

## The Apostolic Fathers

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### The Apostolic Fathers

The Apostolic Fathers were a group of early Christian authors whose writings date back to the late first and early second centuries. Included among the Apostolic Fathers are St. Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp of Smyrna, Didache, Barnabas of Alexandria, The Shepherd of Hermas, and Diognetus. The Apostolic Fathers showed their contribution to the development of Christianity with their writings. While the Bible is extremely valuable as the written record of God's Revelation, it does not contain the full record of that Revelation in its entirety. To put things simply, John 21:25 states; And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.[ CITATION KJV04 \l 1033 ] Many of these other things that our Lord did and said did not make it into the New Testament writings and remained oral Tradition. The Apostolic Fathers, incorporated many of the oral Tradition into their writings as means to clarify and interpret the Bible and to give Christians a clearer understanding of our faith. The content of the Apostolic Fathers writings varies. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch in Syria, wrote several letters before he was martyred in Rome around 110 C.E. His letters give us helpful glimpses into the life and worship of Christian communities at the turn of the century, in the same manner as the epistle of Paul provided for churches in his days. I Clement is a letter written to the church in Corinth. II Clement is a sermon that was written to urge Christians to repentance and to exercise moral self-control. [CITATION Kei01 \p 180 \l 1033 ] A manual for ethical advice with instructions concerning worship practices was written by Didache. The Shepherd of Hermas is popularized presentation of Christian teaching and advice, communicated through long, repetitive series of vision, commands, and similitudes.[CITATION Kei01 \p 180 \l 1033 ]

References

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<https://www.ccel.org/ccel/lake/fathers2.html>

KJV. (2004). John 21:25. Peabody: Hendrickson.