

## **Counsels, Confessions, Creeds, and Catechisms**

### **Before the era of the counsels Part II**

Counsels built on an established pattern of the apologists of the second and third centuries. Men like:

Justin Martyr – 100-165

1. First Apology – to Emperor Antonius Pius:

Proving that Christians were not atheists nor idolators.

Proving Christians are moral, have a deep and logical \_\_\_\_\_, and follow Jesus Christ whose morality and life are evidence of the highest form of perfection.

Proving the superior nature of the Christian \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Second apology – to Emperor Antonius Pius:

Shared examples of the suffering of Christians who were good, even according to the philosophy of Aristotle.

Tatian – 110-180

The superiority of Christianity to Greek religion and thought requires fair treatment of Christians.

The comparison of Christianity to Greek philosophy proving that it predates the esteemed Greek philosophy because it dates all the way back to \_\_\_\_\_.

Athenagoras – 133-190

The pagan gods of Rome were only human creations.

The pagan gods were guilty of the same immoralities as their \_\_\_\_\_.

Christians were not guilty of gross sin and should be pardoned of the charges against them.

Theophilus of Antioch

Apology to Autolycus – Book 1

The superiority and nature of God.

Apology to Autolycus – Book 2

The comparison of Christianity to the \_\_\_\_\_ of Rome.

Apology to Autolycus – Book 3

A response to the questions and objections of Autolycus.

Tertullian – 160-225

A fiery personality, along with elite training as a lawyer helped him construct a logical case in defense of the Christians demonstrating that they were \_\_\_\_\_ citizens, that persecution was actually counter-productive to the Roman cause, and that their doctrines, practices, and associations were superior to the pagans.

(We see him later too.)

Minucius Felix

Wrote to win his friend, a Roman aristocrat to Christ.

Counsels also built on and responded to the teaching of two prominent schools established during this time:

The School in Alexandria:

1. Leadership included: Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen
2. Its purpose was noble, but the Greek philosophical Gnosticism of the day heavily influenced their interpretation of Scripture. On the whole this school did more damage to the cause of Christ than good. However, they were the first to give us a credible work on textual criticism, as well as a systematic theology.

The School in Carthage:

1. Leadership included Tertullian (remember him?) and Cyprian.
2. This school was where the doctrine of the trinity became popularized, along with believer's baptism, and traducianism (our soul is from our parents.) Cyprian was one of the first to recognize some error in the growing power of the papacy. However, he introduced theology that later grew into transubstantiation.