



History of Theology Volume I: The Patristic Period

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In this, the first of a four-volume series, Father Studer offers a detailed study of how theology was done" in the socio-cultural scene of the Christian community in the Constantinian and Theodosian eras (known as the age of "the Church of the Empire" or the "Imperial Church"). It defines the conditions in which pastors sought to help the faithful understand their religion and develops the thought through which the writers of the post-Nicene Church set out to actualize the Word of God as found in the sacred writings.

Rather than narrowly focusing on major figures and their works, this historical investigation defines the context in which patristic theological inquiries were formed, since what is termed "theology" today only gradually took shape in the early centuries of Christian living. Terminology, literary genres, the Bible, philosophy, heresy, art and architecture, theological currents, and sociopolitical circumstances in addition to people and events are some of the categories this volume explores to integrate in a holistic manner the developing theological methods of the Church.

Translated from Italian, this scholarly work is carefully organized and annotated. Text and chronological tales are included along with a list of abbreviations and a topical index.

Chapters in Part One are: "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," "The Greco-Roman World: Challenge and Response," "Defense of Truth and Attack on Heresy," "The School of Alexandria and Its Fortunes," "A Theology Without Learning," "The East After Origen," "The Beginnings of Theological Reflection in the West," and "The Christian Apocrypha and Their Significance."

Chapters in Part Two are: "The Situation of the Church," "*Instituta Veterum*," "Concluding Thoughts," "*Eruditio Veterum*," "*Sapientia Veterum*," "The Characteristics of Theological Work," "The Bible as Read in the Church," "Synodal Orthodoxy," "The Fathers of the Church," "The Beginnings of the Doctrinal Authority," "A Rational Knowledge of the Bible," "A Search for a Synthesis of Biblical Thought," "Summaries of Christian Doctrine," "The Role of Heresies," and "Reflection on Theological Systematization."

Basil Studer, OSB, a monk of Engelberg Abbey in Switzerland, is professor of history of ancient Christianity and patrology at the Collegio di San Anselmo and the Istituto Patristico Augustinianum in Rome. He is also the author of Trinity and Incarnation, also published by The Liturgical Press.

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