

Heresies of the Early Church "fathers"

By Wm Tipton

As you read this please bear in mind that we are protestants and that while we do love our Catholic and Orthodox brothers and sisters, there are obviously areas of disagreement as far as doctrine and tradition are concerned. This article is in no way meant to offend any catholic or orthodox brother or sister, please do not take it that way.

This page is simply to show that these early church fathers that some rely so heavily upon for marriage doctrine were not exactly founded well in scripture. There is a multitude of items and names that can be added here, but we are trying to make a simple point here that these men were not any more trustworthy concerning doctrine than any other man might be.

These are the teachings of some of the ECF's that people such as lastblast, sealedeternal and 1956ford that we discuss elsewhere rely on for their doctrinal positions.

We will add to these over time, but clearly these men teach confessing to a priest instead of to God Himself, penance and daily prayer blotting out sin instead of the blood of our Lord, Universalism and pre-existence of the soul. And we have not even really begun to dig into the teachings of these men yet.

Basil the Great

"It is necessary to confess our sins to those to whom the dispensation of God's mysteries is entrusted"

Jerome

"If the serpent, the devil, bites someone secretly, he infects that person with the venom of sin.

And if the one who has been bitten keeps silence and does not do penance, and does not want to confess his wound . . . then his brother and his master, who have the word [of absolution] that will cure him, cannot very well assist him" (Commentary on Ecclesiastes 10:11 [A.D. 388]).

Origen

"[A final method of forgiveness], albeit hard and laborious [is] the remission of sins through penance, when the sinner . . . does not shrink from declaring his sin to a priest of the Lord and from seeking medicine, after the manner of him who say, 'I said, "To the Lord I will accuse myself of my iniquity"'"

"Origen espoused a Platonic view of eternal souls achieving perfection while escaping the temporary, imperfect material world. He imagined even demons being reunited with God.

His views of a hierarchical structure in the Trinity, the temporality of matter, "the fabulous preexistence of souls," and "the monstrous restoration which follows from it" were declared anathema in the 6th century"

Augustine

"When you shall have been baptized, keep to a good life in the commandments of God so that you may preserve your baptism to the very end. I do not tell you that you will live here without sin, but they are venial sins which this life is never without.

Baptism was instituted for all sins.

For light sins, without which we cannot live, prayer was instituted. . . . But do not commit those sins on account of which you would have to be separated from the body of Christ. Perish the thought! For those whom you see doing penance have committed crimes, either adultery or some other enormities. That is why they are doing penance.

If their sins were light, daily prayer would suffice to blot them out. . . .

In the Church, therefore, there are three ways in which sins are forgiven: in baptisms, in prayer, and in the greater humility of penance" (Sermon to Catechumens on the Creed 7:15, 8:16 [A.D. 395]).

Ambrose of Milan

"For those to whom [the right of binding and loosing] has been given, it is plain that either both are allowed, or it is clear that neither is allowed. Both are allowed to the Church, neither is allowed to heresy. For this right has been granted to priests only" (Penance 1:1 [A.D. 388]).