

## **The Church Fathers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century**

Who are the Church Fathers?

The Church Fathers are a specific set of, largely men, who laid the foundation of the Christian Church through their teachings, writings, and lives. Many of the Church Fathers became martyrs for the faith dying at the hands of the Romans. Some were profound theologians and scholars who wrote against the heresies of their time, advanced our understanding of the faith, or led the Church. Some of the Fathers are Saints. The list of the Fathers begins with the Apostles in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century and ends with St. John of Damascus in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

The Church Fathers are largely divided into two groups. The first group of the Church Fathers are called the “Greek Fathers.” The earliest Christians spoke Greek as well as the people they evangelized. This era encompasses the first three centuries of the Christian era. If we extend our view slightly, the Orthodox Church remained in the Greek era of Christianity. The influence of Latin and Roman rule didn’t affect the Eastern Christian churches in the same way as it affected the west. For this reason, they have a larger list of Greek Fathers than the Latin Church. The era of the Greek Fathers largely ended with St. Augustine of Hippo who never learned Greek. As the Roman Empire grew and fell, the Latin language developed from a language of the elite to the common language of the Roman Empire. Even after the fall of the Roman Empire, Latin remained as the dominant language for trade, business, legal, and governance. Starting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century, the language of the Church shifted from the common language of Greek to Latin. As the shift continued, the language of the Church Fathers also shifted starting the second group of Church Fathers called the “Latin Fathers.”

Most people struggle to grasp the influence, scope, and value of the Fathers. As for influence, these men established the basics of the Church, taught the Christians of their day, debated with heretics, and built the foundation of the Church. Great writers like St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Gregory the Great, St. Leo the Great, St. Ignatius of Antioch, and St. Maximus the Confessor, to name just a few, wrote extensively. St. Augustine alone wrote 84 works some of which are hundreds of pages long. The entire corpus (collection of works) of the Fathers can encompass a room of a library. From them we have the truths of the Christian message, the theology of the Sacraments, the life of the early Church, and the framework through which the rest of the centuries of Christians would come to understand the God who came to be with us. We can often reduce them to local dignitaries who preached to their own people. Yet, this is not the case. Many of their works circled around the empire and were even used in debates at Ecumenical Councils and in defense of the faith before governors and emperors. During the middle ages, especially during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Fathers were discovered anew and became the basis of all theological thought. We cannot dismiss the power, scope, and influence of these early writers and thinkers as they are the basis through which we understand the Christian faith.

**The Situation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century:**

Christianity's origin is shrouded in the beliefs of the earliest Christians. The first generation of Christians, which includes the Apostles and their first converts, believed that Jesus is going to return very soon. Some of Jesus' sayings including, "some here will not see death until I return" (Matthew 16:28) prompted this belief. Therefore, the 1<sup>st</sup> generation of Christians held to the belief that their only task was to spread the message of Jesus and make more disciples. Due to this belief, they didn't write any of the stories of Jesus but instead passed them down by oral tradition. Many of the ways we understand our faith and the practices of Christianity did not develop for several decades.

Let's take a moment to explore the events of the foundation of the Church which led to the first generation of the Church Fathers. The beginning of the Church is the death of Jesus and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. These two events became the foundation for the beliefs of the Church and their understanding of their role. Jesus' death and Resurrection is the central proclamation of the early Church and the source of their preaching and belief. The God whom they believe in died and rose from the dead for their sake. No message or idea is more valuable to preach. From the moment of Pentecost the Apostles understood their role as to spread this message about the death and Resurrection of Jesus to all the nations. Many of the disciples started to spread across the world traveling as far as Spain and India. Yet, this image doesn't encapsulate the fullness of life in the early Church.

As the disciples spread the message about the death and Resurrection of Jesus, many people accepted this new belief and joined the Church. This first generation of disciples knew that their task is the same as the Apostles: to spread the message of Jesus. Yet, we have some problems. The first major issue is that the disciples preached that Jesus would be returning very soon, like in a few years. Issues like a proper understanding of Jesus including who he is and what that means was not as important as continuing the mission. Second, information about Jesus was scarce. The vast majority of the information about this new religion from the region of the Galilee was spread by only word of mouth. By the 40's, written documents in the form of letters began circulation. Letters have limitations. Letters largely only address specific situations to a specific group of people. Thus, confusion was common in Christianity during the 40's through the 60's.

The death of St. Andrew in 48 shocked the Christian communities. Although they were prepared for martyrdom and had experienced heavy persecution as they spread the message, they held to the belief that Jesus would return before the Apostles died. With the death of St. Andrew came a major transition in the Church. Whereas before they could rely on Jesus' imminent coming to resolve problems, now they had to address them. Whereas before they could wait out the challenges the Church faced, now they became imminent problems. In response, they began to write. The first Gospel, Mark, was written and began distribution around 68 AD with the other three following throughout the 70's through 90's. We are quite familiar with the Gospels. Surrounding the Gospels and explaining them are the writings of the Church Fathers.

Our first few texts give such color and expression to this era. The first major document, which I will cover in detail at the end of this session is called the *Didache* or the *Teaching of the 12 Apostles*. This document, dated somewhere in the 50's is the earliest and only text directly from

the Apostles. In this document we have teachings on morality, church structure, the earliest Sacraments, and beliefs about Jesus. Outside of the Gospels, we have a second iteration of writing coming at the end of the century. These writings include the lives of the martyrs and letters. These early martyrs of the Church were deeply influential for the faith of this young religion but also inspirational to those who watched the valor of these men and women who died for their faith. The early letters reflected both the sentiments and lives of the martyrs but also extended the teaching of the Apostles. Greatly influential men like St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Polycarp were taught by the Apostles. We often forget this influence. The writings of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation of the Church Fathers were either the Apostles themselves or the disciples of the Apostles. Clearly we should read their works in light of people taught by the Apostles.

### **The Martyrdoms**

The Martyrdom of St. Polycarp is one of the most influential stories of martyrdom of the early Church. Although this event took place in 160 AD and I will cover it in the next session, this text sets the tone for understanding martyrdom in the early Church.

Martyrdom was not a major theme for the earliest Christians until the reign of Emperor Nero in the 60's. Most martyrdoms were isolated events caused by the general distrust of this new monotheistic religion. Persecution under Emperor Nero showcases the distrust of the Romans towards Christians and the general feeling of Roman towards this new sect. Until the 40's, the Christian religion semi-coexisted with the Romans. In some areas, the refusal of Christians to offer sacrifices to the Roman gods or the emperor met with immediate death usually by beheading, sometimes by crucifixion, and rarely by gladiator matches or being fed to beasts. This refusal to offer sacrifices to the Roman gods labeled Christians as atheists who desired the fall of Rome. In the early 40's through 60's two major events occurred. First, the Jews and Christians in the city of Rome quarreled about the new religion which came from Judaism. The issue was serious enough that St. Paul responded to this issue by writing the Letter to the Romans. Emperor Claudius, realizing that this dispute was causing quite a stir, expelled all the Jews from Rome leaving the small Christian group left in Rome. Following Claudius' reign, Nero came to power. Although distrustful of Christians, Nero tolerated them at first. In 64 AD, a great fire consumed the city of Rome destroying 10 out of 14 districts. Although the exact cause of the fire is unknown, Nero blamed the fire on the Christians prompting the first widespread persecution of the Christians. During this era, many Christians were beheaded, crucified, fed to wild beasts in the arena, killed in gladiator matches, or torn to pieces by hunting dogs.

The martyrologies, the stories of the martyrs, tell two stories. The most prominent part of the story of these martyrs is the cause their deaths. Most of their deaths are incredibly brutal like the martyrdom of Sts. Perpetua and Felicity or St. Cecilia. The Romans wanted to both ensure their deaths but also deter anyone who may wish to join this religion. In the midst of the stories of their deaths is a secondary theme: valor. Romans greatly valued valor. A gladiator who gave up in the ring or quit was a disgrace and immediately killed. A person who showed weakness or timidity was considered a low class. The martyrs showed such incredible bravery and valor in their deaths that it awed the Romans. Some of these martyrs were so valorous that their executioners became weak against their valor. Many people converted to Christianity simply due

to the courage and valor of these early martyrs. Yet, the Church saw these martyrs in a different light. They followed Jesus to the death. Their imitation of Jesus came on several levels. The most obvious level was their willingness to die for their faith. Secondary to the obvious willingness to die was the understanding of the value of their lives. Their lives were spent for God and returned to God in whom they now have glory. The Christians would gather around the tombs of these martyrs on the anniversary of their deaths to celebrate Mass connecting the living and the dead. The martyrs weren't dead but alive and active in the Church. Their connection with Jesus is stronger than just dying for him: they became him. In some of the stories of the martyrs they smelled like baking bread or they understood that they were being poured out like wine, clear Eucharistic imagery.

### The Writings

The writings of the 1<sup>st</sup> century are few and far between. As we enter the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, we will have far more writings. Most of the writings we focus on from the 1<sup>st</sup> century are the Gospels and the letters of St. Paul. Yet, we have several other examples of writings in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. These writings have a similar theme: church structure, prayer and sacraments, and encouraging the faithful. At this point in church history, the persecutions had just begun, the heresies and controversies had not started, the necessity of teaching the faith was not apparent, but issues of respect for authority, consistency in message, and morality were major issues. Therefore many of the writings of the 1<sup>st</sup> century focused on morality.

### Saint of the Day: St. Clement of Rome

The lives of many of the earliest fathers of the Church have been lost to history. Many people of those eras assumed that keeping record of their lives was not important and their struggle to stay alive and build the Church was the primary responsibility. Even very important figures like the popes we know very little about and St. Clement is no exception.

We know nothing about his early life nor his conversion to Christianity. Everything we know about St. Clement came decades if not centuries after his death in the writings of other church fathers and historians. The general consensus is that Clement was ordained by St. Peter and lived and learned the faith under the care of the Apostles. Some writers claim that Clement was St. Peter's immediate successor, but most early writers disagree. St. Clement wrote one letter that we still have today known as St. Clement's Letter to the Corinthians.

Extra sources claim that Clement, as bishop of Rome, was exiled by Emperor Trajan to Chersonesus. As punishment for being a Christian, he was forced to work in the stone quarries. While working, the workers ran out of water. St. Clement saw a lamb on a hill, went there, started digging, and found water for the workers. Although this story has some elements of legend, St. Clement performed enough miracles to incite the ire of Rome. Frustrated with the number of converts he was creating, the governor tied an anchor to him and threw him into the sea.



## The *Didache*

Origins: the origins of the *Didache* are highly debated among scholars. The text was found by an archeologist in 1873 and became an object of great study ever since. Archeologists knew of a text of a similar context due to quotes of it found in other sources but this was the first complete text. Some people date the text to the 4<sup>th</sup> century but there is little evidence for this date. Most of the themes in the *Didache* are from the times towards the end of the lives of the Apostles around the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. It speaks of prophets, which ceased to exist after the 1<sup>st</sup> century, apostles, who became bishops after the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and some early examples of Christian prayers. The *Didache* is the oldest example of both rules and a standard form of baptism. The form of baptism is far closer to the standard form used by the early Christians than the one found in the Acts of the Apostles. The text also contains the oldest forms of Christian prayers including an edition of the Our Father and prayers related to the Mass. Since many of its prayers, teachings, and examples are very close to those of the Gospel of Matthew, many scholars conclude that this text came after the Gospel had been written.

Some of the themes of the *Didache* are strange to modern ears since the Church went through many developments following this text. First, the prohibition against astrology, sacrifices to idols, magicians, and similar types of arts and people. Remember: this text was written in an age still dominated by Roman rule. Astrology, magic, and similar arts were common practice among those who worshipped the pagan gods. Therefore the Apostles are making a strong distinction between the practices of Roman cultic worship and the Christian religion. Second, the absence of priests and bishops. Bishops are not absent from the text but are called “apostles.” The first generation of Christians had two ranks to their leadership: bishops and deacons. The bishops were the successors of the Apostles whereas the deacons were their helpers. To distinguish themselves from the Jews, the earliest Christians chose not to call their priests “priests” but instead “presbyters.” Third, the role and challenges with prophets. Today we do not use the term and ministry of a prophet. During the early church it was common for itinerant preachers to wander amongst Christian communities and preach. More about this in a moment. To help curb some of the challenges with such vast movement amongst the Christian communities, certain restrictions were placed. Fourth, a strong moral code. Few modern people care about the moral code of Christians. More than likely, they despise us for it. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century the moral code was a critical component of their faith, society, and distinction from the Romans. The Christian moral code was a sign of their new life. They were no longer Roman pagans but believers in the one true God who has redeemed them by sending his Son. This new life had consequences: they needed to live it. The Romans would notice if they didn’t follow their own moral norms or did whatever they wanted. Therefore, the Church maintained a strict moral code for all believers. Fifth, the form of the Mass. The Mass seems simple and short compared to our modern Mass. The Mass of the *Didache* and the early Church is deeply rooted in Scripture and its fulfillment of the Old Testament. As the Mass developed, it continued to adapt this message to the people and times to help them understand its themes. This is the earliest form of it.

### Structure and Themes

The *Didache* is split into three parts: the moral teachings, the prayers, and the eschatology.

## Part 1: the moral teachings

As I mentioned above, morality in the early church was essential for the effective proclamation of the Gospel. Imagine if you were a Roman of the 1<sup>st</sup> century who saw a woman of this new religion wandering aimlessly through the city begging for money, not caring about laws, and causing a stir. What would you think? In order for the people to grasp the value and importance of the new life that came through Jesus, a strict morality was necessary. Keeping your word, honestly, absence of lying and deceit show honor to the people. A strict sexual ethics set the Christians apart from the Romans who gave men sexual freedom and not women. An adherence to charity was an essential part of the strangeness of Christianity. Romans were not charitable. Begging was dishonorable. Plus anyone who begged was also the lowest cast of society. But adhering to a law of charity, Christians equalized all aspects of society and showed the true nature of Christianity that all people are saved. It comes with a catch. Charity can lead to abuse. Christianity was not a religion of handouts but one of new life. A person who wants to be part of the community must also work. Everyone was required to work and to provide for the good of the Church.

Prophets are mentioned in great detail throughout the work. We need a sense of the role and challenge with prophets of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Prophets were itinerant preachers. It was common for well-known preachers to wander around the Christians world and preach in various communities to earn food or lodging. Herein lies the problem. A preacher can wander into a town, preach, and then live off the goodness of that town as a free-loader. No free-loaders in the early church. Therefore the Church put strict rules regarding the true and false prophets. Additionally, not all prophets were true to the Christian message. It was very common during the 1<sup>st</sup> century to have many different views of Christianity and to debate them within a community. St. Paul speaks about many of these groups throughout his letters. Therefore the Church needed a way to distinguish between true and false teachers of the faith.

## Part 2: Prayers and Liturgies

The one main prayer contained in this section is the Our Father. As you may notice, it is the same one as in the Gospel of Matthew. The only addition is the requirement to pray this prayer three times a day. As we read in the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostles went to pray three times a day. The Church preserved this tradition in the Liturgy of the Hours and Mass through which a person would pray the Our Father three times that day. The Rosary came much later in Church history as a way to capture the idea of praying the Our Father three times a day for people who couldn't pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

The Mass is mentioned as a rule. The Church began to restrict and clarify the form and structure of Sacraments and the Mass at this time in history. We have the words that the Apostles said that we should pray over the wine and the bread. A clear form to the Mass is developed. The same applies to baptism. The one baptizing must use the given words and perform the ritual in a specific way. Notice that the common way in the early Church is by pouring water over the head not full submersion.

## Part 3: the eschatology

The *Didache* ends in a way similar to the Gospel of Matthew by reminding the reader of the end times and that Jesus is going to return. After sixty years Jesus has not returned and the Apostles are dying, it would be easy to settle into a comfortable life and just enjoy the new life that Jesus has given. But that is not the point. Jesus will return and we need to be ready. Therefore the Apostles remind their flock to keep Jesus' coming always in their mind and to remember that they will be judged for their actions. Notice the strong connection between the Book of Revelation and the *Didache* in the style of writing and the themes. The Book of Revelation was not written for another 20 years.

### List of the Church Fathers

#### **1. The 5 Apostolic Fathers : 1st Century**

Clement, Bishop of Rome (30-100)  
 Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (30-107)  
 Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (69-155)  
 Barnabas (priest?) (between 70 and 132)  
 Mathetes, *Epistle to Diognetus*

#### **2. The Post-apostolic Fathers : 2nd & 3rd Centuries**

Justin, (Priest) Martyr (100-165)  
 Hegesippus, (110-180)  
 Aristides the Athenian (2nd Century)  
 Marcus Minucius Felix (*wrote in Latin* after 150)  
 Melito, Bishop of Sardis (died circa 180)  
*Anonymous*: Letter to Diognetus (end of 2nd Century)  
 Tatien the Syrian, a disciple of Justin (born 110/120 )  
 Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (120-200)  
 Athenagoras of Athens (circa 133-190)  
 Clement, Bishop of Alexandria (150-215)  
 Hippolytus, priest of Rome (170-235)  
 Theophilus, Patriarch of Antioch ( wrote c. 180-185)  
 Origen, priest, (184/4 , 253-254)

#### **3. The Christian Faith is officially recognised in the Empire**

##### **The Golden Age – The 4th to 8th Centuries**

##### **Greek Fathers (those who wrote in Greek) :**

Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Caesarea (died 270)  
 Lucian of Antioch, priest & martyr (c.240-312)  
 Alexander, Bishop (Pope) of Alexandria (died 326/8)  
 Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, (260/5-339/40)  
 Athanasius, Bishop (Pope) of Alexandria (298-374)  
 Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (ca. 313-386)  
 Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea (Syria) (died 390)

Didymus the Blind (Egyptian theologian) (313-398)  
 Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis (Egypt) from (330-360)  
 Basil, Bishop of Caesarea (329-379)  
 Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus (330-390)  
 Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (332-394) ( brother of Basil)  
 Diodorus, Bishop of Tarsus, (died 390)  
 Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (Cyprus) (310/320-403)  
 John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (349-407)  
 Asterius, Bishop of Amasea (Turkey) (c. 350-410)  
 Severian, Bishop of Gabala, (before 380-before 425)  
 Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia (350-428)  
 Cyril, Bishop (Pope) of Alexandria (376-444)  
 Cynesius of Cyrene, Bishop of Ptolemais (N.Africa)  
 Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrhus (c. 393-458/66)  
 Hesychius, priest of Jerusalem (died 443)  
 Isidore, Bishop of Pelusium (Egypt) (died c.450)  
 Leontius of Jerusalem, theologian (485-543)  
 Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, (6th Century)  
 Romanos the Melodist, deacon, (6th Century)  
 Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem (c. 560-638)  
 Maximus the Confessor, Monk (580-662)  
 Anastasius of Sinai (Sinaita) Abbot of St Catherine's (d. after 700)  
 John Climacus, monk at St Catherine's (Sinai) (7th Century)  
 John of Damascus, priest and Abbot (675/6 – 749)  
*Also called the last of the Greek Fathers*

#### **4. Latin Fathers (those who wrote in Latin) :**

##### **The 4th to 8th Centuries**

Tertullian (c 155 – c 225) priest of North Africa (probably Carthage)  
 Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (died in 258)  
 Arnobius of Sicca (in Tunisia) Lay apologist (died in 330)  
 Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (315-367)  
 Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari (died 370/1)  
 Eusebius, Bishop of Vercelli (236-371)  
 Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (339-397)  
 Optatus, Bishop of Milevis (N. Africa) (4th Century)  
 Jerome, Priest, (347-420)  
 Augustin, Bishop of Hippo (354-430)  
 Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (354-431)  
 Peter Chrysologus, Bishop of Ravenna (380-450)  
 Prosper of Aquitaine, layman, (390=455)  
 Julianus Pomerius, priest (5th Century)  
 Leo the Great, Bishop (Pope) of Rome (400-461)  
 Gennadius, priest of Marseilles (died 496)



Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe (Tunisia) (462/67-527/33)

Caesarius, Bishop of Arles (France) (died in 542)

Gregory the Great, Bishop (Pope) of Rome (540-605)

Isidore, Bishop of Seville (c. 560-636)

*Also called the last of the Latin Fathers*

### **5. Syriac Fathers (those who wrote in Syriac) :**

Ephrem the Syrian , Deacon (306-373)

Aphraates, Monk (c. 320-345)

Jacob, Bishop of Serugh (451-521)

Philoxenus, Bishop of Mabbug (or Hierapolis) (6th Century)

Isaac , Bishop of Nineveh and hermit (613-700)

### **6. Fathers of the Desert (Hermits/Monks)**

Anthony, the Great **Father of all Monks** (251-356)

Pachomius, **Founder of Christian Monasticism** (292-348)

Macarius of Egypt, (300-391)

Macarius of Alexandria (died 395)

Evagrius Ponticus, deacon (345-399)

Arsenius the Great (deacon/hermit) (350/4-445)

Nilus of Sinai (died 430)

Vincent of Lerins (died 445)

Theodore the Studite, Abbot (759-826)

Athanasius the Athonite, Abbot (920-1003)

Symeon, the New Theologian, Monk (949-1022)

Gregory Palamas, Monk (1296-1359)



him two miles; if someone takes your cloak, give him your tunic also; if someone takes from you what belongs to you, do not demand it back, for you cannot do so. 5 Give to everyone who asks you, and do not demand it back, for the Father wants something from his own gifts to be given to everyone. Blessed is the one who gives according to the command, for such a person is innocent. Woe to the one who receives: if, on the one hand, someone who is in need receives, this person is innocent, but the one who does not have need will have to explain why and for what purpose he received, and upon being imprisoned will be interrogated about what he has done, and will not be released from there until he has repaid every last cent. 6 But it has also been said concerning this: "Let your gift sweat in your hands until you know to whom to give it."

### *The Second Commandment of the Way of Life*

2 The second commandment of the teaching is: 2 You shall not murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not corrupt children; you shall not be sexually immoral; you shall not steal; you shall not practice magic; you shall not engage in sorcery; you shall not abort a child or commit infanticide. You shall not covet your neighbor's possessions; 3 you shall not commit perjury; you shall not give false testimony; you shall not speak evil; you shall not hold a grudge. 4 You shall not be double-minded or double-tongued, for the double tongue is a deadly snare. 5 Your word must not be false or meaningless, but confirmed by action. 6 You shall not be greedy or avaricious, or a hypocrite or malicious or arrogant. You shall not hatch evil plots against your neighbor. 7 You shall not hate any one; instead you shall

1.4 if someone takes your cloak... also Luke 6:29 (Matt. 5:40). \* if someone takes from you... back Luke 6:30. 1.5 Give... back Luke 6:30.1.5 will not be released... cent Cf. Matt. 5:26; Luke 12:59. 1.6 Let your gift... give it Source unknown; cf. Sir. 12:1-7. 2.2-3 You shall not murder... testimony Cf. Exod. 20:13-17; Matt. 5:33; 19:18.

## THE DIDACHE

The teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles  
by the twelve apostles.

### *The Two Ways*

1 There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways.

### *The First Commandment of the Way of Life*

2 Now this is the way of life: First, you shall love God, who made you. Second, you shall love your neighbor as yourself; but whatever you do not wish to happen to you, do not do to another. 3 The teaching of these words is this: Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you. For what credit is it if you love those who love you? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? But you must love those who hate you, and you will not have an enemy. 4 Abstain from fleshly and bodily cravings. If someone gives you a blow on your right cheek, turn to him the other as well and you will be perfect. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with

Title See the introduction. 1.2 you shall... yourself Cf. Matt. 22:37-39 (Mark 12:30-31); Luke 10:27; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18. \* whatever... another Cf. Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31. 1.3 Bless... you Luke 6:28. \* pray for... hate you Cf. Matt. 5:44-47; Luke 6:27-28, 32-33, 35. 1.4 Abstain... cravings Cf. 1 Pet. 2:11. \* If someone... as well Cf. Matt. 5:39. \* you will be perfect Cf. Matt. 5:48. \* If someone forces... miles Matt. 5:41.

reprove some, and pray for some, and some you shall love more than your own life.

### *To Do and Not Do*

**3** My child, flee from evil of every kind and from everything resembling it. **2** Do not become angry, for anger leads to murder. Do not be jealous or quarrelsome or hot-tempered, for all these things breed murders. **3** My child, do not be lustful, for lust leads to sexual immorality. Do not be foulmouthed or let your eyes roam, for all these things breed adultery. **4** My child, do not be an augur, since it leads to idolatry. Do not be an enchanter or an astrologer or a magician, or even desire to see them, for all these things breed idolatry. **5** My child, do not be a liar, since lying leads to theft. Do not be avaricious or conceited, for all these things breed thefts. **6** My child, do not be a grumbler, since it leads to blasphemy. Do not be arrogant or evil-minded, for all these things breed blasphemies.

**7** Instead, be humble, for the humble shall inherit the earth. **8** Be patient and merciful and innocent and quiet and good, and revere always the words that you have heard. **9** Do not exalt yourself or permit your soul to become arrogant. Your soul shall not associate with the lofty, but live with the righteous and the humble. **10** Accept as good the things that happen to you, knowing that nothing transpires apart from God.

**4** My child, remember night and day the one who preaches God's word to you, and honor him as though he were the Lord. For

<sup>3,4</sup> *augur* One who attempts to foretell the future by examining the behavior or entrails of birds or animals. \* *see* Some ancient authorities read *see or hear*. <sup>3,7</sup> *the humble . . . earth* Matt. 5:5; Ps. 37:11. <sup>4.1</sup> *remember . . . to you* Cf. Heb. 13:7.

wherever the Lord's nature is preached, there the Lord is. **2** Moreover, you shall seek out daily the presence of the saints, so that you may find support in their words. **3** You shall not cause division, but shall make peace between those who quarrel. You shall judge righteously; you shall not show partiality when reprovng transgressions. **4** You shall not waver with regard to your decisions.

**5** Do not be one who stretches out the hands to receive but withdraws them when it comes to giving. **6** If you earn something by working with your hands, you shall give a ransom for your sins. **7** You shall not hesitate to give, nor shall you grumble when giving, for you will know who is the good paymaster of the reward. **8** You shall not turn away from someone in need, but shall share everything with your brother or sister, and do not claim that anything is your own. For if you are sharers in what is imperishable, how much more so in perishable things!

**9** You shall not withhold your hand from your son or your daughter, but from their youth you shall teach them the fear of God. **10** You shall not give orders to your male slave or female servant (who hope in the same God as you) when you are angry, lest they cease to fear the God who is over you both. For he comes to call not with regard to reputation but those whom the Spirit has prepared. **11** And you slaves shall be submissive to your masters in respect and fear, as to a symbol of God.

**12** You shall hate all hypocrisy and everything that is not pleasing to the Lord. **13** You must not forsake the Lord's commandments but must guard what you have received, neither adding nor subtracting

<sup>4,4</sup> *waver . . . decisions* Lit. *be of two minds whether it shall be or not*. Cf. Barn. 19.5. \* *brother or sister* Gk *adelpho*. <sup>4.8</sup> *not claim . . . your own* Cf. Acts 4:32. <sup>4.9</sup> *withhold your hand from* I.e., *neglect your responsibility to*. Cf. Barn. 19.5. <sup>4.13</sup> *must guard . . . anything* Cf. Deut. 4:2; 12:32 (LXX 13:1).

anything. 14 In church you shall confess your transgressions, and you shall not approach your prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of life.

### *The Way of Death*

5 But the way of death is this: first of all, it is evil and completely cursed; murders, adulteries, lusts, sexual immoralities, thefts, idolatries, magic arts, sorceries, robberies, false testimonies, hypocrisies, duplicity, deceit, pride, malice, stubbornness, greed, abusive language, jealousy, audacity, arrogance, boastfulness. 2 It is the way of persecutors of good people, of those who hate truth, love a lie, do not know the reward of righteousness, do not adhere to what is good or to righteous judgment, who are vigilant not for what is good but for what is evil, from whom gentleness and patience are far removed, who love worthless things, pursue a reward, have no mercy for the poor, do not work on behalf of the oppressed, do not know the one who made them, are murderers of children, corrupters of God's creation, who turn away from someone in need, who oppress the afflicted, are advocates of the wealthy, lawless judges of the poor, utterly sinful. May you be delivered, children, from all these things!

### *The Right Choice*

6 See that no one leads you astray from this way of the teaching, for such a person teaches you without regard for God. 2 For if you are able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect. But if you are not able, then do what you can.

5.1 *abusive language* Or *obscenity*.

### *Concerning Food*

3 Now concerning food, bear what you are able, but in any case keep strictly away from meat sacrificed to idols, for it involves the worship of dead gods.

### *Concerning Baptism*

7 Now concerning baptism, baptize as follows: after you have reviewed all these things, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in running water. 2 But if you have no running water, then baptize in some other water; and if you are not able to baptize in cold water, then do so in warm. 3 But if you have neither, then pour water on the head three times in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. 4 And before the baptism let the one baptizing and the one who is to be baptized fast, as well as any others who are able. Also, you must instruct the one who is to be baptized to fast for one or two days beforehand.

### *Concerning Fasts*

8 But do not let your fasts coincide with those of the hypocrites. They fast on Monday and Thursday, so you must fast on Wednesday and Friday.

### *Concerning Prayer*

2 Nor should you pray like the hypocrites. Instead, pray like this, just as the Lord commanded in his Gospel:

7.1 *reviewed* I.e., with those who are about to be baptized \* *in the name... Spirit* Matt. 28:19. \* *running* Lit. *living* (also in following sentence). 7.2 Cf. Tertullian, *On Baptism* 4: "It makes no difference whether a man be washed in a sea or a pool, a stream or a fountain, a lake or a trough." 7.3 This appears to be the earliest reference to the Christian use of a mode of baptism other than immersion. 8.1 *But do not let... hypocrites* Cf. Matt. 6:16. 8.2 *Nor should you... hypocrites* Cf. Matt. 6:5.



"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debt, as we also forgive our debtors;  
and do not lead us into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one;  
for yours is the power and the glory forever."

3 Pray like this three times a day.

*Concerning the Eucharist*

9 Now concerning the Eucharist, give thanks as follows. 2 First, concerning the cup:

We give you thanks, our Father,  
for the holy vine of David your servant,  
which you have made known to us  
through Jesus, your servant,  
to you be the glory forever.

3 And concerning the broken bread:

We give you thanks, our Father,  
for the life and knowledge

8.2 *Our Father... forever* Cf. Matt. 6:9-13. • *the evil one* Or *evil*. 9.1 *the Eucharist* Or *the thanksgiving* The Gk word *eucharistia*, which in the NT is used in the general sense of "thankfulness" or "thanksgiving" (e.g., Acts 24:3; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 3:9), soon became a technical term for the primary act of "giving thanks," namely the Lord's Supper (cf. Ign. *Smyrn.* 6.2; Justin Martyr, *1 Apology* 65).

that you have made known to us  
through Jesus, your servant,  
to you be the glory forever.

4] Just as this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains  
and then was gathered together and became one,  
so may your church be gathered together from the ends of  
the earth into your kingdom;  
for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ  
forever.

5 But let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who  
have been baptized into the name of the Lord, for the Lord has also  
spoken concerning this: "Do not give what is holy to dogs."

10 And after you have had enough, give thanks as follows:

2 We give you thanks, Holy Father,  
for your holy name, which you have caused to dwell in our  
hearts,  
and for the knowledge and faith and immortality that you  
have made known to us through Jesus your servant;  
to you be the glory forever.

3 You, almighty Master, created all things for your name's  
sake,  
and gave food and drink to humans to enjoy, so that they  
might give you thanks;  
but to us you have graciously given spiritual food and  
drink,  
and eternal life through your servant.

9.5 *Do not... dogs* Matt. 7:6. 10.3 *servant* Some ancient authorities read *servant Jesus*.

4 Above all we give thanks to you because you are mighty; to you be the glory forever.

5 Remember your church, Lord, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in your love;

and from the four winds gather the church that has been sanctified into your kingdom, which you have prepared for it; for yours is the power and the glory forever.

6 May grace come, and may this world pass away.

Hosanna to the God of David.

If anyone is holy, let him come;

if anyone is not, let him repent.

Maranatha! Amen.

7 But permit the prophets to give thanks however they wish.

### *Concerning Teachers*

11 So, if anyone should come and teach you all these things that have just been mentioned above, welcome him. 2 But if the teacher himself goes astray and teaches a different teaching that undermines all this, do not listen to him. However, if his teaching contributes to righteousness and knowledge of the Lord, welcome him as you would the Lord.

10.6 *repent* Or *be converted*. • *Maranatha* Or *Our Lord, come!* Cf. 1 Cor. 16:22. 10.7 *wish* Other ancient authorities read *wish*. And concerning the ointment, give thanks as follows: *We give you thanks, Father, for the fragrant ointment that you have made known to us through Jesus your servant; to you be the glory forever. Amen.*

### *Concerning Itinerant Apostles and Prophets*

3 Now concerning the apostles and prophets, deal with them as follows in accordance with the rule of the gospel. 4 Let every apostle who comes to you be welcomed as if he were the Lord. 5 But he is not to stay for more than one day, unless there is need, in which case he may stay another. But if he stays three days, he is a false prophet. 6 And when the apostle leaves, he is to take nothing except bread until he finds his next night's lodging. But if he asks for money, he is a false prophet. 7 Also, do not test or evaluate any prophet who speaks in the spirit, for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven. 8 However, not everyone who speaks in the spirit is a prophet, but only if he exhibits the Lord's ways. By his conduct, therefore, will the false prophet and the prophet be recognized. 9 Furthermore, any prophet who orders a meal in the spirit shall not partake of it; if he does, he is a false prophet. 10 If any prophet teaches the truth, yet does not practice what he teaches, he is a false prophet. 11 But any prophet proven to be genuine who does something with a view to portraying in a worldly manner the symbolic meaning of the church (provided that he does not teach you to do all that he himself does) is not to be judged by you, for his judgment is with God. Besides, the ancient prophets also acted in a similar manner. 12 But if anyone should say in the spirit, "Give me money" or anything else, do not listen to him. But if he tells you to give on behalf of others who are in need, let no one judge him.

11.7 Cf. Matt. 12:31. 11.11 *who does something . . . church* Or *who acts out in an earthly fashion the allegorical significance of the church*; Lit. *who acts with a view to the earthly mystery of the church*. The phrase has never been explained satisfactorily. It may refer to some symbolic action intended to convey spiritual truth, analogous to those performed by some of the OT prophets (e.g., Hosea's marriage to Gomer), which may have seemed to some members of the community to be of doubtful propriety.

**12** Everyone who comes in the name of the Lord is to be welcomed. But then examine him, and you will find out—for you will have insight—what is true and what is false. **2** If the one who comes is merely passing through, assist him as much as you can. But he must not stay with you for more than two or, if necessary, three days. **3** However, if he wishes to settle among you and is a craftsman, let him work for his living. **4** But if he is not a craftsman, decide according to your own judgment how he shall live among you as a Christian, yet without being idle. **5** But if he does not wish to cooperate in this way, then he is trading on Christ. Beware of such people.

**13** But every genuine prophet who wishes to settle among you is worthy of his food. **2** Likewise, every genuine teacher is, like the worker, worthy of his food. **3** Take, therefore, all the first fruits of the produce of the wine press and threshing floor, and of the cattle and sheep, and give these first fruits to the prophets, for they are your high priests. **4** But if you have no prophet, give them to the poor. **5** If you make bread, take the first fruit and give in accordance with the commandment. **6** Similarly, when you open a jar of wine or oil, take the first fruit and give it to the prophets. **7** As for money and clothes and any other possessions, take the first fruit that seems right to you and give in accordance with the commandment.

#### *Concerning the Lord's Day*

**14** On the Lord's own day gather together and break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure. **2** But let no one who has a quarrel with a companion join

12.1 *find out...false* Or (lit.) *know, for you will have right and left understand-*  
ings. 13.1 *worthy...food* Matt. 10:10. 13.2 *the worker...food* Matt. 10:10.

you until they have been reconciled, so that your sacrifice may not be defiled. **3** For this is the sacrifice concerning which the Lord said, "In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is marvelous among the nations."

#### *Bishops and Deacons*

**15** Therefore appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men who are humble and not avaricious and true and approved, for they too carry out for you the ministry of the prophets and teachers. **2** You must not, therefore, despise them, for they are your honored men, along with the prophets and teachers.

#### *Call to Follow the Gospel*

**3** Furthermore, correct one another not in anger but in peace, as you find in the Gospel; and if anyone wrongs his or her neighbor, let no one speak to that person, nor let that one hear a word from you, until he or she repents. **4** As for your prayers and acts of charity and all your actions, do them all just as you find it in the Gospel of our Lord.

**16** Watch over your life: do not let your lamps go out, and do not be unprepared, but be ready, for you do not know the hour when our Lord is coming. **2** Gather together frequently, seeking the things that benefit your souls, for all the time you have believed will be of no use to you if you are not found perfect in the last time.

14.3 *In every place...nations* Mal. 1:11, 14. 16.1 Cf. Mark 13:35, 37; Matt. 24:42, 44; Luke 12:35, 40. 16.2 *for all the time...to you* Cf. Barn. 4.9.

*Mini-Apocalypse*

3 For in the last days the false prophets and corrupters will abound, and the sheep will be turned into wolves, and love will be turned into hate. 4 For as lawlessness increases, they will hate and persecute and betray one another. And then the deceiver of the world will appear as a son of God and will perform signs and wonders, and the earth will be delivered into his hands, and he will commit abominations the likes of which have never happened before. 5 Then all humankind will come to the fiery test, and many will fall away and perish; but those who endure in their faith will be saved by the accursed one himself. 6 And then there will appear the signs of the truth: first the sign of an opening in heaven, then the sign of the sound of a trumpet, and third, the resurrection of the dead—7 but not of all; rather, as it has been said, “The Lord will come, and all his saints with him.” 8 Then the world will see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven.

16.4 For as lawlessness... another Cf. Matt. 24:10-12. • will perform... wonders Cf. Mark 13:22. 16.5 will be saved Matt. 24:10, 13. • by... himself Or by him who was cursed (cf. Gal. 3:13; in either case the reference is to Christ), or by the curse itself; or (emending the text) from the curse itself i.e., the grave. 16.6 then... signs Cf. Matt. 24:30. • trumpet Cf. Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16. 16.7 The Lord... him Zech. 14:5; cf. 1 Thess. 3:13. 16.8 will see... heaven Cf. Matt. 24:30.

