

# A SYNOPSIS

OF THE MOST FAMOUS & ANCIENT  
DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH, AS ALSO  
OF THE SCHOOLMEN



DANIEL TOSSANUS.

Written by Daniel Tossanus

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A  
**S Y N O P S I S,**  
 OR  
**C O M P E N D I U M**  
 of the fathers, or of the most  
*famous and ancient doctors*  
 of the **C H U R C H**, as also of the  
**S C H O O L M E N**

Wherein is clearly shown how

much is to be attributed to them, in what  
 several times they lived, with what  
 caution they are to be read, and  
 what their perfections  
 and their errors were.

*A treatise most necessary, and profitable  
 to young divines, and delightful to all such  
 whose studies in humanity take from them the  
 leisure, though not the desire of reading the fathers;  
 whose curiosity this brief survey of antiquity  
 will in part satisfy.*

Written in Latin by that reverend and renowned divine, Daniel Tossanus, chief  
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### A letter from the translator

To his truly worthy and noble friend, Sir R.C. Knight.

Sir,

What is not my own, I cannot dedicate, and therefore can neither prefix your name nor mine before this book. I appeal to you here, not as an indulgent patron, but a learned judge. Of such you have the two requisites: ability and commodity. The first is within you, an acute and solid understanding; the latter, outside of you, a complete library, which Chrysologus styles as the only paradise of this world.

You sit every day most happily encircled with the most famous writers of all kinds. Thus enveloped, the poorest scholar thinks himself majestically enthroned and securely guarded. There is not a quotation in this treatise, which you cannot readily bring to the test, and therefore I choose you as a most fit trier of the author's integrity, in whose praise when I have spoken much, it will appear in a discerning eye too little. His brevity is such that sometimes I resemble him to one who makes an exact survey of an immense kingdom in a moment; sometimes to the sun himself, who encompasses the world in a natural day. For the same proportion holds this short discourse with vast antiquity.

I dare maintain that in far greater volumes of the same subject (as *Medulla patrum*, *Favus patrum*, *Flores patrum*) you shall not find so accurate

a judgment of the fathers, neither delivered with so entire a faith, and so clean a sifting of the meal from the bran, of their perfections from their errors.

More sentences, it may be, they contain, and the more the worse. For those wretched summaries, or florists, are the very bane of learning, who instead of culling out the choicest flowers, do, indeed, nothing but weed authors. They leave the pure wine behind, and give their thirsty readers the unsavory lees to drink.

Believe me, the fountains themselves are far sweeter. Possevin has inserted Campian's *Ten Reasons* in his *Bibliotheca Selecta*, and alleges the cause to be his fear, lest the volume being so small, heretics might in time collect, and sacrifice them all to Vulcan. I think this little work is of as great value, and merits no less care, especially since it has already become so rare, that it is hardly by prayer, or money to be purchased. Of its dignity this is no obscure argument, that the learned son of our Tossanus thought it worthy the dedication to Jacobus Arminius, who rose with as great a luster as any light of the modern church, though it was his evil destiny to set in a cloud.

For the translation I say little, both because it is my own, as also that books of this nature admit no flourishes, nor elegance of phrase. I am confident I have not altered the sense, and that is as much as the most severe critic can require at my hands. The love to knowledge, and her professors, is yours by inheritance, who derive it from your truly great father, on whose head my divining soul foresees impartial posterity setting that crown which as yet the modesty of his friends, and the malice of his enemies deny him. I presume therefore that you will add the perusal of this treatise to your other favors, which are so many, that should I endeavor to sum them up, I should at once prove grateful to you, and tedious to the reader.

I beseech you therefore to accept the bare acknowledgment, and of the religious protestation that I am, noble Sir, your most humble servant,

A. S.



### The author's preface

My courteous auditors,

I have often times called to mind the saying of that most excellent and grave philosopher, Seneca: "*magnam esse dementia in tanta temporis egestate supervacua discere.*" "It is great madness," says he, "in so great a want of time to learn things superfluous."

For that first aphorism of Hippocrates, the prince of physicians, is most true: *vita brevis est, ars longa*; life is short, art long. Though this be most true, yet I cannot assent unto them, who think it enough for a student in divinity to be thoroughly versed in the sacred scriptures, and that he need learn and meditate nothing else; that the immense volumes of the fathers, and ancient doctors, as a vast and fathomless sea are to be avoided, because they bring greater doubt and perplexity, than light and science to the mind; especially if a man will dwell upon the manifold commentaries of the late doctors, whom we call Scholastics. These assertions (though they may at first sight appear fair and goodly) yet savor too much of arrogance.

Far be it from any divine to assume that Nestorian pride, who, as the ecclesiastical history testifies, relying on the volubility of his own tongue, arrogantly contemned the writings of the most ancient interpreters. I confess, the sacred Scriptures are able to render a man abundantly wise, as

says Paul (2 Timothy 3). And to instruct him in all things pertaining to salvation, by the faith which is in Jesus Christ.

I confess also some men have not the understanding rightly to judge of so many commentaries of the ancients; others have not the leisure to read them, and not a few want means to procure them. Yet in these, a divine ought not to be altogether a stranger. *Nescire quid antequam natus sis acciderit idest semper esse puerum*, says Cicero in his oratory. To be ignorant altogether of what happened before you were born, is always to be a child, and the commemoration of antiquity, and producing of examples, gives not only delight, but authority and credit to an oration. It was an ancient and laudable custom, as witnesses Irenaeus (Book 3 Chapter 4) that if any question were disputed, the judgment and consent of the most ancient churches wherein the apostles were conversant, should be inquired into, and fully known.

But here certain cautions are necessary, which being not observed by the papists, they have erred many ways in reading of the fathers, and have proved not so much theologians, as patrologists, and anthropologists:

The first caution is, that none read the fathers except they be well exercised in the Scriptures, which neglected, they shall grope like one blind in the dark, and sail in a wide sea without either north star or compass. Another caution ought to be, that though the authority and consent of the fathers in the truth, do much confirm and comfort, yet faith is only to be built upon the apostolic and prophetic scriptures, as a foundation most firm. For the Scripture, as the only queen and empress (as Luther is used to say), ought to have the sovereign command. The third caution is that in reading the fathers, we do not imitate those flatterers of Dionysius Siculus, who licking up the tyrant's spittle, affirmed it to be sweeter than nectar. To these I may liken such as without any exception embrace and magnify indifferently all the writings and sayings of the fathers.



These are the points about which at this day we combat the Jesuits, the stoutest champions the pope has; and not (as they labor to persuade the vulgar) about the fathers themselves, or reverent antiquity, as if we did plainly reject them, and after the Athenian manner were delighted with the novelties of newsmongers. For first, we recall them to true antiquity, which is to be derived from the ancient of days, and his revelations, that so we may refuse and condemn as new whatever Christ has not taught us, as Ambrose advises us, *Lib. Officior.*

Next we distinguish between the ages of the church, and between father and father, and demonstrate in one and the same father what is authentic, what erroneous, interpolated, and inserted by the monks.

Moreover, when we inquire after the church, we do not seek the degenerate and adulterate, but the chaste and holy spouse of Christ, and why may not we say the same of the Roman church at this day, that Cicero in his oration for his house said of the Roman people, *an tu populum romanum esse putas qui constat ex iis qui mercede conducuntur, qui impelluntur ut vim adferant magistratibus, optant quotidie praecipiti furore, caedem, incendia, rapinas; o speciem dignitatis populi romani, quam scilicet reges, quam nationes ex terrae, quam gentes ultimae pertimescunt.*

“Do you think,” he says, “that to be the people of Rome which consists of those that are mercenary; who are ready to offer violence to magistrates, that desire daily with a desperate fury, fire, rapes, and slaughter? O the goodly dignity of the Roman people, whom kings, foreign nations, and the most remote inhabitants of the earth do fear.”

We do indeed much esteem that Roman church whose faith is preached through the whole world; we likewise revere those fathers and bishops which are not commended to us by the only authority and

canonization of popes, but by their own purity of doctrine, innocence of life, and constancy in martyrdom.

But it is well the Jesuit so distrust their own cause, that they dare not stand to the decision of the sacred Scriptures, nor of the fathers themselves, except they be mutilated, and altered according to their will, and deformed with many suppositious books. Their impudence this way clearly appears in their *Index Expurgatorius* not long since here published; out of all which we may easily collect that they retain neither shame, faith, nor conscience, nor anything authentic either in the Scriptures, or fathers, but only what is appropriated to their superstition, and will-worship of images.

Now, most loving auditors, because it is much material to the students in divinity (though all have not the means and faculty of reading the fathers) at least to know what is to be judged and determined of them in general, and which were the most famous fathers, and Scholastic authors, as also with what judgment and choice they are to be read, I think it will neither be a service unacceptable, nor unprofitable, if in the end of these dog days, and before the mart now at hand, I instruct you in the premises, and contract the whole matter into, as it were, a synopsis, or abridgement.



*THE FIRST PART: General aphorisms containing certain rules by which we may judge in reading of the fathers of their true antiquity, and purity, together with the solutions of some objections.*



#### **Aphorism 1**

That true antiquity is to be sought after, and magnified, is the common tenet of all pious people.

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#### **Aphorism 2**

For it is manifest that the Christian religion is the most ancient, as deriving its testimonies from the very beginning of the world.

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#### **Aphorism 3**

But this is not to be esteemed true antiquity, to understand *quid hic, aut ille ante nos fecerit, aut docuerit: sed quid is qui ante omnes est, Christus, et qui solus via est, veritas, et vita, à cujus praeceptis nullo modo recedendum est*: What this, or that man did, or taught before us, but what he did who was before all, even Christ himself, who only is the way, the truth, and the life, from whose precepts we ought not to digress, as says Cyprian to Caecilius (Book 2 Epistle 3).

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#### Aphorism 4

*Omnis quippe Antiquitas, et consuetudo sine veritate nihil aliud nisi Error vetustas censenda est.* So that all antiquity, and custom, not grounded on the truth, is to be accounted no other than an ancient error, as the same Cyprian piously wrote to Pompeius against the epistle of Stephanus.

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#### Aphorism 5

But the ancient truth, God taught us by his prophets and apostles, who though in condition they were men, and, indeed, sinners, yet in Doctrine which was revealed to them supernaturally by the Holy Spirit, not by the will of man, we know them rightly to be fellow witnesses (Ephesians 2:20; 2 Peter 1:20).

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### Aphorism 6

The perfection of the Scriptures is easily proved by these two arguments: First, that they are sufficient to instruct in those things that belong to salvation, and to the full knowledge of the truth. (John 5:39, John 20:30; 2 Timothy 3:15-16). Secondly, because in temptations faith only finds rest in the testimonies of the sacred Scriptures; having always for its object the word of God revealed by the prophets and apostles, which cannot be said of any other writings or books whatsoever.

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### Aphorism 7

To recall us therefore from the manifest testimonies of the Scriptures to the writings of the fathers, or other men, were injustice, and contumely against the Holy Spirit himself; especially since our faith does not consist in wisdom, or in the words of men, but in the power of God, or in the evident proofs of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2).

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### Aphorism 8

Wherefore Augustine wrote thus against the Donatists (Book 2 Chapter 3):

*“Quis nescit sanctam Scripturam Canonicam tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti omnibus posterioribus Episcoporum literis ita praeponi, ut de*

*illa omnino dubitari, et disceptari non possit: Episcoporum autem literis, quae post confirmatum Canonem vel scriptae sunt, vel scribuntur a doctioribus libere reprehendi, et particularia Concilia a plenariis, et haec quoque a posterioribus emendari?”*

“Who knows not the holy Scripture canonical, as well of the Old as New Testament, so far to excel all the writings of the later bishops, as that there needs no doubt, or dispute thereof: and that the works of bishops which have been, or are now written after the confirmed canon, may be freely reprehended by the more learned, and that particular councils may be amended by general, and these also by the successive?”

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### Aphorism 9

Moreover, whereas many complain of the obscurity of the Scriptures we ought to make no scruple thereof, there being greater obscurity, less purity, and certainty in the writings of men, as plainly manifest the almost infinite commentaries upon Peter Lombard, and not a few animadversions of the Sorbonists upon him:

*“Cum ita sit temperata Scripturae obscuritas,”* (they be the words of Augustine, *Of Christian Doctrine*, Book 3) *“ut facile quis se possit expedire, modo cum similibus, et apertioribus locis Scripturae locum obscuriorem conferamus, et imprimis oculos a scopo non demoveamus, et quod in uno idiomate non intelligimus, ex alio cognoscere studeamus:”*

“Whereas the obscurity of the Scriptures is so tempered that we may easily explain it, if we confer the obscure place with places more open, and perspicuous; especially if we move not our eyes from the scope; and what we understand not in one tongue, we study to know by another.”

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**Aphorism 10**

Lastly, the fathers have often erred, as also the Scholastics, as the papists themselves confess: but that the Scriptures are void of all error, no Christian doubts.

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**Aphorism 11**

It is enquired therefore whether there be any need of reading the fathers, and ancient doctors, and if it be needful, how much we ought to attribute to them.

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**Aphorism 12**

To read the fathers profitably no man forbids, but it is not necessary to read them all, neither are they promiscuously to be read by all persons; neither to the same proper end that we read the Scriptures.

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**Aphorism 13**

They are not presently to be accounted the writings of the fathers that are fathered on them. As for example: some things pass under the name of one Dionysius Areopagita, others under that of Origen, whereof part were forged by idle monks, part were falsely attributed to those fathers; as also many legends of saints. Neither has every man such light, and knowledge of the Scriptures, as may enable him to judge of the fathers, whom we read not as foundations of our faith.

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#### Aphorism 14

*“Civitas Dei,”* (says Augustine, *City of God*, Book 19, Chapter 18)  
*“dubitationem Academicorum tanquam Dementiam detestatur: credit Scripturis sanctis veteribus, et novis, quas Canonicas appellamus, unde fides ipsa concepta est, qua justus vivit, per quam sine dubitatione ambulamus.”*

“The City of God detests all the doubts of the academics as mere madness. She believes the sacred Scriptures, both Old and New, which are called canonical, from whence faith itself is derived, whereby the just shall live, by which we walk with full assurance.”

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#### Aphorism 15

(15.) Wherefore Christ, and the apostles, when they taught, did not cite the rabbis, nor any father before them but Moses, and the prophets:



nor was it in vain decreed in the third Council of Carthage, that nothing should be read in the church but the canonical Scriptures.

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### Aphorism 16

But the fathers are read, and are often cited in the Schools: partly that we may see the consent of the ancient church concerning the principal heads of doctrine after they were first constituted by the sacred Scriptures, and partly that we may know the history of the church and discern her inclination, who (as witnesses Eusebius' History, Book 3 Chapter 29), after the apostles' times remained not long a virgin, nor long retained her faith uncorrupted. Partly also so that we may accommodate to our use the many pious admonitions, and consolations savoring of the very spirit of martyrdom, together with the many elegant similitudes, and comparisons, as somewhere says Erasmus.

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### Aphorism 17

And we read so that we may try all, as admonishes Jerome, in his epistle to Minerius: *“Meum est propositum Antiquos legere, probare singula, retinere quae bona sunt, et a fide verae Ecclesiae Catholicae non recedere.”*

“It is my purpose to read the ancients, to prove every particular, to retain that which is good, and not to fall from the faith of the true catholic church.”

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### Aphorism 18

The same, in a manner, writes Augustine to Bishop Fortunatus:

*“Neque enim, inquit, quorumlibet Disputationes, quamvis Catholicorum, et laudatorum hominum, velut Scripturas Canonicas habere debemus, ut nobis non liceat, (salva honorificentia quae illis debetur hominibus) aliquid in eorum Scriptis reprobare, atque respuere, si forte inveniamus quod aliter senserint, quam veritas habet: Talis ego sum in Scriptis aliorum, tales volo esse intellectores meorum.”*

“Neither,” he says, “ought we to have the disputations of any in the same esteem with the canonical Scriptures, although they be men truly catholic, and praiseworthy; nor to lose the freedom (paying the reverence due to them) of censuring their writings, if we find anything in them not consonant to truth. Such am I in the works of others; such would I have those who understand me.”

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### Aphorism 19

Wherefore the madness of them is great, who without choice would simply admit all the sayings of the fathers, which often contradict each other, and as often digress from the truth.

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### Aphorism 20

*“Lapsus est a fide, et crimen maximae Superbiae,”* (says Basil, in oration de confession. fidei) *“velle a Scripturis recedere, veleas solas, cum agitur de fide, molle admittere. Christus enim ait, suas oves, suam vocem audire, non alterius.”*

“It is a falling from the faith, and a crime of the highest arrogance, to forsake the Scriptures; or, when faith is our theme, not to receive them only. For Christ says that *his* sheep hear his voice, not another’s.”

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### Aphorism 21

(21.) Wherefore Augustine (when Cyprian’s authority was urged against him concerning baptism of heretics) answered, that he held not the epistles of Cyprian for canonical; and (when Jerome had cited three, or four fathers touching the reprehension of Peter by Paul) he replied, that he also could quote the fathers, but he had rather appeal to the sacred Scriptures.

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### Aphorism 22

For it is certain that Cyprian dissented from the church about the baptism of heretics; and that Tertullian being bewitched by the Montanists, wrote some tracts against the tenets of the church: as also that Lactantius and others were too much addicted to the opinions of the Chiliasts, and Platonists. And as true it is, that many things are ascribed to the fathers falsely, which savor neither of their style, nor their faith, nor their piety, as shall be shown in its proper place.

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### Aphorism 23

Moreover, it is most sure that councils have often erred, and that those things which had been well constituted by some councils, were overthrown by others: Yea, and in the Nicene Council itself, an unjust sentence had been pronounced against the marriage of priests, had not one Paphnutius, an old man, opposed it. In that council also, there was an overly-harsh canon written against those who, after a confession of faith once made, did fight for their princes.

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### Aphorism 24

Not without reason therefore is that of Panormitanus, a doctor of common law, *De Elect. cap. significasti.*

*“Magis credendum Laico, si Scripturas adferat quam Papae et toti Concilio, si absque Scripturis agant.”*

“We owe a greater belief to a layman producing the Scriptures than to the pope and a whole council if they determine anything without them.”

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### **Aphorism 25**

They err therefore who would have the common opinion pass for a law, preferring the multitude of human testimonies before the Scriptures.

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### **Aphorism 26**

But some will say: “Heretics believe not the Scriptures, and therefore we must have recourse to the authority of the fathers.”

To which I answer that they will less believe the fathers and the church, as appears in the ecclesiastical history by the Arians, and Nestorians, who – after the Councils of Nice and Ephesus and the decrees of the fathers – became more obstinate than before.

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### **Aphorism 27**

Whereas therefore, the Evangelical Divines of Worms, when they affirmed the holy Writ only to be the judge of controversy – being asked thereupon, whether or not thereby they meant to take away all authority

from the fathers – answered, that they willingly would receive the fathers who lived in the first 500 years after Christ.

It is not so to be understood as if they did simply approve them in all things, which the very papists themselves do not; but comparatively, that the corruption of doctrine was less in those times than in the ages following; although there were not lacking those who, after those 500 years, retained the apostolic doctrine in many points, such as Fulgentius, Vigilius, Leo Bishop of Rome, Bernard, and Damascene himself, especially if you consider the doctrine of the person of Christ.

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### Aphorism 28

It remains that we answer those who demand what is to be done when passages are produced from those early fathers which seem somewhat to confirm the opinions of the papists or the errors of others, as in prayer for the dead, the sacrifice of the mass, free will, etc.

To this, I answer, first, that proofs of opinions are to be derived from the Scriptures, and the rule of Paul to be strictly observed (2 Corinthians 13): We can do nothing against the truth, but all for the truth.

Secondly, we must compare many passages together.

Thirdly, we must consider how and in what sense anything is spoken by the fathers.

Fourthly, we must distinguish the authentic books from the bastard and supposed or suspected ones; such as the books *Hypognosticon* of Augustine, and *Of Questions of the Old and New Testament, Of a Blessed Life*, and many more not resembling the doctrine or style of Augustine, as Erasmus and Jacobus Hermerus rightly observe.



*THE SECOND PART of the writings of the fathers, whereof  
some are public, and some private.*




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*Chapter 1: Of the canons which they call the apostles' canons, and are wont  
to be inserted in the first tome of councils, in the beginning.*

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There are certain canons published in the Greek language, which they call the apostles' canons; some maintaining that they were collected by Clement, the successor of Peter. But it is manifest that this compilation was written long after the times of the apostles. For there are many things mentioned that were utterly unknown in the days of the apostles, such as celebrating the paschal feast before the vernal equinox, the use of gold and silver vessels for sanctification, distinctions between clergy and laymen, etc.

Additionally, it is unjust for the papists to object against and impose these canons upon us, especially since they themselves do not observe many of them. For example, the canon that prohibits clergy from being denied communion if they visit taverns or the one that commands all the faithful to enter the church to hear and participate in the Scriptures. Also, the canon that forbids bishops

or priests from putting away their wives under the pretext of religion, and so on.

Lastly, in Gratian's own work, Distinction 16, those canons are listed as apocryphal by the authority of one Isidorus, even though in another place, by the authority of one Zephirinus, they are simply received. This contradiction is reconciled by the gloss, which distinguishes these canons as some being apostolic and some being suspected.

It's different with the Apostles' Creed, which has authority above and is received before all other confessions. Almost all of it consists of words from the Scripture itself and comes to us through apostolic tradition. Refer to the works of Cyprian and Ruffinus on the creed. This creed is also the source and origin of all other creeds.

For, as Irenaeus rightly admonishes, "*Doctrina Apostolorum simpliciter pendemus, nec cogitandum est alios doctiores, aut sapientiores successisse Apostolis.*" "We merely depend on the doctrine of the apostles, and we ought not to think that anyone wiser or more learned than them has succeeded them."





*Chapter 2: Of councils.*



After the apostles' time, there were synods often assembled to decide ecclesiastical controversies, and that happened before the Nicene Council. For instance, there were debates about the paschal feast in the year 198 AD in Palestine and Rome. There were also discussions against the Novatians in Rome and Africa.

In 278 AD, there was a synod convened to refute the errors and blasphemies of Paul of Samosata, and an excellent confession by Gregory Thaumatergus exists as a response to his heresy. However, these synods before the Nicene Council were accounted but particular and provincial, because the persecution was severe, and it was not feasible to call a general council. The general or ecumenical councils, as Augustine calls them, are primarily four:

(1) The First Nicene Council, convened during the time of Constantine the Great, around the year 325 AD.

(2) The First Council of Constantinople, assembled in 381 AD by Gratianus and Theodosius the Elder, to address the issues with Macedonius and men with pneumatical spirits.

(3) The First Council of Ephesus in 431 AD, called by Theodosius the Younger, against Nestorius.

(4) The Chalcedonian Council during the reign of Emperor Martianus in 456 AD, in which condemned Eutyches, abbot of Constantinople, and Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria.

To these four universal councils, Bede and some others add two more councils of not much lesser authority, but in which almost nothing but the decrees of the former councils were established. These are the Fourth and Sixth Councils of Constantinople, which took place around the year 680 AD and condemned the errors of the Monothelites, who averred that Christ's deity and humanity had only one will and operation.

But, Gregory I, bishop of Rome, made an error when he wrote in Book 2, Epistle 10: "We receive the four synods of the holy universal church, as we do the four evangelists." Gratianus expressed a better view in his *Decretum*, Canon 3: "The holy Roman church," says he, "after the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which it regularly receives, does not forbid the admittance of the four synods."

Moreover, these rules are to be observed concerning those four ecumenical councils:

(1) We must believe the Scriptures for themselves, because they have never erred in matters, words, or sentences, but we believe the councils not for themselves but for the Scriptures.

(2) The certainty of the symbols and confessions of faith established by these councils does not depend on the authority of the individuals or the places where they were held but on the continuous consensus of the entire church from the time of the apostles.

(3) Councils do not have the power to create new articles of faith but can only explain and defend them using Scripture, and produce them against heretics.

(4) Councils can be examined and scrutinized for their conformity with the divine Word, and whatnot. For if for those of Berea, it were lawful to examine Paul's teachings and confer it with the Scriptures, why may we not

likewise examine the councils, especially since many of them contradict one another. as the Nicene and Ariminensian councils, the Chalcedonian and second Ephesian councils, and the sixth council at Constantinople touching the pulling down of images, and the second Nicene council under Irene against the defacers of images.

Also, many have erred, as that of Carthage before the Nicene Council, of the rebaptism of heretics, the Nicene council concerning warfare, and the second Ephesian council, which defended Eutyches, despite the presence of great and famous men. Leo, the bishop of Rome, mentioned in Epistles 30 and 31, that he approved of the decrees of the Chalcedon Council as far as they concerned doctrine but not those that involved Anatolius.

And the saying of Augustine in Book 3, *Contra Maximinus* is very remarkable:

*“Nec ego tibi Nicoenum Concilium, nec tu mihi Ariminense tanquam praeiudicaturus proferas: nec ego huius autoritate, nec tu illius detineris: Scripturarum autoritatibus, non quorumlibet propriis, sed utris{que} communibus testibus certemus: res cum re, ratio cum ratione decertet.”*

“Nor will I prejudice urge against you the Nicene Council, nor should you prejudice against me the Ariminensian. Neither I am tied to the authority of one, nor are you by the other. Let us both submit ourselves to the authority of the Scriptures: witnesses not proper to one, but common to both. Let one matter and one argument contend against another.”

But some councils deliberated solely on matters concerning ecclesiastical policy, as that of Spain and the Laodicean. Other councils decreed partly some things holy, partly many impious, as the Lateran Council convened in Rome under Innocent III, where the profane doctrine of transubstantiation was elevated to the status of articles of faith. In subsequent councils (the state of the church always declining) many idolatries were established.

And so in the following councils (the state of the Church always declining), many idolatries were established; so that not without cause, the

evangelical churches have rejected their authority, and have appealed from them to the antiquity of the apostolic age.



*Chapter 3: Of the private writings of the fathers.*



Before the Nicene Council, there flourished in the church the two disciples of the apostles, Polycarp and Ignatius: in their youth auditors of John the apostle. But of these, there are no writings extant except certain fragments of the epistles of Ignatius.

To them succeeded Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, and Justin the philosopher, surnamed Martyr, in the reign of Antonius the emperor. Jerome in his catalog of the ecclesiastical writers, testifies that Irenaeus wrote many things, but now there is only one volume remaining, consisting of five books against the heresy of Valentinus and the like; wherein there are excellent sayings of the cunning arguments of heretics; as also of the authority, and consent of the ecclesiastical doctrine. Among others, this saying is very rife (Book 3 Chapter 21): “*Christum pro nobis passum requiescente verbo, at crucifigi, et mori posset:*” the word resting: “Christ suffered for us, that he might be crucified, and die.”

Irenaeus was set forth at Geneva with the notes of Nicholas Gelasius, who has explained certain things unfitly spoken; as that in his third book, *filium hominis commixtum verbo dei*: “The son of man is mixed with the Word of God,” also, “*Mariam sibi, et universo generi humano factam causam salutis:*” “Mary was made the cause of salvation to herself, and all mankind: which to say is blasphemy, unless we consider her as the organ through which our savior passed into the world.”

There are extant both deserving and learned writings of Justin Martyr, in Greek: *Questions and Answers Against the Gentiles about True Faith*, and *An Apology for the Christians to Antoninus*. In the second book there is a memorable place of the liturgy of the ancient Christians, out of which may be proved how much the papists degenerate from the custom of the ancient church; for thus he says:

*“Die, qui solis dicitur, omnes, tum qui in opidis, tum qui in agris morantur, in unum convenimus, et ex commentariis apostolorum, et prophetarum scriptis recitatur quantam licet. Deinde ubi destitit qui recitat, antistes orationem habet, quae admonet, hortatur{que} ad pulchrarum illarum rerum imitationem. Postea omnes una surgimus, et precamur. Postquam autem à precibus destitimus profertur panis, et vinum, et aqua. Tum antistes rursus precatur, et gratias agit quanta potest contentione, populus{que} acclamat, dicens, amen: et iis, super quibus actae sunt gratiae unusquis{que} participat.”*

“ On the day called Sunday, we assemble together as well they which are in the towns, as those that dwell in the fields; when as much as is convenient is recited out of the commentaries of the apostles, and writings of the prophets. When the reciter has ended, the chief priest makes an oration, which admonishes and exhorts to the imitation of those fair things. After this we rise altogether, and pray. Prayers being ended, there is brought forth bread, wine, and water. Then the chief priest prays again, and gives thanks with as great ardency as he can, and the people cry, amen. Then everyone participates of those things already consecrated by prayer and thanksgiving.”

This, among other things, some approve not of in Justin Martyr, that while he labors to convince the Gentiles out of the writings of the philosophers, he sometimes attributes too much to the later, whose subtlety certainly did not penetrate to these mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

At that time flourished the Alexandrian school (Commodus being emperor) and namely the famous Clement of Alexandria, in the year 195.

Many of whose writings are yet extant in Greek: as the adhortatory book against the Gentiles, called *Protreptikos*: three books of the schoolmaster, wherein he teaches that Son of God is our tutor, and what ought to be the manners of Christians – commentaries of the diverse and manifold literature required to institute a Christian philosopher (Book 3, *Stromata*). He makes mention of a gospel according to the Egyptians, wherein there is a saying of Christ to Solon, *veni ad dissolvendum opera foeminae*: “I came to dissolve the works of the woman: but they are fabulous.” That in his second book of the schoolmaster seems to some harsh, and may be wrested to a more hard construction: “*Duplicem esse sanguinem domini, alterum carnalem quo redempti sumus, alterum spiritualem quo uncti: et hoc esse bibere sanguinem domini, incorruptionis eius esse participem.*” That “there is a two-fold blood of our lord, the one carnall, whereby wee are redeemed; the other spiritual, wherewith we are anointed; and this is to drink the blood of our Lord, to be a partaker of his incorruption.” Where the blood of Christ is improperly put for the effect, or fruit thereof.

Origen was the disciple of Clement under Emperor Severus, in the 200th year after Christ, who being from his infancy thoroughly grounded in all kind of learning, had also an incredible zeal in comforting the martyrs, as also industry, and acuteness in confuting the philosophers, and those Arabians, who would have souls to die with their bodies; as also Berillus the heretic, who denied the eternity of Christ, whom at length he reduced into the right way. See Eusebius Book 6, Chapters 2 & 4. But as the sharpest, and best-mettled knives easily grow dull or are broken, so oftentimes the most acute wits, either by too much confidence, or inconstancy, are soon overthrown. So it befell origen,\* who for his many errors, (as of all souls created at once, of the resurrection of new bodies according to substance, of the salvation of the devils at last: of the possibility of the law against the doctrine of justification) is ranked rather with the heretics than the fathers.

Of the Origenist heretics, see Augustine, *On Heresies*, Chapter 43. And Epiphanius, who with a strong endeavor of mind, opposed Origen; and Jerome (Tom. 6) confutes some of his errors. Yet he does not lack defenders, who excuse him and think many things to be falsely imputed to him, as Pamphius the priest, Rufinus, and Chrysostom. Some of his books are yet extant, as eight books of principles against Celsus, and commentaries upon the Pentateuch and the epistle to the Romans.

At the same time lived Tertullian, whom the historians make somewhat more ancient than Origen. His writings are extant in Latin, in a harsh style, and rough enough, although in some places (as the learned affirm) it is mutilated, and misplaced, especially in what he wrote against Marcia and Praxea. He wrote many things not to be despised, of prescriptions against heretics, of patience, of the flesh of Christ, of the resurrection of Christ, of the trinity: of baptism, but above all, his *Apology Against the Gentiles* deserves praise, which (as Jerome affirms) contains the learning of all ages. In others of his books he is either too pure, or too crabbed and severe: as in his book touching flight in persecution, which he simply disallows. Also in his book of fasting; of the cloak; of the crown of a soldier; of virgins to be veiled. But in his books to his wife, and of having only one wife; monogamy; and of the exhortation to chastity, he seems to embrace the errors of Montanus.

Jerome thinks Tertullian to have been provoked to this by the Roman clergy. Rhenanus excuses him thus: that in the time of persecution, and the day of judgment (as most of the ancients then thought) being at hand, he judged marriage not greatly to be desired. He was addicted to the opinion of the Chiliasts, as is collected out of his *Against Marcion*, Book 3. In his book *Against Praxea*, there are many dangerous phrases: as, "*patrem tota substantia deum esse, filium derivatione, et portione aliqua deitatis:*" that the father is God according to the whole substance, the son by derivation, and some part of the Godhead.



Augustine, *On The Literal Meaning of Genesis* (Book 10 Chapter 25) notes also this error in Tertullian: that he believed the soul to be a body, for no other cause, says the same father, then that he could not think it to be incorporeal, fearing lest it should be nothing if it were not a body. Neither could he conceive otherwise of God himself, to whom he gave a body. Which notwithstanding Augustine elsewhere so interprets, as if he there understood by a body, a nature, or substance. Yet are these acyrologias to be avoided.

These things considered, who sees not how preposterous the judgements of the papists are, who complain of the obscurity of the Scriptures, and tie us to the fathers, that is, lead us from certainties to uncertainties; from things simply true to doubtful; from clear to troubled and perplexed? For whether or no they did it out of weaknesses, or out of policy to draw and allure the heathen to them, it is incredible to be spoken sometimes how wittily, and sometimes againe how simply the fathers of those times have philosophized concerning things divine. To omit ceremonies, many of which the papists themselves have changed; as that in the time of Tertullian, milk and wine were given to the baptized, that Christians abstained from sausages and puddings: that they offered sacrifices for the dead, and on birthdays.

In the year of Christ, 250, Decius and Valerian, being emperors, flourished Caecilius Cyprianus, an African. He was first a rhetorician, then a priest, next a bishop, and at length a martyr of Christ, whom Lactantius commends for perspicuity and elegancy of phrase. Erasmus gives him this testimony: "*Si omnia cypriani opera haberemus, quae magna ex parte interciderunt, cum unum, multorum instar haberi posse, sive eloquentiam, sive doctrinam, sive apostolici spiritus vigorem spectes.*" "If we had all Cyprian's works, whereof many are lost, he alone would in value counterpoise many, either in respect of eloquence, doctrine, or the vigor of the apostolicall spirit." Gratianus, in *I parte decreti, dist. 15. Can. 3.*, when he numbers the fathers received in the church, begins with Cyprian.

Except his epistles, and some other short tracts, as of patience, of mortality, of the lapsed; also against Demetrianus, and the Jews, scarce anything of Cyprian is left us, although I cannot deny some other sermons are inserted. The explanation of the creed is rather made by Rufinus than Cyprian. The treatise of the Lord's supper seems also to have another author. After the Frobenian and Lugdunensian edition, his works were printed, and revised by Turnebus at Paris, and after that at Colen, with an addition of some fragments. He confuted Novatius the heretic, whom in his epistles he styles an importunate innovator, and a murderer of penitence.

The stains of Cyprian were that he contended too obstinately, that they were to be re-baptized who were baptized by heretics; or who, leaving heresy, repented. Although the African council assented to him, yet Stephanus, a Roman bishop, opposed him. Augustine (Book 2 *Contra Crescon. Grammat.*) says thus: "*Nos nullam cypriano facimus iniuriam, cum eius quaslibet literas a canonica divinarum scripturarum anthoritate distinguimus. Non teneor auctoritate epistolae cypriani ad iubaianum, et cum eius pace, quod cum scripturis non convenit, respuo.*" "We do no wrong to Cyprian, if we distinguish any of his letters from the canonical authority of the divine Scriptures. I am not tied to the authority of Cyprian's letter to Jubaianus, and by his leave, I refuse that which agrees not with the Scriptures."

Cyprian also in his epistles, over-carefully and superstitiously, urges water to be mixed with wine in the administration of the Lord's Supper, because water and blood flowed from the side of Christ. Also, in Epistle 8 Book 3, he affirms: "*infantes statim esse baptizandos ne pereant, quòd eis misericordia non sit deneganda;*" that infants must forthwith be baptized, lest they perish; because mercy is not to be denied them, where he seems to confine mercy to the signs.

In the year 260, Gregory Thaumatergus, the disciple of Origen, a learned, and pious man, confuted Paul of Samosata; of whose works there is nothing

extant, save a confession of his in the council of Antioch against Paul of Samosata.

To these times may be referred Arnobius, an African, of whose composing, eight books are extant against the Gentiles, as also his commentaries on the Psalms, but they are very brief, and falsified by the monks.

About the 317th year after Christ, Lactantius Firmianus flourished in the beginning of the reign of Constantine the Great, to whom he dedicated his books of *Divine Institutions against the Gentiles*. He lived at Nicomedia, and excelled in elegance, and luster of language, all the writers of the church. But he seemed little to understand the proper doctrine of the gospel concerning the benefits of Christ and of faith, for he expressly writes that Christ was therefore sent, that by his word and example, he might invite us to virtue, and suffered onely to be a president of patience.

And when in his 5th and 6th book, he expressly and purposefully handles the point of Christian justice, he only disputes of the justice of the law, and mentions very sparingly the justification by faith. But the first part of his institutions which taxes the heathenish idolatries and philosophical opinions of God, and the chief good; as also his book of the workmanship of God in the structure of man, may be read with great profit and pleasure.

The fathers in the time of the Nicene council, which was held in AD 330, whose writings are extant. Athanasius, although he was not a bishop in the time of the council, yet was he always a faithful assistant of Alexander the bishop of Alexandria, whom he afterward succeeded, and deservedly obtains the first place amongst the fathers of that time. For although he was exposed to innumerable calumnies, yet he frustrated all the endeavors of his adversaries with an incredible constancy, and is styled the bulwark of faith in *The Ecclesiastical History*. Neither was there any other cause that more whetted the bitter hatred of the arians against him (as Theodoret says in Book 1, *The Ecclesiastical History*) than that they perceived the sharpness of his wit and

industry in confuting heretics in the Nicene Council. His creed, or his explanation of the apostolic creed, is in the church among other creeds received.

There are yet some of his most grave and excellent treatises extant at Basel, set forth heretofore by the *frobenii* and *episcopii*, but more lately at Paris by Nivellius, Petrus Nannius, an eloquent man, being his interpreter: as an oration against idols, of the incarnation of the word, an epistle against heretics to Epictetus bishop of Corinth, an exposition of faith, four orations against the Arians, a double apology for his flight against the calumnies of the Arians, of divers questions of the Scripture to Antiochus, and many others of the same argument, which our divines usually object against the Neorians [sic.] and Ubiquitarians.

The life of Anthony the abbot is fathered on him, but there are in it many things fabulous, which savor not of the gravity and simplicity of Athanasius. Most true it is, that both Athanasius, and those ancient fathers were too fervent in commending the sign of the cross, and the miracles wrought by that sign, and by martyrs, thinking by this means to authorize the evangelical doctrine. While we give these cautions touching the blemishes of the fathers, we are not liable to that censure which the papists lay upon us, derived from the authority of the same father, who in his first oration complains that the Arians accused the fathers. For he speaks not there of all the writings of the fathers, but of the Nicene creed gathered out of the Scriptures by the fathers of that council to confute the Arians. For he there diligently admonishes us to try the spirits, which may be easily done by those who are conversant in the Scriptures.

There are some memorable speeches of Athanasius to be observed: first, against the Lutherans, out of the second oration against the Arians. "*Nunquam populus Christianus ab episcopis suis, sed a domino, in quem creditum suit, nomen accepit. Ne ab Apostolis quidem appellationes adepti sumus, sed a Christo. Illi qui aliundè originem suae fidei ducunt, ut haeretici*

*meritò authorum suorum cognomenta praese ferunt.*” The Christian people never took their name from the bishops, but from the Lord in whom they believed. Neither have wee our appellations from the apostles, but from Christ himself. They who derive their faith from any other origin, as heretics, deservedly beare the surnames of their authors. Then against the Ubiquitarians upon that saying, *omnia mihi tradita sunt*, etc. “All things are given me.” *Tradita sunt illi omnia, ut medico, qui sanaret morsum serpentis, ut vitae, qui vivificaret, ut luci illuminanti (id est, ratione officii) dedit, inquit, deus, ut quemadmodum per eum facta sunt omnia, ita in eo omnia refici possint. Quid quod filio dei quaedam tradita sunt quae non habeat, ut homo fieret.* “All things are given him as a physician that should heal the biting of the serpent; as to the life that quickens, as to a light illuminating (this is spoken in regard of his office) God,” he says, “has granted that as by him all things are made, so by him all things may be refreshed. What if we say that some things are given to the Son of God that he had not before, that he should be made man?”

Moreover, against Schwenckfeld in the same treatise: “*Vtrum{que} de Christo est credendum, illum esse deum, et omnia creasse, et esse hominem, et ita creatum, et creaturam, qualis est homo. Hominum enim proprium est creari.*” “Both,” he says, “are to be believed of Christ, that he was a God, and created all things; and that he was a man, and so created, and a creature, such as manis: for it is proper to men to be created.”

Also, against the papist canonization of impious men, in his epistle, to all the godly founded, and sanctified in Christ. “*Hinc quoq, heresis agnosci et convinci potest, quòd quisquis ipsis charus est, et eiusdem impietatis socius, etiam si aliis delictis, et infinitis sceleribus obnoxius, et adversus se habeat argument a scelerum suorum, probus apud eos, et in pretio habetur: quin imo statim imperatoris amicus efficitur, commendabilis scilicet sua impietate. Qui vero eorum impietatem redarguit, et quae Christi Sunt sincere procurant, isti, tametsi puri in omnibus, modo crimen in eos confingatur, in exilium*

*abruptiuntur.*” “Hence may heresy be known, and convinced, that whosoever is deare to them, and a companion in the same impiety, although he be guilty of sundry crimes, and infinite vices, and has arguments against himself of his own heinous acts, yet he is approved and had in great esteem amongst them, yea, and is forthwith made the emperor’s friend, and is commendable for his impiety. But those who reprove their wickedness, and teach the things sincerely which are of Christ, such, though pure in all things, upon any feigned crime laid to their charge, are presently hurried into banishment.”

To Athanasius, we may join Eusebius, the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, who got the surname of Pamphilus from his friend Pamphilus the Martyr, and in the Nicene synod joined himself to the orthodox, although in the beginning he wavered a little, as says Sozomen, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book 1 Chapter 20. He was very learned in the languages, history, and philosophy. He wrote a history from the nativity of Christ to the time of Constantine the Great inclusively, which Socrates the Schoolman, and Hermias Sozomenus continued from Constantine to Theodosius I, and Honorius, and Evagrius to the time of Emperor Maurice, vulgarly called *The Tripartite History*. Eusebius wrote also a chronicle which is yet extant; and a book of evangelical demonstration, and preparation; in which he compares the evangelical doctrine with philosophy, and other religions, and solidly demonstrates no doctrine to be more perfect than the evangelical, as also that in the gospel many things better and more certain are contained, than in any other doctrine whatsoever.

He was suspected, indeed, by some to have privily favoured Arius, but an apology for him is extant in Socrates (Book 2 Chapter 17). Yet in the beginning of the same history, Socrates does not dissemble this fault of Eusebius, that writing the life of Constantine, which is comprehended in four books, he lightly blamed the deeds of Arius; and that he predicated the virtues of that emperor, concealing his vices; and that he studied more to render his

oration illustrious (wherein he highly praised him) and to adorn it with majestic words, than diligently to explain the things done.

He had another blemish common with him and many Greek authors, which Bodin, not undeservedly, imputes to him in his method of history; which is, that (retaining somewhat of the Greek vanity) he relates not a few fabulous things, which have little, or no appearance of truth: as, of an epistle of Glarus, King of the Edisseni, to Christ, and of Christ's answer to him: of John the apostle, and a certain young man by him recalled from the society of thieves. Also of the finding out of the wooden cross, and of its virtue, of Peter, who desired a certain kind of death, to wit, crucifying; and governed the Roman church for 25 years, which how far it is from truth, Calvin, amongst others, shows (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 4 Chapter 6 Section 14). But as Gelasius admonishes in Book 3 Chapter 3, it is very likely those great men were deceived by a certain vulgar opinion, not enquiring into things diligently; neither could they imagine what engines Satan was then preparing to raise up the kingdom of Antichrist.

After Eusebius and Athanasius, (who died under Valentinianus in the year 379) Hilary is rightly placed. He was bishop of the Picts in France, and lived in the time of Constantine the son of Constantine the Great, and his life extended even to the reign of Valentinian. Jerome prefers him before other doctors of the church, and, although younger, was his familiar friend. His style is such (as Erasmus rightly warns) that it is hard to be understood, easy to be depraved, yet Jerome calls him the trumpet of the Latin tongue; perhaps because he was the first that confuted the Arians in that language. His works are extant, published at Basel by Eusebius Episcopius, and are partly controversial, partly expository. He wrote 12 books of the Trinity against the Arians; also an epistle against constantine being then dead, who was the chief favourer of the Arian faction; and against Auxentius of Milan, a patron of the Arian party, as also of various synods against the Arians, which book he translated for the most part out of Greek from the synodical decrees. His

expository books are a commentary upon Matthew, but a short one, as also upon many psalms, all which are comprehended in one tome.

He has many faults: for, first, he has many hard, and unusual words; as *disfrocit* for degenerate; *zabolus* for diabolus, and many more of the like kind. Next he affirms the Holy Spirit to be from the Father by the Son (*On the Trinity*, Book 10). And upon Psalm 8, he attributes a soul and a body to Christ, not subject to any molesting affections, and avers that thirst and hunger were not natural in him. He seems to maintain the body of Christ to be born and brought forth by the virgin Mary, not to be made of her substance (*On the Trinity*, Book 10). In his commentary upon Matthew, he too much inclines to the allegories of Origen.

Next to Hilary, we may rightly place Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who lived in the times of the emperors Valentinianus, Gratianus, Theodosius, and Honorius. And when he was proconsul in Liguria in the time of Valentinianus, he was called to the bishopric of Milan with the full consent of the people. It is reported that he baptized Augustine. He was endued with great zeale, as appears in the ecclesiastical story, and by his demeanor in his bishopric.

The extant writings of Ambrose are divided into four tomes, and are partly moral, as the three books of the offices of a Christian; an institution, and exhortation to virgins; of widows; of repentance; of the world's volubility; and of the good we receive by death. Also they are partly doctrinal (Tome 2): of the vocation of the gentiles; of faith to Gratianus; of the Holy Spirit to the same; of faith against the Arians; of the sacrament of the dominical incarnation.

But it is to be observed, that the more learned have judged Ambrose not to be the author of the treatise of the calling of the Gentiles:

- (1) Because he speaks nowhere so purely of the predestination of God.
- (2) By reason there is mention made of Pelagius, who lived after Ambrose.



(3) In Augustine, who cites many things out of Ambrose against Boniface the Pelagian, mentions not this book, which inveighs most of all against the Pelagians.

(4) The dissimilitude of phrase. But it is certain the author of that book to have been a learned man, and well-exercised in the Scriptures, which makes Erasmus not inaptly wish that many such were mixed with the works of Ambrose.

Amongst many excellent sayings contained in those books, these golden words are extant, making directly against the papists (Book 1 Chapter 5). Where he disputes the reason why to one man grace is given, to another denied. *“Quid calumniatur, inquit, iustitiam occultam, qui gratias debemus misericordiae manifestae? Laudemus, et veneremur quod agitur, quia tutum est nescire quod tegitur. Hic nec praeterita, nec futura merita censeri possunt: vilesceret redemptio Christi, neo misericordiae dei humanarum operum praerogativa succumberet, si iustificatio quae fit per gratiam meritis praecedentibus deberetur: ut non munus largientis, sed merces esset operantis.”* “Why do we who owe thanks for the manifested mercy,” he says, “calumniate the hidden justice? Let us praise and adore what is done, because it is safe not to know what is hidden. Here, neither past, nor future merits are to be reckoned. The redemption of Christ would be abased, neither would the prerogative of human works give place to the mercy of God, if justification, which is by grace, were due to precedent merits: so that it should not be the gift of the distributor, but the reward of the worker.”

The writings of Ambrose are partly also homiletical, as Tome 3: orations, epistles, sermons, partly again expository; as Tome 4. The book of the hexaameron, and a treatise of the patriarchs, which belong to Genesis. He wrote also copiously on Psalm 119, and of the sacraments of the church; also a gloss upon Luke, and commentaries upon the epistles of Paul. Where again it is to be noted against the papists, that Ambrose upon the Romans 4, uses the particle {only} when he avers *“gratiam dei solam fidem poscere ad salutem”*:

“the grace of God requires faith only to salvation.” Augustine quotes his commentaries upon Isaiah and Psalm 48, but they are not extant.

By reason of his ignorance in the Greek and Latin tongues, he erred often in his expositions, which is common to him, together with Augustine and some others. But although he be over-vehement in the commendations of virginity, yet is that memorable against the papists, which he writes in *Of Virgins* Book 1: “*Non debere imperari virginitatem, nec necessitatem imponendam, nec castam esse quae metu cogitur.*” “Virginity,” he says, “ought not to be commanded, neither of necessity to be imposed; nor is she chaste, who is compelled by fear.”

In his books *Of the Sacraments*, there are some things ambiguous, othersome superstitious: as of unction in baptism, which notwithstanding was not done altogether without cause by those of riper years; also of water to be mixed with the wine in the cup at the Lord’s table. Yet is it remarkable against the papists, that in his book *Of the Sacraments*, he only acknowledges two: baptism, and the supper of the Lord. And when in Book 6, he disputes how the bread is made the body of the Lord, he speaks nothing at all of transubstantiation, but he confesses that there seems to be a similitude only, not true flesh and blood, and that we must believe the operatory word of Christ, that is, the efficacious: that the sacrament is taken outwardly; grace and virtue inwardly. He plainly distinguishes bread from grace: “*Tu, inquit, qui accipis panem, in illa alimento divinae participas substantiae; quia idem Christus est particeps corporis, et divinitatis.*” “You,” he says, “who take bread, in that nourishment participate of the divine substance, because the same Christ is partaker of a body, and divinity,” which is as much to say: we communicate the whole Christ, and communicating his flesh, have communion also with God.

Neither did the Greek churches lack excellent doctors, for in those times, namely, under Valentinian, Basilius Magnus, of Caesarea Cappadocia, and Gregory bishop of Nazianzen were famous, of whom as yet some worthy

monuments are extant. We link them together because they were companions in studies and most intimate friends. Yet Gregory lived longest, even to the year 400. And wrote a monody, or funeral oration, which contains the life of Basil. Of this Gregory, there are extant eloquent orations and epistles, as also Greek poems, which are in the hands of all men. There lived also in those times Gregory of Nyssa, brother of Basil, who wrote eight books of man. There is a learned epistle extant written to him by Basil of the difference between the essence and subsistence.

Moreover, Basil, as he himself somewhere writes, was diligently instructed in the Christian religion from a child. He was endued with so much eloquence, that erasmus doubts not to call him the Christian Demosthenes. Amongst others, that saying which is extant in his sermon of humility is eminent, and is often cited by our divines against the papists: "*haec est perfecta, et integra gloriatio, quando non propter iustitiam suam aliquis offertur; sed agnoscit sibi deesse veram iustitiam: fide autem sola in Christum iustificari.*" "This is," he says, "Perfect and entire glory, when a man is not puffed up with his own justice, but acknowledges himself to lack true justice: and that justification is only by faith in Jesus Christ." Also in his epistle of the sacred scripture to Eustathius the physician: "Non consuetudinem, sed sacras scripturas nermam debere esse:" "The sacred scriptures, and not custom, ought to be our rule." Also in his *Definitions*, Question 98: "*Eos qui praesunt, extra scripturae canonem nihil praecipere debere, ne falsi dei testes et sacrilegi inveniantur.*" "They," he says, "who rule the people, ought to command nothing beyond the canon of the Scriptures, lest they be found false witnesses of God, and sacrilegious." And in his epistle of apostasy to the bishops of the west, he complains: "*Semen apostasiae spargi in illis ipsis ecclesiis in quibus evangelii doctrina primum per orbem manavit:*" that "the seed of apostasy was sown in those very churches, whence the doctrine of the gospel was first spread through the world."

His works extant at this day are comprehended in three tomes, and are either doctrinal; as *Hexameron*, or of the world made in six days; eleven homilies; of the divinity of the Son, and that the Holy Spirit is not a creature, against Eunomius. Where is to be understood, that there were three families of the Arians. Arius held the Son to be equal to the Father, but by grace, not by nature. The Macedonians, companions of the Arians, affirmed the Son to be like the Father, but not the Holy Spirit. Eunomius held the Son to be totally unlike the Father, because the creature can by no means be like the creator. Basil also wrote sermons of the human generation of Christ; also of baptism. Or his works are expository; as sermons upon some of the psalms; a gloss upon the whole psalter, and the first sixteen chapters of Isaiah. Other of his works are morall; as his sermons against drunkenness, of wrath, of humility, of envy: also his sermons called *Asceticos*, or of the manners of monks, and of those who aspire to an angelic life. The errors of Basil are that he too hyperbolically extols fasting, and a monkish life; though, indeed, he describes such monks as peculiarly exercise themselves in piety, and good works; to whom the monks of our times are as much unlike as crows to swans.

By the singular providence of God it came to pass that the heresies of the Arians and Pelagians beginning to spring up, in the same time, almost, there arose famous doctors to confute them, for Jerome of Stridon Pannonius lived in part of the time of Ambrose and Basil. He was brought up at Rome, and was famous in the year 390. He traveled over the greatest part of Europe to confer with learned men, and at length chose himself a place of abode in Judaea, in the fields of Bethlehem, where he wrote many of those things which at this day we enjoy. He is painted with a cardinal's hat, whereas he rather led a monastic life, and those red hats were given in ages long after to some certain priests of the Roman church by Pope Paul II in the year 1460, as Platina testifies.

The style of Jerome is elegant; for he was learned, and a great linguist. He wrote many things, whereof some are expositions upon the psalms, and upon

the greater and the lesser prophets: also upon Matthew, and some epistles of Paul; as to the Galatians and Ephesians. For the commentary (which goes under his name) upon the epistle to the Romans, savors too much of Pelagianism, which he ever opposed. Other of his writings are controversial and apologetic: as against Helvidius; concerning the perpetual virginity of the virgin Mary, against Jovinianus and Vigilantius, and also against the Pelagians, and an apology against Rufinus. Some again are paraenetical or instructive, as of the life of clergymen, and concerning the institution of a mother of the family.

He seems to have a somewhat arrogant and fiery wit, which appears not only by his sharp writings and epistles against Augustine, but also that sometimes he accuses the apostle Paul himself of rudeness of style, and ignorance in the Greek tongue. Beza often complains of his wresting the Scriptures, especially against wedlock. See the annotations of Beza on 1 Corinthians 7, 1 Timothy 3, and 1 Peter 3.

But it is remarkable that although he was an enemy to wedlock, yet in his age both bishops and priests were married; for so he writes in *To The Ephesians* (Chapter 6): "*Legant haec episcopi, et presbyteri, qui filios suos saecularibus libris erudiunt*": "Let those bishops, and priests," he says, "read these things, who instruct their children in secular books." But he often with too much bitterness inveighs against Vigilantius, and Jovinianus, for contending with him that wedlock and single life were of equal merit; as also that the rewards of the just were alike in that life; and that no choice was to be made of meats, if they were received with thanksgiving; that the ashes of martyrs were not to be adored, nor the vespers to be celebrated at their sepulchers; that the saints deceased pray not for us. He contended unseasonably with Augustine concerning Peter, that he never erred, and that he was reprehended by Paul, not seriously, but in jest in Galatians 2.

How much the state of the church was disturbed in those times, appears by that learned book of Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, which he wrote against

80 heresies, which work is worthy of perusing for the variety of story contained in it. Then also lived Theodoret, bishop of the city Cyrus in Persia, who wrote five books of the history of the church; and Polymorphum, where in three dialogues most worthy of reading, he defends the truth of both natures in Christ against the heretic of his time.

In the time of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius, lived John Chrysostom, whose eloquence and zeal far exceeded his knowledge in the Scriptures. Wherefore he excels more in morals than in doctrines and expositions: for oftentimes he philosophizes too subtilly. Yet is he often cited by our divines in the interpretation of Greek words, especially in the epistles of Paul. Vulgarus Theophilactus was afterward his imitator, and abbreviator, but an author less pure.

It was reprehensible in Chrysostom that he was too choleric and free of speech, by which he incurred the great displeasure of many.

Aurelius Augustinus, by nation an African, ought not to be accounted the last amongst the doctors of the church. He was instructed in rhetoric at Carthage, and was a follower of the Manichaeans nine years together. He relates a great part of his own life in his confessions. Afterward being often admonished by Ambrose, or rather converted by God upon the abundant tears and prayers of his mother, he turned into the right way, and succeeded Valerius, bishop of Hippo in Africa, about the year 390. He sustained many sharp conflicts with the Manichaeans, Arians, Donatists, and Pelagians, whom he confuted by learned writings; and personally, by word of mouth. He died a little before the first Ephesian council, when Hippo was besieged, being 76 years old.

Gregory I bishop of Rome had his works in so great esteem, that he thus writes (Book 8, Epistle 38): "*Si delitioso cupitis pabulo saginari, b. Augustini opuscula legite, et ad comparationem siligimis illius nostrum furfur em non quaeratis.*" "if you desire," he says, "to be fattened with delicious fat, read the works of Augustine, and having tasted his flower, you will not seek after our

bran.” Which is to be noted against the papists, who prefer that Gregory I before all others.

The works of Augustine are distributed into ten tomes. Some of them are philosophical, and of no great moment; as of grammar, rhetorical, logic, music; of order; of the quantity of the soul. In his books of *Confessions*, wherein he describes his own life, he often uses too much simplicity and copiousness, yet may they be read cursorily. But the students in divinity meaning to read Augustine ought to begin at his doctrinals; and first at his four books *Of Christian Doctrine*, in which he instructs a future divine. Next, he must read his *Enchiridion* to Laurentius, and the book of faith to Peter, *Of the Spirit and the Letter*, and *Of the Ecclesiastical Opinions*. The epistles of Augustine, and the books of the *City of God*, are of a mixed kind, partly doctrinal, partly historical, but full of various learning. Thence let him proceed to his polemical, or controversial, which he wrote against the Manichaenas, the Arians, Donatists, etc. His expository books, as upon the Psalms and John’s gospel, contain more piety than solid interpretation; partly by reason of his small insight in the Hebrew and Greek tongues; partly because in those interpretations he accommodated his writing to those times, as also that sometimes he makes digressions; but his commentary on John is excellent above the rest.

The palmary, or masterpiece of Augustine, was that above all the other fathers, and almost alone, being provoked by the Pelagians, he discusses diligently the doctrine of original sin and predestination.

But as in Augustine it is very laudable that he only of all the ancients, wrote books of *Retractions* (for in his seventh epistle he professes himself to be of their number who write by profiting, and profit by writing) so there remain some things which require a censure. Yet there is no doubt but many things are inserted in his works, of which he is not the author. For he being yet alive, sixteen articles were falsely fathered on him, to which he replied. But

chiefly this was his error: that as he wrote much, so he often varies, nor is always consonant to himself.

He has also many acyrologias, as Lambert Danaeu, a most learned divine, observes in his annotations upon the Enchiridion of Augustine. Then he erred, in that he precisely included the salvation of infants in the sacrament of baptism. But whereas in some places he calls the eucharist a sacrifice, he thus interprets himself in the *City of God*, Book 10 Chapter 20, that it is the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ. In another place he seems to affirm, that the pious soules of the deceased are helped by the alms and prayers of the living, but without the warrant of the word of God; especially in his book entitled *The Care for the Dead*, where he handles this question, whether or no it profits to be buried near the monument of any saint. But that book (as Calvin admonishes, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.5.10) contains so many doubts, that the coldness of it is able to extinguish the heat of any foolish zeale, and there is no doubt but that book has been depraved by many monkish additions; for in another place, as *Question. Evangelii* (Book 2 Chapter 38), he affirms: “*Nullum auxilium a justis praeberi defunctorum animabus:*” that the soules of the deceased receive no help from just men.

Cyril bishop of Alexandria flourished about the year 433, in the reign of Theodosius the younger. He expelled the Jews out of his diocese, and killed not a few of them in the synagogues by the hands of his soldiers. Being much incensed against Nestorius, he excommunicated him by his own proper authority, which was not approved of by the fathers, although he defended a good cause, and that nestorius was a little after condemned in the Ephesian council. Cyril wrote in Greek, and many things which are extant in Latin. They were published at Basil with an addition.

In the first tome, there are found commentaries upon Leviticus, in which he insists too much upon the anagogical sense. He also wrote commentaries upon John, but imperfect. His second tome is doctrinal, as the book which he calls a treasure. There, in 14 books, he defends the consubstantiality of the



Son, and the Holy Spirit against the Arians. In the third tome, he disputes against Julian for the Christian religion; also touching the right faith to Theodosius and the queen. The fourth tome contains epistles, homilies, and an apology to Theodosius; also an exposition of the Nicene creed, and synodical epistles, together with other things against the Nestorians. The fifth tome is a commentary upon Isaiah, not long since added to his works, and translated by Laurence Humphrey, an Englishman.

Vigilius bishop of Trent flourished in those times, of whose works but a few are extant, printed at Colen in Octavo, as a disputation against the Arians, and five books against Eutyches, both pious and learned, which are often objected against the Ubiquitarians.

The hearers of Augustine who retained his doctrine were: Primasius in the year 440, who wrote upon all the epistles of Paul; Prosper of Aquitaine in the year 454, Hesychius in the year 490, who wrote upon Leviticus, and Fulgentius – a bishop in Africa about the year 500 under Thrasamund King of the Vandals – wrote three books of various questions to Monimus, seven books to King Thrasamund, and other things worthy of reading. His works were most accurately printed at Antwerp by Plantin.

After the time of Augustine, and his disciples, the purity of doctrine began with the Roman empire very much to decline, by reason of the accumulated superstitions of the monks; wherefore the succeeding fathers cannot be in the same esteem with the first, and more ancient; yet had the following their peculiar gifts, not to be contemned, and wrote many things which are read with great profit.

Leo I – bishop of Rome about the year 444 in the time of Attila the Hun – was the author of gathering together a synod against Eutyches, and Dioscorus bishop of Alexandria, who would oppress Flavianus, an orthodox bishop of Constantinople. His works, as his sermons and epistles, are printed at Colen by Birkmannus. Amongst his epistles, the one to Flavianus against the blasphemies of Eutyches is most eminent, the authority of which epistle

was of great force in the Chalcedonian council, wherein amongst the rest, this speech is remarkable: "*Agit utraque forma, id est, natura cum alterius communione quod proprium est, verbo operante quod verbi est, & carne exequente quod carnis est: unum horum coruscat miraculis, alterum succumbit iniuriis. Non est ejusdem naturae flere lazarus, & resuscitare.*" "Either form works that which is proper to it with the communion of the other, the word working what is of the word, and the flesh executing what is of the flesh. The one of these shines with miracles, the other is subject to injuries. To bewail Lazarus, and to raise him proceed not from the same nature."

This saying also is memorable, and makes against the papists (*On Peter, Sermon 2*) on that place of Matthew 16: "*Tu es petrus; thou art Peter, etc. Soliditas ejus fidei quae in apostolorum principe laudata est perpetua est. Haec fides diabolum vincit, portaeque inferi adversus eam praevalere non possunt.*" "The solidity," he says, "of that faith which is praised in the chief of the apostles is perpetual. This faith shall vanquish the devil, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it."

About the year 591, Gregory I, bishop of Rome, lived – Gregory the Great – who in his youth was a monk of the Benedictine order. He instituted the mass, and most of the psalmodies which are in the papacy. His works are extant printed at Basil by the *frobenii*. Stella, a Venetian priest who wrote his life, says that he was a most humble man, and the first of the popes that out of his humility would be called the servant of servants. "*Nullum, inquit, ex successoribus habuit, aequalem, aut parem.*" "None of his successors," he says, "were equal, or like to him." He labored much to call the Goths to the true faith. He wrote moral expositions upon Job; also on the seven psalms which we call penitential; and upon Ezekiel, the books of Kings; and forty homilies upon the gospels.

In his expositions he is pure enough. He writes thus Tome 1, Book 25, Chapter 15): "*Sciunt, inquit, pij quod omnis justitia humana injustitia esse apprehenditur si divinitus districte iudicetur.*" "The godly know," he says,

“that all humane justice appears injustice if it be strictly examined from above.” In his epistles also are found many excellent admonitions, as that which he writes in his second tome to Serenus the bishop of Marseille: “*Ad nos per venit quod fraternitas vestra quosdam imaginum admiratores adspiciens, easdem ecclesiae imagines confregit. Eum quidem zelum ne quid manu factum adorari possit laudavimus, sed frangere easdem non debuisse judicamus. Idcirco enim pictura in ecclesijs adhibetur, ut hi qui literas nesciunt saltem in parietibus videndo legant.*” “It is told that your fraternalship, seeing certain admirers of images, has broken the said images belonging to the church. We commend that zeal, indeed, which would have nothing made by hands to be adored; but we judge that you ought not to have broken them, for therefore are pictures admitted into churches, that they who are ignorant of good letters may read by looking on the walls.”

He wrote a treatise of the pastoral cure, not unprofitable; but in his *Dialogues*, he seems to dote in relating I know not what feigned miracles, as: “*Stephano cuidam presbytero diabolum coactum obedire ad extrahendas caligas: Bonifacium quendam orando duodecim aureos a Maria imputrasse. Fortunatum quendam signo crucis equum furiosum mansuetum reddidisse:*” that the devil by constraint obeyed one Stephan, a priest, to pull off his hose. That one Boniface by prayer obtained twelve crowns from the virgin Mary. That one Fortunatus made a fierce horse tame with the sign of the cross.

Concerning the fire of purgatory he writes doubtfully in *Dialogue 10* Book 1: “*Qualis hinc quisque egredietur talis in iudicio praesentabitur. Sed de quibusdam levibus culpis purgatorium esse ignem ante iudicium credendum est.*” “Such as every one departs hence, such shall he be presented at the day of judgment. But it is to be believed that there is a purgatory fire before the day of judgment for some light crimes.” In Tome 2, Epistle 58, Book 4, he complains grievously that the peace of the whole church is disturbed by one John bishop of Constantinople, by assuming the name of universal bishop. And in Book 7 Epistle 39 to Mauritius the Emperor, he thus writes: “*Ego*

*fidenter dico, quod quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat, vel vocare desiderat, in elatione sua Antichristum praecurrit.*” “I confidently affirm,” he says, “that whosoever calls, or desires to call himself a universal priest, is by this his pride marked for a forerunner of Antichrist.” Yet for all this, presently after Gregory Phocas, successor of Maurice, in the year 660, granted to Boniface III that Rome should be the head of all other churches. Yet all the churches never simply consented to it – especially the Greek, and the French.

In the year 727, in the time of Leo III the Isaurian iconoclast, John of Damascus lived. At first he was secretary to the duke of the Saracens, but after that he became a monk. His chief writings are four books *Of The Orthodox Faith*, which Faber Stapulensis translated out of Greek. In Book 1, he discourses of the essence of God, and of the three persons; in Book 2, the works of God, of the angels, of man, of the creation of the world; in Book 3, of the dispensation of the mystery of our salvation, where he learnedly disputes of the union of natures, and the theandric actions, and also of the twofold will of Christ, but he adds many superstitious things, as of the adoration of images, etc.

In the year 1116, Bernard abbot of Clairvaux was in great repute for his sanctity of life and doctrine, and was admitted to compose differences between kings and princes. At that time there was such a disturbance of all things, as saith Calvin (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.7.22) That it was not much unlike our times, if we consider the papacy. But Bernard makes grievous complaints and admonitions of the corruption of the papal court in his book *On Consideration* to Pope Eugenius. Many excellent sayings also of his are to be read, in his sermons on the Song of Solomon and on Psalm 91, which sermons are worth perusing; yet many things fabulous are intermingled, as of saints, and he numbers the washing of feet amongst the sacraments.



*Chapter 4: Of the writers commonly called Schoolmen.*



The labor would be infinite to number all the scholastic authors. It suffices us to show the chief, whose monuments are extant. There were after those times also some bishops, though not so famous, yet not unlearned, as in the time of Heraclius in the year 630, Isidore of Seville, who wrote holy expositions upon books, and some books of etymologies. Also Bede, an English priest who in the time of Justinian II, A.D. 690, wrote upon the New Testament, as also a learned book of times. In the year 834, in the reign of Ludovicus pius, Haymo bishop of Halberstadt wrote upon the epistles of Paul, and many other things. In the year 856 lived Rabanus Maurus who being first made Abbot of Fulda, was afterwards Bishop of Mainz. He is reported to have written the gloss commonly called *The Ordinary*. There is a saying of his memorable in chapter 2, Epist. Iacobi “*Abraham per opera quae fecit iustus non fuit, sed sola fide: oblatio autem ejus opus, & testimonium fuit fidei.*” “Abraham was not just by the works that he did, but by faith onely; but his oblation was a work, and testimony of his faith.”

But it is to be observed that the zeal and diligence of the bishops decreasing, and their wealth and dignity augmenting, the privilege of teaching, and writing was conferred on certain monks and priests called school doctors, because they taught most in the schools.

Before this time the doctrine of Augustine and his manner of teaching was for the most part received; but about the year 1200, the school divinity began to spring up, which afterwards degenerated from its first simplicity, and purity, and fell upon many unprofitable, and doubtful questions, full of philosophy call subtleties, together with definitions, and sentences accommodated to the corruptions of those times. The chief of these were Lanfrancus Monachus Papiensis, who opposed himself against Berengarius, Albertus Magnus, and Peter Lombard. Then also did Gratianus gather the decrees of the Popes into one volume, and without judgment, insomuch that the gloss sweats in reconciling the contradictions.

Peter Lombard, about the year 1150, wrote four books of *Sentences*, collected out of all the fathers, as the foundation, and compendium of all scholastical divinity; which with some are of great value, yet he has cited many things amiss out of the fathers, and omitted not a few necessary many things there are in him, which if rightly understood, and explained make against the papists, especially where he treats of the Supper of the Lord.

He that would know the defects of Lombard, let him peruse the notes of Lambert Danaeu in Book 1 of his *Commentary on The Sentences*. But like as Lombard did not well in that he would confirm the opinions of Christian religion rather by the authorities of the fathers than by the testimonies of the Scriptures, so, he is far more tolerable than the other Schoolmen, who acknowledge Aristotle for their master, and attribute more to his authority than to the Scriptures. Among others of that time William Occam was famous in the year 1030, who defended the right of the emperor against the pope very learnedly.

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**Question:** Whether therefore did Tertullian, *Against Hermogenes*, rightly call the philosophers *patriarchs of heretics*, and in his book *The Prescription*

*Against Heretics*, he terms the logic which the heretics learnt out of Aristotle *the subverter of truth*, and *the turncoat artificer of building and destroying*?

**Answer:** These are to be understood *secundum quid* of Chrisippean sophisms, and such logicians as Eutydemus in Plato, who instantly denied what he formerly granted. Next of those who make philosophy a mistress, and a lady in divine matters, who ought to be the waiting-maid; the imbecility of reason in divine things being not only apparent, but it's *adunamia* (1 Corinthians 12). Yet philosophy and reason are not to be rejected, but God is to be invoked that he will give us the spirit of wisdom, whereby the eyes of our minds may be illuminated, that we feign not false principles, and involve ourselves and others in ambiguities, and subtleties of words, as in times past the Valentinians did, and many of the Schoolmen do, which Abbot Trithemius acknowledges when he says: "*Ab hoc tempore philosophia secularis sacram theologiam foedare coepit.*" "From this time," he says, "secular philosophy began to pollute sacred divinity."

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But to return to Peter Lombard, it is not to be expressed how many of his successors have, I cannot say explained, but involved his books of *Sentences*, as amongst the rest, Bonaventura, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Occam, Durandus, and innumerable others, the last whereof was Thomas Cajetan, who lived in the time of Luther.

The Disciple of Albertus Magnus, was Thomas Aquinas, commonly called the *angelic doctor*, who lived in the year 1270. In him two things are laudable: Firstly, that he argued very methodically. Secondly, that as well in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, as in his *Summa Theologica*, he has disputed more tolerably of justification, and predestination, than any of the rest. But he is much to be blamed in this: that he employed the whole strength

of his wit in defending transubstantiation, though most unhappily, and with many contradictions.

Not long after lived Johannes Scotus, surnamed Duns, a Franciscan, who opposed Thomas, whence sprung the two sects, Thomists, and Scotists, of which the first were called *nominal* and the latter *real*, because the one concluded the names only; the other the things themselves also to be comprehended under the predicaments.

But it is to be noted that there was another Johannes Scotus long before those times, in the year 874: a man most learned in the Greek and Latin Tongues, who governed the school at Oxford, and at length was murdered by his scholars with penknives because his opinion of the Lord's Supper was no way pleasing to the monks.

The last age of the Schoolmen from the Council of Constance to the time of Luther, was not more happy, but more audacious, and infinitely ignorant, although some were more enlightened with knowledge than others. The chief of these were Johannes Capreolus, Iohannes Gerson, Chancellor of Paris; Gabriel Biel, Tubinga, Petrus de Alliaco, Cardinalis Cameracensis, who wrote questions upon the book of *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, where, amongst others, this saying of his concerning the Eucharist is observable: "*Communem Sententiam esse, panem Transubstantiari: licet id non sequitur evidenter ex Scriptura, sed ex determinatione tamen Ecclesiae. Alia opinio est quod substantia panis remanet: valde enim possibile est substantiam panis coexistere substantiae corporis; nec est magis impossibile duas substantias coexistere quam duas qualitates. Possibile, inquam est Corpus Christi assumere corpus perunionem, et ille modus non repugnat rationi, nec auctoritati Biblicae.*" "It is the common opinion," he says, "that the bread is transubstantiated, although that evidently appears not by the Scripture, yet by the determination of the Church it does. Another opinion is that the substance of the bread remains: for it is very possible that the substance of the bread may coexist with the substance of the body: neither is it more impossible that two substances



should coexist, than two qualities. It is possible, I say, the body of Christ may assume another body by union, and that manner is neither repugnant to reason,\* nor the authority of the Bible.” Which opinion, though Lanfrancus had long before refuted as not agreeable to the words of Christ, yet Luther embraced it, as himself confesses, in *On The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*.

This was the Scholastic divinity full of sharp and subtle questions, contentions, and contradictions: While some made it a question whether or not the virgin Mary was conceived in original sin, the maintainers of which tenet were the Dominicans; the opposers, the other monks. Others demanded whether or not the pope was simply a man, or in part a god, and whether he was above a council or not.

Of which times, Peucer rightly admonishes us in *Chronicles*, speaking of the times of Frederick II and Charles IV: “*Duplex, inquit, genus hominum exortum est quo Sathan papatum fulcivit; Canonistarum, qui collectis variis decretis, et canonibus, tyrannidem pontificiam stabiliverunt, et novum forum constituerunt: et Scholasticorum, quorum Theologia ex male detortis Scripturae, et patrum Sententiis, bisque confusis, tum Platonicis, et Aristotelicis disputationibus, et Pontificum placitis consuta, sacra Biblia, et praecipua doctrinae de vera Dei invocatione, de vero usu Sacramentorum, de fide, justificatione, veris cultibus, atque etiam patrum vetustiorum Scripta de cordibus, et manibus hominum excussit:*” “Two sorts of men,” he says, “then arose, by which Satan supported the papacy: firstly the canonists, who by a collection of various decrees and canons, strengthened the pontifical tyranny, and erected a new court. The Schoolmen next, who by composing their divinity out of ill-wrested sentences out of the Scriptures, and the fathers, and those confused with Platonic and Aristotelian disputations, and ordinances of the popes, have forced the holy Bible out of men’s hearts and hands, together with the chief heads of doctrine touching the true invocation of God, and the

true use of the sacraments, faith, justification, true worships; and not only these, but the writings also of the most ancient fathers.”

Yet did God stir up some in several ages, who abhorred those subtleties, and betook themselves to his law and testimonies; although (as those times were palpably darke, and obscure) they could not free themselves from errors and superstition. One of these was Nicholas de Lyra, 1320, who wrote upon the Old and New Testament, and on the third to the Galatians. He affirms faith alone to justify. Another was John Wycliffe, an Englishman, in the year 1364, who discovered many errors and superstitions of the papacy, whose doctrine afterwards Jan Huss embraced, and Jerome of Prague, who were both burned in the Council of Constance.

But at length by the divine providence it came to pass in the year 1577 that the sincere and incorrupt doctrine of the gospel, and the whole method of teaching was instituted and reformed by those great men, Luther, Philip Melancthon, Zwinglius, Bucerus, Oecolampadius, Calvin, and others, so that it is most true which Cyprian writes (Book 1 Epistle 4): “*In plerisque famulis suis dignatur Deus ostendere reintegrationem Ecclesiae, et post longas pluvias serenitatem.*” “God vouchsafes,” he says, “in most of his servants to show the revival of his church, and after much rain, serenity.”

Laus, et Gloria sacrae Trinitati.

*FINIS.*