

Church History



Review

- Charlemagne saw himself as the spiritual as well as political leader of the Holy Roman Empire. Who did he claim to be modeling himself after?
 - He claimed he was modelling himself on the good Biblical kings of Judah, such as David and Josiah
- Charlemagne passed laws that resembled some of the Old Testament laws. What were some of those laws?
 - Lay people were forbidden to do any work on Sunday, except for burying the dead, and transporting food and necessary military supplies.
 - Charlemagne made the payment of tithes universal and compulsory.
- What was the penalty for refusing to pay tithes to one's parish church?
 - Excommunication

Review

- Invasions by foreign powers, which had subsided for a while under Charlemagne and his successors, started afresh with the decline of the Carolingian empire. Name two major foreign powers that repeatedly invaded the western Europe.
 - The Scandinavians (Vikings)
 - The Hungarians
 - The Muslims
- What method of transportation did the Vikings use to travel to so many places throughout Europe and around the world, raiding and looting?
 - Viking Longships - ships, sixty or seventy feet in length and propelled by sail and oars, that could carry up to eighty men.
- What religious belief did the Norsemen eventually adopt once they conquered and settled among the western Europeans?
 - They became Christians.

Gottschalk of Orbais



Gottschalk of Orbais

- Gottschalk of Orbais (AD 805-69) was the son of a Saxon nobleman. His parents placed him in the abbey of Fulda when he was a child.
- He later tried to obtain release from his monastic vows, but the abbot of Fulda, Rabanus Maurus, forced Gottschalk to remain a monk.
- Although Rabanus would not release Gottschalk from his vows, he did allow his reluctant monk to move from Fulda to the monastery of Orbais in north-eastern France. There Gottschalk received ordination to the priesthood.

Frankish State in Gottschalk's Time



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- Although Rabanus would not release Gottschalk from his vows, he did allow his reluctant monk to move from Fulda to the monastery of Orbais in north-eastern France. There Gottschalk received ordination to the priesthood.
- An ardent disciple of Augustine of Hippo, Gottschalk began teaching his doctrines of sin, grace and predestination with passionate enthusiasm.
- Gottschalk also wrote religious poetry which scholars have praised as the finest the 9th century has to offer.

Gottschalk of Orbais

- Gottschalk's zeal for Augustinianism brought him into conflict with Rabanus, his former abbot, who wrote against him; Gottschalk responded by accusing Rabanus of Semi-Pelagianism.
- Gottschalk defended his views at the council of Mainz in AD 848, where he went several degrees beyond Augustine's theology by arguing that:
 - Christ died only for the elect (the doctrine of "limited atonement"),
 - The precise number of the non-elect is specified by an eternal decree of God, a predestination to death, which runs parallel to the decree of election to life (the doctrine of "reprobation").
- Augustine had never explicitly taught these two ideas.
- The council condemned Gottschalk and delivered him over to the haughty and intolerant Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims, in whose diocese Orbais was situated.

Gottschalk of Orbais

- Hincmar, who combined a Semi-Pelagian tendency in theology with a personal tendency to behave like a thug, deposed Gottschalk from the priesthood, had him flogged within an inch of his life, ordered his books to be burnt, and had him imprisoned.
- Gottschalk spent the rest of his life in prison, continuing to dispute with Hincmar to the bitter end.
- Hincmar's brutal treatment of Gottschalk outraged many Churchmen.
- A number of great Catholic scholars leapt to the defense of Gottschalk and his theology – notably:
 - Archbishop Remigius of Lyons (died 875),
 - Florus of Lyons (died 860),
 - Prudentius of Troyes (died 861),
 - The monk Ratramnus of Corbie

Gottschalk of Orbais

- It's interesting that two of Gottschalk's defenders came from Lyons.
- The church of Lyons produced some of the greatest medieval works in defense of Augustinian theology, including one entitled, ***On the Universal Ruin of All Humanity through Adam and the Special Redemption of the Elect through Christ.***
- Four councils were held over the next six years (AD 853-859) in which this issue was debated. **Two** of the councils sanctioned a strong **Augustinianism**; the **other two** upheld a **Semi-Pelagian** theology.

Gottschalk of Orbais

- The two parties reached a “compromise” at the council of Toucy in AD 860, where Hincmar, the most powerful bishop in France, took the leading part in the council.
- It comes as no surprise that the council ended up favoring Hincmar’s Semi-Pelagian views, concluding, for example, that God wills the salvation of all human beings, and that Christ died for all.
- Despite the council of Toucy, the issues raised by Gottschalk were never really resolved.
- Approval for Hincmar’s Semi-Pelagian views only ever came from **local** Frankish councils, never from an **ecumenical** Council
- In the meantime, a full-blooded Augustinianism continued to flourish within Western Christendom.

Gottschalk: A Hymn to God the Life-Giver

You are Three, You are One;

*You are all-powerful; You are good, You are gentle, You are
all-merciful;*

O graciously grant that my eyes may flow with rivers of tears!

You once changed stone into pools of water,

And cliffs into many-headed fountains;

Therefore You can soften my iron heart.

Yes, You can change my heart of steel into a heart of flesh,

The soul of a beast into the soul of a man,

The old time-worn heart into a new one ...

Freely You created me by Your goodness;

Freely create me afresh, I pray, and restore me to life!

*Freely You bestow Your gifts, which is why we say they are "by
grace".*

Gottschalk: A Hymn to God the Life-Giver

*O Holy Spirit, You bring instant life to those You breathe into;
Together with the Father and His Son, You thunder forth,
govern and give light;
You increase and You quicken the faith which You grant to
whomever You choose.*

*Even more, You make clean those polluted by leprosy,
You make the ungodly righteous;
Together with the Father and the Son, You recreate Your elect
souls,
And when they are recreated, You also glorify them.*

Radbertus, Ratramnus, and the Communion Controversy



The Communion Controversy

- When the two Frankish monks Paschasius Radbertus (AD 785-860) and Ratramnus of Corbie (died AD 868) clashed with each other over the doctrine of the Eucharist (holy communion), it was the first serious theological controversy on this issue to disturb the Church.
- The dispute concerned the relationship between the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper and the flesh and blood of Christ's human body.
- In the early Church period, as far back as we can go, Christians had always believed that the Eucharistic bread and wine could and should, in some sense or other, be called the body and blood of Christ.

The Communion Controversy

- In the 4th century, many began to speak of the bread and wine being “converted” into Christ’s flesh and blood; but at the same time, they still called the bread and wine “symbols”, “figures” and “signs”.
- Often the same theologian would employ both ways of speaking – that the bread and wine were “converted”, and were “symbols”.
- This is not such a contradiction as it may seem; in the thought of the ancient world, a symbol made the thing it symbolized to be present in some way – “presented” it.

The Communion Controversy

- Different theologians would emphasize one side of the equation more than the other.
- For example, Ambrose of Milan tended to stress the conversion of the bread and wine, while Augustine of Hippo emphasized more that they were signs and symbols.
- These two lines of thought came in conflict with each other in the 9th century.
- Radbertus was a distinguished scholar who wrote theological treatises, biographies of saints, and commentaries on Psalm 44, Lamentations, and Matthew.

The Communion Controversy

- In a book he wrote in AD 831, Radbertus argued that the bread and wine of communion were changed completely into the flesh and blood of Christ, so that the bread and wine no longer existed – they only *seemed* to be bread and wine, but in reality they were now entirely the flesh and blood of the Savior.
- He taught that when communion was celebrated, the very sacrifice of Christ's flesh and blood on the cross of Calvary became miraculously present and effective for the washing away of sins.
- However, Radbertus also maintained that the believer ate Christ's flesh and blood in a spiritual sense, and that unbelievers who took part in communion did *not* receive the Lord's body and blood.

The Communion Controversy

- Hincmar of Rheims supported Radbertus, but a number of leading Western theologians strongly opposed him, particularly Ratramnus of Corbie and Rabanus Maurus.
- Ratramnus and Rabanus were on different sides in the predestination controversy, Ratramnus defending Gottschalk and Rabanus opposing him; but they were united in rejecting Radbertus and his doctrine of communion.
- Ratramnus was one of Radbertus's monks at Corbie, but he wrote against his abbot at the request of King Charles the Bald.

The Communion Controversy

- Ratramnus's book, entitled *Concerning Christ's Body and Blood*, argued that the bread and wine of communion remained bread and wine in their own physical nature.
- At the same time, they became the flesh and blood of Christ – but for the believer alone, and in a mysterious and spiritual sense, rather than a crudely physical way.
- In, with and through the bread and wine, the Holy Spirit worked secretly to feed and strengthen the souls of Christians with the risen life of Christ.
- Neither Radbertus's nor Ratramnus's doctrine triumphed in this controversy; the Western Church tolerated both as valid views.
- However, Radbertus's view became the increasingly popular one.

Medieval Monasticism



Whitby Abbey, North Yorkshire, England. Founded in the 7th century

<https://www.ancient.eu/image/9703/whitby-abbey/>

VOLUNTEERS ARE LIKE BROWNIES!

B BEST OF THE BEST
R REALLY GENEROUS
O OUTSTANDING
W WONDERFUL
N NATURALLY NICE
I INVALUABLE TO HOPE
E EXCELLENT
S SWEET



Class Discussion Time



*Class Discussion Time

- Does it surprise you that what would later come to be known as “Calvinism” was clearly taught by Gottschalk and a number of others in the ninth century?
- This week we have looked at the beginnings of what would later develop into the doctrine of ***transubstantiation***. Radbertus argued that the bread and wine of communion were changed completely into the flesh and blood of Christ, so that the bread and wine no longer existed – they only ***seemed*** to be bread and wine, but in reality they were now entirely the flesh and blood of the Savior.
- He further taught that when communion was celebrated, the very sacrifice of Christ’s flesh and blood on the cross of Calvary became miraculously present and ***effective for the washing away of sins***.
- But even Ratramnus, who ***opposed*** Radbertus’ teaching taught that the elements ***became the flesh and blood of Christ*** – but for the believer alone, and ***in a mysterious and spiritual sense***, rather than a crudely physical way.
- Do you believe there is anything ***mystical*** in the elements of the Lord’s Supper, or do you believe they are merely physical symbols by which we ceremonially remember Christ’s death?
- Do ***you*** have a topic or question that ***you*** would like to see us to discuss?