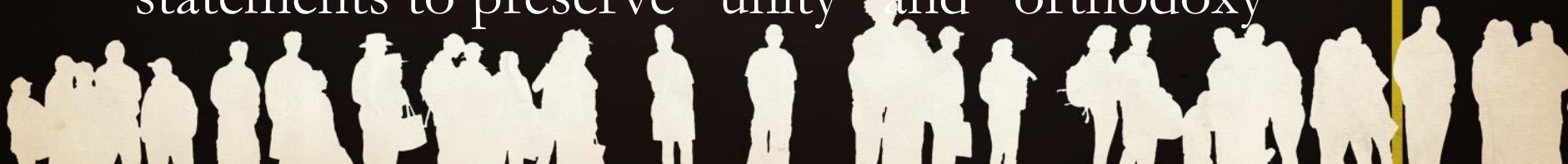


Pivotal Developments— Catholicism

- Shift from elders (presbuteros) to distinction between priest and bishop (episkopos)
- Shift from bishops to bishop—centralization
- Focus on “apostolic succession”
- Roman bishop claims superiority
- Constantine’s conversion, Council of Nicea
- Augustine
- Dealing with controversy by conferences, creeds, statements to preserve “unity” and “orthodoxy”



Catholicism

- Authority is the fundamental issue
- Catholics believe the Bible AND church tradition and teaching are authoritative
- Apostolic succession continues down to today and gives authority to current statements and practices
- This authority, combined with the historic divisions it has battled, produces unique teachings



Catholicism

- Original sin → Immaculate Conception → Jesus' brothers were cousins → Praying to Mary → Assumption of Mary
- Church authority and sacraments—church must administer Eucharist, baptism, marriage, confession



Catholicism—Toward Understanding

- Catholic perspective is church-centric—very little emphasis on personal study or individual
- Catholic perspective emphasizes worship and the doctrinal positions of the larger church
- Catholic perspective ties culture and religion together—despite widely varying cultures



Catholicism—Toward Understanding

We share many things in common with Catholics, including the seriousness of—

- Sin
- Jesus
- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Reverence for NT
- Marriage



Catholicism—Engaging

- Heb 13:8, Gal 1:6-9—How change? Why change? Comfortable with truth changing?
- Deal with root problem, not just doctrinal manifestations
- Is Peter pope? Matt 16:18, NT picture of Peter
- Can popes be wrong? What if they are?
- Contrast NT to Catholicism—popes, structure, priests



Catholicism—Engaging

- What will lead us to unity with Catholics? If we drop our allegiances to authorities *in addition* to Jesus (Eph 4:1-6)

