

biblical literature immediately pertaining to the church. The authenticity of the second letter is in doubt. The first letter is one of pastoral proportions and is a combination of godly advice and common sense..but at no time does he assume a position of authority over the church or indicate any other sort of pontifical leaning.

4) The Letters of Ignatius: A leader in the Smyrna church, Ignatius was martyred about 118 AD and in the process of preparing for his end, wrote a number of letters to the Asian churches. These are in the style of the Revelation letters of John in Revelation 2-3. He gives strong support for the paternal role of the office of bishop and demonstrates how quickly the legal power structure of Christianity was developing. His emphasis on a necessary martyrdom is also of interest.

5) The Letter of Barnabas: This appears to be a pastoral work from the first half of the second century and gives notable applications of New Testament teachings to singular problems. It is not to be confused with the "Gospel of Barnabas" and other later items associated with that name. It is generally regarded as pseudigraphy.

6) The Shepherd of Hermas: is a long pastoral fantasy, allegory with extraordinary visions and no certain authorship. It reads somewhat like Tolkien! Due to the unusual nature of the visions and the teachings applied to them, it was thought by many second-century Christians to be inspired but as the church matured it was recognized as merely a good piece of literature. When you read it, you will marvel that anyone thought it was inspired!

7) The Fragment of Papias: Remnants of this memoir from the famous Asia Minor father include his provocative note on Matthew and his recognition of the Apostolic teaching of John. Papias was apparently a student of John and Polycarp knew John through him. The fragment is brief.

8) The Martyrdom of Polycarp: a brief account of the life and death of this noble and godly person about 154 AD.

Good translations and Greek texts for these works are found in the titles THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS as edited by either Lightfoot or Goodspeed. The English translation is also in the PRE-NICENE FATHERS.