

Church History
Lesson 4 - Early Church Writings (1 Clement, Ignatius, Didache)

1. Introduction - Writings from the Apostolic Fathers

- 1.1. The Apostolic Fathers and their writings
 - 1.1.1. After the apostles had all died created a very different situation for the young church
 - 1.1.1.1. Few if any people who had actually walked with Jesus were still alive
 - 1.1.1.2. In case of disputes over doctrine or in relationships, there were no apostles who could be turned to for a decision about what to do
 - 1.1.2. Obviously, the church had leaders to guide her through this transition. The leaders of this time are often referred to as the Apostolic Fathers.
 - 1.1.2.1. These leaders were not themselves apostles, and their writings were not considered Scripture (although a few of them were considered as candidates to be accepted as Scripture.)
 - 1.1.2.2. However, many of these leaders knew the apostles personally, or were at most one generation removed from the apostles.
 - 1.1.2.3. For this reason these individuals held a place of real esteem in the life of the church, and their writings give a real glimpse into Christianity as it developed during the time from the close of the NT canon (between 70-90 AD or so) to the middle of the 2nd century (circa 150 AD or so.)
 - 1.1.3. Modern collections of the Apostolic Father writings
 - 1.1.3.1. In the last 100 years or so there has been renewed interest in the writings of these early leaders.
 - 1.1.3.2. In general, the writings included in collections of the Apostolic Fathers include:
 - 1.1.3.2.1. **1 Clement**
 - 1.1.3.2.2. 2 Clement
 - 1.1.3.2.3. **The Letters of Ignatius**
 - 1.1.3.2.4. The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians
 - 1.1.3.2.5. The Martyrdom of Polycarp
 - 1.1.3.2.6. **The Didache**
 - 1.1.3.2.7. The Epistle of Barnabas
 - 1.1.3.2.8. The Shepherd of Hermas
 - 1.1.3.2.9. The Epistle to Diognetus
 - 1.1.3.2.10. The Fragments of Papias
 - 1.1.3.3. We will not be reading all of these, though it is worthwhile to read all of them as you have time.
 - 1.1.3.4. We will only be discussing 1 Clement, the Letters of Ignatius, and The Didache.

- 1.2. Our approach to these writings
 - 1.2.1. These writings are not Scripture. Like everything else they must be read in light of Scripture and judged as to their faithfulness to it.
 - 1.2.2. However, these writings are from the very early church and should therefore be given due weight. They help us to understand how the early church understood and applied the Scripture to their own situation. If we read them with humility, they might help us to more faithfully apply the Scripture to our own lives and situations.
 - 1.2.3. As we read and discuss each of these writings, ask ourselves the following questions:
 - 1.2.3.1. What was the background that prompted this writing?
 - 1.2.3.2. What was the purpose of this writing?
 - 1.2.3.3. What are the main points the author seems to stress?
 - 1.2.3.4. What things sound familiar to me?
 - 1.2.3.5. What things sound unfamiliar to me or surprise me?
 - 1.2.3.6. What things do I like in these writings? Why?
 - 1.2.3.7. What things make me uncomfortable? Why?

2. 1 Clement

- 2.1. Background, author and date
 - 2.1.1. This was a letter written by Clement, an early leader in the church of Rome, to the Corinthian church.
 - 2.1.2. Most scholars date this writing to around 95 AD. As such it is probably the earliest post-New Testament writing we have.
 - 2.1.2.1. The persecution under Nero is already in the past, but the people martyred during it are referred to as being part of “our own generation.”
 - 2.1.2.1.1. ^{5:1} But let us pass from ancient examples, and come unto those who have in the times nearest to us, wrestled for the faith. ^{5:2} **Let us take the noble examples of our own generation.** Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most just pillars of the Church were persecuted, and came even unto death. ^{5:3} **Let us place before our eyes the good Apostles.** ^{5:4} Peter, through unjust envy, endured not one or two but many labours, and at last, having delivered his testimony, departed unto the place of glory due to him. ^{5:5} Through envy Paul, too, showed by example the prize that is given to patience: ^{5:6} seven times was he cast into chains; he was banished; he was stoned; having become a herald, both in the East and in the West, he obtained the noble renown due to his faith; ^{5:7} and having preached

righteousness to the whole world, and having come to the extremity of the West, and having borne witness before rulers, he departed at length out of the world, and went to the holy place, having become the greatest example of patience.

2.1.2.2. Furthermore, it appears that some leaders appointed by the Apostles were still alive (chapter 44)

2.1.2.2.1. Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect fore-knowledge 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. **We are of opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ in a humble, peaceable, and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly dismissed from the ministry.** For our sin will not be small, if we eject from the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled its duties. Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before now, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure [from this world]; for they have no fear lest any one deprive them of the place now appointed them. But we see that you have removed some men of excellent behaviour from the ministry, which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honour.

2.1.2.3. It appears from chapter 1 that the church at Rome is undergoing persecution when the letter was written. There was a persecution in Rome at the end of Domitian's reign, which ended in 96 AD.

2.1.2.3.1. ^{1:1} Owing, dear brethren, to the sudden and successive calamitous events which have happened to ourselves, we feel that we have been somewhat tardy in turning our attention to the points respecting which you consulted us;

2.1.2.4. Consequently a date of around AD 95, just after the persecution under Domitian began, seems most likely.

2.1.2.5. The letter was apparently written because that some of the younger men in the congregation had provoked a revolt (this is the Roman point of view; the younger Corinthians no doubt defended their action in more positive terms) and succeeded in deposing the established leadership of the church (3.3; 44.6; 47.6).

2.1.2.5.1. ^{3:3} Thus the mean men were lifted up against the honourable; those of no repute against those of good repute; the foolish against the wise; the young against the elder.

2.1.2.5.2. ^{44:6} For we see that ye have removed some men of honest conversation from the ministry, which had been blamelessly and honourably performed by them.

2.1.2.5.3. ^{47:6} Disgraceful, brethren, yea, very disgraceful is it, and unworthy of the conduct which is in Christ, that it should be reported that the most firm and ancient Church of the Corinthians hath, on account of one or two persons, made sedition against its presbyters.

2.1.2.6. While the letter, which was sent on behalf of the whole church (see the subscription), does not name its writer, well-attested ancient tradition and most manuscripts identify it as the work of Clement.

2.1.2.6.1. Clement's precise identity, however, is not clear. Roman Catholic tradition identifies him as the third bishop of Rome after Peter, but this is unlikely because the office of monarchical bishop, in the sense intended by this later tradition, does not appear to have existed in Rome at this time. Leadership seems to have been entrusted to a group of presbyters or bishops (the two appear to be synonymous in 1 Clement; see 44.1–6), among whom Clement almost certainly was a (if not the) leading figure.

2.2. Discussion of 1 Clement - key things to note

2.2.1. Clement uses Old Testament Scripture much as we do to support his points.

2.2.1.1. ^{8:1} The ministers of the grace of God spake by the Holy Spirit concerning repentance; ^{8:2} and **the Lord of all himself spake concerning repentance with an oath. As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner, as I desire his repentance; [Ezekiel 33:11]** adding thereto an excellent saying: ^{8:3}Repent, O house of Israel, from your iniquity: Say unto the sons of my people, Though your sins reach from earth to heaven,

and though they be redder than scarlet, and blacker than sackcloth, and ye turn unto me with your whole heart and say, My father, I will hearken unto you as to an holy people. **[Summary of Ezekiel 33]** ^{8:4} And in another place he speaketh in this wise: Wash, and be ye clean; take away the wickedness from your souls from before my eyes; cease from your evil deeds, learn to do well; seek judgment; deliver him that is oppressed; give judgment for the orphan, and justify the widow; and come and let us reason together, saith he; and though your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow; and though they be as scarlet, I will make them white as wool. And if ye be willing and hearken unto me, ye shall eat the good things of the earth; but if ye be not willing, and hearken not, the sword shall devour you; for the mouth of the Lord hath said this. **[Isaiah 1:16-20]** ^{8:5} Desiring, therefore, that all his beloved ones should partake of repentance, he hath confirmed it by his almighty will.

- 2.2.2.** Clement clearly knows of New Testament writings as well and cites them as authoritative
 - 2.2.2.1.** ^{10:1} **Abraham, who was called the friend**, was found faithful, inasmuch as he became obedient to the words of God. **[Referencing James 2:23]**.
 - 2.2.2.2.** ^{47:1} **Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul.** ^{47:2} What did he first write unto you in the beginning of his gospel? ^{47:3} Of a truth, he warned you spiritually, in a letter, **concerning himself, and concerning Cephas and Apollos, because even then there were factions among you;** ^{47:4} but the faction of that time brought less sin upon you; for ye inclined unto Apostles of good repute, and unto a man approved among them. **[Referencing 1 Corinthians 1]**.
 - 2.2.2.3.** Note some have seen quotes or allusions to Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Hebrews, Acts, and 1 Peter.
 - 2.2.2.4.** Clement quotes the NT as authoritative, though he does not call it Scripture.
- 2.2.3.** Clement sometimes includes quotes that we know nothing of from Scripture or other ancient writings, and sometimes seems to have different versions of sayings of Jesus than we have.
 - 2.2.3.1.** Let us clothe ourselves in concord, being humble and self-controlled, keeping ourselves far from all backbiting and slander, being justified by works and not by words. 4 For it says: "The one who speaks much shall hear much in reply. Or does the talkative person think that he is righteous? 5 Blessed is the one born of woman who has a short life. Do not be overly talkative." (1 Clement 30:3-5; source of quote unknown).

- 2.2.3.2.** Let this scripture be far from us where it says, “Wretched are the double-minded, those who doubt in their soul and say, ‘We heard these things even in the days of our fathers, and look, we have grown old, and none of these things have happened to us.’⁴ You fools, compare yourselves to a tree, or take a vine: first it sheds its leaves, then a shoot comes, then a leaf, then a flower, and after these a sour grape, and then a full ripe bunch.” (1 Clement 23:3-4; source of scripture quote unknown).
- 2.2.3.3.** Most of all, let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus, which he spoke as he taught gentleness and patience. ² For he said this: “Show mercy, so that you may receive mercy; forgive, so that you may be forgiven. As you do, so shall it be done to you. As you give, so shall it be given to you. As you judge, so shall you be judged. As you show kindness, so shall kindness be shown to you. With the measure you use it will be measured to you.” (1 Clement 13:1-2)
- 2.2.4.** The clear theme in 1 Clement is related to the schism occurring in the church at Corinth. In fact, pretty much every other theme in the letter is used in reference to this main theme.
- 2.2.4.1.** Because of the sudden and repeated misfortunes and reverses that have happened to us, brothers, we acknowledge that we have been somewhat slow in giving attention to **the matters in dispute among you, dear friends, especially the detestable and unholy schism, so alien and strange to those chosen by God**, which a few reckless and arrogant persons have kindled to such a pitch of insanity that your good name, once so renowned and loved by all, has been greatly reviled. (1 Clement 1:1)
- 2.2.4.2.** For you did everything without partiality, and you lived in accordance with the laws of God, **submitting yourselves to your leaders and giving to the older men among you the honor due them. You instructed the young people to think temperate and proper thoughts**; you charged the women to perform all their duties with a blameless, reverent, and pure conscience, cherishing their own husbands, as is right; and you taught them to abide by the rule of obedience, and to manage the affairs of their household with dignity and all discretion. (1 Clement 1:3)
- 2.2.4.3.** Take up the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle. ² What did he first write to you in the beginning of the gospel? ³ Truly he wrote to you in the Spirit about himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then you had split into factions. ⁴ Yet that splitting into factions brought less sin upon you, for you were partisans of highly reputed apostles and of a man approved by them. ⁵ In contrast now think about those who

have perverted you and diminished the respect due your renowned love for others. ⁶ It is disgraceful, dear friends, yes, utterly disgraceful and unworthy of your conduct in Christ, that it should be reported that the well-established and ancient church of the Corinthians, because of one or two persons, is rebelling against its presbyters. ⁷ And this report has reached not only us but also those who differ from us, with the result that you heap blasphemies upon the name of the Lord because of your stupidity, and create danger for yourselves as well. (1 Clement 47)

2.2.4.4. You, therefore, who laid the foundation of the revolt must submit to the presbyters and accept discipline leading to repentance, bending the knees of your heart. ² Learn how to subordinate yourselves, laying aside the arrogant and proud stubbornness of your tongue. For it is better for you to be found small but included in the flock of Christ than to have a preeminent reputation and yet be excluded from his hope. (1 Clement 57:1-2)

2.2.5. Jealousy as an underlying cause of schism

2.2.5.1. Because of **jealousy** our father Jacob ran away from the presence of Esau his brother. ⁹ **Jealousy** caused Joseph to be persecuted nearly to death, and to be sold into slavery. ¹⁰ **Jealousy** compelled Moses to flee from the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt... Because of **jealousy** Aaron and Miriam were excluded from the camp. ¹² **Jealousy** brought Dathan and Abiram down alive into Hades, because they revolted against Moses, the servant of God. ¹³ Because of **jealousy** David not only was envied by the Philistines but also was persecuted by Saul, king of Israel. (1 Clement 4)

2.2.6. Hospitality as a virtue

2.2.6.1. Because of his faith and hospitality a son was given to him in his old age, and for the sake of obedience he offered him as a sacrifice to God on one of the mountains that he showed him.... Because of his hospitality and godliness Lot was saved from Sodom when the entire region was judged by fire and brimstone.... Because of her faith and hospitality Rahab the harlot was saved.... The hospitable Rahab, however, took them in and hid them in an upstairs room under some flax stalks. (1 Clement 10, 11, 12)

2.2.7. The beginnings of a more allegorical interpretation of Scripture can be seen

2.2.7.1. And in addition they gave her a sign, that she should hang from her house something scarlet—making it clear that through the blood of the Lord redemption will come to all who believe and hope in God. (1 Clement 12:7)

2.2.8. There is a clear emphasis on the importance of godly order in the home, the church, and society

2.2.8.1. For you did everything without partiality, and you lived in accordance with the laws of God, **submitting yourselves to your leaders and giving to the older men among you the honor due them. You instructed the young people to think temperate and proper thoughts**; you charged the women to perform all their duties with a blameless, reverent, and pure conscience, cherishing their own husbands, as is right; and you taught them to abide by the rule of obedience, and to manage the affairs of their household with dignity and all discretion. (1 Clement 1:3)

2.2.8.2. Let us offend foolish and senseless people, who exalt themselves and boast in the arrogance of their words, rather than God. ⁶ Let us fear the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us. **Let us respect our leaders; let us honor the older men; let us instruct the young with instruction that leads to the fear of God. Let us guide our women toward that which is good: ⁷ let them display a disposition to purity worthy of admiration**; let them exhibit a sincere desire to be gentle; let them demonstrate by their silence the moderation of their tongue; let them show their love, without partiality and in holiness, equally toward all those who fear God. ⁸ **Let our children receive the instruction that is in Christ: let them learn how strong humility is before God**, what pure love is able to accomplish before God, how the fear of him is good and great and saves all those who live in it in holiness with a pure mind. ⁹ For he is the searcher of thoughts and desires; his breath is in us, and when he so desires, he will take it away. (1 Clement 21:5-9)

2.2.9. There is an appeal to myths current in that day - as if they are true

2.2.9.1. Let us observe the remarkable sign that is seen in the regions of the east, that is, in the vicinity of Arabia. ² There is a bird that is named the phoenix. (1 Clement 25:1)

2.2.9.2. The story of the phoenix, well known in antiquity, was widely used (with varying levels of credulity) by early Christian writers; sanction for this usage was found in Ps. 92:12 (LXX 91:13), where in the Greek LXX phoenix meaning “palm tree” was confused with phoenix meaning “phoenix bird.” (footnote by Michael W. Holmes, on this section in 1 Clement)

2.2.10. Clement teaches justification by faith - not works

2.2.10.1. Why was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he attained righteousness and truth through faith? (1 Clement 31:2)

2.2.10.2. All, therefore, were glorified and magnified, not through themselves or their own works or the righteous actions that

they did, but through his will. 4 And so we, having been called through his will in Christ Jesus, are not justified through ourselves or through our own wisdom or understanding or piety, or works that we have done in holiness of heart, but through faith, by which the Almighty God has justified all who have existed from the beginning; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Clement 32:3-4)

3. The Letters of Ignatius

3.1. Background, author, date

3.1.1. This collection of seven letters was written by Ignatius, the elderly bishop of Antioch, to a number of cities. He wrote them while on his way to Rome to be martyred for his faith. This is evident in the heading of the letters.

3.1.2. These letters are virtually the only record we have of Ignatius, though he was clearly a highly respected leader, and is mentioned by others, and these writings were preserved by the early church.

3.1.3. It appears that Ignatius was martyred during the reign of Trajan (AD 98-117). Thus, the letters were probably written in the first decade or two of the 2nd century.

3.2. Discussion of the major themes in the letters of Ignatius

3.2.1. Ignatius displays a clear concern regarding false teachers

3.2.1.1. Michael Holmes states that "To Ignatius, the false teachers within posed a greater threat than the pagan society without."

3.2.1.2. Therefore, as children of the light of truth, flee from division and false teaching. Where the shepherd is, there follow like sheep. (Ignatius Philadelphians 2:1)

3.2.1.3. 2 Now note well those who hold heretical opinions about the grace of Jesus Christ that came to us; note how contrary they are to the mind of God. They have no concern for love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the oppressed, none for the prisoner or the one released, none for the hungry or thirsty. They abstain from Eucharist and prayer because they refuse to acknowledge that the Eucharist is the flesh of our savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which the Father by his goodness raised up. (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 6:2-3)

3.2.1.4. In particular, he is fighting against early Gnostics who deny the full Deity and humanity of Jesus in one person, and who especially deny that Jesus was flesh.

- 3.2.1.4.1.** There is only one physician, who is both flesh and spirit, born and unborn, God in man, true life in death, both from Mary and from God, first subject to suffering and then beyond it, Jesus Christ our Lord. (Ignatius Ephesians 7:2)
- 3.2.1.4.2.** For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived by Mary according to God's plan, both from the seed of David and of the Holy Spirit. He was born and was baptized in order that by his suffering he might cleanse the water. (Ignatius Ephesians 18:2)
- 3.2.1.4.3.** the ancient kingdom was abolished when God appeared in human form to bring the newness of eternal life; and what had been prepared by God began to take effect. (Ignatius Ephesians 19:3)
- 3.2.1.4.4.** But if, as some atheists (that is, unbelievers) say, he suffered in appearance only (while they exist in appearance only!), why am I in chains? And why do I want to fight with wild beasts? (Ignatius Trallians 10:1)
- 3.2.1.4.5.** For he suffered all these things for our sakes, in order that we might be saved; and he truly suffered just as he truly raised himself—not, as certain unbelievers say, that he suffered in appearance only (it is they who exist in appearance only!). Indeed, their fate will be determined by what they think: they will become disembodied and demonic. (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 2:1)
- 3.2.1.4.6.** For I know and believe that he was in the flesh even after the resurrection; (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 3:1)
- 3.2.1.4.7.** For what good does it do me if someone praises me but blasphemes my Lord by not confessing that he was clothed in flesh? Anyone who does not acknowledge this thereby denies him completely and is clothed in a corpse. 3 Given that they are unbelievers, it did not seem worthwhile to me to record their names. Indeed, far be it from me even to remember them, until such time as they change their mind regarding the passion, which is our resurrection. (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 5:2-3)

3.2.1.5. He also writes against continuing in Judaism - the break is virtually complete by this stage

3.2.1.5.1. Do not be deceived by strange doctrines or antiquated myths, since they are worthless. For if we continue to live in accordance with Judaism, we admit that we have not received grace. (Ignatius Magnesians 8:1)

3.2.1.5.2. If, then, those who had lived according to ancient practices came to the newness of hope, no longer keeping the sabbath but living in accordance with the Lord's day, on which our life also arose through him and his death (which some deny) (Ignatius Magnesians 9:1)

3.2.1.5.3. It is utterly absurd to profess Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism. For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity, in which every tongue believed and was brought together to God. (Ignatius Magnesians 10:3)

3.2.1.5.4. But if anyone expounds Judaism to you, do not listen to him. For it is better to hear about Christianity from a man who is circumcised than about Judaism from one who is not. But if either of them fails to speak about Jesus Christ, I look on them as tombstones and graves of the dead, upon which only the names of people are inscribed. (Ignatius Philadelphians 6:1)

3.2.2. Ignatius is very concerned about unity and structure within the church - especially in the form of submission to a single bishop. (However, note that this constant reference is notably missing in the letter to the Romans - who apparently still did not have a single bishop of Rome!)

3.2.2.1. Since, therefore, I have received in God's name your whole congregation in the person of Onesimus, a man of inexpressible love who is also **your earthly bishop**, I pray that you will love him in accordance with the standard set by Jesus Christ and that all of you will be like him. **For blessed is the one who has graciously allowed you, worthy as you are, to have such a bishop.** (Ignatius Ephesians 1:3)

3.2.2.2. It is proper, therefore, in every way to glorify Jesus Christ, who has glorified you, so that you, joined together in a united obedience and subject to the bishop and the council of presbyters, may be sanctified in every respect. (Ignatius Ephesians 2:2)

- 3.2.2.3.** For Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the mind of the Father, **just as the bishops appointed throughout the world are in the mind of Christ.** (Ignatius Ephesians 3:2)
- 3.2.2.4.** Thus it is proper for you to run together in harmony with the mind of the bishop, as you are in fact doing. For your council of presbyters, which is worthy of its name and worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop as strings to a lyre. (Ignatius Ephesians 4:1)
- 3.2.2.5.** Let no one be misled: if anyone is not within the sanctuary, he lacks the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two has such power, how much more that of the bishop together with the whole church! 3 Therefore whoever does not meet with the congregation thereby demonstrates his arrogance and has separated himself, for it is written: "God opposes the arrogant." Let us, therefore, be careful not to oppose the bishop, in order that we may be obedient to God. (Ignatius Ephesians 5:2-3)
- 3.2.2.6.** It is obvious, therefore, that we must regard the bishop as the Lord himself. (Ignatius Ephesians 6:1)
- 3.2.2.7.** Indeed, it is right for you also not to take advantage of the youthfulness of your bishop but to give him all the respect due him in accordance with the power of God the Father, just as I know that the holy presbyters likewise have not taken advantage of his youthful appearance but defer to him as one who is wise in God; yet not really to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, the bishop of all. (Ignatius Magnesians 3:1)
- 3.2.2.8.** Be eager to do everything in godly harmony, the bishop presiding in the place of God and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles and the deacons, who are especially dear to me, since they have been entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ, who before the ages was with the Father and appeared at the end of time. (Ignatius Magnesians 6:1)
- 3.2.2.9.** For when you are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, it is evident to me that you are living not in accordance with human standards but in accordance with Jesus Christ, (Ignatius Trallians 2:1)
- 3.2.2.10.** It is essential, therefore, that you continue your current practice and do nothing without the bishop, but be subject also to the council of presbyters as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope, in whom we shall be found, if we so live. (Ignatius Trallians 2:2)

3.2.2.11. Similarly, let everyone respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, just as they should respect the bishop, who is a model of the Father, and the presbyters as God's council and as the band of the apostles. Without these no group can be called a church. (Ignatius Trallians 3:1)

3.2.2.12. For all those who belong to God and Jesus Christ are with the bishop, and all those who repent and enter into the unity of the church will belong to God, so that they may be living in accordance with Jesus Christ. ³ Do not be misled, my brothers and sisters: if any follow a schismatic, they will not inherit the kingdom of God. If any hold to alien views, they disassociate themselves from the passion. (Ignatius Philadelphians 3:2-3)

3.2.2.13. Flee from divisions as the beginning of evils. You must all follow the bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and follow the council of presbyters as you would the apostles; respect the deacons as the commandment of God. Let no one do anything that has to do with the church without the bishop. Only that Eucharist which is under the authority of the bishop (or whomever he himself designates) is to be considered valid. ² Wherever the bishop appears, there let the congregation be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church. It is not permissible either to baptize or to hold a love feast without the bishop. But whatever he approves is also pleasing to God, in order that everything you do may be trustworthy and valid. (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 8)

3.2.2.13.1. Michael Holmes notes "term here occurs in Christian literature for the first time. In later use (by ca. AD 200) the word "catholic" became a technical term designating "the Catholic Church" as opposed to the heretical sects, but here the expression is used in the sense of "universal" or "general" (thus the adjective could be attached to words like "resurrection" or "salvation" as well as to "church"), or possibly "whole" (conveying the idea of organic unity or completeness)."

3.2.3. Ignatius is clearly concerned about his own impending death, and that he honor Christ in the ordeal

- 3.2.3.1.** Since God has answered my prayer to see you godly people, I have gone on to ask for more. I mean, it is as a prisoner for Christ Jesus that I hope to greet you, if indeed it be will that I should deserve to meet my end. Things are off to a good start. May I have the good fortune to meet my fate without interference! What I fear is your generosity which may prove detrimental to me. For you can easily do what you want to, whereas it is hard for me to get to God unless you let me alone. (Ignatius Romans 1:1-2)
- 3.2.3.2.** I do not want you to please men, but to please God, just as you are doing. For I shall never again have such a chance to get to God, nor can you, if you keep quiet, get credit for a finer deed. For if you quietly let me alone, people will see in me God's Word. But if you are enamored of my mere body, I shall, on the contrary, be a meaningless noise. Grant me no more than to be a sacrifice for God while there is an altar at hand. Then you can form yourselves into a choir and sing 104 praises to the Father in Jesus Christ that God gave the bishop of Syria the privilege of reaching the sun's setting when he summoned him from its rising. It is a grand thing for my life to set on the world, and for me to be on my way to God, so that I may rise in his presence. (Ignatius Romans 2:1-2)
- 3.2.3.3.** I am writing to all the churches and am insisting to everyone that I die for God of my own free will—unless you hinder me. I implore you: do not be unseasonably kind to me. Let me be food for the wild beasts, through whom I can reach God. I am God's wheat, and I am being ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, so that I may prove to be pure bread. (Ignatius Romans 4:1)
- 3.2.3.4.** For though I am still alive, I am passionately in love with death as I write to you. My passionate love has been crucified and there is no fire of material longing within me, but only water living and speaking in me, saying within me, "Come to the Father." 3 I take no pleasure in corruptible food or the pleasures of this life. I want the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ who is of the seed of David; and for drink I want his blood, which is incorruptible love. (Ignatius Romans 7:2-3)
- 3.2.4.** Ignatius clearly is familiar with NT writings, as he alludes to them in his writings

- 3.2.4.1. Ignatius the Image-bearer to the church at Ephesus in Asia, blessed with greatness through the fullness of God the Father, **predestined before the ages for lasting and unchangeable glory forever**, united and elect through genuine suffering by the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ our God, a church most worthy of blessing: heartiest greetings in Jesus Christ and in blameless joy. (To the Ephesians, Salutation; compare with Ephesians 1)
- 3.2.4.2. I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who made you so wise, for I observed that you are established in an unshakable faith, having been nailed, as it were, to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ in both body and spirit, and firmly established in love by the blood of Christ, totally convinced with regard to our Lord that he is truly of the family of David with respect to human descent, Son of God with respect to the divine will and power, truly born of a virgin, baptized by John in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled by him, ² truly nailed in the flesh for us under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch (from its fruit we derive our existence, that is, from his divinely blessed suffering), in order that he might raise a banner for the ages through his resurrection for his saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, in the one body of his church. (Ignatius Smyrnaeans 1:1 - clearly referencing Romans 1:3-4)

4. The Didache

- 4.1. Background, author, date, purpose
 - 4.1.1. The Didache - the greek word meaning “teaching” or “doctrine” - was a document known to exist because it was referred to in many other writings. However, we did not have a copy of it until 1873!
 - 4.1.2. The document was probably finalized in its present form between 100-150 AD, but it seems to reflect a time much earlier - perhaps shortly after the death of the apostles, and before writings like Ignatius.
 - 4.1.3. The most likely location of writing is probably Syria or Palestine.
- 4.2. Discussion of the notable themes in the Didache
 - 4.2.1. The two ways - basic instruction on Christian living
 - 4.2.1.1. There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways. (Didache 1:1)
 - 4.2.1.2. 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. (Didache 1:2)
 - 4.2.1.2.1. Note that this contains the two great commandments as stated by Jesus, and also

the Golden rule. They clearly had access to the early copies of the sayings of Jesus.

4.2.1.2.2. In fact, this opening statement is followed by a string of sayings of Jesus, many from the sermon on the mount.

4.2.1.3. 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. (Didache 2:1-3)

4.2.1.3.1. Note the reference to the Ten Commandments

4.2.1.4. 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! (Didache 5)

4.2.1.5. This concept of the two ways was a very popular form of catechism and moral instruction within Judaism. However, the inclusion of all of the New Testament material shows this form has been greatly adapted for Christianity.

4.2.2. Church practices - The second part of the document gives a variety of instructions for church life and practices. These include baptism, fasting, prayer, the Eucharist, and various issues about leadership.

4.2.2.1. Baptism

4.2.2.1.1. 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. (Didache 7)

4.2.2.1.1.1. Note the practice following the Trinitarian formula in Matthew 28:19-20.

4.2.2.1.1.2. Note that many additions - use running water, three times, fasting, etc.

4.2.2.1.1.3. Note that baptism was apparently by immersion, and only by pouring if immersion could not be done.

4.2.2.2. Fasting and prayer

4.2.2.2.1. 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. ² Nor should you pray like the hypocrites. Instead, pray like this, just as the Lord commanded in his Gospel: "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. (Didache 8)

4.2.2.2.1.1. Note the references to Jesus' teaching on prayers - not like the hypocrites, Lord's prayer.

4.2.2.2.1.2. Note idea of not fasting like hypocrites - use different days!

4.2.2.2.1.3. Note prayer to be done three times a day - very similar to Judaism.

4.2.2.3. Eucharist

4.2.2.3.1. Concerning the Eucharist, give thanks this way.

4.2.2.3.2. ² First, concerning the cup: We thank you, our Father, for the holy vine of David your servant,

which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be the glory forever.

^{9:3}Next, concerning the broken bread: We thank you, our Father, for the life and knowledge which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be the glory forever. ^{9:4} Even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom. To you is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.

^{9:5}Allow no one to eat or drink of your Eucharist, unless they have been baptized in the name of the Lord. For concerning this, the Lord has said, "Do not give what is holy to dogs."

4.2.2.3.3.

^{10:1} After the Eucharist when you are filled, give thanks this way: ^{10:2} We thank you, holy Father, for your holy name which you enshrined in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality that you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be the glory forever.

^{10:3} You, Master Almighty, have created all things for your name's sake. You gave food and drink to all people for enjoyment, that they might give thanks to you; but to us you freely give spiritual food and drink and life eternal through Jesus, your servant. ^{10:4} Before all things we thank you because you are mighty. To you be the glory forever. ^{10:5} Remember, Lord, your church. Deliver it from all evil and make it perfect in your love, and gather it from the four winds sanctified for your kingdom which you have prepared for it. For Yours is the power and the glory forever. ^{10:6} Let grace come, and let this world pass away! Hosanna to the Son of David! If anyone is holy, let him come; if anyone is not holy, let him repent. Maranatha! Amen. [^{10:7} But permit the prophets to make thanksgiving as much as they desire. [Didache 9-10.]

4.2.2.3.4.

Note how prayers are prescribed - unless a prophet is present. They can pray as they want!

- 4.2.2.3.5. Note how in 9:5 one must be baptized before eating the Eucharist - otherwise you are giving holy food to dogs!
- 4.2.2.3.6. Note the liturgical nature (and often Jewish nature) of the prayers.
- 4.2.2.4. Church leaders
 - 4.2.2.4.1. 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. (Didache 11:1)
 - 4.2.2.4.1.1. Note the testing of teachers. They must teach the settled faith - not new ideas.
 - 4.2.2.4.2. 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.
 - 4.2.2.4.2.1. Note that roaming apostles and prophets still existed!
 - 4.2.2.4.2.2. Note the test - leave quickly and ask for no money!
 - 4.2.2.4.3. 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.
 - 4.2.2.4.3.1. False people trying to get money was clearly a problem then as well!
- 4.2.2.5. Church leadership and structure
 - 4.2.2.5.1. 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. (Didache 14:1)

1. Note the meeting was on the Lord's own day - Sunday, the day of the Resurrection - not the Sabbath of Saturday!
 2. Notice that they apparently took the Eucharist every Sunday.
2. 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.
- 2.1. Note the two fold structure of leaders - bishops (elders) and deacons. This is different than that seen in Ignatius of bishops, presbyters/elders, and deacons.
2. End times teaching
- 2.1. 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. ⁵Then 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. (Didache 16:4-8)
 - 2.1.1. This seems to be very general, putting together various stands from the Olivet discourse, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.