

Document Packet: “Royal Challenges to Papal Power”

Question:	▪ What powers were claimed by Pope Gregory VII?
Document #1	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Roman Church was established by God alone. 2. That the Roman pontiff alone is rightly called universal 3. That he alone has the power to depose and reinstate bishops. 4. That he has the power to depose emperors. 5. That his decree can be annulled [made void] by no one, and that he can annul the decrees of anyone. 6. That he can be judged by no one. 7. That the Roman Church has never erred and will never err to all eternity, according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures. 8. That by his command or permission subjects may accuse their rulers. 9. That no one can be regarded as Catholic who does not agree with the Roman Church. 10. That he has the power to [release] subjects from their oath of fidelity to wicked rulers. 	
SOURCE: Pope Gregory VII, 11c.	

Question:	▪ From the evidence presented in this document, why would King Henry IV care if he was excommunicated?
Document #2	
<p>On the strength of this belief (the Pope is second only to God) therefore, for the honor and security of the church, in the name of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I withdraw, through thy power and authority, from Henry the king, son of Henry the emperor, who has risen against the church with unheard of insolence, the rule over the whole kingdom of the Germans and over Italy. And I absolve all Christians from the <i>bonds of the oath</i> which they have made or shall make to him; and I forbid any one to serve him as king. For it is fitting that he who strives to lessen the honor of the church should himself lose the honor which belongs to him. And since he has not obeyed as a Christian, and has not returned, ignored my commands which I issued to him for his own salvation; I now separate him from the church to let all know that the Church of the living God will forever triumph over evil.</p>	
SOURCE: Pope Gregory VII to King Henry IV, February 22, 1076.	

Question:	▪ Why is the King refusing to comply with the bishop’s wishes?
Document #3	
<p>The Bishop Guy of Auxerre spoke to him [Louis IX] for all of them, and said:</p> <p>"Sire, these archbishops and bishops here present have charged me to tell you that Christendom decays and melts in your hands . . . because no man stands in fear of excommunication (being exiled from the church). We require you therefore to command your bailiffs and your sergeants to compel all excommunicate persons . . . to make satisfaction to the Church." And the king replied that he would willingly order his bailiffs and sergeants to constrain [compel] excommunicate persons in the manner desired, provided full cognizance of the sentence were given to him in each case, so that he might judge whether the sentence were righteous or not.</p>	

And they consulted together, and answered the king that they would not give him such cognizance, because the matters involved were spiritual. And the king replied in turn that he would not... order his sergeants to constrain excommunicate persons to obtain absolution For if I did so," said the king, "I should be acting contrary to God and against right. . .

SOURCE: Jean de Joinville, a friend of King Louis IX [St. Louis], 13c.

Questions:

- Why does the Pope feel that Kings are over-stepping their "limitations?"
- How would Pope Boniface VIII feel about the stance of Louis IX mentioned in document #2?

Document #4

They are not content with their limitations, the laity [non-clergymen] strive for forbidden things and give free reign to the pursuit of illicit(sinful/illegal) gain. They do not prudently observe that all control over the clergy . . . is denied to them, but they impose heavy burdens . . . upon the churches themselves, . . . exacting tallages [taxes] and other contributions from. them. We strictly command all prelates [church officers] and ecclesiastical(church personnel) persons . . . that they shall not hereafter acquiesce in any such demands

SOURCE: Pope Boniface VIII's papal bull, *Clericis Laicos*, 14c.

Question:

- How does the Pope try to justify his position that the Catholic Church is the highest authority in the land?

Document #5

Both . . . the spiritual and the material swords are in the power of the Church, the latter, indeed to be used for the Church, the former by the Church, the one by the priest, the other by the hand of kings and soldiers but by the will and sufferance of the priest. It is fitting, moreover, that one sword should be under the other... [for] the spiritual power excels in dignity and nobility any form whatsoever of earthly power . . . Therefore, if the earthly power shall err, it shall be judged by the spiritual power. . . But if the supreme power err, it can be judged by God alone and not by man . . . We, moreover, proclaim, declare and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff (the Pope).

SOURCE: Pope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctam*, 1302.

Questions:

- How does King Philip the Fair answer the argument of Pope Boniface VIII?
- How is he criticizing the Pope?

Document #6

The pope claims that we are subject to him in the government of our states and that we hold the crown from the Apostolic See (by the Pope's permission). Yes, this kingdom of France, which our ancestors built, with the help of God, which until now has been governed so wisely. It seems that the Pope wants us to believe that this kingdom is not from God alone as everyone has always believed but from the Pope!

SOURCE: King Philip the Fair of France, 1302.