

Lecture 31- Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Church & State

Destiny waits in the hand of God, shaping the still unshapen...Destiny waits in the hand of God, not in the hands of statesmen...

The chorus in T. S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Romans 13:1

Assigned Reading

The Story of Christianity—Chapters 31 (pp. 307-311) & 32

Key Terms

Great schism, council of Constance, John Wycliffe

Objectives

- Understand the growing tension between church and state during this period
- Be able to state the claims of the church
- Know the objections of the state

Class Prayer

“Our strength renew

On our dryness pour

Thy dew

Wash the stains of

guilt away

Bend the stubborn

heart and will

Melt the frozen

Warm the chill

Guide the steps that

go astray. Amen.”

Stephen Langdon

“In Canterbury Cathedral”

On a day sweet with April showers

the safe tires of our tour bus

had sung us south from London,

Sightseer pilgrims, cameras slung,

no need or time on patient plodding

horses for long diverting tales.

We stood at last at Beckett's shrine,

lost in architecture and dates,

confused by Norman and Gothic.

Our ancient tiny guide seemed shrunk

into his suit, dwarfed by his clothes
as we all were dwarfed by time.

His small precise English voice went on: pronounced "Our Lord,"
and the words fell on us
like a benediction.

"Our"—incredible assumption of union
offered in passing to American strangers,
mortar for diverse motley stones.

Time and blood and history redeemed
from meaninglessness: two words
turned sightseers into pilgrims.
E. W. Oldenburg (1936-1974)

Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Church & State

I. "Murder in the Cathedral"— Archbishop Thomas Becket and King Henry II (1120-1170)

From *Murder in the Cathedral* by T. S. Eliot (part 2):

First priest: "What, is the exile ended, is our Lord Archbishop reunited with the King? What reconciliation of two proud men?"

Third priest: "What peace can be found to grow between the hammer and the anvil?"

Thomas: "It is not I who insult the king, and there is higher than I or the king. It is not I, Becket from Cheapside; it is not against me, Becket, that you strive. It is not Becket who pronounces doom, but the law of Christ's Church, the judgment of Rome."

A. Weapons of the church

1. Excommunication
2. Interdict

II. The Papacy

A. Boniface VIII (pope 1294-1303)—"It is necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff." *Unum Sanctum*

B. Seven Popes, French Papacy—Avignon

C. Multiple Popes

D. Gregory VII (pope 1073-85)—To Emperor Henry IV: "It would have been becoming to you, since you confess yourself to be a son of the church, to give more respectful attention to the master of the church, that is, to Peter, prince of the apostles." (this point is not on the CD)

E. "The Two Swords"

III. Objections to Papal Supremacy

"Princes submit their necks

Either t' his publick foot or private tricks

...that the whole world did seem but the pope's mule."

from "The Church Militant" by George Herbert

A. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)—*On Monarchy*

B. Marsiglio of Padua (1275-1342)—*The Defender of the Peace*

C. John Wycliffe (1330-84) (this point is not on the CD)

IV. Resolution

A. The Great Schism: Avignon pope and Roman pope (1378)

B. Council of Pisa; the third (Pisan) pope (1409)

C. The Council of Constance (1414-18)—conciliarism: "All men, of every rank and condition,

including the pope himself, are bound to obey it in matters concerning the faith, the abolition of the schism, and the reformation of the church of God in its head and members.”

V. Revived Papal Monarchy

For Further Study

Read T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. How does Eliot present the issue that divided the archbishop and the king? List several of your favorite quotations from the play.