

Ancient Church Fathers

What the Disciples of the Apostles Taught



Ken Johnson, Th.D.

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Apostles Taught

by Ken Johnson, Th.D.



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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 1452868565

ISBN -13 9781452868561

Front Cover: *Pentecost* by Jean Restout,
AD 1732

Church father drawings courtesy of
Wikipedia.

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quotations are taken from the King James
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Table of Contents

3

[History of The Fathers](#) 5

[Who were the Fathers?](#) 8

[The Apostles](#) 8

The Seventy Disciples 11

Eyewitnesses of the Apostles 12

Non-eyewitnesses of the Apostles

14

Timeline 18

Primary Doctrines 23

Authority of the Bible 24

New Testament Books 27

The Deity of Jesus Christ 32

Secondary Doctrines 39

Calvinism 40

Foreknowledge 44

Free Will 47

Predestination 51

Catholicism 54

Papal Authority 56

Idolatry 63

Eucharist and Transubstantiation

65

Baptism 69

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| <u>Mary</u> | <u>73</u> |
| <u>Purgatory</u> | <u>75</u> |
| <u>Celibacy</u> | <u>76</u> |
| <u>Miscellaneous Catholic Notes</u> | <u>77</u> |
| <u><i>Cults</i></u> | <u>79</u> |
| <u>Jehovah's Witnesses</u> | <u>80</u> |
| <u>Mormonism</u> | <u>81</u> |
| <u><i>Dispensationalism</i></u> | <u>82</u> |
| <u>Circumcision</u> | <u>84</u> |
| <u>Law of Moses</u> | <u>86</u> |
| <u>Sabbath</u> | <u>89</u> |
| <u><i>End Times</i></u> | <u>91</u> |
| <u>Premillennialism</u> | <u>94</u> |
| <u>Schism of Nepos</u> | <u>99</u> |
| <u>Return of the Jews</u> | <u>101</u> |
| <u>Apostasy of the Church</u> | <u>103</u> |
| <u>The Rapture</u> | <u>105</u> |
| <u><i>False Works</i></u> | <u>107</u> |
| <u>Gospel of Barnabas</u> | <u>111</u> |
| <u>Gospel of Judas</u> | <u>112</u> |
| <u>Gospel of Thomas</u> | <u>113</u> |

Gnosticism 116

Carpocrates 122

Ebionites 123

Encratites 125

Mani 127

Marcion 129

Nicolaitans 131

Moral Issues 132

Abortion 133

Euthanasia and Suicide 136

Homosexuality 137

Replacement Theology 139

Women in Ministry 141

Paganism 143

Astrology 145

Astral Projection 147

Evolution 148

Ghosts 150

Islam 152

Meditation / Ecstasy 153

Reincarnation 156

Yoga 158

The Gospel 159

Immortality of the Soul 161

Salvation 164

Sin 167

Psychology 169

Spiritual Gifts 170

Gifts 171

Perfection 174

Text of Scripture 176

Missing Verses 179

Heretical Manuscripts 184

Endings of the Gospel of Mark 186

Other Teachings 190

Church Councils 191

Prince of Edessa 196

Sibylline Oracles 200

Conclusion 201

Other Books by Ken Johnson, Th.D. 202

Bibliography 205

3

History of the Fathers



History of The Fathers



History of the Fathers

To date there are over one hundred and fifty-eight separate Christian denominations in the United States and many more scattered throughout the whole world.

In 1 Corinthians 1-3, the Holy Spirit commands believers not to divide the church over secondary issues. Paul used the example of baptism in this passage. In contrast to this, 1 Corinthians 5 explains that a Christian who willfully practices sin, and refuses to repent, is to be excommunicated. We are not to eat with, or fellowship in any way with, such a person until he repents.

According to 2 John, this also applies to those “Christians” who do not hold to the doctrine of Christ’s divinity (which we will see in Chapter 4).

Many confuse primary and secondary doctrines. As a result, they divide the church where they should not, and sometimes don’t divide it when they should!

How can we know what the Scriptures teach when so many “scholars” are confused? Most of these teachers are confused because they choose to be. They do not wish to give up their pet doctrines. In many cases they refuse to look at Scripture and history because

they are too scared to discover what the truth really is.

This book shows what the ancient church taught about many doctrines modern denominations are so confused about. If we adhered to the ancient church, we would only have five to seven denominations. Instead, we are allowing Satan to divide and conquer us.

First and Second Century Church Fathers:

The twelve disciples were very clear about the most important issues. Today when we try to figure out a doctrine, we look to the Scriptures, then ask people we trust, (like our local pastor, and

Christian teachers on the radio and TV). Some of us check the teachings of the great preachers: Wesley, Luther, Calvin, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, Spurgeon, and many more.

While these are good strategies, these wonderful preachers were not eyewitnesses of the disciples. If confused, an eyewitness could simply go back to Peter or Paul and ask them to explain. Today most Christians are unaware that vast amounts of writing from the apostles' disciples still exist. There is a ten-volume work, by Eerdmans Publishing, called the Anti-Nicean Fathers. This set contains most of the existent writings from the disciples of

the apostles up to the Council of Nicea, in AD 325.

We can show that the apostles' disciples taught the same doctrines from generation to generation and document when, who, why, and where the first change in each doctrine was made. In some cases we can even show that each time someone tried to change doctrine, the church fathers attacked them as heretics. Still, a few centuries later the same "heresy" became official church doctrine. We know the history of the church fathers from their own writings.

For instance, Irenaeus writes in *Against Heresies* 3.3 that in his youth he was a disciple of Polycarp. In his writing,

Refutation of all Heresies 8.9,
Hippolytus, a disciple of Irenaeus, says
Tatian was a disciple of Justin Martyr.

Eye-witness Accounts

If a writer from the first or second century testified that he learned a certain teaching directly from the apostles, then we must accept what he says as truth, unless it can be proven that the writer is lying or the document in question has been tampered with. How do we do this?

First, we examine the evidence to prove that the first or second century document is genuine.

- Do third and fourth century

writers quote these documents?

Do any third and fourth century writers call the teaching in the document heretical?

Are there any different works that claim to be the real document of that church father?

If these questions prove the document is indeed a genuine document from the ancient church, then we need to see if the document could have been tampered with.

Does any ancient church father before or during his time teach something different or attack the teaching as heretical?

How many others before his

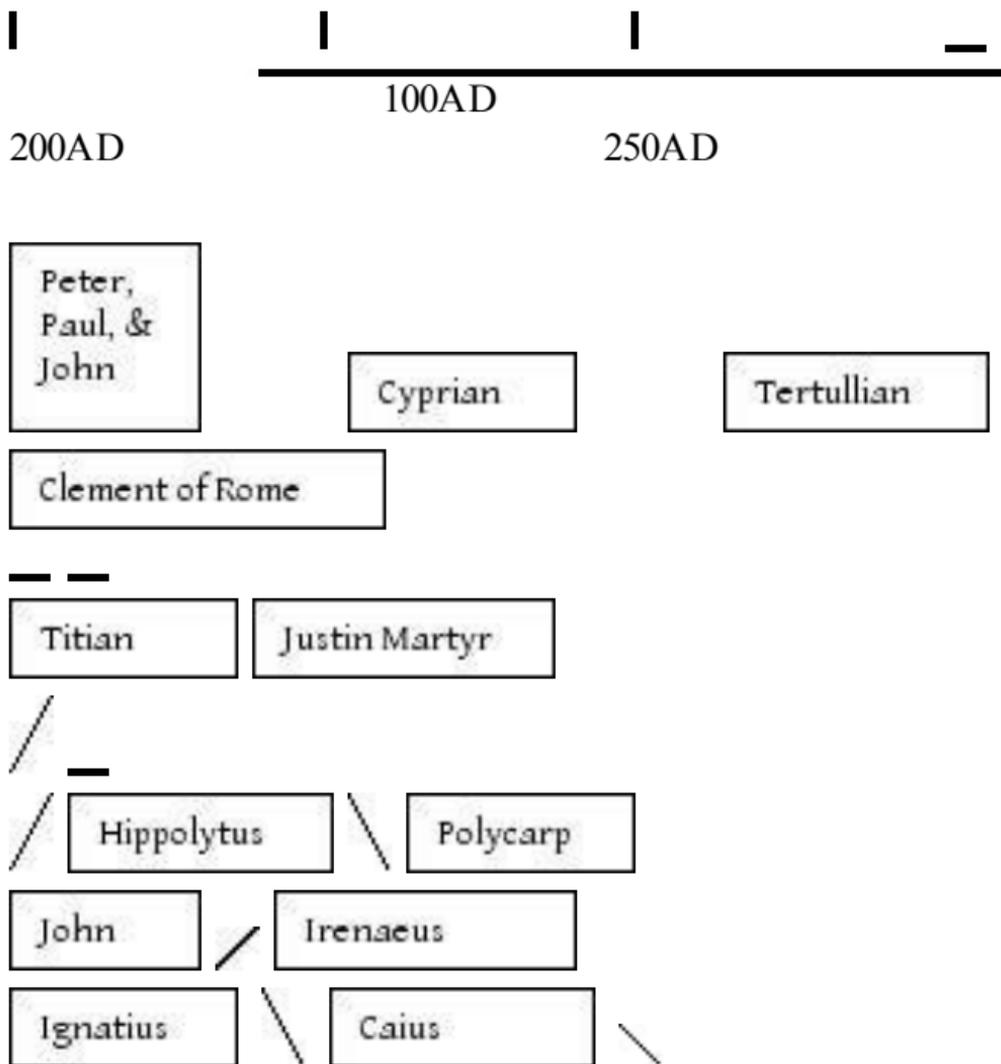
time taught the same doctrine?

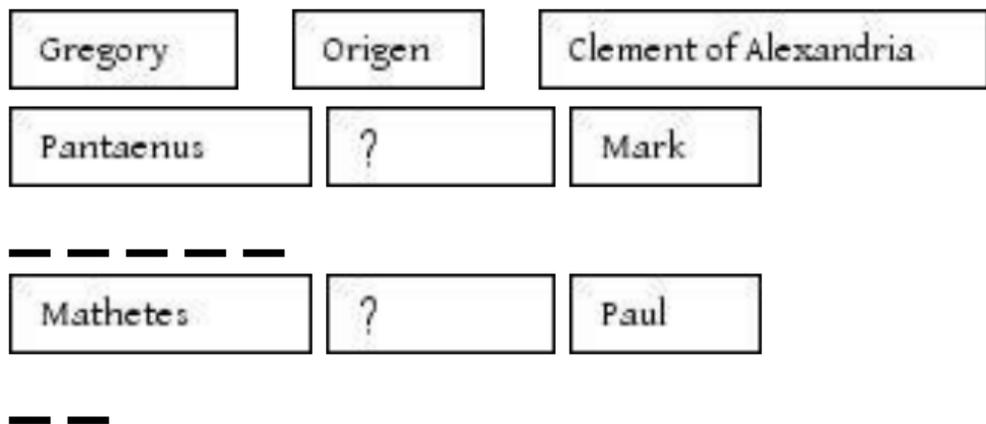
Some would say that the medieval church destroyed all the real ancient church documents and replaced them with fiction. If that were true, their writings would not be so extremely anti-Roman Catholic and the Gnostic literature from Nag-hamadi, Egypt, would not exist. If we find that these writings were written by first and second century church fathers who were eyewitnesses of the apostles; we also see these documents have not been tampered with and therefore must contain truth.

In order to clearly see the correct

doctrine handed down by the Twelve Apostles, we need to know the eye-witnesses of the twelve very well. We will see that the disciples of the apostles handed down the same doctrines with no additions to them. It wasn't until the late second century and early third centuries AD that things began to change.

The Apostles and Their Disciples





Who were the Fathers?

The above chart identifies the major ancient church fathers and the apostle who taught them. The most important church fathers to know are the apostles and the eyewitnesses of the Apostle

John. So we will start by looking at the apostles.

The Apostles

The Apostle John

The Apostle John was banished from Asia Minor to the Isle of Patmos for being a Christian. While there, he wrote the book of Revelation, in AD 96. When Roman Emperor Domitian died in AD 96, his decrees were nullified and John was

released. John went back to the Asian capital Ephesus and set it up as a headquarters for missionary activity. John and his disciple, Polycarp, sent out missionaries and planted churches for over twenty years. John died there of old age during the time of Emperor Trajan (AD 98-117). Both Church father Hipolytus and Greek tradition reveal that under the city of



Apostle John

Ephesus are the remains of the church that was dedicated to St. John. Contained in it is the tomb of St. John, and close by, are the tombs of Timothy and Mary, the mother of our Lord.

Victorinus, in chapter 11 of his commentary on Revelation, says:

“For when Valentinus, and Cerinthus, and Ebion, and others of the school of Satan, were scattered abroad throughout the world, there assembled together to the Apostle John from the neighboring

provinces all the bishops, and compelled him to draw up his testimony.” *Commentary on the Apocalypse by Victorinus AD 270*

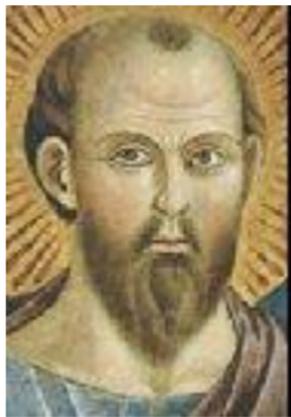
While the Muratorian Canon Fragment (see Chapter 3) shows the Gospel of John was written earlier; Victorinus taught First and Second John were written from Ephesus later, after the Gnostic cults were causing major problems. First John was written by the apostle specifically against his arch-enemy Cerinthus. Tertullian said the book of Jude was written to counter the Gnostic Carpocrates. See the chapter on Gnostics for more details on these subjects.

The Apostles Peter and Paul



Apostle Peter





Apostle Paul

Paul became an apostle a year after the ascension of Christ; and beginning at Jerusalem, he preached as far away as Illyricum, Italy, and Spain. He preached the Gospel for a total of thirty-five years. Paul was in prison for two years. (This is recorded in the last chapter of the book of Acts.) He was released and then took his last missionary trip (not recorded in the book of Acts). He

traveled to Spain, Britain, and came back through Gaul. Britain and Rome were still at war, and Christianity was taking hold very well in Britain. For this reason, while in Gaul, Paul was arrested once again and taken back to Rome on charges of conspiracy and preaching a non-official religion. Peter was arrested about the same time. Peter preached the Gospel in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Betania, Italy, and Asia. Peter and Paul were both in prison in Rome for just a matter of weeks. On June 27th, AD 67, they were both put to death. The apostle Peter was crucified upside down at his request, feeling unworthy to be crucified like Christ. Paul, being a Roman citizen, was beheaded. Both were buried in the

city of Rome. Ancient church history records Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and several others were in Rome at times. Nowhere is it mentioned that *any* of them, including Peter, was ever a bishop at the church at Rome.

James

James was the first bishop of Jerusalem. He was the half-brother of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was considered so holy that the Jews allowed him to pray daily in the temple. He was nicknamed “camel knees” because of the calluses he had on his knees from long prayers kneeling on the stone floor of the temple. He was not open about his faith in Jesus. After being the pastor at Jerusalem for fourteen

years, the non-believing Jews asked him to preach against Christ at a festival. At the festival, he declared Jesus to be the true Messiah. The unbelieving Jews immediately rushed at him and threw him off the pillar of the temple. They then took a stone and beat his brains out, and so he died a martyr.

Mark

Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark. He was one of the Seventy and ministered in Egypt. He was martyred by being dragged to death behind a train of horses in Alexandria. There was an Essene-type of monastic group there at Alexandria that converted to

Christianity. They were known as Therapeute, and they brought with them many odd monastic practices, like the idea of a sunrise service and Vestal Virgins. See *Ancient Paganism* for details on the Therapeute and how sorcery came into the church in the early years.

Hippolytus' account of the other apostles

Andrew preached to the Scythians and Thracians. He was martyred – crucified, suspended on an olive tree, at Patrae, a town of Achaia; and was buried there.

James, Andrew's brother, was

beheaded by Herod the Tetrarch when preaching in Judea, and was buried there.

Philip preached in Phrygia. In the time of Domitian he was crucified head downward in Hierapolis and was buried there.

Bartholomew preached to the Indians, to whom he also gave the Gospel according to Matthew, and was crucified head downward. He was buried in Allanum, a town of Armenia.

Matthew wrote his Gospel in the Hebrew tongue and published it at Jerusalem. He “fell asleep” at Hieres, a town of Parthia.

Thomas preached to the Parthians,

Medes, Persians, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and Margians, and was thrust through in the four members of his body with pine spears at Calamene, the city of India, and was buried there.

James, the son of Alphaeus, was stoned to death by the Jews when preaching in Jerusalem. He was buried there beside the temple.

Jude, who is also called Lebbaeus, preached to the people of Edessa, and to all Mesopotamia, and fell asleep at Berytus, where he was buried.

Simon the Zealot, the son of Cleopas, who is also called Jude, became bishop of Jerusalem after

James the Just, and fell asleep and was buried there at the age of 120 years.

Matthias, who was one of the Seventy, was numbered along with the eleven apostles, and preached in Jerusalem, where he fell asleep. He was buried there in Jerusalem.

The following chart of the seventy disciples Jesus sent out two-by-two is provided for your information. It was compiled by Hippolytus about the year AD 220.

The Seventy Disciples

By Hippolytus

35. Phlegon,
bishop of
Marathon.

36. Hermes,
bishop of
Dalmatia.

37.
Patrobulus,
bishop of
Puteoli.

38. Hermas,
bishop of
Philippi.

39. Linus,
bishop of

1. James the Lord's brother, bishop of Jerusalem.*
2. Cleopas, bishop of Jerusalem.
3. Matthias, who supplied the vacant place in the number of the twelve apostles.
4. Thaddeus, who conveyed the epistle to Abgarus.
5. Ananias, who baptized Paul, was bishop of Damascus.
6. Stephen, the first martyr.
7. Philip, who baptized the eunuch.
8. Prochorus, bishop of Nicomedia. He was the first to

Rome.

40. Caius, bishop of Ephesus.

41.

Philologus, bishop of Sinope.

42. Olympus and Rhodion were martyred in Rome.*

43. Rhodion was martyred in Rome.

44. Lucius, bishop of Laodicea in Syria.

45. Jason, bishop of Tarsus.

46. Sosipater,

depart, believing together with his daughters.

9. Nicanor died when Stephen was martyred.

10. Timon, bishop of Bostra.

11. Parmenas, bishop of Soli.

12. Nicolaus, bishop of Samaria.

13. Barnabas, bishop of Milan.

14. Mark the evangelist, bishop of Alexandria.

15. Luke the evangelist.

16. Silas, bishop of Corinth.

17. Silvanus, bishop of Thessalonica.

bishop of Iconium.

47. Tertius, bishop of Iconium.

48. Erastus, bishop of Panellas.

49. Quartus, bishop of Berytus.

50. Apollo, bishop of Caesarea.

51. Cephas.
52.

Sosthenes, bishop of Colophonia.

53. Tychicus, bishop of Colophonia.

54.

18. Crisces
(Crescens), bishop of
Carchedon in Gaul.
19. Epaenetus, bishop
of Carthage.
20. Andronicus,
bishop of Pannonia.
21. Amplias, bishop
of Odysseus.
22. Urban, bishop of
Macedonia.
23. Stachys, bishop of
Byzantium.
24. Barnabas, bishop
of Heraclea.
25. Phygellus, bishop
of Ephesus, was of the
party of Simon.
26. Hermogenes. He,
too, was of the party of
Simon.
27. Demas, who later
became a priest of

- Epaphroditus,
bishop of
Andriace.
55. Caesar,
bishop of
Dyrrachium.
56. Mark,
cousin to
Barnabas,
bishop of
Apollonia.
57. Justus,
bishop of
Eleutheropolis.
58. Artemas,
bishop of
Lystra.
59. Clement,
bishop of
Sardinia.
60.
Onesiphorus,
bishop of

idols.

28. Apelles, bishop of Smyrna.

29. Aristobulus, bishop of Britain.

30. Narcissus, bishop of Athens.

31. Herodion, bishop of Tarsus.

32. Agabus the prophet.

33. Rufus, bishop of Thebes.

34. Asyncritus, bishop of Hyrcania.

Corone.

61. Tychicus, bishop of Chalcedon.

62. Carpus, bishop of Berytus in Thrace.

63. Evodus, bishop of Antioch.

64.

Aristarchus, bishop of Apamea.

65. Mark, who is also John, bishop of Bibloupolis.

66. Zenas, bishop of Diospolis.

67. Philemon,

bishop of
Gaza.

68.

Aristarchus

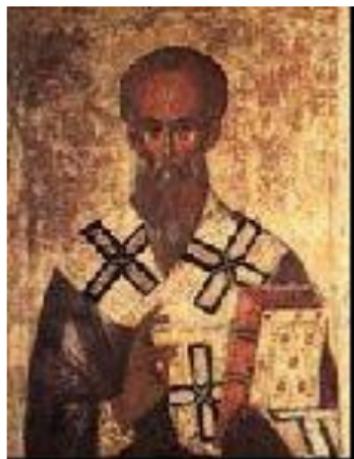
69. Pudes

70.

Trophimus,
who was
martyred along
with Paul.

*The Scripture indicated James was an unbeliever until after the Resurrection. Since number 42 contains two people, we can conclude James was not one of the original seventy.

Eyewitnesses of the Apostles



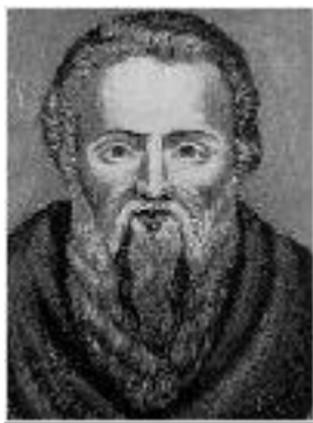
Clement of Rome

Clement of Rome

Clement of Rome was a convert of

Barnabas on his first trip to Rome. He remained behind when Barnabas returned to Jerusalem. Taking a year to sell his business in Rome, he then moved to Jerusalem. He studied mainly under Peter, but was also an eyewitness of Paul and John (Phil 4:3). He wrote a work, called *1 Clement*, to the Corinthians for the sake of correction, about AD 95. There is a work called *2 Clement* forged in his name. In his later years he moved back to Rome and became Rome's third bishop.

Existent Writings: 1 Clement



Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius AD 35-107

The Apostle John had two main disciples, Polycarp and Ignatius. Ignatius was born in AD 35 and became the second bishop of Antioch. He studied under several of the apostles and was martyred at Rome between AD 98 and AD 107. He wrote some of his epistles

before the Apostle John was exiled to the Island of Patmos, so his writings pre-date the book of Revelation.

Existent Writings: Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Smyrnaeans, Romans, Philadelphians, To Polycarp.



Irenaeus

Irenaeus was born in AD 130 and became the bishop of Lyons, France. He wrote a five-volume set called *Against Heresies*. In this work he detailed all of the cults of his day with their true history, along with witnessing tips for them. He testified that he was an eyewitness of both John and Polycarp. He confronted Victor of Rome saying he had no authority to change doctrine. He died about AD 200. (See Papal Authority for more details.)

Existent Writings: Against
Heresies



Justin Martyr

Justin Martyr

Justin was born in AD 100 and was one of the first apologists. His writings mainly focused on convincing the Roman

Emperors that Christianity was a benefit to the empire. Calvinists today look at him as a heretic because of his extremely anti-Calvinistic views. He was born in Samaria and became a disciple of Irenaeus. He ministered in Rome, where he was martyred in AD 165.

Existent Writings: First Apology, Second Apology, Dialogue with Trypho, Address to the Greeks, Sole Government of God, Fragments on the Resurrection

Mathetes

Mathetes studied mainly under Paul, but testified he was also an eyewitness of the other apostles.

Existent Writings: Epistle of Mathetes



Papias

Papias

Papias was born in AD 60 and became bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor. He was a disciple of the Apostle John and a close friend of Polycarp. He died about AD 130.

Existent Writings: Only fragments remain.



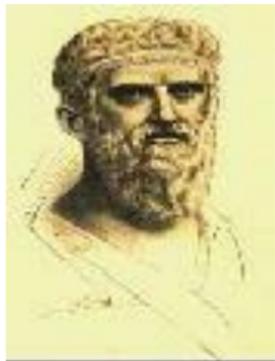
Polycarp of Smyrna

Polycarp

Polycarp was born in AD 69 and became a disciple of the Apostle John and close friend to Ignatius. He was the bishop of Smyrna until the Apostle John called him to come help with the mission at Ephesus. After the Apostle John's death, about AD 115, Polycarp took full control of the missionary outreach from the city of Ephesus, and continued the work for about forty more years. At the end of his life, Polycarp was burned at the stake as a martyr about AD 156.

Existent Writings: Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians

Non-eyewitnesses of the Apostles

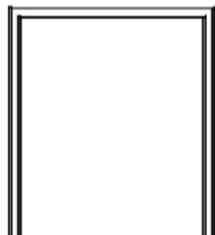


Athenagoras

Athenagoras

Before Athenagoras converted to Christianity, he was a Greek philosopher. He made converts by using Scripture and pagan histories. His apology, dated approximately AD 177, was presented to Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus.

Existent Writings: A Plea to Christians, On the Resurrection of the Dead





Ciaus

Caius

Caius, also known as Gaius, was a presbyter at Rome in the late second century. He wrote several works against the major heresies of his day. Not much remains of his works, except he is thought by many historians to be the author of the *Muratorian Canon Fragment*. (See Chapter 3.)

Existent Writings: MCF; the Muratorian Canon Fragment



Clement of Alexandria

Clement of Alexandria

Clement of Alexandria was born in AD 150 and took over the school at Alexandria from Pantaenus. He is mainly orthodox in doctrine and legalistic in

some places. His quotes from Scripture show the Alexandrian form of text. He died approximately AD 215.

Existent Writings: Exhortation to the Heathen, The Instructor, The Stromata



Cyprian of Carthage

Cyprian

Cyprian was the bishop of the church in Carthage, North Africa. He was one of the first to adopt infant baptism for baptismal regeneration. His writings show the bishop of Rome had no power on his own. Whenever the idea crept up that Rome might have supremacy over the other churches, Cyprian would threaten Roman leaders with excommunication if it did not stop. He was martyred about AD 258.

Existent Writings: 82 epistles, 12 treatises, and several others



Eusebius

Eusebius

Eusebius was born in AD 270 and became bishop of Caesarea. He is considered the father of Church history. In AD 325 he put together the most complete one-volume work for ancient Church history, ranging from AD 33-

325, entitled *Ecclesiastical History*. Only five hundred pages, this is a must read. He also wrote the historical proceedings for the Council of Nicaea. He died in AD 340.

Existent Writings: Ecclesiastical History



Hippolytus

Hippolytus

Hippolytus was born in AD 170 and was disciplined by Irenaeus. He continued Irenaeus' work by creating his own set of *Against Heresies*. This new set contains additional information on cults and heresies that were started after Irenaeus' time. He was martyred about AD 236.

Existent Writings: Refutation of all Heresies and various fragments



Lactantius

Lactantius

Lactantius was born in AD 250, and became a prominent Roman teacher. In his old age he tutored Crispas, son of Emperor Constantine, in Gaul. He used ancient pagan history books about the gods and goddesses the Greeks worshiped to show they were just deified dead people. This allowed him to convert many Romans to Christianity.

He died in AD 325.

Existent Writings: Divine Institutes, and several other works



Origen

Origen

Origen was born in AD 185. Famous for traveling and speaking against the cults of his day, he was brought up on charges of teaching heresy. Today the heresies he was charged with are collectively called Origenism. It is unclear if Origen actually taught Origenism or was simply accused of it by a jealous bishop. Origen took over the school at Alexandria from Clement and passed it on to Gregory. He died about AD 255.

Existent Writings: commentaries on Matthew, John, Against Celsus, Of First Principles, letters to Gregory and Julius, and other fragments





Tatian
the Assyrian

Tatian

Tatian was a disciple of Justin Martyr. He wrote several good works including a harmony of the Gospels called the Diatessaron. He later apostatized from the church and formed the Gnostic cult known as the Encratites. He then produced the Gnostic version of the Diatessaron. See the section on

Encratites for more information.

Existent Writings: Address to the Greeks, the
Diatessaron



Tertullian

Tertullian

Tertullian was born in AD 160 and became a presbyter in Carthage, North Africa. He wrote several good works over a period of twenty years but then fell in with an aberrant group founded by a false prophet named Montanus. After this, his writings became unbalanced. He died about AD 230.

Existent Writings: Idolatry, Against Heresies, Baptism, Treatise on the Soul, Flesh of Christ, Against Marcion, Of the Nations, and several others





Theophilus

Theophilus

Theophilus became bishop of Caesarea about AD 190. Before that however, he wrote three epistles. He was very vigilant to defend the faith against the Gnostic cults in his day. He was the first to coin the term “Trinity.”

Existent Writings: three books; today simply entitled Book 1, 2, and 3.

Victorinus

Victorinus was a disciple of Arnobius, bishop of Portovio, Syria, and is famous for his commentary on the book of Revelation. He died about AD 304.

Existent Writings: Commentary on the
Apocalypse

Other Church Fathers

For general information I have included a list of people mentioned in church history who never wrote letters, or their letters are no longer existent. We will not mention them further in this book since they do not contribute to our study of doctrine; but the reader might be interested in where they went and what success they had in ministry.

Alexander the Coppersmith & Demas

In chapter 16 of his book *The Flesh of Christ*, Tertullian says Alexander became violent in temper, left the faith and joined a subgroup of the Ebionites.

Alexander believed that Jesus was just a man with a sin nature, that there was no resurrection in the flesh, and that we can become sinless by obtaining the Christ consciousness. Hippolytus says Demas left the faith to become a priest of idols.

Hegesippus

Hegesippus was an early church historian who was born in 110 AD and died approximately 180 AD. About AD 133, he created a five-volume commentary on the Gospels, entitled "Memoirs." Eusebius says these contained facts gained from eyewitnesses from our Lord's family and friends. The set answered just about any question you could ask about the

ministry of Jesus. Unfortunately it no longer exists.

Onesimus & Philemon

Onesimus was Philemon's runaway slave, who had become a Christian while away from his master. Paul wrote about him to his master, Philemon, in the Epistle to Philemon. He returned to Colosse and was treated as a brother as Paul requested. Onesimus became the bishop of the church there at Colosse. Later Philemon went on to become the bishop of the church at Gaza.

Pantaenus

Pantaenus started the school at Alexandria, Egypt. He was an

eyewitness of Mark. Not much is known about him, but Eusebius records he disappeared for a time. This has been taken out of context by several conspiracy groups.

Phygellus & Hermogenes

Paul wrote about these two men to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:20. Paul states they were turned over to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme, because they became “shipwreck” in their faith. Hippolytus wrote they were two of the Seventy disciples of our Lord Jesus. Tertullian, in his book, *On the Resurrection*, wrote these two denied that there would be a physical resurrection of the body. Further, in his

book, *Prescription against Heretics*, Hippolytus stated that Phygellos, Hermogenes, Philetus, and Hymenaeus left the apostles and their true faith for a counterfeit. He quoted 1 John 2:19 saying that they “went out from us to prove they really never were part of us,” that is, part of the true church.

Firmilian

Firmilian was born in AD 200 and became the bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. He was acquainted with Origen and sided with Cyprian against Stephen of Rome in the “Baptism of Heretics” controversy. He died in AD 268.

Bardesanes

Bardesanes was born in AD 154. A Syriac convert, he is credited with the work *The Book of the Laws of Divers Countries*. Later in life he fell into Gnostic heresy. He died in AD 222.

Timeline

Here is a list compiled from Eusebius and the ancient church fathers that gives the most important events in ancient church history. Dates given are AD.

14 Tiberius Caesar succeeded
Augustus Caesar

32 Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection

37 Caligula succeeded Tiberius as Caesar

James the Just became the first Bishop of Jerusalem

Thaddeus preached in Edessa

The name "Christian" began to be used in Antioch

41 Claudius succeeded Caligula as Caesar

41 Famine occurred (Acts)

43 Herod Agrippa afflicted the church, put James the Great to death

Simon Magus began preaching his perversion

Peter preached in Rome

Agrippa appointed king of the

Jews

50 Jerusalem Council (See Acts 15) condemned Legalism

54 Nero succeeded Claudius as Caesar

Annianus succeeded the Apostle Mark as bishop of Alexandria

62-63 Paul's two-year Roman imprisonment

64-68 Nero's Persecution

66 Paul was arrested and taken to Rome where he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus.

67 Peter and Paul executed in Rome.

68 Linus became the first bishop

of Rome

Galba succeeded Nero as

Caesar

69 Vespasian succeeded Galba

as Caesar

70 The Jerusalem temple
destroyed

Gnostic schools of Cerinthus,
Ebion, and Simon Magus began to grow
in influence

Simon, son of Cleopas, became
second bishop of Jerusalem

79 Titus succeeded Vespasian
as Caesar

79 Anencletus became second
bishop of Rome

81 Domitian succeeded Titus as
Caesar

81-95

Domitian's Persecution

Clement of Rome wrote *I*

Clement

94

Polycarp wrote to

Philippi

95

Apostle John was imprisoned on the isle of Patmos

Apostle John wrote the book of *Revelation*.

96

Trajan succeeded Domitian as Caesar

98

Clement became third Bishop of Rome

Ignatius became second bishop of Antioch

100-117 **Trajan's Persecution**

105 Ignatius wrote his
seven epistles

117 The Apostle John died
and was buried in Ephesus.

130 Mathetes wrote in defense
of Christianity.

140 Polycarp martyred.

 Papias wrote about the sayings
of the Lord.

150 Justin Martyr wrote his
Apology.

163 Athenagoras and Tatian
wrote their works

165 Tatian left the church and
founded the Gnostic Encratites.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 161-177 | Aurelius' Persecution |
| 166 | Justin Martyr and Polycarp martyred |
| 177 | Irenaeus finished his <i>Against Heresies</i> . |
| | Athenagorius and Irenaeus martyred |
| 180 | Montanus formed the Montanist cult |
| | Blastus arose in Rome |
| 198 | Clement of Alexandria wrote in defense of Christianity |
| 200c | Gnostic gospels written |
| 203-210 | Severus' Persecution |
| 210 | Tertullian wrote his works |

created the Sabellian heresy

Stephen became bishop of
Rome

257-260

Valerian's Persecution

259

Cyprian martyred

264
schism

Paul of Samosata created a

268

Council of Antioch

condemned Paul of Samosata

276

Aurelian's Persecution

277

Manichean heresy arose

295

Schism of Nepos

303-310

Diocletian's

Persecution

313 Edict of Milan issued by Constantine made Christianity an official Roman religion

324 Constantine became the undisputed leader of the entire Roman world

325 The Council of Nicaea defined the Trinity and condemned Arianism

 Eusebius of Caesarea wrote *Ecclesiastical History*

Conclusion

To sum up what we have learned, the eyewitnesses of the apostles continued to teach the true doctrine of the apostles. In the third and fourth generations non-eyewitnesses of the apostles began to change doctrine and were immediately called heretics. The following chart shows who was an eyewitness and who was not.

| Eyewitnesses of the Apostles | Non-Eyewitnesses of the Apostles |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | 1. |

1.
Papias

AD 70-155

2. Clement of
Rome
AD 90

3.
Ignatius
AD 90

4.
Polycarp
AD 95-
135

5.
Mathetes

Theophilus
AD

2.
Athenagoras
AD

3. Caius

AD 180

4.
Hippolytus
AD

206

5.
Tertullian
AD

210

6.
Lactantius

AD 130
6. Justin
Martyr
AD 168
7.
Irenaeus
AD 177

AD
320
7.
Commodian
AD
8. Origen

AD 240
9.
Victorinus
AD
303

Other volumes for further research:

1. *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History*: Church History from A.D. 1-325.
2. *Socrates*: Church History from

A.D. 305-438.

3. *Sozomenus*: Church History from A.D. 323-425.

Now let's start by looking at the primary doctrines and branch out from there.



Primary Doctrines



Authority of the Bible

Tradition or Scripture?

The ancient church fathers taught the following: the New Testament is the final authority for Christians. They also said anyone requiring one to believe a doctrine that is not clearly taught in Scripture should be ignored. There have never been any secret doctrines handed down by the apostles. If any doctrine is vague or debatable, it is not important for salvation. Believe only what is clearly taught in Scripture.

Apostolic Succession.

Apostolic succession is something that was extremely important in the first century but can be very dangerous now.

During the first century, when someone started his own church and taught some strange new doctrine, all one had to do was go back to Peter, Paul, or John and ask one of them if this new teaching was right. If they said “yes” then you knew the teaching was sound. If they said “no, that was not correct,” then you knew this new church was a cult and the new teaching was a lie from Satan. Jesus and the disciples taught all through the New Testament that false teachers and false prophets would rise up from within the church, and believers needed to be on

guard against their teachings.

After the death of the Apostles, the same situation applied to any of the eyewitnesses of the disciples. A great example is Irenaeus, who sternly corrected the bishop of Rome for heresy, stating that he was an eyewitness of John and Polycarp. He basically said if they were alive in his time, the bishop of Rome, Pope Victor, and Florinus would have been instantly excommunicated! Irenaeus knew this because he witnessed this very thing several times when he was younger.

After the first few generations, we had clear instructions from the New

Testament and from the ancient church fathers. Apostolic Succession of a non-eyewitness is a very dangerous thing. Since we were warned of false teachers rising up from within the church, we should expect them and judge all modern authorities by the Bible, *as interpreted by the eyewitnesses of the disciples*. Therefore, if any modern denomination uses “Apostolic Succession” as a means of authority, they are deliberately disregarding the ancient authorities themselves. And by the authority of those ancient fathers they are to be ignored!

Roman Catholic Authority

When witnessing to a Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox believer, the question

of authority usually arises. They argue that the Pope can trace his apostolic authority all the way back to the apostle Peter. Whether this is true or not, it sounds good. So why would a Roman Catholic want to choose your opinion of what a Scripture means over the Pope's opinion?

If you say "because the Bible says so," the Roman Catholic interprets that as "I have no authority, and can't prove it; it's just my own opinion." But if you say, "I have it on the authority of the first century bishops and popes," it will make him stop and think.

We know that there were no popes in the

first century. But Roman Catholics consider the bishops of Rome, popes. So when you say “a first century pope said...” and then quote a first century Bishop of Rome, that is simply trying to speak the Roman Catholic’s language.

The point is this: even if a pope has the authority to change *practice*, like saying homosexuality is no longer a sin, he still can’t make a declaration and change *history*. So, if a first century pope said Mary, the mother of Jesus, died and was buried in Ephesus, then a recent pope declared the dogma of the “Assumption of Mary,” which states Mary never died but ascended into heaven, then one pope is correct and one pope is lying. There is

no way that Mary could have died and not died at the same time!

Now, the question is this: are you going to obey the authority of an ancient pope who was an eyewitness to the apostles, or the modern pope who has changed doctrine that he was forbidden to change?

When you discover the first century popes also wrote that any future presbyter, bishop or pope who changes specific doctrines should be banished, and not heard, you must make a decision. Of course this also applies to Protestant churches who twist the teachings of the ancient church fathers.



Scripture

“...it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Jude 1:3-4*

Church Fathers

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 3.2 – Heretics allege truth was delivered not by written documents, but by oral tradition. Without this oral tradition you can't properly interpret the Scriptures.

Against Heresies 3.3 – The Apostles did not pass down any hidden wisdom, just the Scriptures. If an older written document contradicts the newer written document, we believe the older document.

Against Heresies 4.26 – Obey the presbyters who are in the church,--

those who possess the succession from the Apostles-- together with the succession of the Episcopate, who have received the certain gift of truth. But it is also incumbent to hold in suspicion others who depart from the primitive succession. Avoid all who do not hold to the doctrine of the Apostles, including Presbyters.

Against Heresies 4.33 – The doctrine of the Apostles has been guarded as a very complete system of doctrine and has been preserved without any forging of Scriptures. Neither receive addition to, nor suffer curtailment from, its truths. Read the word of God without

falsification, lawfully and diligently explaining the Old Testament in harmony with the rest of the Scriptures.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata book 2.4 – There were no secret doctrines handed down by the Apostles, just the Scriptures. Only heretics say there are secret doctrines from the Apostles which you must know to correctly understand the Scripture.

Stromata 2.17 – To be true, a thing must be proven scientifically, by comparison and testing.

Stromata 7.15 – True Christians do not divide the body of Christ, but heretics try to.

Stromata 7.16 – Accept no doctrine that is not clearly taught in the Scriptures. It must be proven logically and completely from the Scriptures or it is just an opinion. Anyone who divides the body of Christ with opinions is sinning against the body of Christ.

Stromata 7.15 – It is necessary to show how in the Scripture and in the ancient church, there are both the most exact knowledge and the truly best set of principles.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Prescription against Heretics 1.25
– The Apostles did not keep any secret doctrine, but taught every

doctrine openly. Only heretics teach a secret gospel, letter, or doctrine.

Prescription against Heretics 1.26

– The Apostles did not give special information to favorite friends.

Prescription against Heretics 1.32

– Even if the heretics were to produce such a contrivance [a list of succession back to the Apostles], they will not even advance one step. For when their very doctrine is compared with that of the Apostles', it's own diversity and discrepancy proves that it had neither an Apostle nor an apostolic man for its authorship.

Prescription against Heretics 1.19

– It will be manifest that where the true Christian faith is, there will be the true Scriptures and the correct exposition thereof.



New Testament Books

Now that we have established by tradition the Scriptures are the rule and guide for our faith and that we need nothing else, we need to see what books were considered the New Testament from ancient times. These books will be the ones we judge all others by. We will start by looking at the oldest known list of New Testament books.

The Muratorian Canon Fragment.

It is widely thought that Caius, a disciple of Irenaeus, wrote the Muratorian Canon Fragment, abbreviated MCF. This is

dated to about AD 175. The fragment is named after Muratoni, the man who discovered it. Both the beginning and end are missing.

The important points to note are:

1. There have always been only four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
2. There was one book of church history, called the Acts of the Apostles.
3. Then the MCF mentions thirteen of the fourteen books written by Paul.
4. There is one real epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans, but there are forged epistles to Laodicea and Alexandria.

5. It mentions Jude, and two epistles of John, and the Revelation of John.
6. It fails to mention Hebrews, James, 3 John, and the epistles of Peter (That fact does not mean they were disputed by this manuscript, just not mentioned).
7. It notes some accepted the Revelation of Peter and the book of Wisdom.
8. It accepts none of the Gnostic books.



Scripture

“...it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Jude 1:3-4KJV*

The MCF fragment...

Matthew and Mark

...at which never-the-less he was present and so he placed it in his narrative.

Luke

The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, the well-known physician, wrote it in his own name. It is widely believed that he wrote it after the ascension of Christ when he was traveling with the Apostle Paul. Luke had a great zeal for making sure all the information was completely correct. It is true that he had not seen the Lord in the flesh, yet having ascertained the facts, he was able to begin his narrative with the nativity of John.

John

The fourth book of the gospel is that of John, one of the disciples. In response to

the exhortation of his fellow disciples and bishops, he said “fast with me for three days. Then let us tell each other whatever shall be revealed to each one.” The same night it was revealed to Andrew, who was one of the apostles, that it was John who should relate in his own name, they all acting as correctors. That way there would be no discord even although different selections are given from the facts in the individual books of the gospels and the faith of believers would be secure. Because in all of them, under the one guiding Spirit, all the things relative to his nativity, passion, resurrection, conversation with his disciples, and his twofold advent, the first in humiliation rising from contempt

which took place and the second in the glory of kingly power which is yet to come, have been declared. What marvel it is then if John brings forth so consistently in his epistles these things, saying in person “what we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears and our hands have handled, those things we have written.” John professes to be not only an eye-witness, but also a hearer and a narrator of all the wonderful things of the Lord in their order.

Acts

Moreover the acts of all the Apostles are written by Luke, in one book for the most excellent Theophilus. Luke wrote about

the individual events that took place in his presence. He clearly shows this by omitting the crucifixion of Peter, and the departure of Paul, when Paul went from the city of Rome to Spain.

Paul

Now, Paul's epistles, what they are about and to whom they are written is clear to anyone who reads them. First of all, Paul wrote at length to the Corinthians to correct their heretical system; to the Galatians to forbid circumcision; and then to the Romans on the order of Old Testament Scriptures, showing that Christ is the chief matter in them. Each of which is necessary for us to discuss, seeing that the blessed

apostle Paul himself, following the example of John, writes to no more than seven churches by name, in the following order: Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians, and Romans. But he writes twice for the sake of correction to the Corinthians and to the Thessalonians. It is shown that by these seven epistles that there is one church spread throughout the whole earth. Likewise John also in the Apocalypse, although he writes to seven churches, he speaks to us all. He wrote out of affection and love one epistle to Philemon, one to Titus, and two to Timothy. These are held sacred by the universal church, in the regulation of Ecclesiastical discipline.

Forgeries

There are also circulating one epistle to the Laodiceans and one to the Alexandrians forged in the name of Paul against the heresy of Marcion. [Colossians 4 shows there is a real epistle of Laodicea also.] There are many others which cannot be received into the universal church, for it is not fitting that gall be mixed with honey.

General Epistles

Further, an epistle of Jude and two bearing the name of John are counted among the General Epistles. And Wisdom, written by the friends of Solomon in his honor. We receive the

Apocalypses of John and Peter only. Some of us do not wish the Apocalypse of Peter to be read in church.

Non-Inspired

But Hermas wrote “the Shepherd” in the city of Rome most recently in our times, when his brother bishop Pious was occupying the chair in the church at Rome. And so indeed it ought to be read, but that it be made public to the people in the church and placed among the prophets whose number is complete or among the apostles is not possible to the end of time.

Gnostic Cults

We reject everything written by Arsenus,

Valentinus, or Miltiadees. We also reject those who wrote the *New Book of Psalms*, Marcion, Basilides, the founder of the Asian Cataphrigians and...

The Fathers' Lists

All the fathers agreed there were only four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Some quoted others on the understanding that they were translations of one of the four or a harmony of the four. For example, when the "Gospel of the Hebrews" is quoted, it is the Hebrew version of the Gospel of Matthew, not the Gnostic work by the same name. In another case, a father quoted the lineage

of John the Baptist, which is not in the four real gospels but included in the Gnostic “Gospel of the Ebonites.” The fake work simply included what was considered to be a real genealogy into its fake gospel in order to give it more credit. The father was quoting the genealogy, not the Gnostic work. Here is a chart showing which books the ancient church fathers and ancient Bibles have as a New Testament canon.

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hebrews | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| James | | | | | D | D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 Peter | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Peter | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | D | D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 John | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 John | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | D | D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 John | | | | | D | D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jude | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | D | D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | | | | |

Ath =

Athanasius

(400)

Eus =

Eusebius

(325)

Hip =

Hippolytus,

Iren =

Irenaeus

(170)

Orig =

Origen (240)

Tert =

Tertullian

(200)

Vul =

Vulgate

Clem = Clement of
Alexandria (190)

MCF = Muratorian

Canon Fragment (170)

Sin = Sinaiticus (350)

B = Vaticanus (350)

A = Alexanderius (450)

D₂ = Claromontanus

(700)

☐ = Included.

D = Some had
disputed the work.Parentheses are
AD dates

Notes on New Testament Books

Eusebius stated that Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark based on what Peter told him, and that Paul wrote Hebrews (Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. II pg. 580).

Epistle of Barnabas

This epistle was not included in the canon, but was used extensively among the ancient church fathers. It is highly recommended reading, but not to be considered inspired. Read the *Ancient Epistle of Barnabas* for yourself.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 195

Stromata 2.17 – The apostolic Barnabas (he was one of the Seventy and a fellow-worker of

Paul) speaks in these words:
“Before we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak.”

Origen, AD 225

Of First Principles 3.2.4 – Barnabas, in his epistle, says there are two ways - one of light and one of darkness.

Clement of Alexandria, in *Stromata 2.20*, quoted and agreed with Barnabas' interpretation of the Mosaic food laws in his fight against legalism.

The fathers stated several things about the New Testament books. Tertullian stated in *Marcion 5.11*, there was a real

epistle of Paul to the Laodeceans that was not canonized. Some heretics incorrectly taught Ephesians was that book, in order to get it removed from the canon because the book of Ephesians exposed some of their errors. In his *Commentary of John 4.18*, Origen wrote everyone accepted 1 Peter and 1 John, but some in his time still doubted 2 Peter, 2 John, and 3 John as genuine.

To be very clear, we have only twenty seven books in the New Testament. These twenty seven books should be the rule and guide for our faith. Any doctrine that is not clearly taught in them is not to be used to divide the church. Anyone who contradicts a doctrine clearly taught

in these twenty seven books must be ignored. The twenty seven are in order:

213

New Testament Books

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians

- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

New Testament Books



The Deity of Jesus Christ

The deity of Jesus is central to the Christian faith. The Scriptures make it clear one cannot be a Christian without believing in the deity of Jesus. As early as AD 70, all the church fathers taught the deity of Jesus. We will see that the first official declaration of a heretic is one who claimed to be Christian, but rejected the deity of Christ. This was made official in the “Baptism of Heretics.” Non-Trinitarians were anathematized at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. Today any religious group that claims to be Christian but denies the

doctrine of the Trinity is defined as a cult.

We will examine the Scriptures and church fathers on this subject.



Scripture
(NKJV)

“In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God [the Father], and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made

through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

John 1:1-3

“[the Father] has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;” *Hebrews 1:2*

“ He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created

through Him and for Him. And He is before all things and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” *Colossians 1:15-19*

“ For in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily;” *Colossians 2:9*

“But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.’ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not

only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”

John 5:17-18

“Then Moses said to God, ‘Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, “The God of your fathers has sent me to you” and they shall say to me, “What *is* His name?” what shall I say to them?’ And God said to Moses, “I AM who I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Exodus 3:13-14

““Your father Abraham rejoiced to

see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.’ Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’ Then they took up stones to throw at Him” *John 8:56-59*

“‘I [Jesus] and My Father are one.’ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those good works do you stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and

because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.’” *John 10:30-33*

“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM *He*, you will die in your sins.” *John 8:24*

“And he [Satan] said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the LORD your God, and him only you shall serve.”’”
Matthew 4:9-10

“But when He again brings the

firstborn [Jesus] into the world, He says: ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him.’” *Hebrews 1:6*

“But to the Son *He says*: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.’” *Hebrews 1:8*

“And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst,

and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.’” *John 20:26-29*

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but

made Himself of no reputation
taking on the form of a servant, *and*
coming in the likeness of men.”
Philippians 2:5-6

Church Fathers on Jesus’ Divinity

Ignatius, AD 30-107

Epistle to Ephesus 7 – Jesus is
“God existing in flesh.”

Epistle to Ephesus 18 – Jesus is
“our God.”

Epistle to Romans 3 – For our
God, Jesus Christ... is all the more
revealed in His glory.

Epistle to Polycarp 3 – Jesus is
God.

Mathetes, AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 7 – Jesus is God come in the flesh, the very creator of all things, and is not an angel

Epistle to Diognetus 11 – He testifies that he was taught directly by the apostles that Jesus is uncreated (from everlasting).

Theophilus, AD 168

Book 3.9 – There is only one God and he created everything. [Theophilus was the first to use the term “Trinity.”]

Justin Martyr, AD 110-165

First Apology 13 – There is one God that manifests in three persons.

Dialogue 48 – Jesus is God incarnate and he pre-existed.

Dialogue 56 – Jesus, who is God, appeared as one of the angels (men) to Abraham. (Heb 1:8)

Athenagoras, AD 177

Chapter 8 – There is only one God.

Chapter 10 – Christians worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and refer to God as “God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Jesus was never brought into existence, but was always with the Father.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 1.22 – Everything was made by God, nothing was made by any angel.

Against Heresies 3.9 – Jesus is God.

Against Heresies 3.15 – Jesus and the Father are the only true God.

Against Heresies 3.19 – Jesus is one hundred percent God.

Against Heresies 4.6 – The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are the one God.

Fragment 53 – Jesus created the universe and is the God of Gods.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata 5.12 – Jesus is the only

begotten God.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Against Marcion 2:14 and 4:9 – Jesus is God incarnate.

Marcion 5.19 – Colossians teaches us that Jesus is the Creator of all things, and is therefore God.

Marcion 1.5 – There is only one God.

Praxeas 1.2 – The Trinity is defined and explained.

Origen, AD 200-240

Of First Principles 1.2.1 – Jesus is God.

Of First Principles 1.3.5 – The Trinity is defined and explained.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.26 – Jesus is God incarnate.

Divine Institutes 4.29 – The Trinity is defined and explained.

Church Fathers on Jesus' Physical Body

The cult of Jehovah's Witnesses falsely teaches Jesus did not resurrect in a physical body. They also teach Jesus was not God incarnate, but an angel. The Mormon cult, on the other hand, teaches that God the Father has a physical body.

Ignatius, AD 30-107

Epistle to Smyraeans 3 – Jesus had a real physical body after the resurrection.

Epistle to Smyraeans 5 – Only unbelievers say he [Jesus] did not have a real body.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata 5.14 – God the Father does not have a physical body.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Marcion 4:42 – Jesus resurrected in a physical body.

Mathetes, AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 7 – Jesus is

God come in the flesh, the very creator of all things, and is not an angel

Church Fathers on Jesus' Relationship with the Father

Oneness groups are considered cults because they teach Jesus is the Father in another form.

Justin Martyr, AD 110-165

First Apology 63 – Jesus is God; but whoever says Jesus is the Father, does not know God.

Church Fathers on Jesus' Pre-existence

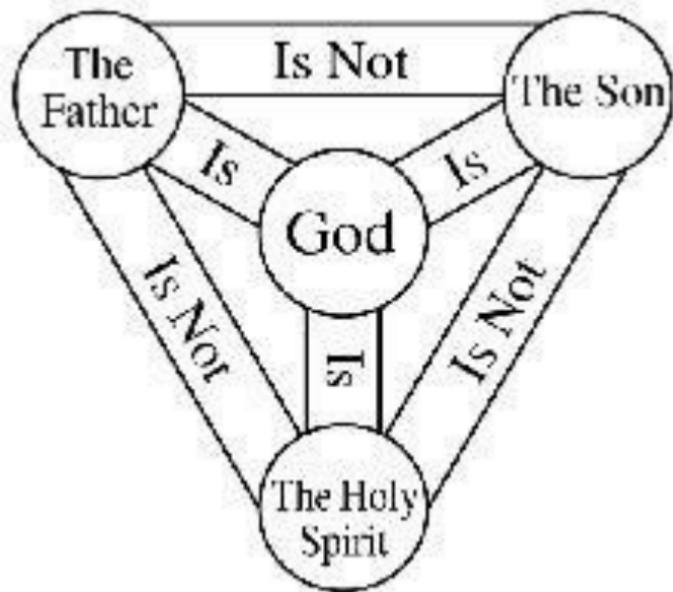
Cults like the Way International have taught that Jesus pre-existed only in the sense that He was in God the Father's memory, but since God is all-knowing, all humans preexist in that sense also. The ancient church taught Jesus was unique in that He pre-existed and we did not. This also shows Mormonism to be false, because they teach our souls existed before birth.

Justin Martyr, AD 110-165

Dialogue 48 – Jesus is God incarnate and He pre-existed.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata 3.14 – Souls do not pre-exist.



Trinity

Defined

The Council of Nicaea defined the Trinity very eloquently. The Trinity is defined as one God manifested in three persons, coequal, consubstantial, and

coeternal. This means that the three persons known as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have always been, and will always be, God (coeternal). They are all equal (coequal) and all truly God. They exist in a form or substance different from any angel, human, or other created being.

Arius, AD 250-336

Arius was a presbyter in Alexandria, Egypt, who taught the Son of God is of a different substance than God the Father. Basically, he taught that Jesus was *created* out of nothing by God the Father and is not God in any way. This is the same doctrine held by Jehovah's Witnesses today. Arius' teachings were

condemned at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. All of the ancient heretics were non-Trinitarian in their beliefs, along with other perverted doctrines. It became easier to just group the heretics/cults together. The ancient church teaching was clear, non-Trinitarians are not Christians, they are the original heretics.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.30 - When they are called Phrygians, Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Anthropians, or Arians they have ceased to be Christians.

This true today. The vast majority of

cults are non-Trinitarian. Look at the following list and compare Trinitarians with non-Trinitarians.

| Trinitarians | Non-Trinitarians |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Roman Catholic2. Eastern Orthodox3. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jehovah's Witnesses2. Mormons3. Christian Science4. Bahai5. Spiritism |

Episcopal
4. Methodist
5. Presbyterian
6. Reformed
7. Baptist
8. Amish
9. Mennonite
10. Brethren
11. Pentecostal
12. Friends/Quaker
13. Fundamentalist
14. Holiness
15. Lutheran

6. Unitarians, Unity
7. Branch
Davidians
8. Christadelphians
9. Divine science
10. Scientology
11. Witness Lee
12. Charles Manson
13. Rosicrucians
14. Jim Jones
15. Satanism
16. Religious
Science
17. Metaphysics
18. Hare Krishnas
19. Church
Universal and
Triumphant
20. William Branham

16. Mennonite
17. Some Adventists
18. Christian Churches
19. Church of God
20. Church of Christ
21. Calvary Chapel

Over 160
denominations in all

21. Children of God, “The Family”
22. Shakers
23. Unification Church, “Moonies”
24. Oneness Pentecostals
25. The Way International
26. Shepherd’s Chapel
27. United Pentecostal Church, UPC
28. Seventh Day Adventists

Over 300 cults in all



213

Secondary Doctrines



Calvinism

Calvinism is the official doctrine of Presbyterian churches, Reformed churches, and a few other denominations. It is named after John Calvin, who successfully created “Calvinism” about AD 1540.

Calvinistic History

When we examine the testimony of the ancient church in this chapter, we will see the ancient church fathers strongly believed in man’s free will. They also taught that no one is compelled to accept salvation; but salvation is presented as a

free gift to all men. They taught that no one is predestined to go to hell.

When the Gnostic cults rose up in the second century, they combined false ideas with Christian teachings. One Gnostic school, the Valentinians, taught some men were predestined to go to hell, had no free will, and had no chance of being saved. Another Gnostic school, the Basilideans, taught everyone was born sinless and needed no savior unless they fell into sin later in life. These errors were strongly condemned by the whole church. About AD 250, the Manichean cult arose. The Manicheans revived Valentinian Gnosticism and added to it.

Two centuries later a man named Augustine, who was a Manichean for eight years, converted to Christianity and left the cult. Augustine became one of the most influential writers of his period. Believing in the free will of man and denying that anyone is predestined for hell, he successfully converted many cultists to Christianity. (See Augustine's work, *City of God*.) But in the year AD 417 all that changed. A new cult arose led by a British bishop named Pelagius. Pelagius revived some of the elements of the Basilidean Gnostics, specifically that man is born free from sin and needs no savior unless he sins sometime later in his lifetime. Augustine debated Pelagius

and his followers, but to no avail. Desperate for a way to eloquently silence this new cult, he went back to his arguments from his Manichean days. He thought since the Manicheans taught the exact opposite doctrines than that of the Pelagians/Basildeans, those ideas should be effective. Augustine's idea worked, but in the process he started teaching a mixture of Christian and Manichean ideas. The church called Augustine's corrupted doctrine Augustinianism and Pelagius's corrupted doctrine Pelagianism. The church rejected both Augustinianism and Pelagianism.

Eleven centuries later the Roman

Catholic church held control of Europe by the power of the Interdict. An interdict is a kind of group excommunication. If a king disobeyed the pope of Rome, the pope placed an Interdict on that king's country, thereby excommunicating the king and the entire population. Everyone in that country lost their salvation and were again headed for hell. This usually ended with the king being killed and a new obedient king placed on his throne. Then, the country's excommunication would be lifted and everyone's salvation restored. It was in this environment that John Calvin gained popularity when he revived and perfected the Valentinian Gnostic ideas (Augustinianism) and created what is

today called Calvinism. If you are predestined for salvation, and that cannot change, then the pope has no power over anyone and no one has to obey him or pay taxes to Rome.

Calvin passed away and his successor, Theodore Beza, maintained a stronghold on Europe through Calvinism. But one of Beza's students, Jacob Arminius, researched the ancient church and found Calvinism's ties to the Valentinian Gnostics. He then set out to correct the problems with Calvinism, and Arminianism was born.

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| | Calvinism | |
|--|------------------|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|--|
| | | Arminianism | |
|--|--|--------------------|--|



John Calvin

Total Depravity
 Unconditional Election
 Limited Atonement
 Irresistible Grace
 Perseverance of the Saints
 Foreknowledge of individuals

Free Will
 Conditional Election
 Unlimited Atonement
 Resistible Grace
 Foreknowledge of events

J.
 Arn

Salvation predestined for certain individuals God foreknew He would want to save.

Salvation predestine the Church, individuals who choose to accept C God foreknows all will accept salvation.

Calvinism consists of five points, which can be remembered using the acronym TULIP. Calvinism says we are **T**otally **D**epraved, meaning we can't accept God's gift of salvation even if we wanted to. God must **E**lect those He wants saved **u**nconditionally because we can't do anything to be saved. God **L**imited the **a**tonement to only those few He wanted to save. All the rest He consigned to hell. None of those He wants to be saved can refuse because God uses an **I**rresistible **g**race. And that being the case, they can't lose their

salvation, **Preserving those Saints.**

In contrast, Arminianism teaches everyone is born with a sin nature, but each has the free will to accept Christ as their savior. Salvation is available to all on the condition that each accepts Christ as his savior. The Atonement or salvation is open to all, so that “whosoever will” may be saved. The atonement is not limited to a select few. God draws all individuals to salvation by grace, but it can be resisted by free will. Some Arminian denominations teach Perseverance of the Saints, also called Eternal Security. Southern Baptists are one example of these. Other Arminian denominations, like the church

of the Nazarene, do not teach Perseverance of the Saints.

The extreme forms of Calvinism and Arminianism are Universalism and Pelegianism.



1. Universalism – Everyone is born saved and no one can lose their salvation. No human will ever go to hell.
2. Calvinism – God chose a few people and compelled them to be saved. God has predestined all

others to die and go to hell.

3. Arminianism – Everyone is born with a sin nature and is therefore on their way to hell. God enables everyone, some time in their life, to understand God's gift of salvation. He gives each person the free will to accept or reject the gift.
4. Pelagianism – Everyone is born sinless and is therefore saved and on their way to heaven. They have no need for a savior unless they sin some time in their life.

Being a Calvinist does not make you a non-Christian heretic. It simply shows that part of your doctrine is not perfect.

It should be noted that to be a Calvinist you must accept all five points of Calvinism or that doctrine falls apart. Some denominations state they are *partial* Calvinists, but in reality they simply redefine two or three points and accept the rest as Arminian theology. With this in mind, we need only to look at three points of Calvinism and compare them to what the ancient church fathers taught.



Church Fathers

Clement of Alexandria, AD 190

Stromata 4.12 – [Basilides taught] man can grow up and be sinless all of his life.

Stromata 2.3,20; 4:13 – [Basilides taught] saving faith is intellectual assent. All humans are born with the ability.

Stromata 2.3,20; 4:13 – [Basilides taught] Spirits (sometimes animal spirits) latch on to us and force us to sin.

Stromata 4.12 – [Valentinus taught] saving faith comes from your spirit, if you are one of the chosen.

Stromata 4.12 – [Valentinus taught] only those whose spirit is an emanation from Sophia, are

predestined to be saved. All others are predestined to hell.

Tertullian, AD 200

Valintians 1.29 – [Valentinus taught] some are not predestined to be saved, but predestined for hell, but the rest might be saved through works.

Valintians 1.30 – [Valentinus taught] those predestined for salvation do not need to practice good works.

Archelaus, ~ AD 300

Acts of Manes 33 – [Manes taught] man does not has free will.

Alexander of Lycopolis, AD 350

Of the Manicheans 21 –
[Manicheans taught] man does not
has free will. Some are born with
their nature totally depraved, while
others are born nearly perfect.

In the next three chapters we will look closely at these teachings and see how the ancient church fathers explained them.

1. Foreknowledge – The Scripture uses the term foreknowledge when talking about the church, not the individual.
2. Free Will – Each person has the

free will to accept or reject the Gospel.

3. Predestination – Predestination of the individual, called fate, was only taught by Gnostic heretics.



Foreknowledge

| Biblical – Foreknowledge | Calvinistic – Foreknowledge |
|---|---|
| God knows what will happen in the future, including each person's choice to become a believer or to reject the gift of salvation. | God foreknew those few He wished to pick to save and give eternal life to, and those He wished to send to hell. |

All modern denominations agree true

believers are predestined for salvation (Acts 13:48). The official teaching has always been that the Church, the Body of Christ, is predestined for salvation. In other words, all true Christians will be saved, while all non-Christians will spend eternity in Hell. Once people truly understand the Gospel, they either accept God's gift of salvation or reject it. See the chapter on Free Will. If you accept God's gift by exercising your free will, you become a Christian and gain eternal life. You become part of the group predestined for salvation.

Calvinists argue that *individuals*, not the body of Christ, are predestined for salvation. In order to do this they must

redefine “foreknowledge” to mean not knowledge of a future “event” but intimate knowledge of a “person.” That would be the only way to prove that God does not elect people based on the “event,” the moment they accepted Jesus as their savior. Calvinists say these individuals have no choice in the matter.

If it can be demonstrated that the first century church and secular society before, during, and after the first century used the word “foreknowledge” to mean the knowledge of a future event, *and never used it in any other way*, then Calvinism falls apart. Look at these Scriptures and you will see God in His foreknowledge predestined the *Body of*

Christ to salvation.



Scripture

“God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” *Romans 11:2*

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who

verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.” *1 Peter 1:18-21*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy

and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” *Ephesians 1:3-6*

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be

multiplied.” *1 Peter 1:1-2*

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who *can be* against us?” *Romans 8:29-31*

Calvinism bases its whole concept of foreknowledge on one verse in Scripture, Acts 2:23.

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:” *Acts 2:23*

The Greek of this passage is vague enough to mean either Jesus was delivered by the “council and foreknowledge” or by the “council which is the foreknowledge” of God. You will constantly hear Calvinists quote this verse and state that it proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the word “foreknowledge” never referred to God or a prophet knowing an “event” but knowing a “person.”

The Bible is full of examples of prophets predicting events like earthquakes, so foreknowledge is God knowing everything, including events and people. The following quotes from the ancient church fathers prove they believed God had foreknowledge of *both* people and events.



Church Fathers

Clement of Rome,

1 Clement 44 – Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus

Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the Episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions, that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry.

Justin Martyr,

Dialogue with Trypho 35 – So that, in consequence of these events, we know that Jesus foreknew what would happen after Him, as well as in consequence of many other

events which He foretold would befall those who believed on and confessed Him, the Christ.

Dialogue with Trypho 42 – I can demonstrate that they were types, and symbols, and declarations of those things which would happen to Christ, of those who it was foreknown were to believe in Him, and of those things which would also be done by Christ Himself.

Dialogue with Trypho 70 – The people foreknown to believe in Him were foreknown to pursue diligently the fear of the Lord.

Dialogue with Trypho 82 – We know that He foreknew all that would happen to us after His

resurrection.

Irenaeus,

Against Heresies 2.32.1 – [Christians] have foreknowledge of things to come: they see visions, and utter prophetic expressions.

Against Heresies 4.29 – God only blinds the minds of those who chose not to believe and have already rejected Him. In Romans 1, those who would not retain God in their knowledge He gave them over to a reprobate mind. In 2 Thessalonians 2, strong delusion is sent to believe the lie. God knows the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all

things, and has given them over to unbelief. God has foreknowledge of all things.

Tatian, AD 166

Greeks 7 – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

Clement of Alexandria,

Instructor 9 – [Jesus shows] His divinity in His foreknowledge of what would take place.

Stromata 12 – Again, prophecy is foreknowledge; and knowledge, the understanding of prophecy; being

the knowledge of those things known before by the Lord who reveals all things.

Stromata 6:8 – The disciple of wisdom foreknows signs and omens, and the issues of seasons and of times.

Origen,

Of First Principles 3:13 – [God] knows the secret things of the heart, and foreknows the future.



Free Will

I

Calvinism
ValentinianGnosticism

Biblical View

Plagianism
BasilideanGnosticism

No free will
Can't save himself
Born with a sin nature

Free Will
Can't save himself
Born with a sin nature

Free will
Can save himself
Born sinless

The Church

The official doctrine of the church has always been that man cannot do what is necessary for salvation by himself. We have a sin nature that causes us to

commit sin, which in turn damns us to hell. God provided His Son as a sacrifice for sins. When each person understands this, they can accept Christ and be saved or reject Christ and be damned. This is called the Doctrine of Free Will.

The Gnostics

As stated in the previous chapter, Gnostic cults rose up in the first and second century. One Gnostic school was headed by a man named Valentinus. The Valentinians taught some persons are born saved. Even if they turn out to be wicked sinners, they will still be saved because they were born elected for salvation. Other people are elected, or

predestined, for hell. No matter what good they do, they can never make it to heaven. And, of course, only the Valentinians were elected for salvation. The church rejected as heresy the teachings of this cult.

Augustine of Hippo

A man named Augustine converted to Manicheanism, a cult based on the ancient Valentinian Gnosticism. He believed man has no free will; but instead, he is totally depraved and unable to be saved. After eight years as a Manichean, Augustine converted to Christianity and taught the free will of man and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Pelagius

Pelagius, a British bishop, started teaching man was born sinless and had the free will to stay that way. If you did choose to sin, only then would you need a savior. This was a revival of the ancient heresy of the Basilidean Gnostics. Augustine used the arguments of the Manicheans, who were the opposite kind of Gnostic, to combat Pelagius. This led Augustine to change his teaching from Free Will to Total Depravity.

John Calvin

In the 1500's, John Calvin successfully brought the teachings of the Valentinian Gnostics and Augustinian thought to the

forefront of Christianity and formed Calvinism. The centerpiece of Calvinism is the doctrine that man is totally depraved and has no free will to choose to receive Christ as savior.



Augustine of Hippo



Semi-Augustinianism

Pelagius
No sin nature,

| Total depravity – No free will | Sin nature, but a free will to choose | can remain sinless |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Man is born with a sin nature controlling him to the point that he can't even accept the gift of Salvation.</p> | <p>Man is born with a sin nature causing him to sin and thereby all men need a savior.</p> | <p>Man is born sinless and if he is careful, he may never sin. Therefore he never needs a savior</p> |
| <p>God must</p> | <p>Once man recognizes his need for</p> | <p>Be</p> |

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| force | those | a savior, he | careful |
| few | He | can freely | and |
| chooses to be | choose to | choose not | |
| saved and | accept | to sin and | |
| force them to | God's gift of | you will | |
| stay saved. | Salvation or | be saved. | |
| | reject it. | | |

For a long time the church has been divided over the issue of free will. The Calvinist churches teach man does not have the free will to accept the gift of salvation. Thus God must send an irresistible saving grace to force a conversion. On the other hand, the Armenian churches teach that God grants man the ability to understand and freely

choose to accept or reject His gift of salvation. I have to say this is really a small issue, and to argue the point seems a waste of time, but we should look at what the early church taught on this subject.



Church Fathers

Justin Martyr, AD 165

Second Apology 7 – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

Dialogue 88 – Men and angels have free will. The human race from Adam had fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent, so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

Dialogue 102 – He created both angels and men free to do that which is righteous, and He appointed periods of time during which He knew it would be good for them to have the exercise of free will; and because He likewise knew it would be good, He made general and particular judgments; each one's freedom of will, however, being guarded.

Dialogue 141 – God created men

and angels free to do righteousness; possessing reason, that they may know by whom they are created, and through whom they, not existing formerly, do now exist; and with a law that they should be judged by Him, if they do anything contrary to right reason: and of ourselves we, men and angels, shall be convicted of having acted sinfully, unless we repent beforehand. But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

Tatian, AD 165

Greeks 7 – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

Greeks 9 – Demons invented the concept of fate with astrology to enslave man into worshiping them.

Greeks 11 – Our free will enslaved us to sin. [Rom. 7] but we can choose to follow righteousness now.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 4.29 – God only blinds the minds of those who chose not to believe and have

already rejected him. In Romans 1, those who would not retain God in their knowledge He gave them over to a reprobate mind. In 2 Thessalonians 2, strong delusion is sent to believe the lie. God knows the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all things, has given them over to unbelief. God has foreknowledge of all things.

Against Heresies 4.37 – God made man a free agent from the beginning. This is the ancient law of human liberty, for there is no coercion with God. In man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice. The Gnostic

teaching that some men are born good, and others are born bad, is wrong. Everyone has the power to reject the Gospel. God has free will and we do, too, because we are made in His image. God preserved the will of man free and under his own control. We will be brought to perfection in the resurrection. Romans 8 refers to the church being predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Against Heresies 4.39 – Man has the ability to distinguish good from evil. He has the power by his own free will to perform God's commandments. This is taught in Romans 2. God does not compel

people to salvation, so those who have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192

Stromata 2.3 – Christians teach saving faith is a gift that starts with God and is accepted by free choice.

Stromata 2.4 – The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift [started by] God, but true faith produces repentance.

Stromata 5.3 – Faith is the rational assent of the soul exercising free will.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Marcion 2.5 – Man has free will.

Minucius Felix, AD 210

36 – The mind of man is free from birth and remains free throughout his life.

Origen, AD 230

Against Celsus 4:70 – Man has free will.

Mathetes AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 7 – Jesus, who is God come in the flesh, came to persuade, not compel us, to salvation because violence has no part in the character of God.



Predestination

| Calvinistic Predestination / Fate | Biblical Predestination |
|--|---|
| Certain individuals are predestined for heaven Certain individuals are predestined for hell | The body of Christ is predestined for heaven Non-Christians are predestined for hell |

The word “predestined” refers to God making a decree that cannot be changed. Both the Scriptures and the ancient

church fathers agree that Christians are predestined for salvation, while non-Christians are predestined for hell. There is nothing that Satan, or anyone else, can do to change this. No power can send Christians to hell, while some non-Christian group becomes destined for heaven. As an individual you decide which group you want to be in by your own free will.

Calvinism teaches the Valentinian Gnostic idea that when the Scripture mentions predestination it is referring to individuals, not groups. This idea that no one can change his “destiny” would mean some people are born saved while others are born damned. The ancient

fathers called this concept of predestination “fate.”

In Calvinism this is referred to as **Irresistible Grace, Unconditional Election, and Limited Atonement**. The idea is that God chooses some to be saved, then compels them to be saved, while the others are destined for hell. Each type has no choice in the matter.

In order not to confuse Christians, the ancient church fathers referred to the Gnostic form of predestination as fate. To make sure there was no doubt as to the difference, there are numerous quotes from the fathers stating there is no such thing as fate and that God would never

compel anyone to be saved, but allows each individual to freely choose salvation by his or her own free will.



Church Fathers

Justin Martyr, AD 165

Second Apology 7 – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

Dialogue 88 – Men and angels have free will. The human race, from Adam forward has fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent, so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

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Him, if they do anything contrary to right reason: and of ourselves, we, men and angels, shall be convicted of having acted sinfully, unless we repent beforehand. But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

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own control. We will be brought to perfection in the resurrection. Romans 8 refers to the church being predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.

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Clement of Alexandria, AD 192

Stromata 2.3 – Christians teach

saving faith is a gift that starts with God and is accepted by free choice. *Stromata 2.4* – The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift [started by] God, but true faith produces repentance.

Stromata 5.3 – Faith is the rational assent of the soul exercising free will.

Stromata 5.12 – The Holy Spirit opens the minds of believers.

Stromata 7.2 – Jesus persuades, but never compels us to salvation.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Marcion 2.5 – Man has free will.

Marcion 2.23 – It is not the mark of a good God to condemn beforehand

persons who have not yet deserved condemnation. Who is so faultless among men, that God could always have him in His choice, and never be able to reject Him? Or who, on the other hand, is so void of any good work, that God could reject him forever, and never be able to choose him?

Minucius Felix, AD 210

36 – The mind of man is free from birth and remains free throughout his life.

Origen, AD 230

Against Celsus 4:70 – Man has free will.

Against Celsus 7.50 – Jesus' sacrifice was for newborn infants also, since no one is born free from sin.



Catholicism

Roman Bishops

1. Linus
2. Anencletus
3. Clement
4. Euarestus
5. Alexander
6. Xystus or Sixtus
7. Telesphorus
8. Hyginus
9. Pius
10. Anicetus
11. Soter
12. Eleutherus

13. Victor
14. Zephyrinus
15. Callistus
16. Urbanus
17. Pontianus
18. Anteros
19. Fabianus
20. Cornelius
21. Lucius
22. Stephen
23. Xystus or Sixtus II
24. Dyonysius
25. Felix
26. Eutychianus
27. Caius
28. Marcellinus
29. Miltiades

Roman Catholicism, as a separate denomination, started in the 200's AD when the bishop of Rome began to change doctrine. As noted in the chapter

on the authority of the Bible, the ancient church fathers taught we must all obey the Scriptures and no one has a right to change the teaching of the Bible. If anyone does, even if he leads a large church, like Rome, they must be ignored.

The main teaching that set Rome apart was the idea that Peter was the first pope, or bishop of Rome. The chart at the right shows the bishops of Rome given by church father Eusebius. It lists all the Roman bishops down to his day, AD 325. Roman Catholics show the same list, except they put Peter as the first pope before Linus. The following are quotes from the ancient church fathers showing Peter was never thought

of as a bishop of Rome or a pope.

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 3.2 – After the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Linus was the first to receive the episcopate of the church at Rome.

Irenaeus, 177

Against Heresies 3.3.3 – The blessed apostles, then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate. Of this Linus, Paul makes mention in the Epistles to Timothy. To him succeeded Anacletus; and after him, in the third place from the apostles,

Clement was allotted the bishopric.

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 3.13 – After Vespasian had reigned ten years, Titus, his son, succeeded him. In the second year of his reign, Linus, who had been bishop of the church of Rome for twelve years, delivered his office to Anencletus.

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 3.15 – In the twelfth year of the same reign, Clement succeeded Anencletus after the latter had been bishop of the church of Rome for twelve years.

The Title Pope

In the first two centuries the head of a church was called a bishop. In the second century the term pope began to be used to refer to the leader of a patriarchate. There were five cities that were patriarchates: Rome, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople. Each patriarchate was responsible for planting churches in its area. Rome's jurisdiction was Europe, while Alexandria's was Africa. In the correspondence between Cyprian of Africa and the bishops of Rome, each referred to each other as pope because they all headed their own patriarchate. So we have Pope Cyprian of Africa

corresponding with Pope Stephen of Rome. After the fall of the other patriarchates, the only pope left was the one in Rome. But even back in the early 200's AD, the Roman bishops started thinking of themselves more highly that they ought.



Papal Authority

The idea of Papal Authority is this: Peter was the first pope and Jesus said He would build His church on Peter alone and give him the “keys to the kingdom.” So if Peter alone could bind and loose, and the gates of hell could not prevail against Rome, then the bishop of Rome must be infallible. Hence all churches must obey the pope.

We have already seen that the apostle Peter was not the first bishop of Rome. But we must examine if the apostle Peter had that kind of authority and if it could

have been passed down to the Roman bishops. This chapter will focus on these questions:

1. Is the Rock Jesus built His church on Peter's authority or Peter's confession?
2. What are the "keys to the kingdom" and the "binding and loosing?"
3. Did Peter alone, or did all the apostles, have the "keys to the kingdom?"
4. Are popes infallible?

The Rock

Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ and therefore the Son of God. Jesus says

on this truth “I will built My church.” Roman Catholic dogma states Jesus was saying His church would be built on Peter’s authority, not on his confession. By this they mean Peter and his successors would be in charge of the whole church. In fact, Jesus gave the power of binding and loosing to all twelve apostles whenever two or more of them agreed in prayer. This did not apply to Peter alone.

“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree

on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” *Matthew 18:18-19*

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the

kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.”
Matthew 16:16-20

We can see by Scripture the power of binding and loosing was given to all the twelve apostles. In Matthew 19:28, Jesus stated the twelve apostles would sit on twelve thrones and judge Israel. Remember also in Galatians 2, Paul rebuked Peter. Peter accepted the correction, showing he did not think of himself as a pope. Cyprian taught the

same when he said:

Cyprian, AD 250

Epistle of Cyprian 70.3 – [Peter] did not insolently claim anything to himself. Nor did he arrogantly assume anything when Paul later disputed with him about circumcision. He did not say that *he* held the primacy and that *he* needed to be obeyed by novices and those lately come!

The ancient church fathers stated that the “rock” Jesus will build his church on was not Peter, but the statement of faith that Jesus is Messiah.

Victorinus, AD 280

Commentary of the Apocalypse 22
– Christ is the rock *by* which, and
on which, the church is founded.

Origen, AD 240

Commentary on Matthew 16 – If
you should think that the whole
Church was built by God only on
that one, Peter, what will you say of
John ... or each of the apostles?

Augustine, AD 378

Retractationes – I have somewhere
said, concerning the apostle Peter,
that the Church was founded on
him, as a *petra*, or rock; but I know
that I have since very often
explained that our Lord meant

Peter's confession of Him.

Similar statements were made by St. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers in his second book on *The Trinity*, St. Chrysostom in his *53rd Homily on St. Matthew*, and several others.

Keys to the Kingdom and Binding and Loosing

Jesus said that the disciples would have the power to bind and loose. Roman Catholic dogma states this referred to the authority to rule the church and is referred to as having the “keys to the kingdom.” They teach this authority was given *only* to Peter and therefore retained *only* by the popes of Rome. The

ancient church taught the authority to “bind and loose” was the authority to decide what, if any, Jewish laws would be binding in Gentiles and had nothing to do with moral issues or new doctrine. It was given to *all* the apostles and then only when they were gathered together to prayerfully make a decision, as in the Jerusalem council recorded in Acts 15.

Tertullian, AD 212

On Modesty 21 – Peter said “Why are you tempting the Lord, concerning the imposition upon the brothers of a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear?” This proclamation both “loosed” those parts of the law that were

abandoned and “bound” those that were retained. Hence the power of binding and loosing given to Peter had nothing to do with the moral sins of believers.

Origen, AD 230

Commentary on Matthew 12.11 - The promise of the keys to the kingdom was given not to Peter alone, but to all the disciples [the church].

Commentary on Matthew 12.14 and 13.31- The power of binding and loosing of one who has the keys to the kingdom is not that he has authority in himself to make new

laws about sin; but that he has the answers [doctrinal truth] about Jesus and the church. The power in teaching total truth is that it instantly sets free those who listen and obey from the sin and its consequences on their life, or it completely binds them to their sin if they refuse to listen, making the consequences that much more severe. But if a person has incorrect doctrine, then those who listen to them will be trapped deeper in sin. These no longer have the power of binding and loosing. One can't free with the truth if one does not know the truth. So if someone speaks rightly, we must

listen to them, but if not, we must not listen to them lest we be bound unnecessarily.

Archelaus, AD 320

Disputation of Archelaus and Manes 38 – Those who seek to set up any new dogma have the habit of very readily perverting it into conformity with their own notions and any “proofs” they care to take from the Scriptures... The apostolic word marks out the case in these words, “If anyone preaches any other Gospel to you other than that which you have received, let him be accursed.” Consequently, in addition to what has been once

committed to us by the apostles, a disciple of Christ should receive nothing new as doctrine.

Are Popes Infallible?

If the Bishops of Rome [popes] are infallible when sitting in St. Peter's Chair and speaking Ex Cathedra on matters of morals and doctrine, then none of the popes would have made mistakes in these areas. None would ever have been accused of immorality or heresy or excommunicated by the church. But instead, we see the opposite.

Pope Anicetus of Rome refused to observe the resurrection in the way John and Polycarp do because he said he had

to follow his Roman traditions. Polycarp refused to participate in the Roman way of celebrating the resurrection, which leads you to think there was some form of paganism creeping into Rome, even at that early date.

Irenaeus, 177

Fragment 3 – When the blessed Polycarp was visiting Rome... Anicetus [second bishop of Rome] could not persuade Polycarp to forgo his observance [of Passover customs]. For these things have always been observed by John, the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom Polycarp had been conversant. Nor, on the other

hand, could Polycarp persuade Anicetus to keep [Passover rituals instead of Easter rituals] for Anicetus maintained that he was bound to adhere to the usage of the presbyters who preceded him.

In *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History* 5:20, Irenaeus corrects several schisms of Roman bishops Blastus, Florinus, Eleuterus, Victor, Zephyrinus, and Callistus.

Pope Eleuterus [twelfth bishop of Rome] was deceived by the false prophet and cult leader, Montanus. Eleuterus actually declared Montanus to be a true prophet of God. In AD 177, Irenaeus actually

travelled to Rome and persuaded Eleuterus to publically declare Montanus a false prophet and excommunicate him. Pope Victor is said to have reintroduced the false prophet Montanus, until Irenaeus brought to light his heresy again. Victor finally expelled Montanus and his followers from Rome.

Victor, Zephyrinus, and Callistus, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth popes, constantly fell into heresy even to the point of allowing non-Trinitarian doctrine to be taught in Rome. Notice they were constantly rebuked and eventually forced to do right by the church. They were not infallible. Pope Zephyrinus was misled by someone

into thinking the bishop of Rome was in control of the whole church.

Hippolytus, AD 225

Refutation of All Heresies 9.2 – At that time Zephyrinus [fourteenth bishop of Rome] imagined that he administered the affairs of the whole church. He was an uninformed and shamefully corrupt man... He hurried headlong into the same opinions [denying the Trinity] and he had Callistus [who would become fifteenth bishop of Rome] as his advisor and fellow champion of these wicked tenants... I have never been guilty of collusion with them. Instead, I have frequently

opposed, refuted, and have *forced* them [bishops Victor, Zephyrinus, and Callistus] reluctantly to acknowledge the truth.

Some popes continued to teach heresy for personal reasons, even though they knew it was an error.

Hippolytus, AD 225

Refutation of All Heresies 9.6 – Callistus perverted Sebellius himself. And he did this, even though he had the ability of rectifying [his errors].

Refutation of All Heresies 9.8 – The imposter [Pope Callistus I], having ventured on such opinions,

established a school in antagonism to the church. He adopted the forgoing system of instruction: he first invented a device conniving with men in regard to their indulgence in pleasures, saying that everyone has their sins forgiven by him. For if anyone commits any transgression, if he is called a Christian (even though he normally attended someone else's congregation), they say the sin is not counted against him – provided he hurries off to the school of Callistus. And many persons are gratified with his regulations... Now, some of those persons had been by us forcibly ejected from the

church in accord with our judicial sentence. However, they simply went over to him and helped to crowd his school.

Firmilian actually comes right out and states the bishops of Rome change apostolic doctrine and practice and create new customs of doctrine based, not on the apostles like the rest of the church, but on their own previous corrupted doctrines. This is the first known account of the Roman idea that tradition is equal to Scripture.

Firmilian, AD 256

Epistle of Cyprian 74.6 – Those

who are at Rome do not always observe those things that were handed down from the beginning. Yet, they vainly pretend the authority of the apostles.

Epistle of Cyprian 74.19 – We join custom to truth. We resist the Roman's custom upon custom.

Cyprian

Cyprian was the bishop of Carthage, he was martyred in AD 250. He wrote eighty-one epistles and twelve treatises. In his eighty-one epistles he leaves no doubt that there was no concept of Papal Authority or infallibility in the ancient church, except in the minds of the corrupted bishops of Rome.

Cyprian, AD 250

Epistles 16,29,30 – Cyprian is addressed as “Cypriano Papae” or Pope Cyprian. So the word pope is being used for the head of a patriarchate (Greece, Italy, etc.) Cyprian is pope of Carthage and Stephen is pope of Rome.

Epistles 3,17,31,51 – The pope of Rome is equal to all the other bishops, and is called a colleague of Cyprian.

Epistle 47 – The pope of Rome refers to the other bishops as his “co-bishops.”

Epistles 25,26 – The keys to the kingdom and the power of binding

and loosing refer to all bishops equally and decisions should be made with the consent of all the bishops.

Epistle 40 – Cyprian rebukes Rome for ordaining Novatian (unlawful ordination and in opposition to the Catholic Church) and the Church will not recognize or be in communion with Rome or anyone else who is a part of his faction.

Epistle 50 – Cyprian rebuked Rome on the unity of the church. “Some are always assuming on themselves more dominion” with a “sacrilegious presumption” and a “proud obstinacy” and thereby “perish from the church”

[excommunication].

Epistle 51 – After the persecution, all the remaining Carthaginian bishops got together to debate what to do with the lapsed, both sides appealing to Scripture as the “only authority;” then notified Rome of their decision. Rome had a similar council and came to the same conclusion.

Epistle 66 – Cyprian warns Stephen of Rome to excommunicate Novatian and his party.

Epistle 67 – Stephen was deceived by Basilides and Novatian. Cyprian states the prophecies of the Antichrist foretold of heresies rising up in the church at the end of

the world. He speculates the prophecy of the church's end-time apostasy is starting in Rome.

Epistle 70 – His colleague Stephen [Pope of Rome] is presumptuous.

Epistle 73 – Cyprian wrote to bishop Stephen of Rome because he was in “error” by forbidding anyone coming from a heresy to be baptized in the church, judging the baptism of heretics to be lawful. Stephen may have considered only non-Trinitarians to be heretics and therefore not considered Novatian a heretic. Stephen said that since the heretics do not rebaptize a convert who came to them from us, we should not rebaptize one of them

who converts to the true church.

Epistle 74 – Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea, writes to Cyprian stating Stephen, bishop of Rome, was unkind and compares him to Judas who betrayed Christ. He is thankful that Cyprian settled the matter once and for all. Firmilian says not only was Stephen wrong about baptism, but also “They who are at Rome do not observe those things in all cases which are handed down from the beginning, and vainly pretend the authority of the apostles.” There are small differences in each church due to culture and language, but no break in unity. “The folly of Stephen” is that he “boasts of the

place of his Episcopate, and contends that he alone holds the succession from Peter.” He does not understand that “the truth of the Christian Rock is overshadowed, and in some measure abolished, by him when he betrays and deserts unity this way.” Stephen says baptism in the name of Jesus alone is permissible, making heretic baptisms acceptable. Stephen, in so doing, “cut himself off from the unity of the church” and can be considered “apostate.” Stephen at the last called Cyprian a “false Christ, false apostle, and a deceitful worker.”

Epistle 75 – The schismatic tries to

“establish a throne for themselves and assume primacy and the right of baptism.”

Unity of the Church 4 – Peter is equal to the other apostles in the authority of binding and loosing, and forgiving sins. Whosoever does not hold to this teaching of unity “strives against, and resists, the church” and does not hold to “true faith.”

Unity of the Church 10 – Those who “appoint themselves as prelates without any law of ordination” are the chaff separated from the wheat.

Conclusion

Irenaeus, in his *Against Heresies* 3.3, states that every church should agree with the church of Rome because it was founded by both Peter and Paul. This looks like papal infallibility, but he explains this comment in 3.2. On account of Rome being the capital of the empire, the faithful from all parts, representing every Church, are obliged to resort to Rome, and there to come together; so that the apostolic tradition of “the gathering together out of all the churches” will be preserved. Later, some Latin texts will give the impression of coming to hear rather than to debate. The council of Chalcedon 451 AD states Rome was given primacy only because it was the capital of the empire,

and is equal – not superior – in privileges, to Constantinople and the others.

The Roman Catholic Church must go back to a biblical standard, otherwise they cause the church to be divided.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 190

Stromata 2.19 – Whoever shall attempt to do aught with presumption, provokes God.

Peter was not the first pope. The church as a whole had the power to “bind and loose,” not Peter or the bishops of Rome. Many popes made mistakes, and some even taught errors for the sake of gain. Some popes were non-Trinitarian,

meaning they were not even truly Christian, according to the ancient church! We have given abundant proof from the ancient church fathers that there is no such thing as Papal Authority. With this in mind, let us look at what the ancient church believed about other Roman Catholic issues.



Idolatry

The second of the Ten Commandments forbids creating an image of anything in heaven, on earth, or under the earth that will be used in a religious ritual. The apostle Paul commands that we can't even sit down to lunch with anyone who claims to be a Christian but practices idolatry. The angels in the Old Testament would not allow men to bow to them; hence we should not bow to their statues, either!

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of

anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” *Exodus 20:4-5*

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.” *1 Corinthians 5:11*

The ancient church fathers forbade the use of statues of saints or angels; but in time they crept into use by the Roman church. In AD 787, the seventh general

council was called to discuss what would be called the “Iconoclastic Controversy.” Second Nicaea declared that the Roman use of statues of saints to be idolatry and must be stopped. Rome refused, and to this day still disregards the council of the church and continues in its idolatry. The ancient church taught:

Justin Martyr, AD 160

First Apology 24 – We [Christians] do not offer drink offerings and the aroma of fat to the dead, nor do we crown their statues.

Tertullian, AD 197

Shows 11 – We [Christians] know

that the names of the dead are nothing, as are their images. But we know well enough, too, when images are set up, who carry on their wicked work under their names. We know who exult in the homage rendered to the dead and who pretend to be divine. It is none other than the accursed spirits.

Shows 12 – Offerings to propitiate the dead are regarded as belonging to the class of funeral services. And these are idolatry. In fact, idolatry is a type of homage to the departed. The one as well as the other is in service to dead men. Moreover, demons have their abode in the images of the dead... therefore we

make no funeral oblations to the departed.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 2.32 – The Church does not perform anything by means of angelic invocations, or incantations, or by any other wicked curious art; but, directing her prayers to the Lord.”

Clement of Alexandria, 190

Stromata Book 7.7 – Mature Christians pray only to God, without thought for bodily position or set time. [eg. sunrise prayers or on their knees] and their prayers

are not selfish.

Lactantius, AD

Divine Institutes 2.29 – Those who make prayers to the dead will suffer for their impiety and rebellion against God, since this is an unforgivable rite and a violation of sacred law.

Clement of Alexandria in *Stromata* 3:431, and Tertullian in *A.E.* 3, mention the Gnostic sect, Carpocrates, who committed a unique kind of sin in that they used small idols of Jesus, Aristotle, Pythagoras, other people and angels, which they said were a means to contact the pure God. They would adorn the

idols with wreaths, garlands, and in other ways honor them. Today many Christians see nothing wrong with honoring statues of saints or praying to them. Tertullian states the book of Jude was written specifically against these Carpocratian Gnostics.

Some Protestant groups and cults have gone too far in saying that saluting the flag of the United States or wearing a cross around your neck amounts to idolatry. To be an idol, it must be an image or statue used in religious worship. The ancient church made clear the cross is a symbol, not an idol, and any man-made ritual not involving a god is not idolatrous.

Tertullian, AD 197

Idolatry 1.16 – Ceremonies or holidays commemorating man-made events that are not directly connected with an idol are permissible.

Nations 1.12 – The cross is not an idol.

Some Roman Catholics will give the argument, “we don’t pray to the dead. The saints are not dead.” The pagans believed their dead were evolving into angels, gods, or other creatures. Pagans could say the exact same thing, “we don’t pray to the dead.”



Eucharist and Transubstantiation

Eucharist a symbol

The Lord Jesus commanded us to observe Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, or the Eucharist. In the ritual, the wine *represents* the blood of the Passover Lamb placed on the doorposts of believers' houses for their salvation. The blood of the Passover Lamb is a symbol of the blood Jesus shed on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. The bread in the ritual *represents* the flesh of the Passover Lamb, which in turn *represents* His body which was

crucified for our healing.

Justin Martyr, AD 165 AD

Dialogue 70 – The Eucharist is bread which Christ gave us to eat in remembrance of His being made flesh for the sake of His believers, for whom also He suffered; and to the cup which He gave us to drink in remembrance of His own blood, with giving of thanks.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Fragment 37 – Wine and bread are counterparts. They invoke the Holy Spirit. This is done for a memorial [remembrance] to the Lord.

Lactantius, AD 304

Divine Institutes 4.18 – The bread signifies His body. For He Himself is the food and the life of all who believe in the flesh that He bore.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 195

Instructor 1.6 – Elsewhere the Lord, in the gospel according to John, brought this out by symbols when He said: “Eat My flesh and drink My blood,” describing by metaphor the drinkable properties of faith.

Instructor 2.2 – They use water mixed with wine for communion, and the wine is just a symbol of the blood of Jesus, but it does sanctify

both body and soul to those who take it in faith.

Roman Catholics teach the bread and wine are not a symbol of our Lord's salvation. They teach grace is imparted into the bread and wine when blessed by a priest, so that when a person participates of the Eucharist in faith, his sins are forgiven.

Spiritual Presence

Some of the early believers were fellowshiping with Ebionites, who taught the unleavened bread and wine did not symbolize the body and blood of the Lord, and Jesus was not God and did not die on the cross. Roman Catholic

scholars will sometimes use these quotes to try to convince others the ancient church really did believe in a spiritual presence in the bread and wine, but of course, these are taken out of context.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 5.2 – Ebionites state the Eucharist is not the body and blood of Christ; it is just part of the Passover Seder and the blood of Christ does nothing for atonement. Just as eating bread and wine caused our physical bodies to be nourished and grow, so participating in the Eucharist

causes personal faith to increase, thereby the body of Christ is nourished and grows. The church is the body of Jesus.

Ignatius, AD 107

Smyraeans 7 – They [Ebionites and Docetists] abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, incur death in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to treat it with respect, that they

also might rise again. It is fitting, therefore, that ye should keep aloof from such persons, and not to speak of them either in private or in public.

Imparting Grace

How do we know for sure these quotes refer to what the ritual symbolizes, and that the fathers did not believe in an actual presence in the Eucharist? They tell the stories of how that concept came from the Gnostics and the cult of Mithras and was never a part of the teaching of the apostles. Justin explains that the idea of a grace or spiritual power being placed in the bread and wine after an incantation comes from the Mithras cult,

where Mithras himself was supposed to be spiritually present in the one initiating and/or the wine and bread. So when eaten it imparts some change in the initiate.

Justin Martyr AD 165

First Apology 65 – Only the illuminated [baptized] who live godly partake of the communion.

First Apology 66 – No one is allowed to partake of the Eucharist but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins [baptized], and unto regeneration, and who is so living

as Christ has enjoined. For we do not receive these as common bread and drink [the bread must be unleavened and the drink wine]; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. [Justin is saying here that, just as our flesh is nourished, the food being transmuted to our bodies, so the

Eucharist nourishes and strengthens our faith. The misquote of this phrase alone will be the beginning of the doctrine of transubstantiation. [See Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 5.2 above] Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated.

Dialogue 41 – The Eucharist is a sacrifice like praise.

First Apology 13 – Christians do not offer sacrifices of blood or incense, but praise.

Transubstantiation

Roman Catholics also teach that when the bread and wine are blessed, they turn into the body and blood of Jesus. This is called Transubstantiation. Church father Irenaeus explains how the idea that the wine actually changes into blood was started by a Gnostic named Marcus. Marcus was credited with originating grace impartation and transubstantiation with the Eucharist. Hippolytus goes further than Irenaeus and actually gives the entire ritual that Marcus used. Irenaeus stated this was never taught in the church and is a demonic doctrine. Notice, if we add this doctrine to what the apostle Paul said were demonic doctrines in 1 Timothy 4:1-3; we would

have celibacy, not eating meat [on Fridays], and transubstantiation as major demonic doctrines in the last days!

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 1.13 – A Gnostic named Marcus started teaching when he blesses the cup of wine, the Charis, or Holy Spirit, puts a drop of her own blood into the wine. [Heretics sometimes taught the Holy Spirit was feminine.] The Holy Spirit is then spiritually present in the wine. Upon drinking this wine, they are filled with the Charis and are able to prophesy. The church never taught anything like this and all who follow such a

demonic teaching are crack-brained.

Hippolytus, AD 170-236

The Refutation of all Heresies
6.34-35 – A certain other teacher among them, Marcus, an adept in sorcery, carrying on operations partly by sleight of hand and partly by demons, deceived many from time to time. This heretic alleged that there resided in him the mightiest power from invisible and unnamable places. And very often, taking the Cup, as if offering up the Eucharistic prayer, and prolonging to a greater length than usual the word of invocation, he would cause

the appearance of a purple, and sometimes of a red mixture, so that his dupes imagined that a certain grace descended and communicated to the potion a blood-red potency.

The Refutation of all Heresies
9.11 – Some also taught baptism only works when timed with the conjunction of certain stars. [showing that heretics thought baptism was more than just a memorial.]

Other Misquotes:

Here is another misquote. Irenaeus here shows that as eating physical bread and wine would nourish our physical bodies, so eating the Eucharist will nourish our

spirits by keeping our minds focused on God. This is often misquoted by Roman Catholics who try to say Irenaeus believed in transubstantiation. Notice Irenaeus clearly says only pagans say Christians eat and drink real flesh and blood.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 4.18 – For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly; so also our bodies, when they receive the Eucharist,

are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to eternity. Now we make offering to Him, not as though He stood in need of it, but rendering thanks for His gift, and thus sanctifying what has been created. [I am sure we all agree taking communion will not save you and does not make you immortal, so that you cannot die physically. But taking communion does convey the idea that if you are in Christ you will have eternal life.]

Fragment 13 – Pagans say Christians eat human flesh and blood but this is not true.

213



Baptism

Most churches today teach the rituals of baptism and the Eucharist (the Lord's Supper) are symbolic. Baptism is simply a public declaration that one has chosen to become a Christian, identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord. These rituals help our minds stay focused on Christ. They set us apart, or sanctify us. Some churches teach these rituals are much more than that. Some falsely teach baptism and the Eucharist impart some grace or power into the participant. Some denominations will even baptize infants, even though the

infant has not made a profession of Christ.

Both Scripture and the ancient church fathers teach being baptized “for the remission of sins” means that public baptism shows the world you have been forgiven and become a Christian. Years later these phrases were twisted into the idea that the water, itself, has some form of power or grace. The ancient church fathers taught baptism is not necessary for salvation, there is no such thing as holy water, and the kind of water a person was immersed in made no difference. It is equally wrong not to baptize at all, or to baptize only in the name of Jesus instead of the Trinitarian

formula.

Here are some quotes from the early church about the subject of baptism:



Church Fathers

Justin Martyr, AD 165 AD

First Apology 61 – Baptism is “the manner in which we dedicate ourselves to God after we had been made new through Christ.” Baptism

is “for the remission of their sins that are past” and is done in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The apostles taught this rite is to show one has chosen to be born again and has repented of his sins, and is illuminated in understanding. So baptism is called “the regeneration” or “illumination.” We are instructed to pray for the remission of sins. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. They there receive the washing with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, of our savior

Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.
Dialogue 29 – Water baptism is of no need to one who has been baptized of the Holy Spirit.

Tertullian, in his later years, fell in with the heretical group called the Montinists. He then seems to begin to believe that the sacrament of baptism is more than just a memorial. He begins to call those who use Paul's point about not baptizing if it caused division, heretics: in light of all the above I believe this came from being a Montinist.

Tertullian, AD 210

On Baptism 1 – The Cainite heresy is to do away with baptism.

On Baptism 5 – The cults of Isis and Mithras each have a baptism ceremony which is supposed to impart supernatural powers. The Christian sacrament of baptism does no such thing.

On Baptism 12 – Heretics teach that the Apostles were not baptized and Paul taught baptism is not important [by misquoting 1 Corinthians 1:17], but these things are not true.

On Baptism 13 – Baptism is now a law.

On Baptism 17 – Of giving it [baptism], the bishop has the right. In the next place, the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the

bishop's authority, on account of the honor of the Church, which being preserved, peace is preserved. Beside these, even laymen have the right; for what is equally received can be equally given. But the woman of pertness, who has usurped the power to teach, will of course not have the right to baptize. But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name, claim Thecla's example as a license for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing, as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and

confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed from his office.

On the Veiling of Virgins 9 – It is not permitted to a woman to speak in the church nor teach, nor to baptize, nor be in any sacerdotal office.

Tertullian, AD

On Baptism 4 – It makes no difference whether a man is washed in a sea, pool, stream, fountain, lake, or trough. All waters attain the sacramental power of sanctification. For the Holy Spirit immediately supervenes for the heavens and rests over the waters.

Against Marcion 1.28 – [The heretic] Marcion calls baptism a “sacrament of salvation,” and will not baptize unless the person is in a state of virginity, widowhood, or celibacy.

Jesus Only Baptism

We are to baptize “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Anyone who baptized in another way, like in the name of Jesus only, is in fact denying the Trinity and is therefore, heretical.

Tertullian, AD 198

Against Praxeas 27 – we are commanded to baptize in the name

of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, not to an impersonal God. Indeed it is not once only – but three times – that we are immersed into the three Persons, at the mention of each individual name.

Cyprian, AD 250

Epistle of Cyprian 72.18 – there is no ground for anyone... to say “all who are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ have obtained the grace of baptism.” The Son alone, without the Father, cannot be of advantage to anyone... How, when God the Father is not known – nay, is even blasphemed – can they who are among the heretics and are

baptized in the name of Jesus obtain the remission of sins? Christ himself commands pagans to be baptized in the full and united Trinity. Are we to assume that someone who denies the Father is not denied? Are we to believe that he who blasphemes against him whom Christ called His Lord and God is rewarded with Christ?

Baptism of Heretics

The ancient church was clear in saying when a cult baptized a person, it was not a real baptism and therefore each person should be baptized into the true faith. We should, therefore, recognize a Christian baptism performed by any Christian

denomination that teaches the Trinity, but no other. For example, we should accept a baptism from a Baptist or Nazarene, but not from a Jehovah's Witness or Buddhist or a United Pentecostal who baptizes in the name of Jesus only.

Tertullian, AD 198

On Baptism 15 – Heretics... do not have the same God we do. Nor do they have the same Christ. Therefore, their baptism is not one with ours, either, for it is not the same.

Cyprian, AD 250

Epistle of Cyprian 70.1 – We say that those who come from the

heretics are not *re-baptized* by us, but are *baptized*. For indeed, they did not receive anything where there is nothing.

Cyprian, AD 250

Epistle of Cyprian 72.25 – Upon reading the letter of [Pope] Stephen of Rome, you will more and more observe his error... He has judged the baptism of all heretics to be just and lawful. Everywhere [in the gospels and epistles of the New Testament] heretics are called adversaries and antichrists... no one should defame the apostles as if they had approved of the baptism of heretics.

Firmilian, AD 256

Epistle of Cyprian 74.17-18 – [Stephen, bishop of Rome] says “Whoever is baptized in the name of Christ, he immediately obtains the grace of Christ.” ...We resist the Romans’ custom upon custom... We have deemed no baptism holy except that of the holy church.

Footwashing

Irenaeus compares water baptism to foot washing as a ritual that makes one clean. No denomination, to my knowledge, teaches foot washing imparts a grace or supernatural power.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 4.22 – We have been cleansed and washed in baptism from things pertaining to death, to come to the life of God. Jesus, who washed the feet of the disciples, sanctified the entire body and rendered it clean.



Mary

Mary's Grave

It is recorded in the Gospel of John that Jesus told the Apostle John to take care of His Mother, Mary. As noted earlier, John cared for Mary as if she were his own mother. After leaving the isle of Patmos, John went back to the city of Ephesus and lived there for twenty more years planting churches in the area. John died and was buried in the city of Ephesus, while Polycarp, his disciple, continued the church-planting work for another twenty years. A church was built over the tomb of the Apostle John. In

time, a mosque replaced the church. Mary, Jesus' mother, and Timothy are also buried in Ephesus.

On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII, in his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, dogmatically and infallibly defined the Assumption of Mary. The dogma of the Assumption of Mary states Mary, Jesus' mother, did not die, but ascended into heaven like Jesus. All Catholics must believe and confess this new dogma if they wish to avoid hell. Today the Roman Catholic church states if there is a Mary buried there, this would be Mary Magdalene. This is just one example of a pope not being infallible.

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” *John 19:25-27*

Mary's Virginity

Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus, fulfilling prophecy. Scripture teaches that after the birth of Jesus, she

and Joseph had other children. Ancient church father Origen noted that Mary did not remain a virgin and that the doctrine of her “perpetual virginity” was made up by a Gnostic cult who simply wanted to make her into a goddess. This false doctrine was not taught by the apostles, but is contained in the Gnostic books entitled *The Gospel of Peter* and *The Protevangelium of James*.

Origen, 230 AD

Commentary on Matthew 10.17 – Those who wish to preserve the honor of Mary in virginity to the end, say, basing it on a tradition in *The Gospel according to Peter*, as it is entitled, or *The Book of James*

[*Protevangelium of James*], that the brethren of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 195

Instructor 1.6 – The Holy spirit is the same everywhere, and one is the only virgin mother. I like to call her the church.

Mary Needed a Savior

Mary confesses in the Gospel of Luke that she is a sinner like the rest of us when she says God is her “savior.”

“And Mary said, My soul doth

magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” *Luke 1:46-48*

“Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?” *Matthew 13:55-56*



Purgatory

The Roman Catholic position states Purgatory is a place where people go after death to finish paying for their sins. This was affirmed at the Council of Trent in AD 1547. However, the ancient church taught that upon death one either went to be with the Lord or to Hades to await judgment. Christ paid for all the sins of each Christian, so there is no need for a purgatory.

Roman Catholics get the idea of purgatory from a passage in 2 Maccabees 12, describing a battle

between Jews and Syrians. After the battle, it was found that the only Jews who were killed were idolaters. A collection was taken and sent to the temple to buy a sacrifice for the dead. Even Martin Luther states it should be obvious that that passage was referring to the mosaic law recorded in Deuteronomy 21. When a dead person is found outside a city, and no one is identified as the murderer, an offering must be taken from the leaders of the city and a sacrifice made, so the Lord will not judge the city for that crime. It had nothing to do with Jewish priests getting loved ones out of Purgatory.

“We are confident, I say, and

willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” *2 Corinthians 5:8*

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 2.29 – Another Gnostic heresy is: at death some souls enter an intermediate state to be purged of the animal nature before going into the Pleroma (Heaven).

Justin Martyr, AD 165

Dialogue 5 – At death, Christians go to heaven, and non-Christians go to hell. Scripture mentions no other place.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 190

Stromata 7.13 – The Christian knows when he dies, being already cleansed from all the sins of the soul, he will go to a much better place.

Stromata 4.24 – The Gnostic heretic Basilides began teaching that after baptism, God forgives involuntary sins but you must pay for all voluntary sins in order to be purged from them. Christians believe all sin is forgiven immediately upon repentance.

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 6:24-25 – Celsus says that the Christians teach a

purgatory for purification, among other Gnostic things. In all my years, I have not heard of such a thing as a place for purification after death. Heretics may have combined Gnostic ideas with Gehenna in the Valley of Hinnom.



Celibacy

The apostle Paul stated a pastor should be the husband of only one wife. The Roman Catholic Church requires a priest to be celibate or remain non-married. The apostle Paul warned us in the last days demonic doctrines would become prevalent in the church. The two doctrines he specifically mentioned were the forbidding of eating meat and commanding pastors/priests to be celibate.

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife,” *1*

Timothy 3:2

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

1 Timothy 4:1-3

The Roman Catholic position says all clergy must be celibate. This was

affirmed at the first Lateran Council in AD 1123. The ancient church fathers did not require anyone to remain celibate, but instead taught forced celibacy is immoral. However, forced celibacy was sometimes found among the cults of that day.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 177

Stromata 3.6 – Forced celibacy is wrong.

Stromata 3.7 – Peter, Paul, Philip, and others were married.

Stromata 3.13 – Clergy must be married once, but can never remarry.

Stromata 3.16 – Bishops should be married.

Tertullian, AD 207

Against Marcion 1.29 – Nor do we prescribe celibacy as a rule, but only recommend it.

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 2:17 – The Egyptian Therapeutae [a Gnostic Christian sect; See *Ancient Paganism* for full details] had occultic practices and patterned themselves after the priests and priestesses of the Greeks. They drink no wine, eat no meat, and are celibate.



213

Miscellaneous Catholic Notes

Vicar of Christ

Roman Catholic popes are referred to as the vicar of Christ. This is another attempt to say they have more authority than other bishops. In the ancient church, the vicar of Christ referred to the Holy Spirit, not any man or office.

Tertullian, AD 200

Veiling of Virgins 1 – The vicar of our Lord is the Holy Spirit.

Tertullian wrote the Roman bishop was

leading his church and all the other churches in disagreement with Rome, into error. He then sarcastically refers to the Roman pontiff as a vicar of Christ. This shows that part of the error was derived from the fact that Rome had already begun teaching a primitive form of Papal Infallibility.

Tertullian, AD 200

Prescription Against Heretics 28 –
The Holy Spirit has no such respect for any one church [Rome] so to lead only it into truth... has the steward of God, the *vicar of Christ*, gone astray?

Babylon in the Scripture referred to

Rome.

The ancient church taught that the references to Babylon in the New Testament (1 Peter 5:3; Revelation 18) secretly referred to Rome. Peter wrote his first epistle from Babylon/Rome (1 Peter 5:3), probably comparing pagan Rome with pagan Babylon. Since Revelation 18 mentioned the fall of Babylon, and the ancient church fathers were all premillennial, they would have interpreted the Babylon of Revelation as the fall of the Antichrist's future ten-kingdom empire. See the section on the *End Times* for full details.

Tertullian, AD 197

Jews 9 – So, again, Babylon in the

writings of our own John is a figure of the city of Rome.

Against Marcion 3.15 – By similar usage, in the writings of our John, Babylon is the figure of the city of Rome. For Rome is like Babylon in being great and proud in royal power and in warring against the saints of God.

Hippolytus, AD 225

Treatise On Christ and The Antichrist 36 – Tell me, blessed John, –apostle and disciple of the Lord– what did you see and hear concerning Babylon? Arise and speak! For it [Rome] has sent you into banishment.

Victorinus, AD 280

Commentary of the Apocalypse 7.8

– ...the great overthrow of Babylon, that is, the Roman state.

Works Salvation

The current teaching of the Roman Catholic Church is that man is saved by both faith and works. Notice Clement of Rome, who was considered to be the second pope, wrote that salvation is by faith alone. Do we believe the ancient popes who were eye-witnesses of the apostles or current popes who were not eye-witnesses of the apostles and have changed doctrine they have no right to change?

“For what saith the scripture?
Abraham believed God, and it was
counted unto him for
righteousness.” *Romans 4:3*

Clement of Rome, AD 95

Corinthians 32 – We too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men.



213

Cults

As we learned in the chapter on the *Deity of Jesus Christ*, a cult is a group that claims to be Christian but rejects the doctrine of the Trinity or other major biblical doctrines. Cults often have strange but seemingly harmless doctrines that do not come from the Bible. We will examine some of these and see that they were condemned by the ancient church fathers.

**False Doctrines Taught by Various
Cults**

Jesus is not God

There is no

Trinity

The Holy Spirit is

a force, not a

person

God the Father

had a body

Jesus no longer

has a physical

body

Psychology

should be

practiced in the

church

Some Mosaic

There is no Rapture

Pray to things or

people, other than

God

Amillennialism

Abortion,

euthanasia are not

wrong

Fornication and

homosexuality are

not wrong

Eastern meditation

laws still apply
We must observe
the weekly
Sabbath
We can't eat pork
or other foods
We must do some
form of works to
be saved
There is no
coming Antichrist
The end time
church will not
apostatize
Christians can be
demon possessed

is not wrong
Reincarnation
The Church has
replaced Israel
Pastors must be
celibate
Spiritual gifts
ceased in the first
century
People of other
religions might
make it to heaven

Several modern cultic movements have made claims, such as Jesus suffered in hell, paid our penalty to Satan, or became a demon-possessed mortal in hell, so that we could be saved or become gods. These ideas have always been considered heresy by Christians.

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 6.42 – The doctrine that Jesus suffered punishment, was vanquished by, or paid ransom to the devil is ridiculous.



213

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses teach a variety of unbiblical doctrines, including not baptizing in the Trinitarian formula, but in the name of the Father, the archangel Michael, and the spirit-lead organization.

Tertullian, AD 198

Against Praxeas 23 – He commands them to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit - not to an impersonal God. Indeed it is not once only – but three times – that we are

immersed into the three Persons, at the mention of each individual name.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach Jesus is the archangel Michael, and that after the Father created Michael, Michael in turn created everything else.

Mathetes, AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 7 – Jesus is God come in the flesh, the very creator of all things, and is not an angel.

Epistle to Diognetus 11 – He testifies that he was taught directly by the apostles that Jesus is uncreated (from everlasting).

Athenagoras, AD 177

Chapter 8 – There is only one God.

Chapter 10 – Jesus was never brought into existence, but was always with the Father.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 1.22 – Everything was made by God, nothing was made by any angel.

Jehovah's Witnesses also teach Jesus did not resurrect in a physical body, nor is He coming back physically.

Ignatius, AD 70

Smyraeans 3 – Jesus had a real

physical body after the resurrection.

Smyraeans 5 – Only unbelievers say Jesus did not have a real body.

Tertullian, AD 198

Against Marcion 4.42 – Jesus resurrected in a physical body.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe souls are destroyed when they are cast into the lake of fire. Christians have always taught souls are immortal and will exist eternally in hell.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 2.34 – Souls are only created once, are immortal.

Mormonism

Unlike Christianity, the Mormon cult teaches there are many gods; God the Father has a physical body; and our souls existed centuries before we were born, because we are born from gods (emanation). They believe if they are baptized for dead relatives, it will be as if their relatives were baptized before they died.

Tertullian AD 207

Against Marcion 5.10 – Paul asks
“What will they do who are

baptized for the dead, if the dead do not raise?” Don’t suppose that some new god is the author of this practice. Rather, it was so he could firmly insist upon the resurrection of the body. Therefore, to be “baptized for the dead” means to be baptized for the body. In other words “What will they do who are baptized for the physical body, if the dead do not raise?”

Against Marcion 2.8 – Man has an immortal soul coming from God, but it is not God.

Irenaeus, 178 AD

Fragment 49 – The body and soul are created at the same time.

Clement of Alexandria AD 192-202

Stromata 3.14 – Souls do not pre-exist.

Stromata 5.12 – Jesus is the only begotten God.

Stromata 5.14 – God the Father does not have a physical body.

Origen, AD 230

Of First Principles 1.2.6 – The doctrine of emanations is false.



Dispensationalism

| Dispensations |
|----------------------|
| Edenic |
| Pre-Flood |
| Abrahamic |
| Mosaic |
| Grace |
| Tribulational |
| Millennial |

Dispensationalism is defined as the belief

that there are periods of time where God worked differently with man. Most dispensationalists see seven ages of man. The ancient church fathers supported this belief.

Edenic Dispensation

The first age began when Adam was in Eden. There was no sin and no commands for animal sacrifices or other rituals.

Pre-Flood Dispensation

After the fall of man and before Moses, murderers were punished with banishment, not death. Animal sacrifices were required. After the Flood, capital punishment was required for murderers.

Abrahamic Dispensation

During the Abrahamic dispensation, all the previous laws were still required; but circumcision was added.

Mosaic Dispensation

Much changed under Moses' dispensation. Animal sacrifices were still required, but they had to be done at the tabernacle or temple. Sabbath and holy day observances were mandatory, and many other laws were given.

Dispensation of Grace

Believers were now freed from the Laws of Moses. Animal sacrifices, Sabbath and Holy day observances,

circumcision, and food laws were no longer required.

For our purposes we need to stop here and show the ancient church fathers worshiped on Sunday, not the Sabbath, and did not keep the Mosaic or Abrahamic laws of circumcision, food laws, or animal sacrifices. First we will look at their teaching about the dispensations themselves, then the specific issues.



Church Fathers

Justin Martyr AD 165

Dialogue 51,52 – Jewish prophets ceased after John.

Irenaeus AD 177

Against Heresies 1.10 – What the church believes: one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the

ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His future manifestation from heaven.

Against Heresies 3.11 – Montanists set at nought the gift of the Spirit, which in the latter times has been, by the good pleasure of the Father, poured out upon the human race; do not admit that aspect of the evangelical dispensation presented by John's Gospel, in which the Lord promised that He would send the Paraclete [John 16]; but set aside at once both the Gospel and the prophetic Spirit.

Against Heresies 3.15 – Jesus and the Father are the only true God.

Jesus gave Moses the dispensation of the Law.

Note: He talks a lot about dispensations (of the Law, of Christ, of the church, of the day of the Lord ...)

Against Heresies 4.4 – The Law started with Moses and ended with John.

Against Heresies 4.16 – Men were never released from the Ten Commandments. We, however, do not observe the Sabbath, or circumcision.

Against Heresies 4.34 – Jesus fulfilled the Law and prophets, then did away with the Mosaic law, and gave a new covenant.

Against Heresies 5.8 – In the dispensation of Law, the clean animals represented spiritual man and the unclean animals represented the carnal man.

Against Heresies 5.17 – “He has destroyed the handwriting” of our debt, and “fastened it to the cross;”

Against Heresies 5.32 – Some of the orthodox are ignorant of God's dispensations.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 5.11 – In 1 Corinthians, the veil of Moses refers to the complete doing away with the old dispensation.

Origen AD 230

Of First Principles 1:2:1 – We see in Scripture there were several dispensations.



Circumcision

Circumcision was the sign of the covenant between the Old Testament Jews and the Lord, just as baptism is a sign of the covenant between Christians and the Lord.

The Acts 15 record of the first Jerusalem Council shows that circumcision was not binding on Christians.

“The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary

things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.” *Acts 15:24-29*

In Galatians Paul clearly says circumcision is not necessary for Christians. In Acts 15, when confronting those who stated one must be circumcised in order to be saved, he says if you allow yourself to be circumcised for religious reasons Christ profits you nothing!

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall

profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” *Galatians 5:2-4*



Church Fathers

Mathetes AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 3,4 —

Christians do not offer sacrifices, nor abstain from meats, nor observe the Sabbath or new moon festivals, nor become circumcised like the Jews do.

Epistle to Diognetus 11 – I (Mathetes) was taught directly by the apostles.

Justin Martyr AD 110-165

Dialogue 10 – Christians live like all other gentiles, not observing the festivals, Sabbaths, new moon, or the rite of circumcision.

Dialogue 11 – Christ did away with the entire Law of Moses, and circumcision.

Dialogue 19 to 23 – Circumcision,

food laws, and Sabbaths were for a teaching. Circumcision began with Abraham and the Sabbath and the rest began with Moses.

Dialogue 43 – Circumcision began with Abraham. The Sabbath, sacrifices, offerings, and feasts began with Moses.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 1.20 – In Galatians Paul teaches the Law given by God, then fulfilled and done away with in Christ.

Against Marcion 5.2 – Galatians proves the Mosaic law is fully abolished.

Against Marcion 5.11 – 1

Corinthians, the veil of Moses refers to the complete doing away with the old dispensation. Christ being Messiah brought abrogation of Moses' Law.

Jews 1.3 – Circumcision was temporary.

Jews 1.5 – Sacrifices were temporary.

Origen AD 230

Against Celsus 1:22 – The rite of circumcision began with Abraham and was discontinued by Jesus.

Against Celsus 5:47 – The circumcision practiced by the Egyptians is not the same as the circumcision of the Jews.

Against Celsus 5:48 – Christians are forbidden to practice circumcision; and are reminded [by the apostle Paul]: “If you become circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.”

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.17 – Jesus abolished circumcision, and laws against eating pork, and the Sabbath.



213

Law of Moses

The Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15 proves the Laws of Moses are not binding on Gentile believers. They were for Israel alone under the Mosaic dispensation. All of the early church fathers taught the entire Law of Moses has been done away with. Here are just a few quotes:



Church Fathers

Ignatius AD 30-107

Trallians 9 – Christians do not observe the Sabbath, but the Lord's day.

Mathetes AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 3,4 – Christians do not offer sacrifices, nor abstain from meats, nor observe the Sabbath or new moon festivals, nor become circumcised like the Jews do.

Epistle to Diognetus 5 – Christians follow the customs of their native lands in regard to marriage, food, clothing, and conduct. They marry

and have children, but they never have abortions. They obey all the laws of their country.

Justin Martyr AD 110-165

First Apology 13 – Christians do not offer sacrifices of blood or incense but by praise. God is Triune.

First Apology 67 – Christians meet together on Sunday.

Dialogue 10 – Christians live like all other Gentiles, not observing the festivals, Sabbaths, new moon, or the rite of circumcision.

Dialogue 11 – Christ did away with the entire Law of Moses, and circumcision.

Dialogue 19 to 23 – Circumcision, food laws, and Sabbaths were for a teaching. Circumcision began with Abraham and the Sabbath and the rest began with Moses.

Dialogue 43 – Circumcision began with Abraham. The Sabbath, sacrifices, offerings, and feasts began with Moses.

Irenaeus AD 178

Against Heresies 3.15 – Jesus and the Father are the only true God. Jesus gave Moses the dispensation of the Law.

Against Heresies 4.4 – The Law started with Moses and ended with John.

Against Heresies 4.34 – Jesus fulfilled the Law and prophets, then did away with the Mosaic law, and gave a new covenant.

Against Heresies 5.8 – In the dispensation of Law, the clean animals represented spiritual man and the unclean animals represented the carnal man.

Against Heresies 5.17 – “He has destroyed the handwriting” of our debt, and “fastened it to the cross;”

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 1.20 – Paul in Galatians means the Law given by God, then fulfilled and done away with in Christ.

Against Marcion 1.21 – Some disputed about eating idol sacrifices, others about the veiled dress of women, others again about marriage and divorce, and some even about the hope of the resurrection; but about God no one disputed.

Against Marcion 4.12 – Jesus annulled the Sabbath.

Against Marcion 5.2 – Galatians proves the Mosaic Law is fully abolished.

Against Marcion 5.11 – In 1 Corinthians, the veil of Moses refers to the complete doing away with the old dispensation, Christ being Messiah, He abrogated all of

Moses' Law. Heretics try to say the epistle to the Ephesians is the epistle to the Laodeceans.

Jews 1.3 – Circumcision was temporary.

Jews 1.4 – Sabbath was temporary

Jews 1.5 – Sacrifices were temporary.

Nations 1.13 – Christians worship on Sunday; this has nothing to do with paganism.

Origen AD 230

Against Celsus 1:22 – The rite of circumcision began with Abraham and was discontinued by Jesus.

Against Celsus 5:47 – The circumcision practiced by the

Egyptians is not the same as the circumcision of the Jews.

Against Celsus 5:48 – Christians are forbidden to practice circumcision; and are reminded [by the apostle Paul]: “If you become circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.”

Victorinus, AD 270

Creation of the world 1 – There was a literal seven-day creation, but Jesus abolished the Sabbath.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.17 – Jesus abolished circumcision, laws against eating pork, and the

Sabbath. [He agrees with the Epistle of Barnabas on swine's flesh].

Clement of Alexandria, AD 195

Stromata 4.22 – It is said that we should go to the sacrifices and prayers washed, clean, and bright. It is said that this external adornment and purification is practiced as a *symbol*.



Sabbath

The Jews observe the weekly Sabbath from sundown on Friday night to sundown on Saturday night. God commanded Moses to commemorate the seven days of creation by observing a weekly Sabbath. This was for the Jews alone. The ancient Church fathers taught it was not binding on Christians. Christians met on Sunday to worship the Lord.

Paul clearly teaches the seven high Sabbaths, or holy days, are no longer enforced, along with the monthly new

moon festivals and the weekly Sabbath.

“[Jesus] Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us... Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.”

Colossians 2:14,16



Church Fathers

Ignatius, AD 30-107

Trallians 9 – Christians do not

observe the Sabbath, but the Lord's day.

Mathetes, AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 3,4 – Christians do not offer sacrifices, abstain from meats, observe the Sabbath or new moon festivals, nor become circumcised like the Jews do.

Justin Martyr, AD 110-165

First Apology 67 – Christians meet together on Sunday.

Dialogue 10 - Christians live like all other Gentiles, not observing the festivals, Sabbaths, new moon, or the rite of circumcision.

Dialogue 19 to 23 – Circumcision, food laws, and Sabbaths were for a teaching. Circumcision began with Abraham and the Sabbath and the rest began with Moses.

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Tertullian, AD 190-210

Against Marcion 4.12 – Jesus annulled the Sabbath

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Jews 1.4 – Sabbath was temporary

Nations 1.13 – Christians worship

on Sunday; this has nothing to do with paganism.

Victorinus, AD 270

Creation of the world 1 – There was a literal seven days of creation; but Jesus abolished the Sabbath.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.17 – Jesus abolished circumcision, laws against eating pork, and the Sabbath. The Epistle of Barnabas teaches us clearly why these laws were given to the Jews.

Note: some groups will try to say that

meeting on the first day of the week is really the Havdalah service on Saturday night. But as we can see, the entire Sabbath from morning services to the evening “Havdalah” service has been annulled, and no longer observed. In other words, the whole Sabbath day. So the LORD's day is the first day of the week or Sunday.



End Times

The disciples of the apostles taught premillennialism, which means Jesus will return to earth in the future and set up a kingdom that will last for a literal one thousand years as prophesied in Scripture. He will reign from the city of Jerusalem. Prior to this, there will be a seven-year period during which the Antichrist will rule the earth. During these last days the Jews will return and rebuild their temple in Jerusalem.

In the years AD 200-300, a movement arose teaching these doctrines were

symbolic of historical events. We will see that after an event in church history called the *Schism of Nepos*, the whole church abandoned the teachings of the twelve apostles and adopted what is now called Amillennialism

Some ancient church fathers taught the second coming of Jesus would occur at the end of six thousand years of human history. Here is what the early church fathers said about the end times:

1. There will be a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ.
2. There will be a literal Antichrist and a tribulation period lasting seven years.

3. The Jews will return to their land and rebuild their temple in Jerusalem.

First let's look at what the ancient church fathers said about the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth.



Church Fathers

Papias AD 70-155

Fragment 6 – After the resurrection of the dead, Jesus will personally reign for one thousand years. I was taught this by the apostle John, himself.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 3.25 – The millennial reign, resurrection, and the New Jerusalem are literal.

Irenaeus AD 178

Against Heresies 5.35 – The Resurrection of the Just takes place after the destruction of the Antichrist and all nations under his rule. Many believers will make it through the Tribulation and replenish the earth. In the Resurrection we will have fellowship and communion with the holy angels, and union with spiritual beings. The new heavens

and earth will be created, and then the new Jerusalem will descend. These are all literal things, and Christians who allegorize them are immature.

Notice Ireanaeus' last quote. Christians who are Amillennialists or Postmillennialists may be true Christians; but they are very immature in their faith. If they can't understand something so simple as the return of Jesus, what else have they mixed up in their faith?

The Six Thousand Years

The idea that Jesus will return to set up His millennial kingdom in the Jewish

year 6,000 is taught by several ancient church fathers. The first coming of Jesus Christ was about 4,000 years after Creation. These ancient church fathers taught the Second Coming would be about AD 2000. The most descriptive is in the Epistle of Barnabas which devotes an entire chapter on this issue. Remember, this does not mean they were correct; but if they believed and taught this, it proves the ancient Christians were Premillennial. Here are a few quotes on the issue. With the calendars being confused and inaccurate, we can't say for certain when the year 6,000 will occur. An approximate range would be between the years AD 2030 and 2067, although it could occur even earlier. See

Ancient Post-Flood History for more information on the historical timeline.

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 15:7-9 – Therefore, children, in six days, or in six thousand years, all the prophecies will be fulfilled. Then it says, He rested on the seventh day. This signifies at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus, He will destroy the Antichrist, judge the ungodly, and change the sun, moon, and stars. Then He will truly rest during the Millennial reign, which is the seventh day.

Irenaeus, AD 180

Against Heresies 5.28 – The day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed. It is evident, therefore, they will come to an end in the six thousandth year.

Hippolytus, AD 205

Fragment 2; Commentary on Daniel 2.4 – The Sabbath is a type of the future kingdom... For “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” Since, then, in six days the Lord created all things, it follows that in six thousand years all will be fulfilled.

Commodianus, AD 240

Against the Gods of the Heathens
35 – We will be immortal when the six thousand years are completed.

Against the Gods of the Heathens
80 – Resurrection of the body will be when six thousand years are completed, and after the one thousand years [millennial reign], the world will come to an end.

Victorinus, AD 240

Commentary on Revelation 20.1-3
– Satan will be bound until the thousand years are finished. That is, after the sixth day.

Methodius, AD 290

Ten Virgins 9.1 – In the seventh

millennium we will be immortal and truly celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

Lactantius, AD 304

Divine Institutes 7.14 – The sixth thousandth year is not yet complete. When this number is complete, the consummation must take place.

The Time of the End Begins

The “time of the end” begins when the Roman dispersion ends with the return of the Jews to their land. The second return of the Jews to the land of Israel in AD 1948 sparked the time period when all believers could begin to completely understand the prophecies.

Irenaeus AD 178

Against Heresies 4.26 – Daniel the prophet says "Shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of consummation, until many learn, and knowledge be completed. For at that time, when the dispersion shall be accomplished, they shall know all these things."



Premillennialism

The basic doctrine of Premillennialism (the belief that there will be a future one-thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth) comes from the prophecies of Revelation 20 and Daniel 9.

“They came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second

death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.” *Revelation 20:4b-6 NLT*

The Revelation text says at a certain point in history, Jesus Christ will come back to earth. At that time all those who are believers will resurrect and reign with Him for one thousand years.

“A period of seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city to put down rebellion, to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to

anoint the Most Holy Place. Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, despite the perilous times. After this period of sixty-two sets of seven, the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the temple. The end will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end. He

will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven, but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. Then as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration, until the end that has been decreed is poured out on this defiler.”

Daniel 9:24-27 NLT

This text in Daniel says two things: first, from the issuing of the command to restore Jerusalem to when the Messiah would die is a very specific time period; and second, after that time there would be a period of seven years.

Let's look closely at the last set of seven. The Messiah or "the Anointed One" is cut off. After His death, a prince comes and destroys the city and the temple. In AD 70, Titus the Roman general, besieged Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. This took place about forty years after the death of Jesus Christ. After the destruction of the temple, "he" stops the daily sacrifices. The daily sacrifices can only begin again if the temple in Jerusalem is rebuilt. The temple has never been rebuilt, so this part of the prophecy is yet future. In addition, Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2 that the Antichrist will "exalt himself and defy every god there is and tear down every object of adoration and

worship. He will position himself in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God.” Again there must be a rebuilt temple for him to sit in it; therefore, this is yet future.

Amillennialism

The doctrine called Amillennialism began to be taught in the early fourth century by those who wanted to twist the Scriptures so they could forget the judgments that were coming. Amillennialism teaches that the millennium, or one-thousand-year reign of Christ, is symbolic of the church age itself. They teach the one thousand years began with Christ and continues today. The change from Pre-Millennialism to

Amillennialism took place in what was called the Schism of Nepos. Let's look at what the early church fathers taught; then we can see how it was twisted.

Church Fathers On the End Times

In the first three centuries, the church fathers taught the following were still future events and would take place in this order:

1. The Roman Empire would fall apart. (This took place in AD 476.)
2. Out of what was the Roman Empire, ten nations would spring up. These are the ten toes and ten horns of Daniel's prophecy.
3. Then a literal man, possessed by a

demon, called the Antichrist, will ascend to power.

4. The Antichrist's name, if spelled out in Greek, will add up to the number 666.
5. He will sign a peace treaty between the Jews in Israel and the local non-believers there. This treaty will be for a period of seven years
6. This seven years' treaty is the last seven years of the "sets of sevens" prophecy in Daniel 9.
7. At the end of the seven years, Jesus will return to earth, destroy the Antichrist, and establish a literal reign of peace that will last for one thousand years.
8. The ancient church fathers state

they were taught these things by the apostles, and were also told that anyone who rises up in the church and begins to say any of these things are symbolic are immature Christians who can't rightly divide the word of God, and should not be heard. (Today this includes most of, but not all of, the Reformed, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches)

Here are some of the quotes and references from the early church fathers on the End Times:

Justin Martyr AD 110-165

Dialogue 32 – The Man of Sin, spoken of by Daniel, will rule two [three] times and a half, before the Second Advent.

Dialogue 81 – There will be a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ.

Dialogue 110 – The man of apostasy, who speaks strange things against the Most High, shall venture to do unlawful deeds on the earth against the believers.

Irenaeus AD 178

Against Heresies 5.25 – In 2 Thessalonians, the “falling away”

is an apostasy and there will be a literal rebuilt temple. In Matthew 24, the “abomination spoken by Daniel” is the Antichrist sitting in the temple as if he were Christ. The abomination will start in the middle of Daniel's 70th week and last for a literal three years and six months. The little horn [11th] is the Antichrist.

Against Heresies 5.26 – The Roman Empire will first be divided and then be dissolved. Ten kings will arise from what used to be the Roman empire. The Antichrist slays three of the kings and is then the eighth king among them. The kings will destroy Babylon, then give the

Babylonian kingdom to the Beast and put the church to flight. After that, the kings will be destroyed by the coming of the Lord. Daniel's horns are the same as the ten toes. The clay and iron mixture of the ten toes represents the fact that some kings will be active and strong, while others will be weak and ineffective. It also means the kings will not agree with each other.

Against Heresies 5.30 – The name of the Antichrist equals 666 if spelled out in Greek. Do not even try to find out the number of the name until the ten kings arise. The Antichrist shall come from the tribe of Dan. That is why the tribe of Dan

is not mentioned in the Apocalypse. The fourth kingdom seen by Daniel is Rome. Titan is one Greek word that totals 666. [Each letter in Greek also represents a number, so every Greek word also totals a number.] The rebuilt temple will be in Jerusalem.

Against Heresies 5.35 – The Resurrection of the Just takes place after the destruction of the Antichrist and all nations under his rule. Many believers will make it through the Tribulation and replenish the earth. In the Resurrection we will have fellowship and communion with the holy angels, and union with

spiritual beings. The new heavens and earth are first created and then the new Jerusalem descends. *These are all literal things, and Christians who allegorize them are immature Christians.*

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 3.5 – There will be a literal one-thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ.

Against Marcion 3.25 – Millennial reign, resurrection, and the New Jerusalem are literal.

Against Marcion 5.16 – The Antichrist will be a real man and sit in a real temple.

Treatise of the Soul 1.50 – Enoch

and Elias will come back to die. They are the two witnesses of Revelation.

Origen AD 230

Against Celsus 2:49 – Quotes Paul, saying the Antichrist is a literal person who works false miracles.

Against Celsus 6:45 – There is a literal future Antichrist coming.

Against Celsus 6:46 – The prophecies in 1 Thessalonians and Daniel are real prophecies about the end of the world. There will be a literal rebuilt temple.

Commodianus AD 240

Against the Gods of the Heathens
35 – Resurrection is at the end of the six thousand years [since Creation].

Against the Gods of the Heathens
41 – Isaiah said: This is the man [the Antichrist] who moves the world against so many kings, and under whom the land shall become desert. Hear ye how the prophet foretold... the whole earth on all sides, for seven years shall tremble.

Against the Gods of the Heathens
44 – Those who were not martyred under the Antichrist will marry and have children during the one

thousand years. There will be no rains, snow, or cold during the one thousand years.

Against the Gods of the Heathens
80 – Resurrection of the body will be when six thousand years are completed, and after another one thousand years the world has come to an end.

Lactantius AD 285

Divine Institutes 7:14 – There will be a total of six thousand years until the millennium.

Divine Institutes 7:25 – The end of days is after the fall of Rome at the end of six thousand years. Even your Sibyls teach this.

Epitome of Divine Institutes 72 –
The righteous will be raised unto
eternal life... But when the thousand
years shall be fulfilled... the
wicked will be raised for judgment.

Hippolytus, AD 220

Fragment 8 – And what am I to say
with respect to men, when the very
elements themselves will disown
their order? There will be
earthquakes in every city, and
plagues in every country; and
monstrous thunderings and frightful
lightnings will burn up both houses
and fields. Storms of winds will
disturb both sea and land
excessively; and there will be

unfruitfulness on the earth, and a roaring in the sea, and an intolerable agitation on account of souls and the destruction of men. There will be signs in the sun, and signs in the moon, deflections in the stars, distresses of nations, intemperateness in the atmosphere, discharges of hail upon the face of the earth, winters of excessive severity, different frosts, inexorable scorching winds, unexpected thunderings, unlooked-for conflagrations; and in general, lamentation and mourning in the whole earth, without consolation. For, “because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax

cold.” By reason of the agitation and confusion of all these, the Lord of the universe cries in the Gospel, saying, “Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not yet by and by.” Let us observe the word of the Savior, how He always admonished us with a view to our security: “Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.”

It should be noted that Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian started teaching that the final week of Daniels' seventy weeks prophecy ended with the destruction of the temple in AD 70. Tertullian fell into the Montanist heresy about this time. You will notice other problems with their explanations. In *Jews* 8, Tertullian taught Jesus was born at the end of the sixty-two weeks. Clement of Alexandria stated, in *Stromata* 1.21, that during the sixty-two weeks of years, all of Judah was quiet and without wars. Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and the others continued to teach the premillennial view of the Second Coming, the seven-year Tribulation, and

the Rapture.



213

Schism of Nepos

If Premillennialism was so clearly taught, complete with eyewitness testimony and warnings that wolves would arise in the church and change these teachings, then how did the change take place?

Since the one thousand years is mentioned only in the book of Revelation, the focus is on how Revelation should properly be interpreted. Most of the older denominations do not believe it should be interpreted as literal, or, at least,

never talk about it. The Eastern Orthodox Church, for instance, teaches that the book of Revelation was added to the canon of Scripture only on the condition that it would never be read in a public service. This supposedly happened just prior to the Council of Constantinople in 381. This is the same council that supposedly condemned Pre-Millennialism. The problem with this is that the “Tome and Anathemas” no longer exists. So no one really knows what took place during this Council of Constantinople.

About two hundred years earlier, in AD 170, a document was written detailing what should be included in the New

Testament Canon and why. This document is called the Muratorian Canon Fragment, because only a portion of it still exists. It clearly states “We receive the Apocalypses of John and Peter only. Some of us do not wish the Apocalypse of Peter to be read in church.” We can see from very early times the book of Revelation was accepted and read in church. Either the Orthodox legend is a complete myth or it is mixed up with the statement that some did not like the spurious “Apocalypse of Peter” to be read in church. In either case, the book of the Revelation, written by John, has always been accepted and taken very literally.

Eusebius wrote his *Ecclesiastical History*” in AD 325. In *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39 he records Papias’ testimony that the apostle John taught him that Jesus would literally come back in the flesh and reign for one thousand years.

The apostle John had many enemies. But his arch-rival was the Gnostic, Cerinthus. In Eusebius’s *Ecclesiastical History* 7.24-25 we learn that in the apostle John’s time, when everyone still believed in the literal interpretation of the Book of Revelation, Cerinthus added the teaching that the Millennium would be for the gratifying of the sensual appetites, like food, drink, and sex. (One

can see where the Muslims get the idea that martyrs go to a paradise with all the food and wine they want and their seventy-two virgins!)

Most of the Christians simply ignored the ravings of Cerinthus the Gnostic; but these perverse teachings led some early Christians to reject the book of Revelation; or to accept it, but view the thousand years as symbolic. When the allegorical interpretation started really gaining ground about AD 290, an Egyptian bishop named Nepos wrote a book entitled *Refutation of the Allegorists*. This book no longer exists, but Eusebius states it had many of the quotes of the fathers we have given

above, plus a lot of history about the Gnostics. The movement for Amillennialism used his “*Refutation*” to convince many he was secretly trying to revive the heretical teaching of Cerinthus. This caused even more Christians to switch to the Amillennial view, and most of the remaining Christians to avoid the issue all together.

By the fourth century, Amillennialism was the standard and the legend that the book of Revelation was never originally designed to be read or studied by the average Christian, was firmly in place.

Nepos and the Millennium are also mentioned by Dionysius in his *Promises*

1.1. Victorinus' *Commentary on Revelation*, in chapter 22, also mentions Cerinthus.

It is an interesting to note that Eusebius, in AD 325, takes the Amillennial position. He may have had to “officially” accept the party line in order to write his church history, but buried deep within his history is the complete story of how it happened.



213

Return of the Jews

The prophecies of Micah describe the destruction of Jerusalem and expulsion of the Jews. Daniel 11 predicts the Romans would drive the Jews from their land and that the Jews would later return.

“For the ships of Chittim [Rome] shall come... And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame [temple burned in AD 70], by captivity [Roman expulsion], and by spoil,

many days [AD 132-1948].”
Daniel 11:30,33

“Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us [Romans besieging the temple, AD 70]... Therefore will he [God] give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel [second return of Israel, AD 1948].”

Micah 5:1,3

Church father Ireanaus wrote his works one hundred and seven years after the destruction of the temple, which was

forty-five years after the Romans expelled the Jews and dissolved the ancient nation of Israel in AD 132. So he knew the temple had to be rebuilt and that Christians would not do it. In AD 177, Irenaeus explained how the biblical prophecies taught Rome will first be divided, then dissolved, and then the ten kingdoms will arise. Rome was not divided until AD 395, and it did not fall until AD 476. So Irenaeus' understanding of prophecy was excellent. He went on to predict that only after the ten kingdoms arise will the Antichrist desecrate a newly built temple. Although he does not directly say the Jews will return, he does say they will rebuild the temple. He teaches

someone will, and it will not be the Christians! Since Irenaeus was familiar with the *Ancient Epistle of Barnabas*, it is easy for us to understand he realized the Jews would return and rebuild their temple.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 5.26 – The Roman Empire will first be divided and then be dissolved. Ten kings will arise from what used to be the Roman Empire. The Antichrist slays three of the kings and he is then the eighth king among them. The kings will destroy Babylon, then give the Babylonian kingdom to the Beast and put the believers to

flight. After that, they will be destroyed by the coming of the Lord. Daniel's horns are the same as the ten toes. The toes being part iron and part clay mean some kings will be active and strong while others, weak and inactive. And the kings will not agree with each other.

The *Ancient Epistle of Barnabas* clearly teaches that even though the Jews were enslaved by Romans and the temple was gone, the Jews would rebuilt their temple once again. For this to be true, the Jews had to return from the Roman expulsion and recreate their nation in order to have the right and ability to

rebuild it.

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 16:5-7 – You can perceive that their hope is vain. Furthermore the Lord said, “Behold, they who destroy this temple, even they will again build it up once more.” This prophecy was fulfilled because the Jews went to war against their enemy. But even though they are now no more than servants to Rome, they will return and rebuild the temple. It was revealed that the city of Jerusalem, the temple, and the people of Israel were to be given up.

Here are what other ancient church father quotes about the temple.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 5.30 – The rebuilt temple will be in Jerusalem.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 5.16 - The Antichrist will be a real man and sit in a real temple.

Origen AD 230

Against Celsus 6:46 - The prophecies in 1 Thessalonians and Daniel are real prophecies about the end of the world. There will be

a literal rebuilt temple.

The Jews did indeed return to their land as prophesied, in AD 1948. During the first sixty years after their nation was established, more than fifty-three prophecies were fulfilled. Their temple will be rebuilt in the near future. See *Ancient Prophecies Revealed* for full details including maps and charts.



Apostasy of the Church

In the book *Ancient Prophecies Revealed*, we list over one hundred points identifying what the apostasy is supposed to look like right before the Second Coming. These are taken from Scripture and the writings of the ancient church fathers. Here are a few general quotes just showing the ancient fathers absolutely taught there would be an apostasy of the church right before the Second Coming.

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For

men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” *2 Timothy 3:1-5*

Excerpt from the Ascension of Isaiah

“When the Messiah's coming is at hand, His disciples will forsake the teaching of the twelve apostles and their faith, their love and their

purity, and there will arise much contention about His coming and His appearing. And in those days there will be many who will love office though they are devoid of wisdom, and many elders will be lawless and violent shepherds to their sheep and will become ravagers of the sheep, since they have no holy shepherds. And many will exchange the glory of the garment of the saints for the garment of the covetous, and respect for persons will be common in those days, and such as love the honor of this world. And there will be much slandering and boasting at the approach of the Lord

and the Holy Spirit will depart from many. And in those days there will not be many prophets nor such as speak reliable words, except a few here and there, on account of the spirit of error, of fornication, of boasting and of covetousness which shall be in those who yet will be called His servants and who receive Him. Great discord will arise among them, between shepherds and elders. For great jealousy will prevail in the last days, for each will say what seems pleasing in his own eyes. And they will set aside the prophecies of the prophets, which were before me and also pay no attention to these

my visions, in order to speak forth from the torrent of their heart...”

Hippolytus, AD 210

On the End of the World 7 – The temples of God will be like houses [house churches], and there will be overturnings of the churches everywhere. The Scriptures will be despised, and everywhere they will sing the songs of the adversary. Fornications, and adulteries, and perjuries will fill the land; sorceries, and incantations, and divinations will follow after these with all force and zeal. And, on the whole, from among those who profess to be Christians, will rise

up then false prophets, false apostles, impostors, mischief-makers, evil-doers, liars against each other, adulterers, fornicators, robbers, grasping, perjured, mendacious, hating each other. The shepherds will be like wolves; the priests will embrace falsehood; the monks will lust after the things of the world.

Fragment 8 – And what am I to say with respect to men, when the very elements themselves will disown their order? There will be earthquakes in every city, and plagues in every country; and monstrous thunderings and frightful lightnings will burn up both houses

and fields. Storms of winds will disturb both sea and land excessively; and there will be unfruitfulness on the earth, and a roaring in the sea, and an intolerable agitation on account of souls and the destruction of men. There will be signs in the sun, and signs in the moon, deflections in the stars, distresses of nations, intemperateness in the atmosphere, discharges of hail upon the face of the earth, winters of excessive severity, different frosts, inexorable scorching winds, unexpected thunderings, unlooked-for conflagrations; and in general, lamentation and mourning in the

whole earth, without consolation. For, “because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” By reason of the agitation and confusion of all these, the Lord of the universe cries in the Gospel, saying, “Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not yet by and by.” Let us observe the word of the Savior, how He always admonished us with a view to our security: “Take

heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.”



The Rapture

Most Christian denominations teach the doctrine of the Rapture. Some denominations teach the Rapture will occur before the seven-year tribulation (Pretribulationists). Some teach it will occur in the middle of the seven-year tribulation (Midtribulationists). Still others teach it will occur at the end of the seven-year tribulation or at the Second Coming (Posttribulationists).

Since there will be converts during the great Tribulation, the church fathers mention the Antichrist persecuting

believers. This says nothing about the Rapture. As to the timing of the Rapture, it should be noted that there are no ancient church fathers that directly teach a Midtribulation Rapture or a Posttribulation Rapture.

The ancient church fathers speak often about the Rapture and constantly remind believers to look for it. Unlike most of the other subjects we have covered, there are but a handful of quotes pointing to the timing of the event.

Irenaeus, AD 170

Against Heresies 5.29 – When in the end that church will suddenly be caught up from this, it is said,

“There will be tribulation such as not been since the beginning, nor will be.”

Tertullian, AD 207

Against Marcion 5.16 – He [Paul] says those who remain unto the coming of Christ, along with the dead in Christ, will rise first, being “caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” ...By the mouth of Isaiah, it was said long ago “who are these who fly like clouds unto me, as doves with their young ones?”

One quote from the author of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, two quotes by

Cyprian, and one quote by Ephraim the Syrian reveal that at least some of the ancient church fathers were Pretribulationists.

Shepherd of Hermas

The Shepherd of Hermas was written about AD 150. It describes a dream and gives the interpretation of it. The church (bride clothed in white) escapes the Great Tribulation because of the promise of the Lord. This is not to be considered Scripture, but it does show that many second century Christians believed in a Pretribulational Rapture.

Shepherd of Hermas, AD 150

Shepherd of Hermas 2.2-6 – Go

therefore and declare to the Elect of the Lord His mighty deeds and say to them that this beast is a type of the Great Tribulation which is to come. If ye therefore prepare yourselves and with your whole heart turn to the Lord in repentance, then shall ye be able to escape it, if your heart is pure and blameless... the golden color stands for you who have escaped from this world... Now ye know the symbol of the Great Tribulation to come. But if ye are willing, it shall be nothing.

Cyprian

Cyprian was bishop of Carthage about AD 250. Notice he did not teach we must endure the time of the Antichrist,

but we will be “delivered” from it. He tells his readers that the coming resurrection was the hope of the Christian, and points out that the Rapture should motivate us as we see the last days approaching.

Cyprian, AD 250

Treatises of Cyprian 21-26 – We who see that terrible things have begun, and know that still more terrible things are imminent, may regard it as the greatest advantage to depart from it as quickly as possible. Do you not give God thanks, do you not congratulate yourself, that by an early departure you are taken away, and delivered

from the shipwrecks and disasters that are imminent? Let us greet the day which assigns each of us to his own home, which snatches us hence, and sets us free from the snares of the world, and restores us to paradise and the kingdom.

Epistle 55 – The Antichrist is coming, but above him comes Christ also. The enemy goes about and rages, but immediately the Lord follows to avenge our suffering and our wounds. The adversary is enraged and threatens, but there is One who can deliver us from his hands.

Ephraim the Syrian

This next quote is from a work entitled Pseudo-Ephraim. It has the title pseudo, not because anyone doubted the sermon, but because when quoted later, two historians said it was Ephraim the Syrian who wrote it, and one historian said it was Isadore of Seville. Whether this was written by Isadore or Ephraim, the sermon was always accepted as genuine. It clearly teaches a Rapture before the Tribulation occurs.

Ephraim the Syrian, AD 373

On The Last Times 2 – ...because all saints and the elect of the LORD are gathered together before the Tribulation which is about to come and be taken to the LORD...

213



False Works

There are numerous works that were forged under the names of the apostles. In addition to stating what books have always made up the New Testament, the ancient church fathers gave lists the false documents, and in many cases explained why the works are obviously fake. They frequently not only sound strange, and contradict the Bible, but often they contradict themselves!

Until recently all we had to go on was the testimony of the ancient church fathers as to what Gnosticism really

was. In 1945, in a place called Nag Hammadi, Egypt, a whole library of Gnostic literature was found. Once fully translated in the 1970's, these fifty documents were found to contain many of the false teachings described by the church fathers. This proves that Gnostic literature was indeed as wicked as the church fathers had said.

The ancient church fathers taught that any Spirit-filled Christian could begin to read a Gnostic work and immediately know it was fake. If it were from a true prophecy, it would match the symbolism and feel of the Scriptures and its truth would be obvious to the Christian. Satan's counterfeit prophecies and

riddles do not match with Scripture and are so cryptic a Christian with the gift of discernment would see they do not really have a true meaning at all.

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 7:9 – The spirits speaking through the pagan prophets claim to be God, but their speech is "strange, fanatical, and quite unintelligible words, of which no rational person can find the meaning: for so dark are they, as to have no meaning at all; but they give occasion to every fool or impostor to apply them to suit his own purposes."

Against Celsus 7:10 – True

prophets speak the plain truth and sometimes in parables and enigmas, but spiritual Christians can always figure out the riddles. Satan will counterfeit with riddles that have no real meaning.

We will start by looking at the list of the Gnostic books found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945 and a partial list of false works mentioned by the fathers. If the ancient church fathers wrote why the works are Satanic, their explanations will be given after the lists.

We will then do in-depth studies of the more famous false works including the Gospels of Thomas, Judas, and

Barnabas.

Alphabetical List of Gnostic Works Found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt:

1. Acts of
Peter and
the Twelve
Apostles

17. Exegesis on
the Soul
18. Gospel

35. Pla
Republic
588A-58
36. Pra
of the
Apostle
37. Pra

| | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 2. | Allogenes | of the | of |
| 3. | Apocalypse of Adam | Egyptians* | Thanksg |
| 4. | (First) Apocalypse of James | 19. Gospel of Philip | 38. Sec |
| 5. | (Second) Apocalypse of James | 20. Gospel of Thomas | Treatise the Great |
| 6. | Apocalypse of Paul | 21. Gospel of Truth | Seth |
| 7. | Apocalypse of Peter | 22. Hypostasis of the Archons | 39. Sentenc |
| 8. | Apocryphon of James | 23. Hypsiphron | Sextus |
| 9. | Apocryphon of John | 24. Interpretation of Knowledge | 40. Soj of Jesus Christ |
| 10. | Asclepius | 25. Letter of Peter to Philip | 41. Teachin |
| | | 26. Marsanes | Silvanus |
| | | | 42. Testimo |
| | | | Truth |
| | | | 43. Thought |
| | | | Norea |
| | | | 44. Th |
| | | | Steles o |

- 21-29
11. Authoritative Teaching
12. Book of Thomas the Contender
13. Concept of Our Great Power
14. Dialogue of the Savior
15. Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth
16. Eugnostos the Blessed

27. Melchizedek
28. On the Anointing
29. On the Baptism A
30. On the Baptism B
31. On the Eucharist A
32. On the Eucharist B
33. On the Origin of the World
34. Paraphrase of Shem**

- Seth
45. Thunder Perfect Mind
46. Treatise the Resurre
47. Trimorp Protenn
48. Tripartit Tractate
49. A Valentin Expositi
50. Zostrian

Gnostic Works Referenced by the Ancient Church Fathers.

| Gospels | Acts and Epistles | Apocalypses |
|---|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Infancy Gospel (Arabic) 2. Infancy Gospel | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts of Abodias 2. Acts of Andrew 3. Acts of Andrew (fragment) 4. Acts of Andrew and Matthais 5. Acts of Barnabas | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apocalyp of the Virgin 2. Apocalyp of Paul 3. Apocalyp of Ezra |

- (Armenian)
3. Assumption of the Virgin
 4. Bartholomew's Resurrection of Christ
 5. Gospel of Basilides
 6. Gospel of Ebionites
 7. Protevanglium of James
 8. History of Joseph the Carpenter
 9. Gospel of Marcion
 10. Gospel of Nicodemus
 11. Birth of Mary
 12. Gospel of

6. Acts of James, Ascents
7. Acts of James the Great
8. Acts of John
9. Acts of John, by Prochorus
10. Matthew, Martyrdom of
11. Acts of Paul
12. Peter, Preaching of**
13. Peter, Passion of
14. Acts

- (Greek)
4. Apocalyp of Adam
 5. Apocalyp of Abraha
 6. Apocalyp of Daniel
 7. Elchasai, Book of
 8. Naassene Psalm
 9. Life of Adam and Eve
 10. 2nd and 3rd Enoch
 11. 3rd and 4th Baruch
 12. Testament of Adam
 13. Testament of Abraha
 14. Testament

- Barnabas
(Arabic)
13. Gospel of
Matthias
14. Gospel of
Pseudo-
Matthew
15. Gospel of
Thomas
(Infancy)**
16. Gospel of
Bartholomew
17. Gospel of the
Hebrews*

Uncategorized:

- 2nd & 3rd Baruch
1st & 2nd book of
Adam and Eve

- of Peter
15. Acts
of Peter
(Slavonic)
16. Acts
of Peter
and
Andrew
17. Acts
of Peter
and Paul
18. Peter
and Paul,
Passion of
19. Acts
of Philip
20. Acts
of Pilate
21. Acts
of
Thaddeus
22. Acts
of Thomas

- of Isaac
15. Testament
of Jacob
16. Testament
of Solomo
17. Ladder of
Jacob
18. History of
the
Rechabite
19. History of
Joseph
20. Ezekiel
Apocryph
21. Threefold
Fruits
22. Good
Tidings of
Seth
23. 2nd & 3rd
Enoch**
24. Secrets o
Enoch**

| | |
|--|---|
| | 23. Paul and Seneca |
| | 24. Paul and Thecla |
| | 25. Apocalyptic Epistle of Titus |

*Quoted by both church fathers and heretics alike. **
Mentioned by the fathers as official Gnostic literature and
very wicked.

Sometimes an ancient church father
quoted something out of another
“Gospel.” These Gospels were
translations or harmonies of one or all of
the four. Gnostics would sometimes use
the same names to deceive
unsuspecting people into reading their
forgeries. Remember the ancient church
clearly taught there are only four
Gospels. For example when the *Gospel*

of the Hebrews is quoted, it is the Hebrew version of the *Gospel of Matthew*, not the Gnostic work by the same name. In another case, a father quoted the lineage of John the Baptist, which is not in the four real Gospels but included in the Gnostic *Gospel of the Ebonites*. The fake work simply included what was considered to be a real genealogy into its fake Gospel in order to give it more credit. The ancient church father was quoting the genealogy, not the Gnostic work.

Origen (commentaries)

Commentary on John 2.6 – Quotes the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, but admits some do not give it credence

Commentary on John 2.25 – The “prayer of Joseph” is included in the fictitious *Gospel of the Hebrews*.

Of First Principles 1.8 – The *Preaching of Peter...* was not included among the ecclesiastical books. For we can show that it was not composed by Peter or by any other person inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Irenaeus

Against Heresies 1.20 – The infancy *Gospel of Thomas* was the work of Gnostics and is a very wicked story.

Against Heresies 4:16 – Mentions

the *Gospel of the Egyptians*.

Clement of Alexandria

Stromata 3.10 – The *Gospel of the Hebrews*...and the *Gospel of the Egyptians* are disputed by most.

Hippolytus

Refutation of all Heresies 5.1 – The Gnostic Naasseni use the *Gospel According to Thomas*.

Refutation of all Heresies 5.17 – The *Paraphrase of Seth* is the official doctrine of the Gnostic Sethites.

Refutation of all Heresies 5.19 – The Gnostic Justinus gets his teachings from *Third and Fourth*

Beruch.

Refutation of all Heresies 10.16 – Apelles devoted his attention to a book written by a certain Philumene, whom he considers a prophetess, called *Revelations*.

The Muratorian Canon Fragment, AD 170

There are also circulating one [Epistle] to the Laodiceans and one to the Alexandrians, forged in the name of Paul against the heresy of Marcion.

We receive the Apocalypses of John and Peter only. Some of us do not wish the Apocalypse of Peter to be read in church.

But Hermas wrote *the Shepherd* in the city of Rome most recently in our times, when his brother, bishop Pious, was occupying the chair in the church at Rome. And so indeed it ought to be read; but that it be made public to the people in the church and placed among the prophets whose number is complete, or among the apostles, is not possible to the end of time.

We reject everything written by Arsenus, Valentinus, or Miltiadees. We also reject those who wrote the *New Book of Psalms*, Marcion, Basilides, the founder of the Asian Cataphrigians and...

Tertullian, AD 190

On Baptism 17 – But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name [*Acts of Paul and Thecla*], claim Thecla's example as a license for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing, as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed from his office.

Apparel of Women 1.3 – The book of Enoch is genuine Scripture. It is not received by some, because it is

not admitted into the Jewish canon, either. The Jews rejected it, like other portions of Scripture, because it testifies of Christ. The fact that Jude quotes it is proof enough [this may not be the *First Enoch* we know of today, but the one quoted by Jude].

Origen AD 225

Of First Principles; preface 8 – If anyone should quote to us out of the little treatise entitled the *Teaching of Peter* [also called the *Preaching of Peter*]... I have to reply, in the first place, that this work is not included among the ecclesiastical books. For we can show it was not

composed either by Peter nor any other person inspired by the Spirit of God.

Commentary on John 2.6 – Many dispute the *Gospel of the Hebrews*.

Commentary on John 2.25 – Mentioned the “prayer of Joseph” is indeed included in the Gospel of the Hebrews, but many doubt its authenticity.

Of First Principles 1:2:3 – The language which is found in the *Acts of Paul*, where it is said that “here is the Word a living being,” [denying Jesus’ divinity]... take care that you be not guilty of impiety against the unbegotten Father Himself.

Of First Principles 1:3:3 – The *Shepherd of Hermas* is a treatise, not inspired Scripture.

Against Celsus 1:63 – Celsus misquotes the *Epistle of Barnabas* in saying the apostles were notoriously wicked men.

Against Celsus 5:48 – *Second Enoch* and the *Secrets of Enoch* are not considered sacred by the church, [in another places he seems to quote *First Enoch* as somewhat authoritative].



Gospel of Barnabas

The Gospel of Barnabas is a fake work. The English version was translated in the early 1900's from the Italian version. The Italian translation could be as old as AD 1400. No other copies exist, and there are no references to it from anyone before the 1500's AD.

This should not be confused with the *Epistle of Barnabas* which dates between 70 and 135 AD. That work may or may not have been written by the Barnabas of Acts, but it is quoted by early church fathers, like Clement of

Alexandria, who about 170 AD stated the epistle was authentic.

The teachings in the *Epistle of Barnabas* agree completely with the Bible.

Muslims will bring up the *Gospel of Barnabas* when trying to witness to Christians. They will point out the contradictions between it and the Bible. Christians should be aware of the contradiction between it and the Quran and the facts that it contradicts itself also.

Contradictions:

1. The Gospel of Barnabas says Jesus stated "I am not the Messiah"

in section 42 and 48. This contradicts both the Bible, in Matthew 16, and the Quran in Sura 5.

2. It calls Paul an apostate, and stated circumcision is necessary for salvation in section 23.

3. Section 217 states Jesus is neither God incarnate nor did He die on the cross, but Judas died in His place.

4. Section 3 states Jesus was born when Pilate was governor.

5. Section 20 states Jesus sailed to Nazareth, which, of course, has no seaport.

6. Section 3 states Mary brought forth her son without pain. This is

contradicted by the Quran in Sura 19:23.

7. The Quran condemns eating pork; but in section 32 Barnabas says, “that which enters into the man defiles not the man, but that which cometh out of the man defiles the man.”

8. Section 80 states Daniel was taken captive by Nebuchadnezer while he was two years old.

It does, however, teach in section 6 the wise men worshiped Jesus, which agrees with the Bible but contradicts the Quran.



213

Gospel of Judas

The Cainites were an ancient Gnostic sect that taught Cain, Judas, the sodomites, Esau, Korah, and other ungodly persons were true enlightened men who fought against the evil creator god. They produced the famous *Gospel of Judas*, which is full of Gnostic ideas. In *Against Heresies 1.2*, Tertullian taught the Cainites worshiped Cain as the incarnation of the supreme pure god and despised the Creator God of the Old Testament as an inferior god.

The *Gospel of Judas* teaches that Jesus

came to destroy the works of the God of the Old Testament. Judas and Jesus secretly entered into a pact that would cause the crucifixion and thereby destroy man's enslavement to the God of the Old testament. Once freed, men could becomes gods.

Irenaeus, AD 180

Against Heresies 1.31.1 – The Gnostic sect of Cainites... maintain that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things. They even produced a fictitious history of this kind, which they call the Gospel of Judas.

213



Gospel of Thomas

There are actually *four* documents that report to be the Gospel of Thomas. Three are classified as infancy gospels; two written in Greek and one in Latin, and one is a Gnostic work. The infancy gospels report miraculous events in Jesus childhood. Some of these contradict Biblical doctrine and are obviously fake. In the infancy gospels, the boy Jesus supposedly curses, kills people by divine power, and constantly seems to find ways of hurting people's feelings.

Greek Form 1

3 – When Jesus became angry, He turned a young boy into a wrinkled old man.

4 – Jesus, by His word alone, killed a boy.

5 – Jesus made the people who did not like Him go blind. When reprimanded by Joseph, Jesus rebuked Joseph.

7 – Jesus made His teacher feel very foolish and ashamed.

8 – Jesus maimed people who spoke against Him.

9 – Jesus raised a boy from the dead.

13 – Jesus made a piece of wood grow to fit in a plough Joseph was

making.

14 – Jesus killed his teacher because he hit Jesus in the head with a rod for smarting off to him.

16 – The child, Jesus, healed his older brother, James, from a snake bite and the snake burst.

Greek Form 2

2 – Same as (GR 1.3) except the boy dies instead of becoming wrinkled.

4 – Same as (GR.1.4)The 4th chapter is the same. The other stories mentioned above are omitted.

Latin Form

1 – Jesus brought a fish back to life and made it walk on water.

4 – Same story, except Jesus calls the Pharisee (boy) a sodomite, then kills him.

5 – The parents are angry because Jesus has killed some of their children.

12 – Same story as Greek form 1 chapter 14.

14 – Same story as Greek form 1 chapter 16.

Gnostic version

Most people will be familiar with this Coptic manuscript discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi in Egypt. This Gospel of Thomas was referenced by Mohammed

in the Quran. This Gnostic manuscript contains 114 sayings attributed to Jesus. Some of these sayings are similar to sayings found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Other sayings were unknown. The 114 sayings are secretive in nature and are impossible to understand. The ancient church fathers warned that no “secret” information was passed down and that Christians understand riddles and symbols by comparing them to Scripture. The satanic forgeries are so complex and mysterious that Spirit-filled Christians will discern that they have no real meaning. They were only created to deceive.

Teachings from the Gnostic version that contradict Scripture are:

1. People have an essence of God in them.
2. Salvation is finding the light within oneself.
3. Jesus says “if you pray, you will be condemned.”
4. Jesus says “If you fast, you are sinning.”

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 7:9 – The spirits speaking through the pagan prophets claim to be God, but their speech is “strange, fanatical, and quite unintelligible words, of which

no rational person can find the meaning: for so dark are they, as to have no meaning at all; but they give occasion to every fool or impostor to apply them to suit his own purposes.”

Against Celsus 7:10 – True prophets speak the plain truth and sometimes in parables and enigmas, but spiritual Christian can always figure out the riddles. Satan will counterfeit with riddles that have no real meaning.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 3.3 – The Apostles did not pass down any hidden wisdom, just the Scriptures.

Against Heresies 4.33 – The doctrine of the apostles has been guarded and preserved without any forging of Scriptures, as a very complete system of doctrine. Neither receive addition to, nor suffer curtailment from, its truths. Read the Word of God without falsification, lawfully and diligently explaining the Old Testament in harmony with the rest of the Scriptures.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata Book 2.4 – There never was any secret doctrine handed down by the apostles, just the Scriptures. Only the heretics say

there is a secret doctrine from the apostles which you must know to correctly understand the Scripture.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Prescription Against Heretics 1.25

– The apostles did not keep any secret doctrine, but taught it all openly. Only heretics teach a secret gospel or letter or teaching.

Prescription Against Heretics 1.26

– The apostles did not give special information to favorite friends.



Protevangelium of James

The Protevangelium of James tells the story that Mary was born from Anna, who was barren. She gave Mary up to the temple (like Samuel). Upon entering the temple, she was given food from the hand of an angel. Some of the non-biblical ideas taught in this false work include fables like Jesus was not born in Bethlehem and Jesus was not born in the normal way, but just appeared.

Chapter 9 – When Mary was twelve years old, the priests assembled and prayed to find out

who could take Mary before she defiled the temple by coming into puberty. The men cast their rods down and prayed. When Joseph took up his, a dove flew out of it and landed on his head. But he says he is an old man and already has children.

Chapter 16 – The priest gave the water of the ordeal to Joseph and Mary, but they remained unhurt. So no judgment was passed on them.

Chapter 17-18 – Joseph took Mary and his sons with him to Bethlehem to be registered. Joseph found a cave for Mary to give birth in *before* they came into Bethlehem.

Chapter 19 – The infant Jesus just

appeared after a bright light shone in the cave.

Chapter 20 – The midwife, Salome, went to check to see if Mary was really still virgin, and her hand became severely burned. Then an angel appeared and she believed. Then the angel healed her hand.

Chapter 21 – The Magi were in Bethlehem before Joseph and Mary got there. They visited Jesus in the cave. [contradicting the Magi's own account. See: The Magi and Matthew 2:11]

Chapter 23 – Herod, thinking John the Baptist was the newborn king, tried to find him but could not. He then murdered Zacharias, John's

father.

Chapter 24 – The clotted blood of Zacharias found in the temple, miraculously turned to stone.



Church Fathers

Origen 230 AD

Commentary on Matthew 10.17 - Those who wish to preserve the honor of Mary in virginity to the end, say, basing it on a tradition in the Gospel according to Peter, as it is entitled, or “The Book of James,” (Protevangelium Jacobi, c.

9) that the brethren of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary.



Gnosticism

The father of Gnosticism was Simon Magus, the Simon of Acts 8. Two major schools had developed by 150 AD, the followers of Valentinus and the followers of Basilides. Our knowledge of Gnosticism comes mainly from the early church father Irenaeus, who wrote the five-volume set, *Against Heresies* and the Gnostic literature itself found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. Irenaeus wrote that Gnostics derived their teachings from the heathen, namely Homer, Plato, Aristotle, the Pythagoreans and others.¹⁶ John the

Apostle would not enter a bathhouse where Cerinthus was, and Polycarp said Marcion was the firstborn of Satan.¹⁸

The basic teachings of Gnosticism that the church called heresy are:

1. There are thirty Aeons (gods) that exist in the Pleroma, outside time and space.¹
2. The goddess, Sophia, created the Demiurge, a creator angel (the god of the Old Testament) who was a tyrant; and being unaware of the Aeons, thought he was the only God. He created man; but Sophia gave man a spirit.²
3. Some may be saved if they do

enough good works; but some are predestined to go to hell. ⁴ (works salvation)

4. Gnostics have spirits that are emanations from Sophia. This makes them predestined to be saved. It is imposable for them to lose their salvation. It does not matter if their behavior is good or evil. The most “perfect” of them addict themselves to evil deeds and are in a habit of defiling the women they convert. ³
5. Eventually all matter will be destroyed since matter is evil and not capable of salvation.^{9,6}
6. Gnostics will become spirits and

will marry the angels. ⁹

7. Christ descended upon Jesus at His baptism and left before Jesus went before Pilate. Sophia would not allow Christ to suffer. ⁹
(Adoptionism)
8. They utter mantras to effect nature. ¹⁰
(Hindu mantra and Kabalistic letter magic, Gramera, and emanations)
9. Souls reincarnate. ³²
10. Perfect knowledge is obtained by baptism, spiritual marriage, and last rites. ⁵ (Sacramentalism)
11. Sophia sent the serpent (the angel Michael or Samael) into the Garden of Eden to free Eve and Adam. By

eating from the tree they attained true Gnosis and were set free. ¹⁵

12. Sophia saved Noah from the flood sent by the evil Demiurge. ¹⁵

13. The Demiurge forced Eve into sexual intercourse many times. Eve thereby gave birth to other evil creator angels. ¹⁵ (Serpent Seed)

14. At death, some souls enter an intermediate state to be purged of the animal nature before going into the Pleroma. ¹⁷ (Purgatory)

Later, other Gnostics would add or change some points and found their own

Gnostic schools.

Simon Magus

Simon Magus was the father of the Gnostic movement. He had a feigned faith and used exorcisms and incantations, love-potions, and charms, as well as those beings who are called “Paredri” (familiaris) and “Oniropompi” (dream-senders).⁶ He allegorized much Scripture to support his teachings⁴⁴, especially Genesis⁴⁵

Menander

Menander was a disciple of Simon Magus. When he broke away and formed his own Gnostic cult he

taught that by means of magic one may overcome the angels that made the world. Only if you are baptized into Menander will you obtain resurrection and never die, again having eternal youth.⁶

Ebionites

The Ebionites were founded by a man named Ebion³⁸. They believed God created the world, but Jesus was just a man. They use the gospel of Matthew only and say Paul was an apostate and follow the Jewish customs.^{12, 38}

Nicolaitanes

The Nicolaitanes practiced

adultery, and ate things sacrificed to idols.¹² In the course of time they became very obscene .³⁷

Carpocrates

Carpocrates Was a magician and a fornicator.⁴⁰ He practiced magical arts, incantations, spells, and held voluptuous feasts. And his followers are in the habit of invoking the aid of subordinate demons and dream-senders.⁴⁹ He taught we are imprisoned in a cycle of reincarnation by those evil creator angels, but will eventually break the cycle and be saved,⁸ and said Nicolas and Mathias taught fornication is no longer wrong.²⁴

Cerinthus

Cerinthus taught Jesus was just a man and the Christ descended on him at His baptism and departed before He suffered on the cross. ¹² (Adoptionism)

Saturninus

Saturninus said He, himself, was an angel,⁷ Jesus did not have a physical body,⁷ Jesus came to destroy the god of the Jews,⁷ and Sex, marriage, and reproduction are sinful.^{7,14} Saturnilus and his school were vegetations. Marriage and procreation were said to be instituted by Satan and they

practiced asceticism.⁴⁸

Marcus

Marcus taught that the Holy Spirit put a drop of her blood into the wine when he blessed it. Upon drinking it, followers would understand mysteries and prophecy.¹¹ This was the beginning of the false doctrine of Transubstantiation. Marcus said the cup imparts grace, if he uses a special incantation.⁴⁶ Marcus taught a second baptism [of redemption], by a laying on of hands. Marcus also gave a word or phrase [Mantra] when he decides the follower is ready to go on to the

higher mysteries, or when the disciple is dying [last rites]. They are taught to keep secret the word and even deny that it exists.⁴⁷

Marcion

Marcion rejected the Old Testament and used cut up versions of Luke and some of Paul's epistles. He taught the God of the Old Testament and His prophets were evil and will be destroyed.¹³ He taught God is the author of sin,²⁷ there were two equal and opposite gods, one good and one evil,²⁸ and that the Law and the Gospel being so against each other proves two different gods.³⁰ He was strongly

addicted to astrology,²⁹ taught there was no resurrection and that the saved should not marry.³¹ He Removed references in his gospel that Christ was creator,³³ and said Jesus was a phantom [did not have a physical body]³⁴

Titian

Titian said Adam was not saved,¹⁹ drinking wine is a sin,²² and that the soul is not eternal; it dissolves with the body.²⁰ [Soul Sleep] He also taught Medicine is demonic, instead of taking it, we should rely on God alone.²¹

Ophites

The Ophites worshiped the serpent as primary Eon or god.³⁸

Cainites

The Cainites worshiped Cain, the brother of Abel as primary Eon or god.³⁸

Cerdo

Cerdo was the first to introduce dualism.³⁹

Apelles

Apelles agreed Jesus did come in the flesh, unlike other Gnostics, but after the resurrection, Jesus disintegrated His own body.⁵⁰

Calistus

Calistus formed a school [commune] that allowed fornication, common law marriages, the use of drugs for producing sterility, abortions [called murder by Calistus], no true Christian does these things.⁵¹

Alcibiades (Elchasai)

The Alcibiades, also called Elchasai, formed the Elchasaites who taught there are female angels, a new remission of sins [based on the teachings of his book]. Teachings were similar to the teachings of Callistus: with incantations, circumcision, taught

Christ was born a man, reincarnation, and astrology.⁵²

Elchasaites

The Elchasaites taught Jesus incarnated many times. They resort to incantations and baptisms in their confession of elements. And they occupy themselves with bustling activity in regard of astrological and mathematical science, and of the arts of sorcery. But also they allege themselves to have powers of prescience.⁵³

Naasseni

Naasseni worshiped the serpent; taught their order was started by James, the Lord's brother, and that

Adam was a hermaphrodite. They used the *Gospel According to Thomas*, some things taken from the Mysteries of Isis, and Mysteries of the Assyrians, and they practiced orgies.⁴¹

Peratae

The Peratae taught a kind of tri-theism.⁴² Another branch is the Peratae, who teach Jesus is the Son is the serpent.⁴³

Basilides

Basilides taught Reincarnation with Karma,²⁵ Man can grow up and be sinless all of his life,²⁵ [Born without original sin] and that

Spirits [sometimes animal spirits] latch on to us and force us to sin.²³ He taught saving faith is intellectual ascent. All humans are born with the ability [Pelegianism],²³ after baptism, God forgives involuntary sins but you must pay for all voluntary sins in order to be purged from them [Penance, Purgatory, Cardinal and Venial sins],²⁶ and that Jesus was transformed to look like Simon of Cyrene; Simon was crucified in his place.^{7, 37} He also taught the name of the most supreme god was Abraxas.³⁷ This is where we get the magic word “Abracadabra.”

Valentinus

Valentinus said saving faith comes from your spirit, if you are one of the chosen [men are born saved],²³ and some are not predestined to be saved, are predestined for hell, but the rest might be saved through works.³⁵ Only those who's spirit is an emanation from Sophia are predestined to be saved. All others are predestined to hell [Double predestination],²³ and those predestined for salvation do not need to practice good works.³⁶

In combating Gnosticism, the Scripture says the following:

- **1 John 1:5** There is no duality in God.
- **1 John 2:23** Whoever says Jesus is not the Christ is of antichrist.
- **1 John 4:3** Whoever says Jesus did not come in the flesh is of antichrist.
- **2 John 7,9-10** Do not welcome or allow into your house anyone who says Jesus did not come in the flesh.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 4.30 – When they are called Phrygians, Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites,

Anthropians, or Arians they have ceased to be Christians.

Ecumenicisim

Victorinus, AD 280

Commentary on Revelation 11.1 –
No one worships at the holy altar
except one who confesses this faith.

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Carpocrates

The Carpocrates were a Gnostic cult that developed in the first century in Alexandria, Egypt. According to Clement of Alexandria, in *Stromata* 3:431, the Epistle of Jude was written specifically to counter their heresy. Tertullian (A.E. 3) says first Carpocrates cult sprang up, then the Apostle John's arch-enemy Cerinthus formed his cult. After his death, Ebion added Gnostic teaching to the Jewish Ebionites, creating the Gnostic Ebionites. Victorinus, in *Commentary on the Apocalypse 11*, says the Apostle

John wrote 1 John to counter the teachings of Cerinthus, and that the Gnostic schools of Valentinus, Cerinthus, and Ebion were rapidly spreading across the land. So all these heretics were in existence in the time of Jude and John.

The Carpocrates slandered Nicolas and Matthias by saying they taught fornication is no longer wrong. They taught people are imprisoned in a cycle of reincarnation by those evil creator angels (Compare to Scientology) and that people can break the cycle of reincarnation only by experiencing all forms of sin and righteousness. The Carpocrates practiced magical arts with

incantations and spells and invoked the aid of subordinate demons and dream-senders. They were well known for having voluptuous feasts which include gluttony, drunkenness, and fornication. They taught Jesus was the son of Mary and Joseph, so there was no virgin birth. They also taught Jesus was just a man with a pure heart because his soul was with a pure god before incarnation. Some of their adherents actually taught they were more pure and advanced than Jesus.

They had a few unique points compared to other Gnostic cults. Their disciples had a tattoo on the back side of the right earlobe. The ancient church fathers

commented on their unique form of idolatry. They used small Idols of Jesus, Aristotle, Pythagoras, and other people and angels, whom they said were emanations of the pure god. (Compare to the Bahai.) They would adorn the idols with wreaths, garlands, and in other ways to honor/worship them.

Hippolytus AD 225

Refutation of All Heresies 7.21 – The disciples of Carpocrates make counterfeit images of Christ, alleging that these were in existence at the time... and were fashioned by Pilate.



Ebionites

After the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, some broke away, refusing to accept the resolution of the Council. They claimed Jesus as Messiah, but taught the following: (Eusebius' *Church History* 6:17 and Ireneaus' *Against All Heresies*, 1:26, 3:11, & 5:1)

Tertullian wrote the founder of the sect was named Ebion. Epipanius traces the origin of the Ebionites to the Christians who fled to Pella after the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, AD 69-70. He also added that some of them held the

belief that Adam was an incarnation of Jesus. Ebionites were found all over Israel and the surrounding region, Cyprus, Asia Minor, and even as far as Rome.

The Ebionites denied the divinity and virgin birth of Jesus, saying Mary and Joseph were his physical parents. They denied Jesus is the Son of God. They believed observance of the ceremonial law was necessary for salvation and taught no one could be saved by faith in Christ alone; it required a holy life [works]. They practiced circumcision, and observed the Law of Moses, and the Judaic style of life. They refused to acknowledge that Jesus was pre-

existent, being God, the Word. They observed strictly the bodily worship of the Law and reproached Christians for eating unclean meats. Ebionites used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews (some say the Hebrew version of Matthew). Rarely made use of the other gospels. They stated Isaiah's prophecy of "a virgin conceiving" should be translated "young woman" instead and they rejected all the epistles of the apostle Paul, whom they called an apostate from the Law.

The Apostle John would not even enter a bathhouse where the Gnostic Cerinthus was, because Cerinthus taught Jesus was just a man, born of Joseph and Mary.

(Ireneaus' *Against All Heresies*, 3:11)
Eusebius says Ebionite doctrines were spawned by evil demons. Those who believe Ebionite doctrine are not Christians. Ignatius, in *Smyraeans* 7, said those that believe the Passover does not refer to Jesus and His death on the cross are not Christians and we should not even speak to them.

A subgroup developed adding these additional doctrines to the above:

They did not deny that the Lord was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit, but they did deny the divinity of Jesus. They observed the Sabbath and the rest of the Jewish lifestyle, but also celebrated the

Lord's Day as a memorial to the resurrection of the Savior. Some also practiced oaths of poverty and vegetarianism.

Later a full Gnostic sect developed: (Ireneaus' *Against All Heresies*, 1:26, 3:11, & 5:1 and the *Pseudo-Clementines*).

The Gnostic Ebionites rejected any distinction between Jehovah the Demiurge, and the supreme good god and taught matter is eternal, and an emanation of the deity. They said the Son of God is the Christ, a middle-being between God and creation, not a

creature, yet not equal to, nor even to be compared with, the Father. They believed man is saved by knowledge (gnosis), by believing in God the Teacher, and by being baptized unto remission of sins.

The name Ebionite can be translated "poor." Some suggest this was applied to James' group in Jerusalem, even though a different word is used in Scripture. If this is true, it may only refer to the Jerusalem Christians who took an oath of poverty. This could just as easily be referring to people who are poor. The Ebionite cult fused together Pantheism, Persian Dualism, Judaism, and Christianity. Ebionites seemed to have

died out about the fifth century.

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213



Encratites

Tatian started off being orthodox. He wrote a harmony of the gospels called the Diatessaron. Later, he became very violent and apostatized from the church. After he apostatized, he founded the Gnostic sect of the Encratites. The name in Greek means “self-perfected ones.” In the 12th century the name of Encratites was applied to the Bogomils. Tatian then started removing passages from the Diatessaron that referred to Jesus’ divinity and other non-Gnostic thoughts. Copies of both the original Diatessaron and the perverted Diatessaron still exist.

(The eastern church used the Diatessaron for years before going back to the four Gospels.)

The basic teachings of the Encratites are similar to the Valentinian Gnostics. They believed in the Aeons, held dualistic views of God, condemned marriage, taught sex and reproduction is evil and that Adam was not saved. They were vegetarians and did not drink wine. They believed they were self-controlled, able to master their actions and become sinless. They rejected the epistles of Paul, calling him an apostate and taught Christ did not have a physical body.

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By the time he wrote his book entitled *To the Greeks*, about AD 166, Tatian was beginning to adopt some Gnostic ideas. He was orthodox in the following:

Tatian AD 166

Greeks 4 – There is only one God

Greeks 5 – God and the Logos created the world, not the angels. Matter is not self-existent.

Greeks 6 – We did not exist before we were born and do not reincarnate. There will be a

physical resurrection.

Greeks 7 – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

Greeks 9 – Demons invented the concept of fate with astrology to enslave man into worshipping them.

Greeks 11 – Our free will enslaved us to sin. (Rom 7) but we can choose to follow righteousness now.

Greeks 17 – Demons use numbers, letters, roots, and amulets to ensnare people.

Greeks 21 – Jesus was God, born in the form of man.

Greeks 25 – God the Father does not have a physical body.

Greeks 26 – Christians do not eat human flesh (as it has been rumored).

Greeks 32 – Women and children of any age who want to hear are allowed to attend church.

But Tatian also taught the following Gnostic ideas:

Greeks 13 – The soul is not eternal; it dissolves with the body. The soul will be brought back at the resurrection.

Greeks 18 – Demons also use medicine [He did not believe in

taking medicine. He taught people should rely on God alone.]

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 3.11 – The Encratitae who, on account of such as come in hypocrisy, hold themselves aloof from the communion of the brethren.

Against Heresies 3.23 – Adam was saved, contrary to Tatian. There was no way possible for Adam to become a god.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Instructor 2.2 – We use water mixed with wine for Communion, and the wine is just a symbol of the

blood of Jesus, but it does sanctify both body and soul to those who take it in faith. We are to be careful of drunkenness, but avoid any, who like the Encratites, teach drinking wine is a sin.

Hippolytus, AD 170-236

Refutation of all Heresies 8.13 – Encratites are very prideful and violent, abstaining from animal food, (and) being water-drinkers, and forbidding to marry, and devoting themselves to asceticism.



Mani

The Manichean's were the followers Mani. In about 252AD, Mani, a Persian, mixed Christianity with Gnosticism and other Persian elements. He stated his teaching came from Christ and the Persian Magi.

Mani taught there are two gods; one evil and one good.² Jesus was not a real man [did not have flesh].¹ Jesus came to reconcile man to Satan, the dark god⁴ but Jesus did not undergo punishment on the cross.⁶ Satan is the god of Moses and the prophets.⁷ Man does not has free

will,⁸ some are born with their nature totally depraved,⁹ while others are born nearly perfect.⁹ He taught reincarnation based on Karma.⁵ Mani said he was the Comforter (Paraclete) and also the “that which is perfect” of 1 Corinthians 13: 3. Mani taught Vegetarianism,¹⁰ Marriage, and begetting children are sins,¹⁰ and that there was a purgatory for purifying souls.⁵ After being purged of sins in the sun, the souls fly to the moon [Purgatory].⁵ The soul of man is from light and his body from darkness.²

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St. Augustine was a Manichean for eight years before becoming a Christian. After becoming a Christian, he taught free will (see: *City of God*). It was not until 417 AD, while debating with Pelegius, that he began teaching what today's Calvinists describe as the doctrine of "total depravity" and the "bondage of the will."

It seems that in reaction to Pelegian doctrine that “man could be sinless from birth,” Augustine went too far the other way.

Archelaus, AD

33 – The Judges concluded against Mani that man has free will; so if Mani can sin, his spirit can't be an emanation from God. The angels, and Satan (dark, evil god) are not of God's essence.

Augustine recorded that Mani taught when the sun and moon have liberated all the light they are able, there will be a fire kindled on the earth which will burn for 1,468 years, after which, there will

be no light left. The King of Darkness and his hosts will thereupon withdraw into the pit prepared for them. Mani taught, unlike the world, man was created by demons. The aim of demons is to imprison in man, through the propagation of the race, as much as possible of the light, and so to hinder the separating process by the sun and the moon. Manicheans teach salvation comes from rigorous asceticism, and by the practice of certain ceremonial observances. Manicheans deny the saving efficacy of baptism but believe Salvation consists simply in the liberation of the light from the darkness. In the case of the Elect this takes place immediately after death; in the case of

adherents who have not practiced the prescribed forms of asceticism, it takes place only after considerable torment [purgatory]. In the case of the ordinary sensual man, there is no deliverance.



Marcion

In the middle of the second century AD, Marcion left the church and started the Gnostic Marcionites. Marcion was a native of Sinope on the Black Sea. He first studied with the Stoics, then became a Christian. According to Epiphanius, as he began to apostatize, he seduced a young girl, and was excommunicated. Marcion then traveled to Rome in hopes of being readmitted to the church. Later he joined Cerdon and another Gnostic, preaching in Rome, hoping to create a schism in the church. Marcion's most famous disciples were Apelles,

Lucanus, Basilus, Potitus, and Blastus. This same Blastus later caused a schism in Rome. Marcionites continued until the sixth century, principally in Egypt, Israel, and Syria.

Marcion rejected the Old Testament and used cut up versions of Luke and some of Paul's epistles, for Scripture. He used the Gospel of Luke but eliminated the first four chapters and removed all references to Jesus' divinity or any connection with the God of the Old Testament. His canon of Scripture also contained Romans, 1st & 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thessalonians, Philemon, and

Laodiceans. All of these were tailored to fit Marcion's teachings. In Paul's Epistles, he removed all references to God creating the world, and to Jesus being God's Son, and any predictions of Jesus' birth. He taught the God of the Old Testament and His prophets were evil and would be destroyed because that god was the author of sin. He also taught there are two equal and opposite gods, one good and one evil. He taught the Law and the Gospel were so strongly different, it proves there were two different gods. Marcion insisted there is no resurrection and removed all references in his gospel showing Christ was the creator and the God of the Old Testament was Jesus' father. He also

removed the genealogy of Jesus. He said Jesus was a phantom having no physical body. Marcion forbade marriage and said it was evil. Married people could not be baptized unless they got a divorce and practiced celibacy. The Marcionites were strongly addicted to astrology.

Other Doctrines of the Marcionites were that Jesus came to overthrow the dominion of the evil creator. Followers needed to be baptized in order to remove sins recently committed, and women were allowed to baptize other women. Followers must be single, widowed, or divorced before they could be baptized. They denied Christ came in the flesh and claimed there was no

salvation or resurrection of the flesh, only of the spirit. Some Marcionites believed in the transmigration of souls. We know this teaching as reincarnation. Some Marcionites sought martyrdom in order to escape this evil world. It was well known that Marcion tried to publish a Gospel he wrote himself in the name of Paul.

Church teachings contrasted:

Tertullian, AD 200

Against Marcion 4.8 – Jesus was not a phantom, but had a real body.

Against Marcion 4.37 – Christ saves both body and soul. Only heretics say the body is not saved

[resurrected].

Against Marcion 5.11 – Heretics try to say the epistle to the Ephesians is the epistle to the Laodeceans.

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8. *Against Marcion* 3.8, 4.8
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213



Nicolaitans

In Revelation, John wrote that the Ephesus church hated the Nicolaitans and got rid of the false apostles who started the Gnostic cults; but in the process, they lost their first love. The ancient church fathers taught Nicolaitan characteristics included: the practice of fornication (both heterosexual and homosexual forms of adultery and chambering), Then in a confession ritual on a weekly basis they were forgiven. (on the eighth day). Nicolaitans used idols and participated in pagan rituals, which also means they tolerated ungodly

things. This form of idolatry was also practiced by the Carpocratian Gnostics. The idea that food had to be exorcised before it was eaten was based on the idea that a Christian could be demon-possessed. The ancient church fathers taught Nicolaitans had a special way of exorcizing meat offered to idols so that if Christians ate it they would not become demon-possessed. The belief that Christians can be possessed by demons, is an error.

“So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the

sword of my mouth.” *Revelation*
2:15-16

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 3.29 – This sect took its name after Nicolas, one of the seven deacons of Acts (although Nicolas had nothing to do with them). Influenced by the Gnostics, they began practicing adultery and eating meat offered to idols in order to prove they had conquered their flesh.

Victorinus, AD 285

Commentary on the Apocalypse
2.6 – The works of the Nicolaitans

were in that time false and troublesome men, who, as ministers under the name of Nicolas, had made for themselves a heresy, to the effect that what had been offered to idols might be exorcised and eaten, and that whoever should have committed fornication might receive peace on the eighth day.



Moral Issues

The church today is divided into two camps: liberals and conservatives. A fundamentalist (or conservative) is one who follows the literal teaching of Scripture. Liberals say that the literal teaching of Scripture was cultural, for that time, and is no longer binding on Christians.

Both liberal and conservative Christians agree some things are no longer binding. These include: animal sacrifices, circumcision, Sabbath observance, Mosaic food laws, and such. See the

section on *Dispensationalism*.

The New Testament makes it clear Mosaic laws were done away with, and no longer practiced in the church age. But the New Testament clearly teaches the following are moral issues, not cultural issues, and will never be abolished:

1. Abortion
2. Euthanasia
3. Homosexuality
4. Replacement Theology
5. Women in Ministry

In each section we will look at the Scriptures and the teachings of the

ancient church fathers. We will learn that the ancient church taught abortion and euthanasia were forms of murder; that homosexuality was a form of fornication, and therefore, sin; and that women are forbidden by Scripture to be pastors. We will also learn that church has not, and never will, replace Israel.



Abortion

The view of the Ancient church always has been that human life begins at conception. Therefore, an abortion is actually the murder of a human child. Under the Mosaic law anyone who caused a woman to miscarry her child was to be put to death for the crime of murder. In extreme ancient times, all the Gentile nations put murderers, abortionists, and rapists to death. See *Ancient Post-Flood History* for full details. Scripture records the punishment for abortion:

“If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,” *Exodus 21:22-23*

The first instance of abortion is recorded in the *Ancient Book of Jasher*, a Jewish history book.

“And Lamech, the son of Methusael, became related to Cainan by marriage, and he took his two daughters for his wives, and

Adah conceived and bare a son to Lamech, and she called his name Jabal. And she again conceived and bare a son, and called his name Jubal; and Zillah, her sister, was barren in those days and had no offspring. For in those days the sons of men began to trespass against God, and to transgress the commandments which he had commanded to Adam, to be fruitful and multiply in the earth. And some of the sons of men caused their wives to drink a draught that would render them barren, in order that they might retain their figures and whereby their beautiful appearance might not fade. And when the sons

of men caused some of their wives to drink, Zillah drank with them. And the child-bearing women appeared abominable in the sight of their husbands as widows, whilst their husbands lived, for to the barren ones only they were attached. And in the end of days and years, when Zillah became old, the Lord opened her womb. And she conceived and bare a son and she called his name Tubal Cain, saying, After I had withered away have I obtained him from the Almighty God.” *Jasher 2:17-24*

The ancient church fathers made it clear that abortion is a moral sin equal to

murder.

Didache, AD 100

Chapter 2 – You shall not murder a child by abortion, nor kill them when born.

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 19:12 – You shall not murder a child by abortion, nor shall you kill it when it is born.

Mathetes, AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 5 – Christians follow the customs of their native lands...they marry and have children, but they never have

abortions.

Tertullian, AD 200

Apology 9 – In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth.

Nations 1.15 – Christians do not kill infants before or after birth.

Treatise of the Soul 1.25 – Heretics maintain that the soul is not conceived in the womb. They

maintain that the soul is deposited much later, after conception. Christians teach abortion is murder. *Treatise of the Soul 1.37* – The law of Moses, indeed, punishes with due penalties the man who shall cause abortion. Christians teach the soul is imparted at conception.

Treatise of the Soul 1.26 – Among surgeons' tools there is a certain instrument that is formed with a nicely-adjusted flexible frame for first of all opening the uterus and then keeping it open. It also has a circular blade, by means of which the limbs within the womb are dissected with careful but

unflinching care. Its last appendage is a blunted or covered hook, by which the entire fetus is extracted by a violent delivery. There is also a copper needle or spike, by which the actual death is brought about in this treacherous robbery of life. From its infanticide function, they give the name, "killer of the infant"-which infant, of course, had once been alive.

On Chastity 12 – Indeed, the Law of Moses punishes with appropriate penalties the person who causes abortion. For there already exists the beginning stages of a human being. And even at this stage, the fetus is already acknowledged as

having the condition of life and death, since he is already susceptible to both.

Treatise of the Soul 27 – Life begins at conception, for we contend that the soul also begins from conception.

Athenagoras, AD 177

Plea 35 – We say that those women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder, and will have to give an account to God for the abortion.

Mark Minucius Felix, AD 200

Octavius 30 – There are some women who, by drinking medical

preparations, extinguish the source of the future man in their very bowels. So they commit murder before they bring forth. And these things assuredly come down from the teaching of your gods.

Hippolytus, AD 206

Against Heresies 9.7 – Women who were reputed believers began to resort to drugs for producing sterility. They also girded themselves around, so as to expel what was being conceived. For they did not wish to have a child by either a slave or by any common fellow -- out of concern for their family and their excessive wealth.

See what a great impiety the lawless one has advanced! He teaches adultery and murder at the same time!

Apostolic Constitutions,

7.3 – You shall not slay your child by causing abortion, nor kill the baby that is born. For “everything that is shaped and has received a soul from God, if it is slain, shall be avenged, as being unjustly destroyed.” [Quoting from Ezekiel 21.]

Lactanius, AD 304

7.35 – I cannot find language to even speak of the infants who were

burned to the same Saturn!



213

Euthanasia and Suicide

Euthanasia is defined as the willful premeditated killing of the elderly, hopelessly sick, or injured person in a relatively painless way. It is one thing to give drugs to ease the pain of the terminally ill, knowing they might cause a premature death; but quite another to deliberately murder such people with such drugs. Suicide was also considered murder by the ancient church.

Tertullian, AD 190

Apology 9 - In Gaul, children were sacrificed to Saturn and the old

sacrificed to Mercury in the time of Tiberius. And the Romans stopped the practice by crucifying all the pagan priests. Christians do not sacrifice young, old, or even destroy the fetus in the womb. Other pagan rites that Christians would never do are: cannibalism, making a pact by bloodletting, eating raw flesh, blood sausage, or human blood. They will not practice incest or adultery.

Lactantius, AD 285

Epitome of Divine Institutes 71 –
The end times will manifest
abortion, euthanasia, children
carrying weapons, winter and

summer will be confused, years, months, and days will be shortened. *Divine Institutes 3.18* – If a murderer is guilty because he is a destroyer of man, he who kills himself is under the same guilt, for he also kills a man. In fact, the crime can be considered to be greater for the punishment of it belongs to God alone.

Divine Institutes 6.17 – It is a virtue to despise death. Not that we seek death, or of our own accord afflict it upon ourselves... for this would be a wicked and ungodly thing.

213



Homosexuality

I Corinthians 6:9 says the “effeminate” and “homosexuals” will not inherit the kingdom of God. The word used here for effeminate is $\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha$ in Greek and homosexual is $\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta\beta$. Some trying to explain away these words by pointing out that when $\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha\alpha$ is used as a phrase with clothes, it means “soft clothes” and therefore has nothing to do with homosexuality. That is like saying “gay” means happy and therefore has nothing to do with homosexuality. Various cultures, then and now, took

words already in use and made them into new words for perversion.

Romans 1:26,27 describes homosexuality as “degrading their bodies” by “women exchanging the natural relations for unnatural ones” and “men abandoning natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust one for the other.” “Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty of their perversion.” The Holy Spirit uses words like “degrading, unnatural, vile affection, indecent, depraved, and an error.” Some try to say that this refers to a purity law from the Old Testament, and therefore does not apply to Christians.

Anything Paul says is sin in the New Testament, whether it is in the Old Testament purity code or not, must be considered a moral sin, and therefore binding on Christians today. The following first and second century church fathers described the sin of homosexuality.

Didache, AD 100

2.2 – You shall not commit adultery; you shall not commit pederasty.

Polycarp, AD 120

Epistle of Polycarp 5 – It is well that they should be cut off from the lusts of the world, since “every lust wars against the spirit” and

“neither fornicators, nor homosexuals...will inherit the kingdom of God.”

Aristides, (Syriac version) AD 125

8 – Some have polluted themselves by lying with males.

17 – The Greeks, O King, follow debased practices in intercourse with males, or with mothers, sisters, and daughters. Yet, they, in turn, impute their monstrous impurity to the Christians.

Tatian, AD 160

Greeks 28 – Pederasty is condemned by the barbarians. However, by the Romans it is

honored with certain privileges. In fact, they try to collect herds of boys like grazing horses.

Athenagoras AD 175

Plea 25 – They do not abstain even from males; males with males committing shocking abominations, outraging all the noblest and comeliest bodies in all sorts of ways.

Theophilus, AD 180

1.2 – Show me yourself whether you are not an adulterer, a fornicator, a thief, a robber. Show me that you do not corrupt boys...for God is not manifest to

those who do these things.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 195

Instructor 3.4 – Men play the part of women and women that of men, contrary to nature. Women are at once both wives and husbands...O miserable spectacle! Horrible conduct!

Instructor 3.10 – The fate of the Sodomites was judgment to those who had done wrong, and instruction to those who hear. The Sodomites had fallen into uncleanness through much luxury. They practiced adultery shamelessly, and they burned with insane love for boys.

Tatian, AD 165

Greeks 28 – The whole earth has now become full of fornication and wickedness. I admire the ancient legislators of the Romans. These men detested effeminacy of conduct. The giving of the body to feminine purposes, contrary to the law of nature, they judged worthy of the most extreme penalty.

Tertullian, AD 197

Apology 46 – The Christian man confines himself to the female sex.

Idolatry 16 – I find no dress cursed by God except a woman's dress on a man. For He says, "Cursed is

every man who clothes himself in woman's attire.”

Against Velentinians – The coupling of two males is a very shameful thing.

Origen, AD 245

Commentary on Matthew 14.10 – Such sins are committed by fornicators, adulterers, abusers of themselves with men, effeminate men, idolaters, and murderers.

The following are secular references where the word is used of people called catamites, whose description can be nothing other than homosexuals.

Dionys. Hal. 7, 2, 4; Dio Chrys. 49[66], 25; Ptolem., PHib. 54, 11 [c.245 BC]

The following are secular references where the word □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ is used of a male who practices homosexuality, pederast, sodomite.

Bardesanes in Euseb., Pr. Ev. 6, 10, 25 - Anth. Pal. 9, 686, 5 and Cat. Cod. Astr. VIII 4 p. 196, 6; 8; Sib. Or. 2,73

Replacement Theology

With the development of amillennialism in the fourth century, the church began to teach all the promises/prophecies given to Israel were now spiritually referring to the church. It should have been obvious to denominations teaching Replacement Theology, that they were wrong when Israel returned as a nation on the very day the Bible predicted they would: May 14, AD 1948. See *Ancient Prophecies Revealed* for full details on the prophecies.

The ancient church fathers taught Israel

would return and rebuild their temple. They taught a seven-year period would occur which included the Antichrist, and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth. See the section on Premillennialism in this book for more details.

Replacement Theology goes hand-in-hand with Calvinism and amillennialism. We have seen that the ancient church fathers rejected these ideas and recorded that they were created by the Gnostic cults in the early days. They are an attempt by Satan to blind the minds of believers into a form of anti-Semitism. Replacement Theology was used by Hitler to initiate the Holocaust.

It is not possible for the church to replace Israel if Israel is still fulfilling prophecies today.

God promised Father Abraham that those people and nations who blessed the Jews will themselves be blessed. As mature Christians, we don't want to miss that blessing!

“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be

blessed.” *Genesis 12:2-3*

The *Ancient Epistle of Barnabas* taught that even though the Jews were enslaved by the Romans and their temple destroyed, the Jews would rebuilt their temple once again. For this to be true, the Jews had to return from the Roman expulsion and recreate their nation in order to rebuild it. Since their return, the temple has yet to be built.

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 16:5-7 – You can perceive that their hope is vain. Furthermore the Lord said, “Behold, they who destroy this temple, even they will again build

it up once more.” This prophecy was fulfilled because the Jews went to war against their enemy. But even though they are now no more than servants to Rome, they will return and rebuild the temple. It was revealed that the city of Jerusalem, the temple, and the people of Israel were to be given up.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 5.30 – The temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem.

By AD 250, Replacement Theology had set in and the church rejected the original teachings about the return of

Israel. They believed all the prophecies about Israel referred only to the church in some spiritual way.

Origen, AD 240

Commentary on John 10:26 – Promises referring to Jerusalem now refer to the church.

The teaching of Replacement Theology is that the church just keeps getting better and better until the Second Coming. Premillennialism, and therefore the ancient church fathers, taught the majority of the church would apostatize before the seven-year tribulation.

213



Women in Ministry

Many denominations today allow women to be pastors, bishops, and leaders in the church. They perform marriages, baptisms, and carry authority in the church. The ancient church took the comments of the Apostle Paul seriously. In the Old Testament only men from the tribe of Levi could be priests. Some non-Levitical men who tried to perform the duties of a priest God put to death or punished with diseases like leprosy. Paul taught there were very specific requirements to be a New Testament bishop or pastor.

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach...One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) *1 Timothy 3:2,4-5*

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” *1 Timothy 2:11-12*

The ancient church took Paul's message seriously. Women were treated with respect, but were not allowed to be pastors. They were teachers of children and other women, but not men. Only Gnostic cults allowed women to hold an office in a church.

Tertullian, AD 210

On Baptism 17 – But the woman of pertness, who has usurped the power to teach, will of course not have the right to baptize. But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name claim Thecla's example as a license for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter

who composed that writing, as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed from his office.

On the Veiling of Virgins 9 – It is not permitted to a woman to speak in the church nor teach, nor to baptize, nor be in any sacerdotal office.

Prescription Against Heretics 41 – The very women of these heretics, how wanton they are! For they are bold enough to teach, to dispute, to enact exorcisms, to undertake cures [counseling] – it may even be to baptize.

Cyprian, AD 250

Treatise 46 – The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians says, “let women be silent in the church. But if any wish to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. Also Timothy says, “let women learn in silence with all subjection. But I do not permit a woman to teach, or be set over the man, but to be in silence.

Apostolic Constitutions, AD 390

3.1.6 – We do not permit our women “to teach in the church.” Rather, they are only permitted to pray and hear those who teach. For

Jesus Himself, our Master and Lord, when He sent out the twelve to make disciples of the people and of the nations, nowhere sent out women to preach – even though there were no lack of women available.



Paganism

Paganism is based on the beliefs of ancestor worship, humans evolving into gods, and reincarnation. There are a variety of occult practices depending on the various subgroups of paganism.

In the book *Ancient Paganism*, we learned about paganism, including the religion of the pre-flood world, the practices of the ancient Canaanites, kabbalah, mystical Christianity, and the occultic practices we have today. The one thing they all had in common was the practice of eastern meditation, called

“ecstasy” by the ancient church fathers.

In this section we will examine the pagan concepts of:

1. Astrology
2. Astral projection
3. Evolution
4. Ghosts
5. Islam
6. Meditation/Ecstasy
7. Reincarnation

Tatian AD 166

Greeks 17 – Demons use numbers, letters, roots, and amulets to ensnare people.

Tertullian, 190-210 AD

Against Marcion 2.8 – Man has an immortal soul coming from God, but it [the soul] is not God.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Apology 23 – Moreover, if sorcerers call forth ghosts, and even make what seem the souls of the dead to appear; if they put boys to death in order to get a response from the oracle; if, with their juggling illusions, they make a pretence of doing various miracles; if they put dreams into people's minds by the power of the angels and demons whose aid they have invited, by whose influence, too,

goats and tables are made to divine, – how much more likely is this power of evil... The wicked spirit, bidden to speak by a follower of Christ, will as readily make the truthful confession that he is a demon.

Apology 35 – The arts of astrologers, soothsayers, augurs, and magicians were made known by the angels who sinned, and are forbidden by God.

Origen AD 230

Against Celsus 1:6 – Christians do not employ incantations or spells to perform miracles.

Lactantius AD 285

Divine Institutes 2.17 – Astrology, soothsaying, divination, oracles, necromancy, and the art of magic are the invention of demons and vain according to the Sybil. Magicians and enchanters call demons by their true name and mingle false things with true.

Divine Institutes 4.27 – Even the Greek Gods flee when the name of Jesus is used. If a god is commanded to tell the truth, it confesses that it is a demon. If one would be able to actually call up Jupiter or one of the others [ancient men worshiped as gods by the

Greeks] from the dead, they would confess they were men and not gods and that there is only one true God and that the spirits that pretend to be them lie.



Astrology

The most ancient form of astrology was from the pre-flood world. It did not include a horoscope. It was only used to predict when the next major astrological event would take place that would mark the time for an occultic ritual. After the Flood, the Chaldeans (Babylonians) changed the focus by inventing the horoscope. No longer was astrology used to determine when you could contact gods and goddesses, but it was used to determine what would befall a person on a daily basis. Modern astrology employs the idea that

calculating the positions of the planets in our solar system, then comparing them to the positions they were in on a person's birthday will predict what will happen in that person's immediate future. All these forms of astrology were rejected by the ancient church fathers.

Irenaeus, AD 170

Against Heresies 2.32 – The Church does not perform anything by means of angelic invocations, incantations, or by any other wicked curious art; but, directing her prayers to the Lord.

Against Heresies 2.25 – God is not to be sought after by means of letters, syllables, and numbers.

Tatian, AD 166

Greeks 9 – Demons invented the concept of fate with astrology to enslave man into worshiping them.

Hippolytus, AD 170-236

The Refutation of all Heresies 4.3
– The horoscope was invented by the Chaldean astrologers.

The Refutation of all Heresies 4.16 – Examining bumps on the head is an equally stupid method of divination.

Tertullian, AD 200

Apology 35 – The arts of astrologers, soothsayers, augurs,

and magicians were made known by the angels who sinned, and are forbidden by God.

Apology 1 – Christians don't blame fate or the stars for their actions.

Against Marcion 1.18 – The Marcionites [cult] are very strongly addicted to astrology.

Idolatry 1.9 – Astrology is idolatry; but the science of the Magi is different than pagan astrology.

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 1:6 – Christians do not employ incantations or spells to perform miracles.

Lactantius, AD 313

Divine Institutes 2:16 – Demons... invented astrology, soothsaying, divination, and those productions which are called oracles, necromancy, and the art of magic.

Divine Institutes 2:17 – Astrology, soothsaying, divination, oracles, necromancy, and the art of magic are the invention of demons and vain according to the Sybil. Magicians and enchanters call demons by their true names and mingle false things with true.



Astral Projection

Astral projection is the belief that a person can learn to fall into a type of meditative sleep that allows his or her soul to leave their body and travel in a spiritual plane of existence. The ancient church taught this phenomenon was simply a vision given to the person by a demon tricking them into believing they had actually left their body. The practitioner will eventually be led by the demonic visions to conclude that Christianity is false. The ancient church taught when the soul actually leaves the body, the body dies.

Tertullian, 190-210 AD

Against Marcion 2.8 – Man has an immortal soul coming from God, but it [the soul] is not God.

Treatise of the Soul 1.5 – When the soul leaves the body, the body dies.

Origen, AD 230

Against Celsus 3:31 – [Astral projection] is but a trick of demons, it is not possible for the soul to leave the body without the flesh dying.

Lactantius, 285 AD

Divine Institutes 2.13 – After death

we have immortality or suffering of eternal pain. Animals just dissolve at death. Physical death is separation of body and soul.



Evolution

Many of the ancient fathers mentioned they believed in Creation occurring in only six literal days. The ancient pagans have always taught evolution, along with reincarnation. Their idea was that we are evolving into gods. Some of the ancient church fathers recorded the pagan idea of evolution and compared it to the Bible.

Origen AD 225

Of First Principles 2.4 – I cannot understand how so many distinguished men have been of the

opinion that matter...was uncreated. That is, it was not formed by God Himself, who is the Creator of all things. Rather, they say that its nature and power were the result of chance.

Origen AD 248

Against Celsus 1.19 – Celsus [a pagan] harbors a secret desire to discredit the Mosaic account of the Creation. It [Genesis] teaches that the world is not yet even ten thousand years old; but, in fact, [Celsus teaches] it is very much older than that.

Methodius AD 290

Ten Virgins 3.2 – It is dangerous to wholly disdain the literal meaning...particularly of Genesis, where the unchangeable decrees of God for the constitution of the universe are set forth.

Lactantius AD 310

Divine Institutes 2.9 – I cannot omit here that some erring philosophers say that men and the other animals arose from the earth without any maker.

Lactantius AD 310

Divine Institutes 6.10 – Some [unbelievers] say that the first men spent a nomadic life among the

woods and plains. Men were not united by any mutual bond of speech or justice. They had leaves and grass for their beds, and they used caves and grottos for their dwellings... These things are by no means true. Men did not spring from the ground... Rather, one man was formed by God. And from that one man the whole earth was filled with the human race. There were never men on earth who could not speak.

Lactantius AD 310

Divine Institutes 7.14 – God completed the world and this admirable work of nature in the

space of six days, as is contained in the secrets of Holy Scripture.

The Flood

The ancient church taught a seven-day Creation occurred approximately 4,000 BC. They also believed Noah's flood was a literal event. The chaotic array left by the Flood's massive destruction could cause some to conclude the pagan idea of evolution had occurred. But looking at the evidence, fossils of fish found on mountain tops, for example, would be more than enough proof for a world-wide flood.

Tertullian AD 200

On Pallium 2 – There was a time

when the whole globe underwent a change, because it was overrun by all waters. To this day, marine shells and tritons' horns lay as foreign objects on the mountains.

Lactantius AD 313

Divine Institutes 2.11 – It is agreed by all that the deluge took place for the destruction of wickedness and for its removal from the earth. Now philosophers, poets, and writers of ancient history all assert the same...But it is plain that they have corrupted this, too, as they did the former account. For they were ignorant of both the date of the flood on the earth and who it was

who deserved to be saved.



Ghosts

Paganism teaches that ghosts are the spirits of humans that may walk about the earth and haunt buildings, places, and people. The Bible says Christians go to be “with the Lord” at death and non-Christians immediately wake up in Hades. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria taught there *might* be real ghosts, but in their experience ghosts were always demonic. The rest of the ancient church fathers taught every appearance of a ghost had to be a demon impersonating a dead loved one. But all of the ancient church

fathers taught that a Christian may test a ghost by commanding it to tell the truth; if it is a demon, it will truthfully confess what it really is.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Treatise of the Soul 1.56 – Souls who die prematurely do not have to wait on earth. Souls continue to exist whether their body is buried or not.

Apology 23 – Moreover, if sorcerers call forth ghosts, and even make what seem the souls of the dead to appear; if they put boys to death, in order to get a response from the oracle; if, with their juggling illusions, they make a

pretence of doing various miracles; if they put dreams into people's minds by the power of the angels and demons whose aid they have invited, by whose influence, too, goats and tables (ancient Ouija boards) are made to divine, how much more likely is this power of evil... The wicked spirit, bidden to speak by a follower of Christ, will as readily make the truthful confession that he is a demon.

Treatise of the Soul 1.57 – Magic and sorcery only seem to raise the dead. Only God can really raise the dead. The medium of Endor could not have raised Samuel; it was a trick of her demon. Ghosts can't

appear to people, only demons.

A real ghost would truthfully testify to what he has seen, that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation and the only way to escape hell. All demons offer the same lies saying there is no hell and ghosts walk the earth; there is no judgment after death, and no physical resurrection.

Tertullian, AD 200

Treatise on the Soul 57 – In cases of exorcism the evil spirit affirms himself sometimes to be one of the relatives of the person possessed by him, and sometimes even a god... always making it one of his

chief cares to extinguish the very truth which we are proclaiming: that men may not readily believe that all souls remove to Hades, and that they may overthrow faith in the resurrection and the judgment.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 2.16 – Demons have no power over Christians, must tell truth if commanded by a Christian.

Origen, AD 230

Against Celsus 3:36 – All angels, demons, and other unseen powers are subject to the name of Jesus.

Against Celsus 7:4 – Every

Christian, even new ones, have no problem casting out demons.

Against Celsus 7:5 – Some ghosts may remain on earth, some may be able to prophesy, and some may be good or evil.



Islam

It is interesting to note the ancient Arabians were pagans before the coming of Mohammad. The ancient church fathers testify to what some of those pagan customs were. Today, they are still practices in the false religion of Islam.

Tertullian, AD 207

Veiling of Virgins 17 – The pagan females of Arabia... not only veil their heads but their faces as well.

Arnobius, AD 305

Against the Heathen 6.11 – You laugh because in the ancient times the Persians worshiped rivers... and the Arabians, an unshaped stone.

Islam teaches Jesus did not suffer and die on the cross, someone else took His place.

Ignatius, AD 90

Trallians 10 – Only the unsaved would teach Jesus only seemed to suffer.

Smyraeans 2 – Unbelievers say Jesus only seemed to suffer and seemed to resurrect.

Polycarp, AD 65-100

Philippians 7 – For whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross, is of the devil.



Meditation / Ecstasy

God commands Christians to pray with intelligence. The pagan type of prayer requires using a mantra (vain repetitions) to empty the mind. Jesus forbade eastern form of prayer known as contemplative prayer.

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” *Matthew 6:7*

This eastern type of meditation is found

in many places today. Among them are some martial art schools, practitioners of yoga, and T.M. When the cults of the first few centuries began to use meditation in place of prayer, it produced false prophecies and a false gift of tongues, jerking, and uncontrollable muscle movements. The ancient church fathers called this new kind of meditative prayer, "ecstasy." They taught no Jew or Christian ever prayed in this way and it was not part of any of the real gifts of the Spirit. Only the cults used meditative ecstasy. Christians avoided pagan temples and practices, and did not agree with pagans that the dead were evolving into gods.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 3.23 – Adam was saved, contrary to Tatian. There was no way possible for Adam to become a god.

Against Heresies 2.32 – The Church does not perform anything by means of angelic invocations, or incantations, or by any other wicked curious art; but, directing her prayers to the Lord.

Clement of Alexandria, AD

Stromata book 7.7 – Mature Christians pray only to God, without thought for bodily position or set time and their prayers are not selfish.

Tertullian AD 190

Apology 15 – Christians do not enter pagan temples, even in the daytime.

Apology 28 – Therefore, when we are ordered to sacrifice, we resolutely refuse.

Prescription Against Heretics 42 – [Heretics] hear alike, and pray alike – even with pagans, if any such happen to come among them.. They make it their business not to convert the pagan, but to subvert our people!

Origen AD 248

Against Celsus 7.42 – They

[Christians] cannot tolerate temples, altars, or images.

Against Celsus 7:3 – A true prophet under the control of the Holy Spirit does not fall into ecstasy or madness like the pagans do.

Montanus

According to the testimony of the early church fathers Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Eusebius, Montanus wrote the book *The New Prophecy*, in which he taught the following false ideas:

Montanus, said he, himself, was the “other” comforter that Jesus said would come. He brought with him a new form of prophecy. In this new kind of prophecy, a “vain babbling” was used to alter a person’s consciousness so that he could channel the “Holy Spirit.” We see here again the use of meaningless words, or mantras, to get into this state of consciousness.

The ancient church fathers said no Old Testament or New Testament prophet or teacher ever practiced “vain babbling.” Eusebius describes the “ecstasy” as a false system that does away with the *real* spiritual gifts, since it circumvents the Holy Spirit to reach another spirit.

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 3.11 – Montanists set at nought the gift of the Spirit, which in the latter times has been, by the good pleasure of the Father, poured out upon the human race. They do not admit that aspect of the evangelical dispensation presented by John's Gospel, in which the Lord promised that He would send the Paraclete (John 16); but set aside at once both the Gospel and the prophetic Spirit. Wretched men indeed! Who wish to be pseudo-prophets, forsooth, but who set aside the gift of prophecy from the Church. We must conclude,

moreover, that the Montanists can't admit the Apostle Paul, either. For, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, he speaks expressly of prophetic gifts, and recognizes men and women prophesying in the Church, sinning, therefore, in all these particulars, against the Spirit of God.

Here Tertullian is quoted as saying the “ecstasy” is not being in one's right mind and sometimes being completely unconscious.

Tertullian, AD 195

Against Marcion 4.22 – The
Montanist book, *The New*

Prophecy, teaches when God speaks through man a “grace ecstasy” or “rapture” is imparted whereby he necessarily loses his sensation, because he is overshadowed with the power of God.

Treatise of the Soul 1.45 – Thus in the very beginning sleep was inaugurated by ecstasy: “and God sent an ecstasy upon Adam, and he slept.”

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 5.16-17 – Montanus became beside himself, and being suddenly in a sort of frenzy and ecstasy, he raved, and

began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the Church handed down by tradition from the beginning. Some of those who heard his spurious utterances at that time were indignant, and they rebuked him as one that was possessed, and that was under the control of a demon, and was led by a deceitful spirit, and was distracting the multitude; and they forbade him to talk, remembering the distinction drawn by the Lord and his warning to guard watchfully against the coming of false prophets. But others imagining themselves possessed of

the Holy Spirit and of a prophetic gift, were elated and not a little puffed up; and forgetting the distinction of the Lord, they challenged the mad and insidious and seducing spirit, and were cheated and deceived by him. In consequence of this, he could no longer be held in check, so as to keep silence. Thus by artifice, or rather by such a system of wicked craft, the devil, devising destruction for the disobedient, and being unworthily honored by them, secretly excited and inflamed their understandings which had already become estranged from the true faith.

Ancient church father Eusebius went on to report that the leaders of the church, after studying the “babbling spirit” and the prophecies that did not come to pass, judged it to be the work of a “false and seducing spirit” and they separated themselves from the heretics and withheld communion from them. To prove that a true prophet does not “speak in ecstasy” Eusebius says, in chapter 17:

Eusebius, AD 325

Ecclesiastical History 5.17 – The false prophet falls into an ecstasy which is “purposed ignorance” or “involuntary madness of soul” But they cannot show that one of the old

or one of the new prophets was thus carried away in spirit, not Agabus, or Judas, or Silas, or the daughters of Philip, or Ammia in Philadelphia, or Quadratus, or any others.

Eusebius also reported that the predictions of real prophets would always be 100% accurate, because “the apostle thought it necessary that the prophetic gift should continue in all the Church until the final coming. But they (Monanists) cannot show it.”

So the real gifts of the Spirit (prophecy, healing, miracles, etc.) will continue until the Second Coming of our Lord

Jesus; but those who try to force these experiences end up touching the demonic. One ancient church father reported that's how Montanus and Maximilla died, at the hands of a demon.

Asterius Urbanus,

3.2 – The “maddening spirit” caused Montanus to hang himself. A few years later it caused Maximillia to commit suicide in the same way.



Reincarnation

There are four theories about what happens to a person after death. Atheists believe people simply cease to exist after death. Cults and false religions teach that the spirit either goes on to a higher plane of existence or comes back to earth and is reborn as a newborn baby. (This is called reincarnation.) Christians believe in the resurrection of the physical body. The Bible and the ancient church fathers taught no one can be a Christian unless they believe in the Resurrection and reject the other three as false teachings.

Justin Martyr, AD 165

Dialogue 5 – The soul is created, but does not die; but a physical death goes either to a better place or a worse place.

Tatian, AD 166

Greeks 6 – We did not exist before we were born and we do not reincarnate. There will be a physical resurrection of the body.

Athenagoras, AD 177

36 – Christians do not believe the soul dissolves or in reincarnation. [In chapter 36 this author starts a long discussion on the physical resurrection of the body.]

Irenaeus, AD 178

Against Heresies 2.29 – Christians believe in the resurrection of the physical body.

Against Heresies 2.33 – Reincarnation is absurd.

Against Heresies 2.34 – Souls are only created once, are immortal, and can be recognized, like Abraham and Lazarus.

Against Heresies 2.34.2 – The Lord has taught with very great fullness that souls continue to exist. They do not pass from body to body; rather, they preserve the same form as that of the body to which they were adapted.

Clement of Alexandria, AD 192-202

Stromata 3.14 – Souls do not pre-exist.

Commodianus, AD 240

Against the Gods of the Heathens
26 – There is an eternal hell.

Tertullian, AD 190-210

Against Marcion 5.9&10 –
Christians will physically
resurrect.

Treatise of the Soul 1.27 – Soul
and body are conceived at the same
time.

Treatise of the Soul 1.28-32 – The
Pythagorean doctrine of the
transmigration of souls is false.

Treatise of the Soul 1.58 – Souls

do not sleep after death, but go to Hades.

Treatise of the Soul 1.56 – Souls who die prematurely do not have to wait on earth. Souls go on whether the body is buried or not.

Minucius Felix,

35 – Unrighteous men have eternal punishment.

Origen, AD 230

8:25 and 30 – Christians do not believe in reincarnation.

Commentary on John 6.7 – Reincarnation (transcorporation) is a false doctrine.

Commentary on Matthew 10.20 – “Transmigration of souls into bodies” is a false dogma.

Commentary on Matthew 13.1 – John the Baptist was not the reincarnation of Elijah the prophet. There is no such thing as reincarnation.

Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 3.18 – There is no reincarnation.

Justin Martyr, AD 160

Dialogue with Trypho 30 – They [Gnostic cults] say there is no resurrection of the dead. Rather, they say when they die, their souls

are taken to heaven, never again to return physically. Do not imagine that they are Christians.

Athenagoras, AD 177

Chapter 36 – Christians do not believe the soul dissolves at death or in reincarnation.



Yoga

The word philosopher means “lover of wisdom.” The ancient church fathers referred to Hindu yogis (practitioners of yoga) as gymnosophists. The word “gymnosophist” is made up of two Greek words, “gym” meaning a workout or exercise and “sophist” meaning wisdom or a wise person. The word “gymnosophist” then means physical wisdom or dynamic meditation. Most people today see nothing wrong with yoga because they see it as just a stretching exercise. But in reality, it is an occultic form of dynamic meditation

coupled with stretching. The ancient church had nothing bad to say about physical exercise.

Tertullian AD 197

Apology 42 – We are not like Indian Brahman, who practice the dark art of the gymnosophists, who dwell in the woods and exile themselves from ordinary human life.

Clement of Alexandria AD 195

Stromata 1.15 – The Indian gymnosophists are as the other barbarian philosophers. They are either Brahmins, Sarmanae, or Buddhists.

In ancient times the eastern form of meditation where practitioners empty their minds was called sorcery. For more information on meditation, see the section on Paganism. For full details and complete descriptions of the Canaanite forms of sorcery, see the book *Ancient Paganism*.



The Gospel

On the issues of sin, salvation, and repentance the teaching of the ancient church was consistent.

1. The soul of each human is immortal.
2. Every human is a sinner and will spend eternity in hell unless they are saved.
3. Salvation is only by believing and obeying the teaching of Jesus Christ.
4. In the last days, the teaching of sin and repentance will be replaced

by “man’s wisdom,”
or as we call it, psychology.

Irenaeus AD 177

Against Heresies 1.10 – What the church believes: One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His future manifestation

from heaven. Then He will raise up anew of all flesh of the whole human race. The angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, will be cast into everlasting fire. Those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning of their Christian course, and others from the date of their repentance, will obtain everlasting glory.

Against Heresies 3.11 – Montanists set at nought the gift of the Spirit, which in the latter times has been, by the good pleasure of the Father,

poured out upon the human race, do not admit that aspect of the evangelical dispensation presented by John's Gospel, in which the Lord promised that He would send the Paraclete [John 16]; but set aside at once both the Gospel and the prophetic Spirit. Wretched men indeed! who wish to be pseudo-prophets, forsooth, but who set aside the gift of prophecy from the Church; acting like the Encratitae who, on account of such as come in hypocrisy, hold themselves aloof from the communion of the brethren. We must conclude, moreover, that the Montanists cannot admit the Apostle Paul,

either. For, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, he speaks expressly of prophetic gifts, and recognizes men and women prophesying in the Church, sinning, therefore, in all these particulars, against the Spirit of God.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Against Marcion 1.21 – Some disputed about eating idol sacrifices, others about the veiled dress of women, others again about marriage and divorce, and some even about the hope of the resurrection; but about God no one disputed.

Bardesanes AD 222

The brethren in Gaul do not take males for wives, nor do those in Persia take two wives. Those in Judea do not circumcise themselves. Our sisters among the Geli do not consort with strangers. Our brethren in Persia do not take their daughters for wives. Christians in Media do not abandon their dead, bury them alive, or give them as food to the dogs. Those in Edessa do not kill their wives or sisters for fornication, but rather withdraw from them and give them over to the judgment of God. Those in Hatra do not stone thieves to death. In short, wherever they are,

the laws of various countries do not hinder them from obeying the law of their Christ.



Immortality of the Soul

The ancient church taught souls do not pre-exist; they are created at conception, like the body.

Here are some quotes from the early church about the soul and life after death:

1. Souls are created at birth (do not pre-

4. Souls enter either paradise or Hades

5. No one has been cast

exist)

2. Souls
do not cease
at death

3. There is
no purgatory

into Gehenna,
yet.

6. Souls
may, or may
not, stay on
earth for a
time.

Irenaeus AD 178

Fragment 49 – The body and soul are created at the same time.

Against Heresies 5.27 – Good things are eternal and without end with God, and therefore the loss of these things is also eternal and never-ending.

Against Heresies 2.34 – Souls are only created once, are immortal,

and can be recognized, like Abraham and Lazarus.

Hippolytus AD 170-236

Refutation of all Heresies 9.24 – The Sadducees abolish fate, acknowledge that God does nothing that is wicked, nor exercises providence over (earthly concerns); but contend that the choice between good and evil lies within the power of men. They deny that there is a resurrection not only of flesh, but also they suppose that the soul does not continue after death, but man and animals pass into non-existence.

Against Plato 1 - Hades is beneath

the earth and contains paradise [still there] abode of the wicked and Gehenna [no one yet has been cast in].

Clement of Alexandria AD 192-202

Stromata 5.14 – The soul is immortal.

Macarius Chrysocephalus

Fragment – All souls are immortal, even those of the wicked... For they are punished with the endless vengeance of quenchless fire. Since they do not die, it is impossible for them to have an end put to their misery.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Apology 48 – Gehenna, is a reservoir of secret fire under the earth for purposes of punishment.

Against Marcion 2.8 – Man has an immortal soul coming from God, but it is not God.

Treatise of the Soul 1.4 – The soul is created and is corporeal. [Think about the rich man in torment.]

Treatise of the Soul 1.5 – When the soul leaves the body, the body dies.

Treatise of the Soul 1.27 – Soul and body are conceived at the same time.

Treatise of the Soul 1.37 – The embryo, therefore, becomes a human being in the womb from the

moment that its form is completed. The law of Moses, indeed, punishes with due penalties the man who shall cause abortion. The soul is imparted at conception.

Treatise of the Soul 1.56 – Souls who die prematurely do not have to wait on earth. Souls go on whether the body is buried or not.

Apology 46 – For it [punishment in Hell] is not merely long-enduring; rather, it is everlasting.

Commodianus AD 240

Against the Gods of the Heathens 24 – [Non-Christians] will be tormented in Gehenna for all time.

Against the Gods of the Heathens

26 – Hell is eternal.

Origen AD 230

Of First Principles 1:2:6 – The doctrine of emanations (reincarnation) is false.

Against Celsus 2:60 – The soul exists apart from the body after death.

Against Celsus 3:22 – Souls are immortal.

Against Celsus 6:24-25 – Celsus says that the Christians teach a purgatory for purification, among other Gnostic things. Origen refutes them all but seems to have never heard of a place for purification. After researching the Scriptures, he

speculates there may be such a place, and connects it with Gehenna in the Valley of Hinnom.

Lactantius AD 285

Divine Institutes 2.13 – After death we have either immortality or suffering of eternal pain. Animals just dissolve at death. Physical death is separation of body and soul.

Divine Institutes 7.8 – The soul is immortal.

Divine Institutes 7.11 – There is an eternal hell with eternal torments.

Workmanship of God 19 – The soul is from God, not produced by mother and father like the body.

Polycarp AD 120

Epistle of Polycarp 9 – Martyrs are in the presence of the Lord, with whom they also suffered.

Justin Martyr AD 160

First Apology 28 – Christ foretold that Satan would be sent into the fire with his host, along with the men who follow him, and they will be punished for an endless duration.

Dialogue with Trypho 130 – We know from Isaiah that the members of those who have transgressed will be consumed by the worm and unquenchable fire, remaining

immortal. As a result, they become a spectacle to all flesh.

Dialogue 5 – The soul is created, but does not die; but at physical death goes either to heaven or hell.

Tatian AD 160

ECF 1.71 – We who are now easily susceptible to death will afterwards receive immortality with either enjoyment or with pain.

Markus Minucius AD 200

34 – Some [pagans] prefer to believe that they will become nothing after death. They would rather be all together extinguished, rather than restored for the purpose of punishment. There is neither

limit nor end to their torments.

Cyprian, AD 250

Treatise 7.13 – He may fear to die, whom on his departure from this world eternal flames will torment with never-ending punishments.

Athenagoras AD 177

Chapter 36 – Athenagoras starts a long discussion on the physical resurrection of the body and says Christians do not believe in reincarnation or that the soul dissolves at death.

213



Salvation

The ancient church fathers taught salvation was to be found only in Jesus Christ and that no one of any religion other than Christianity, can be saved. This includes today's false religions like Buddhism, Islam, Paganism, Hinduism, and all their offshoots. No cult can offer true salvation to its members. Cults are defined as groups that claim to be Christian but deny the doctrine of the Trinity. See the section on the Deity of Jesus Christ for full details. In addition to this, the ancient church taught:

□ God does not compel to salvation.

□ Men are not born Christians.

□ Men and angels have free will.

□ Original Sin.
(Were born

□ True faith produces repentance.

□ The Holy Spirit opens the minds of believers.

□ No one is predestined for hell or predestined for heaven.

sinner.)

□ All sin is forgiven when you repent.

□ No one pays for their own sin.

□ Salvation is a free gift that is started by God, then accepted by free will.

“Therefore repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.”
Acts 3:19

Clement of Rome AD 30-100

Corinthians 32 – And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Mathetes AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 7 – Jesus came to persuade, not compel us to salvation, because violence has no part in the character of God.

Epistle to Diognetus 11 – He

[Mathetes] was taught directly by the apostles. Jesus is uncreated [from everlasting].

Justin Martyr AD 110-165

Dialogue 88 – Men and angels have free will. The human race from Adam had fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent; so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

Dialogue 141 – God created men and angels free to do righteousness; possessing reason, that they may know by Whom they are created, and through Whom they, not existing formerly, do now exist; and with a law that they should be

judged by Him, if they do anything contrary to right reason; and of ourselves we, men and angels, shall be convicted of having acted sinfully, unless we repent beforehand. But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

Titian AD 166

Greeks 11 – Our free will enslaved us to sin [Romans 7] but we can choose to follow righteousness now.

Irenaeus AD 178

Against Heresies 4.6 – Those who are lost, are lost because they have chosen it for themselves. Those who truly believe do the will of the Father.

Against Heresies 4.14 – If you do not observe the Decalogue, you have no salvation. [If you don't even try to follow moral law, you are not a real Christian.]

Against Heresies 4.37 – God made man a free agent from the beginning. This is the ancient law of human liberty, for there is no coercion with God. In man, as well as in angels, He has placed the

power of choice. The Gnostic teaching that some men are born good, others are born bad, is wrong. Everyone has the power to reject the Gospel. God has free will, and we do, too, because we are made in His image. God preserved the will of man free and under his own control. We will be brought to perfection in the Resurrection.

Against Heresies 4.39 – Man has the ability to distinguish good from evil. He has the power by his own free will to perform God's commandments. This is taught in Romans 2. God does not compel people to salvation; so, those who

have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.

Against Heresies 5.11 – In Galatians 5, not “inheriting the kingdom of God” means he did not receive the Spirit of God, and shall not have power to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Clement of Alexandria AD 192-202

Stromata 2.3 – Christians teach saving faith is a gift that starts with God and is accepted by free choice.

Stromata 2.4 – The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift [started by] God. True faith produces repentance.

Stromata 4.24 – Christians teach all is forgiven when you repent. God would only chastise to teach you to repent. You do not have to pay for your sin.

Stromata 5.3 – Faith is the rational assent of the soul exercising free will.

Stromata 5.12 – The Holy Spirit opens the minds of believers.

Stromata 7.2 – Jesus persuades, but never compels us, to salvation.

Tertullian AD 190-210

Apology 18 – Men are made, not born, Christians.

Against Marcion 2.23 – It is not the mark of a good God to condemn

beforehand persons who have not yet deserved condemnation. Who is so faultless among men, that God could always have him in His choice, and never be able to reject him? Or who, on the other hand, is so void of any good work, that God could reject him forever, and never be able to choose him?

Valentinians 1.29 – The Valentinians taught, contrary to Scripture, that some people are damned, others have a chance for salvation, and still others are predestined for salvation.

Valentinians 1.30 – The Valentinians taught, contrary to Scripture, those who are

predestined don't have to practice good works, but the middle class does.

On Repentance 5 - Sin is never to be returned to after repentance.

Against Marcion 2.24 – In Greek, the word for “repentance” is formed, not from the confession of sin, but from a change of mind.

Resurrection of the Flesh 7 – There is not a soul that can at all procure salvation unless it believes while it is still in the flesh.

Origen AD 230

Of First Principles 1:4 – One can lose salvation gradually, but not by accident.

Against Celsus 7.50 – Jesus’
sacrifice was for newborn infants
also, since no one is born free from
sin. [See psalm 57:3.]



Sin

Today some denominations argue what is, and is not, sin. Some sins they want to practice are not really sins anymore! Under the section of dispensationalism, we learned that the laws of Moses, including circumcision, the Sabbath, and animal sacrifices, were not binding on Christians. In the section on Moral Issues, we learned that abortion, euthanasia, and homosexuality were sins for all people, for all time. In this section we will explore what the ancient church taught about sin in general.

1. Christians follow all the laws of their land unless a law contradicts God's law given in the New Testament.
2. There are sins willfully committed, and there are sins committed in ignorance.
3. We all sin because we are born with a sin nature.
4. When Christians sin, we repent.
5. God chastises His children to lead them to repent.
6. No one ever pays for their sins. Only Christ can do that.

Ignatius AD 30-107

Ephesians 14 - No man truly making a profession of faith, sins; nor does he that possesses love, hate anyone. The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognized by their conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end.

Mathetes AD 130

Epistle to Diognetus 5 – Christians follow the customs of their native lands in regard to marriage, food, clothing, and conduct. They marry and have children, but they never

have abortions. They obey all the laws of their country.

Justin Martyr AD 165

Dialogue 88 – Men and angels have free will. The human race, from Adam, had fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent; so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

Irenaeus AD 177

Against Heresies 4.14 – If you do not observe the Decalogue [natural law], you have no salvation. [If you don't even try to follow moral law, you are not a real Christian.]

Clement of Alexandria AD 192

Instructor 1.13 – Everything contrary to right reason is sin.

Instructor 2.1 – Avoid overeating.

Instructor 2.5 – People who by their actions or speech seem to be senseless, should be removed from the congregation.

Instructor 2.6 – Christians don't use obscene language, mocking words or looks, slander, or joking that may lead to anger.

Instructor 2.13 – Guard against excessive use of jewelry.

Instructor 3.11 – Wearing gold and fine clothes is permissible, if clean and not taken too far.

Stromata 2.12 – Repentance is

torturing yourself for your sins.

Stromata 2.14 – Involuntary sins should not be punished.

Stromata 2.15 – There are three kinds of sin: a mistake, which is done in ignorance, [Hurting someone by mistake is a sin that is never imputed, so there is no need for repentance or forgiveness], a sin which is doing something for your own pleasure, it must be repented of or God will chastise you, [ie. sex or drunkenness. Compare to Hebrews 13], and a crime, which is trying to hurt someone or fight against God's kingdom. [Sacrilege or murder.]

Stromata 4.24 – Christians teach

all is forgiven when you repent. God would only chastise to teach you to repent. You do not have to pay for your sin.

Lactantius AD 285

Divine Institutes 2.19 – Christians do not bow to images.

Divine Institutes 3.18 – Suicide is a sin.

Divine Institutes 6.13 – There are unknown sins.



Psychology

The ancient church was premillennial, and therefore taught the end time church would apostatize. The ancient church fathers predicted some of the signs of the church leaving the true faith; they predicted this end time church would eliminate the concepts of sin and repentance. The only way this can be done and the deluded people would still have a form of godliness, would be to introduce a form of worldly wisdom that puts the blame for sin on someone or something other than themselves.

The apostle Paul referred to this type of teaching as “vain philosophy;” and the ancient church taught Stoic, Platonic, Epicurean, Aristotelian philosophies were never to be mixed with Christianity. Today we call these forms of reasoning, psychology. Any form of counseling that does not base all of our problems on our inherited sin nature and biblical principles would fall into this category.

Victorinus, AD 240

Commentary on Revelation 2 –
[The end time apostate Church will] allow fornication on a “pretext for mercy,” granting “unlawful peace” over new forms

of prophecy.

Tertulian, AD 200

Resurrection of the Flesh 2 – There is even within the confines of God's church a sect that is more nearly allied to the Epicureans than to the prophets.

Resurrection of the Flesh 3 – Take away from the heretics the wisdom that they share with the pagans, and let them support their inquiries from Scripture alone. They will then be unable to hold their ground.

Prescription Against Heretics 7 – What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What agreement is there between the academy and the

Church? ...Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition!

Apology 47 – Some of their brood, with their opinions, have even adulterated our new-given Christian revelation, and corrupted it into a system of philosophic doctrines.

Theophilus, AD 180

47 – Some of the philosophers say there is no God; or, if there is, they say that He cares for no one but Himself. And the folly of Epicurus and Chrysippus has set forth these views.

Lactanius, AD 310

Divine Institutes 2.3 –
Philosophers have reached the
height of human wisdom, in
understanding that which does *not*
exist.



Spiritual Gifts

Denominations are divided today on whether or not God still gives spiritual gifts to His church. The ancient church taught spiritual gifts would continue until the Second Coming. However, they warned about counterfeit gifts creeping into the church from false teachers and false prophets.

The ancient church fathers used the term “perfection,” to mean “complete” or “mature,” usually when referring to spiritual gifts.

In this section we will chart out what spiritual gifts were still in use and when they occurred. We will see all the gifts continued well past AD 350. We have already covered false prophecy and the false tongues the ancient church warned us about. See the section on Paganism for full details on the ecstasy.



213

Gifts

The Ancient Church Fathers taught the spiritual gifts listed in the Scriptures were to continue until the “that which is perfect” of 1 Corinthians 13 comes. The consistent teaching of the ancient church was that the “perfect thing” is the Second Coming of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Throughout the first four hundred years, each father kept teaching that the gifts were still being exercised by Christians. None of the ancient church fathers ever taught otherwise. The following chart shows when each gift was specifically mentioned in history.

The list only stops at AD 350 because I have not researched beyond that point in time.

| Gift | 165 | 177 | 200 | 240 | 280 | 3 |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Gifts (in general) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Prophetical | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Exorcism | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Dead Raised | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |
| Foreknowledge | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Languages | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Healing | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Miracles | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Continuance of gifts throughout the centuries.



Scripture

“...it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye

should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Jude 1:3-4*

Church Fathers

Justin Martyr AD 165

Dialogue 82 – The prophetic gifts are only manifested among Christians and still continue.

Dialogue 85 – Jewish exorcists

make use of craft when they exorcise, even as the Gentiles do, employing fumigations and incantations.

Dialogue 51, 52 – Jewish prophets ceased after John.

Irenaeus AD 177

Against Heresies 2.31 – Christians still heal the blind, deaf, and chase away all sorts of demons. Occasionally the dead are raised. Gnostics and other non-Christians can't chase away demons – except those demons that are sent into others by themselves, if they can even do so much as this.

Against Heresies 2.32 – Some Christians do certainly and truly drive out devils, so that those who have thus been cleansed from evil spirits frequently both believe in Christ, and join themselves to the Church. Others have foreknowledge of things to come: they see visions, and utter prophetic expressions. Others still heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and they are made whole. Yea, moreover, as I have said, the dead even have been raised up, and remained among us for many years. The Church does not perform anything by means of angelic invocations, or incantations, or by any other

wicked curious art; but directing her prayers to the Lord.

Against Heresies 4.9 – In 1 Corinthians 13, “that which is perfect” and “face to face” refer to the Second Coming.

Against Heresies 5.6 – Those who are “perfect” are those who have received the Spirit of God, and who, through the Spirit of God, do speak in all languages, as He, Himself, used also to speak. In like manner we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of

men, and declare the mysteries of God, whom also the apostle terms “spiritual,” they being spiritual because they partake of the Spirit, and seek spiritual understanding to become purely spiritual.

Tertullian AD 200

Apology 23 – Moreover, if sorcerers call forth ghosts, and even make what seem the souls of the dead to appear; if they put boys to death, in order to get a response from the oracle; if, with their juggling illusions, they make a pretence of doing various miracles; if they put dreams into people's minds by the power of the angels

and demons whose aid they have invited, by whose influence, too, goats and tables are made to divine, – how much more likely is this power of evil... The wicked spirit, bidden to speak by a follower of Christ, will as readily make the truthful confession that he is a demon.

Apology 27 – The whole power of demons and kindred spirits is subject to us.

Apology 35 – The arts of astrologers, soothsayers, augurs, and magicians were made known by the angels who sinned, and are forbidden by God.

Against Marcion 4.22 – The

Montanist book, *The New Prophecy*, teaches when God speaks through man, a “grace ecstasy or rapture” is imparted whereby “he necessarily loses his sensation because he is overshadowed with the power of God.”

Against Marcion 5.8 –Montanus teaches that the gifts of the Spirit accompany “ecstasy” or “rapture,” as it is called.

Soul's Testimony 1.3 – Only Christians can expel demons from people.

Treatise of the Soul 1.45 – [Montanists taught] in the very beginning, sleep was inaugurated

by ecstasy: “and God sent an ecstasy upon Adam, and he slept.”

Origen AD 240

Against Celsus 1:67 – Christians still expel demons and heal the sick.

Against Celsus 2:8 – Christian still do miracles and prophesy.

Against Celsus 7:3 – A true prophet under the control of the Holy Spirit does not fall into ecstasy or madness like the pagans do.

Against Celsus 7:4 – Prophets become clearer of mind. Every Christian, even new ones, have no problem casting out demons.

Against Celsus 7:8 – Since the time of Christ there has been no Jewish prophets, only Christian ones.

Against Celsus 7:9 – The spirits speaking through the pagan prophets claim to be God, but their speech is “strange, fanatical, and quite unintelligible words, of which no rational person can find the meaning: for so dark are they, as to have no meaning at all; but they give occasion to every fool or impostor to apply them to suit his own purposes.”

Against Celsus 7:10 – True prophets speak the plain truth and sometimes in parables and enigmas, but spiritual Christians can always

figure out the riddles. Satan will counterfeit with riddles that have no real meaning.

Against Celsus 7:11 – Celsus uses some quotes from Isaiah and Ezekiel to try to prove they spoke unintelligibly.

Archelaus AD 280

Acts of Manes 37 – The gifts still operate, prophecies, and tongues, in all the languages of the world.

Ancient Syriac Documents

Teaching of the Twelve Apostles ECF 7.667 – speaking of the day of Pentecost -- ...according to the tongue every one of them had

received, so did he prepare himself to go to that country in which that tongue was spoken.



Perfection

The ancient church taught no one could be sinless in this life. However, each of us can be totally dedicated to the Lord, perfect in our attitudes toward the Lord. Christians who manifested spiritual gifts were said to be “perfect” in those gifts. People who were healed, stayed healed. Those who prophesied were one hundred percent accurate in their predictions.

Ignatius, 30-107 AD

Ephesians 14 – No man truly

making a profession of faith sins; nor does he that possesses love, hate anyone. The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognized by their conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end.

Irenaeus, 178 AD

Against Heresies 2.28 – Perfect knowledge cannot be attained in the present life.

Against Heresies 2.32 – Gnostics try to pass over to the state of perfection. Some Christians do

certainly and truly drive out devils, so that those who have thus been cleansed from evil spirits frequently both believe in Christ, and join themselves to the Church. Others have foreknowledge of things to come: they see visions, and utter prophetic expressions. Others still, heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and they are made whole. Yea, moreover, as I have said, the dead even have been raised up, and remained among us for many years. The Church does not perform anything by means of angelic invocations, or incantations, or by any other wicked curious art; but, by

directing her prayers to the Lord.

Against Heresies 3.12 – The spirit came with prophecy and tongues, and Peter said it fulfilled Joel's prophecy. When we say the apostles were perfected, we mean their writings are inspired; therefore, one hundred percent accurate.

Against Heresies 4.38 – Man was not created perfect. Men who try to perfect themselves invent gods or systems, then become trapped in those systems they invent, never coming to the complete knowledge of the One True God. Romans 3 teaches every group of man – pagan, Gentile, and Jewish became

entangled in the system they had.

Against Heresies 5.6 – Those who are “perfect” are those who have received the Spirit of God, and who through the Spirit of God do speak in all languages, as He used Himself also to speak. In like manner, we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God, whom also the apostle terms “spiritual,” they being spiritual because they partake of the Spirit, and seek spiritual understanding to

become purely spiritual. The soul, body, and spirit are three separate parts of man, and in order to be whole and perfect, he must be in possession of all three and in union with the Holy Spirit.

Clement of Alexandria, 192-202 AD

Stromata 4.19 – Men and women both can be perfect in their faith. Examples are Judith and Esther, they acted on their faith.

Stromata 4.20-21 – It is not possible to be completely sinless. Christian perfection is the attitude of striving to be more like Christ.

Secondly, those who have a spiritual gift are said to be perfect in that gift. Prophecies are one hundred percent accurate and healings are permanent. No one is perfect in all.

Stromata 4.22 – Mature Christians don't focus on avoiding evil [talking about it a lot] but on doing good. They do not do good out of fear of punishment or promise of reward, but because it is the right thing to do. [Later this will be twisted to mean more good works outweigh the bad.] When evil comes, they don't recompense it, but just keep doing good. This is being “perfect, like your Heavenly

Father.”

Lactantius, 285 AD

Divine Institutes 4.23 – If anyone teaches it is possible to be perfect [sinless], let him first prove it by demonstrating it in his life. Then we will listen.



Text of Scripture

Today there are primarily two families of Scripture manuscripts: the Received Text, called the Textus Receptus, which is what the King James and New King James Bibles are based on and the Critical Text, which is what most of the other English Bibles, (NIV, NASB, and others) are based on.

In modern times the Critical Text has been chosen over the Received Text because, overall, it is shorter. The thinking is that a text closest to the original would have less words per

sentence. Therefore, any text that is longer, must be dated later in time. The longer part of the text would be classified as an interpolation, meaning someone centuries later added what he wanted us to think was real Scripture to the text.

Many times you will see notes at the bottom of a page in a study Bible stating that all or part of a certain verse was not found in the earliest manuscripts. This is true because the oldest manuscripts are the corrupted Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. See Heretical Manuscripts for more information.

The ancient church taught a very

different view. They taught the Scriptures were complete and Gnostics cults were responsible for cutting out portions of the complete Scriptures that they did not like.

Heretics:

The three main heretics we are concerned with are Marcion, Tatian, and the Ebionites. Each created their own canons of Scripture by cutting out portions of Scripture to get rid of evidence that contradicted their teachings.

Passages of Scripture that were cut away show us what doctrines each of these heretics did not like. If we find an

ancient manuscript or codex that follows that tradition, it is very possible that it was produced by the followers of those particular cults. It is also possible that they may have tried to add to portions of Scripture by adding other books to the original twenty-seven of the New Testament, such as *Second Clement* or one of the fake gospels of Paul, Judas, or Thomas.

Canons of the Heretics

| Marcion | Tatian | The Ebionites |
|---|---------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected the Old Testament | | |

□ Used a cut up version of Luke with references to Jesus being the Creator removed.

□ Used cut up versions of some of Paul's epistles.

□ Created the *Gospel of Paul*.

□ Used a cut up version of the harmony of the gospels called the *Diatessaron*, with references to Christ's divinity removed.

□ Rejected all the epistles of Paul.

□ Used *Second Clement*.

□ Used a cut up version of the gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, called the *Gospel of the Hebrews*.

□ Rejected all the epistles of Paul.

Marcion's Canon

The ancient church fathers wrote that Marcion's canon of Scripture did not contain the Old Testament. It only contained the Gospel of Luke with the first four chapters removed and eliminated all references to Jesus' divinity or connection with the God of the Old Testament. His canon of scripture also contained Romans, 1st & 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thessalonians, Philemon, and Laodiceans, all tailored to fit Marcion's teachings. From Paul's epistles, he removed all references to God creating the world, and Jesus as His son, and any predictions of Jesus' birth. He changed Luke 2:33 to state "his father" instead of

“Joseph,” trying to imply Joseph was the biological father of Jesus.

The Ebionite Canon

The canon of the Ebonite cult contained only one gospel, the *Gospel of the Hebrews*. This was a Hebrew version of the gospel of Matthew with parts removed in similar fashion to Marcion's canon. In it, Mary was not a “virgin,” but a “young woman.” They removed references to Jesus being the Son of God, and changed the text in some places to make Joseph Jesus' biological father. They rejected all the epistles of the apostle Paul, whom they called an apostate from the Law.

The Encratite Canon

Tatian, the founder of the Encritites, created the first harmony of the gospels and called it the Diatessaron; but when he apostatized and founded his Gnostic cult, he began cutting parts out of his harmony. In their canon, all references to Jesus' divinity and pre-existence were removed, as well as all the epistles of Paul.

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 3.11.7 – The Ebionites, who use only Matthew's Gospel, are refuted out of this very same work, making false suppositions in regard to the Lord. But Marcion, mutilating the Gospel

according to Luke, is still proved to be a blasphemer of the only existing God, from those pages which he still retains. Those, again, who separate Jesus from the Christ, alleging that Christ remained impassible, but that it was Jesus who suffered, prefer the Gospel of Mark. However, if they read it with the love of truth, they would have their errors rectified. Those, moreover, who follow Valentinus, make copious use of the Gospel according to John to illustrate their conjunctions. However, they, too, will be proved to be totally in error.

Tertullian, AD 200

Against Marcion 5.21 – Macrion rejected First and Second Timothy and began to tamper with the other epistles.

Conclusion

We will learn in the next sections that the long form of most of the verses in question are quoted in the ancient church fathers' sermons, and that the "oldest" manuscripts have heretical books placed in their canons, with numerous spelling and other errors in the text. In short, there is no reason not to go with the Textus Receptus for the Greek New Testament.

It is my opinion, that since the current scholarship wants to view the manuscript with the fewest amount of words as closer to the original, in the near future Satan will cause a corrupted manuscript from the followers of Marcion, Ebion, or Tatian to be dug up. Since it will be notably shorter than anything else, it will be heralded as the original. I think this shorter version will be used by the Antichrist to “prove” Jesus was not God, or born of a virgin, and that there is no hell. I believe such a manuscript will be the basis of the Antichrist’s new Christianity.



Missing Verses

The following is a list of some verses that are found in the Textus Receptus but are not found in whole or in part in the Critical Text (oldest manuscripts). Along with these are quotes from the church fathers showing that they knew of the Textus Receptus version of Scripture. If only part of the verse is missing in the Critical Text, then the missing part will be in bold in the KJV quote.

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|--|
| Matthew | Matthew | Luke 4:4* | |
|---------|---------|-----------|--|

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| 1:25* | 25:13* | Luke 4:18 | Acts 9:5-6 |
| Matthew 6:13 | Matthew | Luke | Romans 14:9 |
| Matthew 9:13 | 27:35 | 24:40* | Ephesians |
| Matthew | Mark 1:1 | John | 3:9* |
| 16:13* | Mark 2:17 | 3:15* | Ephesians |
| Matthew | Mark 9:29 | John 5:3* | 3:14* |
| 18:11* | Mark 9:44 | John 7:53- | 1 Peter 1:22* |
| Matthew | Mark | 8:11 | 1 Peter 4:1* |
| 19:16-17 | 11:26* | Acts | 1 John 5:7-8 |
| Matthew 20:16 | Mark | 2:30* | Revelation |
| Matthew | 16:9-20 | Acts 8:37 | 11:17* |
| 23:14* | | | |

* no quotes from the ancient fathers available

Matthew 6:13

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.” *Matthew 6:13*

Didache

8 – Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for Yours is the power and the glory forever and ever."

Tatian, AD 165

Diatessaron 9.36 – And bring us not into temptations, but deliver us from the evil one. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Matthew 9:13

“But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not

sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance.**” *Matthew 9:13*

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 5:13 – When He chose His twelve apostles to preach His Gospel, they were sinners above all, showing He came “not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Justin Martyr, AD 165

First Apology 15 – His words being, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Matthew 19:16-17

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, **Good Master**, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, **Why callest thou me good?** *There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*” *Matthew 19:16-17*

Hippolytus, AD 220

Refutation of All Heresies 5.32 – He says that this one alone is good, and that what is spoken by the Saviour is declared concerning this

one: “Why do you say that am good? One is good, my Father which is in the heavens.”

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 5.11 – Our Lord and Saviour, hearing Himself on one occasion addressed as “Good Master,” referring him who used it to His own Father, said, “Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God the Father.”

Matthew 20:16

“So the last shall be first, and the first last: **for many be called, but**

few chosen.” *Matthew 20:16*

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 4.27.4 – God showed Himself not well pleased in many instances towards those who sinned, so also in the latter, “many are called, but few are chosen.”

Matthew 27:35

“And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: **that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.**” *Matthew 27:35*

Tertullian, AD 190

Jews 10 – “Upon my vesture they did cast (the) lot” just as the other [outrages] which you were to commit on Him were foretold, – all which He, actually and thoroughly suffering, suffered not for any evil action of His own, but “that the Scriptures from the mouth of the prophets might be fulfilled.”

Mark 1:1

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, **the Son of God**”
Mark 1:1

Irenaeus, AD 177

Against Heresies 3.16.3 –
Wherefore Mark also says: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets.”

Mark 2:17

“When Jesus heard [it], he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance.**”

Barnabas, AD 100

Epistle of Barnabas 5:13 – When He chose His twelve apostles to preach His Gospel, they were sinners above all, showing He came “not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Mark 9:29

“And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer **and fasting.**” *Mark 9:29*

Origen, AD 240

Commentary on Matthew 13.7 – But let us also attend to this, “This kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting.”

Clement of Rome, AD 90

Epistle on Virginity 1.12 –
...according to the teaching of our Lord, who hath said: “This kind goeth not out but by fasting and prayer.”

Mark 16:9-20

“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.” *Mark 16:19*

Irenaeus, AD 170

Against Heresies 3.10 – Also, towards the conclusion of his

Gospel, Mark says: “So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.”

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” *Mark 16:17-18*

Apostolic Constitutions

8.1 – With good reason did He say to all of us together, when we were

perfected concerning those gifts which were given from Him by the Spirit: “Now these signs shall follow them that have believed in my name: they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall by no means hurt them: they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

Luke 4:18

“The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the

brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised”
Luke 4:18

Peter of Alexandria, AD 260

Canonical Epistle 2 – The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised...

John 7:53-8:11

John 7:53-8:11 is the passage recording Jesus' teaching about the woman caught in adultery. In *De Adult. Conj.*, ii. 6, 7, Augustine stated that this passage was cut out of one manuscript on the orders of a certain king. The king believed that certain people might try to use this passage to indulge in adultery.

Acts 8:37

“And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” *Acts 8:37*

Irenaeus, AD 170

Against Heresies 3.12.8 – [Philip declared] that this was Jesus, and that the Scripture was fulfilled in Him; as did also the believing eunuch himself: and, immediately requesting to be baptized, he said, “I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God.”

Acts 9:5-6

“And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: **[it is] hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and**

astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” *Acts 9:5-6*

Apostolic Constitutions

8.5 – ...the subordinate persons should tyrannically assume to themselves the functions belonging to their superiors, forming a new scheme of laws to their own mischief, not knowing that “it is hard for them to kick against the pricks.”

Romans 14:9

“For to this end Christ both died, **and rose**, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.” *Romans 14:9*

Origen, AD 240

Against Celsus 2.65 – I think, moreover, that the following statement regarding Him has an apologetic value in reference to our subject, “For to this end Christ died, and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the “dead and living.”

1 John 5:7-8

“For there are three that bear

record in heaven, **the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth,** the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” *1 John 5:7-8*

Cyprian, AD 250

Unity 1.6 – The Lord says, "I and the Father are one;" and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, "And these three are one."



213

Heretical Manuscripts

Problems with Verses

We learned in the introduction that heretics created their own canons of Scripture to give authority to their false doctrines. Therefore, ancient manuscripts that have the majority of verses missing that deal with one subject in particular have most likely been tampered with for that reason. Ancient manuscripts that have some of the missing verses, but not all of them, should be considered to have been created by scribes that were not aware of the problems of previous centuries.

Problems with Extra-biblical Books

In the chapter on *New Testament Books*, we saw from the Muratorian Canon Fragment that everyone accepted the “Revelation of John;” but there was strong opposition to the *Revelation of Peter*, because it contained Gnostic ideas and seemed to contradict other Scripture. The *Shepherd of Hermas* was written in the mid second century AD and was therefore not Scripture. There were fake epistles of Paul to Alexandria and to Laodicea. All of the Gnostic books were rejected.

Any Bible/Codex or manuscript that contains the *Revelation of Peter*,

Shepard of Hermas, Alexandrians, the forged version of Laodiceans, the New Book of Psalms, The New Prophecy, or anything from the Gnostics Arsenus, Valentinus, Miltiadees, Marcion, Basilides, and the Asian Cataphrigians, should be considered suspect.

Ancient Bibles

| Codex | | Date | Type | Contains |
|------------|---|------|------|--|
| Sinaiticus | Ⲙ | 350 | A | Epistle of Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermas. |
| | | | | Is missing |

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----|---|---|
| Vaticanus | B | 350 | A | Hebrews to Revelation |
| Washingtonus | W | 400 | | Long Ending of the Gospel of Mark (See next section for details.) |
| Alexandrius | A | 450 | | 1 Clement, 2 Clement |
| Ephraemi | C | 450 | | |
| Bezae | D | 500 | | An addition to Matthew |
| Claromontanus | D ₂ | 700 | | The Acts of Paul |

Many of these manuscripts are available at Biblefacts.org

The chart above shows that the “most ancient manuscripts” often mentioned in study Bibles have included extra-biblical books in their canons. Some are from the church fathers, while others are known to be the writings of the Gnostic heretics. In either case we must ask why the scribes that put these together did not know something so simple as the number of New Testament books. Why did they add books that were expressly forbidden by the church fathers? And what other mistakes have they made in their manuscripts? We must remember that over eighty-five percent of all the manuscripts out there agree with the Textus Receptus. The rest disagree

among themselves.

Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus

The Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus are the two oldest Bibles in existence, dating from approximately AD 350. In these two codexes there are numerous mistakes in the text, spelling errors and extra-biblical books. The Codex Vaticanus omits 2,877 words from the Gospels alone. It comprises the New Testament, but the back of the codex has been ripped off so it currently ends with Hebrews 7:14. There are approximately 3036 differences between Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. Each has numerous scribal corrections in the

margins of the manuscript and hundreds of misspelled words.

Codex Bezae

This Codex contains most of the four Gospels and Acts, with a small fragment of Third John. It contains an addition to Matthew 20:28. It had numerous verses with variant endings.

Codex Ephraemi

This Codex contains variant readings no other manuscript has. Many leaves of the manuscript are poorly preserved.

Conclusion

We have seen the most ancient Bibles in existence contain numerous spelling

errors, variant readings of verses and tend to disagree with themselves. Most contain extra-biblical books, not just commentary, from church fathers, also known heretical texts produced from the cults of that day. These should not be used as a basis for editing Scripture.



Endings of the Gospel of Mark

All copies of Mark have the 16th chapter, verses 1 through 8. The standard that we are familiar with (e.g. KJV) also has verses 9-20. The majority of manuscripts contain the standard verses 1-20. Some earlier manuscripts will have different endings and some medieval manuscripts will have various combinations of them.

“Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene,

out of whom he had cast seven devils. *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.” *Mark 16:9-14*

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and

preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” *Mark 16:15-20*

Everything that seems supernatural in these verses has already been recorded in other places.

1. Many passages in Scripture show the disciples cast out demons and laid hands on the sick.
2. Paul was bitten by a poisonous serpent on the Isle of Malta and did not die (Acts 28).
3. The disciples spoke in foreign languages on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

Some people argue over this passage as to whether these signs still exist. In reality, all these signs did exist, and Mark does not say whether or not these were limited to a certain time period or that they were for all Christians throughout our age.

There is no reason not to accept this passage as valid Scripture; however, anyone who wishes to be contentious about it, should note that adding it or leaving it out does not change any doctrine. The earliest quote regarding this passage is from Mark 16:19. It comes from Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.10.6, which means the standard form

was in use in AD 175. This Standard is used in over 16,000 Greek Manuscripts (about ninety-five percent) including Codex Bezae, Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Ephraemi Syri, the Peshitta, the Diatessaron, and church fathers Justin Martyr in *Apology 1.45*, Irenaeus in *Against Heresies 3.10.6*, and Hippolytus).

The Cut off:

Some manuscripts simply end after verse 8. The Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus, and church fathers, Jerome, in *Letter 120.3*, and Eusebius stop at verse 8.

Eusebius Comment:

The accurate copies conclude the story according to Mark with the words of the young man seen by the women, and he said to them, “Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus ... for they were very afraid.” For nearly all copies of the Gospel of Mark end here.

Short Ending

The short ending is only found in Codex Babbiensis, a fourth Century Latin manuscript. It has been added after verse eight. Several medieval manuscripts comment that this may have been included in the original Gospel of Mark.

“And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those

around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from the east to the west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.”

Additional Paragraph

This is the standard paragraph with the additional paragraph tacked on to verse 14. It is only found in Codex Washingtonianus, a late fourth century Greek manuscript, now housed in the Smithsonian. Although church father Jerome stated most copies end with verse eight, he commented on this addition,

“And they excused themselves,

saying, 'This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and the power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now.' – thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, 'The term of years of Satan's power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was handed over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven.'”

Jerome's Comment:

In some Greek manuscripts of Mark, at the end of the Gospel there is written “Afterwards when the eleven had sat down to a meal, Jesus appeared to them and rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed those who had seen him after his resurrection. And they made excuses saying ‘This is the age of lawlessness and unbelief under Satan, who does not allow the truth and the power of God to be grasped by unclean spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now.’”

Conclusion

Again, it seems clear that the addition to the Gospel of Mark has a definite

Gnostic flavor to it. The verses cut out from Mark's ending actually did happen as recorded in the book of Acts. There is no reason to think the Textus Receptus does not represent the original Gospel of Mark.



Other Teachings



Church Councils

In the following list of church councils we see the conclusions of the first eight are correct according to Biblical doctrine. The seven councils ranging from First Nicaea to Second Nicaea are called the Seven General Councils or the Seven Ecumenical Councils. These occurred during the time when the church as a whole came together to seek the truth and God's favor. In AD 1056, the east and west churches excommunicated each other, making this kind of council impossible. The conclusions of councils nine through

fifteen are merely councils that decreed what the Roman Catholic Church wanted, while the rest of the Church was ignored. You will notice the conclusions of these councils do not agree with biblical doctrine.

1. Jerusalem, AD 50

About AD 50, the apostles met in Jerusalem to discuss the Gentile Controversy. This is recorded in Acts 15. Some believers thought it was necessary for Gentile Christians to become circumcised and keep the other laws of Moses. On one side there were the legalists, or Ebionites, who taught that observing the Law of Moses and circumcision are necessary for

salvation. On the other side was Paul, who understanding the church existed in a new dispensation, taught these requirements were never supposed to have been laid upon Gentiles. The apostle Peter made the most convincing argument that the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius while he was yet uncircumcised, therefore, circumcision must not be necessary. If Cornelius was good enough as he was for the Holy Spirit to come upon him, he was good enough for the church. The council agreed and wrote this letter to the Gentile Christians:

“Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us

have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment... it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.”
Acts 15:24,28-29

2. Nicaea I, AD 325

In AD 325, church representatives met at Nicaea. This council, called First

Nicaea, met in order to discuss the Arian Controversy. The heretic Arius taught the same thing the cult of Jehovah's Witnesses teach today, that Jesus was an angel created by God the Father. This mighty angel then created all other things. Arius said Jesus was "heteroousios," a term he himself coined. It means "of a different substance than the Father." In other words, Jesus was not God in any way, shape, or form. Church father Athanasius upheld the biblical teaching that Jesus is indeed God. He countered Arius by saying Jesus is "homoousios," meaning Jesus is of the exact same substance as God the Father. In other words, Jesus is not an angel, but God clothed in human

flesh. Eusebius tried to create a compromise by saying Jesus was “homoiousios,” meaning Jesus was of a similar substance as God the Father. This would allow each party to pour their own meaning into the phrase. The conclusion of the Council was to uphold “homoousios” in their written documents. Jesus was indeed God incarnate. They furthermore concluded that any group that claimed to be Christian, but denied the doctrine of Jesus’ divinity, was a cult. Even though they may claim to be Christian, they were unsaved because of their rejection of what Jesus clearly taught about Himself. This council also fixed the date for the observance of Easter.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth; Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; He suffered, and the third day He rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence He shall come to judge

the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. But those who say: ‘There was a time when He was not;’ and ‘He was not before He was made;’ and ‘He was made out of nothing,’ or ‘He is of another substance’ or ‘essence,’ or ‘The Son of God is created,’ or ‘changeable,’ or ‘alterable’ — they are condemned by the holy universal and apostolic Church.

Nicene Creed

3. Constantinople I, AD 381

With the Deity of Jesus Christ now firmly settled, Satan sought to attack the divinity of the Holy Spirit. First Constantinople met in AD 381 to discuss

the problems of Modalism (Oneness doctrine stating Jesus is the Father and the Holy Spirit). They condemned Patripassionism (which teaches that God the Father died on the cross), and Macedonianism (which teaches the Holy Spirit is not God), upholding the doctrine of the Trinity. Compare this to modern-day Oneness Pentecostals. They also condemned the false prophet Montanus, who said he was the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. This council completed the Constantinopolitan Creed.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and

invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds [æons], Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; from thence He shall

come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. In one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Constantinopolitan Creed

4. Ephesus, AD 431

In AD 431 representatives of the church met in the city of Ephesus to discuss the

Nestorian Controversy. The church had begun using the Greek term “theotokos” in referring to Mary because of the Arians. Theotokos means God bearer. They wanted to make sure new converts understood Mary was the mother of Jesus who was God incarnate. Nestorius refused to use the term “theotokos.” Instead he used the term “christotokus,” meaning Christ bearer. If Nestorius did this in order to try to bring back the Arian heresy, he was truly a heretic himself. He may have, however, merely wanted to try to protect new converts from thinking of Mary as a goddess. Either way, the council upheld the use of the term “theotokos.”

The major controversy, though, was the Pelagian Controversy. The British church father Pelagius started teaching that all men are born saved and do not need a savior unless they fall into sin. Church father Augustine was on the opposite side stating that man is born a slave of sin and can't even choose to accept salvation. God must force salvation upon the individuals He wishes to be saved. The result was that the council upheld the biblical view that all men are born sinners and, as a result, are headed for hell; but each man has the ability to freely choose God's gift of salvation. This view is called semi-augustinianism. The council also rejected semi-pelagianism, which

teaches man must turn to God first, then God can save him. See the section on Calvinism for full details.

5. Chalcedon, AD 451

In AD 451 representatives of the church met in Chalcedon to discuss the Eutychian Controversy. The Church has always taught that Jesus was both man and God. Therefore he has two separate natures, one God's and the other, human. Church father Eutychies started teaching that the two natures fused together into something else. In this way Jesus was neither really God, nor man. Groups that believe Jesus only has one nature are called Monophysites. Roman bishop Leo I sent out his famous "tome," all over

Europe stating that Christ had two natures, one human and one divine. The council concluded Christ has two natures, condemning the Monophysites. They also upheld the use of the term “theotokos” and reaffirmed the twenty-seven books in the New Testament canon.

6. Constantinople II, AD 553

An outgrowth of the Monophysites heresy that Jesus only had one will, was the heresy of the Monothelites. Monothelites taught Jesus only had one will, which resulted in the same idea that He was neither fully God, nor fully man. This was condemned in the Second Council of Constantinople which met in

AD 553. They also condemned Universalism, supposedly taught by Origen. Universalism is the idea that eventually hell will be emptied and everyone will be saved. The council also condemned the “Three Chapters,” which denied Jesus’ divinity.

7. Constantinople III, AD 681

The Third Council of Constantinople met in AD 681 to simply reaffirm that Christ had two natures and two wills.

8. Nicaea II, AD 787

Church representatives met again in Nicaea to discuss the Iconoclastic Controversy, in AD 787. The Roman Catholic Church (most of Europe) used

icons or idols of the saints in their worship. The eastern church taught this amounted to idolatry. A decision was reached to tolerate some images (idols). But the council agreed to condemn Adoptionism. Adoptionism taught the Christ (or the God part of Jesus) left the man part before the crucifixion. This was another way to deny the Trinity. The Iconoclastic Controversy continued until, eventually, in the year AD 1056, the western church excommunicated the eastern church and the eastern church excommunicated the western church. This is known as the Great Schism.

After the Great Schism the whole church ceased to meet to find God's will in all

matters. The following are some of the more important Roman Catholic councils which occurred after the Great Schism.

9. Lateran I, AD 1123

The First Lateran Council met in AD 1123. They decreed that priests could not marry and granted indulgences to crusaders. Neither decision was biblical.

10. Lateran IV

The Fourth Lateran Council met in AD 1215 to establish the Inquisition and define the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The council also condemned two non-catholic groups, the Cathari and the Waldensians. The Cathari were a

Gnostic Cult, but the Waldensians were basically protestant. But since both groups were anti-Roman Catholic, they were condemned.

11. Vienne, AD 1312

The Council of Vienne met in AD 1312 to begin to suppress the Knights Templar and condemn two other non-catholic groups, the Beguines and the Beghards. These were Christian communities of men and women, similar to monks and nuns, but they rejected the authority of the Roman Catholic church.

12. Constance, AD 1418

The Council of Constance met in AD 1418 to end the papal schism. One pope

had been elected then deposed, and a new pope elected. But the first pope refused to step down. A third pope was elected, but then the first two popes refused to step down. This council also condemned John Hus. John Huss was a Czech reformer who was burned at the stake by the inquisition for preaching Jesus is the head of the church, not the pope.

13. Trent, AD 1547

The Council of Trent was a very significant departure from Scripture. This council decreed that tradition bears the same authority as Scripture and that the Vulgate was to be the official Bible version. They reaffirmed the Apocrypha

as inspired, fixed the number of sacraments that impart a grace at seven, reaffirmed Transubstantiation. This council rejected the Protestant teaching on the doctrines of original sin and justification by faith alone. Previous to this council, the “Index” was created, which was a list of forbidden books. This council added any and all Protestant books to the index list.

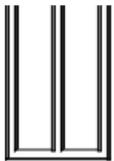
14. Vatican I, AD 1869

The First Vatican Council met in AD 1869 and decreed the dogma of papal infallibility. This doctrine maintains that when the pope speaks on matters of faith and morals, he is infallible.

15. Vatican II, AD 1965

The Second Vatican Council met in AD 1965. This council revoked the excommunication of the Great Schism. It also decreed protestants were no longer heretics but separated brethren, and yet also reaffirmed Papal Infallibility, tradition equal to Scripture, and that the Catholic church was the only way of salvation. The index was eliminated, Bible reading was encouraged, and Mass was required to be in the local vernacular with laity participating, because they were now considered “spiritual priests.” This council departed further from Scripture by encouraging the veneration of Mary and dialogue with other faiths.





213

Prince of Edessa

In John 12, John mentions a group of Gentiles who ask Philip to introduce them to Jesus. Philip thinks it is important enough to get Andrew and they both went to our Lord Jesus about this.

“And there were certain Greeks [non-Jews] among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew

and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.” *John 12:20-23*

Eusebius, the father of church history, records that these non-Jews were representatives of a prince from the city-state of Edessa, named Abgarus. Abgarus had written a letter to Jesus and sent it with his faithful courier Ananias. In his *Ecclesiastical History 1:13*, Eusebius records the details of these representatives of Abgarus, and the letter written from prince Abgarus, who later became king of the province of Edessa.

The following is the account Eusebius gives, including the letter written to Jesus, the reply Jesus gave to Abgarus, and the events that transpired after the resurrection. If Eusebius is completely correct, then the second paragraph is the only known writing penned by Jesus Himself. It contains no new doctrine, but shows the mercy and love of our Lord Jesus.



*Narrative respecting the prince of
Edessa.*

The divinity of our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ, being famed abroad among all men on account of his wonder-working power, he attracted countless numbers from foreign countries lying far away from Judea, who had the hope of being cured of their diseases and of all kinds of sufferings. For instance the King Abgarus, who ruled with great glory the nations beyond the Euphrates, being afflicted with a terrible disease which it was beyond the power of human skill to cure, when he heard of the name of Jesus, and of his miracles, which were attested by all with one accord, sent a message to him by a courier and begged him to heal his

disease. But he did not at that time comply with his request; yet he deemed him worthy of a personal letter in which he said that he would send one of his disciples to cure his disease, and at the same time promised salvation to himself and all his house. Not long afterward, his promise was fulfilled. For after His resurrection from the dead and His ascent into heaven, Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, under divine impulse sent Thaddeus, who was also numbered among the seventy disciples of Christ, to Edessa, as a preacher and evangelist of the teaching of Christ. And all that our Savior had

promised, received through him its fulfillment. You have written evidence of these things taken from the archives of Edessa, which was at that time a royal city. For in the public registers there, which contain accounts of ancient times and the acts of Abgarus, these things have been found preserved down to the present time. But there is no better way than to hear the epistles themselves which we have taken from the archives and have literally translated from the Syriac language in the following manner.

Copy of an epistle written by the ruler Abgarus, to Jesus, and sent

**to him at Jerusalem by Ananias
the swift courier.**

“Abgarus, ruler of Edessa, to Jesus the excellent Savior who has appeared in the country of Jerusalem, greeting. I have heard the reports of thee and of thy cures as performed by thee without medicines or herbs. For it is said that thou make the blind to see and the lame to walk, that thou cleanse lepers and cast out impure spirits and demons, and that thou heal those afflicted with lingering disease, and raise the dead. And having heard all these things concerning thee, I have concluded that one of two things must be true:

either thou art God, and having come down from heaven thou doest these things, or else thou, who do these things, are the Son of God. I have therefore written to thee to ask thee that thou would take the trouble to come to me and heal the disease which I have. For I have heard that the Jews are murmuring against thee and are plotting to injure thee. But I have a very small, yet noble city, which is great enough for us both.”

The answer of Jesus to the ruler Abgarus by the courier Ananias.

“Blessed art thou who hast believed in me without having seen

me. For it is written concerning me, that they who have seen me will not believe in me, and that they who have not seen me will believe and be saved. But in regard to what thou hast written me, that I should come to thee, it is necessary for me to fulfill all things here for which I have been sent, and after I have fulfilled them thus to be taken up again to Him that sent me. But after I have been taken up, I will send to thee one of my disciples, that he may heal thy disease and give life to thee and thine.”

To these epistles there was added the following account in the

Syriac language.

Thaddeus Sent to Edessa

“After the ascension of Jesus, Judas, who was also called Thomas, sent to him Thaddeus, an apostle, one of the Seventy. When he was come he lodged with Tobias, the son of Tobias. When the report of him got abroad, it was told Abgarus that an apostle of Jesus was come, as he had written him. Thaddeus began then in the power of God to heal every disease and infirmity, insomuch that all wondered. And when Abgarus heard of the great and wonderful things which he did and of the cures

which he performed, he began to suspect that he was the one of whom Jesus had written him, saying, ‘After I have been taken up I will send to thee one of my disciples who will heal thee.’

Thaddeus Summoned before Abgarus

Therefore, summoning Tobias, with whom Thaddeus lodged, he said, I have heard that a certain man of power has come and is lodging in thy house. Bring him to me. And Tobias, coming to Thaddeus said to him, The ruler Abgarus summoned me and told me to bring thee to him that thou might heal him. And Thaddeus said, I will go, for I have

been sent to him with power. Tobias therefore arose early on the following day, and taking Thaddeus, came to Abgarus. And when he came, the nobles were present and stood about Abgarus. And immediately upon his entrance a great vision appeared to Abgarus in the countenance of the apostle Thaddeus. When Abgarus saw it he prostrated himself before Thaddeus, while all those who stood about were astonished; for they did not see the vision, which appeared to Abgarus alone.

Thaddeus Preaches to Abgarus

He then asked Thaddeus if he were

in truth a disciple of Jesus, the Son of God, who had said to him, ‘I will send thee one of my disciples, who shall heal thee and give thee life.’ And Thaddeus said, Because thou hast mightily believed in him that sent me, therefore have I been sent unto thee. And still further, if thou believe in him, the petitions of thy heart shall be granted thee as thou believe.

Abgarus’ Response

And Abgarus said to him, So much have I believed in him that I wished to take an army and destroy those Jews who crucified him, had I not been deterred from it by reason of

the dominion of the Romans. And Thaddeus said, Our Lord has fulfilled the will of his Father, and having fulfilled it, has been taken up to his Father.

Abgarus Healed

And Abgarus said to him, I too have believed in Him and in his Father. And Thaddeus said to him, Therefore I place my hand upon thee in His name. And when he had done it, immediately Abgarus was cured of the disease and of the suffering which he had. And Abgarus marveled, that as he had heard concerning Jesus, so he had received in very deed through his

disciple Thaddeus, who healed him without medicines and herbs, and not only him, but also Abdus the son of Abdus, who was afflicted with the gout; for he too came to him and fell at his feet, and having received a benediction by the imposition of his hands, he was healed. The same Thaddeus cured also many other inhabitants of the city, and did wonders and marvelous works, and preached the word of God.

Thaddeus Preaches the Gospel

And afterward Abgarus said, Thou, O Thaddeus, doest these things with the power of God, and we marvel.

But, in addition to these things, I pray thee to inform me in regard to the coming of Jesus, how he was born; and in regard to his power, by what power he performed those deeds of which I have heard. And Thaddeus said, Now indeed will I keep silence, since I have been sent to proclaim the word publicly. But tomorrow assemble for me all thy citizens, and I will preach in their presence and sow among them the word of God, concerning the coming of Jesus, how he was born; and concerning his mission, for what purpose he was sent by the Father; and concerning the power of his works, and the mysteries

which he proclaimed in the world, and by what power he did these things; and concerning his new preaching, and his abasement and humiliation, and how he humbled himself, and died and debased his divinity and was crucified, and descended into Hades, and burst the bars which from eternity had not been broken, and raised the dead; for he descended alone, but rose with many, and thus ascended to his Father. Abgarus therefore commanded the citizens to assemble early in the morning to hear the preaching of Thaddeus, and afterward he ordered gold and silver to be given him. But he

refused to take it, saying, If we have forsaken that which was our own, how shall we take that which is another's? These things were done in the three hundred and fortieth year [of the kingdom of Edessa].”

I have inserted them here in their proper place, translated from the Syriac literally, and I hope to good purpose.



Sibylline Oracles

The legend of the Sybil is a very old one. After Noah's flood, a type of Gentile prophetess, called a Sybil, would be raised up every hundred years or two. Their prophecies would be written down as the Sibylline Oracles. The oldest of these was called the Erythraean Sybil and dates back at least to the 6th century BC, in the Etruscan and early Roman Era. Her teachings match very closely with the Bible. The prophecies concerning the Gentile world were accurate. As time went on, the Sybils became more and more corrupt in their

teaching and history until they were no more. Some of their books were destroyed, partially in a fire in 83 B.C, and others burned by order of the Roman General Flavius Stilicho in 365-408 BC.

The ancient church fathers quote the Sibylline Oracles and other history books to witness to the pagan Roman world. The church fathers showed that if the Romans paid close attention to the Sibylline Oracles, they would be able to see the corruption of their pagan system and see the Messiah. It worked, and Rome was Christianized. There are evidences for God everywhere, so we are without excuse!

Today we have the Pseudo-Sibylline Oracles. They are called such because since they fit too well with Christian theology. The secular academic world holds that any ancient document that proves biblical history or theology must have been made up in the middle ages. The Pseudo-Sibylline Oracles may or may not be the originals, but they do contain some of the quotes the ancient church fathers used. And Rome did become Christian. The Pseudo-Sibylline Oracles can be found at Biblefacts.org under church history.

A more accurate study of what the originals really contained would be by using the Sibylline quotes from the

church fathers. A few of these are presented below:



Lactantius, AD 285

Divine Institutes 2.17 – Astrology, soothsaying, divination, oracles, necromancy, and the art of magic are the invention of demons and vain, according to the Sybil.

Divine Institutes 4.6 – Even Trismegistus and the Erythraean Sibyl mention a time when the most high God would have a Son, who would also be God.

Divine Institutes 4.15 – The Sibyl was very specific when she

foretold the many miracles Christ would do.

Divine Institutes 4.17 – Jesus abolished circumcision, law against eating pork, and the Sabbath. The Sibyl also said he would destroy the old law.

Divine Institutes 4.19 – The Sibyl speaks of the darkness and the veil rent in the temple, the three days, and then the Resurrection.

Conclusion

We have looked at some of the doctrines that divide the church today. We have examined the available evidence and found what the original teaching was through the writings of the disciples of the twelve apostles.

We have seen historically, how, when, and why the Roman Catholics, Calvinists, amillennialists, cults, non-Trinitarians, Gnostics, and cessationists have fallen into error. We have seen the truth about abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, Replacement Theology, the occult, astrology, meditation, reincarnation, evolution, psychology,

Mosaic Laws, the apostasy of the church, the Rapture, and many other subjects.

I hope you have enjoyed this study and I pray that it will guide you into a new and firm foundation for your faith.



Other Books by Ken Johnson, Th.D.

Ancient Post-Flood History

Historical Documents That Point to a Biblical Creation.

This book is a Christian timeline of ancient post-Flood history based on Bible chronology, the early church fathers, and ancient Jewish and secular history. This can be used as a companion guide in the study of Creation Science.

Some questions answered: Who were the Pharaohs in the times of Joseph and Moses? When did the famine of Joseph occur? What Egyptian documents mention these? When did the Exodus take place? When did the Kings of Egypt start being called “Pharaoh” and why?

Who was the first king of a united Italy? Who was Zeus and where is he buried? Where did Shem and

Ham rule and where are they buried?

How large was Nimrod's invasion force that set up the Babylonian Empire, and when did this invasion occur?

What is Nimrod's name in Persian documents?

How can we use this information to witness to unbelievers?

Ancient Seder Olam

A Christian Translation of the 2000-year-old Scroll

This 2000-year-old scroll reveals the chronology from Creation through Cyrus' decree that freed the Jews in 536 BC. The *Ancient Seder Olam* uses biblical prophecy to prove its calculations of the timeline. We have used this technique to continue the timeline all the way to the reestablishment of the nation of Israel in AD 1948.

Using the Bible and rabbinical tradition, this book

shows that the ancient Jews awaited King Messiah to fulfill the prophecy spoken of in Daniel, Chapter 9. The Seder answers many questions about the chronology of the books of Kings and Chronicles. It talks about the coming of Elijah, King Messiah's reign, and the battle of Gog and Magog.

This scroll and the Jasher scroll are the two main sources used in Ken's first book, *Ancient Post-Flood History*.

Ancient Prophecies Revealed

500 Prophecies Listed In Order Of When They Were Fulfilled

This book details over 500 biblical prophecies in the order they were fulfilled; these include pre-flood times though the First Coming of Jesus and into the Middle Ages. The heart of this book is the 53 prophecies fulfilled between 1948 and 2008. The last 11 prophecies between 2008 and the Tribulation are also

given. All these are documented and interpreted from the Ancient Church Fathers.

The Ancient Church Fathers, including disciples of the 12 apostles, were firmly premillennial, pretribulational, and very pro-Israel.

Ancient Book of Jasher

Referenced in Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; 2 Timothy 3:8

There are 13 ancient history books mentioned and recommended by the Bible. The Ancient Book of Jasher is the only one of the 13 that still exists. It is referenced in Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; and 2 Timothy 3:8. This volume contains the entire 91 chapters plus a detailed analysis of the supposed discrepancies, cross-referenced historical accounts, and detailed charts for ease of use. As with any history book, there are typographical errors in the text but with three consecutive timelines running through the histories, it is very easy to arrive at the exact dates of recorded events. It is not surprising that this ancient

document confirms the Scripture and the chronology given in the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, once and for all settling the chronology differences between the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek Septuagint. The Ancient book of Jasher is brought to you by Biblefacts Ministries, Biblefacts.org

Third Corinthians

Ancient Gnostics and the End of the World

This little known, 2000-year-old Greek manuscript was used in the first two centuries to combat Gnostic cults. Whether or not it is an authentic copy of the original epistle written by the apostle Paul, it gives an incredible look into the cults that will arise in the Last Days. It contains a prophecy that the same heresies that pervaded the first century church would return before the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Ancient Paganism

The Sorcery of the Fallen Angels

Ancient Paganism explores the false religion of the ancient pre-Flood world and its spread into the Gentile nations after Noah's Flood. Quotes from the ancient church fathers, rabbis, and the Talmud detail the activities and beliefs of both Canaanite and New Testament era sorcery. This book explores how, according to biblical prophecy, this same sorcery will return before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth. These religious beliefs and practices will invade the end time church and become the basis for the religion of the Antichrist. Wicca, Druidism, Halloween, Yule, meditation, and occultic tools are discussed at length.

The Rapture

The Pretribulational Rapture of the Church Viewed From the Bible and the Ancient Church

This book presents the doctrine of the pretribulational

Rapture of the church. Many prophecies are explored with Biblical passages and terms explained.

Evidence is presented that proves the first century church believed the End Times would begin with the return of Israel to her ancient homeland, followed by the Tribulation and the Second Coming. More than fifty prophecies have been fulfilled since Israel became a state.

Evidence is also given that several ancient rabbis and at least four ancient church fathers taught a pretribulation Rapture. This book also gives many of the answers to the arguments midtribulationists and posttribulationists use. It is our hope this book will be an indispensable guide for debating the doctrine of the Rapture.

Ancient Epistle of Barnabas His Life and Teaching

The Epistle of Barnabas is often quoted by the ancient

church fathers. Although not considered inspired Scripture, it was used to combat legalism in the first two centuries AD. Besides explaining why the Laws of Moses are not binding on Christians, the Epistle explains how many of the Old Testament rituals teach typological prophecy. Subjects explored are: Yom Kippur, the Red Heifer ritual, animal sacrifices, circumcision, the Sabbath, Daniel's visions and the end-time ten nation empire, and the temple.

The underlying theme is the Three-Fold Witness. Barnabas teaches that mature Christians must be able to lead people to the Lord, testify to others about Bible prophecy fulfilled in their lifetimes, and teach creation history and creation science to guard the faith against the false doctrine of evolution. This is one more ancient church document that proves the first century church was premillennial and constantly looking for the Rapture and other prophecies to be fulfilled.

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Table of Contents

[Copyright](#)

[History of The Fathers](#)

[Primary Doctrines](#)

[Authority of the Bible](#)

[New Testament Books](#)

[The Deity of Jesus Christ](#)

[Secondary Doctrines](#)

[Calvinism](#)

[Foreknowledge](#)

[Free Will](#)

[Predestination](#)

[Catholicism](#)

[Papal Authority](#)

[Idolatry](#)

[Eucharist and Transubstantiation](#)

[Baptism](#)

[Mary](#)

[Purgatory](#)

[Celibacy](#)

[Miscellaneous Catholic Notes](#)

[Cults](#)

[Jehovah's Witnesses](#)

[Mormonism](#)

[Dispensationalism](#)

[Circumcision](#)

[Law of Moses](#)

[Sabbath](#)

[End Times](#)

[Premillennialism](#)

[Schism of Nepos](#)

[Return of the Jews](#)

[Apostasy of the Church](#)

[The Rapture](#)

[False Works](#)

[Gospel of Barnabas](#)

[Gospel of Judas](#)

[Gospel of Thomas](#)

[Protevangelium of James](#)

[Gnosticism](#)

[Carpocrates](#)

[Ebionites](#)

[Encratites](#)

[Mani](#)

[Marcion](#)

[Nicolaitans](#)

[Moral Issues](#)

[Abortion](#)

[Euthanasia and Suicide](#)

[Homosexuality](#)

[Replacement Theology](#)

[Women in Ministry](#)

[Paganism](#)

[Astrology](#)

[Astral Projection](#)

[Evolution](#)

[Ghosts](#)

[Islam](#)

[Meditation / Ecstasy](#)

[Reincarnation](#)

[Yoga](#)

[The Gospel](#)

[Immortality of the Soul](#)

[Salvation](#)

[Sin](#)

[Psychology](#)

[Spiritual Gifts](#)

[Gifts](#)

[Perfection](#)

[Text of Scripture](#)

[Missing Verses](#)

[Heretical Manuscripts](#)

[Endings of the Gospel of Mark](#)

[Other Teachings](#)

[Church Councils](#)

[Prince of Edessa](#)

[Sibylline Oracles](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Other Books by Ken Johnson, Th.D.](#)

[Bibliography](#)