

to you) due to a certain crassness in literal expressions. Literal interpretations of the Song of Solomon, for example, were particularly hard on the minds of the people. This distinction between what the Scripture said and what it meant in spirit, is a problem that is still with us and, in time, will lead to the "head" and "heart" dichotomy in which the doctrine is often seen as being less meaningful than emotion. In general we offer the following observations:

The allegorists championed a heart religion based more on subjective and spiritualized ideals.

The literalists championed more or a head religion with greater stress on apparent and objective ideals.

The former will lead to a great thrust in mysticism and devotion while the latter will lead to an emphasis on doctrine and precise, definitive knowledge. My statements are a bit over-simplified, of course, but the ideas are essentially correct. Both schools will self-destruct if permitted to grow alone. The former in meaningless mysticism and the latter in calculated criticism. We can see the development through the long history of the church and can hear from time to time cries from the one group or the other in our day. But the necessary element in the ideologies is balance. No person is all heart or all head. Both ideas must inculcate the saving virtues of the other. To fail to do so is to promote an ideology that is barren ultimately, although, for the moment it may seem to be the really "alive" thing.

III.4.b Church Office

Growth of the Church Office

Whatever church membership may have been in the apostolic period, it rapidly became a more complicated thing in this age and will be even moreso in the next period. The classes of members were structured along lines like this...not exactly the same in every place but very similar:

Hearers: they listen to the lessons
Catechumenoi: they interact with lessons
Readers: they have passed the lessons
Confessors: they have been baptized and are
in the fellowship.

Since the church was illegal for most of this time that might seem like a tough sort of organization.