

# 3—North African Fathers

“The Story of the Church”

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## 1. The Montanists (165-180)

- A. History based on hearsay and anonymous opponents
- B. Practiced spiritual gifts such as prophecy and tongues
- C. Ordained women bishops and presbyters
- D. Took offerings and provided salaries to their preachers
- E. Predicted the end of the world was coming soon
- F. Bishops of Asia Minor excommunicated them (c. 177)
- G. Praxeas convinced Zepherinius of Rome to reject them
- H. *“By this Praxeas did a twofold service for the devil at Rome: he drove away prophecy, and he brought in heresy; he put to flight the Paraclete, and he crucified the Father. (Tertullian, Against Praxeus, ch. 1)*

## 2. Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

- A. “All truth is God’s truth wherever it may be found”
- B. Embraced Neo-Platonism and “Christian Gnosticism”
- C. Wrote in Greek to the Eastern Church
- D. Prototype of the modern liberal theologian

## 3. Origen of Alexandria (185-254)

- A. “The Architect of Eastern (Greek, Orthodox) Theology”
- B. Took over from Clement at 18, castrated himself
- C. Went further into philosophy, produced 800 works
- D. Many great foundations and some troubling ideas.
  - 1) Believed in the preexistence of the human souls
  - 2) Believed God to be unemotional (like Plato)
  - 3) Believed that all creation will be saved and reconciled in the end
- E. Emphasized the eternity, power and divinity of the Trinity

## 4. Tertullian of Carthage (160-225)

- A. “The Father of Western (Latin, Catholic) Theology”
- B. Focused solely on scripture and rejected philosophy
- C. “What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?”
- D. Prototype of the conservative/fundamentalist theologian
- E. Defended the bodily resurrection to eternal life

- F. Developed the ideas and terminology of the Trinity
  - 1) Trinity one "Substance" with three "Persons" (*Against Praxeas*)
    - a) They are distinct but cannot be separated
    - b) They are different in Economy but united in Monarchy
- G. Rejected by the West for joining the Montanists in 207
- H. Rejected by the East because he wrote in Latin, rejected philosophy

**5. Ciprian of Carthage (200-258)**

- A. Held the church together through structure
- B. A person cannot be saved apart from the church, and Bishop
- C. Infants are born into sin and only saved through baptism
- D. Salvation comes through baptism and communion

<b>Theories of Salvation</b>	
Western (Tertullian)	Eastern (Irenaeus)
Satisfaction of God's anger	Victorious conflict
Crucifixion Central	Incarnation Central
The Cross the is the primary focus	Christ's whole life has meaning
Emphasizes His Divinity	Emphasizes His Humanity
Sin a defect of the will	Sin affects the whole person/creation
Saved from the punishment of sin	Saved from the cause of sin
Other world	This world
<b>1 John 2:2</b> <i>He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.</i>	<b>Romans 8:21</b> <i>That the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.</i>