Hebrews</p> <p>James</p> <p>I & II Peter</p> <p>I, II, III John</p> <p>Jude</p> <p>Revelation of John</p> <p>To be excluded – The Shepherd of Hermas, Letter of Barnabas, Gospel of the Hebrews, Revelation of Peter, Acts of Peter, Didache</p>

II Timothy 3:16 – "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy – Novatianism & Donatism Background

- Issue – How to deal with sins committed after baptism
 - Shepherd of Hermas – 1 severe sin forgiven after baptism
 - Tertullian – No forgiveness for adultery or fornication after baptism
 - Origen - No forgiveness for idolatry, adultery or fornication after baptism
- After persecutions of Decius (mid 3rd C.) and Diocletian (early 4th C.) Apostasy entered the discussion of serious sins
 - Lapsed – One who had given in during the persecutions of Decius or Diocletian
 - ❖ Traditor (“One who hands things over”) – One who had lapsed during the Diocletian persecution surrendering scriptures to be burned
 - Confessor – One who had endured persecution
 - ❖ Some held that confessors could forgive the lapsed granting them re-admission to the church

Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Heresy – Novatianism and Donatism

Timeframe	Definition / Characteristics	Notes
<p><u>Novatianism</u> Mid 3rd Century after persecutions of Decius</p>	<p>Issue arises to address what to do with Christians who had obtained a certificate during Decius' persecution either by sacrificing to the emperor or obtaining a false certificate.</p> <p>Allowing the lapsed back into the church based on the word of a Confessor is too lax.</p> <p>The church has no authority to forgive apostasy (or murder or adultery). The catholic church is polluted by its lenient attitude toward sinners.</p>	<p>Though Novatian was from Rome by way of Asia Minor, Novatianism was popular in North Africa</p> <p>Cyprian attempted to find middle ground between those advocating “easy” re-admission of the lapsed and the Novatianists’ position</p> <p>Issue subsides when Decius’ persecutions end</p>
<p><u>Donatism</u> Early 4th Century after persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius</p>	<p>Issue re-surfaces with Diocletian persecution’s demands that Christian scriptures be handed over to be burned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those who handed over the scriptures became known as traditors <p>Donatus was in competition to become Bishop of Carthage with Caecilian who he claimed was ordained by a traditor.</p> <p>Donatism breaks from the catholic church holding that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ordinations and sacraments received from Traditor priests are invalid - The church, as bride of Christ, must be pure and holy <p>We are the pure and holy church, the church of the martyrs</p>	<p>Donatism was also popular in North Africa</p> <p>Struggle between the Donatists and catholic church driven by class and politics as well as doctrine</p> <p>Struggle occasionally spills over into violence</p> <p>Donatism is condemned at Council of Carthage in 411</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OK to use force to bring Donatists back <p>Donatism continues as a separate church into the 7th century.</p>

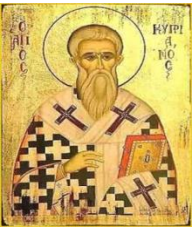
Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Novatian, Cyprian, Donatus, Augustine



Novatian (200-258)

- The church does not have authority to forgive apostasy
- The catholic church is polluted by its lenient attitude toward sinners



Cyprian (died 258) – Bishop of Carthage

- One church – Christianity one body, Christ has one bride. Baptism from outside this church is not valid.
- Bishops hold authority – not Confessors
- Only holy (not lapsed) Bishops can perform sacraments legitimately
- Graduated approach for re-admission of lapsed based on position (lay vs. bishop) and ease with which gave in to apostasy.

Donatus (died 355) – Carthage

- Sacraments and ordinations implemented by lapsed leaders are invalid
- The church must be pure and holy



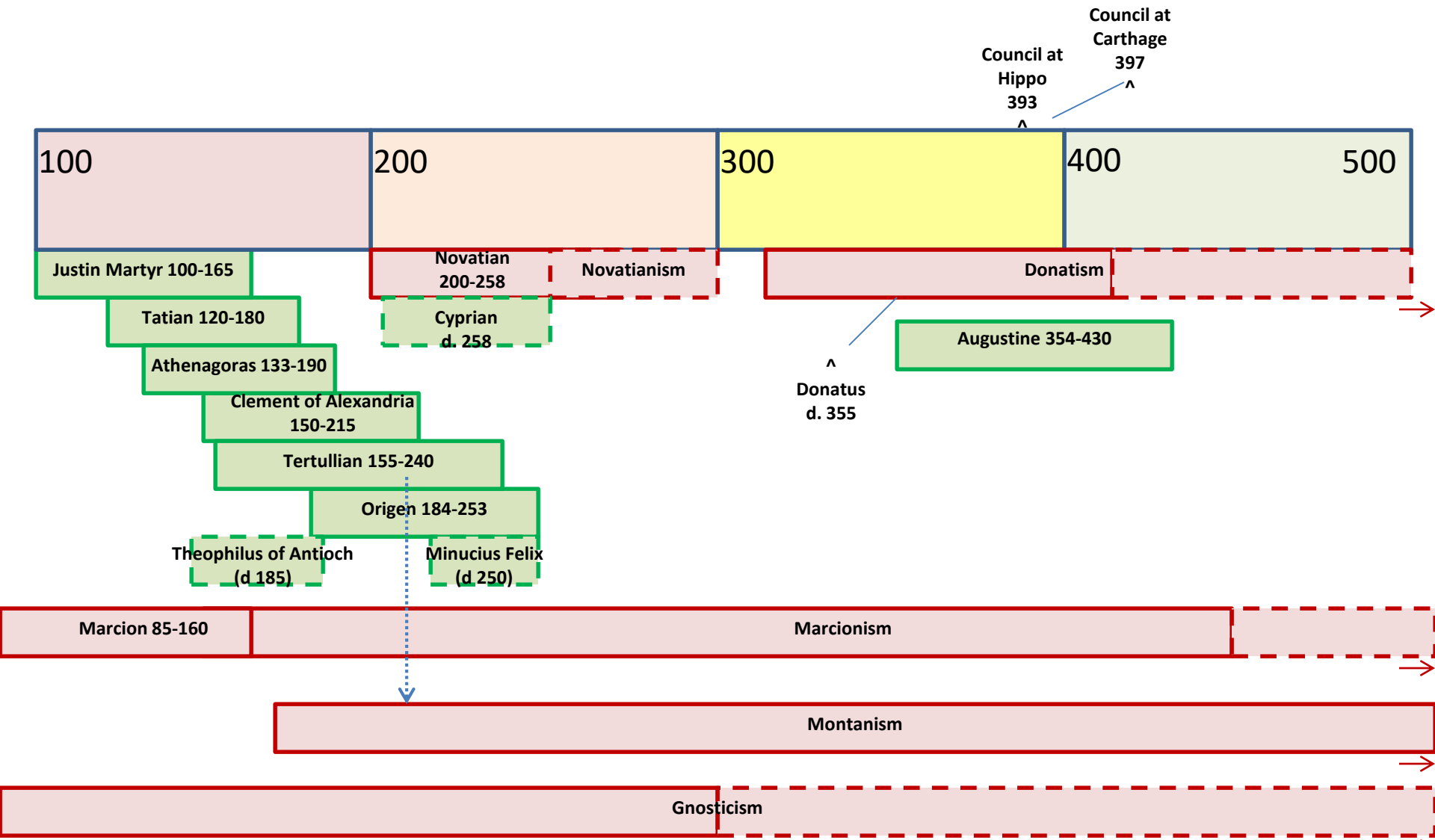
Augustine (354-430) – Hippo, North Africa – struggled with rival Donatist church in Hippo

- Sacraments are inherently good – OK even if administered by a lapsed minister
- God makes the church holy, not the membership



Doctrine – Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Timeline 100 AD – 500 AD



MAP

