

shows the independence of the individual bishops. He sided with the Bishop of Rome in his views of Easter but used his influence to lessen Victor's issuance of letters of condemnation for those who disagreed. He was a chiliast in eschatology and offered a four-fold dispensationalist idea of the unfolding of Scripture. Our age owes him a great deal although, as with other men of his time, there are gaps in our appreciation that may hinder one's total acceptance of all his ideas. The fathers, including Irenaeus, are to be studied, not idolized.

Some modern students have found his system of demonstrating the absurdities in the views of the heterodox as a means of illustrating their falsehood to be a non-preferred method of debate. I kind of like it myself!

#### Clement of Alexandria

The successor of Pantanaeus, the apparent founder of the Alexandrian catechetical school about 170 AD, Clement brought the school to prominence and "put it on its feet. His literary output was large including EXHORTATION TO THE HEATHEN and the STROMATA (the instructor). As an apologist he followed the pattern of Martyr and this led him to an allegorizing principle of biblical interpretation and his disciple, Origen, would carry this art to masterful ends. It is his work with the catechetical school that allows us to call him a polemicist although I believe I have warned you it is difficult to give absolute categorizations to men of multi-interest. His restructuring of Christian schools after the pattern of Roman education seems to have been a strong forward step in the academic discipline.

#### Tertullian (225)

Undoubtedly the most important thinker of his age, Tertullian is not classed among the "fathers" due to the fact of his involvement with the Montanist sect and his outspoken support of what the rest of the church thought bad. Born about 150 he had legal training and a good understanding of philosophy and logic. With his conversion came a sense of commitment to Christian practice and he became outspoken in attacks on worldliness in Christian habit and life and excess in the affairs of church life in general. His attitudes in these things may have been the cause of his move to Montanism, a move that seems to have occurred about 205AD..and one