

3. The regulation of liturgy and life

If you are a non-liturgical soul you may struggle with this portion but..at the heart of all of us you will find a little liturgy. The fact is that Political reality called for the ordering of life. I do not think it had to be done the way it was done..but that is how it was done.

a. Of church membership:

The church very early learned to protect its membership and this protection, before Nicaea, consisted of four general classes of persons coming to the church:

- the **hearers** professed interest in the church and listened to the lessons of Scripture, etc.
- the **catechumenoi** were deemed serious enough in their interest and profession to interact with the lessons
- the **readers** had passed the lessons and were on the threshold, being watched with regard to seriousness of intention.
- and the **confessors** were those who had been baptized and were adherents in good standing in the fellowship.

With legality this already complex arrangement was made more complex with other levels and other tests.

b. Religious practices

These come on to regulate spiritual life and hold the communicants to a core or "truth" that will work against apostasy and worldly falling away.

(1) Sacred times and seasons:

-Sunday

-Easter..dominated the first three months of the year..celebrated on the first Sunday following the first day of the new moon after the spring Equinox.