



Ante-Nicene Fathers, 10 Vols

Alexander Roberts (Editor) , Arthur Cleveland Coxe (Editor) , James Donaldson (Editor)

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The Ante-Nicene Fathers ranges from the Apostolic Fathers to various third and fourth century sources including the liturgies and ancient Syriac documents. It was intended to comprise translations into English of all the extant works of the Fathers (with the exception of the more bulky works of Origen) down to the date of the first General Council held at Nicaea in 325 A.D. This American edition by Arthur Cleveland Coxe is a revision of the original series edited by Alexander Roberts and Sir James Donaldson and published in Edinburgh. The revision involves a major rearrangement to conform to the historical sequence, the addition of brief introductions and notes indicating variances in readings, specifying references to scripture or literature, clarifying obscure passages, and noting corruptions or distortions of patristic testimony (as forged in the Decretals). The basic aim of the translations has been to strive for literary exactness, placing the English reader as nearly as possible on an equal footing with those who are able to read the original.

Volume Titles:

Volume 1: Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus

Volume 2: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria

Volume 3: Tertullian

Volume 4: Tertullian (IV), Minucius Felix, Commodian, Origen

Volume 5: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novatian, Appendix

Volume 6: Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius the Great, Julius Africanus, Anatolius and Minor Writers, Methodius, Arnobius

Volume 7: Lactantius, Venantius, Asterius, Victorinus, Dionysius, Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions, Homily, and Liturgies

Volume 8: Twelve Patriarchs, Excerpts and Epistles, The Clementina, Apocryphal Gospels and Acts, Syriac Documents

Volume 9: Gospel of Peter, Diatessaron, Testament of Abraham, Epistles of Clement, Origen and Miscellaneous Works

Volume 10: Bibliography, General Index, Annotated Index of Authors and Works

Ante-Nicene Fathers, 10 Vols Details

Date : Published June 1st 1994 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. (Peabody, MA) (first published 1874)

ISBN : 9781565630826

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Format : Hardcover 6448 pages

Genre : Religion, Theology, Reference, Christianity, Church, Church History, History, Christian

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From Reader Review Ante-Nicene Fathers, 10 Vols for online ebook

Brent McCulley says

The greatest reading achievement that I have accomplished in my career thus far is completing this ten volume set in precisely the year time that I allotted to complete it. I ran on a strict reading schedule that forced me to read about 15 pages a day, including on Christmas and the day our apartment burned down! Nevertheless, I am glad I stuck with it to rigorously and saw it through unto completion.

That Father's speak for themselves, indeed, these men, being just the pre-Nicea Fathers, are probably some of the most important theologians, philosophers that a Christian can study to build up his foundational knowledge of what it means to "be a Christian." From the Apostolic Fathers, like Ignatius and Clement of Rome, the Shepherd to the Epistle of Barnabas, to the early apologists that were so influential in the history of Church history and dogma such as Justin Martyr and Theophilus of Antioch--and who can forget the most formidable of all the ANF, viz., Origen. Reading these men have taken me back to a proper understanding of the development of Christianity, it's distinct character and flavor along with all it's geographical, theological, and cultural nuances.

On the whole, I soaked up an insane amount of information, and even if I cannot spit off an exact quote of some specific ANF, I understand the contours of each one's theology, not from reading a second hand book, but from wading through, often times tedious, large amounts of information and wrestling with their train of thought and worldview. From Irenaeus and his commitment to the regula fidei, to Cyprian of Carthage and his scuffle with the Bishop of Rome of heretics and the early theological question of re-baptism, understanding these men in light of the history of dogma and their individual contributions has been so beneficial it goes without saying.

While some Fathers' entire corpus are obviously not included in this set, for example Origen who wrote so voluminously, the others for the most part, are included in toto, and so this really did cover an exhaustive amount of ground. While I will have to go back and fill in a few gaps as far as missing literature from this area, my next "big" project will be to go through the next set, namely, the NF & PNF set one, which is primary Augustine. I am currently going through Adolf von Harnack's seven volume History of Dogma, and having now read the ANF's, I am tracking and critically engaging his thought in ways I would not have been able to had I never undertook to read this ten volume set of the ANF's, and for that I am grateful. I will be making hearty use of the ANF's as I work on my master's thesis next year.

Brent

NormaCenva says

Due to insomnia this collection of brilliant books was a perfect companion for me. I was able to get my hands on only 9 Volumes out of ten, but even that way, it was very interesting to read. It gives a good Historical overview, is written in a way that is not too hard to understand and keeps you interested. May be it is not such a good idea to read it all at ones, give yourself a break and take your time. May be choose and pick if you are interested in a specific topic and/or know what exactly you are looking for in regards to information.

Adam says

Blame Hugh Nibley, but I love studying early Christian history. What I'm trying to do is formulate some structure of the early Church, and even schismatic groups that sprung up along the way. Difficult with what is left after realizing we don't have all that is written anymore, and the one who wins tells the history. I like to see their interpretations of the resurrection, ordinances, etc. and how they would handle questions I have of other faiths. Got my set from CBD.com for really cheap...

Daniel Klawitter says

Yes, I read all of them and if you do too, you will understand without a doubt why the Da Vinci Code book got almost everything historically backwards.

Aaron Carlberg says

This is the American reprint of the Edinburgh Edition by A. Cleveland Coxe. This is a great research book, if you read it cover to cover you might get lost, but if you know what you are looking for and grounded in the truth, this is a great book to peruse.

Daniel Poe says

I learnt a lot from the writings of Christians who lived in the post-apostolic period before the First Council of Nicaea. Of course, as Christians, we err in various areas. Well, so do Christians in all of history. But we thank God for His grace and wisdom in leading His people then to persevere till the end. God has done so for them, so will He for us today!

Carrie says

While I didn't read these from cover to cover, I enjoyed the learning and insights I gained as I poured over them in search of specific symbolism of forgiveness as used by the Ante-Nicene Fathers. I feel it expanded my understanding of what I already know, it forced me to think about the implications of their conclusions to scripture--whether it corresponded with my understanding of doctrine or not. I found many of their focuses quite interesting, i.e. the purpose of bathing. :)

I would recommend reading through them to gain a wider scope and understanding of Christianity.

Erik Graff says

I actually read all of these volumes, boring as most of it was both as regards the original texts and the quaint Victorian translations based on them. There were, however, a few exceptions. Clement of Alexandria and Origen come across as intelligent men. Origen even comes across as someone with personal experience of the perennial mystical essence of religion. Tertullian is bright, may have had some experiences himself, but he was not a nice man. One of the most heated attackers of heresy, he ended his life as an heresiarch himself so far as the mainstream of the Christian Church was concerned--not that he'd ever admit it of course. Irenaeus is both stupid and mean, but his *Adversus Haeresis* is one of our primary sources for what he and his ilk perceived as the primary deviations of the day. Also, and this is amazing, he appears to have believed that Jesus lived to a ripe old age, that indeed Jesus had to live to a ripe old age in order to be wholly god incarnate. A few of the others, such as Polycarp, come across as pious old men. Dionysus, of course, actual author unknown, is one of the primary texts of Christian mysticism.

Although the pirated translations are quaintly old-fashioned and often stiff, some of the notes are amusing. One long one is about whether or not Christians can smoke tobacco. This boils down to trying to guess what Jesus would have thought. After much discussion, no decision is reached. Jesus never thought to condemn the practice (rare in the ancient world and usually done by inhaling fumes as from a censor) so, hesitantly it seems, the author of the note allows it.
