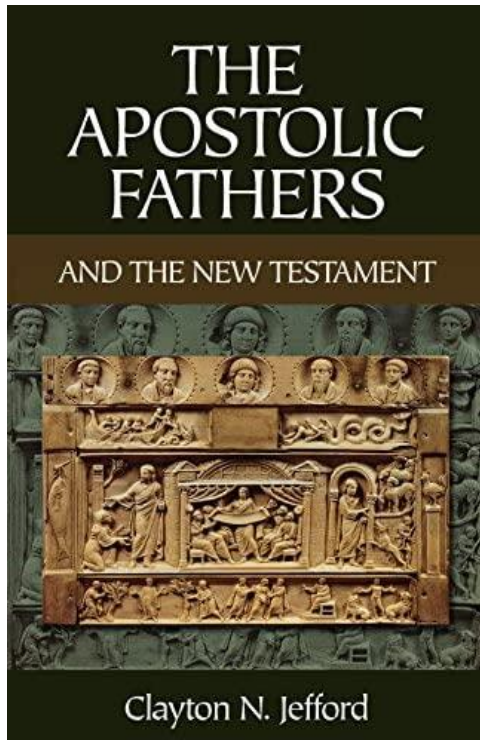


## Book Review



Jefford, Clayton N. *The Apostolic Fathers and the New Testament*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006 (288 pages).

In this book, Clayton addresses five issues, namely, the historical setting of the church father literature, the genre and setting in life of the church father literature, the ethics, and faith in the church father teaching, the struggle of the church fathers concerning the opposition from the Jewish and Gentile society, the influence of some churches in the second century. After observing the historical setting of church fathers, Jefford concludes that the letter of Ignatius was written ca., 107-109 AD from Asia Minor; the letter of Polycarp was written ca., 108-109 AD from Smyrna; 1 Clement was written ca., 65-70 AD from Rome; the Didache was written ca., 120 AD from Antioch; the Martyrdom of Polycarp was written ca., 155-160 AD from Smyrna; the Shepherd of Hermas was written ca., 90-150 from Rome; 2 Clement was written c.a. 166-174 from Corinthians; the letter of Barnabas was written ca., 96-100 from Alexandria; the Epistle of Diognetus could be composed around the first to the third century from anywhere around the Mediterranean world; the lost written work of Papias, *Exposition of the Oracle of the Lord*, probably was written in 130 AD.

Secondly, Jefford discovers that some genres are used in parallel to NT writings such as a letter, a homily, martyrology, and other genres. On the other hand, the church father adjusted the form and traditions of NT documents, such as the usage of miracle stories in church fathers. Jefford believes that the continuity of genre used in the church fathers indicates that there is a continuity between church fathers and the early church. On the other hand, the adjustment indicates that the church father tried to reapply the tradition inherited from the NT authors into the new context based on the new situation and conditions in which they faced.

Thirdly, Jefford finds a strong indication that the continuity between the church fathers and the early church is also related to ethical teaching and faith. Similarly to the early church, the church fathers give much attention to the warning about false teachers and to maintaining the unity of the



church, and the issues on ethics were also highlighted. On the other hand, there is a development concerning the rite in the church; it seems that the situation and conditions faced by church fathers made them have to improve the ecclesiastical teaching in accord with the issues faced in their time.

Fourthly, Jefford shows that there is an indication that a growing separation from Judaism began to happen in the times of church fathers. Although the separation is not seen in the early church fathers, the later period indicates that the separation from [Rabbinic] Judaism was unavoidable. This period shows that the church fathers faced a challenge from the Jewish religion. On the other hand, there is also a strong indication that the need to share the gospel in the Gentile society makes the church in the period of church fathers use the Greek language, Greek style, and also their culture.

Finally, Jefford discusses some churches that hold an important position in the second century. The church of Alexandria was important in this period; unfortunately, there is no record concerning the origin or the growth of this church in NT writings. The church in Antioch and Smyrna also is important; Smyrna was the place where Polycarp served as a bishop; Antioch was the base of Paul's mission to the west and keep to be an important church in the second century. Rome and Corinthians are also essential in the church father period.

Jefford succeeds to connect two important literature in Christianity i.e. early church and church fathers; in this book, he shows that there is a great extent of continuity, particularly in teaching and context between both literature. However, it would be more helpful, if he also made a historical reconstruction of the church after the fall of Jerusalem until the period of the church fathers. In addition, there is still a question that needs an answer, i.e., "why do the prominent leaders who get much attention to the period of church fathers are Paul and Peter, and not James?"