

book. There are many parable settings in Hermas and you have to read it yourself for fuller discussion. It is a long book but interesting and appealing to the "fantasy mind." If you will but begin to read...you will have to finish it.

c. The Letters of Clement of Rome

Two of these are counted in the Apostolic Fathers but only the first is thought to be original. Clement is of the early second century and may be the man referred to in Philippians 4:3, but no one really knows. The letter is addressed to the Corinthian community and it makes much use of Scriptural citations while advising the church to be in proper subordination to the Scriptures. Many date the letter in the last decade of the first century and it may well be the earliest extra-biblical writing we have in the New Testament tradition.

d. The work of Polycarp

A martyred saint of about 156 AD, Polycarp was a very old man at the time...born no later than 69 AD and had been a disciple of John. He was bishop of Smyrna and had written a letter for the Philippian church. As with many similar letters, it pleads for order and growth. It shows the priestly work of Christ in capsule form and gives a summary of the attitude of the devoted towards the Saviour.

e. Papias

Another of John's men who died about 140 AD, Papias prepared an "Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord." It is known only in fragment form today but it shows us a beginning of the commentary movement that would soon produce a wealth of material. His fragment is the one telling us of a supposed Aramaic original of Matthew.

f. Letters of Ignatius

A bishop in Asia Minor and a martyr between the years 111 and 118, Ignatius has left us seven extant letters written to churches in Asian minor in the manner of Paul. His emphasis on order suggests that one of the first problems faced in the church was that of polity and practice.

g. The Didache

Discussed later in more detail, the Didache is really a summary of post-apostolic teaching in the practical things of life..probably dating from about 150.

The apostolic fathers help us to see the esteem in which the early church held the Old Testament Scriptures. We see in them the grip which the priesthood of Christ held on their thinking and we see the continuing emphasis on an order life that will reflect the work of the Gospel. We must remember that