Lesson 2 (1978-79)

THE HIGH POINT OF MEDIEVAL THEOLOGY

Scripture: I Peter 3:13-22
Prayer
Hymn: 602 "All Creatures of Our God and King"

INTRODUCTION: As in the Carolingian Renaissance the intellectual climax of the thirteenth century came after the high point of the political power of both pope and emperor. The new universities overshadowed and replaced the cathedral and monastic schools. The great teachers in the universities came from the new mendicant orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans. The Dominicans attempted to hold the most capable, most popular and influential chairs in the universities. Franciscans were soon rivaling them. If Franciscans copied the intellectual emphasis of the Dominicans, the Dominicans soon took up the Franciscan emphasis on poverty. Salerno was the center of the study of medicine. Bologna was the center for canon law and also important for civil law. Emperor Frederick II made Naples the great secular university. It had been first a center for theology. It became the center for civil law. Paris was the great center for the study of theology, followed by Oxford and Cologne.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS OR ALBERT THE GREAT (1200-1280)

Dominican who studied at Padua and taught in Hildesheim, Ratisbon, Paris, Cologne. Provincial of the Dominican order in Germany 1254-1257.
Teacher of Thomas Aquinas in Paris and Cologne.
Bishop of Ratisbon in 1260.
Defended the doctrines of his pupil, Aquinas, at Paris in 1277.
Wrote a commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard; worked on Summa Theologiae.

Attempted a synthesis of philosophy and theology. His great battle was for the usefulness of Aristotle in theology.

THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274) -- "Doctor Angelicus" -- professor, theologian and saint.

Youngest son of Count Landolfo of Aquino.
At age of five or six family gave him to the Benedictines of Monte Cassino.

Studied at Naples (1239-1244) where he met the Dominicans.
Family kept him in house arrest for about eighteen months to keep him from joining the Dominicans. Finally allowed him to rejoin the Dominicans in Naples in summer of 1245.

Early studies in Paris with Albert the Great (1245-1248).

Early studies in Cologne (1248-1252): Followed Albert to Cologne. Ordained to priesthood in Cologne (1252).


Work in Italy (1259-1268). Taught in Anagni (1259-1261); at Orvieto (1261-1265), the residence of Pope Urban IV. At Rome in Dominican priory of Santa Sabina (1265-1267).

The Place of Aquinas: the greatest philosopher and theologian of the Middle Ages. One of the most prolific writers of the church. Strong attack on Aquinas led by Franciscans at Paris and Oxford following his death met by his old teacher, Albert the Great, and fellow Dominicans. Canonized in 1323. Commended by long line of popes. Made a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V in 1567. Pope Leo XIII in 1879 ordered all theological students to study him. In 1880 he was made patron of Catholic Universities. Philosopher of "existence"; moves from metaphysics to theology; moves from created universe to God. Aquinas' Classical Proofs for the Existence of God: 1) Motion; 2) Cause and Effect; 3) Necessity; 4) Standard of Judgment; 5) Order in the Universe.

GREAT FRANCISCAN TEACHERS

ALEXANDER OF HALE (1186-1245): Englishman who taught at Paris. A treat Summa that Bacon declared was heavier than a horse.

Aquinas: God wills what is eternally right Scotus: The right is right because God wills it.

Aquinas: The Cross the best way Scotus: The Cross is God's way.
Aquinas: No real disagreement between philosophy and theology
Scotus: Much in theology is philosophically improbable and must be accepted on the authority of the church.

This was the beginning of the breaking up of Scholasticism.

WILLIAM OF OCCAM: English Franciscan who moved from Oxford to Paris (1300-1349).
Clashed with Pope John XXII--demanded complete apostolic poverty.
Theology cannot be proved by philosophy but must be accepted on the authority of the church.
Scripture and not councils or derelict popes are the highest authority.

OTHER GREAT TEACHERS

Philosopher and scientist of considerable originality.
Credited with many experiments.
ROBERT GROSSTESE (1175-1253) Bishop of Lincoln credited with being father of experimental method in science.

CONCLUSION: Scholasticism had spun itself out into abstractions and the pendulum began to swing from reason to mysticism. It was one aspect of the waning or break-up of the Middle Ages.