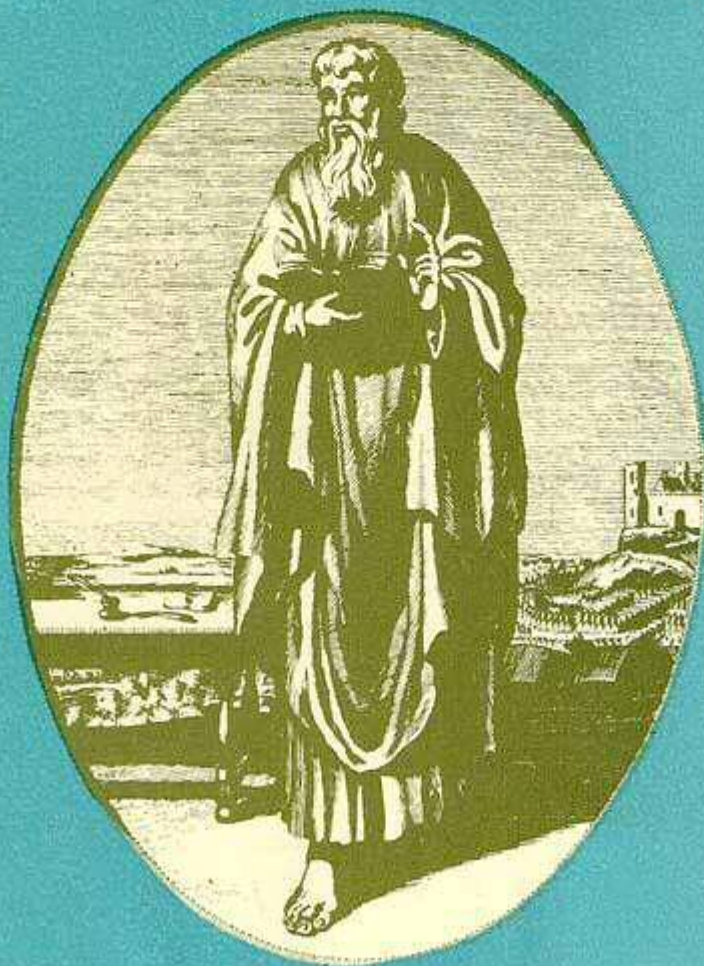


CARL VERNON HARRIS

**Origen of Alexandria's
Interpretation of the
Teacher's Function in
the Early Christian
Hierarchy and Community**



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COMMUNITY**

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To My Wife, Lucille

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PREFACE

This study is an attempt to understand Origen of Alexandria's interpretation of the teacher's function in the early Christian hierarchy and community. The aim is to set forth an estimate of Origen's thought and personality which does justice to the various sides of his work. The writer recognizes in him a balanced mind in which the intellectual does not destroy the spiritual. Remembering that truth is seldom found in the broad roads of history where the great procession passes, but that it is discovered by searching in the bypaths for the rejected ones who would not conform, the writer would aim at rehabilitating this uncanonized saint, and the beloved teacher of many saints. Origen is among the greatest of Christian teachers, and he is justly compared with the greatest philosophers. He was a scholar, but by no means a pedant, and his interest was as much in the love of God as in the knowledge of Him. His homilies are expository sermons delivered for the most part at Caesarea and taken down by shorthand writers. Intellectual rather than sentimental in their appeal, they reveal their author as one of the great preachers of antiquity. Origen is an excellent example of the fact that the functions of preaching and teaching reinforce one another in the Christian ministry. As Ray C. Petry writes in *Preaching in the Great Tradition*: "Christian preaching and teaching develop most fruitfully when they are learned and practiced in productive fellowship. Then teaching is rescued from wooden aloofness and superciliousness, and preaching is protected from vacuity and undisciplined ranting." What Origen taught of doctrine and of the Scriptures is that which he preached and upon which he commented.

It seems that all the best characteristics of Origen, his thoroughness, his patience, his courage, and his humility, come out with singular distinctness in his conception of the teacher's vocation. Whatever the value of his own personal work, the dignity of his high calling admits for him no question. He is a guide of those who are called to carry their search for truth above that which is written. As a true teacher, he never loses sight of his many limitations and his overwhelming responsibilities. This study attempts to show his understanding of the great harm that has come upon the Church through the incompetence of her appointed instructors. Origen makes it unmistakably clear that the teacher's task is not wholly one of instruction. He reminds us that along with doctrine must go the *vitae exemplum*, and that teaching must arouse the conscience as well as inform the mind. God's fire must be in the true teacher's heart; it is the fire which kindles as well as illuminates. Origen lends the golden coin of truth to those who will repay it with interest in reasonable service and intelligent devotion. He regards the pedagogical functions as sacred.

For Origen, the true priesthood is to be found in the spiritual perfection of the individual soul. He summons the saintliest men from the ranks of the laity and charges them with the spiritual care of the faithful. He places upon them an obligation of obedience toward the hierarchy, but that obedience is purely external. At the very height of his fame, he himself believed that priestly ordination was necessary to him for due fulfillment of the great tasks to which he had dedicated his life. Origen is far from distinguishing the visible body of the faithful, the community, from the

group of the elect. Deliberately he mingles them. The Church which he sees and loves is the ensemble of Christ's disciples scattered over the earth, and he would sometimes think that it affords an unhindered view of the Heavenly City. When such thoughts come to him, he forgets the earthly features of the Church, the veils of our faith, the continual warfare in which we are engaged, the imperfections with which we strive. The Church, as Origen conceives it, is more that of the hierarchy of saintliness grouped around the spiritual master than that of the ecclesiastical community around its bishop. There are few men who are sufficiently saintly in their habits, well educated in doctrine, rich in wisdom, capable of showing the truth of things and of teaching the knowledge of the faith. He wrestles with the question of the relation between the visible hierarchy of the presbyters and the visible hierarchy of the teachers or doctors. Certain attitudes correspond to each of these hierarchies. The presbyters are turned more toward worship; the instructors, more toward the ministry of the word and the Scriptures. Although Origen rather clearly represents the course of the teachers or doctors, his life and work attest to an epoch in which the two hierarchies tend to unite. Whereas he does not deny the powers of the visible hierarchy coming from the priestly ordination, he is not resigned to dissociating the sacerdotal powers from the sacerdotal sanctity. For him, what is important is not the institutions, but spiritual reality.

This is a study of the original sources, as far as they have come down to us. Practically all the extant writings of Origen—either in the original Greek or, where that is lacking, the Latin translations of Rufinus and Jerome—have been examined, although not all with equal thoroughness. The homilies and commentaries have been the most important resources for the study; however, supplementary evidence has been gathered from the whole corpus. A certain degree of caution has been used with respect to the Latin translations of Rufinus, especially in the light of the strictures of De Faye and Butterworth. The writer feels with Bardy that it is much too drastic to say, as De Faye does, that Rufinus' translation of the *De Principiis* has the value only of a secondary source. On the other hand, no important conclusions of this study depend upon controverted passages in *De Principiis*.

The excellent series of the Berlin edition of *Origenes Werke*, edited by Paul Koetschau, *et al.* (*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, Leipzig, 1899-1941), has been adopted as the best critical text that we have. This is referred to throughout the work as GCS. For portions of the corpus not yet included in this series, the Delarue text, in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, Vols. XI-XVII, has been used. This is referred to as MPG.

It would be impossible adequately to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Ray C. Petry of Duke University for his patient, painstaking, and inspirational guidance throughout the preparation of this study. To Dr. Thomas A. Schafer, who read the manuscript in its entirety and made valuable critical suggestions, I express my deep gratitude. My interest in Origen was greatly heightened during the preparation of an essay, which consisted of a translation from the Greek of Origen's treatise "On Prayer," presented to the faculty of the Divinity School of Yale University in candidacy for the degree of Master of Sacred Theology, in June, 1947. Drs. H. Richard Niebuhr, Albert C. Outler, and Paul Schubert supervised the work. Another most important source of encouragement has been the genuine friendship of former colleagues of the Mars Hill College faculty: Lucille Sawyer and James R. and Martha P. Hall, who have contributed in various ways to my understanding of the function of a true teacher. Also, I take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation to Colleen M. Chittum for her very careful work in the typing of the manuscript. The

facilities of the Duke University Library have been available throughout the work, and I shall remember with pleasure the courtesy of the Library staff.

C.V.H.

Chapter One

ORIGEN, THE TEACHER, IN THE SETTING OF THE ALEXANDRIAN WORLD

Few great Christian thinkers have been the occasion of so much discussion as Origen, who taught at the School of Alexandria during the first three decades of the third century and afterwards in Caesarea, Palestine. Few have produced scholarly works so prolifically. Few have so extensively influenced the Christian thinking of their age. He was the outstanding champion—we might perhaps say the founder—of the school of mystical or spiritual interpretation of Scripture. In almost every line of the Bible he saw a hidden or deeper meaning of spiritual significance. His learning was prodigious. Greek thought and Greek culture formed a great part of his philosophical equipment, but the first of the immediate influences conditioning Origen's reflection was undoubtedly his living grasp of the central fact of Christianity—the Incarnation. In this fact God is present in person, and it was the knowledge of this that became the master-passion of Origen's soul, for which he mutilated his body.

Origen has never been given the title of a doctor of the Church because of the fact that on a number of occasions certain opinions of his have been formally condemned. Yet his influence on Christian thought is comparable with that of St. Augustine or of St. Thomas Aquinas. The cream of his theological teaching is found in fourth-century Greek writers who were the direct heirs of his learning; in the works of the studious St. Jerome; in the writings of St. Ambrose, whose mind was attuned to the obviously practical rather than to the speculative; and in the homilies of St. John Chrysostom, whose education was along lines that ran somewhat counter to the spirit of Alexandria.

Nor is Origen venerated as a saint of the Church. It is true that in his writings he regards God and the soul as the most important of all spiritual entities, and that in his personal life he showed himself to be a man of genuinely heroic mold. In the realm of the spiritual life, Origen was not one to be satisfied with mediocrity in himself or in others. Therefore, the loftiness of his teaching and the example of his life attracted high minded souls. Evidently, in his day great numbers aimed at perfection and eagerly listened to him as he pointed the way. As a pioneer who recognized lacunae in Christian doctrine, and with an amazing understanding of the new faith of Christianity in its breadth, Origen sometimes let himself be misled by some rash or unchecked line of thought. Was he a pioneer whose very mistakes were helpful? Some such appraisal of his errors might offer an explanation as to why the Church's condemnation of them has always been somewhat tempered.

Origen, a teacher in the truest sense of the word, a man who ever called for a larger use of reason in the affairs of faith, a rational Christian philosopher who was also a dogmatic theologian, entered upon the stage of history at a time when new, vigorous ideas that are not suddenly and easily harmonized with tradition or with the current norms of thought were emerging. Although Origen's essentially speculative mind was always ready to leap over the boundaries set by the list of inspired

books and the articles of a creed which the Church of his day was in process of forming, it was to the service of the Church that he dedicated all the vigor of his genius.

In his anxiety to defend her he sought to enrich her with the wealth of his profound speculations, capable as they were of attracting minds trained to the technique of philosophical inquiry. Stronger than his scholarly interest in his studies and mightier than his preoccupation with the activities of his School, there was an even more powerful influence in his life: the influence of a spiritual milieu that gave meaning and value to his researches, his controversies, his boldest flights of speculation.

That spiritual milieu did not exert its influence merely now and then. Its action was not confined to periods of crisis. It was not content to meet the challenge of his teachings by invoking the authority of a recognized formula or by pronouncing a judgment of approval or disapproval. It acted upon him at every moment of his life, even when it was not defining anything. The intercourse of the members of the Christian body with one another, their likes and their dislikes, the manner in which their anxious looks told him whether he was reaching their hearts or arousing their opposition, his work of defending the faith, his interest in the lists of the new converts, the violence of the persecutions which he sometimes bore meekly and at other times courageously challenged—every such social experience was woven into a Christian mentality by which even his most revolutionary theories were kept under control. By reason of that stable mentality he was enabled, time and again, to turn aside from utopian ideas and from the study of mere curiosa in order to give his attention to the things that really mattered. 1

Origen recognized the Church as the social body which enables the individual to bring his religious longings into harmony with a higher discipline. Abundant evidence of the mere fact of the Church's existence is seen in studies by her historians as a social organism and in the fact that she has been known, loved, and rigorously tested by her own children. Rene Cadiou, in his preface to *La jeunesse d'Origene*, writes of the Church as follows:

Membership in her household is neither a necessary result of an exercise in logic nor is it dependent on the rise and fall of an individual's emotions. Whether the alien inquirer acknowledges her claims to be justified or denies them as baseless, the fact remains that the great family of her children can be distinguished from other social groups in the world of men. Things visible to everyone are their rule of faith and the authority which interprets it, their worship and the ceremonies in which they participate. More concrete and more real than any other fact in the history of Christianity is this organized commonwealth of the Church, together with the great body of spiritual truth which inspires it.

The history of the Church is made up of much more than the teachings of her great thinkers or the discussions which those teachings have provoked; side by side with the doctrines there are the less well known writings, the hymns, the ordinary everyday modes of Christian living. Even in the biographies of the outstanding Christian thinkers who seem to have filled the various periods in which they lived and taught, a detailed analysis reveals the influence of a mode of life common to all Christians. Under that influence academic enthusiasm walks hand in hand with Christian discipline, and philosophical study hews fast to the line of tradition.

This great outstanding fact expresses the very persistence of the Christian religion. It is the norm

for all the other historical facts, continually present in the thoughts, the lives, and the works of Christians. Those who conform to this Christian way of life see its meaning clearly, and even those who desire to change it are compelled to acknowledge its power. ²

Moreover, as Cadiou rightly stresses, this fact of a Christian way of life imposes a greater obligation on writers of religious studies than on other workers not to neglect the social aspects of doctrine. It is imperative that such writers take account of the traditions which a doctrine has accepted either in whole or in part. The various influences, admitted or denied, to which the elaboration of the doctrine has been subjected must be studied. The critical works called forth by that elaboration must be known, and the various degrees of assent given to it when it was first formulated, as well as the general verdict of the faithful at that particular time, must be investigated.

In the study of Origen's life and works, historians of every shade of opinion have made a practice of analyzing his works from the viewpoint of a more or less justified antithesis. Does his doctrine belong to the East or the West? Was he a heretic or an apologist for orthodoxy? Was he a Hellenist or a Christian, a rationalist or a mystic? Proof of the historical fact that the Church has always kept an anxious eye on the progress of the work which Origen set himself to do is the fact that his teachings have always been carefully checked by comparison with Christian tradition. It may be justifiable to assert that he was a rationalist, but it must also be admitted that his sincere desire was to be a Christian. In him we see the interrelations of reason and faith, the problem of discipline and inspiration, of authority and personal freedom—a problem which is at the very core of the religious consciousness.

As usually happens in the case of philosophical speculations that are watered and fed by a deeply religious life, the driving force of his mentality made its influence felt in every minute detail of his teaching. Throughout his whole system the ruling thought is not an effort to achieve a logical unity of propositions formally put together. What he seems always to aim at is a vital unity; and the student of his writings can perceive the same principles at work in the commentary on the Bible, in the study of the soul, in his various controversies, and in his interpretation of each of the dogmas which he sought to expound. This character of vital unity makes a fragment of a few lines easy to recognize when it has Origen for its author.³

A very sketchy treatment of Origen's life and works may enable us to understand better how it was that he, an individual thinker, did more, perhaps, than any other to shape the development of Christian doctrine for the next one hundred and fifty years.⁴ Origen, the son of Christian parents in Alexandria, was born about 185, near the time when Clement became head of the Catechetical School. He was named after one of his country's deities, Origenes, who was the child of Hor, the god of light. His father, Leonides, a member of the Alexandrine Christian Church, trained him in Greek literature, and appears to have regarded him from an early age as a child of exceptional promise. In one of the Roman persecutions of the Christians under Septimius Severus, in 203, Origen's father, with other prominent Christians, was arrested and put to death. In the same persecution, Clement, head of the Christian School, was removed from Alexandria. Origen was a boy of seventeen at the time and was eager to join his father and the other martyrs of the Church, but his mother succeeded in keeping him at home by hiding all his clothes. Since his father's property was confiscated, he undertook to support his mother and his younger brothers and sisters by becoming a teacher in the secular schools of Alexandria. He offered himself as a grammarian

and apparently did a very acceptable job. Demetrius, a vigorous bishop who seems to have sponsored the development of the Catechetical School in Alexandria, heard of Origen's exceptional ability and appointed him to head the Christian School in succession to Clement. Origen, then eighteen years of age, eagerly set to work to master a new range of subjects. In order that he might understand the Scriptures more effectively, he began to study Hebrew. He attended the lectures of Ammonius Saccas, who had been a Christian, but who had lapsed from Christianity and become the teacher of Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism, and other less eminent pagan thinkers. In the course of his career as head of the Catechetical School, Origen increased his reputation tremendously, not only as a vigorous mind and an accurate scholar, but as a teacher of genius.⁵

His relations with Demetrius, the energetic bishop referred to above, are of considerable importance in connection with Origen's view of the teaching office as related to the early Christian hierarchy and community, or his understanding of the true hierarchy of the Church. The first serious collision between Origen and Demetrius involved a trip that Origen made in 216 to Palestine, where Alexander, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus, the Bishop of Caesarea, invited him to preach in a Christian assembly in which they themselves were present. At that time Origen was still a layman. It should be mentioned here that there existed in his case a disability which came later to be adjudged a canonical hindrance to ordination to the priesthood. In his career of quite extraordinary austerity and enthusiasm, he had taken quite literally the word about those who voluntarily make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of God; and a council judging comparable cases later decreed that one who had thus mutilated himself, in a manner condemned by the Mosaic law and characteristic especially of the priests of various pagan cults, was not eligible for the priesthood of the Christian Church. Demetrius was enraged when he heard that Origen had actually preached at the invitation of the Palestinian bishops. He demanded that Origen return to Alexandria immediately and reprimanded him severely. The second collision between these two vigorous persons involved a visit that Origen made in 228 to the churches in Greece to assist them in a time of need. On the way he once again visited the bishops, Alexander and Theoctistus, who this time did the very injudicious thing of having him ordained, perhaps to avoid the difficulty into which they had got him before by asking him to preach to his ecclesiastical superiors without ordination. When Demetrius heard about this event, he called a synod to sit on the question of whether Origen was any longer a fit person to be a member of the Alexandrian Christian community. In 230, Demetrius stripped Origen of his new dignity as a presbyter; and the next year a synod consisting only of bishops, under the leadership of Demetrius excommunicated him from the Alexandrian Church. He was compelled therefore to leave the place where his early reputation had been made, and he moved to Caesarea, In Palestine, where he taught for the remainder of his life, following up the main lines which he had developed in his Alexandrian career. When the persecution under Decius broke out in 250, Origen of course attracted the attention of the authorities, and he was arrested, put into prison, and subjected to torture over a period of years. He survived the experience and was ultimately released from prison, but his health had been completely broken and he died about 254. He had made his confession of faith with heroic constancy and had become in a very real sense, if not technically, a martyr.

A rapid sketch of Origen's literary work, of his thought and method, may help us to grapple more significantly with our major concerns in the following chapter: to point out how knowledge is acquired and applied; to show that this is one of the earliest attempts to form a philosophy of the Christian faith, but with no basic change in the contents of the Christian creed; to show Origen's

understanding of the lacunae in Christian doctrine and his understanding of the new faith of Christianity in its breadth. The work that Origen did during his life is stupendous. He was a voluminous writer, though only about a third of what he actually produced has come down to us.® During his Alexandrian career Origen attracted the attention of a wealthy man named Ambrose, who supplied him with seven expert secretaries, together with assisting copyists. These helpers were able to multiply many times the amount of physical labor that Origen could have done with his own hands. Part of his work has been preserved in the original Greek: his *Contra Celsum*,⁷ the homilies on Jeremiah, the treatises on prayer and on martyrdom, a portion of the commentaries on John and on Matthew. Fragments and even whole pages of lost writings have come down to us in the *Florilegi* and the *Catena*.⁸ The *Philocalia* of Basil of Caesarea and of Gregory of Nazianzus contains important extracts from the *De Principiis* and from certain lost commentaries. We are indebted to Rufinus of Aquileia and to Saint Jerome for the translation into Latin of a considerable number of homilies. We have the text of Origen's early work *On First Principles (Peri Archon)*, usually with the Latinized title *De Principiis*, because we have it at full length only in a Latin translation by Rufinus. As the *De Principiis* is one of our main sources of information regarding the thought of Origen, a statement of opinion as to the real value and importance of the version left by Rufinus is in order. "No one denies that he took great liberties with the text he translated. . . . Not only has Rufinus, in his translation, knowingly distorted the original, for the purpose of eliminating all that was too audacious in the doctrine, but very often he clearly does not understand the author's meaning."⁹ We have the Greek text of certain considerable portions of Origen's work, with which Rufinus' translation can be compared, and the results are not at all reassuring.¹⁰ To understand his author, the translator would have had to transfer himself to a time more than a century and a half gone by. This explains why, even in passages that have nothing to do with doctrine, Rufinus, a Latin who belongs to the West, so often failed to catch the thought, with all its shades of meaning, of Origen, a Greek who belongs to the East.

Origen's reputation in the Church has been that of a Christian philosopher with heretical leanings, and a systematic theologian. The writer holds that Origen was primarily a Biblical scholar—one who conceived himself to be first and last a student of the Scriptures. He learned Hebrew so that he could read the Old Testament more intelligently and more accurately than if he had depended wholly upon the Greek translations. His greatest single work was a critical text of the Old Testament, which we know as the *Hexapla*, a six-column text. His aim was, wherever possible, to compare the texts that were complete and generally known with still other competent translations. Charles Bigg and other competent scholars maintain that it is clear that what Origen was intent upon was correcting, as far as possible, the mistakes that had crept in through the work of translators and copyists, and getting back to the original word of God.¹¹ There is abundant evidence, it seems, that his first concern was to set up proof of the authentic text of the Greek Bible. His commentaries embraced almost all of the Christian Bible; his homilies are Bible studies. Numerous exegeses are to be found in his doctrinal writings, such as the *De Principiis*. He was—and aimed at being—an interpreter of the Bible and the apostolic tradition. The Scripture, in theory, is the basis of all his theological thought. He maintains that the Scripture is inspired; it is genuinely the Word of God. The indication is that here we have a genuinely universal, and not merely a local, Word. The Scripture, thus taken to be inspired, must be interpreted because it has obscure places in it. Greek scholars of Origen's acquaintance were inclined to be scornful of the childishness of much of the Old Testament. In an effort to meet such objection Origen undertook to interpret the Old Testament according to the Platonic principle "Nothing is to be believed which is unworthy of

God.” Accepting that principle, and following a precedent which had already been set by men like Philo and Josephus, apologists for the Hebrew Old Testament, and by earlier Christian thinkers, such as St. Paul himself, he deemed it proper to consider a number of levels of meaning in the Old Testament.¹²

It is of tremendous importance that we understand Origen’s temperament and the conditions under which his works, so far as we possess them, were achieved. Few careers have been more laborious, yet his mental alertness seems to have remained to the last unimpaired. Origen’s daily contact in church or lecture room with other minds contributed to preserve even his final books from all trace of senility.¹³ One is forced to reflect seriously upon the relation between this view and practice of the demands of the Christian gospel in all their exacting fullness and his production of “the works of scholarship that proclaim him the most prolific writer and powerful intellect of the Early Church.”¹⁴ A few of the most pressing questions concerning Origen that confront the writer are as follows: What influences, in the last analysis, inspire and direct his thought? What influences keep the flight of his ideas in the right direction? Whatever form his thought assumes, what beliefs and practices constitute its inmost soul? What influences formed and molded the mind of Origen and even gave their impress to his ideas? Is there one influence, such as the Christian faith, which may be said to have fashioned his soul, his very personality, more than all the rest?

Did this faith comprise the beliefs that were so living, so slightly doctrinal, of the Christians of the time? All of the immediately preceding questions hinge about the problem of the intimate conjunction of teaching and preaching in the Early Church, especially in Origen. How intimate was the association of preacher and teacher? In his book *Preaching in the Great Tradition: Neglected Chapters in the History of Preaching*, R. C. Petry uses Origen as one example to illustrate how intimately the conjunction of teaching and preaching is sustained in the Great Tradition. Here is remarkable insight into and treatment of the entire life and work of Origen as a testimony to the supreme importance which he attaches to his Christian faith. Petry writes:

Origen, by his very spirit and intellectual formation, is a teacher. His great tasks are those of researching, testing, rejecting, and interpreting. His homilies deal in large part with the problems raised by the educating Deity and His student-creatures. These, whether they will or no, are being inexorably educated. What is to be taught of doctrine and of the Scripture is that which Origen preaches and comments upon. It has been convincingly insinuated that his homiletical method for justifying the severity of Providence to men springs from consciously pedagogical assumptions. The homily on Jer. 12:3 points out that God no more chastises for the joy of punishing than does the master of a slave or the father of a son; rather, this educator-God, in leading the erring ones from sin, employs stern correctives only where the Word fails.¹⁵

Moreover, in the introduction to his work *No Uncertain Sound: Sermons That Shaped the Pulpit Tradition*, Petry points out that there is no significant preaching in the post-apostolic period until the third century. In treating the period of major patristic significance, from the third through the sixth century, he includes the Scriptural and theological innovations of Origen.

Origen was one of the first to deal, though not formally, with the principles and problems of the preaching art. He believed in utilizing non-Christian rhetorical principles for Christian ends. These he coupled with vigorous insistence on the high character of the preacher. He stressed study as an

indispensable means of securing the divine message and made much of historical, moral, and allegorical interpretations of Scripture. Origen's influence on succeeding interpretations of Scripture cannot easily be over-emphasized. . .

From the apostolic age to the twelfth century, the prevailing homily type was an informal discourse employing a doctrinal interpretation of Scripture without necessary introduction or divisions. Not infrequently, the Biblical passage incorporated in the liturgy for a particular day of the Christian year was used. The expositions might proceed according to a sentence-by-sentence treatment of the text, or by discussing an entire Gospel, or as an exhortation devoted to a single idea, perhaps a paraphrase of certain vices or virtues. Origen, Gregory, Bede . . . offer conspicuous instances of this kind of preaching.¹⁶

To the writer, the above quotations strengthen the assertion that the genius of Origen is singularly complex and prolific; it is a stream into which flow the waters of many tributaries. The remarkable thing about him is that all these elements blend and harmonize, mutually combine and interpenetrate into a living organic synthesis. The Christian tradition supplied Origen with an absolute monotheism, but when the very character of God and the working of His providence had to be defined, the ideas which this tradition transmitted were vague, even incoherent. He appeals to Plato for the requisite preciseness. Platonism helps to fix his ideas as to the character of God and the working of His providence. "By combining what tradition supplied and what Plato had taught him, he worked out a doctrine which, as a whole, gave satisfaction to philosophical thought and came nearer to the Gospel idea of a heavenly Father than did the notions then current among the Christians. This was a manifest gain."¹⁷ There were cases, on the other hand, in which the Christian belief enabled him to give its full value and importance to an outstanding philosophical doctrine. It was philosophy that gave him the idea of the Logos, but to him, at the time, philosophy was scarcely more than an abstract formula—a principle cosmological rather than moral. Origen's faith in Christ grapples with this notion, giving it substance and converting it into a living doctrine. "In this way his philosophical thought enabled him to intensify and emphasize his Christian belief, which, in turn, enriched and gave renewed life to this thought."¹⁸ De Faye summarizes well the thought that in Origen there are threads of various colors that are worked up into one and the same pattern. He writes:

As we see, the two essential elements which combine to form his doctrines are not simply juxtaposed, coexistent in Origen, without any influence on each other. They are not separated off into watertight compartments. In those days, one did not see what is so frequent an occurrence at the present time. When a savant is in his laboratory or his library, he is really a man of science; he rigidly applies scientific methods. Away from his laboratory or his library, he once more becomes a man fundamentally swayed by tradition. There are dogmas which he will not consent to discuss—or even to examine. In the most intimate domain of all, he is the obedient son of his church, never seeking to reconcile his science with his faith. In Origen, we shall find nothing of all this. His philosophy and his belief, his thought and his faith, blend together and fructify each other. Thinker and believer are closely united, forming one and the same personality.¹⁹

It is this great Christian and noble thinker whom successive centuries have condemned and stamped as a heretic. At the fifth ecumenical Council (Constantinople, A. D. 553) Origen was explicitly declared a heretic. Fifteen anathemas were pronounced against a series of propositions

extracted from his works. He was denounced for doctrines some of which he never held. A pope forbade the reading of his writings, except those approved of by Jerome.²⁰

In a consideration of Origen's theory of knowledge, the writer will attempt, along with showing that his epistemology is a basis for understanding his conception of the teacher and his task, to make clear the reason why Origen's adversaries and judges, who were not without excuse, were unable to understand him. These adversaries and judges belonged to a time when a knowledge of Greek philosophy no longer existed; its meaning was no longer known. Scarcely anything was left of the mind of Plato, Aristotle, or the Stoics. "The very genius of ancient Hellas had died away; all that still survived of Greek antiquity was the form of its genius: the language, the formulas of metaphysics, dialectic."²¹ The thought of Origen is permeated with Greek philosophy, and to understand why he adopted some particular doctrine and formulated it in a particular way, regarding it as a true and legitimate interpretation of a Christian belief, one would have to be imbued oneself with the doctrines and methods of Greek philosophy. De Faye and other highly competent students of Origen's thought contend that it was this very acquaintance with the thought of antiquity, the understanding of its genius, the mentality of the true Hellenic philosopher, that had been lost. De Faye concludes:

He (Origen), at all events, was still Greek. Though he might be indifferent to the artistic genius of the race, at least he possessed that intellectual curiosity which constituted the very nerve and sinew of the creative faculty of the Hellenes. The reader of Plato or Aristotle finds himself by no means out of his element when perusing the great Christian doctor. It was precisely his mental freedom, his philosophical boldness, his irresistible propensity to deal with all those questions which a text or a doctrine was likely to suggest, that the Fathers of the ecumenical councils could neither understand nor accept. It was inevitable that Origen should prove an offense to them, that they should excommunicate him.²²

B. F. Westcott holds that the progress of Christianity can best be represented as a series of victories. When we speak of victories, we imply resistance, suffering, loss: the triumph of a great cause, but the triumph through effort and sacrifice. Such has been the history of the Faith, and we know that the struggle can never be ended in this visible order. "Each age has to sustain its own part in the conflict, and the retrospect of earlier successes gives to those who have to face new antagonists and to occupy new positions, patience and the certainty of hope."²³ Moreover, Westcott maintains that in this respect the history of the first three centuries—the first complete period—is an epitome or a figure of the whole work of the Faith. The threefold victory of Christianity, referred to above, includes its asserting its sovereign power among men by the victory of common life, by the victory of thought, and by the victory of civil organization. This chapter is concerned primarily with some of the features of the victory of thought—with the conflict that had to be sustained, not by the masses, but by great men, the consequence and the completion of that which had gone before. The period during which this conflict of the Faith was waged was, roughly speaking, from the middle of the second to the middle of the third century. The characteristic tendencies of the age were decidedly marked in the marvelous city of Alexandria: a meeting-place of the East and West—of old and new—the home of learning, of criticism, of syncretism.²⁴ "It is easy to see what was the natural office of Christianity in such a society. Alexandria offered an epitome of that Old World which the Faith had to quicken in all its parts."²⁵ The work had been already recognized, for early in the second century numerous attempts were made there to shape a

Christian solution of the problems of life which thought and experience had brought into a definite form. Although many speculations in the various systems of Gnosticism were premature and ended in failure, they rendered an important service to Christian philosophy. They fixed attention upon final problems of life, of which a religion which claims to be universal must take account: How did rational creatures come into being?—how, that is, can we reconcile the coexistence of the Absolute and the finite?—and the like. The different types of answers to these questions will be most clearly seen if we refer the Gnostic and Neo-Platonic answers, for example, to the Christian as a standard of comparison. As against the Gnostic, the Christian maintained that the universe was created, not by any subordinate or rival power, but by an act of love of the One Infinite God, and that evil therefore is not inherent in matter but due to the will of responsible creatures. As against the Neo-Platonist, the Christian maintained the separate, personal existence of God as One to be approached and worshiped, Who thinks and loves; the reality of a redemption that is consequent on the Incarnation; the historical progress of the sum of life to an appointed end. As against both, the Christian maintained that God is immanent in the world, and separate, though not alien, from it; that the world was originally and essentially good; that it has been and is disturbed by unseen forces; that man is the crown and end of creation. Furthermore, the Gnostic and the Platonist despaired of the world and of the mass of men; both placed safety in flight: they knew of no salvation for the multitude. The Christian, however, spoke, argued, lived, with the spirit of a conqueror who possessed the power of transfiguring to nobler service what he was charged to subdue. Whereas others sought for an abstraction which was beyond and above all comprehension and all worship, the Christian had assurance that he had been found by One who came down to earth and became flesh. While others laboriously framed systems designed to meet the wants and the intelligence of the few, the Christian appealed to all in virtue of a common divine faculty and a common God-given freedom, of a universal message and a universal fact. 20

The development and co-ordination of these conceptions, of these realities, was, or rather is, necessarily gradual. But it is of importance to notice that from the moment when philosophers expressed their difficulties, Christian teachers undertook to meet them on their own lines. Christian teachers did not lay aside the philosopher's mantle in virtue of their office, but rather assumed it. At Alexandria, a Christian "School"—the well-known Catechetical School—arose by the side of the Museum. In its constitution no less than in its work this School bore a striking, if partial, resemblance to the "schools of the prophets" under the old Dispensation. It was not ecclesiastical in its organization.

Its teachers were not necessarily, or always in fact, priests. Its aim was not to perpetuate a system, but to gain fresh conquests. From obscure beginnings the work went on. Great thoughts, great principles found utterance; and then a master was raised up not unworthy to combine and quicken them.

The first famous names which occur in connection with the School, those of Pantaenus and Clement, might well detain us. Both men were led to the Faith through the study of Philosophy. Both continued the study as Christians. They had learnt the needs of men by their own experience, and by that they interpreted what they had found.

The scanty notices of Pantaenus which have been preserved suggest the idea of a man of originality and vigour, who combined action with thought. Clement again is perhaps in intuitive power the

greatest, in the line of Catechists. It would be easy to collect from his writings a series of pregnant passages containing, with some significant exceptions, an outline of the system of Origen; but he had himself no sense of a system. The last book in his Trilogy is fitly called "Miscellanies." He appears also to have wanted practical energy, and even if this assertion seems to be a paradox, I believe that this defect accounts for his intellectual failure. His successor, Origen, supplied that which was wanting. He did not stop at writing "Miscellanies." He was filled with the conception of a vast moral unity; of necessity, therefore, he felt that the truths by which this unity was established must form a unity also. It is then to him rather than to his predecessors, or perhaps it may be more true to say to his predecessors in him, that we must look if we wish to gain a right notion of typical Christian thought at

Alexandria, a right notion of the beginnings of Christian philosophy.²⁷

One is tempted to linger over Origen's writings and to forget that writings are but one element of the teacher. A method is often more characteristic and more influential than doctrine. This seems to have been so with Origen, and in his case we fortunately possess a vivid and detailed description of the plan of study which he pursued and enforced. Gregory, surnamed Thaumaturgus, the wonder-worker, from his admirable work in Pontus, after working under Origen for five years at Caesarea, at a later time (c. A.D. 239) delivered a farewell address in his presence.²⁸ In this address the scholar records with touching devotion the course along which he had been guided by the man to whom he felt that he owed his spiritual life. Gregory had come to Syria to study Roman law in the school of Berytus, but on his way there he met Origen, and at once felt that he had found in him the wisdom for which he was seeking. In a magnificent passage in the *Panegyric to Origen*, Gregory tells of the love by which he and his brother, Anthenodorus, were taken captive; of Origen's presenting philosophy as the foundation of piety; of his (Gregory's) willingness to give up fatherland, parents, the pursuit of law, and every other discipline with the view of giving himself wholly to that study. After describing the first day of his meeting with Origen, at which time he felt that the true Sun began to rise upon him, and after a significant discussion of Origen's reprehension of ignorance and the blind in mind who have no understanding of what they are, and who neither know themselves what is good and what is evil, nor care to learn it from others, Gregory writes:

I cannot recount at present all the addresses of this kind which he delivered to us, with the view of persuading us to take up the pursuit of philosophy.

Nor was it only for a single day that he thus dealt with us, but for many days, and, in fact, as often as we were in the habit of going to him at the outset; and we were pierced by his argumentation as with an arrow from the very first occasion of our hearing him (for he was possessed of a rare combination of a certain sweet grace and persuasiveness, along with a strange power of constraint), though we still wavered and debated the matter undecidedly with ourselves, holding so far by the pursuit of philosophy, without however being brought thoroughly over to it, while somehow or other we found ourselves quite unable to withdraw from it conclusively, and thus were always drawn towards him by the power of his reasonings, as by the force of some superior necessity. For he asserted further that there could be no genuine piety towards the Lord of all in the man who despised this gift of philosophy,—a gift which man alone of all the creatures of the earth has been deemed honourable and worthy enough to possess, and one which every man whatsoever, be he

wise or be he ignorant, reasonably embraces, who has not utterly lost the power of thought by some mad distraction of mind. He asserted, then, as I have said, that it was not possible (to speak correctly) for any one to be truly pious who did not philosophize. And thus he continued to do with us, until, by pouring in upon us many such argumentations, one after the other, he at last carried us fairly off somehow or other by a kind of divine power, like people with his reasonings, and established us (in the practice of philosophy), and set us down without the power of movement, as it were, beside himself by his arts. Moreover, the stimulus of friendship was also brought to bear upon us,—a stimulus, indeed, not easily withstood, but keen and most effective,—the argument of a kind and affectionate disposition, which showed itself benignantly in his words when he spoke to us and associated with us. For he did not aim merely at getting round us by any kind of reasoning; but his desire was, with a benignant, and affectionate, and most benevolent mind, to save us, and make us partakers in the blessings that flow from philosophy, and most especially also in those other gifts which the Deity has bestowed on him above most men, or, as we may perhaps say, above all men of our own time. I mean the power that teaches us piety, the word of salvation, that comes to many, and subdues to itself all whom it visits: for there is nothing that shall resist it, inasmuch as it is and shall be itself the king of all; although as yet it is hidden, and is not recognized, whether with ease or with difficulty, by the common crowd, in such wise that, when interrogated respecting it, they should be able to speak intelligently about it. And thus, like some spark lighting upon our inmost soul, love was kindled and burst into flame within us,—a love at once to the Holy Word, the most lovely object of all, who attracts all irresistibly toward Himself by His unutterable beauty, and to this man, His friend and advocate. And being most mightily smitten by this love, I was persuaded to give up all those objects or pursuits which seem to us befitting, and among others even my boasted jurisprudence,—yea, my very fatherland and friends, both those who were present with me then, and those from whom I had parted. And in my estimation there arose but one object dear and worth desire,—to wit, philosophy, and that master of philosophy, this inspired man.

“And the soul of Jonathan was knit with David.” (1 Sam. 18:1). This word, indeed, I did not read till afterwards in the sacred Scriptures; but I felt it before that time, not less clearly than it is written: for, in truth, it reached me then by the clearest of all revelations. For it was not simply Jonathan that was knit with David; but those things were knit together which are the ruling powers in man—their souls,—those objects which, even though all the things which are apparent and ostensible in man are severed, cannot by any skill be forced to a severance when they themselves are unwilling.²⁹

Origen’s first care, so his student Gregory tells us, was to make the character of a pupil his special study. He ascertained with delicate, patient attention the capacities, faults, tendencies, of him whom he had to teach. Rank growths of opinion, we are told, were cleared away; weaknesses were laid open; every effort was used to develop endurance, firmness, patience, and thoroughness. “In true Socratic fashion he sometimes overthrew us by argument,” Gregory writes. “The process was at first disagreeable to us, and painful; but so he purified us . . . and . . . prepared us for the reception of the words of truth . . . by probing us and questioning us, and offering problems for our solution.” In this way Origen taught his pupils to regard language as designed not to furnish materials for display, but to express truth with the most exact accuracy and logic; as powerful, not to secure a plausible success, but to test beliefs with the strictest rigor.

The first stage of intellectual discipline was the accurate preparation of the instruments of thought.

In the next place Origen led his pupils to apply them, first, to the “sublime and heavenly” study of external nature. He made geometry the sure and immovable foundation of his teaching, and from this rose step by step to a consideration of the most sublime mysteries of the universe. Gregory’s language implies that Origen was himself a student of physics—as, in some degree, the true theologian must be, since such investigations serve to show man in his right relation to the world. A rational feeling for the vast grandeur of the external order, “the sacred economy of the universe,” as Gregory calls it, was substituted for the ignorant and senseless wonder with which it is commonly regarded. The lessons of others, Gregory writes, or his own observation, enabled him to explain the connection, the differences, the changes of the objects of sense.³¹ Physics was naturally treated by Origen as a preparation, and not as an end. Gregory hastens to tell us that Origen imbued his students’ minds, above all, with ethical or moral science; and he did not confine himself to discoursing on the virtues in word, but he rather confirmed his teaching by his acts. His aim was not merely to analyze, to define, to classify feelings and motives, though he did this, but to form a character. For Origen, ethics was a life, and not only a theory. The four cardinal virtues of Plato—practical wisdom, self-control, righteousness, courage—seemed to him to require for their maturing careful and diligent introspection and culture. And at this point he gave an excellent commentary upon his teaching. His discipline lay even more in action than in precept. His own conduct was, in the minds of his pupils, a more influential persuasion than his arguments.³²

It is quite clear that Origen was the first teacher who really led Gregory to the pursuit of Greek philosophy, by bringing speculation into a vital union with practice. Gregory saw in him the inspiring example of one at once wise and holy. The noble maxim “Know thyself” gained a distinct meaning for Gregory, who disallows any attainment of the virtues on his part and recognizes piety as both the beginning and the end, and thus the parent, of all the virtues.³³ In failure and weakness Origen’s Christian disciple was enabled to perceive that the end of all was this and this alone: “By the pure mind make thyself like to God, that thou mayest draw near to Him, and abide in Him.”³⁴ Guided by this conviction, Origen encouraged his students in theology to look for help in all the works of human genius. They were to examine the writings of philosophers and poets of every nation, with the exception of dogmatic atheists alone. The students had in their master a friend who knew the difficulties of the ground to be traversed, and one who was always ready to lead them with a firm hand and to lift them up if they were in danger of being swallowed up in shifting error.³³ Gregory hastens to tell us that even yet the end was not reached, that the hierarchy of sciences was not completed until theology, with her own proper gifts, crowned the succession already considered: *viz.*, logic, physics, ethics. Origen found in the Holy Scriptures and the teaching of the Spirit the final and absolute spring of Divine Truth. It was in this realm that Gregory felt his master’s power to be supreme.

Now that greatest gift this man has received from God, and that noblest of all endowments he has had bestowed upon him from heaven, that he should be an interpreter of the oracles of God to men, and that he might understand the words of God, even as if God spake them to him, and that he might recount them to men in such wise as that they may hear them with intelligence. Therefore to us there was no forbidden subject of speech; for there was no matter of knowledge hidden or inaccessible to us, but we had it in our power to learn every kind of discourse, both foreign and Greek, both spiritual and political, both divine and human; and we were permitted with all freedom to go round the whole circle of knowledge, and investigate it, and satisfy ourselves with all kinds of doctrines, and enjoy the sweets of intellect. And whether it was some ancient system of truth, or

whether it was something one might otherwise name that was before us, we had in him an apparatus and a power at once admirable and full of the most beautiful views. And to speak in brief, he was truly a paradise to us, after the similitude of the paradise of God, wherein we were not set indeed to till the soil beneath us, or to make ourselves gross with bodily nurture, but only to increase the acquisitions of mind with all gladness and enjoyment,—planting, so to speak, some fair growths ourselves, or having them planted in us by the Author of all things.³⁸

A very choice passage in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* gives us Origen's conception of the unity of knowledge, his conception of education.

About this time Ambrose, who held the heresy of Valentinus, was convinced by Origen's presentation of the truth, and, as if his mind were illumined by light, he accepted the orthodox doctrine of the Church. Many others also, drawn by the fame of Origen's learning, which resounded everywhere, came to him to make trial of his skill in sacred literature. And a great many heretics and not a few of the most distinguished philosophers studied under him diligently, receiving instruction from him not only in divine things, but also in secular philosophy. For when he perceived that any persons had superior intelligence, he instructed them also in philosophic branches—in geometry, arithmetic, and other preparatory studies—and then advanced to the systems of the philosophers and explained their writings. And he made observations and comments upon each of them, so that he became celebrated as a great philosopher even among the Greeks themselves. And he instructed many of the less learned in the common school branches, saying that these would be no small help to them in the study and understanding of the Divine Scriptures.

On this account he considered it especially necessary for himself to be skilled in secular and philosophic learning.³⁷

Concerning the picture which Gregory gives us of the method of Origen, B. F. Westcott writes that he knows of no parallel to it in ancient times.³⁸ The writer agrees with Westcott in his statement that when every allowance has been made for the partial enthusiasm of a pupil, the view which it offers of a system of Christian training actually realized exhibits a type which we cannot hope to surpass. May we not say that the ideal of Christian education and the ideal of Christian philosophy were fashioned together? And can we wonder that, under that comprehensive and loving discipline, Gregory, already trained in heathen schools, first learned, step by step, according to his own testimony, what the pursuit of philosophy truly was, and came to know the solemn duty of forming opinions which were to be the solid foundations of life-long work? Have we yet, perhaps, we ask, mastered the lessons?³⁹ It may be true (and Origen admitted it) that we are, in our present state, but poorly equipped for the pursuit of knowledge; but Origen was never weary of proclaiming that we are at least born to engage in the endless search. In declaring that an eager longing for the reality of things is natural to us and implanted in our soul, Origen writes:

As then, in those arts, which are accomplished by manual labor, the design, the why or how or for what uses a thing is made, lies in the mind, but its practical efficacy is unfolded through the help of

the work of our hands, so we must believe that in regard to God's works, which have been made by him, their design and meaning remain a secret. Now when our eye sees the works of the

craftsman, if it observes an article which has been made with unusual skill, immediately the mind burns to discover of what sort it is and how and for what uses it was made. Much more, and beyond all comparison, does the mind burn with unspeakable longing to learn the design of those things which we perceive to have been made by God. This longing, this love has, we believe, undoubtedly been implanted in us by God; and as the eye naturally demands light and vision and our body by its nature desires food and drink, so our mind cherishes a natural and appropriate longing to know God's truth and to learn the causes of things.

Now we have not received this longing from God on the condition that it should not or could not ever be satisfied; for in that case the "love of truth" (cf. II Thess. 2:10) would appear to have been implanted in our mind by God the Creator to no purpose, if its gratification is never to be accomplished. So when even in this life men devote themselves with great labor to sacred and religious studies, although they obtain only some small fragments out of the immeasurable treasures of divine knowledge (cf. Col. 2:2, 3), yet⁴⁰ . . . that they occupy their mind and understanding with these questions and press onward in their eager desire. Moreover, they derive much assistance from the fact that by turning their mind to the study and love of truth they render themselves more capable of receiving instruction in the future. For when a man wishes to paint a picture, if he first sketches with the faint touch of a light pencil the outlines of the proposed figure and inserts suitable marks to indicate features afterwards to be added, this preliminary drawing with its faint outline undoubtedly renders the canvas more prepared to receive the true colors. So it will be with us, if only that faint form and outline is inscribed "on the tablets of our heart" (cf. II Cor. 3:3) by the pencil of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is perhaps the reason why it is said, "To every one that hath shall be given and added" (St. Matt. 25:29). It is clear, then, that to those who have now in this life a kind of outline of truth and knowledge there shall be added in the future the beauty of the perfect image.⁴¹

The preceding words are most characteristic of Origen. Thrilling alike by their humility and by their confidence, noble in the confession of the actual weakness of man, and invigorating by the assertion of his magnificent destiny, such words can never grow old. They live by the inspiration of spiritual genius, and through them Origen comes into vital contact with ourselves. One writer, declaring that Origen possessed the highest endowment of a teacher, evaluates him as follows:

He was himself greater than his actions, than his writings, than his method. The philosopher was greater than his system. He possessed the highest endowment of a teacher. He was able to give to the innumerable crowd of doctors, confessors, martyrs, who gathered round him, not merely a tabulated series of formulas, but a living energy of faith. He stirred, quickened, kindled, as Gregory says, those who approached him. He communicated not his words, but himself; not opinions so much as a fire of love. Even Erasmus found in this the secret of his charm. "He loved," he says, "that of which he spoke, and we speak with delight of the things which we love." In the face of this purifying passion, Origen's errors, however we may judge of them, are details which cannot finally affect our judgment of the man.⁴²

In another chapter the writer will focus more sharply on the fact that during Origen's lifetime there was undoubtedly a strong party opposed to him. His enemies represented a principle—hierarchical supremacy—and not only a personal antipathy. Even after his condemnation at Alexandria his spiritual supremacy was undisturbed, and so long as he was remembered as a living power he was

honored by the admiration of leaders of Christian thought. Often he was misinterpreted and misrepresented by men who professed to follow him. That the bitterness of his enemies was a proof of his influence is stressed by an historian (a layman) who has preserved the following anecdote:

“I do not choose,” said a bishop (Theotimus of Scythia), when appealed to join in the condemnation of his writings, “to do outrage to a man who has long since fallen to sleep in honour; nor am I bold enough to undertake a calumnious task in condemning what those before us did not reject. . . .”⁴³ But (writes the historian who pauses to point the moral of the anecdote) since carping detractors have imposed upon many persons and have succeeded in deterring them from reading Origen, as though he were a blasphemous writer, I deem it not unseasonable to make a few observations respecting him. Worthless characters, and such as are destitute of ability to attain eminence themselves, often seek to get into notice by decrying those who excel them. . . . But I affirm that from the censure of these men, greater commendation accrues to Origen. . . . But Athanasius, the defender of the doctrine of consubstantiality, in his *Discourses against the Arians*, continually cites this author as a witness of his own faith. . . . And they who revile Origen forget that they calumniate Athanasius who praised him. . . .⁴⁴

There is much evidence that, even while Origen was still held to be under the ban of the Church, he exercised a strange fascination by the memories of his name. His salvation was a question of the Schools, and was said to have been the subject of revelations. An abbot, so the story ran, saw him in eternal torment with the chief heresiarchs, Arius and Nestorius. On the other hand, it was alleged that it had been made known to St. Mechtildis that “the fate of Samson, Solomon, and Origen was kept hidden in the divine counsels, in order that the strongest, the wisest, and the most learned might be filled with salutary fear.”⁴⁵ Many such notices through the centuries show that Origen, a truly great teacher, though practically unknown, still kept his hold on the interests of men; that he was still an object of personal love; that there is in the fact of a life of humble self-sacrifice something too noble, too divine, to be overthrown by the sentence of an ecclesiastical synod.

Chapter Two

THE TEACHER AND HIS FUNCTION INTERPRETED ACCORDING TO ORIGEN'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Origen was in the full course of his work at Alexandria when his chief philosophical work, *De Principiis*, was written. He was probably at the time not much more than thirty years old, but there is no reason to think that he modified in any important respects the opinions which he expressed in it. The book was not written for simple believers, but for scholars—for those who were familiar with the teaching of Gnosticism and Platonism; and it was written with a view to questions which then were urgent for men who had a wide view of nature and life. Origen felt that Christianity converts the sublime abstractions, “ideas,” of non-Christian philosophies into realities, the personal facts of a complete life; and he strove to express what he felt in the modes of thought and language of his age. In his effort to present the higher “knowledge” (*gnosis*) as an objective system, he had no intention of fashioning two Christianities—a Christianity for the learned and a Christianity for

the simple. He believed that the Faith was one, one essentially and unalterably, but infinite in fullness, so that the trained eye could see more of its harmonies, as it necessarily looked for more.¹

De Principiis is, as has been already said, the earliest attempt to form a system of Christian doctrine, or rather a philosophy of the Christian faith. It is in this respect that it marks an epoch in Christian thought, but no change in the contents of the Christian creed. The elements of the dogmatic basis are assumed on the authority of the Church; and Origen's object is, as he says, to show how they can be arranged as a whole, by the help either of the statements of Scripture or of the methods of exact reasoning. It is necessary to bear in mind that this is the account which Origen gives of his teaching, however strange or startling it may seem to us. He takes for granted that all that he presents is in harmony with received teaching, and professes to accept as final the same authorities as ourselves.² To speak generally, the first book of *De Principiis* deals with God and Creation; the second and third books with Creation and Providence, with Man and Redemption; and the fourth book with Holy Scripture. Stated somewhat differently, the first three books contain the exposition of a Christian philosophy, treating the three ideas of God, the world, and the rational soul, and the fourth book gives the basis of the exposition.

In the first book of Origen's great philosophical work, he brings before us the final elements of all religious philosophy: God, the world, rational creatures. He thinks that he is grounding everything that he affirms about God, the world, man, and human salvation upon the teaching of Scripture. Surely he had a better right to make that claim than many of his predecessors would have had, who were less laboriously and devotedly grounded in Biblical learning.³ He reaches his conception of God, which emerges from his study both of philosophy and of the Scriptures, by three philosophical methods that Celsus had distinguished and employed, and another which to his mind is more fundamental than any of the other three. The methods employed by Celsus were those of analysis, synthesis, and analogy.⁴ Origen regards all of these methods as intellectually appropriate, but all of them must be guided and validated by another which is made possible by the fact of revelation. Revelation, properly speaking, is not the method, but dependence upon revelation is a safeguard against the inappropriate use of any of these purely speculative procedures. The Word of God is the basis on which we employ our reason in the ways which the philosophical schools have defined and developed.⁵ If on that basis we attempt to describe the character that a Christian will ascribe to God, we find that the primary affirmation we desire to make about God the Father is that He is perfect. After dwelling on the essential nature of God as incorporeal, invisible, incomprehensible, and on the characteristic relations of the Persons of the Holy Trinity to man, as the Authors of being and reason and holiness, Origen gives a summary view of the end of human life; for the component parts of a problem cannot be really understood until we have comprehended its scope. The end of life, according to Origen, is the progressive assimilation of man to God by the voluntary appropriation of His gifts. Many philosophers had proposed to themselves the idea of assimilation to God, but Origen adds the means.

Through the ceaseless work on our behalf of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, renewed at every stage of our progress, we may perchance just succeed at last in beholding the holy and blessed life; and when after many struggles we have been able to attain to it, we ought so to continue that no satiety of that blessing may ever possess us; but the more we partake of its blessedness, the more may the loving desire for it deepen and increase within us, as ever our hearts grow in fervor and eagerness to receive and hold fast the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.®

Origen accepts the consequence that this condition of progress, effort, assimilation, involves the possibility of declension, the obliteration of the Divine image, and finds in it an explanation of the actual state of men and angels. In his judgment the present position of each rational being corresponds with the use which he has hitherto made of the revelations and gifts of God. In Origen's system of thought, no beings were created originally immutable in character. Some, by the most diligent obedience, have been raised to the loftiest places in the celestial hierarchy; others, by perverse self-will and rebellion, have sunk into the condition of demons. There are those, too, who occupy an intermediate place and are capable of being raised again to their first state, and upwards, if they avail themselves of the helps which are provided by the love of God.⁷

We must know, however, that some of those who fell from the beginning of which we have spoken above, have given themselves over so completely to a life of unworthiness and wickedness, that they are not only regarded as unworthy of this instruction and training whereby through the flesh the human race, aided by the heavenly powers, is being instructed and trained, but on the contrary become adversaries and opponents of those who are being trained and disciplined. The result is that all our mortal life is full of struggles and conflicts, since we are resisted and thwarted by those who can see no way back to the better state from which they fell, those, namely, who are called "the devil and his angels," and other orders of wicked beings whom the apostle [Paul] enumerates among the opposing powers. ... In the meantime [he continues], alike in these ages that are "seen" and "temporal" and in those that are "not seen" and "eternal," all those beings are arranged in a definite order proportionate to the degree and excellence of their merits.

And so it happens that some in the first, others in the second, and others even in the last times, through their endurance of greater and more severe punishments of long duration, extending, if I may say so, over many ages, are by these very stern methods of correction renewed and restored, first by the instruction of angels and afterwards by that of powers yet higher in rank, so that they advance through each grade to a higher one, until at length they reach the things that are "invisible" and "eternal," having traversed in turn, by some form of instruction, every single office of the heavenly powers. It appears to follow from this, in my opinion, that every rational nature can . . . travel through each order to all the rest, and ... in accordance with its own actions and endeavors and with the use of its power of free will.⁸

Only one kind of change is impossible: no rational being can sink into the nature of a brute.⁹

One singular matter, which is characteristic of the time, is found in this discussion. Origen asks: How are we to regard the heavenly bodies—the sun and moon and stars? Are they animated and rational? Are they the temporary abodes of souls which shall hereafter be released from them? Are they finally to be brought into the great unity, when "God shall be all in all"? He admits that the questions are bold; but he answers all in the affirmative, on what he holds to be the authority of Scripture.¹⁰

In the second book of Origen's great philosophical work, he pursues at greater length the view of the visible world as a place of discipline and preparation, which has been already indicated. He argues that the endless variety in the situations of men, the inequality of their material and moral circumstances, their critical spiritual differences, all tend to show that the position of each has been

determined in accordance with previous conduct. Moreover, God in His ineffable wisdom has united all together with absolute justice, so that all of these creatures, most diverse in themselves, combine to work out His purpose, while “their very variety tends to the one end of perfection.” All things were made for the sake of man and rational beings.¹¹ In commenting upon this, B. F. Westcott says that it is through man, therefore, that this world, as God’s work, becomes complete and perfect. The individual is never isolated, though he is never irresponsible; at every moment he is acting and acted upon, adding something to the sum of the moral forces of the world, furnishing that out of which God is fulfilling His purpose. The difficulties of life, as Origen regards them, give scope for heroic effort and loving service; the fruits of a moral victory become more permanent as they are gained through harder toil. The obstacles and hindrances which surround man are incentives to exertion.¹² Man’s body is not a “prison” in the sense of a place of punishment only; it is a beneficent provision for the discipline of beings to whom it furnishes such salutary restraints as are best fitted to further their moral growth.¹³

Origen’s understanding of the sufferings and disparities of life, the contrasts of the Law and the Gospel, is that they simply reveal that what we see is a fragment of a vast system in which we can do no more than trace tendencies, convergences, and signs, and rest upon the historic fact of the Incarnation. In this respect, Origen regarded the entire range of being as “one thought” answering to the absolutely perfect will of God, while we that are not all, as parts, can see but parts.¹⁴ The sum of finite existence forms one whole.¹⁵

Origen grapples with the objection that our difficulties do not lie only in the circumstances of the present; moreover, that even if we allow that this world is fitted to be a place of discipline for fallen beings who are capable of recovery, it is only too evident that the discipline does not always work amendment. Origen admits the fact, and draws from it the conclusion that other systems of penal purification, moral advance, and illumination follow. In his system of thought, world grows out of world, so to speak, until the consummation is reached. He does not attempt to define the nature, **or** position, or constitution of the world to come.¹⁶ According to Origen, it is enough to believe that, from first to last, the will of Him who is most righteous and most loving is fulfilled; and that each loftier region gained is the entrance to some still more glorious abode above, so that all being becomes, as it were, in the highest sense a journey of the saints from mansion to mansion to the throne of God.” In order to give clearness to this view, Origen traces out in imagination the normal course of the progressive training, purifying, and illumination of men in the future. He pictures them as passing from sphere to sphere, and resting in each so as to receive such revelations of the providence of God as they can grasp. As they look backward, old mysteries are illuminated; as they look forward, unimagined mysteries stir their souls with divine desire. A magnificent passage in Origen’s masterpiece, the *De Principiis*, gives us this picture:

We may speak in some such way also about the abode in the air. I think that the saints as they depart from this life will remain in some place situated on the earth, which the divine Scripture calls “paradise” [cf. Gen. 2:8 ff.; St. Luke 23:43].

This will be a place of instruction and, so to speak, a lecture room or school for souls, in which they may be taught about all that they had seen on earth and may also receive some indications of what is to follow in the future; just as when placed in this life they had obtained certain indications of the future, seen indeed “through a glass darkly,” and yet truly seen “in part” [cf. I Cor. 13:12],

which are revealed more clearly and brightly to the saints in their proper times and places. If anyone is “pure in heart” (St. Matt. 5:8) and of unpolluted mind and well trained understanding, he will make swifter progress and quickly ascend to the region of the air, until he reaches the kingdom of the heavens, passing through the series of those “abiding places” [cf. St. John 14:2]. The Greek idea of the heavens was that of a series of revolving spheres, beginning with that of the moon and ending with the sphere of the fixed stars, if I may so call them, which the Greeks have termed spheres, that is, globes, but which the divine scripture calls heavens. In each of these he will first observe all that happens there, and then learn the reason why it happens. . . ,¹⁸

Everywhere God is with them, and through the perpetual supply of spiritual food, they advance from strength to strength. This food, Origen says, is the understanding and contemplation of God, according to its proper measure in each case and as suitable to a nature which is made and created. Origen urges that everyone who is beginning to see God, that is, to understand Him in purity of heart, should carefully observe these measures even now.¹⁹

While Origen opens this infinite prospect of scene upon scene to faith, or hope, or imagination—call it as we may—he goes on to show that Scripture calls for careful consideration of the next scene, summed up in the words Resurrection, Judgment, Retribution. In dealing with these cardinal ideas, he is most studiously anxious to adhere to the teaching of the Word. For Origen, the Resurrection is the preservation of complete identity of person—an identity maintained under new conditions. Judgment is not a limited and local act, but the unimpeded execution of the absolute divine law by which man is made to feel what he is and what he has become. Punishment is no vengeance, “for when the body is punished the soul is gradually purified, and so is restored to its ancient rank.”²⁰ Rene Cadiou points out that the resurrection of the dead was the subject that brought him into opposition to the Christianity of the illiterate mass of the faithful. He considered their ideas on this point very gross, finding them a definite embarrassment whenever he had to defend them against the criticism of unbelievers.²¹ Moreover, Cadiou maintains that in discussing this handicap with his friends, Origen saw the need of assuring himself that the principles of his theology were sound, and, with this end in view, applied himself to the study of the philosophy of the day, the system of thought which we have called Alexandrian Neoplatonism. His inquiring mind then delved into problems concerning the universe and the origin of rational beings. Already we have seen, to some extent, that his speculations on those subjects were worked into a definite system in the *De Principiis*, both a cosmology and a treatise on the spiritual life. After the production of this masterpiece—embracing the first causes of existence, of knowledge, of virtue, and the obstacles which the Good has to overcome and the way that victory is achieved—Origen turned to the question of the religion of the individual soul and, in his *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*,²² applied his theological genius to a study of the inner life. “This led him to dream of a Christian gnosis (higher knowledge) which should make the discipline of the intelligence the basis of spiritual progress and the purpose of which should be to give the educated Christian a purer knowledge of the nature of God.”²³ He presented this program, with a number of reservations and adjustments, to those whose studies he directed and supervised.

In Books Three and Four of the *De Principiis*, Origen discusses the moral and dogmatic bases of his system. The moral basis of his system lies in the recognition of free-will as the inalienable endowment of rational beings. This free-will does not carry with it the power of independent action, but only the power of receiving the help which is extended to each according to his capacity

and needs, and therefore responsibility for the consequences of action. In Origen's judgment, such free-will offers a sufficient explanation for what we see, and gives a stable foundation for what we hope. It places sin definitely within the man himself, and not without him; it preserves the possibility of restoration while it enforces the penalty of failure.²⁴ Each soul draws and takes to itself the Word of God in proportion to its capacity and faith.²⁵ "Such a doctrine, so far from tending to Pelagianism, is the very refutation of it. It lays down that the essence of freedom is self-surrender; that the power of right action is nothing but the power of God."²⁰ Origen maintains that the decision from moment to moment rests with us, but not the end; moreover, that the gift of being, once given, abides forever.²⁷ The following passage is very interesting and provocative in treating of God's method in dealing with the rational creature that is capable of change, of better and worse, but that can never cease to be:

The man who is abandoned is abandoned therefore by the divine judgment, and towards certain sinners God is long-suffering, not without reason, but because in regard to the immortality of the soul and the eternal world it will be to their advantage that they should not be helped quickly to salvation but should be brought to it more slowly after having experienced many ills. For physicians also, even though they may be able to heal a man quickly, yet act in a contrary way whenever they suspect the existence of a hidden poison in the body. They do this because they wish to heal the patient more surely, considering it better to let him remain in his fever and sickness for a long time in order that he may regain permanent health, rather than appear to restore him quickly to strength and afterwards to see him relapse and this quicker cure prove only temporary.

In the same way God, who knows the secrets of the heart and foreknows the future, perhaps in his long-suffering allows the hidden evil to remain while he draws it out by means of external circumstances, with the object of purifying him who owing to carelessness has received into himself the seeds of sin, that having vomited them out when they come to the surface, the sinner, even though he has proceeded far in evil deeds, may in the end be able to obtain purification after his evil life and be renewed. For God deals with souls not in view of the fifty years, so to speak, of our life here, but in view of the endless world. He has made our intellectual nature immortal and akin to himself, and the rational soul is not shut out from healing, as if this life were all.²⁸

In the *De Principiis*, Origen moves from the universal to the special, from the abstract to the concrete, from the heights of speculation to the rule of authority. In the last book of this work, he writes:

Now in our investigation of these important matters we do not rest satisfied with common opinions and the evidence of things that are seen, but we use in addition, for the manifest proof of our statements, testimonies drawn from the Scriptures which we believe to be Divine, both from what is called the Old Testament and also from the New, endeavoring to confirm our faith by reason.²⁹

With an unsurpassed reverence, insight, humility, and grandeur of feeling, in the remainder of the work Origen examines the questions of the inspiration and the interpretation of the Bible. It is quite obvious how widely his chief philosophical work differs from medieval and modern expositions of the "first principles" of the Christian faith. It contains no theory of the Atonement; no teaching on Justification; it is silent as to the Sacraments. Yet it does deal with questions which are felt to be momentous, and everything at present tends to bring many of these questions again into

prominence.³⁰

The *De Principiis* is a philosophical study of Christian dogmas, rather than a work of biblical interpretation. Cadiou maintains that the authority of the Bible was usually invoked to confirm the author's deductions, a technique which led Origen to compose a sort of appendix to show that Scripture is inspired and contains the revelations of the doctrines professed in the body of the work.³¹ "It was his belief," Cadiou writes, "that neither the ordinary efforts of human reason nor the higher evidence acquired by the enlightened consciousness of the spiritually trained offered sufficient ground for their acceptance." He continues: "A firm foundation must be sought in the inspired writings themselves. Those writings are divine because they lead to Jesus, to the evangelization of the world, and to the power wielded by the holy apostles."³² According to Origen, the Scriptures are addressed to souls who, in their striving to become perfect, have a definite need to know and to understand, according to their capacity, the operations of the Word-made-man and the way those operations affect their progress. It is those operations that must finally teach men their role in the world and equip them with the knowledge of the helps or obstacles they will encounter there. Origen saw the wisdom of providence, the spiritual life, and the moral struggle as three enclosed cities, and he recognized but one road along which each of those cities might be entered: the spiritual interpretation of Holy Scripture. He did not exempt any part of the Bible—not even the accounts it gives of historical occurrences—from the necessity of being interpreted spiritually.³³ He felt intensely the obligation to go beyond the letter of the historical records contained in the Bible, and beyond the face value of the precepts, and even beyond the findings of the moral sense which delivers men from carnal thoughts. Only by leaving all these behind is it possible, Origen thought, to discover the higher revelation that is reserved for purified intelligences. In the *De Principiis*?⁴ he stresses that Holy Scripture makes known the destiny of souls, as it were, in the thought of God, in the same Spirit that illuminated the prophets and the apostles.

Origen's purpose, it seems, was less to augment the number of religious truths than to clarify the teachings of the Church by an exposition that would be at once coherent, true to Scripture, and scholarly enough to win the attention of the philosophers. Often, in the pursuit of this plan, he endeavored to make secondary matters of Christian belief even more solid than the dogmas. If this is kept in view, it is not difficult to see that the passages that seem, upon a hasty examination of the text, to offend against the traditions of Christianity are by no means as numerous as might be supposed. In succeeding chapters the writer will attempt to focus more sharply on the fact that the firmness of Christian tradition can be easily recognized in Origen's work. Cadiou, who maintains that Origen's rashness does not lie precisely in an espousal of heresy and that there is no longer any disposition on the part of the critics to accuse him of introducing new or strange doctrines, says that "in every phase of his (Origen's) research he is an individualist. . . . IBs error is to be found in the particular method he employs. . . ."³⁵ Cadiou, moreover, after discussing Origen's violent rejection of literalism in favor of the allegorical meaning, says that although Origen admits all the ordinary standards of Christian thought, more than once he interprets Christian tradition according to the method by which he was accustomed to interpret Scripture.³⁸

By his disdain for the value of the religion of ordinary Christians and by his exaggeration of the importance of intellectual research, Origen gave countenance to the tendencies of the gnostics. As a result, his contemporaries did not hesitate to charge him, not with self-deception, but with having

raised problems that were superfluous and that tended to disturb the balance of Christian speculation. When he had more experience, he endeavored to bridge the gap between the two degrees of Christian belief. In the end he sought the knowledge of God nowhere but in the progress of the faith held by ordinary Christians.³⁷

It would perhaps be more correct to speak of Origen's anthropology than of Origen's psychology. For it is true, as Denis has pointed out,³⁸ that he applies himself little, directly, to the science of mind as known in concrete experience. Owing to his particular *tour d'esprit*, he eagerly investigates the preexistent state of the soul and its future blessedness, and he held that this was the only means of understanding its real nature. The substance of his teaching on the empirical phenomenon of knowledge may be seen in the following observations.

Origen confines the possibility of knowledge *to man*. Brutes, he says, cannot be said to *know*. In an interesting anticipation of Descartes' theory of the relation of man to the lower animals, Origen raises the question:³⁹ What is the chief guide (*to hegemonikon*) of men and of ants? The chief guide of men is reason; of ants, an irrational principle, moved by instinct, impulse, and imagination, but without reason, by a certain mechanism of nature. Origen argues that the end served by animal life is in the admirable mechanism whereby they are suited to the service of man,⁴⁰ and to such mechanisms knowledge, inasmuch as it is always knowledge of the good, is impossible. The animal is but a machine (*kataskheue*); man partakes of reason (*logos*), and therefore the good (*to kalon*) is alone possible to him.

Origen, like Paul, is a trichotomist in word but a dualist in spirit. For purposes of exposition, the writer will emphasize the latter aspect of his teaching. Origen maintains that knowledge depends upon the union of body and soul and may be hereditary; knowledge is a function of the mind, but it may be greatly influenced by the bodily connection. Always remembering that knowledge and virtue are one (knowledge is always knowledge of the good), he held that sin renders us impervious to the light of the *logos*. Knowledge depends upon the recovery of the body from its sinful isolation from reason and purity; and, he believed, this result may be greatly aided by a good ancestry. In his *Commentary on St. John* (20: 2, 3, 5, 25, etc.),⁴¹ he states, anticipating more recent theories, that a father has his ancestors' traits transmitted to him, and teaches that one man has more virtue than another because his ancestors have been, like Abraham, men of worth. If one places too much stress on such passages as the above, he may find them contradictory to Origen's great contention that the real causes of knowledge and virtuous living are in ourselves. Origen does not attempt to reconcile personal responsibility for ignorance of virtuous knowledge with heredity; he simply claims that knowledge is influenced by heredity, and since it is the union of matter and spirit which is the conditioning fact of knowledge, as known to us, it is therefore a factor in the individual's experience (*teknon*).⁴² But Origen is far from being a sensationalist. The soul (*psyche*), a rarefied, very finely attenuated substance, whose chief function is to be susceptible to individual objects, is not concretely the virtue-knowing power, but by purity it may become such; soul is the mind (*nous*) degenerated through sin.⁴³ He stresses that the neophyte must learn to ascend from things of sense to those of the understanding. "In discussing Romans 1:20, he remarks that though men who live on the earth have to begin with the use of the senses upon sensible objects in order to go from these to things intellectual, yet their knowledge must not stop short with the objects of sense." Moreover, "the whole universe is God's temple"; but 'the disciples of Jesus regard phenomenal things only that they may use them as steps to ascend to the knowledge of the things

of reason.’ ”⁴⁴

Implicated in the ideas expressed above is the fact that Origen considered any agency valid that helped the student to get clear of sense. Knowledge grows by transcendence— through dialectic, through all the movements of self-consciousness, but more particularly through the operations of what he calls the divine sense (*aisthesis theia*), or consciousness in its higher cognitive activity, which is immediately cognizant of a world of reality unknown to mere sense. Origen attributed great powers to this function of the mind. It revives in us our active consciousness of the truth, and it is cognizant, under the Holy Spirit, of the “deep things” of God and the preexistent state.⁴⁵

The conception which our author had of the nature and origin of knowledge can perhaps be understood best when we enter the ethical sphere. As already pointed out, knowledge and virtue are one for Origen. The immense influence of Christianity on the theoretical life of man is seen when we remember that, for Origen, every genuine act of knowledge assumes the form of a moral judgment. The following observations, considered central, are a summary statement of ideas already presented: The activity of the *will* is the heart, so to speak, of genuine cognition. Spontaneous rationality constitutes the peculiarity of the human species. Rational power and *free will* involve each other, and each belongs to the essence of mind as cognitive. Free will is the core of the self. The outcome of the activity of the rational will in cognition is a moral *judgment*. The rational animal has, in addition to imagination, reason, which judges the images of sense and disapproves of some and accepts others, in order that the animal may be led according to them. The power of free moral judgment is bestowed on us by the Creator. This activity of judgment is the cause of all progress in knowledge. Origen most emphatically declared that free will in man involved the possibility of attaining perfect knowledge. Origen's idealism is the condition of any true conception of history or destiny, since all progress is the constant putting forth of the will in new directions, the constant correction of error, failure, and moral defect. The ideal of knowledge— “the vision of all in God”—can be attained only as the outcome of the conflict with sense, and the elimination of error and sin by free-will.⁴⁶ Origen taught that all knowledge involves the conception of an end. The “end” of cognition is the good, and the good and God are one. Both exist in the unity of the absolute Reason, the *logos*. *Thus, sense-perception ever seeks the end—the knowledge of the logos*. “The truth seems to be that Origen’s ‘end’ is the human reason in accord with its object, and the progressive assimilation of the object and the subject. ‘End’ and means are characteristically united in the thought of this church father.”⁴⁷

The distinctive thing about these teachings of Origen is the combination of subtle insight and sublime moral and spiritual conviction. What is lacking, perhaps, from our more modern standpoint, is the clear perception of the order and relation in the topics discussed. But the influences amid which he lived—to be elaborated upon later in the discussion—shed light upon this. Perhaps he underestimated the knowledge of “body” or “matter,” and the sciences of form, logic, and mathematics. On the other hand, he teaches that even these sciences are worthy of study as embodying truth. This underestimating of the sciences of matter, and then the exaltation of them, when viewed in the light of the “end,” are a characteristic turn of mind in Origen. We cannot take lightly his understanding of “the knowledge of the perfect,” whose business it is to instruct and train men with reference to perfection through “the athletics of piety.” Perfection, indeed, exists in degrees. But Origen’s unquenchable idealism teaches that the humblest of our fallen race is not an archangel, not because he is *unable*, but because he is *unwilling*.⁴⁸ Our senses, under the influence

of sin, impose limits to knowledge; but we have power to transcend sense. The understanding (*nous*) can be delivered from it. With an unwilling free-will, the function of the teacher is to change the contents of the mind in hope that the good will move the will. Towering above all is the *pneuma*, which, when compared with the *nous*, is as a lamp to the sun. Even the *pneuma*, however, does not attain to perfect knowledge; there is something higher than knowledge, *i.e.*, the *vision* of God. He teaches that, inasmuch as the end must be as the beginning, man is always actively gaining knowledge, even beyond the present state of existence. His arguments for immortality, final salvation, or the complete assimilation of human nature with the divine nature, are one of the conditioning elements of his theory of knowledge; *i.e.*, he finds in the inextinguishable desire for truth an index of the permanence of the thinking substance.⁴⁰ Origen states⁵⁰ this in language of great clearness, and it seems to follow that those who have in this life a certain rough sketch of knowledge will, in future ages, possess the perfect and finished picture in all its beauty.

What, for Origen, is the criterion of certainty in knowledge? Inasmuch as the Scriptures are the highest revelation of reason, it follows that they are the criterion of validity and certainty in knowledge. Complete and certain knowledge rests, as has already been indicated, on revelation, and, in the last analysis, wholly on the latter, though the teachings of the Church, so far as they accord with reason, are also to be determinative of faith. This position is not to be confused with a later theory of Church authority. Origen teaches that faith and reason can never be opposed to one another. The mind, that is to say, cannot find the test of valid knowledge wholly within itself or outside itself, but only in coordinate action. The postulate upon which Origen's metaphysical monism rests is that reason and the revealed will of God are one; in it the so-called secular knowledge finds its justification, as it were, and the philosophies of the schools their place in the same categories as those of the faith of the Church. The transcendent object of knowledge is known only by a rational faith. H. H. Davies, in his article "Origen's Theory of Knowledge," writes that the proof of the fertility of this suggestion is in "the fact that hardly ever since Origen's day has the relation of faith and reason been correlated so successfully."⁵¹

There are profound general considerations, remote influences, as well as the more immediate conditions which surrounded Origen, that must be kept in view if we would explain the features of his conceptions. In brief, the age of Origen saw all the main lines of Greek speculation—the Platonic-Aristotelian, Epicurean, the Stoic, the skeptic, the Pythagorean and Platonic Eclectics, and the Jewish-Greek—concentrated in the general movement of thought. Philosophical dogmatism failing, recourse was had to the practical and religious interest for inner satisfaction. Philosophy itself gave up its dialectical method and metaphysical thinking. Knowledge becomes more and more identified with vision; intuition, mystical exaltation of the spirit, becomes more and more prominent. Knowledge and religious insight are identified. Polytheistic naturalism ceased to be a power as soon as personality and conduct became problems of thought. It is very important that we keep before us the syncretism of philosophical and religious opinion in Origen's day. Christianity took this age in hand, so to speak, and supplied it with a new spirit and hope.⁵² Origen's understanding of the significant and unparalleled work that the introduction of the personality of Christ, the Divine Teacher, into men's lives accomplished will be treated in the following chapter of this book. The activity of Christian and non-Christian Gnosticism and the activity of the Apologists are special influences that determine Origen's concept of knowledge. Harnack says that the Christian Gnostics were the first theologians of the Church.⁶³ Their object was to present Christianity as a rationally defensible content after the manner of the Greek, Jewish, and Oriental

cults. We recognize clearly the growth of the scientific spirit in the Church at this time.

In any listing of the more immediate influences which surrounded Origen, his grasp on the Incarnation—the central fact of Christianity—occupies the first place. Then, with reference to the Greek influences, he places himself in full sympathy with the noble thought of Plato that the craving for truth is divinely implanted in us all and cannot be repudiated by any. More positively, Origen borrows from Platonism his philosophical argument for the unity and spirituality of God.⁵⁴ Next, we observe the influence of the Stoical philosophy on Origen. “The Stoical spirit suited Origen’s ascetic temperament, and it is in this fact, rather than in any extensive adoption of Stoical ideas, that we have to notice Origen’s dependence on this school.”⁵³ The third influence in connection with which Origen formed his conception of knowledge is Gnosticism. Origen, as we have pointed out, recognized stages of *gnosis*, ranging all the way from simple faith to full vision; but at no time is knowledge the fanciful product that appears in Basilides, for example. A main difference seems to lie in the fact that Origen’s thought moves largely, if not wholly, within the sphere of the Scriptures and tradition, while Gnosticism did not accept the permanent validity of the Scripture canon or the authority of the whole Church. He expresses his amazement at the spectacle of intelligent men teaching the fortuitous origin of matter and holding to the crude dualism and emanationism of Gnosticism. He rejected it as repellent to the demand for unity, as well as opposed to the teaching of Christianity.⁵⁰ It seems obvious that Origen looks at these systems through their relationship to the practico-religious interest; this “adamantine” man will show Basilides and Marcion that Christian knowledge does not exclude, but rather comprehends, the truth of Gnosticism. Finally, we must not lose sight of the closeness of the connection between Origen and Philo. The influence of the school of Jewish Hellenism upon Origen was the most direct, perhaps, of any. Philo’s conception of knowledge had the inflexible hardness which belonged to his rigid belief in authority. This is one of the points of divergence between him and Origen. For Origen, as we have already seen, the Scriptures are the criterion of certainty in knowledge, since they contain a revelation of the divine reason; but Origen never forgets the imperfection of the media of revelation and has the temerity to say that there are “scandals and offenses and impossibilities,” as well as mistakes, in them, in consequence. Again, in both, the ground and source of inspiration and of the thought of the prophet is said to be the *logos*.

But the *logos* of Philo is a hypostasis standing apart from God and the World—a dualism corresponding to the Greek dualism of sense and reason; whilst in Origen there is an ontological unity underlying all reality. . . . Moreover, Origen’s *logos* is never a mere hypostasis; he, indeed, combats the idea mainly on the ground that knowledge would be impossible on the principles of a fundamental dualism. Origen’s *logos* is, primarily, a historical person, in whom are “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” by whom we come to know the “how and why” of all things. . . . The key to these differences lies in the fact that Origen’s reflection arose out of experiences such as Philo never had.

Both were monotheists of the most pronounced kind . . . but Origen was a Christian, and the incomparable richness of Origen’s conception of knowledge, its nature, processes, and results, was doubtless partly due to this fact.⁶⁷

In discussing Origen’s work, *Contra Celsum*, in particular, Denis maintains that the sources for his main data were derived from Christianity, from the traditions of the Church, the *regula fidei*,

and from Greek philosophy in the main.⁵⁸ Origen, the best type of the rational Christian philosopher who is also a dogmatic theologian, ever called for a larger use of reason in the affairs of faith. And in his system, we must hold in view the fact that authority can never quench reason.⁵⁹

Man in every age has an irrepressible desire to discern the truth as it pertains to his life and to discover the cause of the things about him. Many seekers after wisdom have employed the autonomous discursive reason, with its storehouse of empirical data, as the way to truth. Other, more perceptive thinkers have realized that sensible data can never ascertain to the fullest the depths of reality and have turned to a faith as the basis for all knowledge. Throughout the Christian era, the pendulum has swung from the extreme position of Tertullian's refutation of reason's validity in matters of faith, through the neatly compartmentalized system of Thomas Aquinas, to the avowed supremacy of reason in the post Reformation secularism. Tertullian, second-century Latin Father, crying out, "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church?"⁶⁰ refused to admit the necessity for or the validity of proud, independent, philosophical reason in the Christian religion. Thomas Aquinas, Latin theologian of the thirteenth century and doctor of the Church, with the aid of Aristotelian epistemology laid the normative basis for the relation of faith and reason in the Middle Ages and for all following Roman Catholic theology. Reason was believed to be good, within itself, and capable of aiding man in ascertaining the existence of God. It could provide the grounds for arguments through which the existence of God might be proved. Also, with the aid of the processes of negation and *analogiae entis*, knowledge about the nature of God might be discerned.⁶¹ Thus, reason, unaided and autonomous, could bring man to an awareness of the existence of God and of some of His attributes. But this knowledge was not complete and needed the power of faith. Reason complemented by faith could give to man the answer to his existence and salvation.⁶² Roman Catholic scholars, E. Gilson particularly, maintain that Thomas has given the normative synthesis for faith and reason; and yet it seems that it may be legitimately asked if Thomas did not open the way for a very definite bifurcation of faith and reason. Gilson admits that the synthesis of Thomas did not gain wide adherence in the Middle Ages, but he denies that it is responsible for any sharp division between faith and reason.⁶³ Whether or not he consciously bifurcated faith and reason, the result was such a division that the two went their separate ways in the years following his synthesis.

Between the exclusiveness of Tertullian and the neatly compartmentalized, completed system of Thomas Aquinas is the more cogent thought of St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, theologian and Christian philosopher in the Platonic stream of thought, who lived in the fourth century. He has formulated a synthesis of faith and reason that appears to be more related to the facts of man's existence and his Christian experience than is that of Thomas Aquinas. Whereas Thomas considered reason the starting point and believed this reason to be good and capable, in the system of Augustine faith is primary—*credo ut intelligam*: "I believe in order to understand." Reason, according to Augustine, cannot operate unaided, because it is perverted and must first be cleansed by faith; after conversion, it is the tool of faith through which knowledge is articulated. Therefore, through faith the heart of man is illuminated and enlightened and knowledge is received. This Augustinian illuminism has been reflected throughout the history of Christianity and in some way or other is related to all Christian philosophies with foundations in faith. Reason, of itself, cannot ascertain the knowledge necessary to man's ultimate well-being; faith ascertains that knowledge, and the cleansed and converted reason aids in its articulation.⁶⁴

A very challenging problem is to ascertain Origen's concept of the relationship between faith and reason, Christianity and philosophy, and to determine whether or not he foreshadows the Augustinian illuminism of two hundred years later. C. H. Dodd has a very interesting comment that is relevant to this problem. He writes:

In the period after the New Testament, Christian thought moved appreciably in the direction of a metaphysical type of religion, especially in the Greek fathers; but it is noteworthy that Origen, who stands nearer to neo-Platonism than most of them, prefaces his most comprehensive work, the *De Principiis*, with the traditional *kerygma*, in a form closely akin to that which can be recovered from the New Testament, and that he regards the *gnosis* which he has to communicate as a kind of commentary upon it, and not as the result of independent illumination.⁶⁵

Tixeront writes that Origen held that philosophers had learned by revelation at least some of the lofty ideas they had expressed, that they often agree with the law of God (*Contra Celsum*, V, 3; *In Genes.*, hom. XIV, 3), and that the latter completes their affirmations. "It is in this that Origen is truly a philosopher, viz., by the turn of his mind, restless and inquiring, his liking for speculation, the boldness with which he dares to reason even in supernatural problems."⁶⁶ De Faye remarks that it is philosophy which gives to Origen the rule and method of thought.*⁶⁷ Already we have pointed out that, according to Origen (*De Principiis*, Preface), it is permissible for the theologian to apply rational proofs to the doctrines of the faith and thereby articulate and investigate the teachings of revelation, but he must not distort the revelation or in any way base the validity of the teachings of the Church on philosophical speculation. Although reason may legitimately articulate and explain the doctrines of faith, the doctrines themselves are revealed through the Church and accepted on faith. There is in Origen a sense in which there is a higher wisdom for the Christian than just the revealed, simple faith. It is an articulation of that faith— but it must not be confused with an articulation apart from the revealed faith. It is an explanation and investigation of the revealed faith. Origen admits that faith gives freedom from ignorance, but that there is also a type of growth in the faith.⁶⁸

Perhaps something further should be said to indicate the wide gulfs between the theology of Origen and the prevailing secular thought of his day. Especially is this true in his doctrine of God. The Neo-Platonists would have agreed with Origen on the unity and the goodness of God, but they would not have adhered to the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, which is essential to the Christian faith. C. Elsee notes in his work on Neo-Platonism and Christianity that the idea that the very highest of beings, God, could be approached by the humblest of mankind is distinctly Christian.⁶⁹ Neither could the Greek philosopher have understood the Christian concept of the omnipresence of the Christian God. This is seen in Celsus' interpretation of God's coming to earth and thereby leaving his own abode vacant. To this, Origen answered that Celsus could not understand the words of the Lord, "Do I not fill heaven and earth (Jer. 23:24)?" Again, Origen's reply to Celsus' questioning as to whether God came down to earth to learn what was going on among men indicates the willingness of a Christian mind to rise by faith beyond the rational complications that would arise in the mind of the secular philosopher.⁷⁰ Other doctrines of Origen are also distinctly Christian as over against the prevailing Greek thought. In his doctrine of the soul, Origen has adhered to the doctrine of preexistence. Yet his Christian faith halts at the full implications of the Greek concept of the transmigration of souls. He asserts that the souls may

advance in orders toward God, but he denies that souls can sink far enough to enter irrational animals.⁷¹ Therefore, Origen's doctrine of the soul is a mixture of Christian and Greek thought, but he refuses to go so far as to accept the pagan idea of the transmigration of souls into irrational animals. Finally, Origen's insistence on the uniqueness of the Christian faith divides him from a type of philosophical tolerance of all religions. He firmly maintains, against Celsus, that the future life of blessedness is only for those who have accepted the religion of Jesus.

And do not suppose that it is not in keeping with the Christian religion for me to have accepted, against Celsus, the opinions of those philosophers who have treated of the immortality or after-duration of the soul; for, holding certain views in common with them, we shall more conveniently establish our position, that the future life of blessedness shall be for those only who have accepted the religion which is according to Jesus, and that devotion towards the Creator of all things which is pure and sincere, and unmingled with any created thing whatever. And let him who likes show what "better things" we persuade men to despise, and let him compare the blessed end with God in Christ,—that is, the word, and the wisdom, and all virtue,— which, according to our view, shall be bestowed, by the gift of God, on those who have lived a pure and blameless life, and who have felt a single and undivided love for the God of all things, with that end which is to follow according to the teaching of each philosophic sect, whether it be Greek or barbarian, or according to the professions of religious mysteries; and let him prove that the end which is predicted by any of the others is superior to that which we promise, and consequently that that is true, and ours not befitting the gift of God, nor those who have lived a good life; or let him prove that these words were not spoken by the divine Spirit, who filled the souls of the holy prophets.⁷²

Origen is a man of the Church, but he is a philosopher in the Church. This Church is young and only formulating its doctrines. We are in the period before the Nicene Creed and the great Councils of the Church. C. Bigg sums up very well the relationship of philosophy and theology for Origen. Origen is a Christian philosopher. The Church has handed down her tradition, which has not been explained and articulated; therefore, "it is the office of the sanctified reason to define, to articulate, to coordinate, even to expand, and generally to adapt to human needs the faith once delivered to the Church."⁷³ Origen's speculations are therefore done within the framework of the Church and her "rule of faith."⁷⁴ He stands within the Platonic stream of thought which Augustine is later to employ as the framework for his conception of faith and reason. Philosophy does not play the primary role in the Christian religion, but it has a significance not to be underestimated. It is not contrary to faith, but articulates faith. After all, Origen points out, there is in the Christian faith or system as much investigation into articles of belief, explanations of difficult sayings, explanations of the parables in the Gospels, and of countless other things, as in any other system.⁷⁵ In another passage Origen stresses that all philosophy is based on faith.⁷⁶ The philosophers—Stoic or Platonist have no real basis on which to criticize the faith premise of Christianity, he insists. Philosophy, just as does Christianity, has a faith basis that draws men because they believe certain things. Philosophy's tool of discursive reasoning is only a tool employed to expand and articulate that which is already believed. Origen admits the difficulty in bringing the philosophers to recognize this, but he maintains its truth in spite of their refutation of it. Here, it appears, Augustine is definitely foreshadowed—Origen, too, gave philosophy or reason the secondary and helping role in relation to the primacy of faith.

For Origen, as for Augustine later, knowledge is dependent on the illumination of the heart of God.

Man knows because God gives him knowledge. In the first book of *De Principiis*, Origen describes God as the “light which lightens the whole understanding of those who are capable of receiving truth.” By this light man discerns knowledge of all things and knows God. Origen quotes 1 John 1:5, “God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all”; and this is the light, he says, that enlightens the hearts of men.⁷⁷ Moreover, God illumines the hearts of *all* men. God hath not left Himself without a witness in the world. After stressing illumination according to capacity, in one of his homilies on Genesis, Origen says: “Christ bestows His light upon our minds, yet will He only give us real illumination if there is no sort of spiritual blindness to prevent this”; and in the same homily he continues: “And if a man be even so advanced as to be able to go up with Him to the mount, as Peter and James and John, he shall have the illumination not only of the light of Christ but even of the very Father’s voice.”⁷⁸ The doctrine of illuminism is the basis for a doctrine of general revelation, so that in every generation the wisdom of God passes into souls which it ascertains to be holy and converts them into friends and prophets of God.⁷⁹ God has implanted upon or sown in the hearts of all men those truths which He taught through the prophets and the Savior. Each man has written upon his heart by the finger of God the “requirements of the law.”⁸⁰ God illumines with His grace the hearts of all men. Yet all do not know God. What is the further qualification? Knowledge for Origen, as it was for Plato and as it became for Augustine, had an axiological reference. By the divine sense—not of the eyes, but of a pure heart, which is the mind—God may be seen by those who are worthy.⁸¹ Only the pure in heart can see God, can know God. Knowledge comes to man as he stands in a right relationship with the Lord of the Universe, as he tunes his life with the life of the Divine. Origen often employed the verse “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8) to illustrate the axiological basis of his theology.⁸² Man himself, Origen insists, cannot attain a pure heart; it is given to him by God. The man who prays as he should petitions God to create within him a clean heart.⁸³ When Origen asserts that only the pure in heart shall see God, he stands clearly within the Augustinian stream of orthodox Christianity. Knowledge, for Augustine, was related to the will—a man knows what he loves. As the will is moved and cleansed, it turns to God, who makes knowledge available to man.⁸⁴ Origen affirmed the freedom of the will for all men, and thus assigned to man an active role in attaining salvation. As he read the Scriptures, he was disturbed by the passages (Ex. 4:21, *e.g.*) that spoke of God as hardening the heart of man. He attempts to explain them in such a way that they will not take away from the free-will of man and also will not attribute any wickedness to God.⁸⁵ Origen never affirmed that man could save himself. God saves man, but man must first be willing. Man must submit to the power of God. Salvation depends on both God and man; the God who draws is met by the man who responds willingly.⁸⁶ In other words, man must submit; then God works. If there is difficulty, the cause lies in the will of man, which is reluctant to accept the belief that God is over all things.⁸⁷

To sum up several ideas: Knowledge comes to man in right relationship to God, and this right relationship is attained as God calls to man and man responds to the call. Knowledge of God, in the last analysis, comes through this faith relationship. Ultimately, for Origen, God cannot be known through the methods (of synthesis, analysis, and analogy) employed by the heathen philosophers to obtain knowledge of Him. Although Origen depends on these arguments to a limited degree, they are not primary in his epistemology.⁸⁸ They are secondary, and Origen refutes their validity as he indicates the Christian way of approaching God. Man, he insists, through his own intellectual faculties cannot reach God—rather, God, Himself, reaches out to man. God reveals Himself to man as man confesses his need for God’s aid and help. No one can know the living God save him to

whom that God reveals Himself. In answer to the three methods of Celsus, Origen writes:

For ourselves, we maintain that human nature is in no way able to seek after God, or to attain a clear knowledge of Him without the help of Him whom it seeks. He makes Himself known to those, who after doing all that their powers will allow, confess that they need help from Him, who discovers Himself to those whom He approves, in so far as it is possible for man and the soul still dwelling in the body to know God.⁸⁹

The epistemology of Origen is dependent on faith in revelation. That revelation is given in various ways to men, yet all ways are dependent on faith: and the faith itself depends on God who draws man.⁹⁰ W. Fairweather, in his book *Jesus and the Greeks, or Early Christianity in the Tideway of Hellenism*, points out that, for Origen, divine wisdom, as revealed in Christianity, immeasurably transcends the philosophical knowledge of men. Moreover, Fairweather contends that for Origen the Christian doctrine embraces whatever elements of truth are contained in Greek philosophy, of which it is the completion; that if he recognized philosophy as furnishing a series of steps in the right direction, Origen was also strongly convinced of its inadequacy. The true goal of Greek philosophy, as well as of the revealed wisdom proclaimed by the prophets, was the incarnation of Jesus. Without Him, perfect knowledge is an impossibility. Clement held that a man's life is likely to be virtuous in proportion to his knowledge of the truth. Origen made an advance upon this position by identifying human enlightenment with redemption. Men walk in light and practice virtue through Him who is the truth and who has fulfilled all righteousness. By the union of the divine and human natures in His own person, Christ has become the source of the new life of humanity. He concludes by saying: "Like Clement, Origen was at once an advocate and an opponent of Hellenistic philosophy."⁹¹ As already indicated, for Origen, Christianity is the fulfillment of philosophy. Human wisdom is the school of the soul; divine wisdom is the end. Faith, knowledge, wisdom—that, in his judgment, is the order of spiritual growth.^{*2}

Chapter Three

ORIGEN'S INTERPRETATION OF CHRIST THE DIVINE TEACHER

Having spoken of God in the opening chapter of the first book of his *De Principiis*, Origen turns in the second chapter to Christ. At the very beginning he calls attention to the distinction between the divine nature of Christ, by virtue of which he is the only begotten Son of God, and the human nature which he assumed when he appeared on earth. He then devotes himself to the former, leaving the human nature for later treatment. The Son of God was needed, according to Origen, as an agent of creation. God could not directly produce a world so unlike Himself. There must be an intermediate step in the process from the absolute unity and simplicity of the divine nature to the multiplicity and complexity of the created universe. This intermediate step is the Son who is divine and yet subordinate.¹ With reference to the redemption of the created world, Bigg points out that the Logos of God, who is eternally Wisdom, Word, Life, and Truth, becomes contingently a God-Man, a Ransom, a Physician, and a Sacrifice for the redemption of fallen spirits.²

The Son of God was called by Origen sometimes Logos (Reason or Word), sometimes Sophia

(Wisdom). This does not mean that Origen thought of Him as impersonal or unsubstantial, as a mere attribute or faculty of God. On the contrary, he thought of Him as a real being, as truly personal as God Himself.³ Origen marked the distinction between God and the Son of God by calling the former *ho theos*, the latter *theos*,⁴ Both are alike divine, but the latter is subordinate to the former, and so in some sense less than He.⁵ He is not self-existent, as God is; He is produced by Him. And He is produced that He may be God's agent in creation and revelation. Origen's distinctions between the Father and the Son are very illuminating. For Origen, the language of the New Testament makes it impossible not to recognize that the Son is another along with the Father, and that it is necessary that the Son be Son of a Father, and the Father be Father of a Son. His rejection of Monarchianism is made even more emphatic in the late work *On Prayer*. There seems to be a growing consensus of opinion among scholars that this does not mean that in Origen's mind the unity of the Godhead is given up. What it seems to mean is that the terminology for defining unity and distinction in the Godhead is still in a fluid and rudimentary stage. When Origen is arguing against Sabellianism, he is prepared to stress the difference between the Father and the Son even in respect to essential or substantial being; but when he is arguing against Marcionites, Gnostics, or pagan polytheists, he strongly urges the inseparable unity of the one true God.⁸ Origen's followers failed to understand the tension which he tried to maintain in his thinking about God, and exaggerated one side or the other of his affirmations. Such breaking asunder of the complex affirmations that Origen was trying to work out leads rather directly into the essential issues of the Arian-Nicene controversy.⁷ Here, we simply recognize that these two not easily reconcilable tendencies are both clearly present in Origen's own thought.

Origen believed that Jesus Christ is the God-man.⁸ On the one hand, Jesus is human. He has a human soul, and he has freedom of choice as do all men. He remained, however, close to God and chose only the good. Like all other souls, his soul was eternal and eternally united with the Word. Thus, because, on the other hand, he bound himself to God through the perfection of love, the Word united itself with his soul.® The soul picked for this honor was one which never ceased to live in close communion with the Father and the Word¹⁰

Origen used, as an illustration of the union of the human and the divine, a mass of red-hot iron kept constantly in the fire.¹¹ The soul lies perpetually in the Word, the humanity in the divinity, as iron in the fire. As the metal is capable of cold and heat, so is the soul capable of deification; the soul of Christ is completely transfused within the divine fire. This, in brief, is Origen's conception of the human nature and the Logos in the incarnate Word.

Jesus Christ is the only-begotten of the Father; He is the Wisdom of God.¹² There was no time when God did not generate this Wisdom. This Wisdom is eternal with God, not simply because He was produced before time or apart from time, but because He is always and continuously produced.¹³ "The Father did not beget the Son once and for all, and let him go after he was begotten, but he is always begetting him."¹⁴ Origen's phrase for this—"the eternal generation" of the Son—became classic in Christian theology. This Wisdom, referred to above, is also the Word of God because of its disclosing to all other beings the nature of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the Divine Wisdom.¹⁵ This Wisdom and Word is also the Truth and the Life. Since many persons fell from their original goodness, this Wisdom, Word, Truth, and Life became the Way—the Resurrection. It is through the Son that one can regain his divinity.¹⁶ This does not mean, however, that the Son is above the Father or equal to Him. The Father is above the Son; the

Son is begotten of Him.¹⁷ While it is important to insist upon the distinctions between Father and Son, it is quite clear that Origen rejects any view that the Son is of any other essential being than that of the Father. It is because the Son reveals the Wisdom and Truth of God, which were hidden to others, that He is of one substance with God. Origen explains this when he writes:

See, then, whether the Son of God, who is also called God's word and wisdom, and who alone knows the Father and reveals him to whom he will, to those, namely, who become capable of receiving his word and wisdom, may not perhaps be said to express the image of God's substance or subsistence for this reason, that he makes God understood and known; that is, when wisdom outlines first in herself the things which she wishes to reveal to others, by means of which they are to know and understand God, then she herself may be called the express image of God's substance.

In order, however, to understand still more completely how the Saviour is "the image of God's substance" or subsistence, let us use an illustration. . . . Let us suppose, for example, that there existed a statue of so great a size as to fill the whole world, but which on account of its immensity was imperceptible to anyone, and that another statue was made similar to it in every detail, in shape of limbs and outline of features, in form and material, but not in its immense size, so that those who were unable to perceive and behold the immense one could yet be confident that they had seen it when they saw the small one, because this preserved every line of limbs and features and the very form and material with an absolutely indistinguishable similarity.

It is by some such likeness as this that the Son, in emptying himself of his equality with the Father, and showing to us a way by which we may know him, becomes an "express image" of God's substance; so that, through this fact of his becoming to us the brightness, we who were not able to look at the glory of pure light while it remained in the greatness of his godhead, may find a way of beholding the divine light through looking at the bright-

The work which is performed by the Redeemer, who thus comes into this present age for our sakes, is in the first instance a work of revelation and instruction. In dealing with Origen's conception of the Incarnation, McGiffert writes that in order to promote human salvation, the Logos or Son of God became incarnate that he might be seen by men and might show them by example as well as precept the way of life. This is the genuine image of God; it is the real image scaled down in such a way that the revelation is at once authentic and at the same time apprehensible. As has already been pointed out, this revelation of God is the revelation of one who is perfect in justice and perfect in mercy.¹⁹ The mind of man, which had been clouded by his own turning away from God and focusing upon himself, is illuminated with a fresh and vivid awareness of what God really is. This is the first part of the Saviour's task.

"The saving work of Christ, the incarnate Logos," writes McGiffert, "was commonly represented by Origen as a work of instruction." He points out further that Christ showed men the will of God both by teaching and example, telling them of the future rewards and punishments to follow on obedience or disobedience and opening to them the depths of wisdom and knowledge reserved for those competent to understand.²⁰ Salvation, for Origen, means the restoration of fallen spirits to their original oneness with God. This is accomplished by the Logos or Wisdom and by the Holy Spirit, the former instructing men, the latter sanctifying them.²¹ Without this instruction and help,

no one can meet temptation and gain virtue and achieve that likeness to God which is the highest boon.²² Help, however, will be given only to those who desire it and who strive to do right.²³ It is clear in Origen that men have not lost the freedom they possess as rational creatures, but rather that the habit of sin and the temptations of the flesh make it difficult to avoid evil and they must constantly struggle against it. Good and bad angels are always seeking to influence them, and they carry on a constant battle with each other to secure mastery over them.²⁴

In connection with the meaning of salvation for Origen, an additional statement should be made concerning his conception of the manner of the Incarnation. As has already been pointed out, in order to promote human salvation the Logos or Son of God became incarnate that he might be seen by men and might show them by example as well as precept the way of life.²⁵ McGiffert writes that, unlike Clement, Origen was much interested in the Incarnation and it was characteristic of him that the method of it particularly intrigued him. The divine Logos could not directly assume a human body, since the unlikeness between them was too great. Therefore, he united with one of the created spirits, who, by his preeminent virtue, had proved himself worthy of the honor. This spirit, joined to the divine Logos, took on a human body, thus becoming a human soul, and advanced step by step until he attained complete divinity. This human person, possessing a human soul and body, is known as the Son of God, as the Logos also is, so that the term Son of God is used in two senses: to denote the Logos, divine from all eternity, and also the human being who became divine by a life of perfect virtue. The Son of God who suffered and died upon the cross was the latter, not the former—that is, the human being, not the eternal divine Logos.²⁶

Charles Bigg, whose book *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* has long been considered the most informative work in English on Clement and Origen, discusses the teaching of Philo concerning the Logos in relation to the church at Alexandria.²⁷ The Logos doctrine of Philo seems to have influenced the Logos doctrine of Origen. For Philo, the Logos stands in a particular position between God and man, partaking of both natures. He is the mediator who represents in the eyes of God the whole family upon earth. Yet he is not the point of communication between God and man, because man rises above him to God. The knowledge which he gives is a lower knowledge, and he elicits only a temporary and provisional allegiance. Yet he is necessary as the door through which man passes to direct communion with God. He is the first prophet of the Most High. He is the giver of eternal Light and the Saviour. Bigg connects St. John's conception of the Word with the thought at Alexandria.²⁸ In pointing out that the subordination doctrine of Origen is Scriptural, Bigg writes: "We shall however wrong Origen if we attempt to derive his subordination from metaphysical considerations. It is purely Scriptural and rests wholly and entirely upon the words of Jesus—'My Father is greater than I,' 'that they may know Thee the only true God,' 'None is good save One.'"²⁹

The first part of Christ's task which we have considered is his work of revelation and instruction. The second and equally indispensable part is that he offers his soul, his finite spirit, as a ransom for the souls of those who are held under the sway of the demonic powers. Christ gives himself in order that they may be set free.³⁰ He was sacrificed for the whole world. The Saviour who had been crucified goes down into the place of the devils themselves, and when He, essential light, appears in the place of darkness, the power of darkness is broken even in its own stronghold. It is not broken by violence; sin could yield only to the inexorable light of truth and of love. His conquest is more than the conquest on behalf of men over the powers of evil. It is that; but it is also

the conquest of evil in the hearts of the fallen spirits, so that they themselves are now turned back towards God in varying degrees. Redemption is offered for the whole of creation.⁸¹

Furthermore, redemption, according to Origen, involves the participation of believers in the life through which is the true light. It is not simply that a new vision has been set before them, but rather that a new motive has been quickened within them. The light of the Logos becomes their life.

It is at this point that the Holy Spirit takes up the work of the Logos and becomes the principle of light in individual believers and in the Christian community. In a certain sense the whole drama of Creation and Fall has now reached its climax and turned back once more in the direction of God. Thus, the work of the Logos spreads and grows, widens and deepens in history, so that more and more of the created spirits are turned back on the road that will eventually lead them back to God.³²

Origen conceives the life of the redeemed within the Church much in the same way as that life was conceived by Clement. There is the life of the simple believer, who follows the teachings of Christian morality and who lives with faith in Jesus Christ as Logos; but there is also the more enlightened life of the Christian gnostics, into whose life the truth has made its way, not simply in terms of obedience, but in terms of rational insight. In the Church one recognizes that both these groups of Christians are on the way back. The believers will come to have in time the sort of understanding of God that is the only basis of full return to Him, without which simple acceptance upon authority of a particular teaching is inadequate to fulfill powers with which every created spirit is made.³³ It is very important to note that this involves reference, finally, to Origen's doctrine of things to come. He gives a description of the future that is, indeed, on a large scale. He conceives of a kind of waiting-room after death for those who died here in sin and those who died here in faith. Until the end of this present era, the spirits of unrepentant sinners will remain in Hades, and the souls of believers will pass into Paradise, which is likewise an intermediary stage. Eventually the age will come to a close, a new age will begin, and both those who have died here unrepentant and those who have died here in faith will go forward, learning through punishment and through regeneration. Regeneration, according to Origen, is not an instantaneous change from a state of being in sin to a state of being fully saved, but rather a process of learning and of growth. Hereafter we look forward to a long-continued schooling at the hands of God, whose punishments, Origen thinks, must all be regarded as therapeutic or educational rather than as vindictive.³⁴ The sole purpose of punishment is to purify. Ultimately all souls must be purified, and at the end of a world-epoch there must be the rescue and deification of all spirits—even the devil himself. Then there will begin a new world-epoch—a new distribution of souls. At the second coming of Christ, men will be resurrected, and they will be reunited with their bodies. This body will be a glorified spiritual body.³⁵ The end must be like the beginning—a perfect unity with God.³⁸ It is the coming of God's Kingdom. It is a time when death will be conquered, and all things at that time will be subjected to Christ.³⁷ After this has been accomplished, God will become the direct ruler of the world. This Kingdom of God rests upon a number of general principles: justice and goodness are in their highest manifestation identical; God does not punish, but He has made man so that in virtue only can he find peace and happiness; suffering is not a tax upon sin, but it is the wholesome reaction by which the diseased soul struggles to cast out the poison of its malady; if we have done wrong, it is good to suffer, for anguish will cease when health is restored (cf. Plato's *Gorgias*); and evil is against the plan of God, for it is created not by Him but by ourselves.³⁸

In a brilliant article, “Origen, Eusebius, and the Iconoclastic Controversy,” George Florovsky states that Origen’s Christology was utterly inadequate and ambiguous.³⁹ Florovsky maintains that the whole set of his metaphysical presuppositions made it very difficult for Origen to integrate the Incarnation, as an unique historical event, into the general scheme of Revelation, stressing that everything historical was for him but transitory and accidental. The historical Incarnation, therefore, had to be regarded only as a moment in the continuous story of the permanent theophany of the Divine Logos—a central moment, in a sense, but still no more than a central symbol. Florovsky writes:

In the perspective of a continuous Divino-cosmic process there was no room for a true historical uniqueness, for an ultimate decision, accomplished in time, by one major event. No event could, in this perspective, have an ultimate meaning or value by itself as an event. All events were to be interpreted as symbols or projections of some higher, super-temporal and super-historical, reality. The historical was, as it were, dissolved into the symbolic.⁴⁰

The reality or historicity of the events was not denied by Origen, but they were to be interpreted as hints and signs and symbols. Florovsky has well stressed that it would be an obvious injustice if we imputed to Origen a neglect of history, of the “historic Jesus,” and him crucified. As Bigg has aptly remarked: “the Cross, in all its wonder, its beauty, its power, was always before the eyes of Origen.”⁴¹ This symbolism of Origen had nothing docetical about it, and yet the “historic cross” of Jesus was for Origen just a symbol of something higher. Only those who are still children could be satisfied, in Origen’s opinion, with the “somatic sense” of the Scripture, which is but “a shadow of the mysteries of Christ.” The more advanced are concerned with the truth itself, the eternal or spiritual Gospel, of which the historic Gospel is but a shadow. Origen quite clearly distinguishes between and contrasts an “external” and a “hidden” Christianity. Only for educational reasons and purposes is it necessary to be at once “somatic” and “pneumatic.” In commenting upon this, Florovsky quotes Origen:

One has to tell the “fleshly” Christians that he does not know anything but Christ Jesus and Him Crucified. “But should we find those who are perfected in the spirit, and bear fruit in it, and are enamoured of the heavenly wisdom, these must be made to partake of that Word which, after it was made flesh, rose again to what it was in the beginning with God.” Ultimately, we have to “transform” the “sensual” Evangelium into the “spiritual.”⁴²

In other words, the New Testament is to be interpreted in the same manner as the Old—as an anticipation. Origen concludes that in the Old Testament the whole truth was already available for the advanced. The prophets and sages of the Old Dispensation have actually seen and known more and better than “somatics” in the Church, “and could see better that we can the realities of which [the happenings of their times] were the shadows.” They have seen the glory of Christ, the image of the invisible God, “advanced from the introduction they had in types to the vision of truth.” Origen dwells at length on this topic and concludes: “Those who were made perfect in earlier generations knew not less than the Apostles did of what Christ revealed to them, since the same teacher was with them as He who revealed to the Apostles the unspeakable mysteries of godliness.” The only advantage of the Apostles was that “in addition to knowing these mysteries, they saw the power at work in the accomplished fact.”⁴³ Florovsky points out that the allegorical method was first invented in order to interpret the promise. It could not suit the new purpose, for a

Christian exegete had to interpret an achievement. In other words, Florovsky further maintains, a Christian allegorist was approaching the Gospel as if it were still nothing more than the Law; he approached the New Testament as if it were still the Old; he approached the achievement as if it were but a promise. There was indeed a further promise in the achievement, yet the fact of the accomplishment should not have been disregarded. And it was at that point that the “allegorical” method was found to fail.⁴⁴

According to Origen, the story or narrative is but a starting-point. One begins with Jesus of the Gospel, with Him the Crucified, but his aim should be to arrive at the vision of the Divine glory. The humanity of Jesus is but the first and lowest step of our spiritual understanding, which is to be transcended.⁴⁵ Jesus himself has transcended the state of his humiliation, which had been superseded and, as it were, abrogated by the state of his glorification, Origen contends. His humanity has not been laid aside, yet it was exalted to a higher perfection, in an intimate blending with his divinity.⁴⁶ “And truly, after his resurrection, he existed in a body intermediate, as it were, between the grossness of that he had before his sufferings, and the appearance of a soul uncovered by such a body.” And therefore, after his resurrection, Jesus simply could not appear to the people “in the same manner as before that event.” Even in the days of his flesh he “was more things than one,” that is, he had no standing appearance, “nor was he seen in the same way by all who beheld him.” His external outlook depended upon the measure of ability to receive him. His transfiguration on the Mount was but one instance of the adaptability of his body. “He did not appear the same person to the sick, and to those who needed his healing aid, and to those who were able by reason of their strength to go up the mountain along with him.”⁴⁷ With reference to this interpretation, Florovsky writes:

As strange and forbidding as this interpretation may seem to be, it has been preserved in the tradition up to the later ages. We find it, for example, in St. Maximus. He speaks of the mystical experience, but his phrasing is almost a literal quotation from Origen. The Lord does not appear to all in his present glory, but to those who are still under way he comes in the form of a servant, and to those who are capable to follow him up to the mountain of his transfiguration he would appear in the form of God, in which he existed before the world began. (S. Maxim. Cap. theol.II, 13, MPG, XC, 1129-1132.)⁴⁸

The question has been asked: If one were to walk in the steps of Origen, would he really, be interested in any “historical” image or “ikon” of the Lord? For Origen, what could be depicted was already overcome and superseded, and the true and glorious reality of the Risen Lord escapes any depiction or description. Moreover, from the Origenist point of view, the true face of the Lord could hardly be depicted even in the days of his flesh; only his image was accommodated to the capacity of a “somatic” man, which “appearance” was in no sense his true and adequate image. Origen himself was not concerned with the pictorial images; yet what he had to say against the pagan images could be very easily used against the icons. In the final book of *Contra Celsum*, Origen answers in a beautiful manner the question with regard to images or icons.

In all those, then, who plant and cultivate within their souls, according to the divine word, temperance, justice, wisdom, piety, and other virtues, these excellencies are their statues they raise, in which we are persuaded that it is becoming for us to honor the model and prototype of all statues: “the image of the invisible God,” God the Only begotten. And again, they who “put off the

old man with his deeds, and put on the new man . . .” in taking upon them the image of Him who hath created them, do raise within themselves a statue like to what the Most High God Himself desires.

. . . , And everyone who imitates Him according to his ability, does by this very endeavor raise a statue according to the image of the Creator, for in the contemplation of God with a pure heart they become imitators of Him. And, in general, we see that all Christians strive to raise altars and statues as we have described them, and these not of a lifeless and senseless kind. . . ,⁴⁹ De Faye contends that there can be no doubt of the affinity between the common faith in Christ held by the Christians of the third century and the doctrine of Origen.⁵⁰ He maintains that the reason why, at the end of the fourth century, it was possible to accuse Origen of heresy was that in the interval the common faith in Christ had become modified; it had taken on a dogmatic precision which debased it considerably. De Faye writes:

Men believed they had remained faithful to tradition, whereas they had deviated considerably from it. Consequently we think it right to say that the [Christological] doctrine we have expounded is an interpretation in philosophical terms of the faith in the “Lord” which was current at the time. Origen, in full sincerity, was able to commune with confessors and martyrs. Did not he himself suffer like them and for the same faith?⁵¹

Moreover, De Faye asks other very pertinent questions with regard to the work of Origen. Would Origen’s discussions on the nature of Christ, the elements which constitute this nature, his relations on the one hand with the Father and on the other with beings of lower rank, not still be too subtle and abstruse for the convinced militant Christian of today? Are not the engrossing interests of the Christian of the present day more practical? What does the most earnest Christian today seek in the Gospel, or expect of Christ, if not, above all else, a rule of life and the practical means of applying this rule? It should be said that he has the same requirements for collective life, society, the nation, humanity as a whole. For society he demands moral direction, just as for the individual. He considers that Collective bodies also should have superior ends toward which to aim, and that human evolution "should pursue a certain goal—the Ideal, or the Kingdom of God. Too, he relies upon religious faith to procure for mankind the energies exacted by the application of his ideal of life. Whereas the modern Christian understands the utility—even the necessity—of possessing clear and well-reasoned doctrines, to his mind, however, the application of this Christian ideal is more important than more theoretical matters. It is not difficult to understand that to this Christian, evidently, Origen’s point of view will appear too intellectualistic and too doctrinaire.⁵²

After the previous questions and observations, De Faye reveals some genuine insight into the life and work of Origen in his concluding remarks relative to Origen’s Christology. He writes as follows:

Still, we must beware of overlooking the expediency of Origen’s effort, nay, of its necessity at the time it was made. Up to that day, all Christians looked upon the Gospel not as a theory, a doctrine, ideas, but as beliefs, precepts, an ideal of life. Admirable in action, firm in belief and heroic in faith, they were very feeble from the standpoint of ideas, of doctrine, of thought. In the long run, this inadequacy would certainly have become injurious. For the defense as well as for the propagation of the Christian faith, a strong intellectual equipment was indispensable. One had to be able to

confront the philosophers with what these latter called dogmas (*dogmata*). Along with Clement his master, Origen saw this, and with incomparable valor set to work. This is why he made it his purpose to supplement faith in Christ with a Christological doctrine.⁵³

The fact that the necessity of formulating a learned Christology did not prevent Origen from insisting very powerfully on the moral and spiritual influence of his Logos Jesus is equally admirable. Whereas Celsus systematically vilified the Jesus of the Gospels, Origen set forth the fruitful influence, so productive of moral life and heroism, which this Jesus Christ was exercising more than two centuries after his coming. He, who was able to discern so correctly the genuine secret of the power of his Christ, was no simple theorist, however abstruse his Christological doctrine might appear. “In him, the significance of life formed one with the virtuosity of the logician. Herein lay his originality.”⁵⁴

Already it has been pointed out that, at first sight, Origen’s system of redemption is of like nature with that of most of the Gnostic masters. Nevertheless, it differs considerably from them. According to Origen, moral freedom plays in redemption the same role as in the Fall. The beings that ascend are consenting beings; there is nothing inevitable about their return to God. According to Origen, redemption is speedy or tardy according to the progress of each one. Here is a man whose sojourn on this earth will suffice for his complete development. And here, let us say, is another who will detach himself from his terrestrial nature but slowly; he will have need of more than one life on earth. In depicting the salvation of the Samaritan woman, who represents the soul that has strayed and is lost, Origen holds that, in bringing her back to God, Jesus must become her instructor, providing illumination by persuasion at each stage.⁵⁵ It is moral freedom that gives its special character to the redemption conceived by Origen. In order that redemption, which is the effect of freedom, may come about and that beings may be saved, it is necessary to work upon them by persuasion, to mold and to educate them. Education, which consists essentially in divine training and guidance, is, in the final analysis, the method of redemption as understood by Origen. The God of Origen, as already pointed out, is an educator; the salvation He wills can be said to be an education. Education, let us repeat, is the method of redemption according to Origen, and the instrument of redemption is the Logos Jesus.

In writing of Origen, of his work as a teacher and preacher in the Great Tradition, Petry has pointed out in a meaningful way, indeed, Origen’s educator-faith in God’s power.

The divine “cure of souls” is, truly, a “school of souls,” even as Christ the Lord is “Master of souls.” Origen presses this instructional and reclamatory element to its logical end. Heretics will be subjected to redeeming chastisements. The education of souls is one of stages—seven, in fact, as he sets forth in his homily on Jer. 7:2. Some there are who have their eyes opened with the completion of the first stage. Others prove still refractory to the divine preceptor with the conclusion of the seventh. What can be done then is not discussed in this context, though the famous passages in the *De Principiis* show how strong was Origen’s educator-faith in God’s power, ultimately, to enlighten all minds and hearts unto salvation.⁵⁶

Perhaps more should be said about redemption as the work of a divine educator. De Faye maintains⁵⁷ that equally removed from Gnosticism and from popular Christianity, Origen’s doctrine of redemption is quite his own; moreover, its originality was even the reason why it was not

understood. The writer is inclined to agree with him. One inevitable consequence of Origen's point of view is that redemption will require a long period of time, since it is conceived of as the result of a divine education or training. Already we have emphasized that there will be the greatest diversity, for a great deal will depend on the persons to be taught. What does Origen think of the masses? De Faye writes:

Origen knows them well; he cherishes no illusions regarding them. Every page of his homilies tells us what he thinks of simple believers. . . . They imagine that God has a body. They are unable to read the Scriptures and know nothing of its allegorical meaning. Like the Jews, they keep to the literal interpretation. Consequently, each of his homilies is a passionate effort to mold and educate these masses. No wonder he had convinced himself that the duration of a single human life was insufficient to complete the redemption of simple believers, as he understood it, at all events. This is why he adopts the doctrine of the plurality of worlds. . . . Origen makes it his own because the redemption of the majority of reasonable beings cannot come about apart from a succession of worlds. These latter become schools for human souls. A soul passes from school to school until at last it has come to understand the conditions of its return to God and of its salvation, and has agreed to these conditions.⁵⁸

Another consequence of Origen's point of view is that redemptive education, as he understands it, will be alike moral and intellectual. He shows himself faithful to the Greek tradition. From its beginnings, philosophy closely linked together morality and intellectual development. So widespread is this tendency that we find it among the early Christians when they deal with philosophy. Clement of Alexandria depicts the perfect Christian as the "Gnostic"—the man possessed both of science and of love. Quite similarly, Origen draws no distinction between moral and intellectual progress, and recognizes that both conditions are essential to salvation. Nevertheless, since he is strongly Platonist, and in this capacity possesses the vision of eternal Ideas which almost transport him into a state of ecstasy, he shows a certain tendency to emphasize transcendent knowledge.⁵⁹

Origen was an educator in his inmost soul, and he believed that truth would effect the conquest of the lowest and basest of sinners. He understood redemption as a return to God, with the Logos Jesus as the instrument of redemption. History offers some explanation of Origen's attitude toward a doctrine of the expiatory value of the death on the cross. In the second century it is baptism that procures forgiveness of sins. This refers to sins committed in the days when men were pagan. The neophyte is supposed to come out of the baptismal water purified and regenerated. He has regained his full liberty, and for a considerable time it was not admitted that he could fall back into sin. Doubtless, in conformity with the Scriptures, forgiveness is associated with Jesus Christ, but this is indirectly. It is really baptism that cleanses from sin. This seems to be the position of Clement and of Origen. Again, however, we need to take into consideration Origen's special difficulty in entertaining any juridical conception of salvation. Redemption, to his mind, was essentially the result of a prolonged spiritual education. He looked upon God, not as a judge who requires expiation for a fault and chastises with the express intention of causing suffering, but rather as a Father who inflicts suffering only in order to obtain the amelioration of the sinner. The test, then, is no longer a punishment; it is a means of education. Consequently, it is very difficult for Origen to admit that there is an expiatory significance in the death of Jesus Christ. In his works he does not regard it as a real element in his doctrine of redemption. In explaining New Testament texts which

imply expiation, Origen attempts first to explain them apart from the idea of expiation, trying to eliminate it by means of allegory. Later we shall see, for instance, that he compares the death of the martyr with that of Jesus Christ, for to Origen martyrdom was the supreme achievement of the Christian life. His Logos Jesus is in effect the divine instrument whereby life is transmitted to those beings lower in the scale than himself; he (the Logos Jesus) is the efficacious instrument for the return to God. As De Faye reminds us, Origen must not be judged by a theology dating from Saint Augustine, but by the Christian beliefs of his age.⁶⁰

What is the dominant impression left by Origen's interpretation of the work and office of the Divine Word? Does it spring rather from Greek philosophy than from Christianity itself? Some may consider that it has greater affinity with Gnostic thought than with the faith of Christian martyrs and confessors. The writer thinks that the material in Origen's commentaries, homilies, and practical treatises on prayer and on martyrdom, insofar as he has been able to examine them, indicate that such an impression would not be true, and that the implied judgment would be incorrect. Before a specific examination of this material, the conclusion reached by De Faye with reference to Origen's interpretation of Christ the Divine Teacher is worthy of note.

The thing which distinguishes the doctrine of Origen not only from the syncretistic religions of the day and from Greek religious philosophy, but also from the Christian Gnosticism of a Basilides, a Valentinus, and even from that of a Ptolemy or a Heracleon, is the importance it attributes to Jesus Christ. In the last analysis, he is the key-stone of the entire structure. To obtain a thorough comprehension of this, the first two volumes of the commentary on John should be read again and again. There we should find that Jesus Christ occupies the central place in Origen's thought, and that

Origen conceives neither the existence of the Cosmos and of mankind, nor their destiny, apart from the presence and the influence of the Logos Jesus. We should not forget with what warmth of conviction the author of the *Contra Celsum* rejects the attempt which this philosopher makes to under-estimate Jesus Christ. One might quote more particularly the thrilling pages in which Origen lays stress on the moral and spiritual influence always exercised by Christ. It is by the life-work of Jesus that he explains the progress of Christianity. To it he attributes the moral purity, the transformation of feeling and the heroism that characterized the Christians of his time. The reality of this life-work proved the divinity of his Christ. In a word, his doctrine of redemption was but the interpretation in philosophical language of the Gospel saying: the Son of Man came to seek that which was lost.⁸¹

In his article "The Condemnation of Origen," Cyril C. Richardson maintains that one of the most unfortunate circumstances in the whole history of the interpretation of Origen has been the unwarranted stress laid on the *De Principiis*. No doubt this has been largely due to the novelty of such a writing, since it is the first significant attempt to formulate a philosophy of Christian faith. Yet, it should be stressed, the speculative philosophy of Origen forms but a small part of his contribution to Christian life and thought. Richardson writes:⁶² "In the treatise *On Prayer*, in the *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, and above all in the Commentaries, there is revealed a very different character. In these Origen spoke to Christians: in the *De Principiis* he addressed himself to philosophers." Richardson continues: "Particularly in the Commentaries is there to be found a firm grasp of the basic principles of the Christian religion, graced with a wide sympathy and a wealth of

biblical learning.” Moreover, we are told in this article dealing with the condemnation of Origen, “one of the saddest episodes in the history of the Christian church,” that the champions of his orthodoxy—Pamphilus and Eusebius—made a happy point in the preface to their *Apology* when they maintained that the errors with which Origen was charged were not the subjects of systematic treatises but were thrown out in occasional and scattered references.

W. Volker,⁶³ like R. Cadiou, writes to present a re-evaluation of Origen. In *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*, Volker begins with a telling review of modern estimates of Origen, from Luther down, and observes that not only do the judgments recorded show wide divergence and often actual contradiction, but they reflect only too faithfully the personal views of the writers, or those characteristics of their age and school. He draws the conclusion that they make an Origen after their own image because the real Origen has eluded them. He acknowledges a new period of critical insight as begun by Harnack, but thinks that both he and De Faye make a *monstrum* of Origen through seeing only his intellectual side. Volker looks for the true personality of Origen along the road of a study of his piety. The deepest thing, he holds, in Origen is not intellectual curiosity but personal desire for spiritual communion with God. Intellectual zest for knowledge of the universe, both visible and invisible, is bound up with the conviction that the order of the Cosmos and the life of the soul are mutually interpretative. Volker seeks his material not so much in the dogmatic and philosophical passages as in the Homilies and those parts of the Commentaries which bear on spiritual life. He draws a picture of Origen as one for whom the empirical Church is the God-given ladder set up on earth whereby souls can attain their restoration, the upper ranges of which are formed by the “Spiritual,” whose lives are given to a conscious and wholehearted quest of perfection. The main part of Volker’s book is devoted to an analysis of this pursuit of the perfect life. He draws the general conclusion that, while Neoplatonist and Stoic ideas retain a decisive influence, Christian tradition and Scripture have the upper hand, and make Origen a true leader of Christian spirituality. From this special line of approach he reviews Origen’s teaching on the Soul of Christ and on human divinization. He sees the “Spiritual,” not as a race apart, but as a charismatic ministry within the Church, whose service of the people, indeed, leaves them very little time to think of themselves.

It is not without great meaning that Origen lays stress on the moral and spiritual influence always exercised by Christ. Volker points out⁶⁴ that it is generally true of the eclectic philosophers that they are strong moralists. The emphasis on ethics rather than on metaphysics became in Clement and Origen the meeting point of Christian and Greek thought.

They are not concerned to harmonize Christianity and Platonic metaphysics, but to point out that the “likeness to God” declared to be the ideal by the positive philosophers was made actual by the Christian faith. It is quite misleading to label Clement as the moralist and Origen as the philosopher and metaphysician; Origen is as much moralist as Clement. The difference lies rather in the fact that Origen deals with ethical principles where Clement speaks of the practical details of the Christian moral life. To both of them Christianity is not a philosophical school or point of view; it is primarily a living religion demanding right conduct.⁶⁵

Something of Origen’s passionately allegorical, yet highly intellectualized, devotion to Christ, the Divine Teacher, is discernible in the following excerpts from his commentaries and homilies. Origen declares that Jesus Himself is the Gospel:

Our whole energy is to be directed to the effort to penetrate to the deep things of the meaning of the Gospel and to search out the truth that is in it when divested of types. Now what the Gospels say is to be regarded in the light of promises of good things; and we must say that the good things the Apostles announce in this Gospel are simply Jesus.

One good thing which they are said to announce is the resurrection; but the resurrection is in a manner Jesus, for Jesus says: "I am the resurrection" [John 11:25]. Jesus preaches to the* poor those things which are laid up for the saints, calling them to the divine promises. And the holy Scriptures bear witness to the Gospel announcements made by the Apostles and to that made by our Saviour. . . . Isaiah says: "How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim good tidings" [Isa. 52:7]; he sees how beautiful and how opportune was the announcement of the Apostles who walked in Him who said, "I am the way," and praises the feet of those who walk in the intellectual way of Christ Jesus, and through that door go in to God. They announce good tidings, those whose feet are beautiful, namely, Jesus.⁶⁸

Moreover, Jesus is all good things; hence the Gospel is manifold. Origen writes that to say that the Apostles preach the Saviour is to say that they preach these good things. For this is He who received from the good Father that He Himself should be these good things, so that each man receiving from Jesus the thing or things he is capable of receiving may enjoy good things.⁶⁷

In his *Commentary on John*, Origen stresses that Christ's character as wisdom is prior to his other characters.

If we collect the titles of Jesus, the question arises which of them were conferred on Him later, and would never have assumed such importance if the saints had begun and had also persevered in blessedness. Perhaps Wisdom would be the only remaining one, or perhaps the Word would remain too, or perhaps the Life, or perhaps the Truth, not the others, which He took for our sake. And happy indeed are those who in their need for the Son of God have yet become such persons as not to need Him in His character as a physician healing the sick, nor in that of a shepherd, nor in that of redemption, but only in His characters as wisdom, as the word and righteousness, or if there be any other title suitable for those who are so perfect as to receive Him in His fairest characters.⁶⁸

Origen presents Christ as the Truth in a very effective manner. He holds that the Only-begotten is the truth because He embraces in Himself, according to the Father's will, the whole reason of all things, with perfect clearness, and, being the truth, communicates to each creature in proportion to its worthiness. He writes:

And should anyone inquire whether all that the Father knows, according to the depth of His riches and His wisdom and His knowledge, is known to our Saviour also, and should he, imagining that he will thereby glorify the Father, show that some things known to the Father are unknown to the Son, although He might have had an equal share of the apprehensions of the unbegotten God, we must remind him that it is from His being the truth that He is Saviour, and add that if He is the truth complete, then there is nothing true which He does not know.⁶⁹

Origen's understanding of Christ as Teacher and Master is seen in the following passage:

It is plain to all how our Lord is a teacher and an interpreter for those who are striving towards godliness, and on the other hand a master of those servants who have the spirit of bondage to fear [Rom. 8:15], who make progress and hasten towards wisdom, and are found worthy to possess it. For “the servant knoweth not what the master wills” [John 15:15], since he is no longer his master, but has become his friend. The Lord Himself teaches this, for He says to hearers who were still servants: “You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am” [John 13:13], but in another passage, “I call you no longer servants, for the servant knoweth not what is the will of his master, but I call you friends” [John 15:15], because “you have continued with Me in all My temptations” [Lk. 22:28].⁷⁰

Also, in his Commentary on John, Origen writes meaningfully of Christ as Wisdom and Sanctification and Redemption. He sees in Christ the whole of wisdom, and he holds that each of the prophets and sages, in proportion as he embraces wisdom, partakes to that extent of Christ, in that He is Wisdom.

Many things came into being by the help of Wisdom, which do not lay hold of that by which they were created; and few things indeed there are which lay hold not only of that wisdom which concerns themselves, but of that which has to do with many things besides, namely, of Christ who is the whole of wisdom. But each of the sages, in proportion as he embraces wisdom, partakes to that extent of Christ, in that He is wisdom; just as everyone who is greatly gifted with power, in proportion as he has power, in that proportion also has a share in Christ, inasmuch as He is power. The same is to be thought about sanctification and redemption; for Jesus Himself is made sanctification to us and redemption. Each of us is sanctified with that sanctification, and redeemed with that redemption. . . . Christ is our redemption because we had become prisoners and needed ransoming. I do not enquire as to His own redemption, for though He was tempted in all things as we are, He was without sin, and His enemies never reduced Him to captivity.⁷¹

Some of the true greatness of Christ the Divine Teacher is pointed out in Origen’s interpretation of the words “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” Origen says:

If we give a reasonable interpretation to the words “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ,” we shall not be alarmed at the possible discrepancy with them of that other saying, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” If it is Jesus who says, “I am the truth,” then how does the truth come through Jesus Christ, since no one comes into existence through himself? We must recognize that this very truth, the essential truth, which is prototypal, so to speak, of that truth which exists in souls endowed with reason, that truth from which, as it were, images are impressed on those who care for truth, was not made through Jesus Christ, nor indeed through anyone, but by God;—just as the Word was not made through anyone which was in the beginning with the Father;—and as wisdom which God created in the beginning of His ways was not made through anyone, so the truth also was not made through anyone. That truth, however, which is with men came through Jesus Christ, as the truth in Paul and the Apostles came through Jesus Christ.

And it is no wonder, since truth is one, that many truths should flow from that one. . . . Christ is found in every saint, and so from the one Christ there come to be many Christs, imitators of Him and formed after Him who is the image of God; whence God says through the prophet, “Touch not

my Christs” [Ps. 105:15], Thus we have explained in passing the passage which we appeared to have omitted from our exposition, viz.: “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ”; and we have also shown that the words belong to John the Baptist and form part of his testimony to the Son of God.⁷²

In his *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen’s treatment of Christ and of his disciples contributes a great deal to our understanding of his interpretation of the teacher's function in the early Christian hierarchy and community. Christ, for him, is “the pearl of great price.” He writes:

Every soul, therefore, which comes to childhood, and is on the way to full growth, until the fullness of time is at hand, needs a tutor and stewards and guardians, in order that, after all these things, he who formerly differed nothing from a bond-servant, though he is lord of all, may receive, when freed from a tutor and stewards and guardians, the patrimony corresponding to the very costly pearl, and to that which is perfect, which on its coming does away with that which is in part, when one is able to receive “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ,” having been previously exercised, so to speak, in those forms of knowledge which are surpassed by the knowledge of Christ. But the multitude, not perceiving the beauty of the many pearls of the law, and all the knowledge, in part, though it be, of the prophets, suppose that they can, without a clear exposition and apprehension of these, find in whole the one precious pearl, and behold “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ,” in comparison with which all things that came before such and so great knowledge, although they were not refuse in their own nature, appear to be refuse.

This refuse is perhaps the “dung” thrown down beside the fig tree by the keeper of the vineyard, which is the cause of its bearing fruit [Lk. 13:8].⁷³

A very significant passage concerning the gradual growth in knowledge of the disciples is found in Origen’s *Commentary on Matthew*. Origen believes that through that which was said to the Apostles, an outline was given beforehand of the teaching which would afterwards come to be of service both to them and to every teacher.

But now we must first investigate the fact that they were declaring other things about Him as being great and wonderful, but did not yet proclaim that He was the Christ, lest the Saviour might not appear to take away from them the authority to announce that He was the Christ, which He had formerly bestowed upon them. And perhaps someone will support an argument of this kind, saying that on their introduction into the school of Christ the Jews were taught by the disciples glorious things about Jesus, so that in due season there might be built upon these as a foundation the things about Jesus being the Christ; and perhaps many of the things which were said to them were said to all who virtually believed; for not to the Apostles alone did the saying apply, “Before governors and kings also shall ye be brought for My sake for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles” [Matt. 10:18]; and perhaps also not to the Apostles absolutely, but to all who were about to believe the word.... According to this, then, through that which was said to the Apostles an outline was given beforehand of the teaching which would afterwards come to be of service both to them and to every teacher.⁷⁴

Origen gives reasons for the gradual knowledge referred to above. He points out that the Saviour wished, when He enjoined the disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ, to reserve the more

perfect teaching about Him to a more fitting time. Later, to those who had seen Him crucified only, the disciples who had seen Him crucified and risen could testify the things relating to His resurrection.⁷⁸ In the same commentary Origen points out that Jesus was at first proclaimed by the twelve as a worker and a teacher solely, and then he stresses the importance of the proclamation of Jesus as the crucified.

Wherefore, formerly they proclaimed Jesus as the doer of certain things and the teacher of certain things; but now when Peter confesses that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, as He did not wish it to be proclaimed already that He was the Christ, in order that He might be proclaimed at a more suitable time, and that as crucified, He commands His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ. And that this was His meaning, when He forbade proclamation to be made that He was the Christ, is in a measure established by the words, "From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders"⁷⁶

The true greatness of the Saviour is effectively presented in the following homily:

The greatness of our Saviour did not appear at the time when He was born, but now, after being apparently suppressed by His opponents, it has shone out. Consider the greatness of the Lord; the sound of His teaching has gone forth into every land, His words unto the ends of the world. Our Lord Jesus, who is the Power of God, has spread into all the world. He is present with us, according to what is read in the Apostle, "When ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ" [I Cor. 5:4], The power of our Lord and Saviour is even with those who are cut off in Britain from our world, with the inhabitants of Mauretania, and with all under the sun who have believed in His name. Consider then the greatness of the Saviour, how it is spread all the world over, and of a truth not even yet have I set forth His real greatness. Ascend to the heavens and behold Him, how He has filled the heavenly places, for He has been seen of angels. Descend in thought into the places, for He has been seen of angels. Descend in thought into the depths, and you shall behold that He has descended even there. For, "He that descended is the same also that ascended, that He might fill all things . . . that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth" [Eph. 4:10; Phil. 2:10]. Contemplate the power of the Lord, how it has filled the world, every place that is in heaven, on earth, under the earth; how it has gone right into heaven and ascended unto the heights.

For we read that the Son of God has passed through the heavens. If you see these things, you will likewise realize that "He shall be great" is no passing observation but a word fulfilled in reality. Great is our Lord Jesus, present or absent. To this our gathering and assembly He has given a share of His might. Be it our prayer to the Lord God that each one of us may deserve to receive this. To whom be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.⁷⁷

In another homily Origen reminds us that Christ, the Church, and the saints illuminate us, not all equally but each in proportion to his capacity to receive illumination.

As the sun and the moon are said to be the great lights in the firmament of the heaven, so also in us are Christ and the Church. And as God set the stars also in the firmament, let us see too what stars there are in us, that is in the heaven of our heart. Moses is a star within us, which lightens and

illuminates us by its influence. So are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and David and Daniel; so all of whom Holy Scripture has testified that they pleased God. For just as star differeth from star in glory, so does each of the saints shed his light on us in proportion to his greatness. And just as the sun and moon shed light on our bodies, so too are our minds enlightened by Christ and by the Church. It is a condition of our being enlightened that we be not spiritually blind.

The sun and the moon may pour their light on those whose bodily eyes are blind, but these have no power to receive their light. In like manner Christ bestows His light upon our minds, yet will He only give us real illumination if there is not sort of spiritual blindness to prevent this. And even if this should happen, still the first duty of the blind is to follow Christ, addressing Him and crying out, "Son of David, have mercy upon us" [Matt. 9:27]. So from Him may they receive their sight and be able afterwards to be illuminated by the glory of His light.

Yet are not all who have sight illuminated by Christ in equal measure; each has illumination in proportion as he has capacity to receive the power of the light. The eyes of our body do not receive the light of the sun in equal measure, but the higher the levels to which one climbs, the more lofty the view point from which one watches the vista of the sunrise, the larger is one's sense of the power of the sun's light and heat. So it is also with our spirit; the higher and the further it goes in its approach to Christ, the more nearly it exposes itself to the glory of His light, the more finely and splendidly is it illuminated by His radiance. So He himself says by the prophet, "Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you, saith the Lord" [Zech. 1:3]. Again He says, "I am a God at hand and not a God afar off" [Jas. 4:8]. Yet we do not all come near to Him in like degree, but each in proportion to his own attainment. Either we come to Him with the multitudes, and he restores us through His parables, simply in order that we may not faint through long fasting on the road. Or else we sit ever at His feet, with a purpose we never relax, our one interest being to hear His word, never troubled over much serving but choosing the good part which shall not be taken from us. Certainly they who so draw near to Him secure a far larger share of His light. But if, like the Apostles, we never leave Him at all, but remain always by his side in all His afflictions, then does He in secret explain to us and open up what He had said to the multitudes, and sheds on us His light in greater radiance. And if a man be even so advanced as to be able to go up with Him to the mount, as Peter and James and John, he shall have the illumination not only of the light of Christ but even of the very Father's voice.⁷⁸

Let us now examine Origen's practical treatises, *On Prayer* and *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, to ascertain his interpretation of the Christian teaching regarding Christ's person and work, his understanding of Christ's teaching concerning prayer and suffering. In these treatises his simple piety manifests itself in touching fashion. One writer gives the following evaluation of them:

A short treatise on Prayer shows Origen at his best, and an exhortation to martyrdom addressed to two confessors at Caesarea during the persecution of Maximin reveals the depth of his sympathy with the suffering members of Christ. In these little works the greatest scholar and thinker of the Early Church appears as the practical Christian who understands the faith and patience of the saints.⁷⁹

In his treatise *On Prayer*, which dates from Origen's maturer days (since it was written later than

his much-disputed *De Principiis*, as we gather from internal evidence), Origen sets out by insisting that we have not only to pray but to pray fittingly and for fitting things.⁸⁰ He lays down as an axiom that no one can pray without the previous assistance of the Holy Spirit. We need, he says, teaching, and he quotes the words, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” Apropos of this, he points out that the disciple who offers this petition must have known already how to pray, since he had been brought up in the Synagogue, but that the sight of Christ engaged in prayer showed him that he needed something more than he had hitherto been taught. But, asks Origen, what did John himself teach concerning prayer? He was “more than a prophet”; therefore, he probably knew secrets concerning prayer which he taught, not perhaps to all whom he baptized, but to his chosen disciples. All of this is found in the following passage from *On Prayer*:

And returning to the treatment [of what we should pray for], “We do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes with God in unspeakable groanings” [Rom. 8:26], [resembles] this word: “I shall pray with the Spirit, and I shall pray with the understanding; I shall sing with the Spirit, and I shall sing with the understanding” [I Cor. 14:15], For our understanding cannot pray unless before it the Spirit prays, and unless it [the understanding] believes in obedience to it [the Spirit], just as it [the understanding] cannot sing nor praise the Father in Christ with good order, harmony, rhythm, and melody unless “the Spirit who searches all things, even the deep things of God” [I Cor. 2:10], first does not sing and praise the One through whom He has searched the very depths and has understood them as he is quite able [to understand them]. This is why I think that one of the disciples of Jesus, conscious of human weakness, who, since he did not know in what manner one must pray, and especially after gaining knowledge of [prayer], when he heard the wise and strong words announced by the Saviour in the prayer to the Father, must have implored [Him], when the Lord had finished his prayer: “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” [Lk. 11:1]. The complete linking of the passage is as follows: “And it happened, that as he was in a certain place praying, when he finished, one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples to pray” [Lk. 11:1]. . . . [Lacuna] Is it, then, that a man, who had been nourished in the teachings of the law, who heard the prophetic words, and who did not neglect the synagogues, did not know at all in what manner to pray before he saw the Lord praying in a certain place? This is unlikely to suppose. He prayed according to the Judaic manner, but he recognized that he himself had need of more knowledge as to the significance of prayer. What is it, then, that John taught about prayer to his disciples who came from Jerusalem, all Judea, and the neighboring regions to be baptized by him [cf. Matthew 3:5-6], unless, according to the Word, as he was more than a prophet [cf. Matthew 11:9], he saw in the prayer those things that he did not teach to all the baptized, but that he taught in secret to his disciples in addition to baptism?⁸¹

This prayer, says Origen, was spiritual prayer where the Spirit prays in a man’s heart, and, as such, it is fully set forth in Scripture—as, for instance, when it is said of Hannah that “she multiplied prayers before the Lord and spake in her heart” (I Sam. 1:11-13), or in the title of the Psalm: “The prayer of the poor man when he was anxious and poured out his prayer in the sight of the Lord” (Psalm 101).⁸⁴ After stressing that these are truly spiritual prayers, we have this characteristic statement of Origen:

Since, then, it is so difficult to treat of prayer that we need the illumination of the Father and the teaching of the Word, His First-born, and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, if we are to

understand and declare anything worthy of so profound a question, I pray as a man—for in no wise do I deem that the Spirit can pray in me ere I know what prayer is—I pray, I say, that the most fruitful and spiritual knowledge of it may be bestowed on us, and that the understanding of the prayers set before us in the Gospels may be made clear to us.⁸³

Origen puts forward the difficulty which must face all who really try to lead prayerful lives: if prayer means all that has been said in this treatise, if it demands a mental composure in God's presence,⁸⁴ how can Christ have told us that we are "to pray without ceasing"? This seems manifestly impossible. But Christ, says Origen, gave us this injunction, because from the soul of one who prays with knowledge and reason and faith there shoots forth, as it were, an arrow which wounds even unto utter destruction and dissolution the spirits hostile to God. Moreover, since works of virtue or the fulfillment of the commandments are really constituent parts of prayer, it follows that he prays "without ceasing" who combines prayer with the duties he has to perform and who makes his actions accord with his prayer. For only then can we accept as a feasible precept the declaration that we are "to pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17), when we realize that the entire life of a holy man is but one great continuous prayer, though only a portion of it is that prayer which is strictly so-called and which ought to be practiced not less than three times daily, as we gather from the example of Daniel [cf. Daniel 6:13].⁸⁵

What has proved a rock of offence to many in the treatise under discussion is Origen's clear declaration that we are to pray to the Father alone.⁸⁶ Concerning Origen's view of the Trinity in the Godhead, it is clear that he rejects any view that the Son is of any other essential being than that of the Father. At the same time, he insists upon the distinctions between Father and Son. In his day the primary reason for insisting on such distinctions was the prevalence of Monarchian thought, which he repeatedly rejects.⁸⁷ This has been discussed earlier in the chapter. Already we have said that Origen's followers failed to understand the tension which he tried to maintain in his thinking about God, and exaggerated one side or the other of his affirmations. It is such breaking asunder of the complex affirmations that Origen was trying to work out that leads rather directly into the essential issues of the Arian-Nicene controversy. These two not easily reconcilable tendencies are both clearly present in Origen's own thought.⁸⁸

Hugh Pope, in an interesting article, "Origen's Treatise on Prayer," raises the question: Is it possible that Origen really meant that the Son was distinct from the Father in Nature as well as Person? Pope points out that in his *Commentary on St. John's Gospel* we find him refuting the Noetians, who maintained that Christ is "one with the Father in Nature and Person," which is clearly an untenable doctrine, as also is the doctrine which, apparently, Origen sets over against it, *viz.*, that Christ is "different from the Father in Nature and in Person." Pope regards this as entirely a question of precise terminology. "Origen knew perfectly well that Christ Himself had declared that He and the Father were 'one'; when, then, he seems to run counter to this and maintain that they are 'distinct,' he must have some particular point in view, and if we would do justice to him we must discover that point of view."⁸⁹

In the treatise *On Prayer*, Origen considers Christ simply as the Mediator, as the One who, in response to a request, taught us how to pray; or, more exactly, he considers Him as the High Priest who offers our prayers to God. Hence, he insists that to pray to the Father without the Son, or to the Son without the Father, or to pray to both, is to destroy their mutual relationship, since, if

Christ is Mediator and High Priest, logic demands that our prayers be addressed to the Father through Christ His Son. Pope writes that it is “needless to point out that this is precisely what the Church does in her official prayers; this explains in what sense Origen urges that all will acknowledge that to pray to the Son and not to the Father is perfectly ridiculous and contrary to the evidence [of Scripture].”⁹⁰ Moreover, Pope maintains, if anyone had put to Origen the plain question: “Ought we to pray to the Son of God?” he would undoubtedly have answered with an emphatic affirmation, as the following passages will show. When explaining what kind of reverence we are to exhibit to the angels, Origen says:

Nowhere [in Scripture] will you find it laid down that we should offer them that kind of worship which is due to God alone, for their business is to minister to us and to bring to us God’s gifts. For all demands, supplications, prayers, and acts of thanksgiving should be directed to God through the High Priest, who is superior to all Angels, who is the Living Word and God. None the less shall we pray to this same Word, offer Him our supplications, give thanks to Him, and make vows to Him, provided always that we carefully distinguish between prayer properly and improperly so-called.⁹¹

Origen returns to this question again and takes occasion to set forth the Christian teaching regarding Christ’s Nature and Person. Celsus had raised the difficulty that whereas

Christianity professedly taught that there was only one God to be worshiped, “yet Christians now worship in supreme fashion a man who only recently lived, and they think that in doing so they commit no sin against God while worshiping one who is only the minister.” Origen replies by quoting the Divine declaration, “The Father and I are one (thing)” and “that they may be one as We also are one.”

If Celsus had studied these words [Origen says], he would never have dreamed that any other than the Supreme God was worshipped by us, for “the Father is in Me and I in the Father.” Lest, however, anyone should be afraid from this that we agree with those who deny that Father and Son are two Hypostases ... we worship, as we have explained, One God, the Father and the Son ... we do not worship in supreme fashion a man who only recently lived, and previously was not. For we believe Him when He says, “Before Abraham was I am.” . . . We worship, then, the Father of the Truth and His Son the Truth; these are two things as far as hypostasis goes, but are one in harmony and agreement and identity of will. . . . One God, then, and His Only Son, His Word and Image, we venerate as much as we can with prayers and supplications, offering our prayers to the God of all things through His Only-Begotten Son.⁹²

These passages make it quite clear that Origen believed firmly in the Divinity of Christ and taught that we should pray to Him as God.⁹³ However, he insists, and rightly, that when we are talking of Christ precisely as the Mediator or great High Priest whose peculiar task it is to intercede for us with the Father, then our prayers are to be directed not *to* Him but *through* Him to the Father. It must be acknowledged that, since Origen’s true mind on this and similar points is discoverable only after laborious study, it was inevitable that those who came after him should misinterpret his teaching and that consequently the Church was reluctantly compelled to put his works to one side. But it is an abiding source of regret that we have been deprived of so much admirable teaching found in his exegetical works and his devotional writings—works that have suffered, if not

destruction, at least such an ill-deserved eclipse as has befallen, for example, his treatise *On Prayer*.

Origen's treatise *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, written at a time (235) when Origen and his friends at Caesarea could have been included among the victims of the persecution of Maximin, is an admirable testimony rendered to Christ. In reading the treatise one becomes increasingly conscious of his stress upon the example of Christ, the Divine Teacher. Origen insists upon the detachment of riches, the renouncement of earthly affections, even the most legitimate in appearance, upon the glory which awaits the souls noble enough to sacrifice all for the love of Christ. In a rather lengthy section in which he stresses that the apostates will be denied by the Son of God, Origen says:

We must neither deny the Son of God, nor be ashamed of him or of his servants, or of his words, but hear these words: "But he that will deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven," and again: "For he that will be ashamed of me and mine the Son of God will be ashamed when He will come in his majesty, and that of his Father, and of the holy angels," and again: "For he that will be ashamed of me, and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He will come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."⁹⁴

In another passage Origen points out that the Father, also, will deny the apostates.

If, overcome by a great love of life or by lack of courage before suffering, or by the persuasive words of those who can lead us to the worst, one has denied the one God and his Christ, to confess the devils or fortune, let him know that he that sets the table for the devil and fills the cup of fortune, who abandons the Lord and forgets his holy mount, exposes himself to the written reproaches of Isaiah:

"And you, that have forsaken the Lord, that have forgotten my holy mount, that set a table for fortune, and offer libations upon it, I will number in the sword, and you will all fall by slaughter: because I called you and you did not answer: I spoke and you did not hear: and you did evil in my eyes, and you have chosen the things that displease me. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: behold my servants will eat and you will be hungry; behold my servants will drink, and you will be thirsty. Behold my servants will rejoice, and you will be confounded: behold my servants will praise for joyfulness of heart, and you will cry for sorrow of heart . . . and the Lord shall slay thee."⁹⁵

In presenting the example of Christ to those who are about to be martyred, Origen emphasizes that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also does our comfort abound;" those who are partakers of the sufferings, according to the proportion of sufferings which they partake with Christ, will partake also of the consolation.⁹⁶ Near the close of this treatise Origen raises the questions: Why do we hesitate to reject the corruptible and troublesome body which weighs down the soul and charges the spirit with multiple cares? Why do we hesitate to rejoice with Jesus, to contemplate the animated

Word, to be nourished by Him, to understand more fully the varied Wisdom which is in Him, to be marked with the seal of Truth, to have the spirit illuminated by the true light and knowledge?⁹⁷ It

seems quite clear that Origen, who knows the slow practice of all virtues and the progressive attainment of perfection of man, regards martyrdom as the supreme achievement of the Christian life. He writes:

Perhaps in the same manner as we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, who has received “a name above all names,” the precious blood of the martyrs will redeem many men, and they themselves [the martyrs] will be more exalted than they would have been if they had been only just, without being martyrs. For the death of the martyr is rightly called an exaltation, as is seen in the words: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself.” Let us, also, glorify God, exalting Him by our death, since the martyr by his death glorifies God.⁹⁸

Origen made some definite contributions to Christological thought. He marks the climax in the development of Logos Christology; his doctrine of the eternal generation of the Logos is unique; his two-natures theory of the person of Christ perhaps, in a real sense, foreshadowed Chalcedon. It has been pointed out that Origen combined many ideas in his Christology, and thus left himself subject to misinterpretation. Athanasius and the Arians alike referred to Origen as their source of authority. Upon the foundations laid by Origen and others in the second and third centuries were built the more comprehensive doctrinal formulations of Nicaea (325) and Chalcedon (451). Unfortunately, much of Origen’s teaching about Christ—his stress upon the importance of the factor of education in redemption, for example—has been neglected.

Chapter Four

THE “RULE OF FAITH”- A NORM FOR ORIGEN’S TEACHING

Christian tradition in its widest sense—that which is handed over from one generation of Christian believers to the next, the Christian teachings and Gospels, the method by which it is handed over, and the sources from which it is derived, and its authoritative guardians and interpreters—forms a subject which ought to be the concern of all scholars of theology. One would, moreover, expect those who had made a special study of Origen, one of the most able, influential, and voluminous of the Fathers of the Church, to pay particular attention to his doctrine of tradition. But in fact few of those who, in recent years, have written upon Origen have dealt with his doctrine more than incidentally, as a subordinate part of their exposition of what they considered his more important doctrines, such as the relation of the Son to the Father, or the origin and destiny of the soul, or the allegorization of the Bible. One writer on Origen points out that those who have given special attention to his doctrine of tradition have sometimes not sufficiently examined their sources.¹ One notable exception to this rule is G. L. Prestige,² who, in his *Fathers and Heretics*, has included a valuable essay on the doctrine of tradition in the Fathers generally, and later in the book has attempted very sketchily to exemplify his general conclusions from Origen’s works.

The Fathers, says Prestige in the first chapter of his book, spoke of two sorts of tradition. In one sense of the word they meant “an accretion, enlargement, confirmation of the faith,” which “is to be expected and welcomed in the process of transmitting Christian truth,”³ “the accumulating wisdom of philosophically grounded Christianity;” this the Fathers called *didaskalia*, or teaching.⁴ The

other type of tradition they call *paradosis*. This was the faith handed down from Christ to the Apostles, and from them to the Church for it to keep, and “for most practical purposes the tradition is enshrined in the Bible, first in the Old Testament, which witnesses throughout to Christ for minds that rightly understand it, and then ... in ‘the evangelic and apostolic traditions’ of the New.”⁵ In cases of dispute or ambiguity in the Bible itself, appeal is made to tradition as enshrined in Christian institutions and witnessed to in the Christian *cultus*, and as always held in the Church.⁶ Later we shall try to see how far Origen's views on tradition correspond to these.

The Bible was associated, and largely identified, with tradition as early as Clement of Alexandria, at the turn of the century. Prestige, after describing Clement's attitude toward the Bible, basing a deep reverence for the Bible on the unique character of the tradition which it contained, insists that in his maintenance of such an attitude Clement is not singular. Moreover, Prestige holds that Clement merely gives expression in words to the spirit which animated all the Fathers, “who repudiated with horror the idea of possessing any private or secret doctrine, and supported all their arguments with the most painstaking exegesis of the text of Holy Writ.”⁷ Unfortunately, the Bible proved to be common hunting-ground between the follower of the Gospel and the wildest theosophist or the most perverse misbeliever. Heretics showed that they could be as painstaking in their use of Scripture as the saints. The fact soon became obvious to any intelligent thinker that the principle of “the Bible, and the Bible only” provides no automatically secure basis for a religion that was to be genuinely Christian. Already we have stated briefly how the difficulty was met. In the first place, the original doctrine of tradition by the apostles to the Church continued to be the ultimate basis of Christian thought. The Bible was reckoned the principal part of the apostolic tradition. Secondly, it was firmly insisted that although the tradition was enshrined in the Bible, a process of interpretation was required in order to extract it. Appeal was made, not to the Bible simply, but to the Bible rightly and rationally interpreted. Prestige observes that, as the practical authority of the Bible came to be more and more fully exploited, its text began to be more thoroughly and systematically expounded, and vast commentaries were published on separate books or series of books. Explaining that such immense labor could only have been expended on an object reckoned as of immense importance, he writes:

But these commentaries did not treat the Bible simply as a collection of writings “designed to be read as literature.” Their substance was often taken down by shorthand writers from lectures or sermons orally delivered. As might therefore be expected, their purpose was not purely explanatory, but aimed at edification; frequently a commentary might be in reality rather a doctrinal or moral treatise, based on the text of a scriptural book, but dealing with current problems, than an exercise of academic research. In other words, while the great biblical teachers grounded their work on a singularly thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, they never forgot that the task on which they were engaged was the delivery of a Gospel and a faith; it was still a tradition, reproducing, illuminating, and reinforcing the substance of the tradition once for all delivered.⁸

Perhaps at this point some elaboration upon “the tradition once for all delivered” is in order. We need to realize as fully as possible that Christianity is a revealed religion. With human capacity for good or evil enormously extended, and the power of wickedness rediscovered on a vast scale, the strength and comfort of revealed religion, with its message of salvation given from outside the vicious human circle, are peculiarly apparent. The Bible assumes that religion is a thing given. According to the ancients, the agents through whom the gift was made were inspired men, law-

givers, prophets, and apostles authorized to hand over to the keeping of mankind the Word of God and the means of His grace. God is not generally depicted as the direct author of this tradition; however, it is postulated, beyond all question, that it is His authority by which it was made. The Hebrew “fathers” and “elders” were raised up and commissioned to declare divine truth to God’s people so far as they themselves were capable of understanding it or their fellow men were ready to receive it. This was the old tradition of the ancient covenant. The new covenant was introduced and sealed by divine work of an unprecedented character and undertaken on a novel plane of action. Adherence to it depended on personal relations with a historical figure who was both Man and Saviour, who revealed God and selected His own witnesses to testify to the fact and the significance of His work. Redemption or faith in Christ was God’s gift, proclaimed and ministered by the apostles whom Christ had chosen for the purpose. So the faith was indeed once delivered to the saints, uniquely, because it was a unique and final revelation. The significant fact of Christ’s resurrection, and the central truth that His death was a sacrificial act, as indicated by the mysteries of the Last Supper, formed outstanding features of the “tradition” which St. Paul delivered to his converts. This conception of tradition was firmly retained by the Fathers. In their works the word *paradosis*, or “tradition,” regularly means, according to Prestige, the delivery of teaching or the contents of the teaching delivered. He remarks that the idea of proclamation and the note of authority are seldom, if ever, absent when the word is applied to Christian teaching or institutions.⁹

Accordingly, tradition is repeatedly mentioned in connection with the apostles. Authority is claimed for Christian truths on the ground that they are an “apostolic tradition” or a “tradition of the apostles” or of certain of their number.¹⁰ Thus, Irenaeus of Gaul, in the second century, bases his argument on “the tradition which the Roman church possesses from the apostles through its foundation and organization by Peter and Paul” [*Haer.* 3.3.2]. Tertullian in Africa scorns the idea that the Holy Ghost could ever have permitted different interpretations to be put on the faith which He was preaching by the apostles: widespread differences of teaching could never have resulted in a common faith; to him the unity of belief in the various churches must be due to tradition (*De Praescript.* 28). About the same time, in Alexandria, Clement describes how Christian instructors had preserved “the true tradition of the blessed teaching” right from the apostles, and, sons receiving it successively from their fathers, had extended the tradition to his own time to plant in the hearts of fresh generations the ancestral and apostolic seeds of faith (*Strom.* I.I, II.3). Prestige’s comment upon the preceding passage is worthy of note:

A passage such as this prepares the way for an extension of the act of tradition from the apostles, who first delivered the faith to the primitive disciples, to subsequent teachers, who with an authority no less assured delivered it once more to people of a later age. So we hear not only of the apostolic but also of the ecclesiastic tradition, still in the same sense of a divine deposit committed to souls. Clement, that intensely liberal and philosophically-minded Hellenist, contrasts the ecclesiastic tradition with the opinions of human heresies; anyone who spurns the tradition and darts aside after heretical opinions is like the men whom Circe bewitched into beasts; he is no longer a man of God or faithful to the Lord [*Strom.* 7.16, 95.1]. It is worth remarking that the return from such deceit consists in listening to the Scriptures [*ib.* 2]; so that the ecclesiastic tradition is no different in substance from the apostolic. Irenaeus had commented on the variety of agents and languages by which the Church “preaches, teaches, and traditions” the faith, adding that everywhere “the force of the tradition is one and the same” [*Maer.* I. 10.2]. And Athanasius, in the fourth century, sums up by describing “the actual original tradition, teaching, and faith of the

Catholic Church, which the Lord conferred, the apostles proclaimed, and the fathers guarded” [*Ad Seraph. I. 28 init.*].¹¹

In Clement of Alexandria, there is much stress on the fact that the meaning of the Scriptures is often veiled, and not only in the Old Testament, but also in the parables in which Christ deliberately wrapped up much of His teaching. By Christ’s direction, therefore, they had to be interpreted by the apostles in accordance with the Church’s “Rule of Faith.” A comparison with the open teaching of the apostles will illuminate the secret meaning of the prophets and the parables. In Origen’s *De Principiis*, as is pointed out earlier to some extent, we have a monument of Christian speculation based on loyal acceptance of apostolic teaching and the evidence of Scripture. We have stressed in another chapter that he wrote for educated readers, in the language and within the realm of ideas with which his educated contemporaries were familiar. This was not because he felt any contempt for the simple faith of peasants and artisans, but because he realized that if Christianity was to succeed in conquering the world and molding its civilization, it must justify itself to the intellect as well as to the heart of mankind. Accordingly he embarked on a systematic exposition of religious truth, so far as he was able to comprehend that truth, employing the evidence of Scripture and the powers of human reasoning as instruments in an attempt to present Christianity methodically as the key to all human knowledge and experience. Prestige, in an interesting and provocative essay, “Origen: The Claims of Religious Intelligence,” writes:

Whatever elements of original speculation he introduced, daring at times in substance as they were invariably modest and tentative in manner, his starting-point was the simple faith of the creed, and his groundwork was authoritative revelation. His philosophy was therefore never abstract. He was always speaking of facts and persons which to him, as to any wholehearted Christian, were intensely vital and objective.¹²

Before discussing Origen’s doctrine of tradition as related to Prestige’s two forms of tradition found in the Fathers in general, *paradosis* and *didaskalia*, we must issue a warning. The Latin translators of Origen’s works will have to be used very sparingly in evidence because it is clear that both Rufinus and Jerome, the chief ancient translators of Origen’s works, altered the sense of Origen’s words when they thought fit; and we have definite evidence that they both did so in cases where his words referred to tradition.¹³ In his preface to his translation of Origen’s *Concerning First Principles*, Rufinus expressly tells us that he omitted or altered to suit the orthodox rule of faith various passages in Origen’s works on the grounds that they were later interpolations by heretical and malevolent persons.¹⁴ He claims that he is, in this practice, only following the example of Jerome in his translations of Origen. That Rufinus applied this policy of alteration in order to make Origen appear to have more respect for the tradition of the Church than his original text justified is clear from a later passage in his translation of *Concerning First Principles*¹⁵ where Origen has *hoste kata touto* (“thus according to this view”) with no reference whatever to the Church’s rule of faith; Rufinus translates this as *ex quo magis convenit regulae pietatis* (“thus it is more agreeable to the rule of piety”). Later still, Rufinus omits a particularly daring speculation by Origen suggesting that Christ is crucified still in the heavenly places, and begins the next paragraph: “But in all these matters let it suffice us to conform our mind to the rule of piety and to think of the Holy Spirit’s words not as a composition depending upon feeble human eloquence but in accordance with the sayings of scripture. . . .”¹⁶ The Greek fragment stops before the next paragraph begins, but we may suspect that this is another example of an insertion by Rufinus of a

reference to the Church's tradition.¹⁷ Again, J. E. L. Oulton has pointed out how, in his summary of Origen's *Letter to Africanus* about the History of Susanna, Rufinus described Origen as saying "that that alone should be deemed true in the divine Scriptures which the seventy interpreters had translated, since it had been confirmed by apostolic authority." ¹⁸ Oulton comments that Rufinus is correct in asserting that Origen laid stress on tradition as establishing the authority of the LXX, but that the "apostolic authority" appears to be a slight ecclesiastical embellishment on the part of Rufinus. Rufinus' claim that Jerome carried out similar alterations of Origen's text can be verified by references to Jerome's translation of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*, for the first part of which the Greek text survives. In one passage here Origen belittles the "doctrine of resurrection of the dead as it is believed in the Church." Jerome's translation significantly omits this passage.¹⁹ It seems quite clear that both Rufinus and Jerome are capable of altering Origen's references to tradition in the interests of their orthodoxy; however, this does not mean that we can entirely ignore the Latin translations of Origen as sources of our inquiry. It does mean that we must take his works extant in Greek as our primary authorities, and realize that any reference to tradition in a translation by Rufinus or Jerome may very well have been touched up or even interpolated by the translator.²⁰

With this caution in mind we return to Prestige's two forms of tradition, *paradosis* and *didaskalia*. Taking Prestige's conclusions²¹ about the doctrine of tradition in the Fathers in general as a convenient starting-point, R. P. C. Hanson has endeavored to work out in greater detail Origen's doctrine of tradition. The following results of his investigation have a most important bearing on the chief problem of this work:

In all the works and fragments of Origen that survive in Greek, the word *paradosis* occurs 44 times; 30 instances of it signify Rabbinic or Jewish tradition, and 6 mean traditions independent of the Bible connected with the Christian faith; 1 instance may refer to the Bible, and 7 occurrences have meanings quite irrelevant to our inquiry. Origen never uses the phrase "apostolic" nor "ecclesiastical" *paradosis*. His instances of tradition outside the Bible are small and comparatively unimportant pieces of information, such as that "the brothers of Jesus" were sons of Joseph by another wife (*Comm, on Matt. x. 17*), or details concerning the death of John bar-Zebedee and the exile of the other John in Patmos (*ibid. xvi. 6*). Twice, indeed, Origen quotes a saying of our Lord not found in the N.T. (*Con. Prayer, ii. 2* and *Hom, on Numbers, xxiii. 4*), and once a saying which he calls apostolic but which is not in the N.T. (*Hom, on Leviticus, x. 2*); but he does not call any of these a *paradosis*. Some of these traditions, whether called *paradosis* or not, are probably intelligent guesses (cf. *Hom, on Genesis, xiv. 3*), and some perhaps derived from popular legend or gossip (cf. *Against C. i. 51; ii. 62, 68; Hom, on Jeremiah, xx 8*). The one occasion where *paradosis* probably means the Bible is in a comment on Ps. i. ver. 5 (Migne, *Origen, ii. 1092 et seq. Q*), where his phrase *ten ton archaion paradesin* apparently means the Scriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the body. But this instance is not, of course, sufficient to prove against the testimony of the others that Origen uses the word *paradosis* to express the sense of tradition which, in Dr. Prestige's account, attaches to it in the Fathers generally. In fact, as I have shown, Origen quite demonstrably does not so use it. *If further proof is needed, it is supplied by a passage in Against Celsus (ii. 13), which runs: "For [the enemies of Christianity] surely will not assert that those who knew Jesus and heard Him handed down the teaching of the Gospels without committing it to writing (choris graphes ten ton euaggelion panadokenai didaskaiion).* According to Prestige's theory, this should have been *dedidachenai paradosin*.

But this instance, with its strong suggestion that what the first disciples (to use Dr. Prestige's term) "traditioned" was to be found in the Bible, serves to illustrate the fact that Origen does derive the sort of tradition to which Dr. Prestige gives the name *paradosis* from the Bible, though he does not call it *paradosis*. (He does, however, frequently use the verb *paradidonai* in connection with it, as in the instance quoted above; cf. *Against C.* iii. 17; *Comm, on Matt.* xiii. 1, etc.). That he looks for tradition in this primary sense nowhere outside the Bible is clear from almost every passage of his works (cf. especially *Con. First P.* i, Origen's Preface 3 and 10; *Comm, on Matt.*, pt. ii, 47; *Hom, on Numbers*, ix. 1). He quotes no other source of doctrine except the Scriptures or documents which were held to be inspired by at least parts of the Church. Here he is entirely at one with the other Fathers quoted by Dr. Prestige.*²

That Origen's sole source of primary doctrinal teaching is the Bible applies even to his conception of a secret or esoteric tradition. At first sight, this statement may seem highly unlikely and even contradictory, because it is clear that, on the one hand, Origen believed that Christ and His Apostles gave special secret doctrines to various people, some of which at least were never written down; and on the other hand, he says repeatedly that there is secret teaching available in the Church of his day for those who are spiritually and intellectually fit to receive it. The conclusion seems ready that he believed in a continuous unwritten tradition deriving from Christ; however, a close examination of his words compels us to reconsider and perhaps discard this conclusion.*³ Origen's references to a tradition of secret teaching given by Christ and His Apostles are frequent. Writing of the disciples in *Against Celsus*,²⁴ he says: "And the disciples of Jesus, seeing this [viz., the doctrine of the Atonement], and much more, which, it is probable, they learned from Jesus in private"; and later in the same work he says that John 16:12, 13, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," meant that Christ after His Passion and Resurrection taught His disciples the allegorization of the old law.*⁵ Again, in his *Homilies on Joshua*,TM he speaks of the unspeakable mysteries which Paul learned when he was caught up to Heaven, and suggests that though he could not disclose them to ordinary men, "perhaps he used to tell them to those who do not walk according to man. He used to tell them to Timothy, to Luke, and to the other disciples whom he knew to be fit to receive unspeakable mysteries."²⁷ Two examples of what Origen imagined to be the content of this secret teaching we have already seen: the doctrine of the Atonement and the allegorization of the law. "Other examples," writes Hanson in his stimulating article referred to earlier, "are the doctrine of the preexistence of souls [*Against C.*, V. 29; *Comm, on John*, VI. 12, 13; *Comm, on Matt.* XV. 34], some points of soteriology and some of Christology, knowledge about angels, and about the difference of souls, the origin and nature of the world, and the origin and extent of evil."²⁸

Hanson makes an interesting comment upon the word *eikos* (likely, probable), which occurs in two of the passages already referred to (*Against Celsus*, I, 31, and *On Prayer*, II, 4-5), suggesting that in attributing a secret tradition to Christ and His Apostles, Origen was not relying on any continuous delivery of that tradition in the Church, but on his own speculation. *In fact, this conclusion, he maintains, is inescapable, because on several occasions Origen makes it clear that the secret doctrines of his own day and his own school are to be found in the Bible, and never at any point does he even surmise that they are to be found in any other source.*²⁹ *In Against Celsus*³⁰ he says that "there are certain secret and inexplicable systems and logical trains of argument about the dispensation of different destinies to different souls," to be derived only by the

really intellectual Christian from such passages as Deuteronomy 32: 8, 9; and for these and similar doctrines, “the educated man will need to calculate the principles of the doctrine by various sorts of explanations, both from the inspired writings and from the logical development of the principles themselves” (*apo tas en tois logois akolouthias*). In his *Commentary on Romans*³¹ he suggests that “though the Apostle Paul as a wise steward of the Word of God wished these doctrines to be secret and hidden in his letters, still he did put them in,” and “he who is instructed in the law of the Lord knows how to understand a dark saying and the words of the wise and riddles.” With reference to Origen’s conception of secret tradition, Hanson reaches the following conclusion:

The only conclusion which will fit all these facts is that Origen believed that the intellectual Christians of his day were intended to derive from their study of the Bible a number of secret doctrines beyond the understanding of the average believer (and in fact identical with the speculations of Origen himself and his school of thought), and that he assumed that Christ and His Apostles had taught such doctrines privately to their more intelligent disciples as Origen was teaching them to his; but that there is no evidence that any continuity of delivery in the Church existed between such alleged secret teaching by Christ and His Apostles on the one hand and Origen’s secret teaching on the other, nor even that Origen believed such continuity to exist.³²

A.C. Outler, in his article “Origen and the *Regulae Fidei*,”³³ concludes that Origen rejects the idea of a secret or esoteric tradition, transmitted by privileged initiates. In the opening paragraph of the article, he points out that it is by no means an exceptional view which regards Origen primarily as a “speculative theologian,” as one who scorned the simple faith of the Christians around him, and who mingled theology and philosophy together in such fashion that the truth and simplicity of the primitive Gospel were distorted and obscured. In his approach to “such an exaggeration,” Outler confines himself in the article to the question: how do the doctrinal norms in Origen’s thought compare or contrast with what we know of similar basic beliefs in the Christian thought of his own and immediately preceding periods? He maintains that an answer to this question ought to afford preliminary data for the determination of a broader issue—the relation, in Origen’s thought, between theology and philosophy—and might, in itself, throw some light on the sense, if any, in which Origen may justly be called a “speculative theologian.”³⁴

According to Outler, what is the relation between “the canon of truth,” “the preaching of the church,” *regulae fidei*—as the short summaries of belief which began to appear in the second century in many Christian writings were variously called—and the *paradosis*? Outler writes:

These were distillations, so to say, of the *paradosis*, that complex of authoritative teaching which had been handed down in the church by the apostles and their successors. Such summaries tended not only to set the bounds of theological speculation, but also to lay the foundation for the eventual elaboration of Christian dogma in the ecumenical creeds. The *regulae* are not to be identified simply with the baptismal symbol, although between them there is a close parallel evolution. The primary distinction between them appears to have been that the symbol was a liturgical formula of initiation, and hence relatively rigid in form because of its function. The *regulae* exhibit more flexibility and variation than the baptismal symbol and appear to have been minimum statements of the common faith which a given writer was willing to accept as the dogmatic focus of his theological exposition. Like the symbol, they also served to distinguish Catholic doctrine from all

heresy.³⁵

Moreover, from this Origenistic research we learn that there is striking similarity in the various versions of the “rule of faith”: their tireless repetition of the “facts” of the life of Jesus and their consistent emphasis upon the historical rootage of the Christian faith. Outler states that they are in conscious and direct contrast to religious speculation which pretended to conserve the Christian spirit and idea, but which denied or ignored the affirmations which the Gospels make concerning the life, death, resurrection, and coming judgment of Jesus Christ. He states also that since a comparison of types yields the impression that, up to this time, at least, the *paradosis* was more flexible and less stereotyped in the East than in the West, it would be only natural to expect to find in Origen, the most typical of the Greek Fathers, a much less rigid and variable treatment of the tradition than in Irenaeus or Tertullian. “An actual examination reveals, however, that the contrast is not nearly so great as might be anticipated.”³⁶

We have already pointed out in another chapter that Origen prefaces his systematic treatise on Christian metaphysics with a summary statement of the articles of faith which are, according to his statement, universally taught in the Church and which owe their authority to the “teaching of the Church, transmitted in orderly succession from the Apostles.”³⁷ In his writings there are other versions of this dogmatic nucleus, and throughout his works, as we have them, there are numerous references to the “rule of truth,” the “rule of faith,” the “rule of piety,” and a “full faith.” Concerning the authenticity of these passages, Outler maintains that one need not accept De Faye’s contention that the Latin translations of Rufinus are of no more value than secondary sources.³⁸ It seems rather clear that on the precise point we are considering, Rufinus errs grossly on the side of orthodoxy. Outler emphasizes rightly, the writer thinks, that the phrases in question occur in the Latin translations with a frequency out of all proportion to similar references in the Greek originals, and we must discount many of these casual references; we cannot dismiss, however, with equal assurance, the longer passages in the Latin translations which undertake to define the substance of the rule of faith. After emphasizing the finding in the Greek texts of extended versions which serve as controls for the Latin texts, Outler says that “we are forced to the conclusion that Origen did know and use a summary of minimum essentials of normative Christian belief.”³⁹ Now an examination of the substance of the versions we have reason to believe are authentic is in order. The longest Greek text is in the *Commentary on John*, where Origen develops the essentials of a “full faith,” and suggests that anyone who believes less than this fails, by just so much, of having a perfect faith and the salvation which such faith brings.

For the sake of clearness we will make the following declaration. Believe first of all that there is one God, the creator and perfecter of all things, who has made out of nothing everything which has come to be. And it is necessary to believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, and to maintain all the truth concerning both His divinity and His humanity. It is also necessary to believe in the Holy Spirit and that we, being free, are punished for our own sins and are recompensed for what we do that is good.

If anyone appears to believe in Jesus but does not believe that there is but one God of the Law and the Gospel of whom the firmament showeth His handiwork, being the product of His hands, this one is throwing aside a very important chapter of the faith, and again, if someone believes that he who was crucified under Pontius Pilate is a holy being and saviour of the world, but not that he

was born of the Virgin Mary, this one also lacks something very necessary for holding the faith. Again, if one accepts His divinity, but, finding difficulty in His humanity, should believe that His life had no human element and that He did not become **a person**, this one likewise falls short of the faith not an inconsiderable degree. If, on the other hand, **he** should accept the human element, but reject **the** hypostasis of the only begotten and first born of all creation, this one also could not say that he held the faith.⁴⁰

Also, in the Greek text of the *Commentary on John*,⁴¹ he speaks of “the rule by which the mass of the people is guided” as being the sufficient safeguard against heresy. Outler insists that this cannot be interpreted to mean that Origen personally disdained such a rule, but only that he felt that beyond this rule of simple faith there was a higher stage of rational wisdom.⁴²

Another significant passage (this one in Latin) in the *Commentary on Matthew*, in which one recognizes much dependence upon authority, may be placed beside the longest Greek text, given above, where the essentials of a “full faith” are developed. Those who truly believe do not dissent on these public and manifest items: to know the one God who gave the Law and Gospel and also Christ Jesus, first born of the creatures of the universe, who, at the end of the age, according to the preaching of the prophets came to earth and took upon himself the true nature of human flesh, being born of the Virgin, who underwent the death of the cross and was resurrected from the dead and deified the human nature which he had assumed (*deificavit quam susceperat humanum naturam*); and also the Holy Spirit, the same who had been in the Patriarchs and the Prophets and has since been given to the Apostles; and the resurrection from the dead; they believe all this as the Church teaches it with certitude and all that is handed down in the Church.⁴³

Origen’s treatment of the “rule of faith” in the *Commentary on the Epistle of Titus*⁴⁴ should not be overlooked. Outler gives a very succinct summary of this commentary:

In order to make clear what the term “heretic” implies, he undertakes to show what the “full faith” is from which the heretics depart. Specifically, he proscribes such views as those of Marcion, Valentinus, Basilides, the Tethiana, and Appeles. A man is a heretic, likewise, if he falters in his Christological belief and denies either the humanity or the divinity of Jesus Christ. The Patripassians are heretics. The Virgin Birth, the preexistence of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and moral freedom are defined as articles of faith and the passage ends as follows: “Whoever attempts to alter or overthrow any items that we have mentioned above, sins like a lost man and is self-condemned, according to the judgment of the Apostle [Paul]. We, too, must obey this command and thus estimate such an one.”

To this Origen appends the statement that the “full faith” of the true churchman includes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, the existence and evil power of the devil and his angels, adding that the devil himself possesses moral freedom.⁴⁵

In the *Contra Celsum*,^{*6} Origen points to the widespread acquaintance of the whole world with what the Christians preach and specifies the Virgin Birth of Jesus, His crucifixion, death, and resurrection, and the general judgment which is to come. Since the version of the *regula fidei* in the preface to the *De Principiis* is well known and has been cited rather frequently in other chapters, extended citation here seems unnecessary. Koetschau, one of the most critical of all Origen’s

editors, believes that this passage is in the main an accurate representation of the Greek original, with interpolations and expansions by Rufinus which do not, however, seriously obscure the meaning.⁴⁷ In this preface Origen defines the orthodox Christian belief in God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the human soul, the devil and evil powers, the creation of the world *ex nihilo*, the inspired Scriptures, and, finally, angels and good powers. What is the implication of this preface? The clearest one, according to Outler, is that “Origen had come to fear the intellectual consequences of either subjective faith or speculative reason unless they were controlled by some objective canon and oriented, by initial commitment, to these objective truths,” and the purpose of this version of the *regula fidei* is “primarily to define the faith on those points at which the heretics, Ebionite or Gnostic, cavilled and to mark out the distinction between their and the orthodox doctrine of the church.”⁴⁸ In addition to these relatively long versions of the rule, there are many incidental references. In *In Jeremiam Homilia V*, 14,⁴⁹ Origen uses the term “church canons” without specifying its content but identifying it with “the word of truth,” “the word of the church,” and “the setting-forth of sound teachings.”

In the fourth book of the *De Principiis*,⁵⁰ there is a passage, the Greek original of which is preserved in the *Philocalia*, which is of special interest to the writer. In the passage Origen speaks of “the canon [or rule] of the celestial [or heavenly] Church of Jesus Christ according to [or through] the succession of [or from] the Apostles.” Outler remarks⁵¹ that there has been a good deal of comment on the meaning of the phrase “canon of the celestial church” by Lebreton, Van den Eynde, and others, and states that “there is a way of reconciling all these views,” but he does not discuss their comments, their views. As a way of reconciling all these views, Outler suggests that one consider the meaning of a similar phrase of Origen, “the eternal Gospel”⁵²—which refers, in a Platonic phrase, to the heavenly archetype of the historical Gospel, which transcends it, although it does not contradict it. He adds that, similarly, we may suppose that this “rule of the celestial church” refers to the rational archetype which is only partially exemplified in the existing rule of the churches.

We return to a further consideration of the two forms of tradition, *paradosis* and *didaskalia*, as treated in Prestige’s *Fathers and Heretics*. Hanson, in his helpful article on Origen’s doctrine of tradition, tells us that an investigation of the occurrences of the word *didaskalia* in Origen is not much more rewarding than that of the word *paradosis* and serves to bring us to much the same conclusion, namely, that in the narrowly philological field Origen does not very obviously bear out Dr. Prestige’s conclusions about the meaning which the Fathers attached to the word. Some of the very interesting results of the investigation by Hanson are as follows:

Didaskalia occurs 210 times in Origen; 46 instances are quite irrelevant to our study; 102 instances refer to the teaching of our Lord, and 12 to that of evangelists, Apostles, or disciples; in 2 cases it means the teaching of the Bible generally, in 6 that of the law or the O.T., and in 31 that of Christianity or of God, so generally as to be of no use in our inquiry. In 4 instances it signifies the teaching of Christianity in particular relation to those outside the Church, and in 7 explicitly the teaching of the Church. But once more, where Origen does not clearly support the Fathers generally in the word which he uses for tradition, he does so in his conception of that tradition. For he leaves us in no doubt that the primary doctrinal tradition (which is to be found only in the Bible) is the tradition *of the Church*, and that the Church alone has the right to interpret that tradition through its instruction. As has been said, he does refer (*Comm. on Matt. x. 12*) to this function of

the Church as *ekklesiastike didaskalia* or as *hugies didaskalia* (*Hom, on Jeremiah*, v. 4), or as *katechesis ekklesiastike kai didaskalia* (*Comm, on Matt.*, xv. 7), or as *ekklesiastike gnome kai didaskalia* (*Comm, on Ps.* v. 7; cf. *Comm, on Ps.* xlviii. 12). He also refers to the Church's *boulema* (*Against C.* v. 22), to the Church's *kerygma* (*Con. First P.*, Origen's preface, 10; iii. 1, 1), and to the *ekklesiastikos logos* (*Comm, on Matt.* xii. 23; xiii. 2). On one occasion, however, he explicitly belittles the Church's teaching; in his *Commentary on Matthew* (xi. 15) he says: "And even that which is thought to be ecclesiastical teaching (*ekklesiastikos didaskalia*), if it becomes servile on the score of flattery, or as an excuse for greed, or when someone is seeking glory from men on account of his teaching, does not carry any weight with those who are placed by God in the Church as first apostles, then prophets, and thirdly teachers" [cf. *Comm, on Matt.* xvii. 29]. This tendency to suggest that the real judgment of the Church should be left to its intellectual *elite* appears also in his references to *ho ekklesiastikos*, who is sometimes the average churchman truly representing the mind of the Church [e.g., *Hom, on Lul'e*, xvi—on Luke ii. 34], but sometimes the average churchman who had better leave the interpretation of Scripture to the professors [e.g., *Fragment on Exodus*, xx. 5, 6], Similarly, though he does clearly claim that the Church alone has the right to interpret Scripture [*Comm, on Matt.* xvii. 35; *Hom. IV on Psa.* xxxvii, 1], he tends to identify this interpretation with the allegorization of Scripture, and to claim that this allegorization was handed down as the true method of interpretation by the Apostles [cf. *Hom, on Exodus*, v. 1; *Hom, on Leviticus*, v. 5; *Hom, on Numbers*, xxvii. 2; *Honi. on Genesis*, vi. 3; *Hom, on Joshua*, xv. 1].

It is clear, of course, that his only source for this belief (or rather, speculation) is the Bible itself.⁵³

A study of Origen's views on canonicity, especially his attitude to what was later known as the "canon" of the New Testament, is perhaps significant of his whole view of the tradition of the Church. According to him, there is no official imposition of canonicity. The only point where he approaches this conception is in his conviction that there can be only four Gospels (though he is not nearly as emphatic upon the subject as the earlier Irenaeus).⁵⁴ Hanson maintains that in all other references in Greek (for in this point the Latin translators come within the circle of suspicion) Origen preserves a very open mind, and makes the general judgment of the whole Church his only criterion for deciding the genuineness of writings, fully admitting its inconclusiveness.⁵⁵ After giving evidence of careful study of Origen's attitude toward the "Shepherd" of Hermas, Hanson says: "It is not perhaps fanciful to trace in Origen a growing caution in his references to the 'Shepherd.'"⁵⁶ The writer is inclined to agree with Hanson in his view that Origen's attitude toward the Epistle to the Hebrews is the most revealing of all for a study of his views on canonicity. After discussing the book's style and contents and concluding that the style is un-Pauline but the ideas in the book are quite as magnificent as Paul's, Origen adds the following remarks (found in a well-known fragment of his *Homilies on Hebrews* preserved by Eusebius):

If I were to give my opinion I would say that the ideas are those of the Apostle, but the style and composition are due to someone who is recalling the words of the Apostle and writing, so to speak, a commentary upon what was said by his teacher. If therefore any church possesses the letter on the grounds that it is by Paul, let it give its approval to the letter even on the grounds that it is Paul's, for the men of old did not hand it down to us as Paul's for nothing. As for who wrote the Letter, God knows the truth. The story which has reached us says, following some authorities, that Clement who was bishop of Rome wrote the Letter; but, following others, Luke who wrote the

gospel and Acts.⁵⁷

Another possible source of tradition in Origen must be noted, and that is tradition as enshrined in Christian institutions and as witnessed to in the Christian *cultus*.⁵⁸ It seems that references to Christian institutions in his works are not very frequent, and allusions to the Christian *cultus* surprisingly rare. In many cases where he does mention them, it is obvious that he presumes them to derive from rules to be found in the Bible. For instance, in his work *On Prayer*, he takes all his examples of prayer from the Bible and bases his rules for private prayer and his suggestions for its order entirely on the Bible.⁵⁹ On the other hand, however, we do find in a few passages an undoubted recognition of Christian institutions and the Christian *cultus* as a source of authoritative tradition. In his Commentary on Romans⁶⁰ he clearly recognizes infant baptism as a tradition given to the Church by the Apostles, and he does not try to find Scriptural authority for it. In his *Homilies on Isaiah*⁶¹ he argues that the Lord's command to the disciples to wash one another's feet could not have been intended literally because nobody in the Church obeys it literally, which constitutes something of an appeal to ecclesiastical tradition. A very clear reference is in his *Homilies on Numbers*,⁶² where he says that most of those who observe many customs of the Church—such as turning to the East for prayer, kneeling to pray, the manner of celebrating the Eucharist, or the words, actions, questions, and replies in baptism—do not know the reason for them. But the people do them just the same, “according to the way in which they have been handed down and entrusted by the Great High Priest and his Sons” (which very likely means Christ and His bishops). In the same homily Origen tells us that there are of course some people who know the reason for these things, and he is here almost certainly referring to those who would be capable of giving the true allegorical meaning of such customs. According to Hanson, who has investigated the sources, especially the homilies and commentaries, it seems reasonable to conclude that “while Origen recognized an authoritative tradition derived from Christian institutions and the Christian *cultus*, his knowledge of the origins of both was so uncertain that we cannot put much confidence in such a tradition.”⁶³

Before we go further in this discussion, a summary of the views of Outler and Hanson on Origen's doctrine of tradition and an evaluation of their views are perhaps in order. Outler⁶⁴ insists that it is too much to say, as did Harnack,⁶⁵ that Origen recast the rule of faith. Outler holds that Origen seems to have attempted deliberately to sum up all the doctrinal points on which there was general agreement in the Church, to which he added his own prime assumption of moral freedom and the probably popular belief in devils and angels. That Origen felt that the contemporary statements of Christian tradition were meager and fragmentary, Outler does not doubt; moreover, that Origen believed that one might fill in the gaps without altering the essence, Outler seems quite certain. Outler writes:

At the same time, Origen turned to these summaries of belief as starting points for his own exercise in rational speculation. He was moving from faith to philosophy, and as a part of that process he was undertaking to transform statements borne out of religious experience, affirmations suited to moments of worship, into extremely comprehensive and general conclusions about God, the world, and man. It is evident that in so doing he clearly overreached Catholic orthodoxy, but it is equally evident that he was not trying to cram philosophy into the Procrustean bed of an unphilosophical religious tradition. To Origen, the consensus of the belief of the church, based on the Scriptures and the oral tradition, was of paramount importance; his obvious intention was to use it everywhere

as a norm for his teaching.⁶⁶

Outler then states that it is by this same token that Origen rejects the idea of a secret or esoteric tradition, transmitted by privileged initiates. The writer is inclined to think that Outler's language may be too strong at this particular point, for alongside Origen's understanding that God wished to present something to all, even to the most simple, is his understanding, his challenge that God wished to incite the more advanced to sincere, deep, fearless, persistent spiritual investigations.⁶⁷ The superiority of Origen's theology perhaps lies at the point at which Origen preserves both the unity of God and the harmony of revelation. A careful study of *Contra Celsum*, I, 7,⁶⁸ has been very helpful to the writer in his wrestling with Origen's conception of secret tradition. The concluding statements of Outler's stimulating article are given in full below.

Origen's version of the rule of faith, even in its longest form, is very far from being a theological system and still further from being a metaphysic.

Yet, it is the ground of his theology and metaphysics.

It is indeed a *rule of faith*; it guides only those who believe that grace and truth come from the believer's relationship to Jesus Christ. It is not the end of a process of reasoning, inductive or deductive; there is no evidence in Origen's writings that he came to this "rule of faith" after an investigation of alternative positions. It is everywhere taken as given. Assent to it is the sole avenue of approach to the higher knowledge of God which reaches over and beyond simple faith.

We are thus led to a major conclusion in the determination of our original question: in Origen's thought the faith of the church holds a primary place; it is *sina qua non* to the wider development of theological speculation, and is the beginning of that upward movement of the rational soul which, in its completion, brings one to that "wisdom among the perfect," characteristic of full salvation. His was a bold and original mind, but as far as his relation to the doctrinal norms of the church of his day is concerned, he was *oner ekklesiastikos*.TM

A summary of Hanson's investigation of Origen's doctrine of tradition can be succinctly stated. To Origen, the Bible *is* the tradition of the Church. In practice he makes no distinction between the two; but he is quite clear that it is the tradition *of the Church*, and that the Church alone has the right to determine what is its tradition and to interpret that tradition. There are, as Hanson points out, exceptions to this rule, but they are not very significant. W. Telfer, in a review of a study, *Celsus and Origenes*, made by Anno Miura-Stange at the suggestion of A. Harnack, has a statement that is very pertinent at this point:

While Origen is seen to be conditioned, in his reflective thinking, by the Hellenism to which mentally he belongs, his reaction is prompt and true whenever the theme converges on practical Christian living. In sentiment and practice he is Christian to the core, and deeply influenced by loyalty to the church.⁷⁰

Hanson maintains that perhaps the most important modification of the relation of the Church to tradition, as stated above, is that Origen is always inclined to identify the Church's interpretation of its tradition with the speculations of his own particular highly intellectual and rationalizing school

of thought. He is content to leave almost unanswered the question of what precisely are the organs whereby the Church determines and interprets tradition, and in his conception there is a somewhat loose definition of the limits of that tradition. "His essentially speculative mind was always ready to leap over the boundaries set by the list of inspired books and the articles of a creed which the Church of his day was in process of forming."⁷¹

In answering the question: What is the source of Origen's faith? De Faye expresses a point of view which is quite in keeping with that of Outler and of Hanson and which the writer thinks is essentially correct. De Faye writes:

More than all else, it [the source of Origen's faith] is living tradition [*he paradosis*]. It is no more primitive evangelism than it is Paulinism that passed from mouth to mouth. It is this entirely oral Christianity, the writings of which—scarcely yet canonical—were but a reflection, which many regarded as too pallid, that had won over his father Leonides and inspired him with heroic faith. It is this oral Christianity, far more than books, which inspired the youthful Origen. And so, when he begins to write his *De Principiis*, he claims that he is—and aims at being—nothing but the interpreter of the Apostolic tradition.⁷²

De Faye stresses that Origen's faith comprised the truly living beliefs of the Christians of the time; that it is always these, in the last analysis, that inspire and direct his thought. They do not check the flight of his ideas—as stereotyped, rigid, and dogmatic formulas would do—but rather they keep it in the right direction. As proof of this assertion, De Faye speaks of the entire life of Origen as a testimony to the supreme importance he attaches to his Christian faith. As a young man, he thirsted after martyrdom; about the middle of his career, when Christians were being persecuted under Maximinus the Thracian, he wrote his treatise *On Martyrdom*; at the end of his life, as confessor, he afforded an example of inflexible constancy. This faith, we must remember, inspires the whole of his known writings without exception. De Faye is most emphatic in his appreciation of Origen at this point. He writes:

It is found not only in his homilies, in his edificatory writings, in his apology for Christianity, apropos of the book of Celsus, but also in his most arduous commentaries as well as throughout his De Principiis. From beginning to end of his work, we find the purest Christian spirit. Be it noted also that, while Origen made his own the science of his time, and though his thought did not remain uninfluenced by Greek philosophy, he yet regarded himself as alien to his age. Like every Christian of his time, he feels himself outside society and the law; he is conscious of belonging to another humanity . . . it is because he is so entirely a Christian that he somewhat disdainfully rejects the peace treaty which Celsus offers the Christians at the end of his book.⁷³

A final trait which De Faye puts before his readers to show to what extent the Christian element predominates in Origen is Origen's interpretation of the life of Christ, which was so well calculated to impress a man of that time. Origen, however, did not rely so much upon this interpretation as upon a fact—a fact which was of striking significance at the time. De Faye maintains that it was with a certain amount of pride that Origen taught—and on the eve of the Decian persecution—that the Gospel of Jesus transformed men's characters and gave birth to confessors and martyrs. Note particularly the question in De Faye's comment on this trait in Origen.

Persecution was to prove him in the right. The conclusion he reached was that Jesus Christ must really have possessed divine virtue. Now, in order to conceive such an argument, to be conscious of its force and believe it to be irrefutable, was it not necessary to be a Christian—even to the very marrow? A Christian alone could be aware of the profound influence, the intense activity of his Christ in deeds whose notoriety was evident to all. Others might show astonishment and attempt to depreciate them; a really authentic Christian alone could discern in them traces of the direct action of his master.⁷⁴

De Faye gives a very splendid evaluation of Origen when he writes that “his philosophy and his belief, his thought and his faith, blend together and fructify each other; thinker and believer are closely united, forming one and the same personality.”⁷⁵

We have already considered what Origen regarded as the proper task of the Christian philosopher. Charles Bigg, in his outstanding work on the Alexandrine Christian Platonists, points out that for Origen, tradition, embodying the teaching of the Apostles, has handed down certain facts, certain usages, which are to be received without dispute, but does not attempt to explain the why or the whence; moreover, it is the office of the sanctified reason to define, to articulate, to coordinate, even to expand, and generally to adapt to human needs the faith once delivered to the Church.⁷⁶ Concerning Origen’s understanding of the office of the sanctified reason, statements in the preface to the first edition of A. V. G. Allen’s *The Continuity of Christian Thought* are especially relevant and thought-provoking. Allen writes:

If I were revising my book, I should try to enforce more than I have done the importance of the work of Origen. He was a true specimen of a great theologian, the study of whose life is of special value today, as a corrective against that tendency to underrate dogma in our reaction from outgrown dogmas, or the disposition to treat the feelings and instincts of our nature as if they were a final refuge from the reason, instead of a means to a larger use of the reason,—a process which, it is to be feared, in many is closely allied in its spirit with the temper which leads men to seek shelter in an infallible church.⁷⁷

Another significant and accurate statement, it appears to the writer, concerning some of Origen’s speculative tendencies in relation to the essentials of the Christian revelation as taught to all Christians in his time, is found in the same work by Allen.

Origen, it should be said, recognized a wide difference between his speculative fancies and the essentials of Christian revelation. Nor did the purity of his faith or the simplicity of his Christian character suffer from his intellectual vagaries. Mosheim [*Commentaries*, ii. 149], who had great contempt for his philosophical aberrations, says of him: “Certainly, if any man deserves to stand first in the catalogue of saints and martyrs, and to be annually held up as an example to Christians, this is the man.”⁷⁸

Already we have considered to some extent the utterance of Tradition. Perhaps we should point out the chief differences between the doctrine which, in Alexandria at any rate, was taught to all Christians in the time of Origen, and the Nicene Creed. The doctrine, as Bigg points out,⁷⁹ differs from the Nicene Creed in that it does not use the terms “Very God” or “Homoousian” of the Son, and in that it asserts the moral attributes of God, the creation of the world out of nothing, the

spiritual nature of the Resurrection Body, the connection of punishments and rewards with conduct, the eternity of punishment, the existence of angels, the freedom of the will, the double sense of Scripture. It is rather a *Regula Fidei* than a creed in the strict sense of the word, but the language is already so framed as to exclude the Gnostics, the Noetians, possibly the Chiliasts, and certainly all those who doubted the Personality of the Holy Spirit. Within these limits all was open ground for reverent but free discussion, and Origen availed himself of this liberty to the fullest extent. In the *De Principiis* he maps out the field of investigation and expresses himself rather fully about each article in turn. Bigg stresses three merits of this work in particular:

Origen never slurs a difficulty, never dogmatizes, never consciously departs from the teaching of Scripture. It is in this last point that he differs most, in point of method, from Clement, who not infrequently leaves us in doubt as to the precise Scriptural basis of his ideas. Sometimes Origen's interpretations are wrong; sometimes again he attaches undue weight to particular expressions. Certain texts seem to dominate him and color all his views. [Cf. Denis, *op. tit.*, p. 56.] But his most daring flights always start from some point in the written Word. The connection with the particular passage under discussion may be of the most fanciful kind, but the opinion itself is never arbitrary.⁸⁰

Since allegory was the dominant feature of Origen's exegesis, something further should be said about it and the freedom that it gave to him. It supplied the form and enlarged the possibilities of his interpretation. The belief that throughout Scripture a hidden mystical sense underlies all narratives and details and is there buried in concealment by the Divine Purpose was the belief of the age, and Origen is not alone responsible for it. Clement before him had devoted the greater part of the fifth book of the *Stromateis* to a defense of this doctrine of "concealment," and Origen may have heard it in Clement's lectures. But excuse or explain it as we may, this principle is there and is operative. In much Origen was the man of his own time, but it is also true that in much his teaching is of abiding value. In the introduction to his helpful series of translated extracts from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen, R. B. Tollinton adheres somewhat strictly to the subject of Origen's exegesis. He holds that allegory saved the Scriptures for the Church; that, taken literally, the Old Testament could not have been shown, as against the arguments of Jewish controversialists, to be Christian literature, nor could either Testament have been defended against the criticisms of educated Greeks; that the answer to each lay in allegorical exegesis. The method had been worked to excess in the Gnostic schools. Origen has often to plead for consistency and balance in contrast to what he deemed their errors. Tollinton writes that it was because he could use this method on his own lines that in church or lecture room he addressed his many audiences with an entire and unhesitating confidence in the spiritual value of the Scriptures which it was his lifelong service to expound. The *simpliciores* were troubled, but the competent few, who were attracted, multiplied.⁸¹ Allegory meant freedom—escape from the bondage of the letter—to Origen. "It meant that outside the church's Rule of Faith, which Origen held to be sacred and inviolable and never consciously infringed, it was open to him to read his own convictions into the language of the canonical books."⁸² The question is raised: Was it laudable synthesis or, in Harnack's phrase, deplorable "secularization," that the church should assimilate the teaching of Plato and the Stoics? Irrespective of the way in which one may answer the question, patristic scholars seem to be in agreement that Origen was the greatest of the many teachers who brought Hellenic culture into the religion of the Man of Nazareth. Allegory made this possible. The letter remains unaltered, but the spirit of the philosophers is blended in exegesis with the spirit of the prophets. Through the use of

the allegorical method, Origen secured a large measure of intellectual freedom.

Tollinton gives us an excellent appraisal of Origen as exegete. He is quite emphatic in his statement of Origen's relation to the Church's Rule of Faith:

This great exegete left abundant scope alike for his successors and for his critics. We do him no wrong when we recognize his limitations, some of them personal, some of them the conditions of his age. It is of the latter that we are more conscious. "This was all right in its time," we say; or, "Our view of inspiration is not his." Yet we rarely feel that he is positively wrong. From one point of view, if not from another, the thing he meant was true . . . considering the bulk of his work and the haste with which much of it must have been accomplished, and the defects meet us with surprising infrequency. The labor of his achievement, the combination of moral earnestness with mental alertness, the sincerity of conviction, the sense of possessing a great heritage—these are the features which arrest us constantly. . . .

Origen has the humility which characterizes true greatness. On certain points he is quite clear, almost dogmatic. Beyond them he is often only the enquirer, seeking for truth, admitting hesitation. He will allow no infringement of the Church's Rule of Faith. He is quite certain that the case of Celsus could not be maintained. He does not admit the possibility of matter being a first cause equally with God. And literalism in exegesis is definitely wrong. On all these points he speaks affirmatively and decisively. They are not open questions. But side by side with this decision runs through all his writings another strain'. He speaks "as he is able." This point demands "qualifications greater than I possess." This is a subject for the truly learned, "of whom I well know that I am not one." To this question "it is not easy to find an answer." Repeatedly he leaves matters for hearers or readers to decide. "It is for the reader to judge." "He who is able must consider." "Someone else may suggest a better explanation." He is glad to convince but he does not seek to control the minds of others. . . . He is ready to acknowledge the help which a teacher receives from his pupils; he is in their debt as well as they in his. And there are subjects in which a true teacher must advance with caution, *suspenseo pede*, for a false step may bring disaster.⁸³

When Origen's bold speculations brought, especially after his death, numerous critics and objectors, Pamphilus, his loyal admirer, could reply that Origen had made suggestions rather than assertions. The Church had given no decision on the preexistence of the soul or on the nature of the stars. It was therefore open to Origen to consider these matters. He claims no finality for his thoughts or findings. The writer finds himself in agreement with Tollinton, who maintains that, along with Origen's daring flights of imagination, which carry us backwards into dim beginnings and forwards into the long series of the worlds to be, there remains not less evident the spirit of the seeker and of the learner, which makes tentative answers, follows up hints, has respect for other minds, and is not ashamed to acknowledge ignorance. Although he is no skeptic, he is even further removed from being an autocrat in exegesis.⁸⁴

The view which Rene Cadiou has drawn from reflection on the surviving works of Origen should be considered in relation to Origen's doctrine of tradition, especially to the "rule of faith." Cadiou, like Volker, after long personal study of Origen, presents a reevaluation. In his *Introduction au systeme d'Origene*, Cadiou gives mature reflections upon Origen as a Christian thinker to illustrate some of the master-principles of his thinking. He brings a very sympathetic spirit to bear upon the

subject of his book. While he shows how strange and alien many of Origen's ideas are, when tried by standards of Christian tradition, at the same time he insists on Origen's blameless loyalty to the Church, and maintains that all his thinking aimed to serve the Church. The Gnostic systems of Platonic inspiration, on the one hand, and Hellenic Neoplatonism, on the other, cut off whole tracts of actual life from any real relation with God. But his postulating the freedom of spiritual beings to cleave to or fall away from God left the possibility of accounting for the whole of actual life as God's world in the way that Christian tradition demanded. Cadiou points out the fact that Origen was driven to the further postulate of preexistence of souls, and to make all actual existence purgatorial, does not qualify the purity of his intention to strengthen orthodox apologetic. Again, his conviction that the study of the soul was a sure way to solve the riddle of the universe contributed to his becoming a master of the spiritual life. Origen and St. Augustine are very near in that they both searched into spiritual experience for the foundations of their doctrine of the human will. If it be true that for Origen the primal fall of a soul came from its own self-originated motion, it is true also that its redemption back to the state from which it fell depends entirely on the free communication of the Logos. Man's dependence on grace could hardly be stated more strongly, and yet a place is left for striving and progress on the part of the believer.⁸⁵

In a later work⁸⁶ Cadiou stresses that Origen, starting from the principle that Christian knowledge has no other foundation than the common faith of all Christians, considers it necessary to establish a connection between the elementary catechism and the knowledge with which he has been enlightened by his study of the Sacred Scriptures, by the learning he has acquired in the course of his controversies, and by the scholarship that has come to him as a result of his acquaintance with the problems of the various philosophical schools. The common faith of Christians contains some things that are clear and some that are obscure. He points out, moreover, that although it does not, of itself, endow the Christian thinker with all religious knowledge, it lays down the conditions under which such a man ought prudently to conduct his inquiry. Hence it is the norm or canon of every such study. Speaking generally, it can be said that the faith establishes the existence of supernatural realities (divine knowledge) and that it is the duty of theologians, or of those who have received the grace of wisdom, to investigate the essence or the origin of such supernatural realities.⁸⁷ In this ecclesiastical canon we have the rule of true religion, as opposed to the ungodliness of the heretics. It is considered, in its most perfect expression, as a working principle of the spiritual Church, of which the ordinary Church is eminently a part. But it is also the traditional method which guides the spiritual Christian in his contemplation on the mysteries of his faith and furnishes him with the means of interpreting all the enigmas of Holy Scripture, because the canon of the Christian faith contains within itself the principles of symbolism.⁸⁸

Cadiou maintains⁸⁹ that, according to Origen, the Church's message; the apostolical traditions, whether understood by the illiterate or held only by the learned; the preaching of their successors: all are reducible to some fundamental points. Furthermore, Cadiou holds that Origen's public declaration of his important beliefs, as found in his preface to the *De Principiis*, places him under a solemn obligation toward the clergy and the faithful of the Christian community. Origen's method of expounding the canon of faith is worthy of note. His exposition of it is marked by a repugnance for literalism. Instead of stating simply that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, he elaborates the article into an affirmation that Jesus Christ did truly suffer and did not endure this death common to man in appearance only, but did truly die. In Origen we find an intelligence held under control and a boldness of speculation. "It is incorrect to believe that he ignores the simple

rule of faith, and it is no less incorrect to assert that he endeavors to reproduce it without the amplifications to which his training had accustomed him.”⁹⁰ For him, a number of truths flow from the ecclesiastical canon by way of corollaries—so much so, that although they are not articles, properly so called, they are presented as points that have been clarified in the teaching of the Church. For instance, free-will is not expressly included in the catechumen’s baptismal formula; but Origen considers that it is implied in the dogma of the Last Judgment.⁹¹ The argument for this deduction is to be found in the fact that the Church calls men to the practice of virtue and thereby assumes that they are capable of a free determination of their own actions. Origen recognizes the necessity for clarifying the points which Christian tradition has left obscure, and in order to do this, he proposes a number of hypotheses which he checks by comparing them with appropriate texts of Holy Scripture. Many of the points in question do not involve any definition of faith.

Whatever one may say, Origen does not underestimate the role of faith itself. He often enumerates the truths to believe and makes “preaching” the norm of all ultimate knowledge.⁹² But for the faith, such as he ascertained it in the case of the simple people, mixed with ignorance and error, he does not have a very great esteem. Occasionally he defends it against the raillery of the haughty philosopher, such as was Celsus;⁹³ ordinarily, however, he points out the lacunae. According to him, this simple faith is a dull perception which is attached to what is capable of being perceived by the senses, to the literal or carnal sense of the Scripture, to the external rites of worship;⁹⁴ it is faith that is more or less limited to believing in chastisements, in the humanity of Christ and his cross.⁹⁵ The simple believers are those who place emphasis on heavenly enjoyments, on the resurrection of the body—very material ideas.⁹⁸ On the other hand, Origen designates and regards more highly the “spiritual ones” or “perfect ones,” who possess *gnosis* and adhere to the doctrines with intelligence and wisdom;⁸⁷ who, attentive to the world of the intelligible, penetrate the secret meaning of the Scriptures and participate in the Logos which was in the beginning.⁹⁸ The *gnosis* of Origen is, in the first place, the understanding of the mysteries of the Scripture. Because “the sacred books were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by the will of God of the universe and the ministry of Jesus Christ,”⁹⁹ they correspond in every point to the dignity of God, to His wisdom, and to His infinite knowledge.¹⁰⁰ Every scriptural passage possesses a spiritual meaning when certain ones do not have a somatic or historical meaning.¹⁰¹ The treasure hidden in the field of the Scripture is regarded as an immense richness, and it is the task of the perfect ones to discover it by scrutinizing the spirit of the divine words.¹⁰²

W. Volker points out that the *gnosis* of Origen is essentially a divine illumination, a religious perception which has its starting point in faith and its end in ecstasy. Starting from visible things, it progresses from stage to stage; it traverses the invisible world, passes through the Logos, and ends in divinity itself.¹⁰³ The degrees of knowledge are strictly parallel to moral progress, so that the true gnostic is also the perfect Christian.¹⁰⁴ *Gnosis* is still “the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes.”¹⁰⁵ Origen strongly accentuated the speculative note of *gnosis*. He makes it clear that when faith contents itself with an elementary knowledge, *gnosis* seeks the “reasons.”¹⁰⁶ But he does not imagine a knowledge of the universe acquired without divine illumination, or a mysticism which would not be at the same time a knowledge of the causes, or a *gnosis* without the Scriptures.¹⁰⁷ For Origen, the discovery of the mysteries concealed under the letter of the Scriptures is a chief concern. One can immediately recognize the difference between this concept of theology and that of Irenaeus and Tertullian, for example, for whom theology is the implementing of the clear doctrines of the Scriptures.

The Oriental authors who depend on Origen have kept the attraction of the teacher for the speculative problems. The *Apology* of Dionysius of Alexandria, the fragments of the works of Gregory Thaumaturgus, certain treatises of Methodius of Olympus—*On Free Will*, for example—denote philosophical preoccupations that one would seek in vain in the works of Cyprian and other Occidental people. But the Orient likewise counts theologians who, like Hegesippe, and the author of the *Teaching of the Apostles*, have set forth very simply the tradition of the apostolic preaching.¹⁰⁸ All that one can affirm, according to Van den Eynde,¹⁰⁹ is that the Occident has furnished the most qualified representatives of the popular theology, and the Orient the type of learned theologians.

We cannot overlook Van den Eynde's researches with respect to Origen's relation to tradition. He points out that, with Origen, [*paradosis* ordinarily designates some Jewish tradition.¹¹⁰ Sometimes he applies it to the teaching of the apostles,¹¹¹ but we do not know any Greek text of his works in which the term receives the precise meaning of apostolic doctrine transmitted through succession in the Church. Already we have pointed out the distinction which Origen, following close upon his master Clement, makes between faith and *gnosis*, or wisdom. Faith takes in the manifest teaching of the Scriptures; *gnosis* is occupied with the reasons for faith, with the problems that go beyond the apostolic tradition—in a word, with the mysteries of the Scripture and with the supra-scriptural truths. The question of tradition is then posed for faith and for ecclesiastical *gnosis*. With reference to Origen's relation to the "rule of faith," Van den Eynde gives no information in addition to what has already been stated. He stresses that Origen proposes as the first doctrinal authority, not the Scriptures, but the doctrine which is transmitted from the apostles through an uninterrupted succession. The "ecclesiastical preaching" or "the unanimous consent of the churches" is the supreme doctrinal norm.¹¹² Once this principle is posed, Origen never tries to justify it by enumerating the episcopal successions, or even, as Clement had done, by showing that the heretics are subsequent; and he nowhere attaches to the apostolic churches a special importance in the matter of doctrine.¹¹³ Nevertheless, Origen did not espouse the theory of Clement of Alexandria concerning the secret and oral tradition.

Origen admits that *gnosis* has for its object the concealed mysteries of the Scriptures. Being inspired by words of St. Paul, he says that the most sublime truths "are above what is written."¹¹⁴ He also admits that Christ communicated to his apostles, and the latter to their intimate friends, a secret and supra-scriptural teaching. Jesus, he says, did not openly make manifest his entire doctrine to the multitude; often he spoke to them in parables; "but to his disciples he explained everything in particular."¹¹⁵ The gospels do not reveal these sublime doctrines "because the signification of the parables could not be expressed by writing and because each of the interpretations and explanations was of such a nature that the entire world could not contain the books written about these parables."¹¹⁶ From the example of the Master, the apostles adapted their teaching to the degree of perfection of their listeners: to the Corinthians, of little learning, St. Paul gives only "the sermon"; to the Ephesians he communicates the doctrine of the mysteries.¹¹⁷ His knowledge far surpassed the content of his epistles.¹¹⁸ Van den Eynde comments that there are ineffable mysteries which human discourse cannot express, which mortal ears cannot hear, and which the apostles themselves were not able to reveal in full. St. Paul seized them in spirit when he was carried off to the third heaven, "but he was not permitted to tell all of that to men." Nevertheless, he perhaps spoke of it to those who did not walk any more "like a man"—to

Timothy, to Luke, and to the other disciples whom he knew were capable of receiving the ineffable mysteries. We should note the mysterious allusion to it in this advice which he gave to Timothy (II Tim. 2:3): “Remember the words which you have heard about me and confide them to faithful men who will be capable of teaching more of them.”¹¹⁹

In order to rise to the idea of a gnostic tradition, Origen would only have had to connect the actual *gnosis* with that of the Christ and the apostles by an uninterrupted series of gnostic teachers. But he never speaks of such a succession. If he has recourse to a secret teaching of Christ and the apostles, it is in order to legitimize his own teaching, and not in order to affirm the existence of a gnostic tradition in the Church. From the example of Christ and the apostles, he claims the right to proceed, never neglecting the preaching for the faithful, simple people, to higher teachings which can occasionally surpass the Scriptures. He refers to the “ancients” in one of his homilies on Hebrews, but only to support some point of the apostolic storehouse. Never, in any text, does Origen found his speculations on an oral and secret tradition. Even in the passages in which he speaks of the gnostic teaching of the Lord and the apostles, he seems to have recourse only to the gifts of the Spirit and to the revealing grace of Christ.¹²⁰ The secret teaching of Christ is the model, not the source, of Origen’s *gnosis*. Origen also judges supra-scriptural verities by the manifest doctrine of the Scripture and the Church. As for the oral traditions of the Gnostic sects, he resolutely rejects them:

If one wishes, before understanding or accomplishing what is written, to climb to that which is above what is written, one will not understand even that which is written. . . . The heretics, who do not understand that, preach about the traditions and say: They are above that which is written; and our Saviour transmitted them to the apostles in secret, and the apostles to such and such a person. And thus, by such mythology, they deceive the minds of honest, virtuous men.¹²¹

And so in Origen we have a clear admission that the faith of the churches, transmitted through succession, is the ultimate criterion of the truth and is, indeed, a supreme *rule* of faith.¹²² The heretics do not deserve even the name of adorers of the Father; the mass of the faithful, slaves of the letter and symbols, adore the Father only in figures of speech; only the perfect one adores the Father in spirit and in truth.¹²³

Van den Eynde¹²⁴ gives an interesting discussion of the true method of exegesis according to Origen. The gross and material literalism, Origen tells us, has been the cause of almost all the errors. It prevented the Jews from recognizing in Jesus Christ the Messiah announced by the prophets; it permitted the heretics to invent a God for the Old Testament and another for the New; it even led the simplest among the Christians to imagine the God of their faith with the traits that one would not ascribe to the most cruel and the most unjust of men.¹²⁵ The cause, Origen concludes, which leads all those of whom we have just spoken to tell these false, impious, and foolish things about God is not other, it seems, than an understanding of the Scripture according to the very simple letter, and not according to the spirit. On this account we must explain, to those who believe that the sacred books are not the works of men, but that they were composed and have come down to us as a result of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by the will of the Father of the universe through Jesus Christ, the methods of interpretation that appear right to us who keep to the rule of the heavenly Church of Jesus Christ through the succession from the Apostles. That there are certain mystical revelations made known through the Divine Scriptures is believed by all, even by

the simplest of those who are adherents of the Word; but what these revelations are, fairminded and humble men confess that they do not know.¹²⁸

The phrase concerning the “rule of the heavenly Church” has been given various explanations.¹²⁷ Some scholars see in it, it seems, the preaching of the Church whose different objects Origen enumerates in the beginning of the *De Principiis*. J. Lebreton identifies the rule of the heavenly Church with the superior knowledge of the perfect ones, based on the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, and opposed to “the initial and elementary doctrine of Jesus Christ”; to him it is a question of a type of secret tradition. Van den Eynde points out that F. Kattenbusch thinks that the canon of the heavenly Church is clearly the Gnostic canon of the interpretation of the Scriptures. He would probably compare the passage with utterances of Clement about a line of tradition between the Church *gnosis* and Christ. Kattenbusch seems to attach the canon of the allegorical exegesis to a secret tradition. Van den Eynde emphatically states that he is not of that opinion. He points out that Origen himself declares, here and in the preface to his first book of the *De Principiis*, that the divine origin of the Scriptures and their mystic meaning are the object of the tradition and preaching of the Church. The “heavenly Church” is the one which, in searching for the divine and celestial mysteries in the letter of the Scriptures, avoids heresy and error. Origen often justifies his method of exegesis, but always by the faith of the churches and the Scriptures. Van den Eynde thinks it would be astonishing if only here Origen has justified it by an appeal to the secret tradition. Kattenbusch, referred to above, and Van den Eynde seem to be in agreement in their explanation of the canon of allegorical exegesis, but not in attaching it to a secret tradition. In the entire context Origen speaks only of allegorism; it is the purely literal method, he says, which is the cause of the errors of the Jews and the heretics regarding the principal doctrines of the Church, and errors of the simple people on secondary points. He proposes the rule to all those who believe that the Scriptures are of divine origin and that they have come down to us—to all, even the most simple people, who adhere to the doctrine and admit that the Scriptures contain mystical revelations. The heavenly Church, then, is the one which strives to comprehend the Scriptures according to the rule or principle of spiritual interpretation. This rule is transmitted through succession starting from the Apostles. Origen declares, indeed, in the beginning of the *De Principiis*, that one of the points of the apostolic tradition is that the Scriptures were written by the Spirit of God and that they have, besides a clear or manifest meaning, another meaning hidden for the most part. . . .

The Church is unanimous in admitting that the whole law is spiritual, but that the spiritual meaning of the law is known only to those who have received the grace of the Holy Spirit through the word of wisdom and knowledge.¹²⁸

The parallelism of this passage with that of the fourth book of the *De Principiis* is striking: the belief in the divine origin and in the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures constitutes part of “the manifest rule” or the apostolic tradition of the churches. It is, indeed, “the rule” *par excellence* because it constitutes the only means of avoiding the errors in the chief or secondary doctrines of the Church. Van den Eynde concludes that the formula “ecclesiastical rule” applies to the totality of the traditional doctrine of the churches, and that the formula “rule of the heavenly Church” designates the traditional doctrine of the spiritual exegesis.¹²⁹ He seems to be in agreement with G. Bardy¹³⁰ in maintaining that Origen put the church rule in close relationship with a baptismal symbol or confession which he had before him. Origen has not identified them, Van den Eynde

insists, any more than did Irenaeus, Tertullian, or Hippolytus; he never speaks expressly of the symbol, and nowhere tells the formula; his enumerations of the articles of faith are very free; he mixes with them a multitude of considerations which are often inspired by the language of the Bible—especially his favorite theses on the human soul and free-will, the angels and the devils, the divine origin and the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, the creation of the world. All of these points do not belong to the baptismal symbol.

R. P. F. Cavallera¹³¹ tells us that if Origen was mistaken, even in matters of method, at least he put in the hands of his readers a very sure means of correcting his own errors and all other deviations from the faith. That means of correction is tradition. It is as a norm, rather than as a source of faith, that he presents “the ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition.” Cavallera stresses that the Church, for Origen, is not only the guardian of the Holy Books, but also their authentic interpreter; and the one who turns aside from its teaching is considered heretical, preferring the doctrine of men to that of God.¹³² The Church preserves the doctrine which it received from the apostles and which was transmitted by succession. Origen then unites the “ecclesiastical and apostolic” qualifications in order to designate the teaching which he presents as the supreme norm of the true faith. Cavallera points out that we hardly speak otherwise today when we wish to designate the true Church of Christ; we call it “catholic, apostolic, and Roman.” The last qualification is unknown to Origen. However, given the epoch in which he wrote, one could not make of it a cause of complaint. He certainly was not ignorant of what important tradition the very ancient Church of the Romans was the depository, for when he was still a young man (about 212), he went to visit it. But, living and writing in Alexandria, he judged with the perspective which a teacher of that famous city could have at that time. Tradition, *paradosis*, persists “in the churches” to the present day,¹³³ Origen writes. Concerning Origen’s designating the true Church of Christ as “ecclesiastical and apostolic,” Cavallera writes: “It is incomplete, but it is not inexact.”¹³⁴ Cavallera maintains,¹³⁸ moreover, that few writers have emphasized the principle of authority in the Church as did Origen.¹³⁶ Origen belongs to the Church whose teaching he transmits, and he proclaims it very loudly in his controversies with the pagans or heretics and in his homilies.¹³⁷ “Christ is the light of the world which lights the Church itself. Even as the moon, according to common opinion, receives from the sun the light which permits it to illuminate the night, so the Church, having received the light of Christ, lights all those who are in darkness.”¹³⁸ The Church is the ark, built by the true Noah, our Lord, outside of which one is certain to perish; it is the house marked by the blood of Christ, outside of which no one is saved.¹³⁹

The present writer thinks that Cavallera, in his *Melanges*,¹⁴⁰ reveals penetrating insight into Origen’s doctrine of tradition. He reminds us that, as St. Augustine did later, Origen appealed to the tradition that the Church received from the apostles; moreover, that, in order to appreciate the merit of Origen, he must be compared with other Catholic theorists, and the comparison, for him, is incontestably favorable. His theology, according to Cavallera, is, indeed, the effort to comprehend, to understand what we believe, the discernment of the faithful, which St. Augustine and St. Anselm have notably celebrated with so much enthusiasm. Cavallera writes: “The Middle Ages in particular would have gained by drawing inspiration from his teaching . . . our teacher [Origen], superior to the great scholastics as a witness to the importance of tradition as a source of revelation, is at least their equal as a theorist of speculative theology.”¹⁴¹

Chapter Five

ORIGEN'S VIEW OF THE TEACHING OFFICE AS RELATED TO THE EARLY CHRISTIAN HIERARCHY AND COMMUNITY

From the standpoint of charm and versatility, Origen is one of the most appealing characters in history. His independence of mind prejudiced orthodoxy against him, so that he was never beatified—but not all saints are canonized. Owing to his comparatively liberal views, the historic Christian Church has never given him his rightful place as a thinker or as a Christian character. Today, however, we are able to appraise him more dispassionately. Trained in the eclectic school of Alexandria, he possessed a balanced mind in which the intellectual did not destroy the spiritual. From his youth to his death he showed an uncommon fearlessness. His restraint under the treatment given him by Bishop Demetrius and the Egyptian church, when he was deposed and banished, stands as an example of Christian grace that is rare—even among the saints. His rigorous self-discipline and impeccable moral life furnish a strong contrast to many of the better-known persons who have been canonized. It would appear that canonization has often been a matter of theological orthodoxy rather than exemplary conduct.

Origen had the conscientiousness and patience of the true scientist and went to great lengths to ascertain the exact word or phrase. We have already indicated how prodigious a worker he was. Here the writer wants to underscore the fact that Origen had all the admirable qualities of a good teacher, and that his students worshiped him; he knew how to clarify a problem and could stir his listeners emotionally as well as challenge their intellects. From Gregory Thaumaturgus, who felt that Origen stimulated his pupils by the deeds he did more than by the doctrines he taught, we learn of his personal magnetism and ability to inspire. His critical judgment, creative energy, and catholicity of knowledge are not equaled, it has been said, in any Christian thinker before Erasmus. Intellectually, Erasmus was his equal, no doubt, but the Renaissance scholar lacked Origen's generosity of mind and affectionate disposition. It is therefore a pity that so noble a character and so complete a man should be only a name in the annals of Christian history.¹

Origen, the great teacher, is the forgotten man of Christianity. He is forgotten because orthodoxy suppressed his teaching and outlawed him as a heretic. He was the first scientific theologian, and as William Fairweather says, "Within the sphere of Christian dogma he was the first, and he has been the only independent builder."² That he was the watershed of early Christian thought and represented its most progressive expression is also attested by Harnack: "Orthodox theology of all creeds has never yet advanced beyond the circle first mapped out by his mind. She has suspected and corrected her founder, and she has thought she could lop off his heterodox opinions as if they were accidental excrescences."³ Although he has received the eternal condemnation of the papacy since the seventh century, few men in the history of Christianity have received such superlative tributes as those paid to Origen. His real worth was perceived by F. W. Farrar, who said :

In the history of the early church there is no name nobler or more remarkable than that of Origen. Few men have rendered to the cause of Christianity such splendid services, or lived from childhood to old age a life so laborious and so blameless. Anathematized for centuries by the ignorance and prejudice of men incomparably his inferiors in learning and saintliness, he has

exercised an influence deeper in many respects than that even of Augustine. Amid the rage of his enemies great bishops supported him, and God himself blessed his cause. Though many writers affected [*sic*] to doubt the possibility of his salvation, he was from his youth upwards a saint, and the beloved teacher of many saints. ... He was by general admission the greatest, in almost every respect, of all the great Christian teachers of the three first Christian centuries.⁴

In the face of an onrushing authoritarianism, advocates of religious liberty and intellectual integrity need to appreciate the fact that they have history on their side. Remembering that truth is seldom found in the broad roads of history, where the great procession passes, but is discovered by searching in the bypaths for the rejected ones who would not conform, they should begin by rehabilitating many uncanonized saints and the anathematized heretics who lie dead, in a sense, by the side of the road at the places where they tried to break off and start new paths; They are the ones whose greatness lay in running counter to the world, and not in accepting it. As Franz Werfel says in *Hearken unto the Voice*, “the eternally defeated are the eternally victorious.”⁵

Perhaps it is in order here to say something more about Origen himself as a teacher and preacher before turning specifically to his conception of the teacher’s vocation. Charles E. Raven holds the view that Origen’s system is one of the profoundest produced during the Christian centuries and deserves to find a worthy modern exponent. He writes:

The first adequate theology, still perhaps the noblest ever formulated, [was] the Logos theology of the Greek Apologists, which had its fullest expression in the Christian Platonism of Clement of Alexandria and Origen. ... It is one of the tragedies of history that the work of this brilliant succession of Christian thinkers was allowed not merely to come to an end, but to fall into neglect, oblivion, and condemnation. If we are to handle effectively the task of elucidating a Christian theology for the twentieth century, we must, I think, ignore all the elaborate structures of later orthodoxy, Catholic and Protestant, which for today are literally irrelevant, and return to the point at which Origen was removed.⁶

Without necessarily sharing the sweeping generalization of the last sentence quoted, the writer finds himself in hearty accord with Raven’s opinion that Origen is among the greatest of Christian teachers. Much of the scorn poured upon him is based on gross exaggerations. It is not true that he had no sense of sin. Both Clement and Origen fervently denounced the vices and foibles of their day. It is not true that the Christian Platonists did not preach redemption. Origen, even if he dares to believe that in the end all men will be saved, has a passion for souls as strong as any revivalist. It is not just to accuse him of an over-emphasized intellectualism. He was a scholar, but by no means a pedant, and his interest was as much in the love of God as in the knowledge of Him. Origen was the greatest genius among the teachers of the Church, and he is justly compared with the greatest philosophers. It should be said also that his homilies, expository sermons delivered for the most part at Caesarea and taken down by shorthand writers, intellectual rather than sentimental in their appeal, reveal their author as one of the great preachers of antiquity.⁷ Origen is an excellent example of the fact that the functions of preaching and teaching reinforce one another in the Christian ministry. Petry writes: “Christian preaching and teaching develop most fruitfully when they are learned and practiced in productive fellowship. Then teaching is rescued from wooden aloofness and superciliousness, and preaching is protected from vacuity and undisciplined ranting.”⁸ What Origen taught of doctrine and of the Scriptures is that which he preached and

commented upon.

It seems that all the best characteristics of Origen—his thoroughness, his patience, his courage, his humility—come out with singular distinctness in his conception of the teacher’s vocation.

Whatever the value of his own personal work, the dignity of his high calling admits for him no question. “First apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers” —so high does the teacher stand in the Church’s grades of precedence.® He is the guide of the few who are called to carry their search for truth “above that which is written.”¹⁰ He is to be a true “master,” however little he must insist upon his right to claim the title. His position is of divine appointment, and when error is proved false, the teacher’s service abounds to the glory of God.¹¹ And yet, high as is the calling, the true teacher never loses sight of his many limitations or of his overwhelming responsibilities. For he is limited first by his own inadequacy, and he doubts whether he is the able minister of the New Testament.¹² The teacher must not despair, but he must make no great claim to success. In commenting on a parable in which the Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a certain king who wished to make a reckoning with his own servants,¹³ Origen’s spirit of humility is quite evident.

But with regard to the interpretation of the loftiest type, we make no profession; nor, on the other hand, with the assistance of Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, do we despair of apprehending the things signified in the parable; but whether it will be the case that such things will be dictated to us in connection with this Scripture or not, may God in Christ suggest the doing of that which is pleasing to Him, if only there be granted to us also concerning these things the word of wisdom which is given from God through the Spirit, and the word of knowledge which is supplied according to the Spirit.¹⁴

Very often the teacher is puzzled and in difficulty, so that he must turn to God for guidance.¹⁵ In his introduction to translations drawn from Origen’s commentaries and homilies,¹⁰ Tollinton tells us that though, like Augustine after him, Origen delivered a daily sermon, still it was difficult for him to say all that he wished; and even in the second century, congregations liked short sermons, *brevitatem auditores ecclesiae diligunt*.¹¹ For his hearers also, and his readers as well, had their own limitations: their indifference, their irregularity, their lack of insight, and their rooted prejudices.¹⁸ He warns them that they too have their responsibilities, and that the greatest care is necessary in the choice of our religious guides.¹⁹ Origen understands very well, indeed, that the wise are a small company, *valde rari*.²⁰ These things, at times, would almost make Origen shrink and hesitate in face of the teacher’s responsibilities.

His exhortations, warnings, observations, as related to the true teacher, are ever pertinent. He is disturbed by the lazy teacher who hides his talents.²¹ He recognizes great harm and discredit that has come upon the Church through the incompetence of her appointed instructors.²² He is aware of hardly less harm that has come through those who divulged all mysteries and revealed the inner secrets of faith to minds as yet unfitted to receive them—“pearls before swine,” as the often quoted text might have reminded them.²³ For, according to Origen, wise reserve is in many cases necessary.²⁴ He does not hesitate to point out that the true teacher must discriminate among his pupils, giving most careful attention to those who, male or female, are still catechumens only, yet not neglecting the educated or laying himself open to the ridicule of the intellectuals.²⁵ Origen makes it unmistakably clear that the teacher’s task is not wholly one of instruction. Both by his preaching and by his living he must set forth the Word and show it accordingly. He tells us that

along with doctrine must go the *vitae exemplum*, and teaching must arouse the conscience as well as inform the mind.²⁶ God's fire must be in the true teacher's heart; it is the fire which kindles as well as illuminates.²⁷ Origen is most definitely aware of the temptations of popularity that beset the teacher;²⁸ also, of the teacher's temptation to shirk his task.²⁹ He reminds us that for lack of wisdom the teacher might fail to discriminate between what should and what should not be said.³⁰

Origen reveals shrewd insight in his homilies and commentaries that deal with special problems of the teacher and the teaching office. In commenting upon the faithful and wise servant of whom Jesus spoke,³¹ he reminds us that it is very seldom that fidelity and wisdom are found united. And yet, as he urges, both qualities are needed alike in those who administer the Church's finances and in those who dispense the Church's truth. He reminds us³² that if anyone will pass in review the great body of those who desire to be Christians, he will find many who are faithful and put into practice their zeal for faith, but who are not also wise. Again, he will see others who are regarded as believers, quick indeed and wise, but of only moderate faith; if not unfaithful, still deficiently faithful, for they despise the foolish things of the world which God hath chosen. It is very seldom, Origen tells us, that the faithful man and the wise man coincide as one and the same person, so as through both these qualities to give his fellow servants food in due season. For, to give food in due season, a man must have wisdom. And if he is not to deprive others of food in time of scarcity, he will need faith and fidelity. The tremendous responsibilities upon the leaders in the churches may be seen in the following commentary:

In view of the sins which do occur in men who seem to be believers in Christ, and most commonly in those who are administrators of the church's funds, it is not out of place to remind ourselves that even in the simple sense of the term many of us have need to be faithful as well as wise in administering the revenues of the church. We must be faithful, so that we may not devour what belongs to the widows, that we may remember the poor, and may not take opportunity from that which is written, The Lord ordained that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel, to seek for more than simple food and necessary clothing. We must not keep more for ourselves than we give to our hungry or thirsty brother, or to the naked, or to those who in the cares of this life are oppressed by want. And we must be wise, so that we may assist, every man according to his deserts, remembering the saying, Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy. We must not give from the church's stores by any single rule, so as merely to keep the principle of not devouring what belongs to the poor or robbing them. Rather we must be wise to understand the causes of poverty, and the merits of each particular case; how a man was brought up; how much he requires; what is the reason of his poverty.

Thus we must not take the same measures in the case of those who from childhood have been brought up in hard and narrow circumstances and in the case of those who after being reared in affluence and luxury have subsequently come to low estate. We must not make the same grants to men as to women; or the same to men of many years and to men in their prime; or the same to men in the prime but delicate and consequently unable to earn a living and to those who at least in part can maintain themselves. Enquiry must be made whether they have many sons, not indifferent, but of full capacity, and yet not providing adequate support. Not to say more, the man who desires to administer well the revenues of the church needs much wisdom, that being found a faithful and wise administrator even in these matters, he may attain to blessedness.

Possibly too it is also on account of the large number of Christians who do not sufficiently occupy themselves with the quest for the word, and who yet with this defect are promoted to high office, that we have the greater need to listen to the words, “Who is that faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath set over his household to give them food in due season? They must not, in their desire to display their wisdom, squander rational and spiritual food upon their fellow servants without distinction” whoever they may be, persons quite unfit, and often far more in need of such teaching as will improve their character and give order to their life, than of the teaching which guides unto wisdom and illuminates with the light of knowledge those whose intelligence is capable of sustaining the radiance of this kind of light. Nor must they shrink from setting forth deeper truths for the benefit of those who can give intelligent attention, lest by the poverty of their exposition they incur the contempt of clever people, whose cleverness is a natural gift, or who possibly gain a repute for intellect by their constant practice of worldly wisdom. Difficult therefore it is to be both in one, wise alike and faithful, but impossible it is not. The Lord did not bless a man who could never exist when He said, Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you he will set him over all that he hath.³³

Who would desire the responsibilities of the high and honorable office of teaching, remembering that the chiefs are punished for the sins of the people, and that even guardian angels are judged for their neglect of the souls committed to their charge? In his treatment of a passage of Scripture³⁴ in *Homilies on Numbers*, Origen stresses the performance of vitally important duties as laid upon leaders and teachers, and the necessity for their keen vigilance over their own actions. After telling the people that Israel sinned and the Lord told Moses to take all the chiefs, the leaders, and to expose them to Him over against the sun—that is, to lead the leaders forth for investigation so that they might be tested by the light—Origen says:

See what is the lot of the leaders of the people; they are not only put on trial for their own offences, they are also compelled to give account for the sins of the people. Perhaps it is their fault that the people offends. Perhaps they did not teach; they did not warn; they did not take the trouble to convict those who had been the first to do wrong; so as to prevent the spread of the malady to others. The performance of these duties is laid upon leaders and teachers. If through their inaction, through their lack of care for the multitude, the people sins, it is they who are exposed, they who are led forth to judgment. Moses, that is the Law of God, charges them with indolence and slackness; upon them shall the anger of the Lord be turned, and it shall cease from the people. If men thought of these things, they would never desire or intrigue for the leadership of the people. Enough for me to be tried for my own offences; enough for me to give account for myself and for my sins. What occasion is there for me to be exposed for the sins of the people as well? To be exposed over against the sun, before which nothing can be hidden, nothing kept dark?

But perhaps there is also some hidden and secret meaning in the passage, with further teaching for us than the common interpretation seems to possess. Possibly this passage also has reference to those princes of the people of whom we spoke a little earlier. For the angels shall come to judgment together with us, and stand for us before the sun of righteousness; perhaps some responsibility for our sins lies with them; perhaps they failed to pay sufficient care and attention to us, so as to call us back from the disease of our sins. Unless there had been some defect in them, which seemed to deserve blame on our account, the language of Scripture would never say to the angel of this or of that church, Thou hast—for instance—some who hold the teaching of Balaam; or, Thou hast left

thy first love, or thy patience, or something else of the same kind, as we mentioned above, on account of which in the Apocalypse the angels of each church are blamed. For if, let us say, the angel who has received me, marked with the sign, from God, looks for a reward for my good deeds, it is certain he will also look for censure for those deeds of mine which are not good. That is why they are said to be exposed over against the sun, doubtless to make it clear whether it was through my disobedience, or through the angel's carelessness, that sins were committed which led to my devotion to Baalpegor, or to some other idol, according to the character of my sin. Now if my chief, I mean the angel assigned to me, did not fail but counselled me to right action, and spoke in my heart, as he did through conscience calling me back from sin; whereas I, despising his advice and scorning the restraint of conscience, rushed headlong into sin, for me there will be the double penalty, both for despising my adviser and for offending in my deed. Nor should you feel any surprise if we say that angels come to judgment together with men, since Scripture says, The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders of His people and the princes thereof. Thus the princes are exposed, and, if the fault be in them, God's anger ceases from the people. We should have the keener vigilance over our actions, now that we know that not ourselves alone shall stand before God's judgment seat for our deeds, but that the angels, as our chiefs and guides, shall also be brought into judgment on our account. Therefore it is that the Scripture says, Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves in all things. For they watch as those who shall give account for your souls.³⁵

Origen knows that both intellectually and morally the work of the teacher is strenuous and exacting. He expects that all his sermons will be criticized on the Day of Judgment, when apparently there will be no lack of time.³⁶ Ezekiel's warnings to prophets and false prophets were addressed to all teachers, himself included. Hence, he feels the need to appeal to his congregation, asking their prayers for his enlightenment, or to the *lector benevolus* with a request for his patience and kind judgment.³⁷

These references to Origen's own calling help us to understand his influence and to appreciate the characteristics which attracted crowds to the house in which he taught as a young man in Alexandria and elicited twenty years later the enthusiastic panegyric from Gregory in Caesarea. R. B. Tollinton writes of this great teacher:

Through all that is untenable, eccentric, past and over in the details of his exegesis, there still shines clear, for everyone who will study him with sympathy and insight, the great conception of a noble vocation. He is God's banker, distinguishing between the true and counterfeit metal, loaning out the golden coin of truth to souls who will repay it with interest in reasonable service and intelligent devotion. In our own days, when knowledge is increased and the making of many books goes on without cessation, no single teacher is likely to occupy a position in exegesis so eminent as that of Origen in his century. But it is well for the Church when, among our "many masters," Origen's diligence, Origen's candour, Origen's reverence do not fail.³⁸

Already we can see the richness of Origen's homilies and commentaries for material on the function of the teacher. Bigg maintains³⁹ that the Scholia,⁴⁰ Homilies, and Commentaries, the forms in which he expounded nearly every book in the Bible—and many books were treated in all three ways—afford ample material for judging the method and the substance of his teaching. By the time of Origen the old prophesyings and speaking with tongues, except among the Montanist

sectaries, had disappeared before the growing reverence for Scripture and the increasing strictness of discipline. Their place was supplied by the homily,⁴¹ or discourse, a name derived from the philosophical schools, expressive of the character of Christian eloquence, which was didactic rather than rhetorical. In the days of Origen, in Palestine,⁴² public worship was held no longer in the large room of some wealthy brother's house, but in buildings definitely appropriated for the purpose, in which the bishop and his clergy were seated in a semicircle around the decorated altar.⁴³ The service was divided into two parts, corresponding to what were afterwards known as the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful. The first, which was held daily, consisted of the reading of Scripture, the Sermon, and apparently certain prayers; the second, celebrated on Sundays and festivals, consisted of prayers properly so called and the Eucharist. At the first portion of the service, catechumens, even heathen, were allowed to be present; from the second, all except the baptized were rigidly excluded.⁴⁴

Redepenning points out that the scriptural lessons were often of considerable length, comprising as much as three or four of our modern chapters, and went on in regular order, and that the preacher expounded the whole or a portion of each according to the direction of the presiding bishop.⁴⁵ Bigg holds that it is probable that the friendly prelate of Caesarea suffered Origen to follow his own plan, which accounts for the continuous exposition of the several books which his homilies form. The homilies, or discourses, were delivered before a mixed, shifting, and not always orderly congregation. The services were daily and long, and some of the brethren amended only on feast-days, and not always then. Some left the church before the sermon began, or, if they remained, gathered in the farther end of the building, the place of the heathen and unbaptized, "turning their backs on the Word of God and busying themselves with secular gossip." The broad differences in knowledge and morality are clearly seen in Origen's homilies. Some did not consider it inconsistent with their Christian profession to visit the circus or the amphitheater; some fluctuated between Gnosticism and the Church; some remained tainted with heathen superstitions; some, sincere but ignorant, interpreted the promises of the Gospel in the most gross and carnal sense, or "believed of God what would not be believed of the cruelest of mankind." Hence the tremendous responsibility which Origen felt in the pulpit; it weighs upon him with especial urgency in the homilies.⁴⁶ His object in the pulpit, Origen tells us, is not the explanation of the letter so much as the edification of the Church; hence, he dwells here almost entirely upon the moral and spiritual sense.⁴⁷ In discussing Origen's sermons or lectures, Bigg writes:

In Origen there is a subdued fire that reveals the tale of mental suffering and exhausting toil. Hence that austere solemnity, that absolute sincerity, that breadth and dignity of mind, which still grasp and detain the reader with the same spell that was cast upon Gregory. Origen is emphatically "a man of God," strong and subtle yet infinitely humble and gentle, a true *Ductor Dubitantium*, because he knew there was much that he did not know and yet was not afraid. His style is almost everywhere loose and prolix, owing to his habit of extemporaneous speech or dictation. This applies to the Commentaries as well as to the Homilies. Where he used the pen, it is terser and more collected. But it is always simple and direct, flowing straight from the heart, devoid of every ornament, and owing its force entirely to that glowing fusion of thought and feeling by which it is informed.⁴⁸

It was the great Christian teacher Origen of Alexandria who, in his extensive sermons and commentaries on the books of the Bible, established the allegorical method in the Church, where it

was to flourish for many centuries to come. He was convinced that many of the difficult passages of the Scriptures had been made intentionally obscure by the Holy Spirit in order to stimulate the mind of the intelligent student to look for deeper meanings. In speaking of the allegorical method of interpreting the Scriptures, especially as it commended itself to the brilliant intellects of Origen and St. Augustine, one writer reminds us that we can at least admire the persistence and devotion with which the greatest minds in the early centuries searched the Scriptures to discover in them that light which they most certainly believed to be there, though partly hidden. He continues:

The early Church was well aware of the difficulty of interpreting Scriptures. Labour, and prayer, and purity of intention were demanded, if the divine message was to reach the human heart and mind. But saving truth could be found in the Scriptures if the seeker submitted to the necessary conditions. In all the doctrinal disputes of this period, the theologians appealed to the authority of the Bible as decisive; it contained God's Word of revelation as the guide and standard of faith.⁴⁹

The plan which Origen laid down for himself in the commentaries was to give first the literal, then the moral, then the spiritual sense of each verse in regular succession. The text has been likened to a threshing floor on which he pours out all the harvest of his knowledge, his meditations, his hopes. Since any word may open up a train of thought extending throughout all Scripture and all time, often there is much repetition and some confusion. Bigg insists that "even here the object is not so much instruction as the deepening of the Christian life. We lose in perspicuity, but we never miss the inspiring sense of immediate contact with a great character."⁵⁰ Before turning from this consideration of the commentaries as such, of Origen's merit as an expositor, something must be said of our teacher's penetrating letter⁵¹ to his pupil, Gregory, who afterwards became Bishop of Caesarea. The letter forms a good preface to the Commentaries, as it shows how Origen considered the study of Scripture to be the highest of all studies, and how he regarded scientific learning, in which he was himself a master, as merely preparatory for this supreme learning. After pointing out to his pupil that those are few in number who have taken the spoils of the Egyptians and made of them the furniture of the Tabernacle, and that while learning is useful, the Scriptures are their own best key, Origen makes a lively personal appeal to him:

Be diligent in reading the divine Scriptures, yes, be diligent. . . . Knock and the doorkeeper will open unto thee. . . . And be not content to knock and to enquire, for the most necessary aid to spiritual truth is prayer. Hence our Saviour said not only "Knock and it will be opened" and "seek and you will find," but "ask and it will be given you."⁵²

The Catechetical School at Alexandria, which had begun its life as a school dependent upon the hierarchy without ever being absorbed by it, early, and especially under the leadership of Clement and Origen, began to ask itself what its place was in the spiritual life of the community. Needless to say, it was far from assigning itself to the lowest rung of the ladder. Ecclesiastical studies and ecclesiastical teachings were held to resemble the episcopate, the priesthood, or the diaconate in the fact that they demanded virtues far above the ordinary.⁵³ In commenting on the Gospel, Origen was training men who would later be the ruling class in the life of the Church. He himself had not yet been ordained to the priesthood, but he had long aspired to it. In the meantime he regarded his pedagogical functions as something sacred, seeing in them an image of the priesthood of Aaron. Origen would have us remember that St. John represents the Christian people in his vision of the twelve tribes whom he counted around the Lamb. On one side he places the virgins, as first-fruits

of the faithful of Christ. They are the intellectual elite, the little group of true disciples who, by the study of Holy Scripture, by contemplation as well as by vigilance and perseverance, guard that purity of body and of mind by which the perfect are known. They can be called Levites or priests of Israel because they exercise an inner priesthood. According to this interpretation, the scholarly life, when it is united to prayer and mortification, is the highest form of Christianity.

Most of us devote most of our time to the things of this life and dedicate to God only a few special acts, thus resembling those members of the tribes who had but few transactions with the priests, and discharged their religious duties with no great expense of time. But those who devote themselves to the divine word and have no other employment but the service of God may not unnaturally, allowing for the difference of occupation in the two cases, be called our Levites or priests. And those who follow a more distinguished office than their kinsmen will perhaps be high priests according to the order of Aaron.⁵⁴

The life of contemplation is no longer merely a hidden end toward which perfect souls strive, each in his own measure; it becomes a real function of the Christian and ought to be given preference over other functions.⁵⁵ In the passage quoted above, Origen clearly indicates that he recognizes a line of demarcation between the ministries of preaching and teaching. After pointing out what was perhaps a real difficulty for Origen at this point, Petry makes a most interesting observation and suggestion which we cannot afford to consider lightly. He writes:

That Origen was not always conscious of the exact demarcation line separating his teaching from his preaching is attestation to a Christian dilemma some of us may deplore. Nevertheless, Christian history records this peril as having certain edifying aspects as well. Important as it undoubtedly is that the preaching and teaching functions be not indiscriminately equated, it is as surely imperative that the contributions of each be properly capitalized by the other on occasion.⁵⁶

There are many passages in Origen's homilies and commentaries that were not written to please the Bishop of Alexandria. If Demetrius was so unfortunate as not to belong to a group of scholars, his authority was a matter of trifling importance. Origen tells us that the theologian will expound the consoling truths of the faith and will be capable of denouncing sin, if the faithful need instruction.⁵⁷ The Academy can produce its interpreters of Scripture and its masters in the spiritual life, if the traditions of Christianity are to be analyzed and explained. Religious knowledge develops in the same rhythm as other branches of knowledge. It has its searchers, the prophets and the apostles, who discover the principles of the Word of God. It has its young research workers who study the tradition that is thus formed. From all this activity the various systems emerge. Then the masters, who have received from God a higher faculty of discernment, employ their philosophical learning to point the way to the unity of true doctrine.⁵⁸ As the successors of the apostles, they teach the Church instead of being taught by her. They are the prophets of the New Israel.

Cadiou has rightly pointed out that if Origen had been asked to write the history of theology, he would have distinguished three phases by three different words: apostles, priests, and scholars. Origen had an enthusiasm and a respect for religious knowledge, but his progressivism would have betrayed him. To reduce Christian tradition to researches, systems, is to give too poor an idea of its vibrant perpetuity, too distorted an image of this priceless vessel which not only renews itself again and again but in each such periodic renewal revivifies the precious deposit of revelation

which it contains.⁵⁹ Throughout years of religious controversy we have seen a line drawn between the Church Visible and the Church Invisible, between ecclesiastical regulation and the inner life of the individual. Cadiou raises the question: If, as Origen points out, the true priesthood is to be found in the spiritual perfection of the individual soul, is it not logical to conclude that the spiritual life suffices to make every good Christian a priest? If the strongest impulsions that move the soul have their origin in theological studies and in spiritual training, is that not proof that these two disciplines confer on the clergymen or minister the authority without any other condition? He maintains, moreover, that if this estimate of Origen is to be accepted, it means that the banner of the Reformation hangs from the walls of the great Christian university of Alexandria. Origen would then be the witness of a period when the episcopate was beginning to be no longer the custodian of apostolic tradition and when the bishops of the Christian Church no longer exercised any control over Christian teaching. Thus he would have summoned the saintliest men from the ranks of the laity and charged them with the spiritual care of the faithful. Of course he would have placed upon them an obligation of obedience toward the hierarchy, but that obedience would have been purely external, for those saintly men would have known in their hearts that the members of the hierarchy were of less value than they. If this was really Origen's thought, Luther has been guilty of ingratitude in pouring vituperation and scorn upon the name of the great Alexandrian.⁶⁰

Later in this chapter we shall consider the early Christian hierarchy as such. At this point the question is raised: What is Origen's understanding of membership in the Church, of the priestly ideal? As a matter of historical fact, Origen never acknowledged any religion outside the Churches of God. He saw their origin in the coming and Passion of the Saviour, whose dreadful sufferings were reproduced, in a measure, in the trials and tribulations of the apostles.⁶¹ To obtain eternal life, a man must enter the mansion of God; and the moral virtues do not lead a man there, for they are not inspired by love of the Saviour.⁶² In Origen's Commentaries we find a description of this narrow world within a world, this great community of believers living in a world of unbelievers, this society of souls enlightened by the Word, immigrants who live in the world without becoming part of its life.⁶³ Even before he encountered the armies of unbelievers who were encamped beyond the Church's frontiers, he knew from his life within the Church what separated it from the different heresies he met in the course of his studies. He knew that its peculiar characteristic was a message, and he judged it a gross impiety to allow his study of Scripture to lessen the value of that message in even the slightest degree. In his biblical studies his interpretations are guided and regulated by that message.⁶⁴ If the Church, in its schools, has prophets like those of Israel, if sometimes one or another of those chosen souls has occasion to murmur the cry of the prophet, "The leaders of my people have not known me," it nevertheless remains true that the gift of prophecy can be exercised only in a manner which conforms to the institutions of holy religion and under the guidance of authority.⁶⁵ He proposed the life of contemplation especially to the clergy, as a sort of perfection of the sacred functions they perform. At the very height of his fame he himself believed that priestly ordination was necessary to him for the due fulfillment of the great tasks to which he had dedicated his life.⁶⁶

In the days of Christian antiquity the theologians were mainly concerned with two aspects of the Church's life: the faith which she taught, and the sacred rites by which salvation might be achieved. Of these two, Origen retains a preference for the first, for it touches more intimately upon his functions as a catechist and an expounder of Christian teaching. To become part of the Church is to think like the Church and to study her theology. But even during this period of his life we find in

his writings echoes of the baptismal and Eucharistic liturgies.⁶⁷ Cadiou writes:

Far from distinguishing the visible body of the faithful [the community] from the group of the elect, he leans to the other extreme. Deliberately he mingles them. The Church which he sees and loves is ever the ensemble of Christ's disciples scattered over the face of the earth. That great society can never be confused with the rest of the human race, although it never ceases to attract those who have need of belief and although the anxious crowds of those who are hearkening to its call surround it as with a radiance. He would sometimes think that this province of light, quite separated here on earth, had an opening which gives an unhindered view of the heavenly city and that it has the secrets and the rights of that celestial realm, that it is, as it were, the outpost of a mighty empire. When such thoughts come to him, he forgets the earthly features of the Church, the veils of our faith, the continual warfare we are engaged in, the imperfections with which we strive. The Church becomes for him an emanation from the kingdom of the saints with little of its glory lost.⁶⁸

Origen makes it quite clear that in order that ecclesiastical powers may be efficacious, they seem to need, on certain points, a special communication of the Divine Will. It would not be enough to consider the Holy Spirit the normal atmosphere in which Christians live, the unfailing influence, the ever-present authority, the common fountain of life which reanimates human souls and never ceases to give healing to their wounds. The Holy Spirit ought to be visible, Origen contends, in each of those who fulfill the functions of the priesthood. Bishop and priest are, in a way, of the company of those whom God has inspired. The voice of God designates His ministers.⁶⁹ When it becomes necessary for the head of a Church to choose his successor, he will not be able to trust his own unaided judgment. He must pray for the inspiration of God. He who is chosen receives the call by an inner revelation or by something exceptional resembling the call to martyrdom. Origen reminds us that, as there are false martyrs whose souls, deprived of virtue, are hostile to the religion for which they die, so also there are Christians who simulate the priesthood because they have not the spirit of it. The hierarchy of the Church must be founded on extraordinary gifts from on high.⁷⁰ Since he considered priestly functions divine institutions, he had little indulgence for the clergy. Harnack gives the following verdict:

The defects which he discovered in them would not have had such weight with him had he not been profoundly convinced of the value which such functions, and especially the episcopate, represent, and had he not recognized them as divine institutions and been able to imagine a Church which would be without them.⁷¹

Such as the Church was, Origen wanted it to be utterly spiritual. In this he fell into the venial sin of harboring a dream that causes little damage beyond impairing the vision of a Christian writer who has no desire, when he thinks about it, of sitting in judgment on the Church. Cadiou stresses that the Church which he dreamed of had not the least resemblance to the laicized religions that were the product of the Reformation.⁷² He wished all bishops and priests to be monks, men of learning and of lofty purpose, living a life of poverty in the presence of God.⁷³ His theology of the Church is one of the first demands for the monastic ideal made up to that time. It was a period when the aspirations of monasticism tended to become confused with clerical life, before the emergence of a way of life that was to be distinct from the priesthood while serving it as a model on a number of points.⁷⁴

We can easily see that the consequences of Origen's view were by no means of little account. Even a cursory examination of some of his works gives us vigorous declarations against unworthy heads of churches, men who were bishops in name only and who bore their title in the eyes of men but not in the eyes of God. Preachers have always reminded the clergy that the judgment of God establishes values that do not correspond to the ecclesiastical dignities they hold here below. But Origen affirms on several occasions that the validity of ecclesiastical powers depends upon the priest's state of soul. "If he is tightly bound with the cords of his own sins, to no purpose does he bind and loose."⁷⁵ The right of forgiving sins committed against God is reserved to him who "is inspired by Jesus, as the apostles were, and whom we can know by his fruits as having received the Holy Spirit."⁷⁶ Origen does not ask himself whether ecclesiastical functions have a virtue independent of the ministers who exercise them. He fails, however, to see the consequence of this view, not understanding that the means of sanctification employed by the Church must have an efficacy in themselves. He thinks that the Divine Will—the will in which the theologians place the basis of the sacraments—is communicated to the world only through the channel of the saints. Nothing gives us a better view of him than his notion of uniting the priesthood to a *charisma*, such as that of the grace of martyrdom. He views the Church from the perspective of his own experiences. His ordination to the priesthood in Palestine has given a certain consecration to his genius, his success, his lofty purposes in writing his works. He wishes that his own good fortune should be the rule for ordinary men.⁷⁷ It is in such a perspective that baptism, the Eucharist, and holy orders remain in view, but they are veiled in shadow and are intimately attached to the Heavenly City. Often he seems to separate them from the main body of the faithful and to hide them in the Holy of Holies. The ritual of the Old Testament almost always gives him occasion to describe the inner progress of the soul. The most necessary task is to help the progress of souls that are already advanced along the way of perfection, while inviting the crowd to follow them afar. Concerning Origen's attitude toward many of the things of religion, Cadiou makes the following interesting statements:⁷⁸

We should like to think that things like these are but clouds on the mountain top. But are they not sometimes the drifting fog of symbols, pressing upon him and confusing him? The fog will become less dense when Origen preaches in the presence of the faithful and sees Christian institutions other than in the exaltation of the martyrs or in the leisure of his books. He will then look out upon a Christian gathering in all its humble reality. On the edges of the crowd the deacons are standing, and the priests are seated apart, in the sanctuary.⁷⁹ The Saviour's power envelops all who assist at the ceremony. Whosoever has the right to join those Christians in prayer will find in that gathering a strength that is unequalled.⁸⁰

In many of Origen's commentaries and homilies he is concerned with one central thesis: namely, that the teaching and preaching of the Word is the basic response on the Christian leader's part to the Divine Illumination.⁸¹ He tells us that the Christian scribe, the true disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven, is like the man who is a householder bringing forth from his treasure chest things new and old.

Therefore should we endeavor by every means to gather together in our heart, through giving heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching, and by meditation day and night in the law of the Lord, not only the new oracles of the Gospels and of the Apostles and their revelation, but also the old

oracles of the Law that had a shadow of the good things to come, and of the Prophets who prophesied in agreement with the Law. . . .

The man that is a true, householder is Jesus himself, who brings forth from his treasure at the season of instruction things new, that is things of the spirit, which are even renewed by Him in the inward man of the righteous . . . and things old. . . . He may enrich the scribe who has been made a disciple to the Kingdom of Heaven and make him like unto himself. At last the disciple will become as his master, imitating first the imitator of Christ and after him Christ himself. . . .⁸²

Origen seems very conscious of the fact that there is a wrong spirit and there is a right spirit in which we may ask questions about the ways of God. The true teacher is seen as the deep, and tireless searcher.

We therefore, if we wish to know anything about the secret and hidden things of God, if we are men of desirablenesses and not men of contentions, must search with faith and with humility for those judgments of God which are deeply hidden in the divine writings. That is why the Lord used to say, Search the Scriptures. He knew such secrets were not discovered by those who, with their minds full of other affairs, are hearers or readers for the casual moment, but only by those who with a direct and single heart, with the yoke of toil, with long hours of waking, search deeply into the divine Scriptures of whom I well know that I am not one. Whoever does seek in that way, he shall find.⁸³

Moreover, he recognizes the importance of quiet as a requisite for literary work.

Every house that is to have all possible stability in its construction is built in still and quiet weather, so that nothing may prevent its receiving the rigidity necessary to give it strength and fitness to withstand the impetus of a flood or the onrush of a river and all those accompaniments of a tempest, which are wont to show up rotten buildings and to make plain what structures are built with due and proper skill. More especially such a structure of thought as may contain the principles of truth, a sermon for example or a book, is best built at a time when, God giving good aid in its construction to him who purposes so excellent a work, the soul rests calm in the enjoyment of the peace which passeth all understanding, free from all disturbance, like the sea without a wave.⁸⁴

Later in the same commentary, after mentioning the interruption of his Commentaries on the Gospel according to John because of "bad weather in Alexandria,"⁸⁵ he writes:

But now that the many fiery darts aimed at us are quenched by God and rendered blunt and our soul, grown accustomed to changed circumstances, is endeavouring with the aid of the heavenly word to bear more lightly the attacks' made upon it, we desire to continue our dictation without more delay, possessed as it were of a measure of calm. We pray that God may be with us, whispering His instruction in the recesses of our soul, so that the structure of our exposition of the Gospel according to John may attain completion. May God hearken to my prayer, so that I may be able to proceed with the body of the entire treatise without the interruption of any further circumstances calculated to occasion a break of any kind in the course of my writings.⁸⁶

Here we recognize Origen's tremendous sense of mission in his writing.

In one of his homilies on Luke, in which he deals with Jesus' casting out of the temple those who sold, not those who bought, Origen raises the question: "For if I sell for money what is revealed to me by the Holy Spirit, and committed to me that I may impart it to the multitude, and if I do not teach without payment,⁸⁷ what am I doing but selling doves, that is, the Holy Spirit?"⁸⁸ His point is that the Christian teacher must not sell for money the doves of spiritual truth; he should welcome gladly the wonderful wealth of the Lord, the rich ornaments of the Word, the plentiful supply of his teaching, and feed on the flesh of Christ and drink his blood.⁸⁹ In one of his commentaries⁹⁰ we find a rather clear distinction made between the disciples and the multitudes. Origen has abundant place and recognition for simple uninstructed believers, but his sympathies with the educated, the intelligent, the mentally alert, are indeed never lacking. He belongs to the disciples, not to the multitude. In commenting on the multitudes' need for healing, he writes: "But we do not find any healing mentioned in connection with the disciples, since if a man is already a disciple of Jesus, he is in sound health, and being well he has need of Jesus not as a physician but in his other offices."⁹¹ It seems that this thought of the manifold character of Christ is a favorite one with Origen.⁹² He writes:

Blessed are they who in their need of the Son of God have so far advanced as no longer to require Him as the physician who heals those who are sick, or as shepherd, or as ransom, but only as wisdom, and word, and righteousness, or in whatever other capacity He comes to those who by reason of their perfection have power to receive his fairest gifts.⁹³

Origen himself, who traveled as a teacher upon endless missions, in order to impress true doctrine on the mind, or to safeguard it, is a teacher of *the Church* rather than a bishop of an *individual community*.⁹⁴ He cannot but rebuke empty rhetoric, which is so great a danger within the Church. This is seen in his application of Ezekiel's reproof of those who sew cushions upon every elbow, or on one of them, to the seductive rhetoric rampant in the Church. The cushion sewed under the elbow seems to Origen an emblem of the pleasure of the flesh. After expressing his concern for "those who find their interest in the life of the body and do not, even in a dream, behold delights of the spirit," he makes clear the task of a true teacher.

For the word of God and the man of God should utter what makes for his hearer's salvation, what encourages him to self-control, to a life of sound conduct, to everything for which a man intent upon labour, not upon lust, should exert himself, that he may succeed in obtaining what God has promised. When therefore anyone, well in sympathy with the morals of the crowd, in order to charm the people who have itching ears, makes the speeches they gladly welcome, speeches that are on the borders of license, a master of this kind is sewing cushions upon every elbow.⁹⁵

Also, in the same homily Origen considers the veil or kerchief for covering the head an emblem of exuberant, seductive rhetoric. The man who has confidence and is truly a man wears no veil upon his head, but prays to God with head uncovered, prophesies with head uncovered, implicitly manifesting his spiritual disposition by the token of his bodily attire. Just as he has no veil over his head in the flesh, so has he no veil over the dominant principle in his heart. This is brought out effectively in the following passage:

Thus when a man teaches the things which soothe the ears of the crowd and arouses the applause

rather of his hearers than their sighs, if, like a seductive enemy, he has soothed rather than cut out the wound, a man of this kind weaves kerchiefs for the head. And when the speaker's oration spends itself in exuberant rhetoric, when it comes at a bound to worldly licentiousness, he is weaving a veil over the head of every age, not alone of lads and young men, but even of the old. Just as the false Christ and the false prophet will work signs and wonders to deceive, if it be possible, even the elect, so also these men, who discharge their elaborated incitements, and are ever seeking for the things which charm their hearers rather than convert them from their faults, are making veils over heads not of lads and young men only, but even, if it be possible, of old men and fathers.⁹⁶

And so our Alexandrian teacher asserts the truth that there is nothing manly, nothing strong, nothing worthy of God, in the men who preach and teach according to the pleasures and wishes of their hearers. He maintains, moreover, that the true teacher will avoid stale teaching in the Church. For him, it is indeed not without significance that the Divine Word does not allow us to feed on yesterday's meat, but always on what is fresh and new.⁹⁷ The law forbade the Israelites to eat yesterday's meat. In commenting on the passage in Leviticus, Origen says:

As I see from the teaching of this passage and the mystical significance it suggests, what the prophet said to the Lord was this: I am not such a worthless and degraded priest as to eat yesterday's, that is, stale meat. Hearken to this, all ye priests of the Lord; give ye careful attention to what is said.

This flesh, which is allotted to the priests from the sacrifices, is the word of God, which they teach in the Church. Thus they are warned in this passage, by forms which have mystic meaning, not to bring out yesterday's fare, when they set about to address the people; not to set forth stale doctrines according to the letter, but by God's grace ever to bring forth new truth, ever to discover the spiritual lessons.

If you produce today in the Church what you learned yesterday from the Jews, this is just eating yesterday's flesh in the sacrifice. If you remember, the Lawgiver also uses the same language in regard to the offering of first fruits; they must, he says, be fresh and new. Everywhere, you see, what belongs to the praise of God—for this is what the sacrifice of praise means—must be new and fresh, so that there be no risk of your lips speaking but your mind being fruitless, while you produce old teaching in the Church.⁹⁸

He continues, quoting Paul: "If I speak with tongues, my spirit prayeth but my understanding is unfruitful. I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."⁹⁹ In the concluding statements of this homily, we are reminded of the significance of this passage for the teacher.

You too, then, in like manner, if you fail to produce by spiritual learning and by the instruction of God's grace fresh and living discourse in the praise of God, your lips indeed offer the sacrifice of praise but your mind by its barrenness is proved guilty of yesterday's meat. . . . Another point also must not escape us: that there is a time when to eat old food is a blessing.¹⁰⁰

The manner in which preachers, truly teaching the Word, may be helped by their hearers is much in

his mind in a homily on Jeremiah. In reading the homily, one immediately senses Origen's preoccupation with the teacher-physician's difficulty in ministering to recalcitrant patients of the spirit.¹⁰¹ Origen writes as follows of Jeremiah's preaching:

The prophet then preached the word; no one attended to what he said. It is like a physician squandering his drugs upon patients who are without self-control and simply satisfy their desires. It is as if he too should say, I was of no help, neither did any man help me. A reciprocity perhaps there is through the good will of the man who receives help towards his helper, so that the speaker too is in a position to receive advantage, for blessed is he that speaks to the ears of those that hear. In this way would a teacher receive his help from hearers who made advance and improvement. He would be helped by having fruit in them. Failing to receive this from the Jews, Jeremiah says. No man helped me.¹⁰²

Origen continues, making it very clear that just as a prophetic speaker is helped by willing hearers, so every teacher by his very teaching is helped in his teaching and his studies through the intelligence of his pupil. Lecturers become more competent in the very instruction they impart, when their hearers are intelligent and do not accept their words right off, but criticize them and ask questions and examine the meaning of the language used.¹⁰³

Petry comments that "the head of the catechetical school, the inquirer of the cosmos, the synthesizer of universal meanings, is here teaching and preaching."¹⁰⁴

We are left in no doubt as to Origen's understanding that every rational nature must be fed on food that is right and proper for it. The true food of a rational nature is the Word of God. He points out that just as there are many distinctions in the diet of the body, so too is it with our rational nature, which feeds upon this Word. By a comparison of the Word of God with the body, we are told that some find in the Word of God the food of milk. Origen writes: "This is that plainer and simpler teaching, usually on moral subjects, which is normally supplied for those who are at the beginning of their divine studies and receive the early elements of rational instruction."¹⁰⁵ Later in the same homily he reminds us that when a man has advanced sufficiently, to know how to honor God, and how to receive His commandments of righteousness and piety, and he hears orders given about sacrifices and instruction on the ritual of offerings, naturally he ceases at once to listen and rejects fare that is not convenient for him. Then Origen points out the error in rejecting and avoiding, upon slight examination, whatever seems abstruse or difficult, for "there are many things in these passages expressed with sufficient openness and simplicity to instruct a hearer even of little intelligence." He continues:

We cannot say of the words of the Holy Spirit that anything in them is useless or unnecessary, even though some find it obscure. This rather ought we to do, to turn the eyes of our mind to Him who ordered these things to be written and to ask of Him their meaning, that if there be weakness in our soul, He who healeth all infirmities may heal us; or if we be of little understanding, the Lord who protecteth little ones may be with us and nourish us and bring us to manhood's full estate. Each is in our power: we may come from weakness to strength, from childhood to the full grown man. Therefore, it is in our power to ask these things of God. It is God's part to give to those who seek and to open to those who knock.¹⁰⁸

Origen is convinced that the little faith of a Christian is better than the abundant wisdom of the world. He is aware of the virtue of the man of the Church, untrained in speech and learning but filled with faith and the fear of God, who by reason of his fear of God does not dare to offend in any matter, but restrains himself from even the least offence, “a restraint of which he who is rich in the wisdom of this world is not capable.” In one of his homilies Origen says:

Though the man we described above be untrained and without education, yet faithful and god-fearing, that little measure of faith is a better thing for this righteous man than the great riches the wicked have acquired together with this world’s wisdom. But better than both of these is he who is rich in the word of God and in the knowledge of the truth, who, that is, in Paul’s words, is rich in all utterance and in all knowledge, and who not the less is rich in good works.¹⁰⁷

According to Harnack, it is in Egypt generally, and especially at Alexandria, that the institution of teachers survived longest in juxtaposition with the episcopal organization of the churches, though their right to speak at services of worship had expired. “Teachers still are mentioned frequently in the writings of Origen, and what is more, the ‘doctores’ constitute for him, along with the ‘sacerdotes,’ quite a special order, parallel to that of priests within the church.”¹⁰⁸ Origen speaks of those “who discharge the office of teachers wisely in our midst,”¹⁰⁹ and of *doctores ecclesiae*.¹¹⁰ With poignant truth he remarks:

It often happens that a man of low mind, who is base and of an earthly spirit, creeps up into the high rank of the priesthood or into the chair of the doctorate, while he who is spiritual and so free from earthly ties that he can prove all things and yet himself be judged by no man—he occupies the rank of an inferior minister, or is even left among the common throng.¹¹¹

In another homily we read: “For even in the Church priests and doctors can beget children, even as he who wrote Galatians 4:19, and again in another place, I Corinthians 4:15. Therefore, such doctors of the church refrain from begetting offspring when they find an irresponsible audience!”¹¹² These passages from Origen, which might be multiplied,¹¹³ show that during the first thirty years of the third century, there still existed at Alexandria an order of teachers side by side with the bishop, the presbyters, and the deacons. But, as Harnack stresses, we scarcely need the writings of Origen at all, since there is Origen himself—his life, his lot—the plainest evidence of all. Harnack raises several provocative questions¹¹⁴ related to Origen himself:

For what was the man himself but a teacher of the church (*didaskalos tes ekklesias*), busily travelling as a teacher upon endless missions, in order to impress true doctrine on the mind, or to safeguard it? What was the battle of his life against that “ambitious” and utterly uneducated Bishop Demetrius, but the conflict of an independent teacher of *the Church* with the bishop of an *individual community*? And when, in the course of this conflict, which ended in a signal triumph for the hierarchy, a negative answer was given to this question among other things, *viz.*, whether the “laity” could give addresses in the church, in presence of the bishops—was not the affirmative answer, which was still given by bishops like Alexander and Theoctistus, who pointed to the primitive usage,¹¹⁵ simply the final echo of an organization of the Christian churches older and more venerable than the clerical organization which was already covering all the field?

During the course of the third century, the “teachers” were thrust out of the Church, that is, out of

the service;¹¹⁶ some of them may have even been fused with the readers.¹¹⁷ No doubt, as Harnack maintains, the order of teachers had developed in such a way as to incur at a very early stage the exceptionally grave risk of sharply Hellenizing and thus secularizing Christianity. The teachers (*didaskaloi*) of the third century may have been very unlike the teachers (*didaskaloi*) who had ranked as associates of the prophets. But, Harnack concludes:

Hellenizing was hardly the decisive reason for abolishing the order of teachers in the churches; here, as elsewhere, the change was due to the episcopate with its intolerance of any office that would not submit to its strict control and allow itself to be incorporated in the simple and compact organization of the hierarchy headed by the bishop. After the middle of the third century, not all, but nearly all, the teachers of the church were clerics, while the instruction of the catechumens was undertaken either by the bishop himself or by a presbyter. The organizing of the catechetical system gradually put an end to the office of independent teachers.¹¹⁸

Further consideration of Origen and the early Christian hierarchy as such may give us additional insight into his personality and his work as a teacher of *the Church*. It must be remembered that we know very little of the organization or curriculum of the Catechetical School at Alexandria, but it is quite likely that it was a private enterprise sanctioned, but not very closely supervised, by the episcopate.¹¹⁹ It seems that Origen was the first to be set up in the School as the appointee of the bishop, and was brought under closer supervision than any of his predecessors.¹²⁰ We recall that during the short period of persecution in Alexandria, Origen retired to Caesarea, where he responded to the invitation of the Palestinian bishops to preach, although he was not ordained. A consideration of Origen's views on hierarchical authority leads this writer to suppose that he acted with indifference toward what must have seemed to him meaningless regulation.¹²¹ Since he did not regard ordination as sacrosanct, he saw no point in his rejecting an opportunity to preach the Gospel. Apparently he was supported in this opinion by the Palestinian bishops.¹²² About 230, Origen was called to Greece; on his way he was ordained priest at Caesarea by "the bishops of this country."¹²³ It is at least a reasonable conjecture that Origen applied to Demetrius for ordination and was refused. Whether on the grounds of being doctrinally suspect, of insubordination, or of his castration, we cannot tell. This step, much more serious than the former, aroused in Demetrius an indignation that nothing could appease. Origen was made aware of this as soon as he returned to Alexandria. Eusebius attributes the indignation to jealousy.¹²⁴ Lebreton and Zeiller maintain that "that is evidently a partial view, for Origen belonged both by birth and by his position to the Church of Alexandria, and Demetrius had a right to complain that he had been raised to the priesthood without his knowledge."¹²⁵ The irregularity resulting from Origen's castration would be another ground of complaint. Finally, there was reason to criticize Origen for temerarious teaching. This last accusation was the most serious of all, and it was against this that Origen uttered his chief protest. Some doctrines, such as the salvation of the devil, were rejected by him as calumnies; other temerities were admitted but explained as essays which ought to have remained private and which Ambrose had unwisely published.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, Demetrius called together a synod at Alexandria, and in a succession of two synods he obtained the condemnation of Origen: banishment from the city, declaring that he could not teach there, or even reside there, and deposition from the priesthood. Demetrius communicated this sentence to the whole episcopate; the Bishop of Rome, Pontian, called a council, which upheld it; the majority of the bishops did likewise. But the bishops of Palestine, Achaia, Arabia, Phoenicia, and Cappadocia did not adhere to it.¹²⁷

Origen's reaction to this experience can teach us a great deal. Inasmuch as Origen's work of studying, teaching, preaching, and writing was to such a great degree single-minded work, we can imagine the mental anguish which he knew from the storm which resulted. The condemnations pronounced by men who had been most closely connected with Origen— Demetrius, who thirty years before had appointed him head of the Catechetical School, and Heraclas, who had been his disciple and his collaborator—together with the exile which removed him from the Church in which his father had died a martyr's death and in which he himself had taught for thirty years, and the pronouncements against him emanating from the whole world, were to Origen himself a terrible blow. Yet he says little about them in his works; and when he does so, it is with moderation. Origen's own comment on the experience, perhaps the most explicit passage dealing with it, is as follows:

In spite of the storm stirred up against us at Alexandria, we had completed the fifth tome,¹²⁸ for Jesus commanded the winds and the waves. We had already begun the sixth when we were torn from the land of Egypt, saved by the hand of God the deliverer, who had formerly withdrawn his people from thence. Since that time the enemy has redoubled his violence, publishing his new letters, truly hostile to the Gospel, and letting loose upon us all the evil winds of Egypt. Hence reason counselled us to remain ready for combat, and to keep untouched the highest part of ourselves, until tranquillity, restored to our mind, should enable us to add to our former labors the rest of our studies on Scripture.

If we had returned to this task at an unseasonable time, we might have feared that painful reflections would bring the tempest right into our soul. Moreover, the absence of our usual secretaries prevented us from dictating the commentary. But now that the multitude of heated writings published against us has been extinguished by God, and our soul, accustomed to the misfortunes which come to pass in consequence of the heavenly word, has learned to support more peaceably the snares prepared for us —now that we have, so to speak, found once more a calm sky, we do now pray God our Master to make himself heard in the sanctuary of our soul, so that the commentary we have begun on the Gospel of John may be completed. May God hear our prayer that we may be able to write the whole of this discourse, and that no further accident may interrupt and break the continuity of Scripture.¹²⁹

This moving passage well brings out Origen's great grief, and also his efforts to overcome it and continue his work in peace. In Palestine he was in friendly surroundings, and protected by bishops who admired him, Theoctistus of Caesarea and Alexander of Jerusalem. From thence his fame spread over the whole East.¹³⁰ Thus, while Alexandria expelled him and the West echoed this condemnation, Origen was in the East the object of enthusiastic admiration. He suffered on the one hand from a severity which he considered unjustified, and on the other hand received an admiration which he did not think he had merited. In a homily he refers in passing to the excessive honor which the Marcionites rendered to St. Paul by identifying the apostle with the Spirit of Truth. He continues:

We ourselves also suffer from such exaggerations. Many who love us more than we deserve give to our discourses and to our doctrine praises of which we cannot approve. Others calumniate our books and attribute to us opinions which to our knowledge we have never held. Those who love us

too much and those who hate us both stray from the rule of truth.¹³¹

Cadiou writes that when Origen went forth from the land of Egypt, he was delivered from chains. He was beginning a new Exodus, not unlike that of Israel of old, whose spiritual significance he had so often contemplated. He was escaping from his enemies; better still, he was fleeing from the excitements of public controversy. He was delivered also from a more formidable enemy which he had nurtured within himself, the impatience of his own thoughts. As the friends of his Alexandrian days left him, his old dreams fell away. He learned to be wary of his own genius. Little by little he began to understand that even in free questions, research must be subject to guidance, and he realized that guidance as the part which authority must play in his life.¹³² Bigg, one of those who have made a careful study of Origen's thought, writes of him, and especially of the importance of this incident in his life, in these words:

He was learning in strange and unexpected ways the true meaning of the Christian sacrifice. He had been willing and eager to "give his body to be burned," he had "given all his goods to feed the poor," and his reward had been not the martyr crown but the martyr spirit, "love which beareth all things." Now, when he had found his true career in indefatigable labour for the Word of God, and sought to sanctify his toil and enlarge his influence by the name and authority of a priest, what he sought was given to him, but at the cost of banishment and obloquy. Such discipline was needed before this high impatient spirit could obey with docility the bridle of God.¹³³

Even so did Moses find a way across the abyss when all seemed lost. Origen writes:

Strike with the rod of Moses the rising waters of contradiction. The word of the law and the careful study of Holy Scripture, if you ponder them deeply in the recesses of your own heart, will open a way for you through all your foes. The waters will suddenly roll back, and the way to victory will appear. Those who have been your most bitter foes will render to you their wonder and astonishment. Within the limits marked out for you by authority, you will follow the rule of faith in all your studies. You will become so proficient in the teaching of right doctrine that those who hear you, having been instructed by you according to the rule of faith, will rise against the Egyptians like the waves of the the sea and not only will defeat them but will destroy them forevermore.¹³⁴

The history of Origen's career shows how little he thought the judgment of one bishop ought to influence the action of another. He does not appear to have regarded his experience with Demetrius as a bar to his activity or a burden on his conscience. Yet, rebel to the extent that he was, he ranked far higher than Clement the authority and privileges of the clergy.¹³⁵ The analogy between the Christian and the Mosaic hierarchy is constantly in his mind, and if he does not draw from it all the consequences that have been supposed, it is no less true that in his view the priest is no longer the minister of the congregation, but the vicar of God. The ordinary Christian is indeed a priest, but only in the moral or spiritual sense, that is, inasmuch as he offers to God the sacrifice of his own heart and mind.¹³⁶ Origen's homilies show his great emphasis upon the moral and spiritual qualifications of the minister. The power to bind and loose depends upon the spiritual worthiness of him who wields it.¹³⁷ One who is not holy is no priest, and his sentence has no effect at all. Nor is the priestly absolution in itself of force. The priest declares, but does not bestow forgiveness. Nevertheless, he alone may teach; it is his office to instruct the sinner who is converted from his sin. He is to invite confession, both public and private, and to declare the conditions of absolution,

the kind and degree of penance, by which the sinner may gain his restoration to the peace of the Church.¹³⁸ As was indicated above, the judgment of any righteous man has power to bind and loose, but not as regards the discipline of the Church. How far the priest's power extended was a matter of grave doubt. Origen's views on this point seem to have undergone modification.¹³⁹ In his earlier writings¹⁴⁰ he gives unflinching expression to the stern old rule. No death-sin can be forgiven, and those priests who presume to pronounce absolution in cases of this nature are ignorant of the priestly office. This does not mean that the sinner is forbidden to hope. "God alone knows," he says, speaking of the crime of apostasy, "what evils He will bring upon those who deny and do not repent, what upon those who deny and repent."¹⁴¹ The Church cannot pardon them, but God may. The sin may be atoned for in some one of the countless ages of the vast hereafter. In his later works¹⁴² a much more lenient view is maintained. One crime alone, obdurate impenitence, has no forgiveness. The sinner who refuses to hear the Church, whether his offence be light or heavy, is expelled from the fold. Yet, even so, it is better for him to repent, that he may have fewer sins to atone for on the Day of Judgment.

A brief consideration of Origen's theory of Holy Communion may enable us to understand better his attitude toward Christ, the true High Priest, and toward all true Christians as priests, and therefore as having a sacrifice to offer. The language of Origen on the subject of the Holy Eucharist seems quite definite.

There is a sacrifice in the Eucharist, and there is a commemoration of a sacrifice; the first is that of the believer himself, the second is that of Christ. There is a Presence of Christ, but it is a spiritual, and, therefore, in Origen's view the only real, Presence, real precisely because in no wise material.

It is worthwhile to repeat that Origen held the Sacrifice of Christ to have consisted not of His body but of His Soul.¹⁴³ Origen's doctrine is distinguished by its sacramental symbolism and spiritual interpretation. He writes:

For it was not that visible bread, which He was holding in His hand, that God the Word called His Body; it was the word as a symbol whereof that bread was to be broken. Nor was it that visible cup, that He called His Blood, but the word as a symbol whereof that wine was to be poured out. . . . Why did He not say, this is the Bread of the New Testament, as He said, this is My Blood of the New Testament? Because the bread is the word of righteousness, but the wine is the word of the knowledge of Christ. Since then the covenant of God is placed in the blood of the passion of Christ, so that we are saved by faith and not by righteousness, it is said of the chalice alone, this is the cup of the New Testament.¹⁴⁴

For Origen, the bread and wine are a type of the Lord's teaching which sustains men. The intellectual and spiritual reception of the Lord's teaching is, therefore, an eating of His Body and a drinking of His Blood.¹⁴⁵ Harnack says "eating and drinking and, in general, participation in a ceremonial are, from Origen's standpoint, completely indifferent matters."¹⁴⁶ The intelligent Christian feeds at all times on the Body of Christ, the Word of God, and thus celebrates a never-ending supper.¹⁴⁷ Origen, however, is not blind to the fact that his doctrine of the Eucharist is perhaps somewhat removed from the faith of the simple Christian. Here, therefore, he accommodates himself to that faith in points where it seems necessary. This, however, he does not find difficult; for, though with him everything is at bottom "spiritual," he is unwilling to dispense

with symbols and mysteries, because he knows that one must be *initiated* into the spiritual, since one cannot learn it as one learns the lower sciences.¹⁴⁸ The Christian life is, accordingly, lived at a high level, being a constant communion and offering of the sacrifices of prayer and praise. Origen reminds us that “the bread called Eucharist is a *symbol* to us of the thanksgiving to God.”¹⁴⁹ His symbolism seems consistent throughout; it seems based upon John 6, Jesus’ interpretation of his own expressions. In the passage that follows, we see something of Origen’s view of the relation of the cultivation of the intellect and the holding of more spiritual views of the Sacrament. He says; Let the bread and the cup be considered by the more simple according to the commoner interpretation of the Eucharist, but by those who have learned to hear deeper meanings, according to the more divine promise and with regard to the nourishing word of the Truth.¹⁵⁰

Bigg remarks on this passage, “Here the belief in a corporeal Presence is regarded as belonging to the lower life, the life of those who do not go beyond the letter.”¹⁵¹

In his commentary on Leviticus, Origen has some striking passages on the relation of the Old Testament sacrifices to Christ’s. In one homily he says: “Almost every sacrifice which is offered has something of the form and image of Christ.”¹⁵² The rise from the literal to the spiritual interpretation as the more important shows the trend of Origen’s mind away from the things of the flesh to the things of the Spirit. He often explains the flesh of Christ as His *doctrine*. He writes: “That is the sacerdotal bread which is the secret and mystical word.”¹⁵³ Earlier in this chapter, quotations were given from passages in Origen which describe Christians, all true ones, as priests and Levites. One of the chief offices of the clergy, according to Origen, is the *ministration of the Word of God*. This is stated clearly in the following passage:

When you see Gentiles coming to the faith, churches built, altars not sprinkled with the blood of cattle, but consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, and priests and Levites ministering, not the blood of bulls and goats, but the Word of God through the grace of the Holy Spirit, then say that Jesus is the Son of God, is the successor of Moses.¹⁵⁴

The benefit resting upon the Word of God is his who receives it with a pure conscience. The food that is consecrated by the Word of God and prayer, as far as the material part is concerned, passes through and out of the system, but, as regards the prayer that was said over it, becomes beneficial according to the proportion of one’s faith. Not the matter of the bread but the *word* spoken over it is that which benefits. We note that after consecration the bread is still bread and of the matter of bread. Origen did not contemplate any change in the substance, or anything but a material substance after consecration.¹⁵⁵ He held that we feed spiritually on the living Bread and Blood of Christ both in the Holy Communion and in every other means of communion with Him. In commenting on passages in Origen’s homilies, Hitchcock writes:

The Eucharist is, therefore, not an end in itself, but is intended to lead to a more real and more permanent communion with the Christ, for we must not “stop at the Blood of Christ but must go on to realize the Blood of the Word.” It is “mystical bread,” “sacerdotal bread,” “the sacrament of the Lord’s Body,” to be received in a clean soul. Such great and wonderful sacraments are to be approached and handled with reverence because of their consecration by the Word of God and prayer. ... He [Christ, the true High Priest] is present at every communion, not as victim but as priest.¹⁵⁶

The Real Presence that we find in Origen, taken and received by the faithful in the Holy Communion, may also be received in hearing, embracing, and following the teaching and the words of Christ, and on condition that the soul of the recipient is duly prepared for such spiritual feeding.

It should be remembered that our chief sources for Origen's important teachings concerning the Eucharist are the homilies and commentaries. As a result of assiduous preaching, carried out for a long period, we have his views on this subject and numerous other ones. In the midst of eulogies, criticisms, and interruptions, he carried on his work—not only the task of education and teaching which we have described, and the writing of books to which we have already referred, but also the work of preaching, which became increasingly pressing.¹⁵⁷ From the beginning, it seems that Origen was interested in preaching.¹⁵⁸ We have Eusebius' expressed testimony that he began regular preaching soon after he took up his residence in Caesarea.¹⁵⁹ Eusebius notes that it was many years later that Origen allowed his homilies to be taken down stenographically and published.¹⁶⁰ The explanation of the Scriptures was given to the people at least twice a week, on Wednesdays and Fridays;¹⁶¹ it very soon became a daily task, and took place even several times a day.¹⁶² Origen finds it necessary to reprove his hearers, and he does so, but regretfully and without harshness: "It may perhaps seem very severe, but can I cover with plaster a wall which is collapsing?"¹⁶³ These severities spare no one, whether bishops or priests, or even the preacher himself. In a homily on Genesis, speaking of the priests of Pharaoh, Origen says:

Do you want to know the difference between the priests of God and the priests of Pharaoh? Pharaoh gave lands to his priests; the Lord says to his own: "I am your lot." Pay attention, readers, all you priests of the Lord. ... Let us hear what Christ our Lord enjoins on his priests: "Every one of you that does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be my disciple." I tremble when I say these words, for above all it is myself that I accuse, myself that I condemn. Christ refuses to regard as his disciple whosoever possesses something and does not renounce all that he possesses. What are we doing?

How can we read this and expound it to the people, we who not only do not renounce that which we have, but also desire to acquire what we never possessed before we came to Christ? Because our consciences accuse us, are we able to dissimulate that which is written? I do not want to make myself doubly guilty. I confess, yes even before all the people who hear me—I confess that that is written, although I am aware that I have not yet fulfilled it.

But at least today, after this warning, let us make haste to accomplish it; let us hasten to pass from the priests of Pharaoh who have earthly possessions, to the priests of the Lord who have no part here below, but whose lot is the Lord,¹⁶⁴ Lebreton and Zeiller maintain that this passage gives us the note sounded in the homilies of Origen; that these homilies are of great importance for the history of exegesis, and more generally for the history of the Church of the third century.¹⁶⁵ They continue:

But they also reveal to us with a moving sincerity the religious aspirations of the priest of Caesarea. If we link up his oratorical output, which is considerable, with his pedagogical method and his theological labours, we can penetrate his inmost thought, and the elevated religious aims which

were the mainspring of his whole life. These aspirations were, as we have seen, expressed also in a metaphysic which contains some dangerous theses; the best disciples of Origen will be able to separate these and put them on one side.¹⁶⁶

We must ever keep in mind the fact that Origen not only conceived of, but also lived and preached, lofty religious aspirations. He never conceals the rigid requirements for attaining his religious ideal. Life is a warfare in which are engaged the soldiers of God and the soldiers of Satan, and no neutrality is possible: "Every man endowed with reason is either a child of God or a child of the devil; for either he commits sin or he does not commit it; there is no middle course. If he sins, he is of the devil; if he does not sin, he is of God."¹⁶⁷ In this inevitable and constant warfare, prayer is necessary. It is by prayer that, although we ourselves are quite weak, we are able to vanquish myriads of enemies, visible and invisible, determined upon our destruction; and that, when through our own fault we sin, we are able thereby to rise up again by repentance.¹⁶⁸ He reminds us that the good things we ought to attain to are beyond our reach; the perfection required of us exceeds our powers; all this we must obtain through prayer.¹⁶⁹ To prayer we must join the practice of asceticism, which aims only at freeing the soul and enabling it to unite itself to God. We are aware of the life of poverty and mortification which Origen had imposed upon himself from his youth; he tried to lead his disciples and his hearers along the same road.¹⁷⁰ Lebreton and Zeiller point out that this ascetical tendency is much more prominent than in Clement, and we already see in this doctrine an anticipation of the spiritual rigor of the Fathers of the Desert. They add: "Origen nevertheless lived in the world, and preached to the Christians living in the world; his asceticism aimed at the same end as that of the solitaries, but it had not the inflexible severity of the latter."¹⁷¹ Union with God is the end to which the hope and desire of a Christian tend unceasingly. Origen reminds us that to arrive at this terminus we must travel a long road, full of trials and temptations. He finds this journey in the symbol of the crossing of the desert by the Children of Israel. The stages of this journey through the desert are figures of the mystical stages of our spiritual pilgrimage.¹⁷² Historians have pointed out that for St. Paul, what appears in the moral life of a Christian is mainly the rupture with the past, accomplished once and for all by the new birth; for Origen, on the contrary, it is a progressive development, a gradual ascent by which we successively climb the degrees of the perfect life. We cannot overlook the reply given by Lebreton and Zeiller to historians who have made this a matter for criticism. They write:

This antithesis is a forced one, and in the measure in which it is exact, it is to be explained not so much by a divergence in doctrine as by a diversity in the disciples. The readers of the epistles of St. Paul were just emerging from paganism; they still retained a painful memory of the darkness in which they had so long lived, and the joy of the wonderful light which had suddenly shone upon them. Origen's hearers, on the other hand, had for the most part been Christians for a long time. They were already children of light, and they were bound to live as such, having no more darkness, but being wholly transparent and shining forth with the light of Christ.¹⁷³

But there is a deeper and more instructive contrast. If we compare the doctrine of Origen with the speculative teaching of the Gnostics, we are the better able to realize their character by the contrast between them. One of the fundamental dogmas of Gnosticism is that of the essential distinctions among the different races of men. By natural necessity a man belongs to one of three classes, and it would be in vain to endeavor to change it. In Origen, the degrees of religious knowledge are certainly far removed from each other, but there is no abyss separating them. The whole effort of

the preacher is aimed at leading Christians on to the highest union with God, for all God's children can and should aspire to this.¹⁷⁴

In Origen's writings we find many indications concerning the state of the Church, the Christian community, in his period. In his apologetical work *Contra Celsum*, he gives us an ideal view of the Christian community: the Christians live detached from the things of the earth.¹⁷⁵ But when he addresses himself to the Christian community in the Commentaries and Homilies, Origen takes another approach and does not hesitate to reproach the community with its faults with the freedom of one who speaks in the name of God, and with the humility of one who knows that he is the first to fall under the blow of the judgments that he bears.¹⁷⁶ He recognizes that in the Church, there are still miracles as in ancient times; that among the Christians, there are traces of the Holy Spirit which appeared in the form of a dove. Many Christians hunt demons and are instrumental in curing various diseases.¹⁷⁷ But these gifts are diminishing and are found only "in the case of those whose souls are purified by the Word."¹⁷⁸ He recognizes that genuine faith and holiness are lacking in many who call themselves Christian. In the homilies of Caesarea, written during the period which precedes the persecution by Decius, in which the number of Christians increases, Origen reflects with nostalgia upon the time when martyrs were less numerous and more fervent. He mentions the times when Christians, after accompanying the bodies of martyrs, returned from the cemeteries to the congregations; times when the Church was entirely in mourning but not in a downcast mood; and times when the catechumens were instructed with a view to being martyred and dying confessing the faith, without being troubled in their faith in the living God. Then there were few believers, but they were true believers who followed the narrow path leading to Life.¹⁷⁹ With all of his idealism, Origen can be very realistic. He writes:

It is impossible for the Church to be entirely purified while it is on earth, so that no wicked person or sinner should be known to remain in it, but all within it should be holy and blessed, people in whom not so much as a spot of sin can be found. As it is said of the tares, "Lest while you root up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them," so may it be said of these in whom there are things questionable or hidden sins.¹⁸⁰

Throughout his writings Origen shows us the different members of the community. He warns against rushing eagerly to the honors, high positions, and ministries of the church which are from God, and exhorts that Moses be imitated. He writes;

He who wishes to be saved takes no steps to high position in the church, and, if appointed, takes office for the church's service. ... He who is called to a bishop's office is not called to a prince's position but to the service of the whole church. If you seek scriptural evidence for believing that in the church he who rules is servant of all, our Lord and Saviour Himself may convince you, who in the midst of his disciples showed his nature and true greatness not by reclining at the table but by ministering.

For after he had laid aside his garments, he took a towel and girded himself and poured out water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. Teaching us what character our leaders, as servants, ought to possess, he says: "You call me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." Thus the prince of the church is

called to service, that he may be able by such service to attain the throne of heaven.¹⁸¹

He reproaches the multitude of the faithful for its lack of assiduity in the Word of God.

What shall I do, then, I to whom is entrusted the dispensation of the word? Where and when will I find your time? The greatest part, almost all, of your time, you consume in mundane occupations, sometimes in the marketplace, sometimes with the merchants; one is occupied in the country, another in the law-court. No one or very few care about the Word of God. But why do I complain about the absent ones? Even the ones who are here, who are gathered in the Church, are not attentive: you are interested in worn-out fables; you turn your back on the Word of God and the reading of the Holy Books.¹⁸²

Already we have considered passages, especially those from *Homilies on Exodus*, which give a vivid picture of an assemblage of the time.¹⁸³ He complains of the seeming uselessness of his efforts to interest the young people in the study of the

Scriptures.¹⁸⁴ He attacks in particular those Christians who say that they believe but live in sin. He points out that there are some in the church who “have faith in God and adhere to the divine precepts, who are very religious before the servants of God, who are prompt to adorn the church and to serve, but who, in their acts and their way of living, remain sunk in their vices and by no means have laid aside the old man.”¹⁸⁵ In an interesting passage Origen shows us the Christians of tradition scorning the recently converted **ones** when the latter are in any way inferior to them. He writes:

Neither the recent time of their conversion nor impious relatives are an obstacle, for those who struggle courageously, to their hastening to reveal qualities superior to many of those who appear to have grown old in the faith. For it is a fight to destroy the pride of those who glory in being nourished by their parents with Christian teachings, and especially with reference to those who take pride in parents or ancestors who, in the church, have been worthy of the bishop’s seat or the priestly dignity or the deaconship in the service of the people of God. Do you know that you are neither to be glorified for being “the first,” nor to be humbled for being lower than “the first” for having entered into Christianity after them?¹⁸⁸

Here we glimpse oppositions in the community between the old, established Christian families and the newly converted ones. These divisions in the community do not come only from differences of a religious kind, but also from differences of the social circles. Some pride themselves upon their origins:

There are some who rise above others because they are sons of notable people and because they are from families considered great according to the elevated ranks of the world. Those, priding themselves upon an involuntary and unimportant thing, do not have a valid reason for feeling proud; there are others who rise because they have obtained what is called such an ascendancy that they have the right to cut off heads. Others take pride in their wealth, not true wealth, but that down below. And others take pride in having a beautiful house or vast properties.¹⁸⁷

In this community a certain number of groups that constitute the hierarchy are detached. The work

of Origen attests to the organization of the Church of his time. In the Church we find the different categories that appeared in the second century: bishops, priests, deacons, doctors, virgins, monks, laymen. Certain groups—the prophets and the widows—for example, scarcely appear. The sacerdotal hierarchy tends to absorb the functions of the doctors and the prophets. With regard to the sacerdotal hierarchy, Origen appears severe.¹⁸⁸ He writes: “Even in the Church of Christ you find men who organize banquets, who love and hold the first places, who first plot to become deacons, then aspire to the seat of priests, and not satisfied with that, plot to be named bishops by men.”¹⁸⁹ He reproaches the clergy for their pride:

Sometimes we surpass in pride the bad princes of the nations. . . . We are terrible, unapproachable, especially to the poor. When they get to us and request something, we are more insolent than the tyrants and the princes who are most cruel to the suppliants. That is what you can see in many a renowned church, especially those of the great cities.¹⁹⁰ Others, priests or bishops, try to make a fortune for members of their family instead of promoting to ecclesiastical honors the ones who deserve them.¹⁹¹ There are passages in which Origen alludes to the injustice of which certain faithful ones are victims when they are excluded from the community. “And thus, it sometimes happens that the one who is hunted is on the inside and that the one who is on the inside is outside.”¹⁹² He reminds the clergy that second marriages are not permitted to the heads of the churches.¹⁹³

This criticism of the habits of the clergy conceals a more profound attitude, and one which is a certain disparagement of the sacerdotal hierarchy. He maintains that it does not matter so much who performs the solemn functions of the liturgy before the people, but that there are few men who are saintly in their habits, well educated in doctrine, rich in wisdom, entirely capable of showing the truth of things, of teaching the knowledge of the faith.¹⁹⁴ For the outer hierarchy he substitutes or sets up a spiritual hierarchy, that of holiness, the degrees of which are those of beginners, of progressive ones, and of the perfect, and which is what ought to be hoped for. This does not mean a denial of the existence of the visible hierarchy: “I recognize that it is one thing to fulfill the functions of the priesthood, and something different to be well informed and perfect in everything.”¹⁹⁵ But the outer hierarchy is only the visible figure of the inner hierarchy: “Bishop, priest and deacon are the symbols of the realities contained in things.”¹⁹⁶ His ideal is that of the teacher who is at the same time a spiritual man, a speculative man, and an exegete. The teacher is included in the priesthood of which he becomes one of the aspects. Here we are in the presence of one of the great conflicts with regard to the Christian life in the first centuries: that of the duality of action in the community of the doctors and of the bishops. As a counterpart, each group has the tendency to establish in the community a group of holy men, initiated in a more profound knowledge.¹⁹⁷ “The office of teacher in his [Origen’s] case belongs to the bishops and to the presbyters. In principle the degrees of *gnosis* coincide with those of the hierarchy.”¹⁹⁸

In preaching about the victim of the burnt offering that is torn limb from limb and placed on the altar, Origen says:

He [the priest] tears the victim limb from limb, the one who can explain in order and show with proper discernment what progress it is to touch the garment of Christ, what other progress to wash his feet with tears and to dry them with the hair of his head, and how much more than that it is to anoint his head with perfume and how sublime to repose on his breast. To set forth the reasons for

each of these things and to adapt some for beginners, others to those who are already perfect in charity, is to tear the victim limb from limb. The one who knows how to show what were the beginnings of the Law, what progress has been made by the prophets, what fullness of perfection is found in the Gospel; or the one who can show with what milk of the word those ought to be taught who are little children in Christ, and with what vegetable of the word those ought to restore their strength who are weak in the faith, in short what is the solid and strong nourishment on which the athletes of Christ ought to thrive, the one who knows from spiritual intelligence how to separate these things one by one—the instructor or teacher of this kind may be considered as that priest who places on the altar the victim torn limb from limb.¹⁹⁹

Here Origen reminds us that a spiritual priesthood in the New Testament followed the visible and figurative priesthood of the Old Testament. The Christian community is composed of a hierarchy corresponding to the degree of spiritual advancement, and the role of the teacher is to explain the Scriptures by giving to each category of the soul the nourishment which it needs. The priest is the teacher. The New Law has for its altar the living souls who have replaced altars of stone; it has for its priest the one who offers the victim to these living souls, and gives them the living Logos, which is the food of living souls. This Logos is present in the Scriptures, but hidden under the covering of the letter. The role of the priest is to analyze the letter, to distinguish in the Scriptures the different aspects of the Logos, which are the different members, and to give to each soul, according to its development, the aspect of the Logos which it needs. Thus, the accomplishment of the Levitical priesthood is the ministry of the word. The former was the figure; the latter is the reality. Danielou points out a difficulty. According to him, the place of the visible priesthood as that of the visible religious service, in the New Testament, does not appear fully here any more. The Church as Origen conceives it is more that of the hierarchy of saintliness grouped around the spiritual master than that of the ecclesiastical community around its bishop.²⁰⁰ In one of his homilies Origen writes:

It is because Jesus knew that it is in the ears of the inner man, that is to say, in the intelligence of the heart that the things ought to be received that are said (what good does it do, indeed, to hear the word if it is not perceived and retained in the heart), that is why he said that those who have ears to hear let them hear. . . . Now when Jesus announces to you the Law and reveals to your hearts the spiritual intelligence, do not remain proselytes any longer, that is to say, catechumens, but hasten to perceive the grace of God; and you, children, do not be children any more in your tendencies, but become like little children; and you, women, hasten to the perfection of the strong.²⁰¹

In several homilies, cited in the beginning of this chapter, Origen reminds us that the teacher, the priest, to whom the secrets of the mysteries of wisdom have been entrusted, should be utterly careful in transmitting them to the people. It is to the pure souls who live in the simplicity of the faith that the teacher or doctor confides some of the secrets of the faith.²⁰²

We must ever bear in mind that the teacher or doctor is not only the one who has attained spiritual perfection and the illumination of knowledge; he has also a function in the Church. Origen is keenly aware that it is possible for a man to occupy the chair of the teacher or doctor and be unworthy of it, just as may be true of a presbyter.²⁰³ He wrestles with the question of the relation between the visible hierarchy of the presbyters and the visible hierarchy of the teachers or doctors. Certain attitudes correspond to each of these hierarchies. The presbyters are turned more toward

worship; the instructors, more toward the ministry of the word and the Scriptures. For the first, martyrdom is a redeeming sacrifice; for the second, perfection of *gnosis*. Although Origen rather clearly represents the course of the teachers or doctors, his life and his work attest to an epoch in which the two hierarchies tend to unite. In his case the office of teacher belongs to the bishops and presbyters. Whereas he does not deny the powers of the visible hierarchy coming from the priestly ordination, he is not resigned to dissociating the sacerdotal powers from the sacerdotal sanctity.²⁰⁴ It is difficult, indeed, to set forth an estimate of Origen's thought and personality which does justice to the various sides of his work. The writer thinks that Danielou reveals an excellent grasp of Origen of Alexandria's interpretation of the teacher's function when he writes:

It is this distinction between power and sanctity which will be definitely made clear by Augustine in the controversy with the Donatists and which will give birth to the doctrine of the sacramental character. But we can say with the P. of Balthasar that "the identity of the two hierarchies is for the Church not a chimerical dream, but a rigorous exigency."

The resignation of Augustine is a part of the truth; but the refusal of Origen to accept the fact that an unworthy clergyman can communicate grace is the expression of an exigency of sanctity which is also a part of the truth.²⁰⁵

We see in him, not scorn for, but, on the contrary, the high idea which is had of, the priesthood, since he accepts it only as being holy. In other words, the image which Origen offers us is here, as elsewhere, evidence of the existence of a visible priesthood and the meaning of that priesthood. But Origen does not stop there, because for him what is important is not the institutions but the sanctity, the spiritual reality.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1. Rene Cadiou, *Origen: His Life at Alexandria*, tr. by J. A. Southwell (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1944), p. vi. Cf. Rene Cadiou, *La jeunesse d'Origene: Histoire de l'ecole d'Alexandrie du III siecle* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1935), p. ii.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. vii-viii. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. iii-iv.
3. *Ibid.*, p. x. Cf. *ibid.*, p. v.
4. The writings of Origen himself give but few details as to the circumstances of his life. The main authority for the details of his life is Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, VI—to be cited as H.E., VI. Eusebius had made a collection of about a hundred letters of Origen (H.E., VI. 36). These, together with official documents (H.E. VI. 23, 33), and the information which he derived from those who had been acquainted with Origen (H.E., VI. 2, 33), formed the basis of his narrative. His account of the most critical period of Origen's life, his retirement from Alexandria, was given in the second book of his *Apology*, which he composed with the help

of Pamphilus (H.E., VI. 23). This, unfortunately, has not been preserved. The controversial writings of Jerome and Rufinus have preserved some facts from the Apology of Eusebius and Pamphilus, the first book of which remains in the translation of Rufinus. But Jerome had no independent knowledge of the details of Origen's life. Epiphanius (in his Panarion, espec. Haer. lxiv, the section against Origen) has preserved some anecdotes of different degrees of credibility. For the critical text of Epiphanius' work, see Epiphanius Werke, in the series Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte . . . , ed. by K. Holl (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1891, etc.), 2. Band, pp. 401-524.

5. For a discussion of the life and works of Origen, see Eusebius, H.E., tr. with Introduction and Notes by H. J. Lawlor and J. E. L. Oulton (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1927-28), 2 vols., espec. Bk. VI, pp. 175-215 in Vol. I, pp. 191-236 in Vol. II; G. W. Butterworth, Preface and Introduction to his translation of Origen's Concerning First Principles (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1936), pp. i-xxxvi; R. B. Tollinton, Essay prefixed to Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen, tr. by R. B. Tollinton (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1929), pp. ix-xxvii; G. L. Prestige, Fathers and Heretics (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1940), pp. 91-136; E. de Faye, Origen and His Work, tr. by F. Rothwell (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1926), pp. 13-52; E. de Faye, Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee (Paris: Editions Ernest Leroux, 1923-28), 3 vols. in 2, espec. Vol. I., and Vol. II, which contains on pp. 216-239 a useful description of the works of Origen by P. D. Huet, Origeniana (reprinted in J. P. Migne, Patrologia* Cursus Completus, Series Graeca, Parisiis, 1857-1866, in 161 vols., t. XVII, pp. 633 ff.), E. R. Redepenning, Origenes: Eine Darstellung seines Lebens und seiner Lehre (Bonn: Eduard Webe, 1841-46), M. J. Denis, De la philosophie d'Origene (Paris: L'imprimerie Nationale, 1884); W. R. Inge, article "Alexandrian Theology," in J. Hastings, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1908), I, 308-319; B. F. Westcott, article "Origenes," W. Smith and H. Wace, eds., A Dictionary of Christian Biography (London: John Murray, 1887), IV, 96-142; C. Bigg, The Christian Platonists of Alexandria (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), pp. 115-234, 269-304; Introductory Note to the writings of Origen, tr. into English by Crombie in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, American reprint of the Edinburgh edition, ed. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1885-99), IV, 223-235; Gregory Thaumaturgus, Panegyric on Origen, tr. by S. D. F. Salmond in *ibid.*, preceding collection (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), VI, 21-39; W. Fairweather, Origen and Greek Patristic Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), *passim*; F. Prat, article "Origen and Origenism," C. G. Herbermann . . . E. A. Pace . . . et al., eds., The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907-12), XI, 306-312; and other excellent literature given in G. Krieger, History of Early Christian Literature, tr. by C. R. Gillett (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1897), pp. 173-205; also, F. Cayre, Patrologie et histoire de la theologie (Paris: Society de S. Jean l'evangeliste, 1947), I, 183-210.
6. Epiphanius, an expert on the literature of the first three centuries, said that

Origen was the author of 6,000 separate works. The consensus of opinion among scholars is that that means not only major works, but the short one-page papers which he must have turned out from time to time.

7. In addition to Origen's extraordinarily busy life as a Biblical scholar, he undertook an elaborate defense of Christianity against the attacks of the acute pagan scholar and critic Celsus, of the second century. Celsus' effort was to show up the inconsistencies, the absurdities, and the moral defects in Christianity. He attacked not only the behavior and the intellectual non-respectability of Christians in his own day, but also the life, person, teachings, and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We recover the text of Celsus' writings because Origen quotes passage after passage, as a basis for the detailed refutation which he offers. There seems to be a consensus of opinion among scholars that Origen is a model of painstaking and fair, if somewhat tedious, apologetics.
8. "Of recent years, these isolated fragments have been the object of interesting critical studies. They appear to be of less documentary importance than was supposed." E. de Faye, *Origen and His Work*, tr. by F. Eohtwell (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1926), p. 33.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.
10. See G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'église ancienne* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1948), I, 258-280; P. Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jerome* (Paris: Letouzey et An6, 1951), pp. 164-171.
11. See C. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), pp. 124-127.
12. There are three levels of interpretation. The first, simplest level is the historical, physical, or somatic level, the literal meaning of the text. Origen thinks that most of the Old Testament and the New Testament will give perfectly good sense interpreted at this level. Secondly, there is a moral level. At this level the careful interpreter will try to make clear the ethical implications which are found in the record of events. Thirdly, there is a spiritual, or allegorical, level, and sometimes one will find a text which is interpretable only on this ground. In getting at the true text and the true meaning in the Scripture, Origen was concerned with all three of these levels of interpretation. Upon this basis Origen wrote many scholia, brief interpretative notes on various verses or phrases in the Scripture; also, he wrote full-length commentaries and wrote and preached numerous exegetical sermons. See *ibid.*, pp. 127-141.
13. R.B. Tollinton, *Essay prefixed to Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, tr. by R. B. Tollinton (London: Society for Promoting

Christian Knowledge, 1929), p. xvi.

14. R.C. Petry, *No Uncertain Sound: Sermons That Shaped the Pulpit Tradition* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948), p. 45.
15. R.C. Petry, *Preaching in the Great Tradition: Neglected Chapters in the History of Preaching* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 43.
16. Petry, R. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 1, 3, 9. See Melito, Bishop of Sardis, *The Homily on the Passion*, ed. by C. Bonner (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), pp. 3-180, for an example of preaching in the second century. See also Y. Brihiot, *Landmarks in the History of Preaching* (London: Society for Publication of Christian Knowledge, 1950), pp. 1-12.
17. DeFaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 177; Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-279.
21. DeFaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-179.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.
23. B.F. Westcott, *Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1891), p. 194.
24. See A. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature Grecque Chrétienne* (Paris, 1928), II, 326-463, for a discussion of the School at Alexandria; also, R. M. Grant, *The Bible in the Church* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), pp. 60-84; C. Kingsley, *Historical Lectures and Essays* (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd, 1902), pp. 3-132, for a discussion of Alexandria and her schools; R. M. Grant, "The Future of the Ante-Nicene Fathers," *The Journal of Religion*, XXX (Apr, 1950), 109-116.
25. Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
26. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 200-203.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 203-205.
28. Gregory Thaumaturgus, *The Oration and Panegyric Addressed to Origen* (to be cited as *Panegyric*, followed by number of argument), tr. by S. D. F. Salmond, is available in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (to be cited as ANF), American reprint

of the Edinburgh edition, ed. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885-99), VI, 21-39, and the critical text is found in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca* (Parisii, 1856-1866), t. 10, cols. 1051-1104 (to be cited as MPG, X, 1051-1104).

29. Panegyricvi, ANF, 27-28. Hereafter the ANF reference will be given in parentheses by volume and page number, for example: Panegyric vi (VI, 27-28),
30. Panegyricvii (VI, 29-30), as quoted in Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
31. Cf. Panegyric viii (VI, 30).
32. Cf. Panegyric ix (VI, 31).
33. Cf. Panegyric xi-xii (VI, 32-33).
34. Panegyricxii (VI, 33).
35. Cf. Panegyric xiii-xiv (VI, 33-36).
36. Panegyricxv (VI, 36).

37. Eusebius, H.E, VI, 18, tr. in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (to be cited as NPNF), ed. by P. Schaff and H. Wace (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1890-1900), 2nd Ser., I, 264.
38. Cf. Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 217.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218.
40. This sentence is not complete in Latin, and P. Koetschau suggests inserting the words *lucri habent et*, which G. Butterworth translates: "they gain this advantage."
41. Origen, *On First Principles* (to be cited as *De Princ.*), tr. by W. Butterworth (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1936), bk. II, ch. 11.4, pp. 149-150. Cf. Origen, *De Principiis*, ANF, IV, 298. The critical text is found in *Origenes Werke*, in *Die Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte ...* (to be cited as GCS), ed. by P. Koetschau (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1891, etc.), 5. Band. pp. 186-187.

42. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-220.

43. Cf. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. VI. 12, available in NPNF, 2nd Ser, II, 147. See Cassiodorus Senator, *An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings*, tr. by L. W. Jones (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), pp. 28, 31, 85, 89 et passim.
44. *Ibid*, VI. 13, in *ibid*, II, 147-148.
45. P. Bayle, art. "Origene," *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Amsterdam, 1730), III, 541, note D. Cf. Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 223. See also G. Bardy, art. "Origene," and G. Fritz, art. "Origfinisme," *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique* (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ane, 1932), t. 11, pt. 2, pp. 1489-1588 passim.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Cf. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-225.
2. Cf. *De Princ.*, *op. cit.*, Preface, pp. 1-6; also, ANF, IV, 239-241; GCS, V, 7-16. The *op. cit.* refers to the Butterworth translation. Henceforth the page numbers, following the *De Princ.* references, are to this translation.
3. Cf. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
4. *Ibid*, p. 155. The first method, analysis, is the stripping from concrete existence all physical attributes, taking away from it the dimensions of space. Negating, one after another, the partial or deficient characters that we can properly ascribe only to created being, we reach, by that sort of elimination, a conception of God which is free from inappropriate affirmations. Secondly, there is the converse method of synthesis. "Synthesis is the inductive mode, by which we gather from the constitution of the world an idea of Him by whom the world was made." In the first instance we deny of God any imperfection; in the second instance we affirm of Him all perfection. Thirdly, there is the method of analogy. "Analogy is the poet's faculty bodying forth in a myth, a simile, that which language is inadequate to express." This rests upon the judgment that if God be the creator of the world, then, by examining the attributes of created being, we can recognize a certain clue to the nature of the One who has produced them. See also *ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.
6. *De Princ.*, I, 3.8, p. 39. Cf. ANF, IV, 255; GCS, V, 62.
7. "It is probably from among these," he adds, "so far as I am able to judge, that the order of our human race was constituted, in the hope of restoring it in the age to come, or in the ages beyond that, when there shall be the 'new heaven and

new earth' (Isa. 65:17), of which Isaiah speaks, to that unity which the Lord Jesus promises when he prays to God the Father for his disciples, ' . . .' (St John 17:20, 21; 22, 23)." De Princ., I, 6.2, p. 55, Cf. ANF, IV, 261; GCS, V, 81-82.

8. De Princ., I, 6.3, pp. 56-57. Cf. ANF, IV, 261; GCS, V, 82-84.
9. De Princ., I, 8.4, pp. 74-75. Cf. ANF, IV, 266-267; GCS, V, 104- 105.
10. De Princ., I, 7, pp. 59-65. Cf. ANF, IV, 262-264; GCS, V, 85-94. Also, cf. Contra Celsum (to be cited as C. Celsum), bk. V, chs.11, in ANF, IV, 546-548; for critical text see GCS, II, 9-12.
11. Cf. De Princ., II, 1, pp. 76-80; in ANF, IV, 268-270; GCS, V, 106-111. Also, cf. C. Celsum, IV, 99, in ANF, IV, 541; GCS, I, 372-374.
12. Cf. Westcott, op. cit., p. 230.
13. De Princ., II, 2, pp. 81-82. Cf. ANF, IV, 270-271; GCS, V, 111- 113.
14. Cf. De Princ., II, 5, pp. 101-107; II, 9.5, pp. 133-134. Cf. ANF, 278-281; 291. The critical text is found in GCS, V, 132-139; 168-169.
15. Origen elaborates upon this idea in De Princ., II, 9.1, pp. 129-130; also, IV, 1.35, in ANF, IV, 380. For the critical text see GCS, V, 163, 165; 358-361.
16. Cf. Westcott, op. cit., p. 232.
17. De Princ., II, 10, pp. 138-146. Cf. ANF, IV, 293-296; GCS, V, 172-183.
18. De Princ., H, 11.6, pp. 152-153. Cf. ANF, IV, 299. The critical text, found in GCS, V, 189-191, is as follows: "Tale ergo aliquid etiam de aerea sede dicendum est. Puto enim quod sancti quique discendentes ex hac vita permanebunt in loco aliquo in terra posito, quem 'paradisum' dicit scriptura divina, velut in quodam eruditionis loco et, ut ita dixerim, auditorio vel schola animarum, in quo de omnibus his, quae in terra videntur, doceantur, indicia quoque quaedam accipiant etiam de consequentibus et futuris, sicut in hac quoque vita positi indicia quaedam futurorum, licet 'per speculam et aenigmata,' tamen 'ex aliqua parte' conceperant, quae manifestius et lucidius sanctis in suis et locis et temporibus revelantur. Si qui sane 'mundus corde' et purior mente et exercitior sensu fuerit, velocius proficiens cito et ad aereum locum ascendet et ad caelorum regna perveniet per locorum singulorum, ut ita dixerim, mansiones, quas Graeci quidem sphairas, id est globos, appellaverunt, scriptura vero divina "caelos" nominat; in quibus singulis perspiciet primo quidem ea, quae inibi geruntur, secundo vero etiam rationem quare gerantur agnoscet. . . ." Cf. R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Leipzig: George Bohme, 1908), I, 441-455; J. Danielou, *Origene* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1948),

pp. 271-283; E. de Faye, *Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee* (Paris: Editions Ernest Leroux, 1927), III, 249-268.

19. “And so the rational being, growing at each successive stage, not as it grew when in this life in the flesh or body and in the soul, but increasing in mind and intelligence, advances as a mind already perfect to perfect knowledge, no longer hindered by its former carnal senses, but developing in intellectual power, ever approaching the pure and gazing ‘face to face’ [cf. I Cor. 13:12], Jerome’s paraphrase of this passage is as follows—Ep. ad Avitum 7: ‘And at the end of the second book, in the course of his argument about our final perfection, he says: When we have progressed so far that we are no longer flesh and bodies, and possibly not even souls, but mind and understanding come to perfection and not blinded by any cloud of disturbing passions, we shall see rational and spiritual beings “face to face,” ’ if I may so speak, on the causes of things. And it attains perfection, first that perfection by which it rises to this condition, and secondly that by which it remains therein, while it has for the food on which it feeds the problems of the meanings of things and the nature of their causes. For as in this bodily life of ours we grew first of all bodily into that which we now are, the increase being supplied in our early years merely by a sufficiency of food, whereas after the process of growth has reached its limit we use food not in order to grow but as a means of preserving life within us; so, too, I think that the mind, when it has come to perfection, still feeds on appropriate and suitable food in a measure which can neither admit of want nor of superfluity. But in all respects this food must be understood to be the contemplation and understanding of God, and its measures to be those that are appropriate and suitable to this nature which has been made and created. These measures will rightly be observed by every one of those who are beginning to ‘see God,’ that is, to understand him through ‘purity of heart’ [cf. St. Matt. 5:8].” *De Princ.*, II, 11.7, pp. 153-154. Cf. ANF, IV, 300. For the critical text see GCS, V, 191-192.
20. *De Princ.*, II, 10.8 espec., pp. 138-146. Cf. ANF, IV, 293-296; GCS, V, 172-183.
21. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 326. Cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 401. As shown in Chapter I, the first reference is to the English translation of Cadiou’s work, and the second is to the French original.
22. Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, tr. by A. Menzies, available in ANF, IX, 291-408. The critical text is available in GCS, vol. IV.
23. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 326. Cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 401.
24. *De Princ.*, III, 6.1, pp. 245-247. Cf. ANF, IV, 344-345; GCS, V, 279-282. Cf. also Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

25. Origenis, *In Canticum Canticorum* (to be cited *In Cant.*) I, (interprete Rufino), MPG, XIII, 93-94.
26. Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 235.
27. See reference in footnote 24.
28. *De Princ.*, III, 1.13, pp. 181-182 (Greek). Cf. ANF, IV, 313-314 (Greek and Latin). The critical text is found in GCS, V, 217-218.
29. *De Princ.*, IV, 1.1, p. 256 (Greek). Cf. ANF, IV, 349; also, GCS, V, 292-293.
30. Cf. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-237.
31. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 217. Cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273.
32. *Loc. cit.* "Le Traite fut done une meditation philosophique sur les dogmes plutot qu'une interpretation de l'Ecriture. Cependant comme l'autorite de la Bible y intervenait a titre de confirmation, une sorte d'appendice fut consacre a demontrer qu'elle est inspiree, et qu'elle contient la revelation des doctrines profes- sees dans le corps de l'ouvrage. Car il ne suffisait pas, pour les faire accepter, de s'appuyer sur les notions communes de la raison, ni sur l'evidence plus elevee de la reflexion religieuse. On devait aussi en chercher le fundement dans les livres saints. Ils sont divins parce qu'ils aboutissent a Jesus, a l'evangelisation du monde, au pouvoir des Apotres."
33. *Loc. cit.* Cf. *ibid.*, p. 273.
34. *De Princ.*, IV, 2.1-9, pp. 269-287. Cf. ANF, IV, 355-366; GCS, 305-323.
35. Cadiou, *op. lit.*, p. 219. Cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
36. *Loc. cit.*
37. *Ibid.*, p. 220. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 275-276.
38. M.J.. Denis, *De la philosophic d'Origene* (Paris: A L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1884), pp 1-26.
39. C.Celsum, IV, 83, in ANF, IV, 534. Cf. C. Celsum, IV, 81, 86, in ANF, IV, 533, 535. The critical text is found in GCS, I, 352-355; cf. GCS, I, 350-352, 356-357.
40. Inthe passages referred to in footnote 39, "Origen argues exactly like the Cartesians. . . ." H. H. Davies, "Origen's Theory of Knowledge," *The American Journal of Theology*, II (Oct., 1898), 738.

41. Origen, *The Commentary on St. John's Gospel*, the text revised with a critical Introduction and Indices by A. E. Brooke (Cambridge: University Press, 1896), II, 34-74 et passim (hereafter to be cited as Brooke, *Com. on John*, II, 34-74). The critical text is found in *Origenes Werke, der Johanneskommentar*, ed. by E. Preuschen (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1903), in GCS, IV, 327-362 et passim.
42. Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 739.
43. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 740.
44. *Loc. cit.* The critical text is found in MPG, XIV, cols. 837-872 passim.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 740-741.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 741-742.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 743.
48. Cf. *De Princ.*, I, Preface, pp. 1-6; III, 3.1-6, pp. 223-229; the same in ANF, IV, 239-241, 334-337; the critical text in GCS, V, 7-16, 256-263. Also, cf. C. Celsum, IV, 13 ff., in ANF, IV, 502 ff.; the critical text in GCS, I, 282 ff.
49. Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 746-747.
50. "Every mind which shares in intellectual light must undoubtedly be of one nature with every other mind which shares similarly in this light. If then the heavenly powers receive a share of intellectual light, that is, of the divine nature, in virtue of the fact that they share in wisdom and sanctification, and if the soul of man receives a share of the same light and wisdom, then these things will be of one nature and one substance with each other. But the heavenly powers are incorruptible and immortal; undoubtedly therefore the substance of the soul of man will also be incorruptible and immortal. And not only so, but since the nature of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to whom alone belongs the intellectual light in which the universal creation has a share, is incorruptible and eternal, it follows logically and of necessity that every existence which has a share in that eternal nature must itself also remain forever incorruptible and eternal, in order that the eternity of the divine goodness may be revealed in this additional fact, that they who obtain its blessings are eternal too. . . . On the other hand, let us consider whether it does not appear almost impious to say that the mind, which is capable of receiving God, should admit of a destruction of its substance; as if the very fact that it can perceive and understand God would not be sufficient to secure its perpetual existence. This is the more likely since, even if the mind through carelessness should fall away from the pure and perfect reception of God into itself, it nevertheless always possesses within some seeds as it were of restoration and

recall to a better state, which become operative whenever the inner man, who is also termed the rational man, is recalled into the image and likeness of God who created him. . . ." De Princ., IV, 4.9, pp. 326-327. Cf. ANF, IV, 381; GCS, V, 361- 363.

51. Davies,op. cit., p. 748.
52. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 751-755.
53. Cf. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, tr. by N. Buchanan (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1889), I, 222 ff.
54. DePrinc., I, 1.6, pp. 10-12; in ANF, IV, 243-244; in GCS, V, 20-23. A similar idea is to be found in the *Theaetetus*, a fact which Origen explains by the theory that it was revealed by the eternal Word to the Greek mind.
55. Davies,op. cit., p. 757.
56. DePrinc., n, 1.4, pp. 78-80; in ANF, IV, 269-270; in GCS, V, 109-111.
57. Davies,op. cit., p. 760.
58. Denis,op. cit., pp. 1-26.
59. Cf. A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1891), pref. of first ed., p. ix, and pp. 23-94.
60. Tertullian, *The Prescription against Heretics*, ch. 7, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), III, 246. He continues: ". . . our instruction comes from the porch of Solomon, who had himself taught 'that the Lord should be taught in the simplicity of heart.' Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition! We want no curious disputation after possessing Jesus Christ, no inquisition after enjoying the Gospel! With our faith, we desire no further belief. For this is our primary faith, that there is nothing which we ought to believe besides."
61. Thomas Aquinas' five arguments for the existence of God are found in T. Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles*, tr. by the English Dominican Fathers (London, 1924), I, 5-8; they are also found in T. Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, tr. by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London, 1920), Pt. I, Q. II. E. Gilson in *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, tr. by E. B. Lough, ed. by G. A. Elrington (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd., 1924), pp. 36-104, discusses the five arguments and also summarizes the materials from the first volume of *Contra Gentiles* which deal with the use of negation and analogiae entis.

62. E.Gilson, in *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (complete reference given in footnote 61), discusses the relation of faith and reason in the thought of Thomas. See pp. 22-23: "Faith in the incomprehensible confers upon rational knowledge its perfection and crowning completion." P. 21: "Thus, our understanding, resting upon the testimony of our senses, can indeed infer that God exists, but it is evident that a mere examination of sensory objects, which are the effects of God and therefore inferior to Him, cannot bring us a knowledge of the Divine Essence. There are, consequently, truths about God which are accessible to Reason; and there are others which exceed it."
63. E.Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), pp. 69-85.
64. Cf.R. E. Cushman, "Faith and Reason in the Thought of St. Augustine," *Church History*, XIX (Dec., 1950), 271-294, for the essence of the Augustinian position.
65. C.H. Dodd, *History and the Gospel* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1938), p. 59.
66. J.Tixeront, *A History of Dogmas*, tr. from the French by H. L. B. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1921), I, 261-262.
67. E. de Faye, *Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee* (Paris: Editions Ernest Leroux, 1927), II, 1: "Toute sa mentalite est d'un erudit et d'un philosophe alexandrin."
68. C. Celsum, VI, 14, in ANF, IV, 579: . . for we assert that the lowest among us have been set free from this ignorance and want of knowledge, while the most intelligent can understand and grasp the divine hope." The critical text is found in GCS, II, 84-85.
69. C.Elsee, *Neo-Platonism in Relation to Christianity* (Cambridge: University Press, 1908), pp. 93, 100. Elsee maintains that Origen never escapes the influences of Neo-Platonism, although he remains a Christian theologian. "It is true that there is no Neo- Platonic doctrine that Origen can be said to have adopted. . . . Yet it is difficult to believe that his insight is wholly unconnected with the teaching of Plotinus . . . untrammelled by Neo- Platonic dogmas, yet filled with the spirit of reverent speculation which prompted them. . .
70. C.Celsum, IV, 3-5, in ANF, IV, 498-499. Cf. GCS, I, 275-278, for the critical text.

71. Cf. De Princ.j I, 6.2, 3; 8.4, according to references in footnotes 7-9. Elsee, *op. cit.*, p. 96, has a pertinent comment.
72. C. Celsum, HI, 81, in ANF, IV, 496. Cf. GCS, I, 271-272, for the critical text.
73. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 152, Also, see de Faye, *Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee*, II, 1 ff., for a discussion of Origen as a Christian philosopher.
74. Cf. A. C. Outler, "Origen and the *Regulae Fidei*," *Church History*, VIII (Sept., 1939), 212-221,
75. C. Celsum, I, 9, in ANF, IV, 399-400. Cf. GCS, I, 61-62, for the critical text.
76. "For who is there that, on betaking himself to the study of philosophy, and throwing himself into the ranks of some sect, either by chance, or because he is provided with a teacher of that school, adopts such a course for any other reason, except that he believes his particular sect to be superior to any other? For, not waiting to hear the arguments of all the other philosophers, and of all the different sects, and the reasons for condemning one system and for supporting another, he in this way elects to become a Stoic, e.g., or a Platonist, or a Peripatetic, or an Epicurean, or a follower of some other school, and is thus borne, although they will not admit it, by a kind of irrational impulse to the practice, say of Stoicism, to the disregard of others " C. Celsum, I, 10, in ANF, IV, 400. Cf. GCS, I, 62-63. There is also a pertinent passage in 1,11: "... seeing all human things are dependent upon faith. . . ." See ANF, IV, 401; GCS, 63-64.
77. DePrinc, I, 1.1, p. 7; in ANF, IV, 242; in GCS, V, 16-17.
78. Origen, *Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, tr. by R. B. Tollinton (London: Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1929), pp. 260-262. The first of these quotations continues as follows: "And even if this should happen, still the first duty of the blind is to follow Christ, addressing Him and crying out, Son of David, have mercy upon us. So from Him may they receive their sight and be able afterwards to be illuminated by the glory of His light." Hereafter this reference will be cited as *Or. Hom. Tr.*
79. C.Celsum, IV, 7, in ANF, IV, 500. Cf. GCS, I, 279, for the critical text.
80. C.Celsum, I, 4-5, in ANF, IV, 398. Cf. GCS, I, 58-59, for the critical text. Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-208, discusses a type of natural law (Law of Conscience) that is found in the thought of Origen.
81. Cf. De Princ., I, 1.8, pp. 13-14; in ANF, IV, 245; in GCS, V, 24-26.
82. DePrinc., I, 2.9, pp. 22-23; in ANF, IV, 249; in GCS, V, 39-41. Also, C.

Celsum, VI, 4, in ANF, IV, 574-575; the critical text is in GCS, II, 73-74.

83. C.Celsum, VII, 33, in ANF, IV, 624: "To see God belongs to the pure heart. . . . But as 'the strength of our will is not sufficient to procure the perfectly pure heart, and as we need that God should create it, he therefore who prays as he ought, offers this petition to God, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God' (Psalm 51:10)." The critical text is found in GCS, II, 183-184.
84. Cf.Cushman, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-289. Related passages in Augustine may be found in *On the Trinity*, IX, 12.17, 18 and X, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 1st Series, ed. by P. Schaff (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1887), III, 132-133, 134-143.
85. Cf.De Princ., III, 1, pp. 157-210; in ANF, IV, 302-328. The critical text is in GCS, V, 195-244.
86. "Itis neither in our power to make progress apart from the knowledge of God, nor does the knowledge of God compel us to do so unless we ourselves contribute something towards the good result; nor does our power apart from the knowledge of God and the full use of the power that deservedly belongs to us cause a man to be created for honor or for dishonor; nor does the power of God by itself fashion a man for honor or for dishonor, but God finds a ground of difference in our will, as it inclines to the better or to the worse." De Princ., III, 1.24, p. 210; in ANF, IV, 328; in GCS, V, 243-244.
87. C.Celsum, III, 69, in ANF, IV, 491: "Even if it be exceedingly difficult to effect a change in some persons, the cause must be held to lie in their own will, which is reluctant to accept the belief that the God over all things is a just Judge of all the deeds done during life." The critical text is found in GCS, I, 261.
88. Bigg,*op. cit.*, pp. 63, 155,157.
89. C.Celsum, VII, 42, in ANF, IV, 623; cf. GCS, II, 193.
90. C.Celsum, III, 34, in ANF, IV, 477-478. Cf. GCS, I, 230-231, for the critical text.
91. W,Fairweather, *Jesus and the Greeks* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Hark, 1924), pp. 325-327. For Origen's affirmation that Christianity is the fulfillment of philosophy see C. Celsum, VI, 13, ill ANF, IV, 579; the critical text in GCS, II, 83-84.
92. Cf. reference to C. Celsum in footnote 91.

CHAPTER III

1. A. C. McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), I, 216-217.
2. Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-170, 189-191, 210-212.
3. *De Princ.*, I, 2.2, pp. 15-16; cf. GCS, V, 28-30.
4. *Com. on John*, Bk. II, ch. 2, in ANF, IX, 323; cf. GCS, IV, 54-55.
5. In *C. Celsum*, V, 39, in ANF, TV, 561, Origen calls the Son of God a "second God" (*deuteros theos*). In *Com. on John*, Bk. X, ch. 21, in ANF, IX, 401-402, Origen distinguishes Him numerically from the Father and insists that while He is of the same essence as the Father, He is another than He in status as subject and in fundamental existence; cf. GCS, IV, 211-213.
6. See Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-189.
7. See *ibid.*, pp. 273-279.
8. "When, therefore, we see in him some things so human that they appear in no way to differ from the common frailty of mortals, and some things so divine that they are appropriate to nothing else but the primal and ineffable nature of deity, the human understanding with its narrow limits is baffled, and, struck with amazement at so mighty a wonder, knows not which way to turn, what to hold to, or whither to betake itself. If it thinks of God, it sees a man; if it thinks of a man, it beholds one returning from the dead with spoils after vanquishing the kingdom of death. For this reason we must pursue our contemplation with all fear and reverence, as we seek to prove how the reality of each nature exists in one and the same person, in such a way that nothing unworthy or unfitting may be thought to reside in that divine and ineffable existence, nor on the other hand may the events of his life be supposed to be the illusions caused by deceptive fantasies. [Comment in footnote, p. 110: i.e., as the various docetic heresies asserted.] But to utter these things in human ears and to explain them by words far exceeds the powers we possess either in our moral worth or in mind and speech." *De Princ.*, II, 6.2, pp. 109-110; cf. GCS, V, 140-141.
9. "The only-begotten Son of God, therefore, through whom, as the course of our discussion in the previous chapters has shown, 'all things visible and invisible were made,' according to the teaching of scripture both made all things and 'loves what he made.' For since he is the invisible 'image' of the 'invisible God,' he granted invisibly to all rational creatures whatsoever a participation in himself, in such a way that each obtained a degree of participation proportionate to the loving affection with which, he had clung to him. But whereas, by reason of the faculty of free- will, variety and diversity had taken hold of individual souls, so that one was attached to its author with a warmer

and another with a feebler and weaker love, that soul of which Jesus said, 'No man taketh from me my soul,' clinging to God from the beginning of the creation and ever after in a union inseparable and indissoluble, as being the soul of the wisdom and word of God and of the truth and the true light, and) receiving him wholly, and itself entering into his light and' splendor, was made with him in a pre-eminent degree one spirit, just as the apostle promises to them whose duty it is to imitate Jesus, that 'he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.' This soul, then, acting as a medium between God and the flesh (for it was not possible for the nature of God to mingle with a body apart from some medium), there is born, as we said, the God-man, the medium being that existence to whose nature it was not contrary to assume a body. Yet neither, on the other hand, was it contrary to nature for that soul, being as it was a rational existence, to receive God, into whom, as we said above, it had already completely entered by entering into the word' and wisdom and truth. "It is therefore right that this soul, either because it was wholly in the Son of God, or because it received the Son of God wholly into itself, should itself be called, along with that flesh which it has taken, the Son of God and the power of God, Christ and the wisdom of God; and on the other hand that the Son of God, 'through whom all things were created,' should be termed Jesus and the Son of Man." De Princ., II, 6.3, pp. 110-111; cf. GCS, V, 141-143.

10. "It was on this account also that the man became Christ, for he obtained this lot by reason of his goodness, as the prophet bears witness when he says, 'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; wherefore God hath anointed thee, thy God with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' It was appropriate that he who had never been separated from the Only-begotten should be called by the name of the Only-begotten and glorified together with him. As a reward for its love, therefore, it is anointed with the 'oil of gladness,' that is, the soul with the word of God is made Christ; for to be anointed with the oil of gladness means nothing else but to be filled with the Holy Spirit." De Princ., n, 6.4, pp. 111-112; cf. GCS, V, 143-144.

11. "To explain the matter more fully it will not appear absurd if we use an illustration, although on so high and difficult a subject there is but a small supply of suitable examples. However, if we may use this one without offence, the metal iron is susceptible of both cold and heat. Suppose then a lump of iron be placed for some time in a fire. It receives the fire in all its pores and all its veins, and becomes completely changed into fire, provided the fire is never removed from it and itself is not separated from the fire. Are we then to say that this, which is by nature a lump of iron, when placed in the fire and ceaselessly burning, can ever admit cold? Certainly not; it is far truer to say of it, what indeed we often detect happening in furnaces, that it has been completely changed into fire, because we can discern nothing else in it except fire. Further, if anyone were to try to touch or handle it, he would feel the power of the fire, not of the iron. In this manner, then, that soul which, like a piece of

iron in the fire, was forever placed in the word, forever in the wisdom, forever in God, is God in all its acts and feelings and thoughts; and therefore it cannot be called changeable or alterable, since by being ceaselessly kindled it came to possess unchangeability through its unity with the word of God. And while, indeed, some warmth of the Word of God must be thought to have reached all the saints, in this soul we must believe that the divine fire itself essentially rested, and that it is from this that some warmth has come to all others. "The very fact, too, that it says, 'God anointed thee, thy God with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,' shows that that soul is anointed with the 'oil of gladness,' that is, with the word of God and with wisdom, in one way, and his 'fellows,' that is, the holy prophets and apostles, in another." De Princ., II, 6.6, p. 113; cf. GCS, V, 145-146.

12. ". . . as an act of will proceeds from the mind without either cutting off any part of the mind or being separated or divided from it, in some similar fashion has the Father begotten the Son, who is indeed his image; so that as the Father is invisible by nature, he has begotten an image that is also invisible. "For the Son is the Word, and therefore we must understand that nothing in him is perceptible to the senses. He is wisdom, and in wisdom we must not suspect the presence of anything corporeal. 'He is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' but he has nothing in common with the light of our sun. Our Saviour is therefore the image of the invisible God, the Father, being the truth, when considered in relation to the Father himself, and the image, when considered in relation to us, to whom he reveals the Father; through which image we know the Father, whom 'no one' else 'knoweth save the Son and he to whom the Son hath willed to reveal him.'" De Princ., I, 2.6, pp. 19-20; cf. GCS, V, 35-36.
13. ". . . can anyone who has learned to regard God with feelings of reverence suppose or believe that God the Father ever existed, even for a single moment, without begetting this wisdom? . . . Wherefore we recognize that God was always the Father of his only-begotten Son, who was born indeed of him and draws his being from him, but is yet without any beginning, not only of that kind which can be distinguished by periods of time, but even of that other kind which the mind alone is wont to contemplate in itself and to perceive, if I may say so, with the bare intellect and reason. Wisdom, therefore, must be believed to have been begotten beyond the limits of any beginning that we can speak of or understand." De Princ, I, 2.2, pp. 15-16; cf. GCS, V, 28-30.
14. Homily IX on Jeremiah, section 4, as quoted in McGiffert, op. cit, p. 219 .
15. "Now just as we have learned in what sense wisdom is the "beginning of the ways' of God and is said to have been created, in the sense, namely, that she fashions beforehand and contains within herself the species and causes of the entire creation, in the same manner also must wisdom be understood to be the

Word of God. For wisdom opens to all other beings, that is, to the whole creation, the meaning of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the wisdom of God, and so she is called the Word, because she is as it were an interpreter of the mind's secrets." De Princ., I, 2.3, p. 16; cf. GCS, V, 30-31.

16. De Princ., I, 3.8, pp. 38-39; cf. GCS, V, 60-63. Cf. also, C. Celsum, 28, in ANF, IV, 475. McGiffert, *op. cit.*, I, 226 (footnote 1), comments: "See his Commentary on Matthew, Bk. XIII, 8-9; XVI, 8; Commentary on Romans, Bk. II, 13. In agreement with some of the Gnostics, Origen maintained that God offered the devil the soul of Christ in exchange for the souls of men, and that Satan accepted the offer, not knowing, as God did, that he would be unable to hold Christ after he had him in his possession. Origen seems not to have been troubled by the deceit practiced by God, for to deceive one's enemy was generally regarded as quite legitimate."
17. "This is an eternal and everlasting begetting, as brightness is begotten from light. For he does not become Son in an external way through the adoption of the Spirit, but is Son by nature." De Princ, I, 2.4, p. 18; cf. GCS, V, 33.
18. DePrinc, I, 2.8, pp. 21-22; cf. GCS, V, 38-39.
19. McGiffert, *op. cit.* I, 225-226.
20. Ibid, I, 226.
21. DePrinc, I, 3.8, pp. 38-39. Cf. GCS, V, 60-63.
22. DePrinc, III, 2.5, pp. 219-220; 6.1, pp. 245-247. Cf, GCS, V, 252- 254 ; 279-282.
23. DePrinc., III, 2.3, pp. 215-216; 3.4, pp. 226-227. Cf, GCS, V, 248-250; 260-261.
24. DePrinc., III, 2.1, pp. 211-213; cf. GCS, V, 244-246.
25. DePrinc., IV, 3.15, p. 312; cf. GCS, V, 347. Also, C. Celsum, VI, 68, in ANF, IV, 604; cf. GCS, II, 138.
26. McGiffert, *op. cit.*, I, 225-226. He cites the following references to Origen's works: De Princ, II, 6.3 ff.; IV, 31; C. Celsum, IV, 15 ff.
27. Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-26.
28. Ibid., p. 24.

29. Ibid,p. 181.
30. See footnote 16 of this chapter.
31. Cf. Bigg, op. cit, pp. 210-212.
32. Loc.cit. McGiffert, op. cit, I, 220-221, writes: “Like Justin Martyr, Origen found it difficult to make a place for the Spirit and to distinguish clearly between his functions and those of the Son. . . . Only by confining the work of the Spirit to Christians alone was he able to find a distinctive place for him. ‘I think,’ he says, ‘that the Father and the Son work in saints as well as in sinners, in rational beings and in dumb animals and even in things without life, in fact in everything that exists; but that the Holy Spirit does not work in those things which are without life, or in dumb animals, or even in rational beings that are engaged in evil practices and have not been converted to better things. On the contrary I think that the Spirit is active only in those who are already turning to better things and are walking in the way of Christ Jesus, that is those who are engaged in good deeds and abide in God.’ And so the chief function of the Holy Spirit according to Origen was to promote holiness in the followers of Christ. If the Son is the Saviour, the Spirit is the Sanctifier. It is worth remarking that in this part of the *De Principiis* [I, 3:5; cf. I, 3:8] Origen says nothing of the saving work of Christ. He can therefore speak as he does of the sanctifying work of the Spirit without being compelled to show how sanctification is related to salvation, as later theologians found themselves obliged to do.”
33. Cf. Bigg, op. cit, pp. 209-210.
34. Cf. *ibid*, pp. 227-229.
35. *De Princ*, II, 10.3, pp. 140-141; cf. GCS, V, 175-176.
36. *De Princ*, III, 6.6, pp. 251-252; cf. GCS, V, 287-289.
37. *De Princ*, III, 6.9, pp. 254-255; cf. GCS, V, 290-291.
38. Cf. Bigg, op. cit, p. 230. For an illuminating discussion of Origen’s understanding of the perfection of God and of God’s intent that in due course all created spirits will be brought back, see Hal Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis— Providence and Nurture* (Berlin und Leipzig: Verlag von Walter de Gruyter and Co, 1932). This is a brilliant study of Origen’s relation to Platonism.
39. George Florovsky, “Origen, Eusebius, and the Iconoclastic Controversy,” *Church History*, XIX (June, 1950), 77-96. See especially pp. 87 ff.
40. Ibid,p. 87. Florovsky continues this discussion: “Now, a symbol is no more

than a sign, pointing to a beyond, be it eternity or 'the age to come,' or both at once. The whole system of symbols was something provisional, to be ultimately done away. One had to penetrate behind the screen of symbols. This was the major exegetical principle or postulate of Origen. The exegetical method of Origen, by whatever name we may label it, was meant precisely for that ultimate purpose—to transcend history, to go beyond the veil of events, beyond the 'letter.' . . ." Loc cit.

41. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 210. Bigg continues this: " 'We are justified,' he [Origen] says, 'by faith, but far more by the blood of Jesus.' [Cf. In Rom. IV:11.] Those mysteries, which Clement scarcely dared to gaze upon, Origen has endeavored to explain. He is the first to attempt a philosophy of the Atonement. Christ is our Teacher and Example, but above all He is our Sacrifice, and under the touch of Allegory the whole ritual of Leviticus becomes eloquent of Him, who bore our sins upon the tree."
42. InCom. on John, I, 9 and 10; cf. Com. on Matt, XVI, 20 and 24, as quoted by Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 88. See also C. Celsus, II, a portion of which Florovsky translates (p. 88, footnote 27) as follows: "God the Word was sent, indeed, as a physician to sinners, but as a teacher of divine mysteries to those who are already pure and who sin no more."
43. Com.on John, I, 24, in ANF, IX, 310-312; cf. GCS, IV, 30-31.
44. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
45. Com.on John, XIX, 1; cf. GCS, IV, 298-299.
46. C.Celsus, in, 41, in ANF, IV, 480. This is very strong language which Origen uses. The passage is as follows: "But since he [Celsus] has charged us, I know not how often already, "with regarding this Jesus, who was but a mortal body, as a God, and with supposing that we act piously in so doing,' it is superfluous to say any more in answer to this, as a great deal has been said in the preceding pages. And yet let those who make this charge understand that He whom we regard and believe to have been from the beginning God, and the Son of God, is the very Logos, and the very Wisdom, and the very Truth; and with respect to His mortal body, and the human soul which it contained, we assert that not by their communion merely with Him, but by their unity and intermixture, they received the highest powers, and after participating in His divinity, were changed into God. And if any one should feel a difficulty at our saying this regarding His body, let him attend to what is said by the Greeks regarding matter, which, properly speaking, being without qualities, receives such as the Creator desires to invest it with, and which frequently divests itself of those which it formerly possessed, and assumes others of a different and higher kind. And if these opinions be correct, what is there wonderful in this, that the mortal quality of the body of Jesus, if the providence of God has so

willed it, should have been changed into one that was ethereal and divine?" In A. Neander's *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, tr. by J. Torrey (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1851), II, 315-316, we are told that by means of Origen the idea of a proper reasonable soul in Christ received a new dogmatical importance. This point, which up to this time had been altogether untouched with controversy with the Patri-passians, was now for the first time expressly brought forward in a synod held against Beryllus of Bostra, A.D. 244, and the doctrine of a reasonable human soul in Christ settled upon as a doctrine of the Church.

47. See C. Celsum, II, 64, in ANF, IV, 457; cf. GCS, I, 185-186.
48. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
49. C. Celsum, VIII, 17 and 18, in ANF, IV, 645-646; cf. GCS, II, 234-236.
50. DeFaye, *Origen and His Work*, p. 113.
51. *Loccit.*
52. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 113-116.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
55. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 126-127.
56. Petry, *Preaching in the Great Tradition*, pp. 43-44.
57. DeFaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 129 ff.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 130. W. R. Inge, in a lecture on Origen, published in *Proceedings of the British Academy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), XXXII, 123-145, gives an especially enlightening treatment of Origen's cosmology and anthropology. He writes (pp. 140-141, 143-144): "Origen's belief that there is a succession of world-orders has been accepted by Nietzsche and by the Swedish astronomer Arrhenius. Einstein was at one time inclined to abandon his theory of an endless expansion of the sphere which bounds the universe, and to substitute for it the theory of an alternating expansion and contraction, which resembles, on a much larger scale, the Platonic doctrine of the Great Year. ... It seems that no theory is more free from objections than that of Origen, that there is an innumerable series of world-orders. We probably need not believe that the series is progressive, and though Origen is so optimistic about the fate of individuals, he could not, living when he did, have been confident in the progress of humanity at large. There has never been a time when Pagans and

Christians alike—Cyprian is a good example—gave vent to such a chorus of woe about the state of society.”

59. DeFaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-132.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 134-140.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.
62. Cyril C. Richardson, “The Condemnation of Origen,” *Church History*, VI (March, 1937), 50-64, especially pp. 50 and 63. In the beginning of this essay, p. 50, Richardson tells us something of his reason for regarding the condemnation of Origen as “one of the saddest episodes in the history of the Christian church.” “The breadth of his [Origen’s] thought, the keenness of his genius and the wide sympathy of his religion, contrast vividly with the narrow obscurantism of his monkish detractors. It is significant that the final defeat of Origen and the closing of the philosophic schools of Athens belong to the same era. It is as if a curtain were then drawn upon the intellectual freedom of the East, and along with certain garbled texts from his works all that was fine and liberal and mature in the faith and thought of Origen had been condemned. He who had striven for a religion truly catholic and had contended that all things were the Church’s heritage and all things were Christ’s, was cast out of the church with imprecations of intolerance and fanaticism. The long controversies over Origen that reach their climax under Justinian mark the passing of much that was noble and enlightened in the early tradition of Greek Christianity.”
63. W. Volker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1931), pp. 1-235. A concise review of this work is found in *Journal of Theological Studies* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1934), XXXV, 82-83, by W. Telfer.
64. Cf. *loc. cit.*; also, the review in J.T.S.
65. H. Chadwick, “Origen, Celsus, and the Stoa,” *Journal of Theological Studies*, XLVIII, 34-49. See especially pp. 48-49.
66. Com. on John, I, 10, in ANF, IX, 302; cf. GCS, IV, 13-14.
67. Com. on John, I, 11, in ANF, IX, 303; cf. GCS, IV, 14-15.
68. Com. on John, I, 22, in ANF, IX, 308; cf. GCS, IV, 25.
69. Com. on John I, 27, in ANF, IX, 313; cf. GCS, IV, 34.
70. Com. on John, I, 31, in ANF, IX, 314; cf. GCS, IV, 36-37.

71. Com.on John, I, 39, in ANF, IX, 317-318; cf. GCS, IV, 43-44.
72. Com.on John, VI, 3, in ANF, IX, 353; cf. GCS, IV, 113-115.
73. Com.on Matt., X, 9, in ANF, IX, 418; cf. GCS, X, 10-11.
74. Com.on Matt, XII, 16, in ANF, IX, 460; cf. GCS, X, 106-107.
75. Com.on Matt, XII, 17, in ANF, IX, 460-461; cf. GCS, X, 107-109.
76. Com.on Matt, XII, 18, in ANF, IX, 461; cf. GCS, X, 109-111.
77. InLucam. Hom, vi, in Or. Hom. Tr, pp. 45-46, Cf, GCS, IX, 41-43,
78. InGen. Hom i. 7, in Or. Hom. Tr, pp. 260-262. Cf. GCS, VI, 8-10.
79. H.B. Swete, *Patristic Study* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1902), p. 53.
80. Origen, *On Prayer*, tr. by C. V. Harris (New Haven: Yale University Divinity School, 1947), II, 1, pp. 3-4. The text used as the basis of the translation is that of Dr. Paul Koetschau, Vol. II of *Origenes Werke*, in GCS, ed. by the Church-Father Commission of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences (Leipzig, 1899). Henceforth references to this treatise will be given according to the section of the treatise and the pages in the translation—e.g., the above reference would be *On Prayer*, II, pp. 3-4.
81. *On Prayer*, II. 4, pp. 7-9. Parentheses indicate obviously understood words.
82. *On Prayer*, II. 5, p. 9.
83. *On Prayer*, II. 6, pp. 9-10.
84. *On Prayer*, X. 1-2, pp. 32-35.
85. *On Prayer*, XII. 1-2, pp. 40-41. Cf. Hugh Pope, "Origen's Treatise on Prayer," *The Ecclesiastical Review*, LX (June, 1919), 633-649, espec. pp. 640-641.
86. *On Prayer*, XV. 1-2, pp. 53-55. Origen writes: "If we understand what prayer is, we must not pray to any being that is created, not even Christ, but alone to the God and Father of the universe, to whom our Saviour himself prayed, as we have said earlier, and He teaches us to pray. When He was asked: 'Teach us to pray' [Lk. 11:1], He did not teach them to pray to Himself but to the Father, saying: 'Our Father who art in heaven' [Matt. 6:9], and so forth. For if,

as is shown elsewhere, the Son is another than the Father in essential and substantial being, one must pray theoretically to the Son and not the Father, or to both, or to the Father alone. If we should pray to the Son and not to the Father, everyone will agree that it would be a most absurd thing and would be in contradiction to the evidence; if we should pray to both, we should obviously make our petitions plurally: e.g, using the plural form in such words as give, make, grant, save, throughout our prayers. And such a procedure is obviously incongruous, and no one could show a single example of this usage in the Scriptures. It remains, then, that we must pray to God alone, the Father of the universe, but without separating Him from the high priest (cf. Heb. 2:17) . . . when the saints give thanks to God in their prayers, they confess their gratitude to Him through Christ Jesus. And likewise, he who wishes to pray correctly must not pray to Him who prays, but to the One whom our Lord Jesus has taught us to invoke in our prayers; that is, to the Father, and one must not offer any prayer to the Father without Him, (the Son), as He himself shows clearly by saying: 'Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of my Father, he will give it to you in my name. Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full' [John 16:23-24]."

87. See Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-188.

88. See *ibid.*, pp. 183-188, 273-279.

89. See footnote 85. Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 643. Pope continues his explanation (pp. 643-644): "Now the Noetians said that Christ was 'one with the Father,' *ousia kai hypokeimeno*, not, notice, *hypo-stasei*, or 'person' as we have for the moment rendered it since so many thus interpreted him. Now Origen's whole point is that the combination of *ousia* and *hypokeimenon* is precisely what we understand by 'person' or *hypostasis*. For the term *hypokeimenon* denotes 'suppositum' or that which subsists in a nature; in other words, the individual. When, then, Origen says that Christ is 'distinct from the Father in Nature and suppositum,' we must not take these two terms separately as though Origen meant that Christ's Nature as well as His Person were distinct from the Father, but we must take them together, namely that Christ—in Nature combined with 'suppositum,' that is, precisely as an individual or Person—is distinct from the Father."

90. 90. *Ibid.*, p. 644.

91. C. Celsum, V, 4, as quoted in Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 644-645. The critical text is found in GCS, II, 4,

92. C. Celsum, VIII, 12-13, as quoted in *ibid.*, p. 645. The critical text is found in GCS, II, 229-231.

93. Cf. Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-188; Cadiou, *Origen, His Life at Alexandria* (Eng. trans.), pp. 229-230.
94. Exhortation to Martyrdom, XXXVII. The critical text is found in GCS, I, 34.
95. Exhortation to Martyrdom, XL, in GCS, I, 37-38.
96. Exhortation to Martyrdom, XLII, in GCS, I, 39.
97. Exhortation to Martyrdom, XLVII, in GCS, I, 42-43.
98. Exhortation to Martyrdom, L, in GCS, I, 46-47.

CHAPTER IV

1. R. P. C. Hanson, "Origen's Doctrine of Tradition," *Journal of Theological Studies*, XLIX (1948), 17.
2. G. L. Prestige, *Fathers and Heretics* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1940), pp. 3-46, 91-136.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13, 26-27.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29. Prestige writes: "He [Clement of Alexandria] claims the authority of scriptural texts with the new phrase 'as the Scripture has traditioned' [Strom. 1.21, 142.2; *ib.* 7.18, 109.2], and speaks of the spiritual 'knowledge traditioned through the Scriptures,' by which Christ makes a man truly great-minded [Strom. 7.16, 105.1], The Scriptures are not to be treated with casual eclecticism, nor are the truths 'conjoined with the inspired words and traditioned by the blessed apostles and teachers' to be deliberately subjected to quibbling, 'opposing the divine tradition with human teachings in order to establish the heresy' [Strom. 7.16, 103.4, 5]. On the contrary, the genuine 'gnostic'—that is to say, the devout and intelligent Christian, the man of real enlightenment—will grow old in the Scriptures, preserves the apostolic and ecclesiastic orthodoxy in his doctrines, and lives according to the Gospel; for his life 'is nothing else than deeds and words conforming to the Lord's tradition'

[Strom. 104.1, 2].”

8. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
9. See *ibid.*, pp. 20-24.
10. The quotations from the sources which follow are taken from Prestige’s valuable essay on the doctrine of tradition in the Fathers generally. *Ibid.*, pp. 24 ff.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 91-136, especially pp. 124-126. The author’s introductory paragraph to this essay emphasizes well Origen’s several claims to veneration. He writes (pp. 91-92): “He was one of the greatest teachers ever known in Christendom, an Abelard without his arrogance, a Newman who never mislaid [sic] his disciples. He was the founder of biblical science. ... He inaugurated the systematic treatment of theology. ... He finally and completely established the principle that Christianity is an intelligent religion, by bringing all the strength and vigour of Greek philosophical insight to bear on the elucidation of Hebrew religious intuition and Christian spiritual history. It may seem astonishing that he has never been canonized, for in addition to these supreme services to Christianity he lived a confessor and died, to all intents, a martyr. The omission, however, is itself a tribute to the fertility and originality of his genius; he received the posthumous honour of being made a heretic by Jerome and Justinian—men of large attainments but unamiable minds—because some of his speculations, suggested in all intellectual humility and with touching loyalty to the tradition of the Church, turned out on subsequent examination to be untenable. Origen is the greatest of that happily small company of saints, who having lived and died in grace, suffered sentence of expulsion from the Church on earth after they had already entered into the joy of their Lord.” He writes also (p. 108): “Didymus the Blind, whom Athanasius placed at the head of the catechetical school of Alexandria in the latter half of the fourth century, described Origen as the greatest teacher in the Church after the apostles; and Jerome, before orthodox tremors for his own reputation closed the avenues of his judgment, quoted the description with approval.
13. Cf. Hanson, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
14. DePrincipiis (ed. P. Koetschau, Leipzig, 1913), Rufinus’ Preface 3, in GCS, V. 4-5. Cf. Butterworth’s translation, pp. xl-xli. R. P. C. Hanson, in an article referred to in footnote 1, reminds us that there is an equally candid admission in his Preface to his translation of Origen’s Commentary on Romans. See MPG, XIV, 831-838.
15. *Op.cit.*, **in**, 1.23 (Migne, 21), in GCS, V, 240-242. Cf. Butterworth’s

translation, pp. 206-209. Butterworth, in his translation of *De Principiis*, comments frequently on additions of Rufinus. In commenting upon III, 1.17 (p. 193, footnote 4), he writes: "The difference between Rufinus and Origen is well illustrated at this point. Origen is anxious to prove the absolute goodness of God; Rufinus to keep the reader in touch with the faith of the Church." See Bk. I, Ch. V., 4 (p. 47) and Bk. III, Ch. I., 7 (p. 166).

16. Op.cit., IV, 3.13, 14, in GCS, V, 344-345: "Verum in his omnibus sufficiat nobis sensum nostrum regulae pietatis aptere et ita sentire de sancti spiritus verbis, quod non secundum humanae fragilitatis eloquium nitet sermo compositus, sed sicut scriptum est. . . ." Cf. Butterworth's translation, p. 310; see also n. 3, p. 310, for comment on the Greek fragment.
17. Cf.Hanson, op. cit., p. 18.
18. J.E. L. Oulton, "Rufinus' Translation of the Church History of Eusebius," *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXX (Jan 1929), 164.
19. MatthiauserklärungXVII, 9, in GCS, X, 607-610. Hanson (op. cit., pp. 18-19) comments on this passage as follows: "Cf. pt. ii, 46 [found in GCS, XI, 93-95], where the survival of a Greek fragment enables us to see how much Jerome has elaborated upon Origen's reference to the Church's rule of faith."
20. Cf.Hanson, op. cit., p. 19.
21. Prestige,op. cit., pp. 3-46.
22. Hanson,op. cit., pp. 19-20.
23. Cf. *ibid*, p. 20.
24. C.Celsum, I, 31, in ANF, IV, 410. The critical text: GCS, I, 83.
25. C.Celsum, II, 2, in ANF, IV, 430. The critical text: GCS, I, 128-129.
26. HomiliaXXIII. 4, in GCS, VII, 447: "Sed quae verba ? 'Ineffabilia' inquit 'et quae non licet hominibus loqui.' Vides ergo quia scit omnia Paulus et comprehendit in spiritu, sed non 'licebat' ei 'hominibus' ista profere. Quibus 'hominibus'? Illis sine dubio, de quibus, culpabiliter dicebat: 'nonne homines estis et secunda hominem ambulatis?' Sed dicebat ea fortassis illis, qui iam non 'secundum hominem ambulabant'; dicebat haec Timotheo, dicebat Lucae et ceteris discipulis, quos sciebat capaces esse 'ineffabili-um' sacramentorum."
27. For similar statements see C. Celsum, III, 37, 58; VI, 6, in GCS, I, 233-234, 252-253; II, 75-76. Also, see Com. on Matt., XII, 17; XIV, 12, in GCS, X,

107-109; 303-308, and *On Prayer*, II, 4-5, pp. 7-9, in GCS, n, 303.

28. Hanson (op. cit., p. 21) refers us to *De Princ.*, IV, 2.7 and comments thus: "This Origen calls *didaskalia*, and Prestige (*Fathers and Heretics*, p. 120) apparently wants to identify it with his secondary form of tradition, and make it equivalent to the creed of Origen's day. But a close examination of the passage (which Dr. Prestige can hardly have made) makes this view impossible. These are the articles of Origen's esoteric teaching, not of the Church's *didaskalia*. He calls them in the same passage *ton aporreton mysterio*."
29. Loc, cit.
30. *Against Celsus*, IV, 8-9, in ANF, IV, 500-501. The critical text is found in GCS, I, 279-280.
31. *Commentary on Romans*, V, 2, in MPG, XIV, 1025. "Sed quieruditus est ex lege Domini, scit intelligere obscurum sermonem dictaque sapientium et enigmata." Hanson (op. cit., p. 21) says that "he is here almost certainly referring to his own special doctrines of the salvation of all men and of the pre-existence of souls. For similar passages, see his *Comm.*, on *Romans*, VI, 8, and X, 43."
32. Hanson, op. cit., pp. 21-22.
33. A. C. Outler, "Origen and the *Regulae Fidei*," *Church History*, VIII (Sept. 1939), 212-221.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 212. He holds that, despite prolonged debate, the broader issue noted above can hardly be regarded as settled. He refers to W. Volker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1931), pp. 1-21, for a summary of the variety of opinion, in Origenistic research, upon this point.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 213. In this Origenistic research we are told that "there are six authors before Origen whose writings contain one or more versions of this 'rule of faith.' They are Ignatius, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Hippolytus. Besides these there are shorter passages, similar in form to the other *regulae*, in the creed against Noetus ascribed to the 'Elders of Ephesus,' and the so-called *Canons of Hippolytus*, which is certainly not from Hippolytus of Rome, but is more likely of Alexandrine provenance." All of these "rules," except that of Hippolytus, may be examined in A. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche* (Breslau: E. Morgenstern, 1897), pp. 1-11. Outler comments (op. cit., p. 213) that there is some question as to whether or not the extended exposition of Hippolytus may be considered a typical "rule."

36. Ibid, pp. 213-214.
37. De Princ., Preface, 2, in ANF, IV, 239.
38. Outler, op. cit, pp. 214-215. See de Faye, Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1923), I, 62-63 et passim.
39. Outler, op. cit, p. 215.
40. Com. on John, XXXII, 15-16, in GCS, IV, 451-452, as given by Outler, op. cit, pp. 215-216.
41. Com. on John. XIII, 16, in GCS, IV, 240, lines 9-15. Hanson (op. cit., p. 23) makes very interesting comments on Origen's use of the word kanon, which is found in the Greek text cited in this footnote. He writes: "In Origen this kanon always means 'rule of faith,' and never 'canon of Scripture.' Indeed, according to H. Oppel, who has written a monograph upon the word, kanon does not occur meaning 'the list of the writings acknowledged by the Church as documents of the divine revelation' until we reach Athanasius. In one passage [Comm, on John, XIII, 16] Origen, characteristically, uses kanon as 'the rule of faith prevalent among the majority of the Church' which the man who is perfect and holy can transcend. Elsewhere [Con. First P. iv. 2, 2] he links this kanon with the Apostles. ... It is remarkable that in the whole of his Letter to Africanus, which is entirely devoted to discussing the canonicity of the History of Susanna, he does not use the word kanon once."
42. Outler, op. cit., p. 217. As further testimony to Origen's belief in the fundamental importance of the common faith of the church, he cites In Matth. Comm, Series 46 and 137, in GCS, XI, lines 26-30; 282,' lines 6-7.
43. Com.on Matt., Series 33, in GCS, XI, 61, lines 1-11, as given in Outler, op. cit., p. 216.
44. InEpistolam ad Titum, in MPG, XIV, cols. 1303-1306.
45. Outler, **op. cit.**, pp. 216-217. This statement is followed by references to the Commentary on Romans (V, 1, in MPG, XIV, col. 1015, and V, 8, in MPG, XIV, col. 1058), where Origen speaks of the heretics who are called Christians, but who are really blind leaders, of the blind because they cling to the Law and because they profess to teach mysteries which are hidden from the rest of the church.
46. C. Celsum, I, 7, in ANF, IV, 399. The critical text: GCS, I, 59-60.

47. De Princ., in GCS, V, cxxxviii. Cf. Outler, op. cit., pp. 217-218.
48. Outler, op. cit., pp. 218-219.
49. In GCS, III, 43-44.
50. IV,2.2, in GCS, V, 308, lines 15-16.
51. Outler,op. cit., pp. 219-220.
52. DePrinc., Ill, 6.8; IV, 3.13. The critical text: GCS, V, 289-290; 343-345.
53. Hanson, op. cit., pp. 22-23.
54. Hom, in Lucam I (on Lk. 1:1-4), in GCS, IX, 3-4. See Hanson, op. cit., p. 24, for comment on this.
55. Hanson, op. cit., p. 24. He gives references to Origen's Comm, on **John** (xiii. 17; xix. 23), his Comm, on Matthew (x. 17), and his Comm, **on Psalms** (iv. 2).
56. **Ibid.**,pp. 24-25.
57. Eusebius,Ecclesiastical History, VI. 25, tr. by Lawlor and Oulton, pp. 198-199. See Hanson (op. cit., pp. 25-26), who comments thus: "This frank statement makes perfectly clear what we might infer from Origen's references to other works whose genuineness was disputed, that the question of authorship was not the only test, in his eyes, of a book's genuineness. In this case the Epistle's noemata thaumasia (wonderful or marvelous thoughts) commend it to him, and it is likely that this too was true of Hermas' 'Shepherd.' Secondly, the tradition current in the Church concerning a book was something which, in Origen's view, should be given its true weight, but was not by any means decisive. Thirdly, the final standard of judgment in this matter was the fluctuating and indefinite one of the use of any book in question in the Church of Origen's day, and Origen was content to leave it so without betraying any signs of wanting an official list of books of the N.T. Canon."
58. See Prestige, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
59. **On Prayer**, XV. 1-2, pp. 53-55; XXXIII. 1, pp. 165-156. The critical text: GCS, II, 333-335; 401. Hanson (op. cit., p. 26) points out that in his Commentary **on Romans**, Origen calls the necessity of Baptism ecclesiastica regula and speaks of the holy kiss's being "handed down as the Church's custom" (Comm, **on Romans**, II.7; X. 37), but it is clear that to Origen the Church's authority was in the first case John 3:5 and in the second Rom. **16:16**.

60. **Commentary on Romans**, V, 8-9, in MPG, XIV, 1037-1048.
61. **Homilies on Isaiah**, VI, 3, in GCS, VIII, 271-274.
62. **Homilies on Numbers**, V, 1, in GCS, VII, 24-27.
63. Hanson, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
64. For all references to Outler in this summary, see Outler, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.
65. See A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, tr. by N. Buchanan (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1897), II, 12. Harnack writes: "In this [Origen's] dogmatic the rule of faith is recast and that quite consciously."
66. He quotes from Origen's works: *De Princ.*, preface, in GCS, V, 8: "One ought not to admit as true anything which differs from [**discordat**] the ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition." Cf. *In Matth. Comm.*, Series 39, in GCS, XI, 77, lines 25-29: "In order to **be saved**, one must remain in the ecclesiastical tradition and **the** ecclesiastical teaching [*ecclesiasticae traditionis et ecclesi- aasticae inductionis*] which have been proposed from the beginning." Cf. also, *ibid.*, 46, in GCS, XI, 94, lines 26-30.
67. See Harnack, *op. cit.*, footnote 1, II, 339-340, for a somewhat similar point of view.
68. In ANF, IV, 399: "That there should be certain doctrines, not made known to the multitude, which are [revealed] after the exoteric ones have been taught, is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone, but also of philosophic systems, in which certain truths are exoteric and others esoteric." The critical text: GCS, 59-60.
69. **Outler, op. cit.**, p. 221.
70. W. Telfer's review of *Celsus und Origenes* by A. Miura-Stange, *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXX (1928,29), 434-435.
71. **Hanson, op. cit.**, p. 27.
72. **DeFaye, Origen and His Work**, pp. 61-62. **TO.**
73. **Ibid.**, pp. 172.173.
74. **Ibid.**, pp. 173-174.

75. **76.Ibid, p. 176.**
76. **Cf. Bigg, op. dt, p. 152.**
77. **A. V. G. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought: A Study of Modern Theology in the Light of Its History** (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1884), p. ix.
78. **Ibid, p. 72, n. 2.**
79. Cf. Bigg, op. cit, pp. 153-154.
80. **Ibid., p. 154.**
81. **Or. Hom. Tr, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.**
82. **Ibid, p. xxxv.**
83. Ibid., pp. xli-xlii. Tollinton gives the following references to Origen's works: In Matt. xvi. 19; xvii. 7; In Joann, xiii. 58; In Ep. ad Rom. vi. 12; vii. 17; viii. 8; x. 42; and vii. 16.
84. Ibid., pp. xliii-xliv.
85. R. Cadiou, Introduction au Systeme d'Origene (Paris: "Lea Belles Lettres," 1932), pp. 5-94. For a review of Cadiou's work, by W. Telfer, see Journal of Theological Studies, XXXV (1934), 80-82.
86. Cadiou, Origen: His Life at Alexandria (trans.), pp. 213-216.
87. Cf. De Princ., I, Pref., 3, in GCS, V, 9.
88. Cf. In Joann., XIII, 16, in GCS, JV, 239-240; De Princ., IV, 2.1, in GCS, V, 305-308.
89. Cadiou, Origen: His Life at Alexandria (trans.), p. 215.
90. Ibid., p. 216.
91. De Princ., I, Pref., 5, in GCS, V, 11-13.
92. Cf. D. van den Eynde, Les normes de l'enseignement chretien (Paris: Gabalda et Fils, 1933), pp. 151-152.

93. C.Celsum. I, 9-13, in GCS, I, 61-66.
94. Com.on John. XIII, 16, in GCS, IV, 240.
95. Selectionson Ezekiel, III, 1, in MPG, XIII, 773AB; Com. on John, 3, in GCS, IV, 56-57.
96. DePrinc., IV, 2.2, in GCS, V, 308; II, 11.2, in *ibid.*, V, 184; II, 10.3, in *ibid.*, V, 175.
97. DePrinc., IV, 1.7, in GCS, V, 304; C. Celsum, I, 13, in GCS, I, 66.
98. Com.on John, II, 3, in GCS, 56. For more details, cf. De Faye, Origene, III, 276-277; also, cf. Volker, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-144.
99. DePrinc., IV, 2.2, in GCS, V, 308.
100. Hom,on Numbers, XXVI, 3, in GCS, VII, 247; Hom, on Jeremiah, 1, in GCS, HI, 85-87.
101. Hom,on Genesis, II, 6, in GCS, VI, 36-37; De Princ., IV, 3.5, in GCS, V, 331. Cf. Redepenning, Origenes, I, 296-324.
102. Volker,*op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.
103. *Ibid.*,pp. 76-144.
104. Hom,on Luke, XXXIX, in GCS, IX, 252. Cf. Volker, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.
105. Com.on Matth., XVII, 2, in MPG, XIII, 1476B.
106. DePrinc., I, Pref. 3, in GCS, V, 9; IV, 2.7, in *ibid.*, V, 319.
107. Vanden Eynde, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
108. *Ibid.*,pp. 156-157. Van den Eynde refers to Eusebius' Church History, IV, 8.2 (in NPNF, 2nd Series, I, 314).
109. *Ibid.*,p. 157. He writes (p. 157, footnote 3): "It seems that after Origen the enthusiasm for the questions that go beyond the common faith disappears."
110. Hom,on Jer., XX, 2, in GCS, III, 178; C. Celsum, II, 1, in GCS, 127; II, 52, in *ibid.*, I, 175; De Princ., IV, 3.2, in GCS, V, 326; cf. Com. on Matt., XI, 8-9, in MPG, XIII, 925-933; XVII, 28, in *ibid.*, XIII, 1560A; On Matt. Series, 17, in MPG, XIII, 1623; Com. on John, XIII, 27.162, in GCS, IV, 251; XIX, 15.92, in

- ibid., IV, 315; XIX, 17.104; in ibid., IV, 317.
111. Com.on Matt., XIII, 1, in MPG, XIII, 1088A. Cf. Com. on Psalms, 5, in MPG, XII, 1093A.
112. DePrinc., I, Pref., 8, in GCS, V, 14.
113. Cf.Van den Eynde, op. cit., p. 23C.
114. Com.on John, XIII, 5.27, in GCS, IV, 230.
115. Com.on Matt., XIV, 11, in MPG, XIII, 1209D.
116. Com. on Matt., XIV, 12, in MPG, XIII, 1212C-1213A; Com. On John, XIII, 5.26-27, in GCS, IV, 229-230; C. Celsum, VI, 6, in GCS, II, 76.
117. Hom, on Ezekiel, VII, 10, in GCS, VIII, 399.
118. Com. on Rom., X, 11, in MPG, XIV, 1267C-1268A; VIII, 12, in ibid., XIV, 1136A-B.
119. Vanden Eynde, op. cit., pp. 231-232.
120. Com.on Matt., XIV, 11-12, in MPG, XIII, 1212B-1213A. Van den Eynde (op. cit., p. 232, footnote 3) quotes Lebreton (*The Degrees of Religious Knowledge According to Origen in the Investigagations of Religious Knowledge*, 1922, XII, 284), who admits two disparate doctrines in the writings of Origen: “one, strictly Origen’s, attributes the highest revelations to the Word of God . . . ; the other, rather gnostic, sees in them the influence of a secret tradition transmitted to a few of the privileged initiates.” Van den Eynde holds that the view does not appear to be well-founded.
121. Hom,on Cor., XIX, ed. by C. Jenkins, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1908, IX, 357.
122. Cf.Van den Eynde, op. cit., p. 235.
123. SeeCom. on John, XIII, 16.98, in GCS, IV, 240.
124. Vanden Eynde, op. cit., pp. 306-308.
125. De Princ., IV, 2.1, in GCS, V, 308.
126. De Princ., IV, 2.2, in GCS, V, 308.
127. Vanden Eynde, op. cit., pp. 307-308.

128. DePrinc., I, Pref., 8, in GCS, V, 14.
129. Vanden Eynde, *op. cit.*, p. 308.
130. Laregie de foi d'Origene, dans les Recherches de science religieuse, 1919, X, 181-192, as cited in Van den Eynde, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-311.
131. R.P. F. Cavallera, *Melanges* (Toulouse: Rue de la Fonderie, 1948), sections on tradition and speculative theology, pp. 96-104.
132. Cf. Com. on Matt., XII, 23, in GCS, X, 122.
133. De Princ., I, Pref., 2, in GCS, V, 8; Hom, on Exodus, IX, 3, in GCS, VI, 239 (in Origene: Homelies sur l'exode, tr. and notes by Fortier and Lubac, p. 211).
134. Cavallera, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
135. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
136. Cf. Cayre, *op. cit.*, I, 196.
137. C. Celsum, II, 6, in GCS, I, 132; Com. on Epistle to Romans, 11, in MPG, XIV, 897-898.
138. Hom, on Genesis, I, 5, in GCS, VI, 7.
139. Hom, on Genesis, II, 3, in GCS, VI, 30-31.
140. Cavallera, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-104.
141. *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

CHAPTER V

In;

1. See F. G. Bratton, "Origen, the First Christian Liberal," *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, VIII (Aug., 1940), 137.
2. W. Fairweather, *Origen and Greek Patristic Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 212.
3. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, II, 334.

4. F. W. Farrar, *Lives of the Fathers: Sketches of Church History in Biography* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1889), I, 391-392.
5. Cf. Bratton, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
6. C. E. Raven, *Good News of God* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943), pp. 98-99.
7. See M. Spinka, "Berdyaeu and Origen: A Comparison," *Church History*, XVI (Mar., 1947), 3-21; cf. Raven, *op. cit.*, 99-100; Cadiou, *Origen: His Life at Alexandria* (trans.), p. v.
8. For a more comprehensive study of the relation of preaching and teaching in the Christian Church, see R. C. Petry, *Preaching in the Great Tradition*, pp. 40-66.
9. Com. on John, XXXII, 10, in GCS, IV, 443.
10. Com. on John, XIII, 5, in GCS, IV, 230.
11. Com. on Matt., XII, in GCS. X 69-170. In Book XII, pts. 16ff., Origen stresses gradual growth in knowledge of the disciples and reasons for that gradual knowledge. In Com. on Matt., **Xin**, in GCS, X, 216-219, Origen deals with varying degrees of greatness and discusses Matt. v. 19: "Whosoever shall do and teach the commandments, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." See also Hom, on Lev., XVI, 7, in GCS, VI, 504-507.
12. Com.on John, Fragment XVI, in GCS, IV, 105. Cf. Brooke's text, II, 233.
13. Matt.18: 23.
14. Com.on Matt., XIV, 6, in GCS, X, 288-289. Cf. Or. Hom. Tr., pp. xlv-xlv.
15. Hom,on Lev., VI, 1, in GCS, VI, 358-359.
16. Or.Hom. Tr., p. xlv.
17. Hom,on Num., XXVII, 12, in GCS, VII, 272ff. Tollinton (*op. cit.*, p. xlv) comments that in Augustine's day sermons on Sunday were short.
18. Hom,on Ex., XIII, 3, in Fortier et Lubac, *Homelies sur l'exode* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1947), pp.. 260-264. Hereafter this edition will be cited as *Homelies*.
19. Hom,on Lev., XVI, 2, in GCS, VI, 495; Com. on Matt., XI, 14, in GCS, X, 55-58.

20. Hom,on Joshua, XVII, 2, in GCS, VII, 402.
21. Com.on Matt., LXVI, in GCS, XI, 153-157.
22. Hom,on Num, VII, 2, in GCS, VII, 40.
23. Hom,on Lev., VI, 6; XII, 7, in GCS, VI, 369; 466. Hom, on Num.,. 3, in GCS, VII, 23.
24. Hom,on Num., Ill, 1, in GCS, VII, 13.
25. Hom,on Luke, VII, XXH, in GCS, IX, 44-54, 142-150; Com. on Matt., XUX, CXXXIV, in GCS, XI, 102-107, 271-278.
26. Com.on Rom., X, 11, in MPG, XIV, 1267-1268.
27. Hom,on Ex., Xni, 4, in Homelies, pp. 264-266.
28. Hom,on Luke, XXV, in GCS, IX, 160-163.
29. Hom,on Josh., XX, 2, in GCS, VII, 420.
30. Hom,on Ezek., I, 11, in GCS, VIII, 335.
31. Matt.24:45.
32. Com.on Matt., LXI, in GCS, XI, 138-141. Cf. Or. Hom. Tr., p. 134.
33. Com.on Matt., LXI, in GCS, XI, 141-143. Cf. Or. Hom. Tr., pp. 135-137. Tollinton comments that the early, and, indeed, the later, Church was not always so wise in Its treatment of poverty.
34. Num.25:3-4.
35. Hom,on Num., XX, 4, in GCS, VII, 196-198.
36. Hom, on Ezek., **n**, 3, in GCS, VIE, 343.
37. Com. on Rom., IV, 2; VII, 15, in MPG, XIV, 966-970; 1142-1143.
38. Or.Hom. Tr., p. xlvii.
39. Bigg,op. cit., p. 127.
40. The Scholia were brief annotations, such as are commonly found on the

margin of ancient MSS; they were sometimes perhaps fragmentary extracts from the Commentaries or Homilies. Cf. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 127; Redepenning, *op. cit.*, II, 376.

41. Redepenning, *op. cit.*, II, 212-261. The terms *kerygma* and *dialexis* were also in use.
42. Bigg (*op. cit.*, p. 128) points out that his priestly activity belongs wholly to the time after his exile from Egypt.
43. Hom, on Joshua, X, 3, in GCS, VII, 360-361; Hom, on Judges, in, 2, in GCS, **vn**, 481-482.
44. Many of the homilies end with the admonition to stand up and pray, *e.g.*, Hom, on Luke, XXXIX, in GCS, IX, 226ff. Catechumens were addressed, *e.g.*, Hom, on Luke, VII, in GCS, IX, 53. Heathen were sometimes present we are told in Hom, on Jer., IX, 4, in MPG, XIH, 353-358.
45. Redepenning, *op. cit.*, II, 218ff. The Lesson read before the Sermon on the Witch of Endor included I Sam. 25-28. Origen, standing in the pulpit, asks which of the four portions or passages (*perikopai*) he is to take for his subject, and the bishop replies, "the Witch of Endor." There was yet only one lesson, taken sometimes from the Old, sometimes from the New, Testament. At a somewhat later period there were four, divided into two pairs, the first pair from the Old Testament, the second from the New, and between the two readings a psalm was sung; but no trace of this usage is found in Origen, according to Redepenning (II, 221ff.). Bigg (*op. cit.*, p. 129) remarks that many of Origen's homilies must have taken an hour and a half in the delivery.
46. See Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 129 Cf. Redepenning, *op. cit.*, II, 229ff. The behavior of the women was especially troublesome. See Hom, on Ex., XIII, 3, in GCS, VI, 272-275, especially p. 272: "quae tantum garriunt, quae tantum fabulis obstrepunt, ut non sinant esse silentium. Iam quid de mente earum, quid de corde discutiam, si de infantibus suis aut de lana cogitent aut de necessariis domus?" Cf. Hom, on Num., V, 1, in GCS, VII, 24-27; Hom, on Lev., IX, 5, 7, 9, in GCS, VI, 424-428, 429-432, 435-438; Hom, on Gen., X, 1, in GCS, VI, 92-94.
47. Hom, on Lev. I, 1, in GCS, VI, 280-282; Hom, on Num., XIV, 1, in GCS, VII, 120-121.
48. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Bigg comments (p. 130, n. 1) that the reader may acquire a just idea of Origen as a preacher by perusing Hom, on Gen., VIII (in GCS, VI, 77-86); Hom, on Lev., Vn (in GCS, VI, 370-393); Hom, on Luke, XIV (in GCS, IX, 94-102).
49. C.W. Dugmore, ed., *The Interpretation of the Bible* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1944), pp. 17-20.

50. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 131. Bigg especially recommends Origen's allegory on the Treasury in the Com. on John, XIX. 2; the passage on the Death of Christ, *ibid.*, XXVII. 14; on Faith, *ibid.*, XXXII.9; the allegory of the Mercy Seat, Com. on Rom., III.8, and the exposition of the parables in Matt. He maintains that the latter commentary is generally superior to that on John, but that those who wish to see Origen at his best will seek him where he is least allegorical, in the C. Celsus, or the treatises On Prayer and On Martyrdom.
51. Letter to Gregory, in ANF, IX, 295-296. It was preserved in the Philocalia, or collection of extracts from Origen's works drawn up by Gregory of Nyssa. and Basil of Caesarea. In an introductory note to his translation of the letter (ANF, IX, 295), A. Menzies tells us that Droseke (*Jahrbucher fur Prot. Theol.*, 1881, I) has shown that it was written about 235, when Origen, after having had Gregory as his pupil at Caesarea for some years, had fled before the persecution under Maximinus Thrax to Cappadocia; while Gregory, to judge from the tenor of this letter, had gone to Egypt. The Panegyric on Origen, given by Gregory at Caesarea about 239, when the school had reassembled there after the persecution, shows that Origen's solicitude for his pupil's true advancement was not disappointed.
52. **Ibid.**, in ANF, IX, 296. Cf. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
53. **Com. on Matt**, XXIV, in GCS, XI, 39-40
54. **Com. on John**, I, 2 (3), in GCS, IV, 5.
55. Cadiou, **La jeunesse d'Origene**, p. 381.
56. Petry, **Preaching in the Great Tradition**, p. 45. Moreover, in discussing the historical alliance of teaching and preaching, Petry continues: "It is clear that from a very early date the ministries of preaching and teaching frequently proceed in practically inseparable alliance; even as, on occasion, they assume sharply differentiated obligations. That bishops, as well as priests and other assistants episcopally designated, had at the same time the duties of preaching and teaching often means simply this: one who preached was really teaching Christian doctrine; one who taught might be preaching in the truest sense. That **in** the ancient Church, as later, one designated as a teacher might not be in orders, or authorized to preach publicly, goes without saying. As Elliott-Binns says, in *The Beginnings of Western Christendom*, 'Doubtless, teaching was part of the Church's activities from the very earliest days, and those who had the necessary gifts would take their share in it.' Of course, not all were so qualified. Apostolic recognition probably inhered in the office. With no clearly defined functions at first, the teacher most frequently emerges in the Early Church as an instructor of baptismal candidates and others already

Christian. **In** North Africa, for instance, some presbyters were apparently set apart for teaching services. But teachers were not always clergy. Certain Early Church manuals show both ecclesiasts and laymen joining in this work; and laying hands upon, and praying for, **the** catechumens instructed. That the bishop, who was increasingly recognized as the guardian of preaching prerogatives, became also **the** custodian of properly taught doctrine is reflected **fairly soon in** ecclesiastical literature. Let it be remembered, **however**, that the functions involved were frequently so nearly identical as to give rise to an almost embarrassingly interchangeable terminology in much of the Church's literary usage."

57. Hom,on Ex., XIII, 4, in Homelies (tr.), p. 266.
58. Com.on John, XIII, 46, in GCS, IV, 272-273.
59. Cadiou,op. cit., p. 382.
60. Loc.cit. Cf. Volker, op. cit., p. 2.
61. Com.on Gen., t. Ill, in MPG, XII, 52.
62. Cf. Cadiou, op. cit., p. 383.
63. Com.on John, VI, 59 (38), in GCS, IV, 167-168; Com. on Matt., 20, in GCS, X, 234-237.
64. Com.on John, X, 11 (9), in GCS, IV, 180-182.
65. Com.on Matt., XLVII, in GCS, XI, 95-98.
66. Cf.Cadiou, op. cit., p. 383.
67. Com.on Psalms, XIX, verse 4, in MPG, XII, 1248; XV, verse 5, in *ibid.*, XII, 1213. Cf. C. Celsum, VIII, 33, in GCS, II, 248; . . then, let Celsus, as one who knows not God, give thank-offering to demons. But we give thanks to the Creator of all, and, along with thanksgiving and prayer for the blessings we have received, we also eat the bread presented to us; and this bread becomes by prayer a sacred body, which sanctifies those who sincerely partake of it."
68. Cadiou,op. cit., pp. 384-385. See Com. on John, VI, 59 (38), in GCS, IV, 167-168.*
69. Hom,on Lev., VI, 6, in GCS, VI, 367-370; also, Hom, on Num. XXII, 4, in GCS, VII, 208-210.
70. Hom,on Num., XXII, 4, in GCS, VII, 208-210.

71. A.Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1919), XLII, pt. 4, 129, 140; cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 386.
72. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, p. 386.
73. Hom, on Lev., VII, 1, in GCS, VI, 371: "Vult ergo istos, quibus ipse 'Dominus portio' est, sobrios esse, ieiunos, vigilantes in omni tempore, maxime autem cum ad exorandum Dominum et sacrificandum in conspectu eius altaribus praesto sunt." Hom, on Joshua, XVII, 3, in GCS, VII, 405: "Ut ergo lux scientiae in sacerdotibus fulgeat et lucerna eorum sit semper accensa. . . Com. on Matt., LXI, in GCS, XI, 141: . . cibo simplici et necessariis vestimentis. . .
74. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, pp. 386-387.
75. Com. on Matt., XII, 14, in GCS, X, 97-99, espec. p. 99 (Greek).
76. On Prayer, XXVIII, 8, in GCS, II, 380.
77. Cf. Cadiou, *op. cit.*, pp. 387-388.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 388.
79. Hom, on Jer., XII, 3, in MPG, XIII, 381.
80. On Prayer, XXXI, 5, in GCS, II, 398.
81. See Petry, *Preaching in the Great Tradition*, p. 44.
82. Com. on Matt., X, 15, in GCS, X, 18-19. Cf. *Or. Hom. Tr.*, pp. 156-157.
83. Com. on Rom., VII, 17, in MPG, XIV, 1148.
84. Com. on John, VI, 1, in GCS, IV, 106.
85. The bad weather was due to the hostility of Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria. Origen had been ordained presbyter by other bishops, Theoctistus and Alexander, in Palestine. Tollinton (*Or. Hom. Tr.*, p. 162, n.) comments that this was one, though probably not the only, cause of Demetrius' opposition. This act made a final breach between Origen and Demetrius, and Origen abandoned Alexandria to settle in Caesarea of Palestine. See the article by W. E. Barnes, "The Third Century and Its Greatest Christian: Origen," *The Expository Times*, XLIV (1932-1933), 297.
86. Com. on John, VI, 2, in GCS, IV, 108.

87. InOr. Hom. Tr., p. 164, n. 2, Tollinton remarks that at the date of the Didache the Christian teacher was regarded as worthy of his hire, but was warned not to be covetous. Origen was possibly still helped by Ambrose and, being now a presbyter, may have taken his share of the Church's ordinary funds. There was a monthly distribution.
88. Hom, on Luke, XXXVIII, in GCS, IX, 225.
89. Loccit.
90. Com. on Matt., XI, 4, in GCS, X, 39-40.
91. Ibid., in GCS, X, 39.
92. Cf. Denis, De la philosophie d'Origene, pp. 102-103.
93. Com. on John, I, 20, in GCS, IV, 25.
94. See A. Harnack, The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries, tr by J. Moffatt (New York: Williams and Norgate, 1908), I, 361.
95. Hom, on Ezek., III, 3, in GCS, VIII, 350-351.
96. Hom, on Ezek., III, 3, in GCS, VIII, 351.
97. See Lev. 7:15; 19:7.
98. Hom, on Lev., V, 8, in GCS, VI, 348-349.
99. I Cor. 14:15.
100. Hom, on Lev., V, 8, in GCS, VI, 349-350.
101. Cf. Petry, Preaching in the Great Tradition, pp. 44-45.
102. Hom, on Jer., XIV, 3, in GCS, III, 107-108.
103. Hom, on Jer., XIV, 3, in GCS, III, 108.
104. Petry, op. cit., p. 45.
105. Hom, on Num., XXVII, 1, in GCS, VII, 256.
106. Hom. on Num., XXVII, 1, in GCS, VII, 256-258.

107. Hom, on Psalms, III, 6, in MPG, XII, 1342 (from the Latin).
108. Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, I, 360. See H. M. Gwatkin, *Early Church History to A.D. 313* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), II, 277.
109. C. Celsum, IV, 72, in GCS, I, 342.
110. Hom, on Gen., XIV, 2, in GCS, VI, 123.
111. Hom, on Num., II, 1, in GCS, VII, 9: “Nam saepe accidit, uis, qui humilem sensum gerit et abiectum et qui terrena sapit, excelsum sacerdotii gradum vel cathedram doctoris insideat, et ille qui spiritualis est et a terrena conversatione tarn liber ut possit examinare omnia et ipse a nemine iudicari, vel inferioris ministerii ordinem teneat vel etiam in plebeia multitudine relinquatur.” Harnack (op. cit., I, 360) comments: “Here ‘spiritualis’ (gnostikos, pneumatikos) is in contrast to the teachers as well as to the priests. According to Clement of Alexandria, the ‘spiritual’ person is apostle, prophet, and teacher, superior to all earthly dignitaries—a view which Origen also favors.”
112. Hom, on Lev., VI, 6, in GCS, VI, 368-369: “Possunt enim et in ecclesia sacerdotes et doctores filios generare sicut et ille qui dicebat [Gal. 4:19], et iterum alibi dicit [I Cor. 4:15]. Isti ergo doctores ecclesiae in huiusmodi generationibus pro creandis ali- quande constrictis femoralibus utuntur et abstinent a generando, cum tales invenerint auditores, in quibus sciant se fructum habere non posse.”
113. E.g., Hom, on Ezek. II, and III, in GCS, VIII, 341-358.
114. Harnack, op cit., I, 361-362.
115. See Eus., H. E., VI, 19, tr. by Oulton and Lawlor, II, 55-65. Harnack contends (op. cit., I, 361) that their arguments prove that the right of “laymen” (for the teachers were laymen) to speak at services of worship had become extinct throughout Egypt, Palestine, and most of the provinces, for the two bishops friendly to this proposal had to bring evidence for the practice from a distance, and from comparatively remote churches. They write thus: “Wherever people are to be found who are able to profit the brethren, they are exhorted by the holy bishops to give addresses to the congregation; as, for example, Euelpis has been invited by Neon in Laranda, Paulinus by Celsus in Iconium, and Theodoras by Atticus in Synnada, all of whom are our blessed brethren. Probably this has also been done in other places unknown to us.” Harnack remarks that the three persons mentioned in this passage from Eusebius are the last of the “ancient” teachers who are known to us.

116. In this connection reference may perhaps be made to the important statement of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, that Lucian remained outside the church at Antioch during the regime of three bishops. Lucian was the head of a school. See Theodoret, *Ecclesiasticae Historiae*, I, 3, in MPG, 82, tr. as the *Ecclesiastical History*, by B. Jackson, in NPNF, 2nd Ser., III, 38.
117. **On this order and office**, originally a charismatic one, which under certain circumstances embraced the further duty of **explaining the Scriptures**, see the evidence given by Harnack in **Texte u. Untersuch., II**, pt. 5, pp. 57 ff.
118. Harnack, **The Mission and Expansion of Christianity, I**, 362. Later in this work (I, 511-512) Harnack gives the following evaluation of the work of Origen: "Alongside of the church in its developed form, one man may perhaps be mentioned who did more than all the rest put together for the mission of Christianity among the learned classes, not only during his lifetime, but still more after his death. I mean Origen."
119. We know that schools like this existed in both pagan and Christian circles, where a learned man set himself up to teach and gathered pupils as best he could. It is significant, in this connection, that Origen was approached by inquiring students and undertook instruction on his own initiative before his position was regularized by appointment from Demetrius. See Eusebius, *E.*, VI, iii, 1-2, 8; xiv, 11. Cf. De Faye, *Origene, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensee*, I, 16-17; C. H. Turner, *Studies in Early Church History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), pp. 1-70.
120. DeFaye, *op. cit.*, I, ii.
121. In the **Com. on Matt.**, XII, 11, 14 (ANF, IX, 456-459), we find Origen's views on hierarchical authority quite clearly stated. **We** are reminded that the promise given to Peter is not restricted to him, but is applicable to all disciples like him; also, **we** are reminded of the limitations of the power attached to the "keys" given to Peter and to every Peter. Cf. De Faye, *op. cit.*, 277 ff.; Cadiou, *Introduction au systeme d'Origene*, p. 73, points out the polemical attitude of the Palestinian Origenists toward the hierarchy; Gwatkin, *op. cit.*, II, 277. Gwatkin writes: "Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria recognize only a moral priesthood of saintliness, not an official priesthood of sacrifice; and this is substantially Origen's view, though he sometimes calls the bishops priests, and (only once and then with hesitation) equates presbyters and deacons to priests and Levites."
122. Eusebius, *H. E.*, VI, xix, 17-18.
123. *Ibid.*, VI, xxiii, 4. See De Faye, *op. cit.*, I, 30-39.

124. **Ibid.**, VI, viii, 4.
125. J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller, *The History of the Primitive Church*, tr. by E. Messenger (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), II, 943. See *Histoire de l'église depuis les Origènes jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1935), publiée sous la direction de A. Fliche et V. Martin, especially Vol. II, *De la fin du He siècle a la paix Constantinienne*, p. 261.
126. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr., II, 943.
127. **Ibid.**, Eng. tr., II, 944.
128. **Referring to his Com. on John.** Origen tells us later that he has **begun again** the preface to the sixth tome, because he had not **been able** to bring from Alexandria what he had already written, as **his** departure had been too sudden.
129. **Com. on John**, VI, 2.8-11, in GCS, IV, 107-108. Cf. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr., II, 945-946.
130. We have already considered the panegyric of Gregory of Caesarea, especially with reference to the view which it offers of a system of Christian training. The picture Gregory presents shows that "the ideal of Christian education and the ideal of Christian philosophy were fashioned together" (*Diet. of Christian Biography*, IV, 102). Other testimonies show how great was Origen's influence, and how much he was loved. Among them we find Firmilian, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. His authority was great, and soon afterwards Cyprian invoked it, and still later his intervention was sought against the Bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata. Firmilian, who was so greatly respected, was a disciple of Origen: "he first of all summoned Origen to Caesarea for the good of the churches; then he went to be near to him in Judea, and passed some time with him in order to perfect himself in divine things" (*Eusebius, H. E.*, VI, **xxvii**). As for the leaders of the Palestinian episcopate, Alexander and Theoctistus, these remained to the end the faithful protectors of the man they had ordained priest: "they attached themselves to him as to a unique master, and they entrusted him with the explanation of the holy Scriptures and with the whole of ecclesiastical teaching" (*Eus., H. E.*, VI, **xxvii**).
131. **Hom. on Luke**, XXV, in GCS, IX, 162. Cf. tr. in Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, II, 952.
132. **Cadiou, op. cit.**, p. 398. Cf. **Eng. trans.**, p. 323.
133. **Bigg, op. cit.**, p. 119.

134. **Hom, on Ex., V, 5**, in GCS, VI, 190-191. Cf. *Homelies sur l'Exode.*, pp. 145-146.
135. See **Bigg, op. cit.**, pp. 214-215.
136. **Origen constantly speaks of** the true Christian as a priest. See **Hom, on Lev**, IV, 6; VI, 5; IX, 1, 8; XIII, 5, in GCS, VI, 323-325; **866-367; 417-419**, 432-435; 475-477. The layman is a priest **only in a moral or** spiritual sense. See **Hom, on Lev.**, I, 5; II, 4; IX, **6; XV, 3**, in GCS, VI, 287-288; 294-297; 428-429; 489-491.
137. **Hom, on Lev., V, 3**, in GCS, VI, 337-341, espec. 339. Origen says **that the priest** "eats the sins of the people," that is, takes them **upon himself and** remits them; he must "eat the sin" in a clean **place; he must have** charity, faith, and a good conscience. The **good priest works moral** amendment in the sinner. He must **be** spiritual and have a heart pure from sin. To this end he needs the priestly science. See *On Prayer, XXVIII*, in GCS, II, 375-381.
138. **Hom, on Lev., V, 12; II, 4**, in GCS, VI, 354-358; 294-297.
139. See **Bigg, op. cit.**, pp. 217-218.
140. *On Prayer, XXVIII*, in GCS, II, 375-381. In this treatise, written about A.D. 236, idolatry, adultery, fornication, and wilful murder are death-sins. The distinction between moral and venial sins is ha'icd rpjn the Law of Moses and on I Sam. 2:25. For these sins there Im no forgiveness in the Church, though some presume to tK" they may be forgiven. Cf. **Hom, on Ezek, IV, 8**, in GCS, AI, V 8-370.
141. **Com.on Matt.**, Series 114, in GCS, XI, 236-241. **Bigg (op. cit.**, p. 218, n. 1) comrhents that this passage belongs to those that express the later and more lenient view, but that the particular wor<}s here quoted are applicable in either case.
142. **Hom, on Lev., XV, 2; XI, 2**, in GCS, VI, 487-489; 449-452. See also C. Celsum, HI, 51, in GCS, I, 247-248, where we find that the sinner is readmitted to communion, after prolonged penance, but cannot be promoted to office in the Church. There are two remarkable passages in the **Com. on Matt.**, XIII, 30 and Series 114; found in GCS, X, 261-268 and XI, 236-241. From these we **learn** that apparently there is no limit to the number of times **that the** sinner might be admitted to penance, and that Origen appears to defend, with some reluctance, the practice of granting absolution even to apostates.
143. **Bigg,op. dt**, pp. 221-222.
144. **Com.on Matt**, Series 85, in GCS, XI, **196-197**, quoted in **Bigg, op. dt, p.**

221.

145. Cf. **Hom, on Num, XVI, 9**, in GCS, VII, 151-153.
146. **Harnack, History of Dogma, II**, 146.
147. See **C. Celsum, VIH, 22**, in GCS, n, 239: "He who remembers that Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, and that we must feast, eating the Flesh of the Word, at all times keeps the Passover, passing ever in thought, word, and deed from the **things** of this life to God, and hastening to His City." In the **same** passage he remarked: "He at least is keeping the feast who does what he ought, always paying and continually offering **the** bloodless sacrifices in his prayers to God."
148. Cf. **Harnack, op. dt, II, 146**; also, **Com. on Matt, Series 85**, in GCS, XI, 196-197.
149. **C.Celsum, VIH, 57**, in GCS, II, 274.
150. **Com.on John, UCXII, 24 (16)**, in GCS, IV, 468.
151. **Bigg,op. dt, p. 219, n. 1**.
152. **Hom, on Lev, HI, 5**, in GCS, VI, 809.
153. **Hom. on Lst, XIH, 6**, in GCS, VI, 477.
154. **Hom, on Joshua, XI, 6, and XII, 1-2**, in GCS, VII, 366-368, quoted in article: **F. R. M. Hitchcock**, "Origen's Theory of the Holy Communion and Its Influence in the Church," **The Church Quarterly Review**, CXXXI (Jan.-Mar, 1941), 222. Especially for the influence of Origen's views upon the Church see pp. 233-239. In **Hom, on Lev, IX, 10**, in GCS, VI, 438, Origen emphasizes **the** propitiation made by Christ and also gives a spiritual interpretation of blood. We are reminded that we drink His blood **when** we receive His words, in which life consists.
155. Cf.Hitchcock, op. cit, p. 225.
156. Ibid,pp. 229-230.
157. Cf.Lebreton and Zeiller, **op. cit**, Eng. tr, II, 952.
158. SeeDe Faye, **op. cit. I**, 109, for an account of his preaching and especially for his gift for adapting his message to his hearers. De Faye says that he had "un mobile pedagogique."

159. Eusebius, *H. E.*, VI, xxvii.
160. *Ibid.*, VI, xxxvi, 1. Origen was past sixty years of age when he permitted it.
161. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, V, 22, in NPNF, 2nd Ser, II, 132: "This practice in Alexandria is of great antiquity, for it appears that Origen most commonly taught in the church on those days."
162. Cf. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr, II, 952-953.
163. Hom, on Gen., X, 1, in GCS, VI, 92-94, trans. in Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, II, 953.
164. Hom, on Gen, XVI, 5, in GCS, VI, 142.
165. See Westcott, art. "Origen," *Diet. of Christian Biography*, IV, 104-127; Bardy, art. "Origene," *Diet. de theol. cath.*, XI, 1495- 1501 and 1505-1509.
166. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr, II, 954. Cf. Volker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*, pp. 145 ff.
167. Com. on John, XX, 13, in GCS, IV, 343.
168. **On Prayer**, XIII, 3, in GCS, II, 327-328.
169. **On Prayer**, I, in GCS, II, 297-298.
170. **C. Celsus**, VII, 7, in GCS, II, 159-160.
171. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr, II, 956, n. 21.
172. Hom, on Num, XXVII, espec. 11 and 12, in GCS, VII, 271-279. Cf. Volker, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-75. Lebreton and Zeiller (*op. cit.*, II, 960) comment: "When he has finished this lengthy exposition, Origen fears that he may not have been followed by his hearers. To bring home to them all the stages which have been passed through, he compares them to the classes which a scholar goes through: he is first of all in the alphabet class, then the class of syllables, then the class of names, and finally a calculator. This treatise and many others in Origen's homilies show us that many Christians found difficulty in grasping this symbolical exegesis. This does not surprise us, but what is very striking is the high spiritual teaching beneath the exegesis. It is indeed remarkable that the priest of Caesarea should have been able to expound this to all the faithful, and that he should have persuaded them to follow him up to these elevated regions."

173. Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, Eng. tr., II, 960-961.
174. Cf. *Ibid.*, II, 961.
175. C. Celsum, IV, 26, in GCS, I, 294-296. In an interesting, perhaps curious, passage he compares the Christian community with cities: "To take an example, the Church of God which is at Athens is a kind and faithful body that desires to please God; whereas the assembly of the Athenians is given to sedition, and is not at all to be compared to the Church of God in that city. . . . Likewise, if you compare the council of the Church of God with the council in any city, you will find that certain councillors of the Church are worthy to rule in the city of God; whereas the councillors in all other places exhibit in their characters no quality worthy of the conventional superiority which they appear to enjoy over their fellow-citizens." (C. Celsum, III, 30, in GCS, 227-228).
176. Hom., on Ezek., V, 4, in GCS, VIII, 374-375.
177. C. Celsum, I, 46, in GCS, I, 95-96.
178. C. Celsum, VII, 8, in GCS, II, 160.
179. See Hom., on Jer., IV, 3, in GCS, III, 25-26.
180. Hom., on Josh., XXI, 1, in GCS, VII, 428.
181. Hom., on Isa., VI, 1, in GCS, VIII, 269.
182. Hom., on Gen., X, 1, in GCS, VI, 92-94; tr. in J. Danielou, *Origene* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1948), p. 54.
183. See Hom., on Ex., XII, 2 and XIII, 3, in GCS, VI, 263-264 and 272 ff.
184. Hom., on Ezek., XIV, 3, in GCS, VIII, 453-454. See Danielou, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
185. Hom., on Josh., X, 1, in GCS, VII, 358-359.
186. Com. on Matt., XV, 26, in GCS, X, 425-429.
187. Hom., on Jer., XII, 8, in GCS, III, 94.
188. See Danielou, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
189. Com. on Matt., Series 12, in GCS, XI, 22-23.

190. Com.on Matt., XVI, 8, in GCS, X, 489 ff.; tr. in Danielou, op. cit., p. 56.
191. Cf.Hom, on Num., XII, 4, in GCS, VII, 103 ff.; tr. in Danielou, op. cit., p. 56.
192. Hom, on Lev., XIV, 3, in GCS, VI, 481 ff.
193. Com.on Matt., XIV, 22, in GCS, X, 336 ff.
194. Hom, on Lev., VI, 6, in GCS, VI, 367-370.
195. **Hom, on Josh**, IX, 9, in GCS, VII, 354 ff.
196. **Com.on Matt.**, XIV, 22, in **GCS**, X, 336-339.
197. SeeDanielou, **op. cit.**, p. 58.
198. Vanden Eynde, **op. cit.**, p. 233.
199. **Hom, on Lev.**, I, 4, in GCS, VI, 285-287.
200. Danielou,**op. cit.**, pp. 59-60. This spiritualization is seen in the following significant passage (**Hom, on Lev**, IX, 1, in GCS, VI, 418-419): “The Lord said to Moses: ‘Say to Aaron that he should not enter into the sanctuary at any hour.’ This word concerns us all. It prescribes that we know how to approach the altar **of** God. The altar is that on which we offer our prayer. Do you not know that the priest is given to you, that is to say, to the entire church of God, and to the people who believe? Hear Peter say **of** the faithful: chosen, priestly, royal race. You, then, have the priesthood, since you are a priestly race—and thus you ought **to offer to** God the offering of praise, the offering **of** prayers, the offering of mercy, the offering of purity, the offering of holiness.”
201. **Hom, on Josh.**, IX, 9, in GCS, Vn, 354-356.
202. SeeDanielou, op. cit., pp. 60-61.
203. See**Hom, on Num.**, II, 1, in GCS, VII, 8-10.
204. Cf.Van den Eynde, op. cit, p. 233; Danielou, op. cit, p. 62.
205. Danielou,**op. cit.**, pp. 62-6S.

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Texts

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