

## ST. MAXIMUS CATECHISM CLASS 2010 HANDOUT INTRODUCTORY LECTURE 6: THE CHURCH & THE COUNCILS

Acts 15:1-31 Council of Jerusalem

*Acts 15:28* “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.”

*Acts 20:28* “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” [Paul speaking to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus]

*Philippians 1:1* “Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons...”

*1 Timothy 3:1, 2* “This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his house, having his children in subjection with all gravity...Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”

*Titus 1:7, 9* “For a bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly....Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

*1 Peter 2:25* “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

*1 Peter 5:2-3* “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”

*Acts 14:23* “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.”

*Acts 15:2,4, 6, 22, 23* Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem gather to decide question

*Acts 20:17* Paul calls for the elders of the church of Ephesus: “Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

*1 Timothy 5:1* “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father.”

*1 Timothy 5:17-19* “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, ‘Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.’ And, ‘The laborer is worthy of his reward.’ Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”

*Titus 1:5* “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee...for a bishop must be blameless...”

*James 5:14* “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

*1 Peter 5:1* “The elders which are among you I exhort...feed the flock...”

*Acts 6:1—7* Deacons appointed to serve; not fitting for the apostles to leave the word of God to serve tables. They give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. *to serve tables*

*Philippians 1:1* “Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons...”

*1 Timothy 3:8-13* “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless....Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ.”

**From St. Ignatius of Antioch** (cir. 110)

“See that ye all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as ye would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop.” (*Smyrnaeans 8*)

“For, since ye are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of men, but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us, in order, by believing in His death, ye may escape from death. It is therefore necessary that, as ye indeed do, so without the bishop ye should do nothing, but should also be subject to the presbytery, as to the apostle of Jesus Christ, who is our hope...” *Trallians, 2*

“...let all reverence the deacons as an appointment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and the presbyters as the sanhedrin of God, and the assembly of the apostles. Apart from these, there is no Church.” (*Trallians 3*)

“Be on your guard, therefore, against such persons [heretics]. And this will be the case with you if you are not puffed up, and continue in intimate union with Jesus Christ our God, and the bishop, and the enactments of the apostles. He that is within the altar is pure, but he that is without is not pure; that is, he who does anything apart from the bishops, and presbytery, and deacons, such a man is not pure in his conscience.” *Trallians 7*

“Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery and deacons....Do nothing without the bishop.” (*Philadelphians 7*)

“Let nothing exist among you that may divide you; but be ye united with your bishop, and those that preside over you, as a type and evidence of your immortality.” *Magnesians 6*

“Be subject to the bishop, and to one another, as Jesus Christ to the Father, according to the flesh, and the apostles to Christ, and to the Father, and to the Spirit; that so there may be a union both fleshly and spiritual.” *Magnesians 13*

*Matthew 18:17* “Tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.”

**The Seven Ecumenical Councils**

1. Nicaea 325 (Against Arianism)

Nicene Creed: the Son is *homoousios* (one essence) with the Father

2. Constantinople 381 (Against Apollinarianism)

3. Ephesus 431 (Against Nestorianism)

4. Chalcedon 451 (Against Eutychianism)

Christ is one person in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation

5. Constantinople 553 (Three Chapters Controversy)

6. Constantinople 680 (Against Monothelitism)

7. Nicaea 787 (Against Iconoclasm)

8. Fourth Council of Constantinople 879-880

9. Fifth Council of Constantinople 1341-1351 (3 councils, 41, 47, 51)

“To make our confession short, we keep unchanged all the ecclesiastical traditions handed down to us, whether in writing or verbally, one of which is the making of pictorial representations, agreeable to the history of the preaching of the Gospel, a tradition useful in many respects, but especially in this, that so the incarnation of the Word of God is shown forth as real and not merely phantastic... We therefore follow the royal pathway and the divinely inspired authority of our Holy Fathers and the traditions of the Catholic Church (for, as we all know, the Holy Spirit indwells her)....*Decree of Nicaea II*

“For the honor which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented.” *Decree of Nicaea II*