

Counsels, Confessions, Creeds, and Catechisms

The Didache

Historical context:

The origin of the Didache is traced to very early church periods. Some believe that it was written even before Revelation. It was written in Greek, and the term itself means "teachings." It was one of the very first statements of doctrine and church theology.

Important content:

There are four sections. Part one is entitled "The two ways."

Way one – life. A list of excerpts from the Bible that could be viewed as legalism, or evidences of Christian living. It contains three subsections:

1. General instructions on righteous living.
2. *The Second Commandment* – those things to disciples.
3. *The "Fences"* – proverbs to our disciples.

Way two – death. This is a summary of the deeds or evidences of the unbeliever who lives in sin.

Part two is formally called the "Instruction For Catechumens."

Concerning food – Follow religious traditions.

Concerning baptism – Follow prescriptive traditions.

Concerning fasting – Do not follow the fasting schedule of the hypocrites.

Concerning prayer – Say the Lord's Prayer three times a day.

Concerning the eucharist – The sacred prayer is integral.

Concerning the ointment – A thanksgiving prayer for ointment.

Concerning the approved teacher – Follow only teachers who teach consistent with these doctrines.

Part three is called, "Life in the Community."

Section one is a formula for determining if one is a false prophet.

Section two speaks to how we engage strangers.

Section three prescribes how to support true prophets.

Section four gives basic instructions for Sunday gatherings.

Section five calls on the church to appoint bishops and deacons.

Section six gives a basic word on the issue of church discipline.

Part four is titled, "The Lord is Coming." It is a basic reminder of Christ's imminent return.