

- a. The church would have to accept both the responsibilities and pains the always come with patronage.
- b. The church would have a much greater need to develop suitable defenses to protect itself against secularism.
- c. The church would necessarily have to learn the delicate art of diplomacy..with all of the potential dangers of loss of integrity involved.
- d. The church must prepare itself--and live in the expectation of political change--unless it can control the state!

B. The Necessary Quest and Development of Authority

As long as a society is simple..authority may be a mere matter of common consent. But as a society becomes more complex, authority becomes a major issue. The earliest church authority was the Apostles themselves and then those who succeeded them. It was not so much a gathered authority as an implicit authority. This becomes more visible before legalization (the need to deal with heretics, schismatics, etc.) but after legalization it is a major challenge since the unity of the body no longer consists of a moral, common cause affair but as a recognized structure in the society of its time. Sorry, if that is vague and I don't imagine the following notes will clear it up very much but we need to try anyway.

1. Essential authority: the Bible.

We are faced with two problems: 1) canonization 2) hermeneutics (understanding). The first is probably resolved for the bulk of the community by 175 AD..and in the residual sections by 250 AD while the second continues to "bug" us.

The earliest interpreters (Acts 15) seem to take an essentially literal interpretation but this becomes less popular as the allegorical methods of the Greek culture become more popular. Men such as Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom will champion a more grammatical historical approach..Origen and Augustine will promote a more allegorical approach.