

they wrote without a completed canon and under circumstances that are hardly enviable. If we think we see some problems in their formulation, we may be right. But an understanding of the setting will make our criticism sympathetic.

The Apostolic Fathers may be had in single volume form as they are translated by either Lightfoot or Goodspeed. The former offers more critical information while the latter offers a more readable translation. Greek and Latin text are also available in part in the work Hellenistic Greek Texts by Wikgrn, Colwell and Marcus.

3. The Christian Apologists

As noted in earlier definitions, the apologists were a group of scholars who spoke for the reality and truth of Christianity.

a. The early apologists (first century ±)

These writers concentrated on a "right to live" principle. Their appeals were addressed to the Emperor and to the world and the appeal was to the effect that Christians should be allowed to live even as others are given that right. Among them are Quadratus, Aristides, Athenagoras, et al. The works are largely from the latter first and early second century and generally preserved only in fragment form.

b. The later Apologists

These writers made a more "scientific" case for the church as they sought to argue for its existence on existential rather than humanitarian lines. Chief among them are:

Justin Martyr (d. 165) the most eminent of the group as an "evidentialists" who gives reasons and logical discourse for the acceptance of Christianity. His beliefs and method are outlined in the First and Second Apologies as well as in an interview with a learned and capable Jew, the Dialogue with Trypho. The Christian use of the Old Testament comes to some maturity with Martyr and his analyses are sometimes brilliant and occasionally far-fetched. He shows a full knowledge of the New Testament Canon as we perceive it.

Tatian (d. 175) prepared an apology To The Greeks in which he sought to do for them what Martyr had done for the Jews in Trypho. He is a descendent student from Martyr although in later years he adopted a form of Christian gnosticism that did not improve his image. He prepared the first Gospel harmony, the Diatessaron and so showed a full understanding of the Gospel narratives.