

The Early Church Fathers On The Church **(The First Two Centuries)**

It has been said that those of us who believe that the body of Christ is much larger than the local church, but is composed of all the redeemed, are Protestant in doctrine. It is the intention of this writer to demonstrate from a historical viewpoint that the idea of the church being having not only a local nature, but also a universal nature is a quite ancient teaching. We will study quotations from a few writers from the first and second centuries. It might be that we could study and find ourselves in disagreement with these men on various doctrinal and practical issues. That is not our aim at this time. The aim of this article is to simply consider from a *historical* perspective whether or not there were any people of the first and second centuries who believed that the church has an universal nature, and that the church is composed of all those who trust Jesus Christ. Again, we are not seeking to establish the doctrinal orthodoxy of those who are quoted, but are studying from an explicitly *historical* perspective in order to determine the age of the doctrine of the church universal.

Defining Terms

Ante-Nicene- before Nicaea. In AD 325 a council was assembled at Nicaea, in Turkey. Constantine assembled it in order to address some doctrinal issues. The resources from which these quotes come are called the Ante-Nicene Fathers. These are writings that have survived over the centuries, and we are focusing especially on those writers from the first and second centuries AD.

catholic- universal

Regarding the nature of the church and the writings of these ancient Christians, the editors of the Ante-Nicene Fathers said, “Too long have they been allowed to speak to the popular mind as if the Fathers were their own; while, to every candid reader, it must be evident that, alike, the testimony, the arguments, and the silence of the Ante-Nicene writers confound all attempts to identify the ecclesiastical establishment of “the Holy Roman Empire,” with “the Holy Catholic Church” of the ancient creeds.¹”

In other words, we must not confuse the word “catholic” with a lower case “c” with the Roman Catholic Church. The word “catholic” simply means universal. Any time this word appears in our article, it NEVER refers to the Romans Catholic Church, but simply to the nature of the church as being universal.

Polycarp

Polycarp was born about AD 65, and the exact date of his death is uncertain. His death is believed to be somewhere about AD 116, or even as late as AD 155. What is important to us is his place in history.

Polycarp is said to have been one who knew several of the Apostles, studied under the Apostle John, and wrote a letter to the Philippians, which was the same church to whom Paul wrote.

With these things in mind, though we acknowledge only the authority of Scripture, we yield respect to this elder who has gone before us and was so closely related to the Apostles; and we respect the words of his contemporaries who wrote of him.

“THE Church of God which sojourns at Smyrna, to the Church of God sojourning in Philomelium, and to all the congregations² of the Holy and Catholic Church in every place:

¹ Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), v.

Mercy, peace, and love from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.²” This is not a direct quotation from Polycarp, but is extracted from a letter sent from Smyrna to other churches. Let it be noted that it speaks of the congregations of Holy and Catholic (universal) church in every place. Again, we must stress that this does NOT refer to the Roman Catholic Church, which at that time was not in existence at that time. This refers to the universal nature of the church. These Christian brothers, writing about the death of Polycarp, acknowledge that the church has both a local and a universal nature.

“Now, as soon as he had ceased praying, having made mention of all that had at any time come in contact with him, both small and great, illustrious and obscure, as well as the whole Catholic Church throughout the world, the time of his departure having arrived, they set him upon an ass, and conducted him into the city, the day being that of the great Sabbath.³” Once again we see the universal (catholic) nature of the church presented by the writers of this letter, as they declare that it is “throughout the world.”

“For, having through patience overcome the unjust governor, and thus acquired the crown of immortality, he now, with the apostles and all the righteous [in heaven], rejoicingly glorifies God, even the Father, and blesses our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls, the Governor of our bodies, and the Shepherd of the Catholic Church throughout the world.⁴” We see even more clearly the universal nature of the church in the statement that Jesus is the “Shepherd of the Catholic (universal) church throughout the world.” That is, the universal church is in all of the world. It is not simply local, though the church has a local nature, but it is throughout the world.

“Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.⁵” Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the universal (Catholic) church. This clearly sets forth the understanding that the existence of the church is both heavenly and earthly, as Jesus is omnipresent.

Justin Martyr 110-165

“Moreover, that the word of God speaks to those who believe in Him as being one soul, and one synagogue, and one church, as to a daughter; that it thus addresses the church which has sprung from His name and partakes of His name (for we are all called Christians), is distinctly proclaimed in like manner in the following words, which teach us also to forget [our] old ancestral customs, when they speak thus: ‘Hearken, O daughter, and behold, and incline thine ear; forget thy people and the house of thy father, and the King shall desire⁶’ Note that Justin speaks

² Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., “[The Encyclical Epistle of the Church at Smyrna](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 39.

³ Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., “[The Encyclical Epistle of the Church at Smyrna](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 40.

⁴ Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., “[The Encyclical Epistle of the Church at Smyrna](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 43.

⁵ Ignatius of Antioch, “[The Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 90.

⁶ Justin Martyr, “[Dialogue of Justin with Trypho, a Jew](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 229.

of the church as being composed of those who believe, and as being one in nature. Let us recall that this was written at least one hundred years before the organization of the Roman Catholic church, and more than one thousand three hundred years before the Protestant Reformation. It is absolutely impossible to be historically accurate and claim that the teaching of the universal nature of the church is of Protestant origin.

Irenaeus 120-202

“The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father “to gather all things in one,”⁷ and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, “every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess” to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all; that He may send “spiritual wickednesses,”⁹ and the angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, into everlasting fire; but may, in the exercise of His grace, confer immortality on the righteous, and holy, and those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning [of their Christian course], and others from [the date of] their repentance, and may surround them with everlasting glory.⁷” Let us simply notice that Irenaeus stated that the church was spread throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth.

“And again: “God stood in the congregation of the gods, He judges among the gods.” He [here] refers to the Father and the Son, and those who have received the adoption; but these are the Church. For she is the synagogue of God, which God—that is, the Son Himself—has gathered by Himself. Of whom He again speaks: “The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken, and hath called the earth.” Who is meant by God? He of whom He has said, “God shall come openly, our God, and shall not keep silence;”⁴ that is, the Son, who came manifested to men who said, “I have openly appeared to those who seek Me not.” But of what gods [does he speak]? [Of those] to whom He says, “I have said, Ye are gods, and all sons of the Most High.”⁶ To those, no doubt, who have received the grace of the “adoption, by which we cry, Abba Father.”⁸” Irenaeus stated that the church are those who have received the adoption. Adoption occurs when one trusts Jesus Christ and receives the Holy Spirit: “*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*” (Romans 8:9) “*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*” (Romans 8:15) In other words, Irenaeus believed that the church universal was composed of all believers. Again, far from being Protestant theology or ecclesiology, this teaching historically predates both the Protestant Reformation and the Roman Catholic Church.

⁷ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenaeus against Heresies](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 330–331.

⁸ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenaeus against Heresies](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 419.

“For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace; but the Spirit is truth. Those, therefore, who do not partake of Him, are neither nourished into life from the mother’s breasts, nor do they enjoy that most limpid fountain which issues from the body of Christ; but they dig for themselves broken cisterns out of earthly trenches, and drink putrid water out of the mire, fleeing from the faith of the Church lest they be convicted; and rejecting the Spirit, that they may not be instructed.”⁹ Once again we find that Irenaeus plainly presents the church as having a universal nature when he says, “Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church.”

“Vain, too, is [the effort of] Marcion and his followers when they [seek to] exclude Abraham from the inheritance, to whom the Spirit through many men, and now by Paul, bears witness, that “he believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” And the Lord [also bears witness to him,] in the first place, indeed, by raising up children to him from the stones, and making his seed as the stars of heaven, saying, “They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall recline with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;”¹⁵ and then again by saying to the Jews, “When ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, but you yourselves cast out.” This, then, is a clear point, that those who disallow his salvation, and frame the idea of another God besides Him who made the promise to Abraham, are outside the kingdom of God, and are disinherited from [the gift of] incorruption, setting at naught and blaspheming God, who introduces, through Jesus Christ, Abraham to the kingdom of heaven, and his seed, that is, the Church, upon which also is conferred the adoption and the inheritance promised to Abraham.¹⁰ Here Irenaeus declares that the seed of Abraham (He is speaking of all who believe on Jesus Christ.) is the Church.

“For thus it had behoved the sons of Abraham [to be], whom God has raised up to him from the stones, and caused to take a place beside him who was made the chief and the forerunner of our faith (who did also receive the covenant of circumcision, after that justification by faith which had pertained to him, when he was yet in uncircumcision, so that in him both covenants might be prefigured, that he might be the father of all who follow the Word of God, and who sustain a life of pilgrimage in this world, that is, of those who from among the circumcision and of those from among the uncircumcision are faithful, even as also “Christ is the chief cornerstone,” sustaining all things); and He gathered into the one faith of Abraham those who, from either covenant, are eligible for God’s building. But this faith which is in uncircumcision, as connecting the end with the beginning, has been made [both] the first and the last. For, as I have shown, it existed in Abraham antecedently to circumcision, as it also did in the rest of the righteous who pleased God: and in these last times, it again sprang up among mankind through the coming of the Lord. But circumcision and the law of works occupied the intervening period¹¹”

⁹ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenaeus against Heresies](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 458.

¹⁰ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenaeus against Heresies](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 470–471.

¹¹ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenaeus against Heresies](#),” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 495–496.

Note that Irenaeus speaks of the building of God, the church, are those who are in the one faith of Abraham. In other words, he recognized that the church has a universal nature, and is composed of all those who believe on Jesus Christ.

“For the illustrious Church is [now] everywhere, and everywhere is the winepress digged: because those who do receive the Spirit are everywhere.¹²” Once again, more than one thousand three hundred years before the Protestant Reformation, and more than one hundred years before Roman Catholicism, Irenaeus spoke of the church as being those who receive the Spirit. Far from being a historically Protestant doctrine, the doctrine of the universal church being composed of all of the redeemed is a historically ancient doctrine. The innovation comes from those who reject this truth.

“If, then, God promised him the inheritance of the land, yet he did not receive it during all the time of his sojourn there, it must be, that together with his seed, that is, those who fear God and believe in Him, he shall receive it at the resurrection of the just. For his seed is the Church, which receives the adoption to God through the Lord, as John the Baptist said: “For God is able from the stones to raise up children to Abraham.” Thus also the apostle says in the Epistle to the Galatians: “But ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.”¹⁰ And again, in the same Epistle, he plainly declares that they who have believed in Christ do receive Christ, the promise to Abraham thus saying, “The promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his seed. Now He does not say, And of seeds, as if [He spake] of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” And again, confirming his former words, he says, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith are the children of Abraham. But the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, declared to Abraham beforehand, That in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which are of faith shall be blessed with faithful Abraham.”¹² Thus, then, they who are of faith shall be blessed with faithful Abraham, and these are the children of Abraham. Now God made promise of the earth to Abraham and his seed; yet neither Abraham nor his seed, that is, those who are justified by faith, do now receive any inheritance in it; but they shall receive it at the resurrection of the just. For God is true and faithful; and on this account He said, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”¹³” Note that Irenaeus speaks of Abraham and says, “His seed is the Church, which receives the adoption to God through the Lord.” We cannot but accept that Irenaeus was teaching that the church has a universal aspect to her nature, and that universal church is composed of all who believe on Jesus Christ.

“Now I have shown a short time ago that the church is the seed of Abraham; and for this reason, that we may know that He who in the New Testament “raises up from the stones children unto Abraham,” is He who will gather, according to the Old Testament, those that shall be saved from all the nations, Jeremiah says: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, who led the children of Israel from the north, and from every region whither they had been driven; He will restore them to their own land which He gave to their fathers.”¹⁴” Again we read, “The Church is the seed of Abraham.” Could it be stated with any

¹² Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenæus against Heresies.](#)” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 515.

¹³ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenæus against Heresies.](#)” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 561–562.

¹⁴ Irenaeus of Lyons, “[Irenæus against Heresies.](#)” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 563–564.

greater plainness that Irenaeus believed that the church is composed of the redeemed, whose faith is in Christ Jesus?

Clement of Alexandria 153-193-217

“Come, come, O my young people! For if you become not again as little children, and be born again, as saith the Scripture, you shall not receive the truly existent Father, nor shall you ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. For in what way is a stranger permitted to enter? Well, as I take it, then, when he is enrolled and made a citizen, and receives one to stand to him in the relation of father, then will he be occupied with the Father’s concerns, then shall he be deemed worthy to be made His heir, then will he share the kingdom of the Father with His own dear Son. For this is the first-born Church, composed of many good children; these are “the first-born enrolled in heaven, who hold high festival with so many myriads of angels.”¹⁵” Clement declares that the church is “composed of... ‘the first-born enrolled in heaven.’” Once again, history bears out that the belief in the church being composed of all the redeemed is of ancient origin, and did not come from Protestantism.

“And the Lord is called man, because He is perfect in righteousness. Directly in point is the instance of the apostle, who says, writing the Corinthians: “For I have espoused you to one man, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ,” whether as children or saints, but to the Lord alone. And writing to the Ephesians, he has unfolded in the clearest manner the point in question, speaking to the following effect: “Till we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we be no longer children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by the craft of men, by their cunning in stratagems of deceit; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up to Him in all things,”⁹—saying these things in order to the edification of the body of Christ, who is the head and man, the only one perfect in righteousness; and we who are children guarding against the blasts of heresies, which blow to our inflation; and not putting our trust in fathers who teach us otherwise, are then made perfect when we are the church, having received Christ the head.¹⁶” Once again we see that Clement describes the church universal as being composed of all the redeemed, when he says, “We are the church, having received Christ the head.”

“Further release from evils is the beginning of salvation. We then alone, who first have touched the confines of life, are already perfect; and we already live who are separated from death. Salvation, accordingly, is the following of Christ: “For that which is in Him is life.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My words, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life.”² Thus believing alone, and regeneration, is perfection in life; for God is never weak. For as His will is work, and this is named the world; so also His counsel is the salvation of men, and this has been called the church. He knows, therefore, whom He has called, and whom He has saved; and at one and the same time He called and saved them. “For ye are,” says the apostle, “taught of God.” It is not then allowable to think of what is taught by Him as imperfect; and what is learned from Him is the eternal salvation of the eternal Saviour, to whom be thanks for ever and ever. Amen. And he who is only regenerated—as the name necessarily indicates—and is enlightened, is delivered

¹⁵ Clement of Alexandria, “[Exhortation to the Heathen](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 195.

¹⁶ Clement of Alexandria, “[The Instructor](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 213.

forthwith from darkness, and on the instant receives the light.¹⁷” Clement again says, “His counsel is the salvation of men, and this has been called the church.” Those who are saved are called the church by Clement. Once again, it must be stated that we may not agree with every doctrine taught by these men of old; but our aim is to *historically* establish the fact that the teaching of the universal nature of the church is much more ancient than Protestantism.

“And if the Word, speaking of the Lord by David, sings, “The daughters of kings made Thee glad by honour; the queen stood at Thy right hand, clad in cloth of gold, girt with golden fringes,” it is not luxurious raiment that he indicates; but he shows the immortal adornment, woven of faith, of those that have found mercy, that is, the Church; in which the guileless Jesus shines conspicuous as gold, and the elect are the golden tassels.¹⁸” Clement speaks of the church as those that have found mercy. What can this be but the teaching that those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ comprise the church universal?

“And the earthly Church is the image of the heavenly, as we pray also “that the will of God may be done upon the earth as in heaven.¹⁹” We once again find the universal aspect of the church’s nature when we find Clement stating that the church is both earthly and heavenly.

“From what has been said, then, it is my opinion that the true Church, that which is really ancient, is one, and that in it those who according to God’s purpose are just, are enrolled.²⁰” This final quotation is very plain in stating that the true church is one church, and that those who are enrolled in it are those who are justified.

Conclusion

Our aim having been to simply determine if any of the ancients of the early church believed that there was a universal nature to the church has presented us with proof that they did believe so. Several times these writers have stated that the church has a local nature, and that the church in her universal nature is composed of all of those who are redeemed through faith in Jesus Christ. While we may find ourselves disagreeing with these ancients on some doctrinal and practical issues, it must be remembered that our aim has been simply to determine what was *historically* believed among these first and second century writers. We can safely conclude that the belief in the church universal, composed of all of the redeemed is by no means a Protestant invention, nor is it of Roman Catholic origin; but it is much more ancient than either.

¹⁷ Clement of Alexandria, “[The Instructor](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 216.

¹⁸ Clement of Alexandria, “[The Instructor](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 266.

¹⁹ Clement of Alexandria, “[The Stromata, or Miscellanies](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 421.

²⁰ Clement of Alexandria, “[The Stromata, or Miscellanies](#),” in *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 555.