

Counsels, Confessions, Creeds, And Catechisms

Before the era of the counsels. Part I

Two fronts in the attack against Christians in early Christianity:

1. External – Persecution

Pre 250 A.D. – It was sporadic and organized locally by angered mobs.

250-313 A.D. – It was Roman organized, thus studied, expansive, and violent.

But, why? 4 reasons:

1. The church's _____ - Caesar was second to Christ.
2. The church's _____ - Monotheistic; misunderstood: Communion was mistaken for cannibalism. The kiss of peace was mistaken for incest. Private worship was mistaken for secret insurrection.
3. The church's _____ - Their care for the poor was despised by the Romans. They refused to attend at temples, theatres, and colosseums.
4. The church's _____ - It threatened their materialism. Example: Acts 19:23-41.

And, how? 2 ways:

1. Corporately –
The destruction of places of _____.
The trial of _____ with subsequent imprisonment.
The burning of _____.
2. Individually –
The loss of _____.

Execution by sword or _____.

The result: The spread of the _____ with its powerful effect.

On the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2 – thousands.

By 300 A.D. _____ to _____ million Christians are in the empire.

However, two internal issues arose out of the persecution:

1. How to handle those who had repented of sacrificing to Roman gods to preserve their lives.
2. Determining which books were to be included in The Canon. (This was literally a matter of life and death.)