

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH

The Apostolic Faith is compiled from all the Teaching of the Faith, "... which was once for all time delivered to the saints ..." (Jude 3-DT) of the Practice, "... as you have received from us, how you ought to walk and please God." (1 Thes. 4:1-DT) of the Mentality, "... according to the tradition which you received from us ..." (II Thes. 3:6-DT) of the Apostolic Church.

Today, twenty centuries later, almost 130,000! Christian denominations claim for themselves that they hold the Apostolic Faith, Practice and Mentality ... Indeed, Christianity has been chaotically divided, its pieces having nothing in common with the early Apostolic Church which was, "One body and one Spirit" and believed in "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism..." (Eph.4:4-5). "Nevertheless, when the Son of man arrive, shall he find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

On the one hand, we have the traditional R. Catholic, Eastern, and pre-Chalcedonian (*Copts, Armenian, Nestorian*) communities. Although they are the "historic continuation" of the Ancient first Church that united with and submitted to the secular powers during the 5th century they added many human and sometimes ... anti-Biblical traditions.

These traditions and many false teachings of the apostates and their successors today claim to be a continuation of the Apostolic Faith, daring even to say that they are equal to it!...

On the other hand, we have Protestantism, which was born in the 15th century. And although it condemned the former mentioned deviation from the early faith, it transformed every Bible student to a "pope of himself" stating that the Scriptures are very clear and very easy for everyone to ... understand. However, "The hopeless and apparently insoluble division called in to question the basic Protestant affirmation that Scripture was clear and self-evident and that men of good will could readily agree on its meaning ..."

Hillebrad Hans, *Christendom Divided* (N.Y.: Coprus Books, 1971), p. 290

The sad story of endless Protestant division, fighting each other in the name of truth, is well known.

These countless personal interpretations by people with no knowledge of the Greek text and no respect of the early Church's testimony, were baptized as "revelations", but the Spirit of God does not confirm this chaos, for He knows only One Faith (Eph. 4:5). In 1665 the Moravian bishop J.A. Comenius (+1670), wrote: "The great number of teachers, is the reason for the multitude of sects -in Protestantism- for which we shall soon have no names left. Each church reckons itself as the true one, or at least as the purest...while among themselves they persecute each other with the bitterness hatred ...From the Bible they build up their different dogmas, and these become their fortresses and bulwarks behind which they cover themselves and resist all attacks ..." One Thing Needful

Who is then, the only safe guide for the restoration of the first Apostolic Faith, Practice, Understanding and Power?

...The sad story of endless Protestant division, fighting each other in the name of the truth, is well known... Thus, ...we must interpret and understand the Bible no differently from the successors of the Apostles and their successors...

The original Greek text of the New Testament, was compiled by the "... foundation stones of the world, the Apostles" Ignatius (+114),
To the Philadelphians

However, we must interpret and understand the New Testament no differently from the successors of the Apostles and their successors. Why? Because they were the guardians of whom Paul writes to Timothy, "And the things that you heard from me ...

the same you commit to faithful men, who in turn, shall be able to teach others" (II Tim. 2:2-DT).

Although these men formed the New Testament list of books (the Canon), there does not exist a verse in the New Testament that speaks of the twenty-seven books. These are the product of a long and painful development within the early Church. If the Early Church fathers had the Spirit of God in order to compile the Canon then why are not able to interpret it?

Thus, whether we want it or not, "The fathers of the first three centuries of Christianity are and should always be the first and primarily interpreters of the understanding and the feeling of the Early Church..."

K. Bonis Professor of Patrology and the Interpretation of the Fathers in the University of Athens

Thus, the post-apostolic fathers of faith and teachers of the Church prior to the 4th century followed in the footsteps of the first apostles and prophets, who foretold the first “*apostasy*” (1 Tim.4:1-2), are the apostles and prophets, after the prophets and apostles. While the Apostles are the Teachers of our faith (Doctores), the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Fathers are the interpreters of our faith (Expositores). “*The faith, teaching and tradition of the first Universal church, the Lord gave, the Apostles preached and the fathers kept...*” Athanasius of Alexandria, First Epistle to Serapion, ca. A.D. 330

The primary aim of the Early Church fathers is the salvation, i.e. the entrance, if possible, of all people in paradise.

They thought, spoke and acted having in mind eternity. Their pillar was the Bible, for the fathers spoke ... FROM THE BIBLE AND FOR THE BIBLE. They condemned ignorance of the Scriptures and used elements from their own Godly experience, the facts, logic (1 Pet.2:2) and the human nature. In their writings they engulfed the most authentic interpretation of the Old and New Testament “*not encouraged from themselves, but enlightened by God ...*”

The rejection of the Early Church's testimony because of egoism and personal interpretations, which many baptized as *divine revelation*, was and is the source of all false teachings and heresy. While false-teachings put in danger the spiritual life of true believers, heresy put in danger their own salvation. Already

since the 4th century, St. Basil of Caesarea stated:

"We do not accept the faith written by some modern authors, neither do we dare to deliver our own thoughts, in order not to make human the doctrines of our piety, but those which were taught by the holy fathers, these we answer to them who ask us ..."

(Πιστιν δε ημεις ουτε παρ' αλλων γραφομενην ημιν νεωτεραν παραδεχομεθα, ουτε αυτοι τα της ημετερας διανοιας γεννηματα παραδιδοναι τολμωμεν, ινα μη ανθρωπινα ποιησωμεν τα της ευσεβειας ρηματα, αλλ' απερ παρα των αγιων πατερων δεδιδαγμεθα, τουτα τοις ερωτωσι ημας διαγγελομεν). Epist. 140

The above statements, however, must not drive us into a slavish imitation of the Father's works for many fathers have different opinions on secondary matters. The Church Fathers are not without faults but they tolerate no mistakes. Thus, their interpretation and opinions are the safest hand of help to every serious Bible student.

After the 4th to 5th century, when apostasy prevailed, no more Church Fathers exist.

The apostates characteristically stop using the common language (Alexandrine) and use the high Attican Greek dialect. Likewise, they adopted Greek philosophy (Col. 2:8), being graduates of rhetoric schools under heathen principals. Thus, the majority of them evolved into a kind of “*beautified specialists*” in the midst of uneducated Christian masses. In theology the method of studying also changed from that of “*fishers-like*” (i.e., according to the fishermen-apostles) to that of Aristotelian...

For this, and with all due respect to ancient excellencies, we have to make an austere selection in order to separate the apostate theologian and church writers from the testimony of the saints and the spiritual men. The virgin Church has a different story from the whore church.

Thus, the spiritual men and saints after the 5th century, either from the Western (*Mystical*) traditions, or of the Orthodox (*Hesychast*), or the Lutheran (*Pietist*), or Anglican (*Holiness*) and the pioneers of our Last Rain, are the voice of the Virgin Church. All these saintly people, although they grew and were nurtured in different times and within different traditions openly clashed with the apostates and “*... speak the same language for they come out from the same country*” St. Martin (1743-1803)

These men not only did not check the continuation of the Apostolic Faith, but also helped in the better understanding and deeper meaning of it.

The purpose of “*The Apostolic Faith*” is the publication with analysis and comments of the works of the Church Fathers (80-451 A.D.), of the later saints from all traditions who clashed with the later apostates.

We are thankful to God through Jesus Christ, for without great human help and without big personal cost, God has given to us the grace to be beneficial to the church of the Last Days.

THE PUBLISHERS