

A History of the Work of Redemption

By Jonathan Edwards

Lesson 21 - Period 3 - Part 3-From the time of Constantine to the rise of Antichrist

“The work of redemption is a work that God carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world”

While we may disagree with Edwards _____ here, he still can be a helpful instructor as he recounts the main events that took place in the history of the church. Edwards sees the rise of Antichrist taking place during the late 5th century and into the 6th century, roughly. So, the period he will briefly deal with here covers roughly 150-200 years. As with previous sections Edwards focuses on the opposition that the kingdom of Christ faced during this period as well as the success that it enjoyed.

_____ - *“The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of Antichrist, was principally of two sorts.”*

1. _____ - *“After the destruction of the heathen Roman empire. Satan infested the church with heresies...The two principal, and those which did most infest the church, were the Arian and Pelagian.”*

Arianism- *“They denied the doctrine of the _____, the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained that they were but mere creatures. This heresy increased more and more in the church, and prevailed like a flood which threatened to overthrow all, and entirely carry away the church, insomuch that before the close of the fourth century, the greater part of the Christian church were become Arians. Some emperors, the successors of Constantine, were Arians; so that being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side, they raise a great persecution against the true church of Christ.”*

“The Arian controversy was the greatest theological controversy in the history of Christianity.”-Needham-220, 226,

Nicene Creed- *“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit.”*

Pelagianism- *“It began by Pelagius, who was born in Britain...He denied original sin and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held to the power of _____, and many other things of like tendency; and this heresy did for a while greatly infest the church.”*

2. **Attempts to restore _____** - *“The other kind of opposition which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavor to restore paganism. His first attempt was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Constantine the Great.”*

“Another way that Satan attempted to restore paganism in the Roman empire, was by the invasion and conquest of heathen nations.”

_____ - *“I would observe, that the opposition of Satan in those things was baffled....These heresies, which for a while so much prevailed, after a while dwindled away and orthodoxy was again restored...The gospel, during this space of time, was further propagated amongst many barbarous nations in the confines of the Roman empire.”*