



## Outline – Sunday School, March 05, 2017

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### **Sermon Title: “THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS”**

The Christian-Roman period was extremely important from the point of view of doctrine. Now that the Church was free, the historic moment came for it to give precise formulation to orthodox teaching on basic questions of Christian faith - the Blessed Trinity, the mystery of Christ, and the question of grace.

The definition of catholic dogma occurred in the context of heated theological battles against heresies which led to schisms in the Church, some of which are still with us.

The ecumenical councils played an important role in this task of defining catholic dogma. Eight ecumenical councils, between the fourth and ninth centuries, constituted the first cycle of councils in Church history. The First Council of Nicaea (325), which defined the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father; The First Council of Constantinople defined the divinity of the Holy Spirit (381).

The Council of Ephesus (431) proclaimed the Divine Maternity of Mary; that of Chalcedon (451) defined the doctrine of the two natures in the one person of Christ.

The Second Council of Constantinople (553) condemned Nestorianism, and the Third Council of Constantinople (680-681) formulated the doctrine of the Two Wills of Christ.

In the two early councils, the theological doctrine of the Blessed Trinity was defined and the four next councils formulated the fundamental Christological truths. Two other ecumenical councils were also held in the East:

**The Second Council of Nicaea (787)**, which formulated the orthodox doctrine on iconoclasm, and the Fourth Council of Constantinople (**869-870**), which put an end to the **Photian Schism** - which however, persisted in the Greek Church. Upon closer look at their historical and doctrinal context, the first six ecumenical councils actually defined the Trinitarian and Christological doctrines of the Catholic faith.

## 7 FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES - ERRORS....

1. The Augustinian influence - 354-430 A.D. - He taught the procession by logic- (Western - Latin) Emphasis was on the unity of the Godhead. While the East emphasized the distinction of Persons.
2. The practice of the “filioque” 589 in Toledo became tradition and lead to its “insertion” in Rome - about 200 years later.
3. Its premise was to protect and defend the full deity of Christ against the Arian influence- but was not debated and affirmed by the whole Church and thus un-lawfully inserted into the creed.
4. The conflict of the Pope Leo 9<sup>th</sup> and Patriarch Michael Cerularius of the East - 1054 disregarded the historical facts (The shields made by both- West and Eastern leaders affirming the absence of filioque) 810 B.C. - Pope Leo the 3<sup>rd</sup>.....
5. The split occurred as a consequence of the anathemizing of both West and East leaders. Rejecting each other’s authority.
6. The dominate behavior of the West during the Conquest of Emperor - Charlemagne - under Pope Leo the 3<sup>rd</sup>. right of Holy Roman Emperor. - 795-816 B.C. - pushed the issue.
7. This is the true time of the so - called (Holy Roman Empire) when things went further down-hill theologically. Politics and Religion ultimately corrupts religion.

In other words, when beast 1 - Rev 13:1-2 - combines with beast 2 - Rev 13:12-14 - To worship the state - vs 4 - this is Rev 17: 3, 4-6, 14-18

### **In conclusion:**

The Motive was clear- that to add “and of the Son” was to affirm the son’s full deity 325 A.D. and also affirm the Spirits full deity 381 A.D. - since both were under attack then as are now.