

passed it to other spiritual men. (This becomes a watchword among the "Christian Gnostics"...they of all who are in the church, are possessed of and possess the truth.)

(5) Matter is relatively unreal, shadowy, evil: the visible world and human flesh are evil, in many gnostics a metaphysical dualism develops along this line. How they treat it in practice is an interesting point.

(6) The chief apostle to Christian gnostics (as they see it, that is) was Paul and they worked heavily on such texts as 1 Cor. 2:6. Their writings are represented in many of the apocryphal Gospels. But to them the Lord had a non-real body and the concept of Saviour is ferociously ambiguous.

Among the Gnostic teachers with whom you are most likely to become familiar are:

Valentinus (Rome) ca 150 AD.  
Basileides (Alexandria) ca 130 AD

Simon Magus, of Acts fame, is often thought of as an early Gnostic. Cerinthus, famous opponent of the Apostle John was Gnostic in scope. Marcion, for reasons later stated, is placed in a different heading.

( Kelly, page 27, notes the easy influence of gnosticism on Christianity and you should read his discussion very carefully.

The major works against the Gnostic teachers in the Ante-Nicene period are those of:

Martyr: the Apologies  
Irenaeus: Against Heresies  
Hippolytus: Refutation of All Heresies (esp. Book VII)

Both Tertullian and Origen have works that touch on individual Gnostic teachers and most of the fathers take a shot at the teaching in various places.

### Religious Background

### 3. Religious Analysis

We bring the religious background into four camps: Judaism, Christian perversions (usually via a syncretism with something else), Christian cults, and the older pagan and/or anti-Christian religious expressions.