

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

The First 300 years

Period Four

“Third Century Teachers”

3rd Century Teachers

1. Tertullian (160-225)

A. Life

- Born and lived in Carthage; trained in rhetoric—to be a lawyer
- Converted to Christ in 197 in Rome
- Never was a bishop, maybe a presbyter
- In 207, joined the “Montanist” movement

B. Writings

- 31 writings remain (Latin)—apologetic, polemic, moralistic
- notable—“Apology”, “Prescription Against Heretics”, “Against Praxeas”

C. Doctrine

- Rejected secular philosophy
 - *“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem”*
- Coined word “*Trinity*”; taught against “Modalistic” view of God
 - *“one substance in three persons”*
- Incarnation—“one person and two natures”

Montanism: “The New Prophecy”

In 157, Montanus began to prophesy ecstatically, joined by two women—lead to this movement

1. Teachings

- ◆ Outpouring of the Spirit marked a new age—the last age before the end
- ◆ Direct revelation from God through ecstatic prophecies
- ◆ Rigorous moral life—very strict; new rules
- ◆ Rejected episcopal ordination

2. Objections

(not the gift of prophecy as such)

- ◆ Heretical idea of a “new, final age”
- ◆ Abnormal ecstasy—excess emotion
- ◆ Extra-scriptural revelation
- ◆ False prophecies

3rd Century Teachers

Alexandrian School

Training School: started for catechumens; trained young Christians in understanding of the texts

- (1) Devotion to Greek Philosophy
- (2) Allegorical Interpretation

Famous Leaders:

1. Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

- Philosophy was given to the Greeks just as the Law was given to the Hebrews

2. Origen (185-254)

- Father was martyred in 202; studied under Clement at age 14
- Wrote “Hexapla” and “On First Principles”
- Held certain unorthodox views