

1—The Apostolic Fathers

“The Story of the Church”

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1. The Second Generation of the Church

- A. Some knew the original Apostles
- B. More legalistic than Paul, closer to James
 - 1) Romans 3:28-29 (Paul)
For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.
 - 2) James 2:18
But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.
- C. The Apostles met with Paul and Barnabas at the Jerusalem Council (49 AD)
 - 1) Galatians 2:11-12 (Paul)
When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles.
 - 2) Galatians 2:9-10
James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.
- D. The Apostolic Fathers may have been legalistic, but were fighting against “antinomianism” (lawlessness)
 - 1) Galatians 5:22-23
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

2. Clement of Rome

- A. Born in 35, Bishop of the house churches in Rome (88-99)
- B. Consecrated by Peter to be his successor
- C. Wrote *1 Clement* (95) to resolve a dispute in Corinth
- D. Calmed disunity by encouraging submission to the Bishops
 - 1) Episkópoi (overseers, bishops)
 - 2) Presbutéroí (elders, presbyters, priests)
 - 3) Diakónoi (ministers, deacons, servants)
- E. *“We should be obedient unto God, rather than follow those who in arrogance and unruliness have set themselves up as leaders in abominable jealousy . . .*

For Christ is with them that are lowly of mind, not with them that exalt themselves over the flock.” (1 Clem 14:1; 16:1)

3. **The Didache (Teaching)**

- A. Written by unknown authors (c. 101)
- B. Strict moral living, practical instruction for Christian life
- C. Baptism by immersion, or sprinkling if not available
- D. Eucharist (thanksgiving) with the bread and cup
- E. communion, baptism, evaluating prophets

4. **Ignatius of Antioch**

- A. On the way to Rome to be martyred under Trajan
- B. *Ignatius' Letters* (110-115) to the churches: Ephesus, Magnesia, Trallia, Rome, Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Bishop Polycarp
- C. First real theology
 - 1) Elevated martyrdom as freedom from fear of death
 - 2) Elevated the Bishop—“Do nothing without the Bishop”
 - 3) Argued for the Lord’s Day replacing the Jewish Sabbath
 - 4) Called the Eucharist the “medicine for immortality”
 - 5) Strongly defended the deity and humanity of Christ

5. **Polycarp**

- A. Ordained Bishop of Smyrna by the Apostle John
- B. Tutored by John, in turn trained Irenaeus
- C. Received a letter from Ignatius
- D. *Martyrdom of Polycarp* records his death
- E. *Letter of Polycarp* to the Philippians
- F. Tended more toward moralism like James
- G. Burned at the stake and the stabbed in 155

6. **Epistle of Barnabas**

- A. Written in Alexandria 70-135, author unknown (pseudopigraphic)
- B. Allegorical explanation of OT and replacement of Hebrews by the Church (similar to Philo)

7. **Shepherd of Hermas**

- A. 140-145, author may have been the brother of Pius, Bishop of Rome
- B. Shepherd (angel) appears to Hermas in a vision
- C. Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, Athanasius all included it
- D. Christians will be forgiven only once after baptism, conditional on obeying the commandments
- E. Puritanical against sex, remarriage