

Appendix B—Glossary

Adoptionism—The idea that Jesus was in nature a man who became God by adoption. Such groups as the Ebionites and such works as the *Shepherd of Hermas* (circa 150) promoted this belief.

Allegory—A method of biblical interpretation that asserted multiple levels of meaning in the text. The approach was utilized by scholars in making palatable parts of the Bible they found intellectually incredible or morally objectionable if taken literally.

Ambrose (339-397)—Theologian and bishop of Milan. One of the Latin Fathers who greatly influenced Augustine. He introduced the concepts and terminology of the Greek East to the Latin West.

Anthony (251-356)—A 3rd and 4th century hermit who lived on the fringe of the Egyptian desert. His biography, written by Athanasius, inspired many early monastics.

Apollinarius (310-392)—Eastern bishop and theologian. His Christology was an extreme form of the views of the Alexandrian theologians.

Apologists—Christian writers in the early centuries who defended Christianity against pagan attacks on Christian doctrine, morals, and practices. The name is taken from the Greek *apologia* meaning “defense”.

Apostle’s Creed—A confession of faith used by early Christians in celebrating baptism, for catechetical instruction, as a rule of faith, and as part of the official liturgy in the western Church. Segments of our current Creed date to the 2nd and 3rd century, but the Creed didn’t take its present form until the 7th century.

Apostolic Constitutions—A church instructional manual dating to the third century.

Apostolic fathers—A designation created by Jean Cotelier, a French scholar in the late 17th century, for a group of disciples of the apostles and Christian writers, though not contributing to the New Testament canon, were thought to help preserve the apostolic faith. Such writers as Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Papias, and the authors of the *Epistle of Barnabas*, *Epistle to Diognetus*, *2 Clement*, and the *Didache* were numbered among the Apostolic fathers.

Apostolic succession—The doctrine that the pastoral authority given by Jesus to the apostles has been handed down through an unbroken succession of bishops.

Arius (260-336)—Alexandrian presbyter who taught Jesus was not equal in divinity to the Father. He was condemned at the Council of Nicea (325).

Asceticism—The rigorous denial of the body for the purpose of spiritual growth.

Athanasius (296-373) —Bishop of Alexandria (328-373), relentless foe of Arianism, and champion of Nicene Christianity. He is regarded by many as the foremost theologian of his day.

Atonement—The doctrine that answers the question of how did Christ’s suffering and death on the cross take away sin and reconcile human beings to God. There are several different doctrines in the wider Christian tradition.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) —Bishop of Hippo in North Africa and author of numerous significant works, including the *Confessions* and the *City of God*. Next to Paul, he was probably the most influential theologian of the first millennium of the Christian era.

Baptism—The sacrament or rite of Christian initiation. Christians have differed in their understanding of baptism, as to mode (immersion as necessary vs mode as optional), as to proper subjects (believers only vs believers and their children), and as to its meaning (baptism as a means of saving grace/as a sign and seal of the covenant of grace/as an outward sign of an inward reality/reception of saving grace).

Basil of Caesarea (330-379) —Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, theologian, and one of the founders of Eastern monasticism. Frequently referred to as one of the Cappadocian fathers, along with Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa.

Benedict of Nursia (480-550) —A sixth century monk and abbot whose Rule became the standard for Western monasticism.

Bishop—An overseer, senior pastor, and shepherd of the church. In the New Testament, the term for overseer (*episkopos*) and the term for elder (*presbuteros*) seem to be used interchangeably. However, by the 2nd and 3rd centuries, a distinction was drawn between bishop (overseer) and priest (presbyter) and a hierarchical relationship became the norm in church governance.

Caesaropapism—A system in which the secular ruler has absolute authority over both church and state. The term is often used to describe the relationship between church and state in the Byzantine Empire.

Canonical hours—Set times of worship and prayer in the daily routine of a monastery under the Benedictine rule, consisting of nocturnes, matins/lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline.

Canon of Scripture—The officially recognized books of the Bible. The Protestant canon consists of the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament. The Roman Catholic canon also includes the books (and chapters) of the Apocrypha, including *1 & 2 Esdras*, *Tobit*, *Judith*, *additional chapters in Esther*, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, *Ecclesiasticus*, *Baruch*, *A Letter of Jeremiah*, *The Song of the Three*, *Daniel and Susanna*, *Daniel*, *Bel*, and *the Dragon* [*additional chapters in Daniel*], *The prayer of Manasseh*, and *1 & 2 Maccabees*.

Cappadocian fathers—Three 4th century theologians (Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa) from Cappadocia in Asia Minor (now central Turkey). These men made important contributions to Christian theology (especially the doctrine of the Trinity) in general and to the Eastern Orthodox tradition in particular.

Catechumen—An individual in the ancient Church being instructed in the faith in preparation for baptism.

Celsus (circa 170s)—A scathing pagan Roman critic of Christianity whose work *True Doctrine* is known only in quotations and paraphrases found in Origen's reply *Against Celsus*.

Cenobitic monasticism—A form of communal monasticism. The term “cenobite” comes from the Greek *koinos bios* (meaning life together).

Chalcedon, Council of (451)—An assembly of bishops which convened at Chalcedon, near Constantinople, and resolved key questions concerning Christology.

Christology—The branch of Christian theology that deals with the personal identity and work of Jesus Christ.

Church fathers—Christian writers up to Isidore of Seville (died 636), whose works are widely viewed as having special authority.

Clement of Alexandria (150-215)—An Alexandrian bishop and theologian, who sought to establish links between Christian theology and Greek philosophy.

Clement of Rome—Bishop of Rome from 88 to 99 and considered the first Apostolic father, he is famous for a letter he penned to the Corinthians in 96 concerning their divisiveness.

Confessor—Christians who remained true under torture and persecution short of death. By the mid-third century, some persecutions took the tact of attempting to create Christian apostates rather than martyrs, to force Christians to recant while depriving them of the opportunity for heroic witness unto death.

Constantine (274-337)—The Roman emperor who legitimized and then favored Christianity. He called and presided over the Church's first ecumenical council at Nicea in 325.

Constantinople, Councils of—Site of the second (381), fifth (553), and sixth (681) ecumenical councils, which addressed, among other things, the Arian and Monophysite issues.

Creed—From the Latin “credo”, meaning “I believe”. It is a verbal formula of Christian faith, originally used as a confession of faith at baptism and later used as a way of identifying and excluding heretical teaching.

Cyprian—Bishop of Carthage (249-258) who wrote extensively in promoting the unity of the Church and the authority and role of Christian bishops.

Cyril of Alexandria (died 444)—The Patriarch of Alexandria (412-444) and great opponent of Nestorius in the controversy regarding the nature of Christ’s person. He took a leading role at the Council of Ephesus in 431.

Deacon—A church officer who focuses on practical service to the congregation.

Depravity—The idea that because of the Fall, humanity’s original relation with God was broken and human nature broken as well. As a result, human beings cannot do anything, even good things, that are redemptive or restorative of this original relationship. This concept does not contend that humanity is as bad as it possibly can be, but that we are wrong at the root and that shows up in both individual and communal sins from which we cannot escape.

Diaspora—A Greek word meaning “scattering or dispersion” which, in the context of the early Church, referred to the scattering of the ancient Jews from their Palestinian homeland.

Didache—An early Christian teaching manual dating to the 2nd century.

Diocese—An ecclesiastical district under the authority of a bishop.

Docetism—A Christological heresy that held that Christ was wholly divine and only seemed to have a body. The name is derived from the Greek *dokeo* meaning “to seem, to appear”.

Donatists—A group led by Donatus, a schismatic bishop of Carthage (313-347), who opposed allowing Christians who lapsed in the Roman persecutions back into the Church.

Dualism—Ethical or religious dualism asserts that there are two hostile forces or beings in the world, one being the source of all good and the other the source of all evil. The universe is understood as the battleground for these opposing beings or forces, often identified respectively with light and darkness.

Ebionites—A group of ascetics who chose poverty as a way of life. They derived their name from the Hebrew term for “poor men” (*ebyonim*). They denied the pre-existence of the *Logos*, were very legalistic, understood Jesus as adopted by the Father at His baptism, and may have tended to Gnostic dualism.

Ecumenical councils—Assemblies of bishops whose decisions are considered binding on all Christians. Most Christian groups recognize the first four of these:

- Nicaea (325);
- Constantinople (381);
- Ephesus (431);
- Chalcedon (451).

Many, notably the Greek Orthodox, also hold to three others:

- Second Constantinople (553);
- Third Constantinople (680-681);

- Second Nicea (787).

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes all seven of the above and an additional fourteen other councils (see §1-277).

Edict of Milan (313) —A decree issued jointly by Constantine (West) and Licinius (East) extending the freedom of worship to Christians.

Elder—See **Presbyter**

Ephesus, Council of (431) —The third ecumenical council, which condemned the teaching of Nestorius, among other things.

Episcopate—Derived from the Greek word for “bishop” or “overseer”, this term refers to the network of bishops governing the church from the 2nd century on.

Eremetical monasticism—A form of solitary monasticism practiced by the desert hermits. The term comes from the Greek “*eremos*” which means wilderness or desert.

Eucharist—A sacrament commemorating the Last Supper shared by Jesus and His disciples (Mt 26:26-30; Mk 14:22-26; Lk 22:14-20; 1 Cor 1:23-26). It is also commonly known as Communion and the Lord’s Supper. Christians have differed in their understanding of the nature of the Eucharist:

- Transubstantiation (Roman Catholics) – The elements (bread and wine) actually change and become the body and blood of the Lord;
- Consubstantiation (Luther) – Christ is bodily present in, under, and with the elements of bread and wine. The elements do not become the Lord’s body and blood but the participants of the sacrament do “eat and take to [themselves] Christ’s body truly and physically”;
- Memorialism (Zwingli) -- The sacrament or ordinance memorializes Christ’s sacrifice. The Lord’s Supper is primarily an occasion to remember the spiritual benefits purchased by Christ’s death;
- Spiritual presence (Calvin) -- There is a real reception of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament only done in a spiritual manner.

Eusebius (260-339) —Christian bishop, theologian, apologist, and the first notable Christian historian. He is best known as the author of *Church History*, an account which covers the period from the time of Christ until the first half of the fourth century.

Eutyches (died 454) —A prominent monk who taught that the incarnate Christ had only a single, divine nature clad in human flesh. This teaching (monophysitism) was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

Excommunication—A church’s act in excluding a person from its fellowship and from worship, usually for moral or doctrinal deficiencies for which the person is not repentant.

Gnosticism—A broad label for a wide variety of non-orthodox forms of a philosophical religion, popular in the second and third centuries, which taught a cosmic dualism and offered salvation from the material realm based on secret knowledge (*gnosis*).

Goths—Germans who migrated into the Roman Empire in the fourth century. After the collapse of Western Empire, the West Goths (Visigoths) ended up dominating Spain and southern France for time and the East Goths (Ostrogoths) dominated Italy.

Grace—A term for the unmerited mercy and favor of God. The term has a wide play in theology to describe the power of God to redeem and transform human beings.

Gregory of Nazianzus (329-390)—One of the Cappadocian fathers and a founding theologian of the Orthodox tradition.

Gregory of Nyssa (331-395)—One of the Cappadocian fathers, a mystic, and a founding theologian of the Orthodox tradition.

Gregory Thaumaturgus (213-270)—A third century bishop and earnest evangelist who is credited with miracles and with working wonders.

Gregory (the Illuminator) Lusavorich (257-331)—A missionary to Armenia credited with converting that land from paganism to Christianity. Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as its official religion (301). Gregory became the first head of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Hermit—A term that comes from the Greek word for desert. The monastic movement began with individuals fleeing from the world into the desert wilderness. This so-called eremitical monasticism, exemplified by the desert fathers, was often very extreme in its asceticism and in its representation of the struggle against temptation and the evils of the world. Monasticism gained a communal focus in the Middle Ages, in part in reaction to the excesses of the hermits.

Hippolytus (170-236)—A presbyter at the church at Rome who led a schism against Bishop Callistus. He was a rigorist on church discipline, denying reconciliation with the church to those guilty of serious (mortal) sin. He was a prolific author and his *Apostolic Tradition* is one of our best sources on the origins and liturgical practices of the early church.

Hypostatic union—The union of the two natures of deity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. The Council of Chalcedon (451), in particular, addressed this issue. In the incarnation of the Son of God, a human nature was inseparably united forever with the divine nature in the one person of Jesus, yet with the two natures remaining distinct, whole, and unchanged, without admixture or confusion so that the one person, Jesus Christ, is truly God and truly man.

Ignatius of Antioch (35-107)—Bishop of Antioch and one of the famous early martyrs for the faith. He is noted for his letters to the churches of Asia Minor in which he defended the reality of Christ's physical suffering.

Irenaeus (130-200)—Bishop of Lyons in southern Gaul (France) in the late 2nd century. He wrote *Against Heresies*, defending Christianity against Gnosticism.

Jerome (345-420)—Bible scholar, monastic, doctrinal polemicist, and translator of the Latin Vulgate, the standard version of the Bible in use throughout the Middle Ages.

John Cassian (360-430)—Author of the *Institutes* and the *Conferences*, a compendium of Egyptian monastic lore and an important source of what we know about early monastic ideals.

John Chrysostom (347-407)—Bishop of Constantinople, theologian, and one of the most influential preachers in antiquity. The epithet *chrysostom* means “golden-mouthed”.

Justin Martyr (100-165)—Author of two *Apologies*, defenses of the faith aimed at pagan audiences. He was one of the first Christian thinkers to point to what he regarded as common features that linked Christianity with Greek philosophy.

Labarum—A symbol given to Constantine on the eve of the battle of Milvian Bridge (312) by which he was to conquer and be victorious. It consisted of the Greek letters che (χ) and rho (ρ) superimposed over each other and was placed on the shields of Constantine’s soldiers.

Leo the Great (440-461)—A pope who greatly expanded the power and authority of the Roman bishopric. Leo expanded the claims of papal supremacy based on the Petrine dogma, claiming that the Roman see should rule over the entire church. His influential *Tome of Leo* was cited by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. His personal influence and diplomacy persuaded Attila the Hun to abandon his siege of Rome in 452 and moved Gaiseric the Vandal to limit his sack of the city in 455.

Liturgy—A prescribed form of public worship, usually centering on the celebration of the Eucharist. The most common forms of liturgy modern Americans encounter are the Roman Rite in the Catholic Church, the Liturgy of John Chrysostom in the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Book of Common Prayer in the Anglican or Episcopal communion.

Logos—The Word made flesh, manifested in Jesus Christ. For the Alexandrian school in the early centuries, the *logos* took on a more expansive sense and was utilized as the key concept in integrating classical philosophy with the Christian faith.

Manichaeism—A dualist religion based on the teachings of the third-century Babylonian prophet, Mani. Augustine was an adherent to this cult for a time.

Marcion—A second-century heretical teacher whose views included the rejection of the Jewish Scriptures and a selective acceptance of the New Testament (basically Paul’s epistles minus the Pastorals and an edited version of Luke). His influence pushed the Church to recognize an official “canon” or measuring rod for the accepted, authoritative books of the Bible.

Martin of Tours—A fourth century bishop of Tours in France and a devout monastic. He became an example of the “true” bishop, devoted to his shepherding task while maintaining a

simple lifestyle in contrast with the pomp and power of many bishops in the period of the late Empire.

Martyr—One who died for the sake of the faith. The word comes from the Greek word for “witness”.

Monarchianism—A third-century movement that emphasized the oneness of God. Dynamic or adoptionist monarchianism taught that Jesus was divine only in the sense that God gave to him divine power. Modalist monarchianism argued that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were only three modes in which the one God operated and not discrete persons.

Monasticism—The name is derived from the Greek word meaning “alone”. The first monastics were desert hermits who fled from the world at large and the world in the church and sought to live celibate lives of simplicity and self-denial. Communal monasticism soon developed where monks lived lives of poverty, chastity, and obedience in community by a stated rule (usually following the Benedictine rule in the west and the Rule of St. Basil in the east).

Monasticism’s heyday was from the 3rd to the 11th centuries. The mendicants of the 12th and 13th centuries adopted a number of monastic traits but took the monastic ideal outside the walls of the monastery. The Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the modern secular spirit have all contributed to the significant decline of monasticism as a movement.

Monophysites—Derived from the Greek words *monos* (single) and *physis* (nature), Monophysites believe that the incarnate Christ had a single divine nature, clothed in human flesh. The Fifth (553) and Sixth (681) Ecumenical Councils at Constantinople addressed this issue, a very contentious one in the east from the 5th to the 7th centuries.

Montanism—A movement in the second and third centuries based on the prophecies of Montanus. Its insistence on the moral purity of the Church won Tertullian to its ranks late in his life.

Mortal sin—A sin causing spiritual death. Roman Catholic moral theology distinguishes between serious or mortal sin, which extinguishes the life of God in the soul, and lesser or venial sin, which only weakens but does not destroy that life. The distinction was initially suggested by Tertullian in the third century in the context of the question of the lapsed.

Muratorian Canon—An early list of generally accepted books of the New Testament which circulated at Rome near the end of the 2nd century.

Mysticism—An approach to religion that stresses the direct and intuitive experience of God. Their emphasis on the unintelligibility of God (that many aspects of God are hidden from human understanding because God is incomprehensibly beyond human understanding) generally led mystics to look askance at the systems of logic woven by groups like the scholastics. They believed that the scholastics thought they knew too much about God by their logical extrapolations, and that such pretense was dangerous.

Neoplatonism—A form of Platonism that originated with Plotinus (205-270). Neoplatonism supplied the philosophical backdrop for the Nicene fathers.

Nestorius—A bishop of Constantinople and allegedly a teacher of an extreme form of Christology that emphasized the separateness of the two natures of Christ (human and divine).

Nicaea, Council of (325)—An assembly of bishops convened at Nicaea in northwestern Turkey, which condemned the teachings of Arius.

Nicene Creed—A statement of faith resulting from the Council of Nicaea (325) and modified by the Council of Constantinople (381) which has been used by Christians through the centuries.

Novatian—Leader of a rigorous faction of the church at Rome in the third century, seeking to exclude those who lapsed in times of persecution. Cyprian of Carthage and others urged a more moderate policy.

Origen (185-254)—An influential Alexandrian theologian, apologist (author of *Against Celsus*), and author of the first Christian systematic theology, *On First Principles*. He favored an allegorical method of interpreting Scripture and made extensive use of Platonic and Neoplatonic thought.

Original sin—The doctrine that every human being is born with a corrupt and sinful nature deserving of condemnation.

Pachomius (290-346)—Founder of Egyptian cenobitic (communal) monasticism.

Patriarch—A honorary title given in the early Church to the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

Patripassianism—This is sometimes used as another name for modal monarchialism. Strictly speaking, patripassianism is the teaching that it was the Father who became incarnate, was born of a virgin, and who suffered and died on the cross.

Patrick (432-461)—The English missionary to Ireland used of God as an instrument of a very substantial awakening among the Irish. Ireland would become a vibrant monastic and missionary center in the early Middle Ages.

Pelagius—A Christian theologian of the early 5th century who emphasized human freedom and the merits of human effort in attaining salvation. Augustine was his great opponent.

Penance—A sacrament of forgiveness in the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, involving contrition, confession to an ordained priest, the doing of a prescribed penance, and absolution by the priest.

Peshitta—A translation of the Old and New Testament into Syriac. It is one of the earliest translations of the Bible into the vernacular of the people, a key missionary strategy of the early Church.

Platonism—A system of thought formulated by Plato (427-347 BC), immensely influential in the theological formulations of the early Church.

Polycarp (70-156)—Bishop of Smyrna and an early martyr for the faith.

Predestination—The doctrine, heavily influenced by Augustine, that human beings are destined for salvation (and some would say damnation as well) as a result of God's decree before the beginning of time, regardless of their own choices or actions. During the Reformation, this doctrine was emphasized and elaborated on the most by Calvin and Calvinist theologians.

Presbyter—An elder, commonly seen as a priest in the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. One of the three offices in the early church – overseer, elder, and deacon.

Real presence—The doctrine that insists that Christ's body and blood are really present in the Eucharist. Transubstantiation is the Roman Catholic version of this doctrine whereby the substance of bread and wine are changed into Christ's body and blood. Consubstantiation is the Lutheran version of this doctrine whereby the bread and wine physically remain as they are but the body and blood of Christ are present in/around/with them.

Relics—The physical remains of a saint, usually body parts but sometimes artifacts, thought by medievals to have miraculous powers.

Sabellius—A teacher of modal monarchianism, emphasizing divine unity to the point that the three persons of the Trinity are reduced to mere modes of divine being or action.

Sacrament—An outward sign of invisible grace (some would add -- that confer the grace they signify). Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox recognize seven sacraments – baptism, penance or reconciliation, confirmation, Eucharist, holy orders, matrimony, and extreme unction (last rites or anointing for the sick). Protestants recognize two – baptism and the Eucharist.

Septuagint—A Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament dating to the 3rd century B.C., deriving its name from the seventy scholars commissioned by to do the translation.

Stoicism—A major school of Hellenistic thought begun by Zeno (335-263 BC) and deriving its name from the porch (*stoa* in Greek) in Athens where he taught.

Syncretism—The process by which elements of one religion are assimilated into another religion resulting in a change in the fundamental tenets or nature of those religions.

Synod—A regional meeting of religious leaders.

Tertullian (160-225)—A great Latin apologist for the faith and a formative theologian of the Latin Christendom.

Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428)—A theologian of the Antioch school who emphasized the two distinct natures of Christ in the controversy concerning the hypostatic union.

Theotokos—A Greek term meaning “God bearer” used to signify and honor the Virgin Mary.

Trinity—The doctrine that one God consists in three divine, consubstantial persons.

Ulfilas (or Walfila 311-383)—An Arian missionary who worked among the Germanic tribes outside the borders of the Roman Empire. He was known as the Apostle to the Goths.

Venial sin—A sin that does not cause spiritual death in and of itself. Roman Catholic moral theology distinguishes between serious or mortal sin, which extinguishes the life of God in the soul, and lesser or venial sin, which only weakens but does not destroy that life. The distinction was initially suggested by Tertullian in the third century in the context of the question of the lapsed.

Vulgate—A translation of the Bible into Latin by Jerome. This was the version used through most of the Middle Ages.

White martyrdom—A phrase used in relation to monasticism. The monastics were seen as the bloodless successors to the martyrs. The martyrs renounced their lives by defying the world system; the monastics renounced the world system by withdrawing from it.