



This is parcel to our 2021 series  
of FlipPamphlet-formatted educational publications.  
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Want answers to your questions about how, when, where and why the religious quo lost its status? You'll encounter some surprises here, so buckle up!

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Both Jesus and the apostle, Paul, made it quite clear that if “the ministry” were ever to be abdicated to career professional christians, that profession would certainly and quickly become corrupt. Why? For starters, human nature is the sin nature. We're told to crucify it.

The corruption of the professional clergy has its root in the presumption that all who're not professional christians are the subordinates of those who are. The professionals? They've almost all bought-in to the hype and perceive *themselves* as our superiors. Yes that's a subliminal mindset for many, but it's still very easy to observe.

Does the fault lie only with the clergy? No. With very few exceptions, parishioners behave toward professional christians as if they're our superiors. That's likely the primary reason why clergymen quickly buy-in to the hype. Gotta stop that!

In the organized visible church, there are “special” christians and “the little people.” In The Church (the one against which the gates of Hell will not prevail) NOBODY is “special” and none are “not-special.” Many are surprised to learn that “the ministry” has never been and will never be “a calling” for career professionals. It's an assignment given to us all. Our callings and our assignments are a big part of the respective crosses that we each must bear. Some crosses are heavier than others, but not even one of them is “special.”

- ✓ Yes, I know: You've often heard that “God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.” The remarkable calling of Saul of Tarsus (who was to become the apostle, Paul) clearly debunks that foolishness. He was fully equipped for His before-birth assignment long before Jesus struck him down and blinded him. You may appreciate a couple of examples—

- a. Paul's assignment required that he be multilingual and, as one of the most highly educated people in the world, he was fluent in all the languages – a.k.a. tongues – of the regions of his assignment.
- b. He was like a pit bulldog when it came to the aggressive pursuit of things he thought were worthy of his attention. His assignment was his personal cross. It specifically required that characteristic.

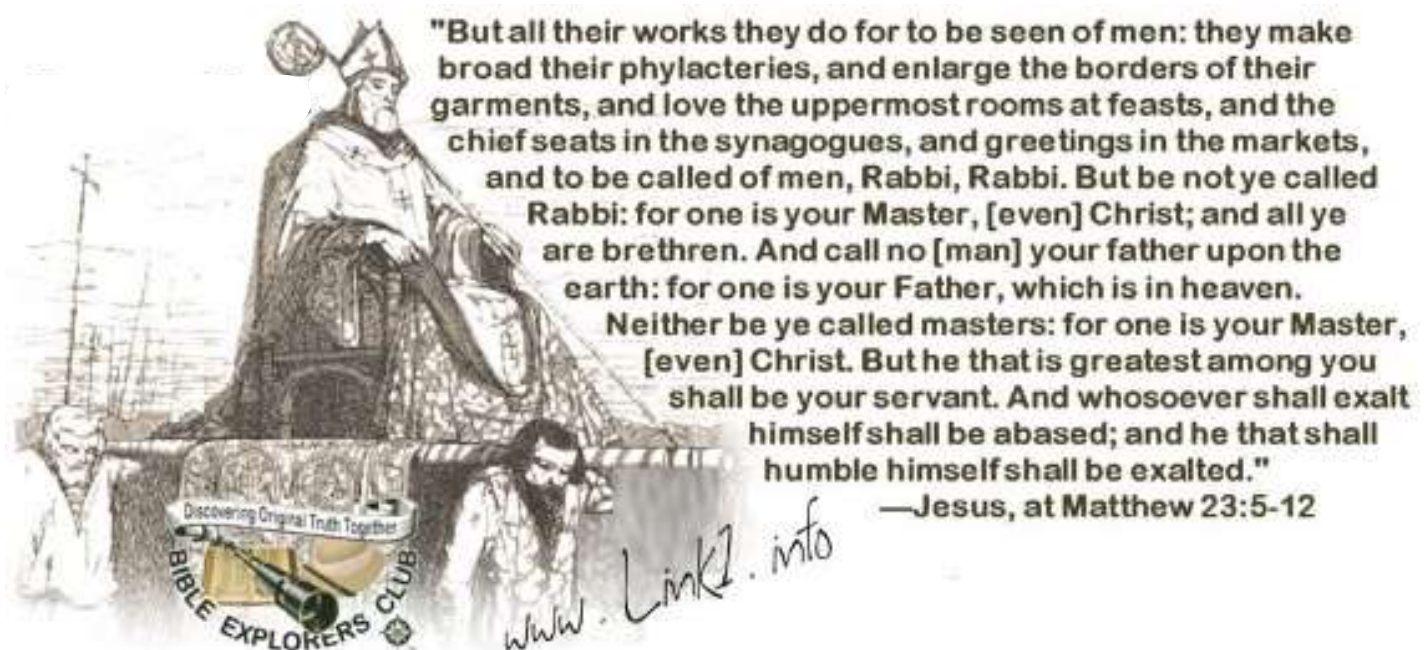
Your assignment (your cross) is suited to YOUR unique characteristics. Nobody's your superior and nobody's your subordinate. You'll find value in the additional insight of our MicroShorts Memo, "Your Calling?" It's on the "FlipBooks" tab on our web site. Or this link will take you directly to it:

[https://static.wixstatic.com/media/a359a3\\_85c8033bb02c448f9f234b8cdaa22a7e~mv2.jpg](https://static.wixstatic.com/media/a359a3_85c8033bb02c448f9f234b8cdaa22a7e~mv2.jpg).

*And whosoever doth not  
bear his cross, and come after me,  
cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:27

What are the things you enjoy doing that you can do pretty well? Those are likely the essence of your assignment. You must get busy and polish the related skills, get onto the practice fields and then onto the playing field. There may be no huge rush for you to do that, but you must take the initiative.





Sensible observers wonder why seminary professors typically start their naive students out with the writings of “the church ‘fathers’?” Why not start them out with objective analyses of the consistently pure message of Jesus and His Apostles? If you want to learn the truth about something important, shouldn’t you start with the original? To start with derivative works can only skew a student’s comprehension of the straightforward truth of it.

A study of “the church ‘fathers’” includes the bitter struggles between orthodox and gnostic theologies. Objective scholarly analysis can only yield the conclusion that both of those early mindsets were extreme departures from the message of Jesus and the Apostles. It is unlikely that that conclusion ever surfaces in those institutions of “higher” learning, though. The result? Far too many of our seminary graduates are confused; clearly misinformed.

Is that rampant confusion a modern phenomenon? No. It started while Jesus’ Apostles still walked here and taught The 1st-Century Gospel Truth. Need confirmation? The Apostle, John, was born c. 6 AD and died c. 100 AD. At 1 John 2:18, you’ll find this: “Little children...ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists.” He knew! What follows in this series is some of what John was warning the early Christians (and us) about...

First, our very brief introductions to three among dozens of those whom Bible *experts* call “The Church ‘Fathers’.” Then, we’ll take a closer look into the significance of each of them.

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## **Ignatius of Antioch; Born c. 35 AD; Died c. 108 AD—**

Ignatius taught...

- ① the deity of Christ.
- ② Jesus’ virgin birth and literal resurrection.
- ③ He coined the phrase, “catholic church.”

- ④ He taught that bishops and priests have divine authority over all believers who're not bishops and priests.
  - ⑤ He claimed that Peter had ordained "the succession of apostles."
  - ⑥ He wrote that there is no Salvation OUTside the orthodox church.
  - ⑦ He initiated what is still known today as "Orthodox Christianity."
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### Valentinus; Born c. 100 AD; Died c. 160 AD—

- ① Valentinus was the best known of the early gnostic theologians. A candidate for Bishop of Rome at one point, when another candidate got the job he started his own church.
  - ② He taught that bishops and priests have NO divine authority over the faithful who're not bishops and priests.
  - ③ He insisted that there is no such thing as "the succession of apostles."
  - ④ He taught that there is no Salvation INside the orthodox church.
  - ⑤ He wrote that Christ was both God and human and that He did NOT experience the pain of crucifixion because He had reverted to His God being at that point.
  - ⑥ He may've been the first to teach that Christ's resurrection may NOT have been literal.
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### Irenaeus; Born c. 125 AD; Died c. 202 AD—

After Valentinus' death, Irenaeus began a massive work on a negative portrayal of Valentinus' teachings.

- ① He is said to have been the earliest of the orthodox church "fathers" to develop a thorough "**Mariology**."
- ② He claimed that, even though Eve had Adam for a husband, she was still a virgin.

- ③ He insisted that Jesus' mother, Mary, forever remained a literal virgin!

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**Ignatius** is seen as the early “church ‘father’” who presented the best case for Orthodox Christianity. Much of what he wrote can be scripturally defended, but the primary thrust of it cannot; e.g.: Clergymen have divine authority over all the subordinate faithful...Peter ordained *the succession of apostles*...There is no Salvation OUTside the orthodox (Roman) church.

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It is not just the Roman enterprise that systematically reinforces the notion that laymen (their presumed subordinates) must “come under the authority of” the established institutions and their appointed clergy. Laymen who dare to quote pertinent scriptures in rebuttal, are labeled “insubordinate”—even by Protestant clergy.

There is no scripture that even implies a “succession of apostles.” Best we have been able to determine from our ongoing study of pertinent scriptures, the title “apostle” was/is applicable ONLY to those twelve whom Jesus had personally ordained. They had spent lots and lots of time with Him, in person. “Apostolic succession” is a lot like a fox that one may enjoy chasing but never catching.

- ✓ “...Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you...whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” —Jesus, at Matthew 20:25-27 (See Matthew 23:11,12, Mark 9:35 and Mark 10:42-44.)

Whenever any exciting new ideology starts “catching on,” marketers inevitably rush in to establish a monopoly on it. In his coining of the phrase, “catholic church,” **Ignatius** distinguished himself as a leader among the early monopoly-seekers...seeking power over growing throngs of prospective subordinates. Although he and his successors were somewhat effective early spokesmen for the “catholic” enterprise, they weren’t able to gain the monopoly

they sought—until 325 AD. See our MicroShorts Memo, “Council of Nicea” for more on that: <https://www.Link1.info/microshorts>. In it, you’ll learn about the pivotal role of Constantine, who both organized and dominated the Council of Nicea. You’ll learn about his sinister motives and how he leveraged the incredible greed of the Roman clergy to his personal advantage. You’ll learn that, like some notable U.S. politicians, he falsely claimed Christianity.

- ✓ “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; [in so doing] my maker would soon take me away.” —Job 32:21,22
  - ✓ “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” —Jesus, at Matthew 23:9
  - ✓ “And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped [him]. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.” —Acts 10:25,26
- Find our MicroShorts memo, “Reverend?” for more on that.

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**Valentinus** was the primary early influencer of the gnostic theologies. They took on multiple forms, many of which were even more extreme regarding the deity of Christ, etc. He was scripturally correct in his teaching that the clergy have NO divine authority over the faithful. He was wrong in his presumption that there is no Salvation INside the orthodox church. How so? God's people are scattered even among apostate institutions. God will always have a remnant of the faithful and true. They, alone, are members of The Church.

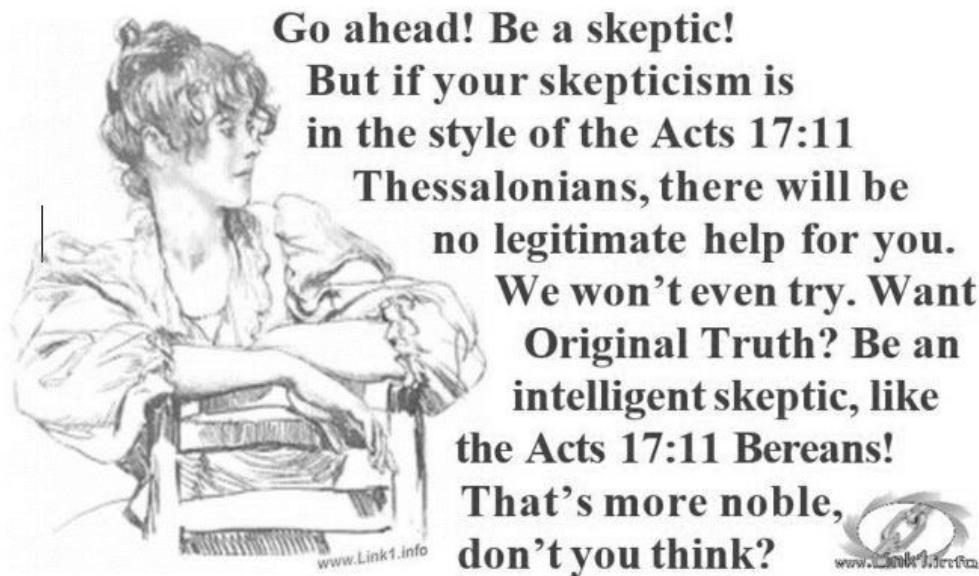
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That character, **Irenaeus**, perpetuated **Ignatius’** heresy re: the presumed orthodoxy of the enterprise at Rome. If you’ve always been curious as to why Catholics worship Mary, now you know! Irenaeus’ claim that both Eve and Mary were perpetual virgins is at the root of it. From the incredible folly of that foundation came the purported *sainthood* of many other human beings.



Was Jesus' mother, Mary, really a perpetual virgin, as Irenaeus claimed and as most Catholics believe with all their hearts? These two verses should help you answer that question for yourself...

- ✓ “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.” —Matthew 1:18
- ✓ “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” —Matthew 1:24,25



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From those who're inclined to always agree with me, I learn not much.  
From those who rationally explain why they disagree, I learn volumes.

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