

V.2.b
Church
StrugglesEarly Mediaeval church Problems

In our study of church history we find many particular trials in every age and discover that these are the things that make history. This is true in our age as well but in the time we are now studying the problems represent the growing liberty of investigation in the church as scholars seek answers to problems regarding material that had always been presumed to have been understood! This is done in spite of the fact that there is not much in the age that is conducive to real theological effort. Individual monasteries do possess considerable libraries and had enough freedom from worldly oppression and duty to allow some continued study and it is from these operations that will come the struggles we will study. Please remember that most items of former argumentative nature are still strong in the areas of dispute and the items to be mentioned did not "originate" at this time. Eventually if you keep track of all of them you can have a very nice catalogue of the things that divide churches.

EUCCHARIST

The term "eucharist" is a transliteration of the Greek word with the root meaning of "giving thanks". Eucharist is also called the Lord's Supper, the Communion, etc., but in some ways, if we can get over the high sounding nature of the term, eucharist is the best word to describe the occasion. Its institution by the Lord and later confirmation by the Apostles is very clear in the New Testament. Its importance in the life of the church is clearly seen. But the particular disputes that come from it relate to what it actually represented and what it actually did. There is no dispute over the fact of its establishment and not a whole lot about the manner of participation but there has never been much clear work done on what was accomplished in it and how the operation was put to work.

The mystery act grows from the instruction of the Lord in John 6 and the "eating my body", "drinking my blood", concepts in the communion ritual. The extent to which the Lord was present in these emblems and what His presence meant to the worshipper becomes a veritable sea of controversy. Essentially there were these views: