

THEO 206-FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 1

1) **Explain the opposition to Christianity and its consequences.**

Christians, like Jews and Muslims, are monotheistic, that is they believe in only one God and claimed their God was Jesus Christ. Christians refused to worship foreign gods and that refusal led to persecution and martyrdom. The consequence of this was the scapegoating of Jews and Christians with false accusations. In its first three centuries, the Christian church endured periods of persecution at the hands of Roman authorities. Christians were persecuted by local authorities on an intermittent and ad-hoc basis. In addition, there were several periods of empire-wide persecution which was directed from the seat of government in Rome.

The persecutions culminated with Diocletian and Galerius at the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century. The Great Persecution is considered the largest. Beginning with a series of four edicts banning Christian practices and ordering the imprisonment of Christian clergy, the persecution intensified until all Christians in the empire were commanded to sacrifice to the gods or face immediate execution. Over 20,000 Christians are thought to have died during Diocletian's reign. However, as Diocletian zealously persecuted Christians in the Eastern part of the empire, his co-emperors in the West did not follow the edicts and so Christians in Gaul, Spain, and Britannia were virtually unmolested.

This persecution lasted, until Constantine I came to power in 313 and legalized Christianity. It was not until Theodosius I in the later fourth century that Christianity would become the official religion of the Empire. Between these two events Julian II temporarily restored the traditional Roman religion and established broad religious tolerance renewing Pagan and Christian hostilities.

Some early Christians sought out and welcomed martyrdom. Roman authorities tried hard to avoid Christians because they "goaded, chided, belittled and insulted the crowds until they demanded their death. One man shouted to the Roman officials: "I want to die! I am a Christian," leading the officials to respond: "If they wanted to kill themselves, there was plenty of cliffs they could jump off." Such seeking after death is found in Tertullian's *Scorpiace* but was certainly not the only view of martyrdom in the Christian church. Both Polycarp and Cyprian, bishops in Smyrna and Carthage respectively, attempted to avoid martyrdom.

1. Explain the opposition to Christianity, and its consequences. (version2)

Christians were understood as different sect of Judaism and this relationship would only later cause major dispute between the two sides. The emergence of Christianity was marked when individuals from the Jewish religion had started in believing in Jesus Christ. These individuals began to grow in numbers in the second century, and slowly more people were moving away from the Jewish religion.

While Christianity was slowly developing, they had soon adopted some traditions which would include anti Jewish sentiments. As many orthodox jews, and rabbis began to take note of this, a sense of bitterness towards the Christians had arose. The Jews were now inclined to see the Christians as their rival twin. As the Christian religion began to take under way, their beliefs had yet to present a definite identity, which led the Christians and their faith to be quite ambiguous for the Jews. The jews felt betrayed by the Christians as they used their synagogues to pray, and develop their belief in Jesus.

Now bitter, the jews grew livid, cursing them when found in their synagogues, which then led to their expulsion from stepping foot into them. In addition to their expulsion, many jews would resort to spreading malicious rumors intentionally directed at the Christian fate. The jews were only one of the opposing sides of Christianity, and with the spreading of the religion, one will be able to see the many consequences they will have to experience along with their emergence.

The Roman view on religion had been a predominant practice of the roman world. While Muslims and Jews were practicing their religions for many preceding years, they were still frowned upon by the Romans, and especially with the emergence of Christianity, there was much animosity towards them. The Christians were perceived as an alternate society; they refused to adhere to the “Roman Life” and refused to worship the roman gods. As their values stayed persistent, and continued to stay true to their beliefs, some citizens in the roman society feared them as the Christians presented an underlying form of “power”. This would posed a threat to the Roman Empire. This threat that the Christians posed only led to the roman government to associate the Christians as an abomination.

Jews and Christians were active religions that were considered as alien religions in the roman society. As they were both deemed guilty for practicing an alternate religion, it was more common to see the Christians getting the upper hand in punishments, and heavy stigmatizations by the public. For instance, Nero in 64 saw Christians as a group distinct from Jews and acted against them, turning the public against them. They were accused of showing actions presenting hatred towards the public by not actively taking part in military services, and allegedly defiling the roman customs. More animosity arose with time, and there wasn't much time before brutal

measures were taken.

Because of their refusal to adhere to the roman life, persecutions were often resorted to. Individuals who were found practicing the religion were harassed in the streets, and sometimes killed in mass numbers. As the religion began to disperse around the west, more and more of these reactions were seen. In Palestine, they were harassed in the streets, and as they spread to Egypt, Syria, Rome, and eventually Asia, it was very common that they suffered severe and sporadic persecutions.

1) Explain the Gnosticism contained in the Gospel of Judas placing it in the context of when it was produced.

Gnosticism was a religious movement that presented major challenges to Christianity in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The Gnostics believed that they had a secret knowledge about God, the universe, and the kingdom. This secret knowledge was only accessible to the Gnostics and was an intuition and spiritual knowledge, not a scientific knowledge. The Gnostics believed they inherited a divine spark from God that enabled them to obtain and deeper comprehend this knowledge and have access to a better interpretation of scripture. They also had the full knowledge of the secrets of salvation. This knowledge about God, the universe, and the kingdom is brought from the outside world from a redeemer. For Christian Gnostics, Christ was that redeemer.

The Gnosticism contained in the Gospel of Judas is Sethian Gnosticism. The explanations and reflections about this type of Gnosticism contained in the Gospel of Judas is what makes the Gospel so interesting and important. The Gospel of Judas is the most important discovery of Gnosticism. The Sethian Gnostics were believed to be descendants of Seth, who was the third son of Adam. Seth was believed to be a revealer and savior who inherited a secret revelation of the world, God, and the kingdom of heaven.

Throughout the Gospel of Judas, there are many cues that show the reader that it is a Gnostic text. First, it is important to understand that the Gospel was not written by Judas, but rather in Gnostic circles in the mid to late 2nd century. Christianity was still being developed at the time, and the movement of Gnosticism developed because they wanted to challenge the teachings about Jesus of proto-orthodox Christianity. Gnosticism appeared in many forms; different teachers did not agree with each other, causing a lack of cohesion – all the same, it presented a major challenge to Christianity.

Through the discovery and translation of the Gospel of Judas in the early 21st century, the character of Judas was first presented as a good person, in opposition to the original views of Judas in the Bible. Later, with a more detailed translation, it was seen that Judas was not as good as perceived through the original translation of the text.

In the Gospel of Judas, there are many Gnostic characteristics that lead us to believe that it is a Gnostic text. First, Jesus is presented as a Gnostic figure who brings secret knowledge to the world. This information that he shares is not completely understood by his 12 disciples, but Judas shows that he believes he understands more than the others of what he must do. The idea of the Gnostic Jesus is not the same as the Catholic Jesus, as they believed that he was not a supreme God, but rather an individual who brings important knowledge to the people about their being; that is, they are from a different realm and therefore have a spark of divinity that needs to be released in order to be able to go back to the spiritual realm, where they came from. Therefore, Jesus is not seen as supremacy, but rather as the Divine Redeemer – a non-human who entered the body of a man in order to share his salvific knowledge. He left the body of Jesus prior to his death, therefore Judas did not actually sacrifice Jesus, as sacrifices are seen as

unjust in Gnosticism, but he rather helped free the “spirit” who finished spreading his knowledge.

Other Gnostic characteristics present in the writing include Gnostic cosmology and Gnostic gods. Barbelo, Sarclas and Sophia are mentioned in the text; Sophia is of great importance in the Gnostic understanding of the creation of the world, as it is because of her mistake that a material world was created and trapped sparks of divinity within it, creating people on Earth. Secret knowledge, sacrifices and laughter are also important Gnostic details repeatedly present throughout the Gospel. Overall, the ideas and facts within the Gospel of Judas show proof that this Gospel is one of Gnostic basis.

1) The Gospel of Judas is a Gnostic Gospel of a particular type. Please explain its Gnosticism, in relation to the general characteristics of Gnosticism we learned about and with regard to the opposition the community who wrote the Gospel of Judas encountered from the proto-orthodox form of Christianity.

Gnosticism is a religious movement that grew in the 2nd and 3rd century AD and so, presented a major challenge for Christianity. The Gnostics believed that they had a secret knowledge about God, the universe, and the kingdom. This secret knowledge was only accessible to the Gnostics and was an intuition and spiritual knowledge, not a scientific knowledge. The Gnostics believed they inherited a divine spark from God that enabled them to obtain and deeper comprehend this knowledge and have access to a better interpretation of scripture. They also had the full knowledge of the secrets of salvation. Christians who have faith in Christ can experience salvation. However, the real afterlife is only available to Gnostics. This knowledge about God, the universe, and the kingdom is brought from the outside world from a redeemer. For Christian Gnostics, Christ was that redeemer.

Proto-orthodox indicates the early church fathers who finally ended up deciding what “orthodox” belief should be.

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Nature of Jesus

Traditional Proto-orthodox Christians view: Jesus is the God incarnate and he came with a physical body into the world. He suffered, he died on the cross, was resurrected in 3 days. As for Judas, he was portrayed as the betrayer or traitor (devil). Completely different thought from the Gnostic thought. They characterized the Gnostics as vile and vicious individuals who practiced all sorts of sexual abnormalities and perversions which caused other individuals to have one type of

perspective of the gnostics. Perspectives were from those who were their enemies. Reactions to the gnostics views became deep to the point where in the new testament, corrections were made in reaction of the gnostic views to oppose them.

Gnostics view: Christ is someone different from Jesus. The Christ inhabited the person named Jesus. When the person Jesus was crucified, the Christ left the body. Christ never suffered. Christ was believed to be the redeemer that brought the knowledge he bestowed upon his disciples however only his favorite (Judas) was fully able to comprehend the hidden meaning behind the message. Gnostic thought devaluated the incarnation which proto-orthodox Christians found unacceptable. Gnostics considered themselves to be the true enlightened.

Sethian Gnosticism: derived from Seth, third son of Adam. Seth was a revealer and the savior. He had inherited from his father a secret revelation concerning the world and the kingdom of god. Sethians believe to be descendants of Seth. Seth was a seed that was planted into the world of evil to save the world. Gospel of Judas reflects an early form of sethian Gnosticism.

VERSION 2

The Gospel of Judas is a Gnostic Gospel of a particular type. Please explain its Gnosticism, in relation to the general characteristics of Gnosticism we discussed and with regard to the opposition the community who wrote the Gospel of Judas encountered from the proto-orthodox form of Christianity

Popular opinion often comes from obscure sources. Many conceptions about Jesus now current and credible in **New Age** circles are rooted in a movement of spiritual protest which, until recently, was the concern only of the specialized scholar or the occultist. This ancient movement — Gnosticism — provides much of the form and color for the New Age portrait of Jesus as the illumined Illuminator: one who serves as a cosmic catalyst for others' awakening.

Many essentially Gnostic notions received wide attention through the sagacious persona of the recently deceased Joseph Campbell in the television series and best-selling book, *The Power of Myth*. For example, in discussing the idea that "God was in Christ," Campbell affirmed that "the basic Gnostic and Buddhist idea is that that is true of you and me as well." Jesus is an enlightened example who "realized in himself that he and what he called the Father were one, and he lived out of that knowledge of the Christhood of his nature." According to Campbell, anyone can likewise live out his or her Christ nature. [1]

Gnosticism has come to mean just about anything. Calling someone a Gnostic can make the person either blush, beam, or fume. Whether used as an epithet for heresy or spiritual snobbery, or as a compliment for spiritual knowledge and esotericism, Gnosticism remains a cornucopia of controversy.

This is doubly so when Gnosticism is brought into a discussion of Jesus of Nazareth. Begin to speak of "Christian Gnostics" and some will exclaim, "No way! That is a contradiction in terms. Heresy is not orthodoxy." Others will affirm, "No contradiction.

Orthodoxy is the heresy. The Gnostics were edged out of mainstream Christianity for political purposes by the end of the third century." Speak of the Gnostic Christ or the Gnostic gospels, and an ancient debate is moved to the theological front burner.

Gnosticism as a philosophy refers to a related body of teachings that stress the acquisition of "gnosis," or inner knowledge. The knowledge sought is not strictly intellectual, but mystical; not merely a detached knowledge of or about something, but a knowing by acquaintance or participation. This gnosis is the inner and esoteric mystical knowledge of ultimate reality. It discloses the spark of divinity within, thought to be obscured by ignorance, convention, and mere exoteric religiosity. This knowledge is not considered to be the possession of the masses but of the Gnostics, the Knowers, who are privy to its benefits. While the orthodox "many" exult in the exoteric religious trappings which stress dogmatic *belief* and prescribed behavior, the Gnostic "few" pierce through the surface to the esoteric spiritual *knowledge* of God. The Gnostics claim the Orthodox mistake the shell for the core; the Orthodox claim the Gnostics dive past the true core into a nonexistent one of their own esoteric invention.

To adjudicate this ancient acrimony requires that we examine Gnosticism's perennial allure, expose its philosophical foundations, size up its historical claims, and square off the Gnostic Jesus with the figure who sustains the New Testament.

- 1) **Please explain the issue of miracles in Christianity in connection with the new reality of Jesus introduces that is referred to as "the kingdom of god". Coinsider the biblical texts that support the two visions of the kingdom of God as being "already here" but "not yet fully realized"**

A miracle is known as a general suspension of the natural laws. In other words it is an event that occurs under extremely low chances of success. Due to this miracles are generally seen as signs of the presence of the Kingdom of God. It shows us a glimpse of a new reality where there is less suffering and where people are being healed. Jesus performed these so called miracles and a few examples of those miracles are: turning water into wine, healing the sick, restoring life to the dead, taking devils out of the possessed or the multiplication of bread. The Kingdom of God is a new reality where there is less suffering or no suffering at all and less injustice or complete justice as well as equality. Jesus gives us a message where he states that the Kingdom of God is already here but is not yet fully realized. There is a tension between the already here and the not yet fully realized. By the Kingdom of God is already here, they mean that the Kingdom is already here. In other words, Jesus is already performing miracles like healing the sick and raising them from the dead. He brings a lot of justice in to the world. The not yet fully realized shows that even though there is a lot of justice in the world there is still a lot of injustice as well. People who are healed will still continue to become sick. People who are revived will still eventually die again. Therefore we only have a

glimpse of what the true reality is but not the full experience. As for the full realization of the Kingdom of God, there is still time to go so it will not come yet. Both views are being presented in the Bible. There are texts from Matthew, Luke and Mark that support the view that the Kingdom of God is already here. As for the view that the Kingdom is not yet fully realized, there are texts from Matthew that support it.

VERSION 2

Please explain the issue of miracles in Christianity in connection with the new reality Jesus introduces that is referred to as "the kingdom of God." Consider the biblical texts that support the two visions of the kingdom of God as being "already here" but "not yet fully realized."

The problem of miracles, which will be treated later in more detail, is difficult and perhaps cannot be discussed with full satisfaction in an age of science and scientific intelligence. However, in the case of miracles of healing, the influence of the mind on the physical body offers some explanation. Although the miracles reported in the Gospels are often described as interruptions of natural processes, in some cases they may be regarded as natural processes that were not understood in Jesus's day. Moreover, the problem of miracles in the New Testament

cannot be divorced from the analysis of myth and its prevalence in the Jewish eschatology of Jesus's time.

That the disciples often failed "to see," that is, to grasp Jesus' meaning and intention, is a frequent theme in the Gospel of Mark. As recorded in Mark 1:35-38, this apparent failure to understand appeared early in the ministry. When Jesus went to a "lonely place" for prayer, his disciples followed him to persuade him to continue to administer to the people of Capernaum. He reminded his disciples of the urgency of his ministry by saying that those in other towns and cities must hear his word. So, "he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons" (Mk 1:39).⁴⁰

The account of Jesus healing the leper, given in Mark 1:40-45, has always intrigued those interested in the miracle stories. In ancient time leprosy was one of the most dreaded diseases, for it was believed that once the disease was contracted, the afflicted person was doomed to a slow and horrible death. Even more tragic, lepers were shunned by everyone because of the fear of contamination and because they were ceremonially unclean. The law regarding leprosy in Leviticus was explicit: "The leper who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp" .But the leper in the story disregarded these regulations. His hope led him to desperate action—"If you will, you can make me clean." And Jesus, "moved with pity, ... stretched out his hand and touched him," and when he said the words "be clean" the leper was healed. Jesus's adherence to Leviticus 14 is evident in this account when he tells the healed man to show himself to the priest. When Jesus came again to Capernaum his fame had spread and crowds were attracted to him. The account of Jesus's healing a paralytic at this time is given in some detail in Mark . The words, "When Jesus saw their faith," refer to the four men and the paralytic whom they lowered through the roof because of the crowded room. His statement, "My son, your sins are forgiven," inevitably produced shock in the listeners. To heal the sick was one thing, but only God could forgive a person of his sins. There were evidences of hostility among those present, and the scribes who witnessed the event raised the serious question, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Then Jesus, sensing their reservations about him, posed the question: "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk?'" Jesus's identity and authority are prominent themes in Mark, and in this instance he makes it clear that Jesus is the Son of man and that he has the authority to forgive sins.

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 2

2) Who was Emperor Constantine and why was he important in the fourth century?

Emperor Constantine (280AD – 337 AD) was a monotheist, who initially was a Sun worshipper. Even before the Roman Empire converted to Christianity, he was always very sympathetic and tolerant toward Christians. In 312, Constantine converted to Christianity, after having a vision of a cross superimposed against the sun. With his conversion, a great change in the Roman Empire occurred. Christianity witnessed a great expansion within the Empire, as many citizens followed Constantine's movement. The Christian population

witnessed its biggest growth from about 5 million in the year 300 to about 300 million in 410AD under his influence. Christianity became the religion of the majority. During this time, Constantine had a personal mission to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity. Due to the fact that his religious conversion took place at the same time he was establishing his control over the western provinces of the Empire, a link was created between the church and the state, placing a lot of power in the hands of Christian religion.

Constantine's first great contribution was in the year 313AD; Constantine, alongside his co-emperor in the East, Licinius, granted universal religious freedom through the Edict of Milan. This gave legal equality to all cults and restored confiscated property to the Christians. With the great acceptance of Christianity and its intermingling within the political aspects of the Empire, great changes within the church also took place. Bishops gained judicial responsibilities and worked alongside bureaucrats, both allowing the church to have an influence on secular activities and events within the Empire. Also, since Christianity had such a high degree of power in the Empire, Christian symbols appeared on the coinage, churches were able to further increase the heritage by inheriting property and Christian places of worship multiplied.

Due to the fact that Constantine felt very important because of the fact that he increased the status of Christianity, he wanted to be seen as the patron of the church. He therefore saw himself as the representative on earth of the Christian God, and also as "bishop extraordinary" – a title which described him as the bishop of what did not pertain directly to the church.

In 324AD, Constantine took reign over the Eastern side of the Empire, overthrowing his co-emperor Licinius. He founded Constantinople, known as "New Rome," which was situated on the site of ancient Byzantium. Being the sole emperor, Constantine Christianized the Eastern provinces.

Although adding to his personal prestige, the Council of Nicaea (325AD) was another important attribute to the development of Christianity in the fourth century. During this council, two important ideas were confronted – the place of Christianity within society and the establishment of orthodoxy within the church.

Through the work of Constantine during his reign, the empire witnessed a great religious progression during the 4th century. What started off as a legalized religion then became favoured by the population and later recognized as the official religion of the Roman Empire.

After Constantine's reign, his efforts placed on the importance of Christianity in the Empire were respected and continued by his successors. With the reign of Emperor Theodosius I (378AD-395AD), paganism became illegal and Christianity became legally enforced.

In conclusion, Constantine created a lasting effect on the evolution of Christianity. Although his reasoning for promoting Christianity may have been due to his personal interest

in the religion or his want to gain power and popularity within the Christian community, his measures allowed for the acceptance and widespread of Christianity during and following the 4th century.

2) Who was Emperor Constantine and why was he important in the fourth century? (v.2)

Who was Emperor Constantine?

Constantine was the first Christian emperor of Rome. He was born in 280 AD and was raised a monotheist, that is he believed in the one, personal, and transcendent God. Constantine became a Christian during the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD. After his conversion, Constantine introduced and mixed Christian monotheism with Sun cult worship. During the battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine had a vision of the cross, "In this sign you will conquer" and knew that he was under the protection of the Christian God. Constantine died in 337 AD.

Why was he important?

Constantine reversed the persecutions of his predecessor, Diocletian, and issued (with his co-emperor of the east Licinius) the Edict of Milan in 313. The persecution of the Christians ended when Constantine and Licinius proclaimed the Edict of Milan. The edict of Milan announced religious freedom throughout the empire. Christian symbols began to appear on the coinage. The churches were given the right to inherit property, which allowed them to increase their heritage. This also restored Christians their confiscated property. The Edict of Milan initiated a different relationship between the church and the state. At this point in time, Christians rose to the highest posts in administration.

Constantine also transformed the ancient Greek colony of Byzantium into a new imperial residence, Constantinople, which remained the capital for over one thousand years. He then conquered the hearts of the Eastern provinces and brought Christianity, which was in many ways still pagan, into Asia Minor.

The Council of Nicaea in 325 AD was called upon by Constantine. This was a very important step toward consolidating the place of Christianity and establishing orthodoxy within the church. Christianity went from being a persecuted religion in the first 3 centuries to the official religion in the 4th century.

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 3

3) **What happened at the Council of Nicaea and why it was important for Christianity?**

The Council of Nicaea is the council condemned Arius and added to the Creeds the word 'homoousios'.

The First Council of Nicaea, the first ecumenical council held by the church, is best known for its **formulation of the Nicene Creed, the earliest dogmatic statement of Christian orthodoxy**. The council was convened in 325 by the Roman emperor Constantine I in an attempt to settle the controversy raised by Arianism over the nature of the Trinity. Nearly all those who attended came from the eastern Mediterranean region.

It was the decision of the council, formalized in the Nicene Creed, that **God the Father and God the Son were consubstantial and coeternal and that the Arian belief in a Christ created by and thus inferior to the Father was heretical**. Arius himself was excommunicated and banished. The council was also important for its disciplinary decisions concerning the status and jurisdiction of the clergy in the early church and for establishing the date on which Easter is celebrated.

The theology expressed in the Nicene Creed is decisively anti-Arian. At the beginning the unity of God is affirmed. But the Son is said to be "true God from true God." Although confessing that the Son is begotten, the creed adds the words, "from the Father" and "not made." It is positively asserted that he is "from the being (ousia) of the Father" and "of one substance (homoousia) with the Father." A list of Arian phrases, including "there was when he was not" and assertions that the Son is a creature or out of nothing, are expressly anathematized. Thus an ontological rather than merely functional deity of the Son was upheld at Nicaea. The only thing confessed the Spirit, however, is faith in him.

Among other things achieved at Nicaea were the agreement on a date to celebrate Easter and a ruling on the Melitian Schism in Egypt. Arius and his most resolute followers were banished, but only for a short time. In the majority at Nicaea was Athanasius, then a young deacon, soon to succeed Alexander as bishop and carry on what would become a minority challenge to a resurgent Arianism in the East. However, the orthodoxy of Nicaea would eventually and decisively be reaffirmed at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

(Version2)

3) The Council of Nicaea, which was the first of seven such councils in the Patristic Period, was an immensely important step in establishing orthodoxy within the Church. In 324 AD, Constantinople, or “the New Rome”, was founded on the site of ancient Byzantium by the emperor Constantine. In 325 AD, Constantine summoned the Council of Nicaea, a gathering of bishops and priests, to discuss whether Jesus was God or the Son of God or not. Some of its main actors are Arius and Athanasius of Alexandria. There are also several others were involved, including Alexander the Bishop of Alexandria.

The main topic of discussion was on whether Jesus should be considered God and/or the Son of God. The debate, which is known as Trinitarian Controversy, really started when Arius, a priest from Alexandria, questioned if it were appropriate to refer to Jesus as God. Since he was not eternal and he was being born as the Son of God, Arius did not believe it was just to refer to Jesus as God himself. Arius believed that Jesus was perhaps the first creature that God created. According to Arius, Jesus was a creature like everyone else, making it impossible for him to be eternal.

The reactions to Arius’ statements were quite dramatic and it really split the church into two schools of belief. At this point, emperor Constantine was just recently becoming a sympathizer of Christianity. Just 12 years earlier, in 313, he legalized the religion. That is why he summoned the important bishops and priests in order to come to a conclusion of Arius’ claims. The Council decided that Arius was wrong; that it was indeed correct to refer to Jesus as God. They also decided that Arius would be removed of his positions as priest in Alexandria and sent into exile.

The council also produced an important creed, or profession of faith, which defined Jesus as the Son of God, and therefore God. They also emphasized that Jesus takes his being from God rather than being made from God. They claim that Jesus was not created the same was as humans are by God.

The debate carried on for almost 50 years until another council took place in 381 AD in the city of

Constantinople. This Council of Constantinople declared that God was in fact three different aspects; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Following the Creed of Constantinople, the Arianism, or the Trinitarian Controversy, was successfully put to rest.

This event was extremely important for Christianity for many reasons. First of all, it vanquished the largest opposition towards Christian beliefs. Arius was questioning some of the most sacred beliefs in the religion and the Council of Nicaea successfully put it to rest. Furthermore, it answered any possible questions or doubt that people like Arius were having. It added a level of legitimacy to the Church because they had come together to produce answers.

The importance of Jesus in the Christian religion is immeasurable, and it was important for the council to solidify His role as God. Throughout the fourth century, Christianity saw a steady progress. By the end of the century, it was relatively prominent in the empire. By 391AD under pressure from the Church and in order to enforce imperial unity through religious uniformity and orthodoxy, Emperor Theodosius I declared paganism illegal, therefore making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. Judaism is the only other religion that is tolerated whatsoever. Moreover, the Council of Nicaea was important because it gave precedence to the areas of the Roman Empire. Naturally, Rome, the capitol city, was given first rank. It was followed by Alexandria and Antioch.

3) Explain Arianism and the impact it had on the fourth century Christian Church, including its condemnation at two major councils.

Arianism was a group of Christians who had a huge impact on the church because of their views of the trinity. This group was led by Arius who believed that the Son was a creature not equal to the father and had not always existed. This faith believed that the son was not God and became incarnate in Jesus. Jesus was not divine and was merely human.

Arians were optimistic Christians who hoped to solve the disagreements of Christology. There were many gaps in the New Testament and other writings therefore clarifications were required concerning the trinity. The Arians hoped that the evidence of scripture and the authority of the bishops would solve the debates. The beliefs of Arius and his followers caused a division of the church some people agreed with Arius that Christ was not eternal and others went against his beliefs. Since this group had much power the church was forced to take a position on who Jesus actually was. Was he divine? Human? Eternal? God?

Constantine was required to call a meeting of bishops and theologians that helped to establish clarifications of the Trinitarian Controversy and decide whether or not Arius was right. This meeting was called the Council of Nicea and had a huge impact on Arianism. The first was the Council of Nicea in 325 in which Arius and Athanasius were the main actors. Two main theses were settled during this council. The first clarification was that Arius was wrong and that it was appropriate to call Jesus God and he was perfectly equal to the father and of one substance with the father but distinct as persons. The second clarification was that Jesus had a real, human body. At the end of this council Arius was condemned, removed from his position of a priest, and sent into exile.

Although some clarifications were made during this council another was needed to reaffirm the council of Nicea. The problem that arose was that in the creed a non biblical word was used to describe Jesus. This word was 'consubstantial.' The uses of this word in the creed led to more debates about the trinity and the Holy Spirit that were clarified in the Council of Constantinople in 381. The main discussion at this council was about God as being one in nature/substance and three in persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The issue of the divinity of Jesus was clear but the divinity of the Holy Spirit was now brought up. The Holy Spirit is different from the Son and the Father because it is said that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the father. The council declared the Holy Spirit also as God but did not use non biblical words such as consubstantial. It was also clarified that the father is God and has that in common with the Son and the Holy Spirit. The difference between the father and the other two is that the father is not begotten and is absolute. Through these two councils a much clearer understanding of the trinity

was established. Since Arianism did not believe in the Son as being eternal or equal to God it was defeated through the information settled at the councils

3) Please explain the 4th-century Trinitarian controversy with particular attention to the Councils of Nicaea (325 CE) and Constantinople I (381 CE).

One important topic that was present in the 4th century was that of understanding and defining the doctrine of the trinity. Christians hold this very basic and important belief that God is one but manifested in three people, the father, son and holy spirit. The first phase of this Trinitarian debate was The Council of Nicea, which occurred around 325 AD. A gathering of the Bishops was called upon by emperor Constantine to deal with the issue of whether Jesus was God or the Son of God or not. It's main actors were Arius and Alexander of Alexandria. The second phase of the Trinitarian debate will take place in the next 50 or so years after the council of Nicea.

The first phase revolved around whether it is appropriate to call Jesus the Son of God and God. It all started as controversy between Arius and his Bishop Alexander. Arius was questioning whether it is appropriate to talk about Jesus as being eternal, the fact that Jesus is being born from god and being referred to as the Son of God was an important point. Arius refused to believe that Jesus was god himself, he believed that Jesus was in fact the first creature that God created but was still a creature and was impossible for him to be eternal.

The reaction to this was quite dramatic and it really divided the church with some people siding with Arius and others taking a position against Arius. After Emperor Constantine called a gathering of Bishops on whether to decide if Arius was right or wrong. The conclusion to this was to condemn Arius as a heretic, he was to be exiled from Alexandria and be removed from his position as a priest title. This council produced a creed, which is something that I used to indicate what people believe. The idea is that the creed emphasizes how Jesus is the Son of God and therefore God.

The second phase of the Trinitarian controversy in particular the Council of Constantinople which happened around 381 AD. Up until about 360, theological debates mainly dealt with the Divinity of Jesus, the 2nd person of the Trinity. However, because the Council of Nicaea had not clarified the divinity of the Holy Spirit, the 3rd person of the Trinity, it became a topic of debate. Some of the main actors in that council were Eunomius of Cyzicus, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus and Augustine. The council spoke of God as being one in nature and three in persons (father, son and Holy Spirit). It also declared that the holy spirit is also God.

This council condemned Arianism which began to die out. With the discussion of Trinitarian doctrine now developed and well under agreement to orthodox and biblical understanding, it led to Christology.

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 4

4) Explain the new relationships between church and emperor in the East and West in the fourth and fifth centuries.

In the Roman Empire there was freedom of religion with the exception of Christianity. The Roman religion was very complex because of the traditions and elements it borrowed from other sources. In the Roman world Christianity was seen as a sect that sprung out of Judaism and was looked down upon. This religion was seen as being disloyal to the state and having turned away from the recognized God. As a result Christians were accused of being atheists, dangerous, performing acts of cannibalism, murder, incest, and magic. They were also part of an antisocial group because of neglecting certain gods and ceremonies. As a result there were many major persecutions which caused many issues even after the persecutions were finished. One issue was how Christians were supposed to collaborate with the persecutors. Some consequences of the persecutions were destruction of churches, confiscation of property, prohibition of worship, arrests, and cancellation of legal and civil rights.

With the help of Constantine and his sympathy toward Christianity the religion started to become tolerated and eventually fully legalized. Christians began to have access to positions with the government, money and support was given to churches, and as a whole Christianity became an establishment. Constantine did so by granting universal religious freedom after he had a vision of a cross that made clear to him his personal mission to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity.

Once Christianity became legalized there was a continuing conflict between church and emperor both in the east and the west in terms of power. In the west there was the theory of the two powers: Throne and Alter. There was the worldly power that was guided by the emperor and the heavenly power that was guided by the bishops. It was required that the bishops and the emperor work together for the good of the society. However, in the case of the west this did not happen. The two powers were separated. The bishop and the pope went against the emperor and there were many quarrels such as the decision of who was supposed to appoint the new bishop. The emperor believed he was the one with the ultimate power while the pope believed he was the power of the church therefore it being his decision. In the fifth century the western territory of Rome was attacked by barbarian groups that took over. In the east there was a better relationship between the two powers much stronger than that of the west. An example of this still exists today and is that of the Vatican. The pope to this day is still the political ruler in Vatican City. The model in the east is the model of harmony. The emperor and patriarch mixed and there was a submission of the church to the state. Therefore there was still a little bit of separation between the two.

VERSION 2

4) Christianity went through a steady progress throughout the fourth century. After some scrutiny, Christianity was officially legalized in the Roman Empire in 313 AD. By 391 AD, Christianity would become the official religion of the empire after Paganism was declared illegal. Constantine, the emperor at the time and the driving force behind the religion becoming so prominent, saw this as an opportunity to unify the empire through the orthodoxy of Christianity.

Before Constantine legalized Christianity, it was extremely scrutinized by the Pagan religion, which was the official religion at the time. In 313 AD the Emperor officially legalized the Christian religion. Although most officers and high-ranking officials followed Pagan religion, Constantine believed greatly in Christianity. He devoted an immense amount of effort into its cause and he even financially supported countless religious establishments.

As Christianity grew in numbers, Constantine sought out council in order to clarify the misconceptions and dogmas of the religion. The Council of Nicaea in 325 AD was the first in a series of seven Councils that eventually aimed at reaching an orthodox consensus and to establish a unified Christendom. The original council aimed at solidified Jesus as God. Opposers such as Arius, who believed that Jesus was created by God, therefore he was a creature who was not eternal and could not be God, were labeled wrong and exiled from the empire. Six other major councils were conducted in years to come in order to clarify any misconceptions or disputes regarding the religion.

The Christianization of Roman society had officially begun. In 380 AD, the Emperor Theodosius 1 banned the practice of ancient religions. That most notably meant that Paganism was now illegal, leaving Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. In the time that two Emperors ruled Rome, Christianity went from being a scrutinized and illegal practice to the Empire becoming completely Christian. In simple terms, Constantine got the Christianity ball rolling then Theodosius really put it into effect. Without the two of them, the religion would probably have never become accepted. In Roman society, the Emperor was the supreme priest and the church ensured world order and the prosperity of the Roman people.

The Empire really began to split into East and West sectors when Theodosius died in 395 AD. No longer was the Empire unified; it was now split into East and West divisions with separate Emperors leading each side. Throughout the fourth century the Church had seen a steady growth until it was successfully the ruling religion of the Roman Empire. All of a sudden, at the turn of the fifth century, the Empire was split into coasts and the church was beginning to lose its unifying power. No longer was one emperor the reigning highest priest. Now, both sides of the Empire had their own Emperor.

During Christianity's rise in the fourth century, many orthodox felt as though the ethical life of

Christians had declined. Therefore, many fled regular society to migrate East and become monastics. Monasticism is a religious sect who sheds worldly life to devote everything to the spiritual life. By the turn of the fifth century, Monasticism had reached back West and the practice was becoming quite popular.

One of the major actors in the rise of Monasticism was Saint Jerome. In 377 AD, he came to settle in Rome, where he preached his ideals. In 385 AD he left Rome for Palestine and several people, most notably women who had placed themselves under his spiritual direction, followed him. Jerome continued traveling the land and founding various monasteries wherever possible. Monasticism spread throughout places like Italy, Milan, Gaul, Spain, African, and especially Egypt where it was most popular. Another major player in the rise of Monasticism was John Cassian, who experienced it in Egypt while in the East and then brought the ideals back West to found monasteries.

By the fifth century, the Empire was clearly no longer unified. There was no longer one ruling Emperor who controlled the Church. Suddenly, there was a split. The East half saw an up rise of Monasticism as well as a continued interest in Greek Orthodoxy, while the West had become more Latin. The relationship between church and emperor in the fifth century no longer had the same power or bond as it had in the fourth century. By the fifth century, the Empire was split into East and West and was no longer one unified state ruled by one religion.

4) Explain the orthodox Christology developed at the Councils of Ephesus (431 CE) and Chalcedon (451 CE).

In 431 CE, the Emperor Theodosius summoned a third Ecumenical Council, held at Ephesus, in an attempt to settle the Nestorian controversy. Nestorius objected to the term, 'Theotokos' (God-bearer, Mother of God) applied to the Virgin Mary. From the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church:

"Opinion is widely divided as to what the doctrine of Nestorius really was and how far it was heretical. His sustained objection to the term, 'Theotokos' has traditionally been held to imply that he asserted not only two different natures, but also two different persons, in Christ, the one the man, born of Mary. But we must not overlook that he repeatedly affirmed the oneness of Christ, though he preferred to speak of conjunction

(synapheia) rather than of union (henosis). His fear of the Monophysite tendencies, which were actually to come into the open a few years later, led him to reject Cyril's conception of a hypostatic union (henosis ksth'hypostasin), substituting for it a union of the will (kat'eudokian). The latter term certainly savoured of Adoptionism, of which he was actually, though unjustly, accused. Certainly his zeal for upholding the integrity of the two natures, which he believed to be both self-subsisting and therefore incapable of being physically united in the Person of the God-man, caused him to fall into unguarded language, and the fact that his own friends finally abandoned him supports the view that, by trying to defend, he actually compromised the Antiochene Christology."

At the Council of Ephesus, St. Cyril of Alexandria took the chair and began the proceedings before the arrival of the Syrian bishops or indeed of the papal legates. Nestorius was deposed from his see of Constantinople and excommunicated, his doctrines condemned, and the Creed of Nicaea reaffirmed. Furthermore, the Council gave formal approval to the term, 'Theotokos.' This is usually rendered in the west as 'Mother of God' and Catholics used it every day in the 'Hail Mary: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.'

Eutyches (378-454) was archimendrite of a large monastery at Constantinople. His opposition to Nestorianism, which separates the two natures of Christ so radically as to make him into two persons, led him into the opposite heresy of monophysitism, teaching that Christ had only one nature. The monophysites held firmly to a phrase of St. Cyril, 'one Incarnate Nature of the Word.' As with Arianism, so there are various degrees or varieties of monophysitism. Eutyches himself seems to have held that 'after the incarnation there was only one nature in Christ, and that nature was not consubstantial with us;' i.e. Christ had no human nature.

The phrase, 'one nature after the union' is commonly found in monophysite writers. The process envisioned is that there is a pre-existent Divine nature and a pre-existent human nature which are united at the Incarnation, to make a new nature. This implies the belief in a pre-existent, immortal human soul—a notion congenial to Platonic, Origenist Alexandrians, but not at all to Antiochenes. It also seems to be envisaged that these natures were changed by the union into something else, that they were confused, confounded, or melted into one another. As we shall see, these ideas were to be specifically refuted at Chalcedon.

Eutyches was deposed in 448 by his archbishop, Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, who of course would have no sympathy at all with such ideas. Eutyches appealed to Pope Leo for support, and through influence at the imperial court secured a retrial at a council at Ephesus in 449. This council was summoned by the Emperor Theodosius II and was chaired by Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, a strong supporter of Monophysitism and no friend of Flavian.

Pope Leo, far from supporting Eutyches, was entirely supportive of Flavian, and sent delegates to the council armed with a letter to Flavian, known as the 'Tome' of Leo. These legates were insulted, and not allowed to read the letter. Eutyches was acquitted of heresy and reinstated, whereas Flavian and other bishops, including Ibas of Edessa and Theodoret of Cyrrhus, were deposed. A spirited account of this council is given in "So the great council ended with the deposition of Flavian of Constantinople, Eusebius of Dorylaeum, Daniel of Carrae, Irenaeus of Tyre, Aquilinus of Biblus, and Domnus of

Antioch as well as of Theodoret. One word of manly Latin had broken in on the supple suffrages of the servile orientals, the 'Contradicitor' of Hilarius the representative of the Church of Rome."

Pope Leo (the 'Great') was not at all pleased. He wrote a remarkable letter about the affair to the Empress Pulcheria

"For, as I have very often stated in letters from the beginning of this matter, I have desired that such moderation should be observed in the midst of discordant views and carnal jealousies that, whilst nothing should be allowed to be wrested from or added to the purity of the Faith, yet the remedy of pardon should be granted to those who return to unity and peace. Because the works of the devil are then more effectually destroyed when men's hearts are recalled to the love of God and their neighbours. But how contrary to my warnings and entreaties were their actions then, it is a long story to explain, nor is there need to put down in the pages of a letter all that was allowed to be perpetrated in that meeting, not of judges but of robbers ('non iudicium, sed latrocinium') at Ephesus."

Following these depositions and condemnations, the aggrieved parties appealed to Leo. Flavian, the deposed Patriarch of Constantinople, sent an appeal by the hand of Hilary the deacon, papal legate at the council and the utterer of the 'one word of manly Latin' to be heard among the supple suffrages of the servile orientals. Flavian pleaded that the faith, not of the Fathers, but of Eutyches was being preached by Dioscorus and his associates; complaining that the Alexandrian had long been seeking his humiliation; asking the Pope to be the first to rise up 'on behalf of our right faith;' and suggesting a united council of east and west to heal the terrible wound that had been inflicted.

Eusebius of Dorylaeum also sent an appeal, and followed it up with a visit to Rome in person. He complained that 'contrary to the divine canons' he had been most unjustly treated by Dioscorus and those compelled to obey his will, begged Leo to declare him restored to his office and in communion with the Roman see. The most eloquent appeal, however, came from Theodoret of Cyrrhus:

"Extolling the dignity and privileges of the throne in the West, he called to mind that when the early Christians at Antioch had been in doubt concerning their manner of life according to the Law, Paul had gone to the great Peter to learn from him the method whereby such difficulties could be solved. In the same way he and those with him were now turning to Peter's successor, seeking healing for the wounds recently inflicted upon the churches. And, he went on, it befitted Leo to take the initiative, since in him God had granted to the West an orthodox bishop who had already manifested his zeal against the ill-famed Manichaeans, and whose recent writing 'on the incarnation of our God and Savior'-in which was set forth 'both the everlasting godhead of the Only-begotten derived from the everlasting Father and, and the manhood derived from the seed of Abraham and David-had sufficiently indicated his apostolic character and spiritual wisdom."

It was an appeal which Leo could scarcely ignore. Nor did he; he wrote two letters, dated 13 October 449, to the Emperor Theodosius:

"In the first, claiming that as the successor of the Chief of the Apostles his was the power 'both to maintain the cause of peace, and to allow no one to distort its firm foundation but at once to repel

the mischief,' he entreated that most Christian and revered Prince to allow everything to remain as it was before the bishops met at Ephesus, till a synod of 'the whole company of bishops from all the world'-which, he suggested, should be held in Italy-could give its judgement..."

"In the second, he ventured to tell Theodosius that had the Bishop of Alexandria allowed the papal letters to the Council of Ephesus and to Flavian to be read, all disputings would have been hushed, and no place left for either ignorance or jealousy, since these contained the declaration of the divinely inspired faith which he had received and was determined to uphold." [Sellers, p. 90] Theodosius did not respond; it is possible, as Sellers suggests, that the letters were intercepted by agents of Dioscorus, and never reached their destination. So Leo wrote again, on 25 December. This time, he made his appeal:

"...simply on the ground that he, too, strictly adhered to the Creed of Nicaea. Within this Creed, he affirmed, his letters were in complete agreement, since in them he anathematized the perverse doctrine of Nestorius, and condemned the impiety of those who were denying that real flesh had been assumed by our Lord Jesus Christ. And again he besought Theodosius to summon an episcopal council in Italy, since this was the only sure means of checking the disorder affecting the whole church, and of preserving the integrity of the catholic faith."

Again, "No Answer" was the stern reply. But in early 450, the Western imperial court visited Rome, and Leo petitioned the Emperor Valentinian III, the Empress Licinia Eudoxia and the Emperor's mother, Galla Placidia [the cousin, daughter, and aunt respectively of Theodosius] to write to their imperial relative in the East on behalf of the catholic faith,' so long guarded by our divine Father Constantine.' Leo also persuaded Galla Placidia to write to her niece, Pulcheria Augusta [sister of Theodosius], soliciting her aid.

Theodosius was, however, not having any of this. He made it clear that, as far as he was concerned, the matter was settled. Flavian, the cause of all the trouble, had been banished. No further decisions were required. One Anatolius wrote to Leo, informing him that he had been appointed Bishop of Constantinople, but offering no assurances of his orthodoxy. Leo rolled up his sleeves and wrote stronger letters, dated 16 July 450, indicating his intention, if it should prove necessary, to hold a General Council in Italy.

In the event, Theodosius solved the problem by falling from his horse and dying on 28 July. He died without male issue, nominating the military commander, Marcian, as his successor.

Pulcheria married Marcian, and when the papal delegates arrived in Constantinople, they found the throne occupied, not as they had expected by Theodosius, but by Pulcheria and Marcian.

Marcian and Augusta Pulcheria summoned a council to be held at Nicaea, and the bishops duly made their way there for the opening on 1 September, 451. A certain kindly but misunderstood old gentleman called Attila the Hun was, however, causing some anxiety in Illyria, and Marcian found it necessary to keep one hand on the tiller of state. The bishops were therefore instructed to proceed to Chalcedon, which is close to Constantinople. Now Marcian could keep one eye on the bishops, and the other on the Hun. One wonders which he found more troublesome.

The Council of Chalcedon assembled in the basilica of St. Euphemia. No less than eighteen imperial officers sat facing down the church. On their left, the place of honour, sat the representatives of Leo, headed by Paschasinus, followed by Anatolius of Constantinople, Maximus of Antioch, Thalassius of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Stephen of Ephesus, and the bishops of their jurisdiction. On their right sat Dioscorus of Alexandria, Juvenal of Jerusalem, Anastasius of Thessalonica, and the bishops of Egypt, Palestine, and Illyricum. There were more than five hundred bishops present in all.

The first session began on 8 October. The Roman delegation immediately objected to the presence of Dioscorus. Dioscorus, now on the defensive, was instructed to sit in the middle as he could not be both judge and defendant. Eusebius of Dorylaeum, who had been deposed by the Latrocinium (see previous entry), then appealed to the Council, which proceeded to review the acts of the Latrocinium. Theodoret of Cyrhus was allowed to enter, amid scenes of uproar, until the imperial officers called meeting to order. A number of Dioscorus' supporters, including Juvenal of Jerusalem, went over to the other side. Only Dioscorus himself refused to yield, maintaining that Flavian had been justly deposed because he had spoken of 'two natures after the union.'

Clearly the 'dyophysite' or 'two-nature' position was gaining ground. However, "Eustathius of Berytus thought it right to warn the bishops that, in their support of the doctrine of 'two natures' they should make it clear that theirs was not the 'dividing' of Nestorius; and Basil of Seleucia threw out the suggestion-which, it would seem, was to bear fruit when the 'Definitio' was drawn up-that they could safeguard the truth by stating that, while the two natures in Christ were not to be 'divided,' they were not to be 'confused' but to be 'recognized' (in their difference)." (Sellers, p. 108)

At the second session of the Council, on 10 October, the creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople were read, together with Cyril's letters to Nestorius and John of Antioch. Finally the Tome of Leo was read. This was greeted with shouts of approval: "This is the faith of the fathers and of the Apostles. This we all believe. Peter has spoken through Leo; thus Cyril taught; Leo and Cyril teach the same; anathema to him who teaches otherwise. This is the true faith; the orthodox hold this; it is the faith of the Fathers. Why was it not read at Ephesus [at the Latrocinium]? Dioscorus kept it concealed.'

"The Tome" is the title usually given to Leo's letter to Flavian concerning Eutyches. The word is usually applied to a lengthy and weighty volume in English, but "Tomos" in Greek can be applied to any document, without regard to length. In fact, the "Tome" runs only to a couple of pages, and can easily be read aloud at one sitting, as it was at Chalcedon. The text can be found in NPNF, Series 2, Letter XXVIII (pp. 38-43). Leo insists that Christ was true God and true man: "Without detriment therefore to the properties of either nature and substance which then came together in one person, took on humility, strength, weakness, eternity, mortality...Thus in the whole and perfect nature of true man was true God born, complete in what was His own, complete in what was ours...both natures retain their own proper character without loss...each form does what is proper to it with the co-operation of the other." The great merit of the document is its clarity. It is written in simple, unphilosophical language which can be understood by anybody.

The definition of Chalcedon, 451:

"Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance [homousios] with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us man and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer [Theotokos]; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized IN TWO NATURES, [en dyo physessin] WITHOUT CONFUSION, [asynchytos] WITHOUT CHANGE, [atreptos] WITHOUT DIVISION, [adiairetos] WITHOUT SEPARATION [anchoristos]; the distinction of natures

being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and substance [hypostasis], not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us."

This did not end all discussion, dissension, and debate.

"From the political point of view, the Council of Chalcedon was a failure. In his zeal for uniformity, the Emperor Marcian had not reckoned with that spirit of nationalism which was destined to prove one of the major forces in the forthcoming disruption of Eastern Christendom. Whilst the Greek cities-at any rate, officially-supported the decisions of the Council, the peoples of Egypt and Syria, living in the days when strong patriotic feeling could be expressed only through the medium of theological controversy, rose in revolt against what they regarded as an attempt on the part of the Greek government to 'Graecize' its subject races; and a hundred years later, after the Church in the East-for the West never wavered in its adherence to Chalcedon-had endured another long period of internal strife, the Monophysites separated themselves into their own communities, and Copt and Syrian were moved to denounce the doctrine of 'two natures' partly because this was the government's creed." [Sellers, 'The Council of Chalcedon,' p. 254]

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 5

5) What is the institution of monasticism and why is it important for Christianity?

The monastic life - also known as Consecrated life and "religious life" - is regulated by the respective Church law of those Christian denominations that recognize it (e.g. the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Anglican Church, or the Lutheran Church). Once a

Christian feels called to seek God in the monastic life, it needs to be established whether the vocation is as a member of a religious community or as a consecrated virgin, hermit or widow. While many people think of the Christian monastic life (especially that of Catholic monks or nuns) as having "something to do with living in a religious community," its purpose is not always communal living with like-minded Christians. Rather, the purpose is many times perpetual training that is meant to help those Christians who feel called to dedicate their life to God. This is in accordance with the perfect example given by Jesus and following his exhortation to "be ye perfect like your heavenly Father is perfect." This ideal, also called the state of perfection, is expressed everywhere that the things of God are sought above all other things. This can be seen, for example, in the *Philokalia*, a book of monastic writings.

A monk or nun is an individual who has made a public vow to observe not only the Ten Commandments and the law of their respective Church authority (as has every other Christian), but also the counsels of perfection (e.g., chastity, poverty and obedience) and the rules set by the founder of their particular religious order.

(VERSION 2)

The institution of monasticism was introduced near the end of the third century. It is a very important part of Christianity because its members are some of the most elite and devoted Christians. There are three main points that prove the great dedication to ones faith involved in monastic life, and in turn show how monasticism is such a crucial institution in Christianity. Firstly, the ideas of monasticism originated with very prominent biblical figures, secondly, there are different forms of monastic life that have different sets of rules, thirdly, asceticism is closely linked with monasticism. The elaboration of the previous three reasons will show how the institution of monasticism is important for Christianity.

To begin with, many great biblical figures lived a life similar to that of monasticism much before the institution was introduced by Saint Anthony, who is known as the father of Monasticism. Mary the mother of Jesus is a role model for the female monastic life. The Apostle Paul shows a lifestyle similar to the model of monasticism. There are two figures, though, that are more prominent than others and whom the bibles speak about in length. The first is John the Baptist; the book of Matthew has passages that show him living the life of a hermit dedicating his life to the Lord. The second is Jesus Christ; from his 40 day fast, to his missions, to his constant servitude of God, he is the role model for all Christian monasticism.

Furthermore, there are different ways to live a monastic life. One way is living an eremitical life, also known as hermit-like. These people live in isolation and often in the wilderness, just like Jesus Christ often did. Saint Anthony was the first to leave society to go live by himself in the desert as a monk. Another form is coenobitic; this way of monastic life involves living in a monastery or community with fellow monks/nuns. These communities are the principle form of monasticism today. A final form is basillian, founded by St. Basil. St. Basil laid down indisputable principles for his monks that would guide their lifestyles towards virtues and away from vices. The virtues St. Basil believed in for monastic life were; poverty, obedience, renunciation, and self-abnegation.

Lastly, asceticism is perhaps the most important part of monastic life. The overall goal of monasticism is to completely dedicate ones life to God. There can be nothing that distracts or inhibits this. Asceticism

is abstaining from the pleasures that would become obstacles in the mission of dedicating ones entire life for God, the most obvious one being sexual activity. This is why monks take vows of chastity, obedience and poverty. Asceticism truly shows who the elite and devoted Christians are.

To conclude, when Christianity was first legalized in the third century there was a large influx of people claiming the religion. Some felt the standards of faith and morality were, therefore, lowered, and that lead to the institution of monasticism. When some of the most prominent biblical figures showed signs of monastic life, early forms of monasticism still exist today, and asceticism is the way in which these Christians are faithful, it is clear that the institution of monasticism is definitely very important to Christianity.

5) Who is Jesus Christ according to the understanding developed in the Church in the fourth and fifth centuries?

Before the various councils held in order to clarify the true nature of Jesus Christ there was many influences of the Christian God. The first influence was that of Jewish monotheism. This belief held that God was one deity and the Son and Spirit were only aspects of the one God. The second influence on the Christian God was Paul's assertion "One God, one Lord." This emphasized the idea that God could not have two other substances (Son and Spirit). Thirdly was the Neo-Platonist Triad which spoke of three completely separate deities/gods. Also Arianism had a huge influence on the Christian God because the faith held a string belief that Jesus was not God. It was because of this faith that there was pressure to clarify the true nature of Jesus Christ.

There were four Christological positions concerning the nature of Jesus. The first is Nestorianism and believes that Jesus is two separate persons and is divine and human. The second is Adoptionism and Arianism and believes that Christ is human but not fully divine. Thirdly there is Monophysitism and states that Christ is both one person and one in nature. Lastly there is Docetism that believes Jesus is divine but not fully human.

The final understanding of Jesus Christ is that he has two natures and is fully divine and fully human. The Bible shows that he is fully divine by the episodes where he performs miracles and forgives sins. These are acts that no other human is capable of therefore making Christ divine.

The Bible provides information about the human nature of Jesus when it discusses his feelings of hunger, happiness, sadness, suffering etc. What makes Jesus extremely special is that he has the same nature as us humans and as God. The only thing about his nature that is not the same as ours is that he's sinless and his extraordinary birth is an example of his sinless nature.

5) Explain the notion of original sin in Augustine of Hippo and its relationship with the human free will.

Saint Augustine, was one of the foremost philosopher-theologians of early Christianity and, while serving (396-430) as bishop of Hippo Regius, the leading figure in the church of North Africa. He had a profound influence on the subsequent development of Western thought and culture and, more than any other person, shaped the themes and defined the problems that have characterized the Western tradition of Christian Theology. Among his many writings considered classics, the two most celebrated are his semiautobiographical Confessions, which contains elements of Mysticism, and City of God, a Christian vision of history.

Augustine believed that original sin manifested itself in sexual desire. His attitude towards sex was not unusual for his time: "Augustine lived in an ascetic age, where the sensitive man already felt humiliated by his body and where his clerical readers would have been increasingly celibate"

Augustine believed sin originated with free will, which is a created good Free will implies the ability to do evil. It is a voluntary noncompulsory self-determined act. Augustine appears to have later contradicted this view when he concluded that Donatists could be forced to believe against their will . With the fall man lost the ability to do good without God's grace, yet he retains the ability of free choice to accept God's grace . True freedom, however, is not the ability to sin but the ability to do good which only the redeemed have.

Augustine lived in a society where many religious philosophies related the body to evil; his struggles with his own desires left him fascinated and perplexed with the concept of evil. He strove to reconcile his own shortcomings with the immaculate perfection of God and God's creation

Augustine eventually developed the theory that all humans are inherently evil because of Adam's sin, which is transmitted through semen; no one is good, and we do not have free will because we are trapped in sin.

Humans become evil, then, at the moment of conception; no one is innocent, not even infants, their sin evident in their ability to act selfishly or jealously. Original sin proved compatible with other theological ideas, such as the virgin birth; if sin is transmitted through semen during conception, then all humans are implicated except for Christ.

Initial Reactions to Original Sin

Although it was initially contested, the notion of original sin soon became widely accepted. It may seem puzzling to outsiders why people would voluntarily accept such a negative, condemning idea. Some Christians of the time did disagree; they found the concept of original sin contrary to foundational beliefs such as the goodness of creation and the human freedom. In Augustine's time, however, many people lived in a "mentality of dependence," so Augustine's explanation fit perfectly with society's outlook. Original sin also provides an answer to theodicy. Original sin does not ease suffering, but for Christians, it proposes an answer as to why humans must suffer; as Pagels explains, perhaps "people would rather feel guilty than helpless" (146). Emperors would also have supported the idea of original sin, since it reinforced their power; because man, a fallen creature, could not control himself, he needed "more than purely spiritual pressures to keep him from evil.

According to Pagels, "Augustine's dark vision of a human nature ravaged by original sin and overrun by lust for power rules out uncritical adulation and qualifies his endorsement of imperial rule" (118). Interestingly, though, Christians believe that the power and authority to control human sinfulness is, under imperial rule, given to merely another fallen and sinful human.

OPTIONS FOR QUESTION 6

6) Who was Mary of Egypt and why is she important for Christian spirituality and monasticism?

Mary of Egypt, the prostitute from Alexandria who achieved sanctity through repentance and ascetic solitary life, was a holy woman who offered reassurance to every Christian.

Her *vita* provides some information on daily life in Alexandria and Jerusalem, on pilgrimage, on the cult of the True Cross and the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, and on Palestinian monasticism

Saint Mary was born somewhere in Egypt, and at the age of twelve ran away to the city of Alexandria where she lived an extremely dissolute life. Some authorities refer to her as a prostitute during this period, but in her *Vita* she states that she often refused the money offered for her sexual favors. She was, she said, driven "by an insatiable desire and an irrepressible passion," and that she mainly lived by begging, supplemented by spinning flax.

When she was twenty-nine, she decided on the spur of the moment to attach herself to a group of Libyan and Egyptian men who were voyaging to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 September), which attracted pilgrims from all over the empire. Mary joined the pilgrims, offering sexual favours to the sailors in return for her passage.

It was at Golgotha in Jerusalem that she underwent a mystical experience that led to her conversion, repentance, and eventual expiation of her sins. After buying three loaves of bread for sustenance, she crossed the river Jordan and settled in the desert. There she lived for forty-seven years without encountering any other human being, until she met Zosimas, a devout monk of a monastery in the vicinity of the river Jordan. A year later, on Maundy Thursday, Zosimas brought her the holy eucharist as he had promised. He then went to meet her a third time in the following year as they had agreed. By then, however, Mary was dead. Zosimas discovered her body in the desert, and buried her with the help of a lion that appeared out of nowhere. The vignette of the lion's assistance in the burial of the holy woman is only one of many passages suggesting that the composition was strongly influenced by Jerome's *vita* of Paul the Hermit.

According to this popular and agreeably written source, Mary was an Egyptian, who left home at the age of twelve and went to live in Alexandria, where she became a prostitute for seventeen years. At the age of twenty-nine through curiosity she joined a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, paying for her passage by offering herself to the sailors. Once at Jerusalem, she was held back from entering the church with the other pilgrims by an invisible and irresistible force. Lifting her eyes to an icon of the Blessed Virgin, she was told to go over the Jordan where she would find rest. She bought three loaves and went to live in the desert, where for the rest of her long life she lived on dates and berries. Her clothes wore out, but her hair grew long and took their place. She could not read, but was divinely instructed in the Christian faith. A devout monk called Zosimus met her by chance in the desert, covered her with his cloak at her own request, and heard her story. He promised to meet her in the same place next Maundy Thursday to bring her holy communion. This was done and arrangements made for another meeting. But when he came, he found her dead body, which a lion helped him to bury. This story was popular in the East, but it was also known in the West, as by Ælfric in his *Lives of the Saints*, and artists depicted it from the 12th century on carved capitals, in stained glass in the cathedrals of Chartres, Bourges, and Auxerre (13th century), and in paintings and sculptures of the later Middle Ages.

She is often confused with Mary Magdalene (also depicted as a hermit) and occurs in Books of Hours and elsewhere clothed with her long hair and carrying with her three loaves as her emblem, as on a screen at Kenn (Devon). Feast: usually 1 April (as in most English monasteries) but sometimes on 9 or 10 April.

The story of the life of Saint Mary of Egypt is extremely dear to my heart. This story leaves me with a great hope and understanding that some day, by the grace of God, I too can be saved, although I am unworthy. Her story is nothing short of God's miraculous work. The sinner knows the heart of the saintly monk, in which a humble woman gives blessing to the worthy priest because he has seen that her own gifts of the Spirit exceed the ranks of ecclesiastical office. Sanctity is found outside the monastery more than within. The desert, the place of death, becomes the place of life. The peace of God's kingdom is restored as the lion and the man become partners in piety. It is a breathtaking story, and it moves me accordingly."

Paul Fuller

The story of Mary of Egypt is remembered and cherished throughout Christendom, east and west. In the Orthodox church, however, we remember her twice each year. The first time, her feast day, is our gift to her: we remember what she did, who she was, and who she became. The second time, on the fifth Sunday of Lent, is her gift to us: the gift of her story at the moment when we ourselves must enter the inner desert of our hearts. For what does Lent mean for us? It is that time when we must face ourselves, and face ourselves in the presence of God. Who are we? What do we live for? We fast, pray, repent, and confess. It is hard and we get lost in the wilderness. And we cannot escape the truth of who we are. At this point in Lent, we prepare for Holy Week. And before we can rejoice, we must complete our full sojourn in the desert.

6) Who was Mary of Egypt and why is she important for Christian spirituality and monasticism? (VERSION 2)

Mary of Egypt, also known as Saint-Mary, is a figure with an extraordinary story. Unfortunately, there are various versions of her story and very little factual proof to backup a lot of the claims about her. There is also no exact timeline of events throughout her life including her dates of birth and death. Father Zosimas is the source of information, since it was to him that Mary of Egypt told her life's story.

Saint Mary was born in Egypt at some point in the fourth century. She left home at the age of twelve

and moved to the city of Alexandria. There she became a prostitute, and lived that lifestyle for the next 17 years of her life. She then began the journey that would drastically change her life. She traveled with pilgrims to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. She paid for her travels by offering sexual favors to the pilgrims. When they reached the church in Jerusalem everyone made their way inside, as Mary got to the doors, though, she could not enter. There was some sort of invisible force stopping her progress and not giving her passage. After a couple tries and no luck at getting inside the church she gave up and sat outside the church. She looked up and saw an icon of the Virgin Mary. She began to weep and pray. She prayed for forgiveness, and she swore that she would give up her sexual habits. She then tried to enter the church again and walked in without a problem. She then went to the monastery of St. John the Baptist where she received absolution of her prior sins and received Holy Communion. She crossed the Jordan and would live in the desert as a hermit for the rest of her life. She, famously, only brought three loaves of bread with her into the desert and lived off the wilderness for the rest of her life.

Before her death, Mary met Zosimas in the desert. He pleaded with her to tell him of her life. She did so only after demanding his cloak to cover her naked body. She recounted her story with great humility while also amazing him with her gift of clairvoyance; she knew who Zosima was and his life story despite never having met him before. Finally, she asked Zosima to meet her again the following year at sunset on Holy Thursday by the banks of the Jordan. Zosima agreed and a year later showed up at the planned meeting spot. Mary appeared on the opposite side of the Jordan; she walked across the water and met Zosima. Mary then received communion and walked back across the Jordan after telling Zosima that he should return to where they first met exactly a year later. When he did so, he found Mary's dead body with a message written on the sand asking him for burial and revealing that she had died immediately after receiving the Holy Communion the year before and had been miraculously transported to the spot where she now lay. So Zosima began to dig, but soon got tired; then a lion approached and began to help him. Thus St. Mary of Egypt was buried.

The main reason I believe Mary of Egypt is so important to Christian spirituality and monasticism is because her story, although amazing and somewhat unbelievable, has an underlying meaning that still stays true today. No matter what your sins, a Christian can be forgiven and absolved and start a new life.

6) Who was Augustine of Hippo and why is he so important for Christianity?

Augustine of Hippo was the bishop of Hippo (today's Algeria in North Africa) from 396 until his death in 430. Augustine is highly influential in a wide range of disciplines even to this day. He has influenced many important individuals who have shaped western intellectual history such as Freud. He was highly trained in education and was a professor. He studied and was influenced by the best of the Greeks and Romans such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero. Not only was he known for his ideas in theology but also in political science, psychology, philosophy, religious studies ect. He discovered many theories that are still used today in education such as theories of war, faith and reason, spirituality, sexuality and human free will. No matter what discipline is being studied chances are one will come across Augustine's theories.

Augustine himself did not become a Christian until his thirties. He was first inspired by the Gnostic group Manichaeism and was a Manichee for 10 years. He then became inspired by Plotinus which eventually led him to Christ. Augustine is very important to Christianity because once he became a Christian he was very dedicated to God and his community. This made him an inspiration to many Christians. His writings were then about knowing the truth which consists of reason (Plato) and authority (Christ). He also turned his attention to creation and the trinity. In terms of the trinity he spoke about it being one in relations, not of substances. He also used the word filioque which means that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the father and from the son. One important theory he spoke of that of the two cities: worldly cities and the city of God. His ideas on the worldly cities were exceptionally important because he spoke about how to organize and develop human societies.

Augustine invented the phrase original sin which makes him very important to Christianity because although the religion discussed sin prior to Augustine he helped to make an easier understanding of our sinfulness. Other important topics he discussed were human free will and our misuse of free will.

6) Explain the opposition to Christianity and its consequences

Christians, like Jews and Muslims, are monotheistic, that is they believe in only one God and claimed their God was Jesus Christ. Christians refused to worship foreign gods and that refusal led to persecution and martyrdom. The consequence of this was the scapegoating of Jews and Christians with false accusations. In its first three centuries, the Christian church endured periods of persecution at the hands of Roman authorities. Christians were persecuted by local authorities on an intermittent and ad-hoc basis. In addition, there were several periods of empire-wide persecution which was directed from the seat of government in Rome.

The persecutions culminated with Diocletian and Galerius at the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century. The Great Persecution is considered the largest. Beginning with a series of

four edicts banning Christian practices and ordering the imprisonment of Christian clergy, the persecution intensified until all Christians in the empire were commanded to sacrifice to the gods or face immediate execution. Over 20,000 Christians are thought to have died during Diocletian's reign. However, as Diocletian zealously persecuted Christians in the Eastern part of the empire, his co-emperors in the West did not follow the edicts and so Christians in Gaul, Spain, and Britannia were virtually unmolested.

This persecution lasted, until Constantine I came to power in 313 and legalized Christianity. It was not until Theodosius I in the later fourth century that Christianity would become the official religion of the Empire. Between these two events Julian II temporarily restored the traditional Roman religion and established broad religious tolerance renewing Pagan and Christian hostilities.

Some early Christians sought out and welcomed martyrdom. Roman authorities tried hard to avoid Christians because they "goaded, chided, belittled and insulted the crowds until they demanded their death. One man shouted to the Roman officials: "I want to die! I am a Christian," leading the officials to respond: "If they wanted to kill themselves, there was plenty of cliffs they could jump off." Such seeking after death is found in Tertullian's *Scorpiace* but was certainly not the only view of martyrdom in the Christian church. Both Polycarp and Cyprian, bishops in Smyrna and Carthage respectively, attempted to avoid martyrdom.