

# The Apostolic Fathers: An Essential Guide - Clayton N. Jefford

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The Apostolic Fathers is a collection of early Christian writings from the late first and early second centuries, traditionally considered to have been written by those connected with the Apostles, and therefore reflecting authentic Apostolic teaching. These writings include 1 Clement, 2 Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Didache, Barnabas, Papias, Hermas, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Diognetus, and Quadratus. Considering their historical context, the Apostolic Fathers bear directly on the study of the New Testament, the development of the early Church, and the history of Christian theology. The Apostolic Fathers: An Essential Guide will explain the nature of the collected writings as they stand between the world of the New Testament and later Christian writers, focusing upon what the texts say about ancient Christian thinkers, early church developments, and the evolution of theological ideas prior to the great ecumenical councils.

Chapter Outline:

- \*Chapter 1: The Collected Writings\*
- Chapter 2: People and Places\*
- Chapter 3: Connections to Scripture\*
- Chapter 4: Theological Ideas\*
- Chapter 5: Structures of the Ancient Church \*
- Chapter 6: Roots of the Patristic Tradition

Here is a long awaited volume that treats in a concise and readable format a body of literature too often neglected, but absolutely essential to our understanding of Christian origins. Clayton Jefford brings unrivaled expertise to this task and serves as a sensitive and insightful guide to these texts, offering an introduction that will serve the needs of the beginning student and the seasoned expert alike. It is sure to be at the top of the reading list for anyone interested in this important topic.

Stephen J. Patterson Eden Theological Seminary St. Louis "The author's goal-a simple and sensible first introduction to the ideas and beliefs of the Apostolic Fathers-is fully realized as he organizes his survey of these intriguing ancient Christian writers according to topics-including scripture, theology, and church structure-of continuing contemporary interest. A reliable guide for students and study groups."

Michael Holmes Bethel University St. Paul, Minnesota Clayton N. Jefford is Professor of Scripture at Saint Meinrad School of Theology and is the Secretary-Treasurer of the North American Patristics Society. He has written and edited six volumes and is best known for his research in the fields of the Didache and the Apostolic Fathers.

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