

Trinitarianism: What was the godhead like? How could there be three persons in One? How did the Christian view differ from the god-image of the gnostics, et al?

Christology: The problem in constant review was how Christ could be god and man at the same time and not have the natures corrupt one another. How could he reflect oneness with the Father and yet maintain independence of the FATHER?

Pneumatology: What was the continuing work of the Spirit? Would it manifest itself by the charismata? How was the Spirit's guidance in the church known and recognized?

Anthropology: How is the soul explained? Where did it come from? What was the real result of Adam's sin? How does grace come to men and how is it received?

Authority: What or who is the real leadership in the church? When was the canon completed and did the church have all it needed to serve God from the beginning? What is the role of tradition in regard to church life and practice?

IV.2.d.  
Church  
Polity

Questions in Church Polity

Polity causes a great deal of emotional disturbance in the church since it is very tangible and hence subject to criticism, scrutiny, and the advice or all. It remains one of the great stumbling blocks to united efforts in almost any ecclesiastical movement. The chief polity issues may be summarized so:

--The extent of rule and the power of the Bishops. The Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, and later Constantinople, stand out in the leadership and direction of the church in this period. Yet their powers with regard to other bishops were largely advisory. The prestige attached to these places was enormous, however, and as is always true of success, it will have a management authority role on areas where success is not so evident. Generally a bishop was felt to have authority only within his see but the more prominent fellows were soon looking over the shoulders of lesser bishops and giving directives beyond their own sees.