

# CHURCH HISTORY

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Tested by Fire 100-311 Anno Domini

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The Church Challenged & Tested

# THE CHURCH CHALLENGED

## External

- Roman Persecution
- Philosophies
- Misrepresentations

## Internal

- Heresy
- Schism

# Widespread Roman Persecution

## ROMAN PERSECUTION

1. After 70 AD, the Romans began to persecute the Church for several reasons.
2. There were several notable persecuting emperors.
  - **Domitian** (81-96)
  - **Trajan** (98-117)
  - **Marcus Aurelius** (161-180)
  - **Domitian** (81-96)
  - **Trajan** (98-117)
  - **Marcus Aurelius** (161-180)
  - **Decius** (249-251)
  - **Diocletian** (284-305)

# Heresy

## 1. Gnosticism

- Gnostic Pseudopigrapha

## 2. Marcionism

# Schism

## 1. Montanism

## 2. Novatianism

## 3. Donatism

# Summary – Heresy & Schism

## 1. Response of the Church

- Canon of Scripture
- Creeds
- Christian
- Episcopacy

## 2. Learning from our History

- Gnostics
- Marcionism
- Montanism
- Novatianism/Donatism

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DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL  
STRUCTURE - POLITY

# Ecclesiastical Structure

1. Elders governed the churches in the New Testament, but by the second century, elder and bishop had become two offices with the bishop presiding over elders in a single congregation.
2. The Roman bishop gradually assumed the title of pope and claimed supremacy over all of Christendom. This claim was based on several factors.



# Influential Leaders – Apostolic Fathers

The early Church fathers are categorized by four designations: Apostolic, Apologetic, Polemical, and Theological.

1. The **Apostolic Fathers** are characterized by their close relationship to the Apostles.
  - **Clement of Rome** (died c. 97) is best known for his epistle to the Corinthians.
  - **Ignatius of Antioch** (35-107) was a disciple of John and the bishop of Antioch. He was martyred in Rome.
  - **Polycarp** (69-155) was arrested as an old man and burned at the stake.

# Influential Leaders – Apologetic Fathers

2. The **Apologetic Fathers** are defended the faith from attacks on the Church. They had a more extensive education than earlier leaders and generally took a philosophical approach when defending the faith.
  - **Justin Martyr** (100-167) was the first learned theologian and Christian thinker among the Church Fathers.
  - **Tertullian** (160-225) was a prolific author from Carthage. His writings greatly influenced later Church fathers, and eventually all theologians in the Latin Church.

# Influential Leaders – Polemical Fathers

3. The **Polemical Fathers** are characterized by their attempt to attack heresy within the Church.
- **Irenaeus** (130-200) was Bishop of Lyons, a disciple of Polycarp, and a brilliant polemicist against Gnosticism. His work is credited for laying out many orthodoxies.
  - **Cyprian** (200-258 AD) as Bishop of Carthage, guided the church of Africa through many trials and tribulations. He was eventually exiled and beheaded.

# Influential Leaders – Theological Fathers

4. The **Theological Fathers** are characterized by their attempts to blend theology with philosophy.
  - **Clement of Alexandria** (150-215), head of the theological school there, brought undue Hellenistic influence into Christian theology as he tried to make Christianity appealing.
  - **Origen** (185-254) was the first Christian theologian and one of the greatest thinkers in the church's history. But blended Christianity with pagan philosophy's desire for truth and God.

# Church Problems 100-313

