

(1) the institutions:

- the home
- the temple
- the synagogue

Of these we will make a few comments. In the New Testament age the temple was gradually being replaced by the synagogue, not in a formal style, but in the use of the people. It served as a cultural, teaching, and study center and was being taken into all parts of the world through its system of organization. It was the development of the synagogue system that gave the early church ready access to much of the world of its time. There was a lot of dissatisfaction with the Temple arrangement, much of it going back to the Maccabean age and the despotism of some of the high priests...to say nothing of their ineffectiveness in office.

(2) religious observations:

- sacred ritual
- festivals and feasts

The religious life of the devout continued to revolve around the Mosaic calendar and the sacred seasons. These are frequently reflected in the Gospels.

(3) religious groups:

Sadducees
Pharisees
Zealots
Herodians
Essenes

While these are discussed more formally in other courses, it is well to remember that the basis for the pharisaic tradition and the Essenic ideals was that of purity in the religious life. The Sadducees favored Hellenistic practices and much of the spiritual force was divided between Hellenists and Hebraists (so to speak).

(4) the Literature

(5) The schools: Famous rabbis and their disciples and teachings.

c. Other religious forces:

- (1) Zoroastrianism
- (2) Syncretisms