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Essays

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Movement Lessons in the Apostolic Fathers

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Movement Lessons in the Apostolic Fathers

A mosaic depicting five men, likely the Apostles, with beards and halos, set against a gold background. The men are shown from the chest up, wearing robes with red and white stripes. The text "Setting the Framework for the Study of Movements in History" is overlaid in white on the center of the image.

Setting the Framework for the Study of Movements in History

A mosaic depicting five men's faces, likely the Apostles or Apostolic Fathers, arranged in a row. The style is traditional, with visible mosaic tiles and a golden background. The men have various features like beards and hair, and are looking slightly to the right.

The Apostolic Fathers

- The Study of Church History
 - Anachronisms
 - Observations
 - Axioms
- Apostolic Fathers
 - Barnabas, Diognetus, Didache, 2 Clement
 - Hermas, Fragments of Papias
- The Disciples of the Apostles
 - Clement and the Romans leaders
 - Ignatius of Antioch
 - Polycarp of Smyrna
- Background
 - Christological Heresies
 - Divisions and Leadership
 - Defense of the Faith

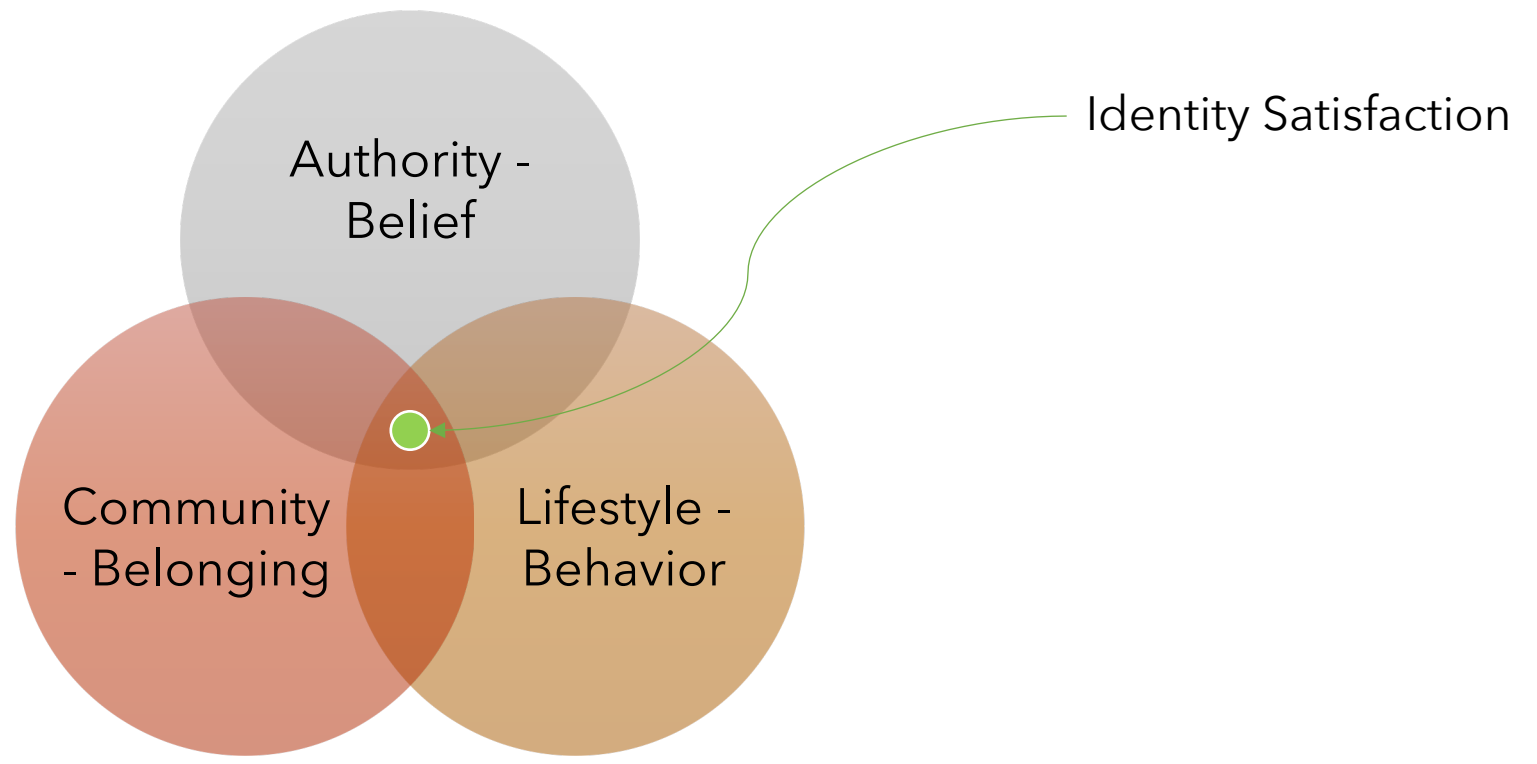


The Study of Movements

- Sociology of Religions
 - Stark's 10 elements of movement growth
 - Addison picks up on these
- Missiology
 - Garrison's observational study of CPMs
 - Accounting for the work of the Holy Spirit
- Social movements
 - Blumer's life cycle of movements
- Social networks
 - Watkin's research
- Leadership Studies
 - Prinz's movement catalysts
 - Hirsch and Lafferty's APEST
- Identity Studies
 - Rambo's Conversion theory
 - Yancy's Group identity
 - Cooper's theory of religious identity



Identity Theory





Movements and Identity

- Three key questions about the sustainability of a movement revolve around identity
 - Who are we?
 - Are we satisfied?
 - From where have we come?



Movements and Identity

- Who are we now in relationship to others in my context (ethnic group, country, city, village, etc)?
 - Authority – Beliefs
 - Appeals to sacred texts
 - Appeals to important people and events
 - Lifestyle – Behaviors
 - Appeals to agreed customs and practices
 - Community – Belonging
 - Common language
 - Ethnicity/Race
 - Sacred place

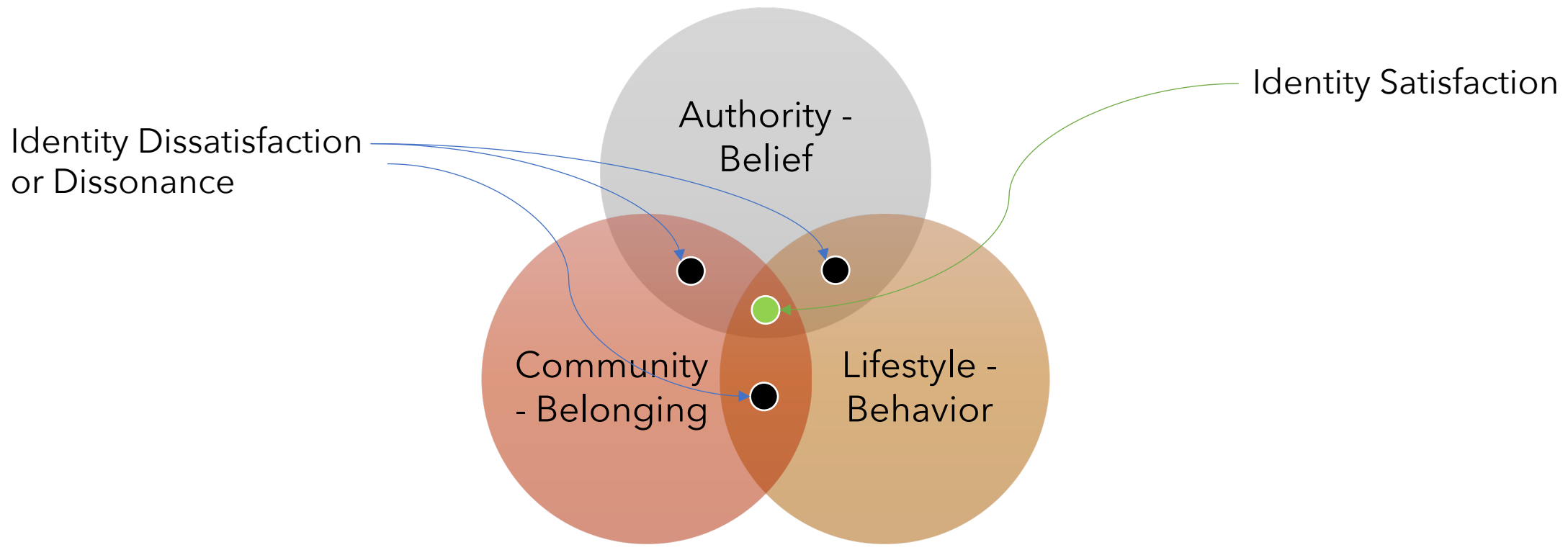


Movements and Identity

- The level of one's commitment to their identity correlates to the level of willingness to switch or remain in their identity
- What is the level of satisfaction?
 - Is my identity satisfying my intellectual desire?
 - Is my identity satisfying my lifestyle desire?
 - Is my identity satisfying my community desire?



The Identity of a Movement





Movements and Identity

- From where have we come?
 - Is my new identity rooted in something more satisfying than my current identity?
 - Satisfying authority
 - Satisfying lifestyle
 - Satisfying community
- Ancientization



Movements and Identity

- Ancientization appeals to a thread of continuity which connects a movement continuously with an ancient past to anchor it in the present
 - Appeals to artifacts – Quran, Ark of the Covenant, Bones of Saints
 - Appeals to sacred places – Stonehenge, Devil's Tower
 - Appeals to an ancient ethnic group – Ethnocentrism, Racism, Nationalism
 - Appeals to extraterrestrial visitors – Ancient astronauts, UFO religions
 - Appeals to philosophers – Plato's Socrates, Aristotle's virtues



Movements and Identity

- Successful movements will root their identity in ancient sources which are beyond their present historical context
 - Mormons root their identity in pre-Constantinian Christianity and Book of Mormon
 - Jehovah Witnesses' appeal to a corrected translation of the NT
 - The Church of Almighty God's appeal to Matthew 24:27
 - The Last Reformation's appeal to Martin Luther's Reformation
 - John Calvin's appeal to the Church Fathers
 - The early church's appeal to the ancient prophets and philosophers

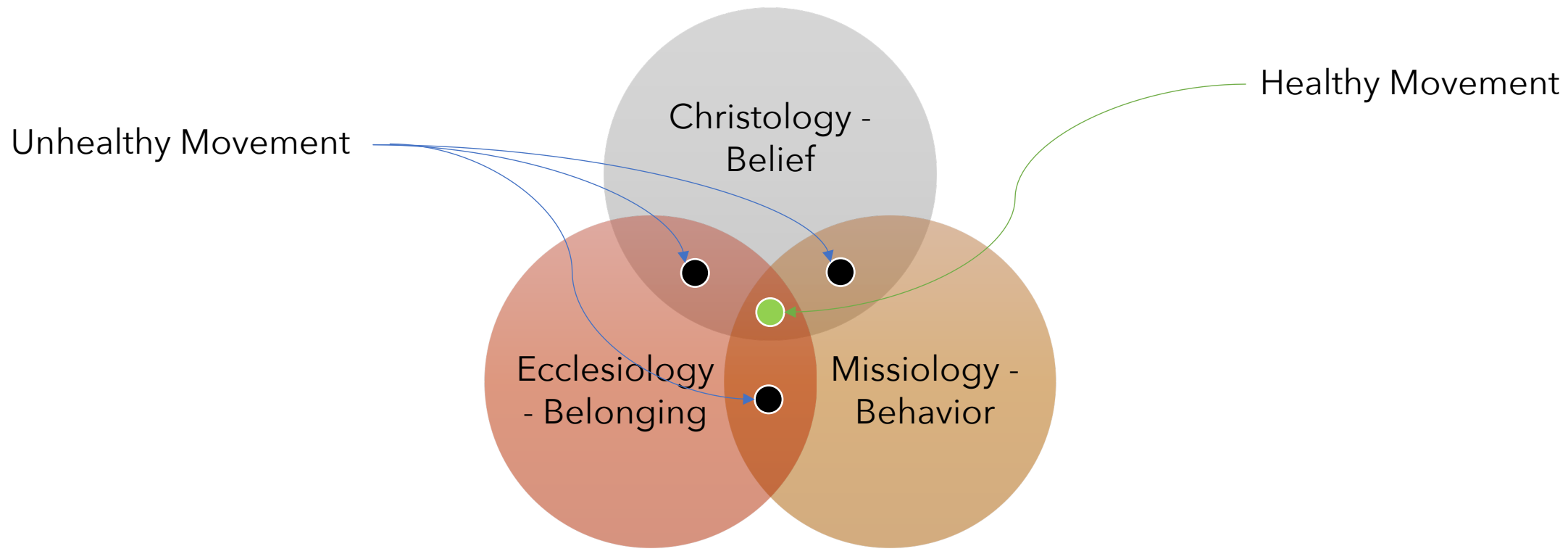


Ancientization in Early Christianity

- "In the beginning was the **λόγος**" – John 1:1 in reference to Heraclitus (6th c. BC), *On Nature*
- "For we are indeed his offspring" – Acts 17:28 in reference to Aratus (3rd c. BC), *Phaenomena*
- "For what is Plato but Moses speaking in Attic Greek?" – Numenius cited in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 1.22
- Pre-Christ Christians in Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 1.46 – **λόγος σπερματικός**



The Identity of a Movement



A mosaic of five men's faces, likely representing the apostles, set against a golden background. The men have various hair styles and beards, and are wearing robes. A semi-transparent dark grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing a quote in white text and a quote icon in a gold circle.

”

A healthy movement will find its identity rooted in careful study of historically reliable authorities, culturally acceptable lifestyles, and adaptive community expressions which make them distinct as a group yet not foreign.

A mosaic depicting five men, likely the Apostolic Fathers, with beards and traditional attire, set against a golden background. The men are shown from the chest up, looking slightly to the right.

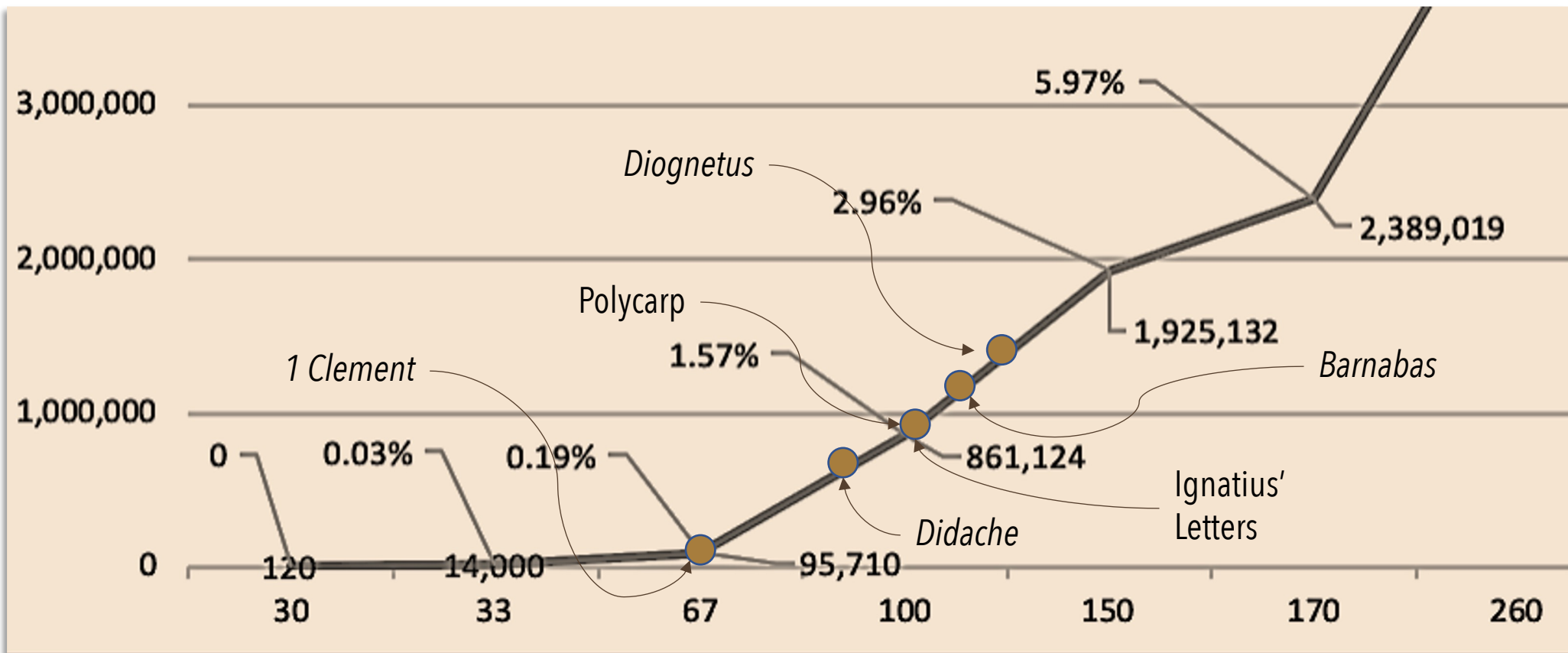
Movemental Lessons from the Apostolic Fathers

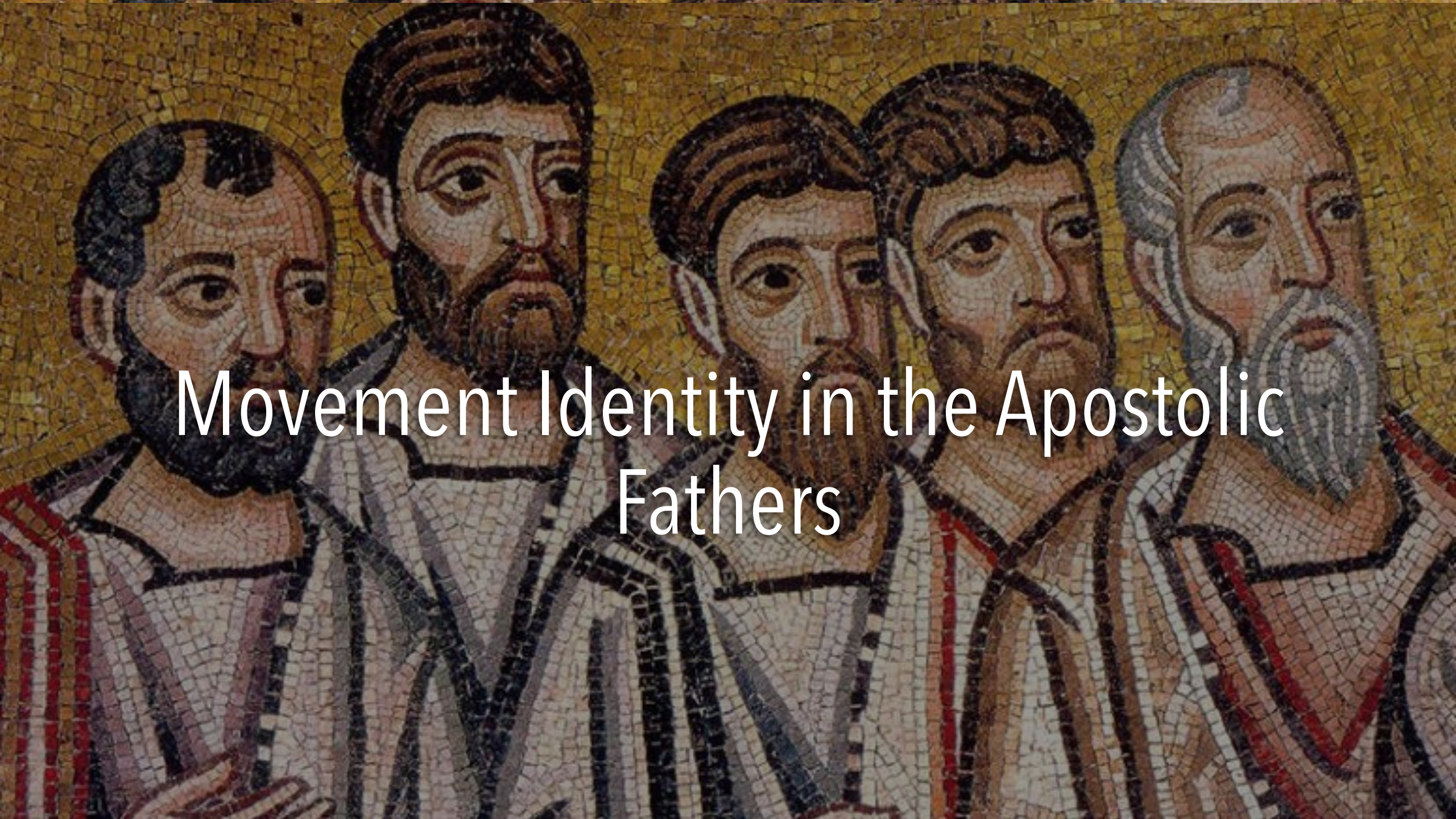
- Proper Christology: Study of the Doctrine of Christ
- Proper Ecclesiology: Christian Belonging
- Proper Missiology: Witness to and Imitation of Christ in Community

Geographical Breadth of the Apostolic Fathers



Growth of Early Christianity





Movement Identity in the Apostolic Fathers


A mosaic depicting five men, likely the apostles, with text overlaid. The men are shown from the chest up, wearing traditional robes. The background is a textured gold mosaic. The text is centered over the figures.

Proper Christology

The Authority of a Movement

Christology of the Apostolic Fathers

| Date | Source | Salient Characteristics |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---|
| Ca. 67AD | First Clement | Jesus is lowly not because He was poor, but because of what He endured in giving His blood to bear our sin |
| Ca. 100AD | The Didache | Jesus is the means by which we know the Father |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Ephesians | Jesus is fully God and fully human |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Magnesians | Jesus, the eternal Word, is one and came from the Father to reveal the Father |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Romans | Jesus Christ is God |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Trallians | Jesus Christ our God who died for us |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Philadelphians | Jesus, whose cross, death, resurrection, is more ancient |
| Ca. 110AD | Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans | Jesus is the focal point of the universal church |
| Ca. 110AD | Polycarp to the Philippians | Jesus, our everlasting High Priest, who suffered for our sins and was raised from the dead, given glory and the throne by God who has subjected all things to Him |
| Ca. 123AD | The Epistle of Barnabas | Jesus the King, revealed in the flesh, resurrected by God, foretold by Abraham and Moses, is the Son of God who redeems of our hearts |
| Ca. 160AD | The Epistle to Diognetus | The Son is the Word of God |



"Study, therefore, to be established in the doctrines of the Lord and the Apostles, so that all things, whatsoever you do, may flourish..."

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Magnesians 13

EPHESIOLOGY

MASTER CLASSES



If you carefully study (lean into) [Paul's letters to you], you will find them to be the source for building you up in the faith that has been given you. Faith which is followed by hope and preceded by love towards God and Christ and our neighbor "is the mother of us all."

-Polycarp, To the Philippians 3

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"This is the way, beloved, in which we find our Savior, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of all our offerings, the defender and helper of our infirmity. By Him we look up to the heights of heaven. By Him we behold, as in a glass, His immaculate and most excellent visage. By Him are the eyes of our hearts opened. By Him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards His marvelous light. By Him the Lord has willed that we should taste of immortal knowledge, 'who, being the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.'"

-1 Clement 36

EPHESIOLOGY

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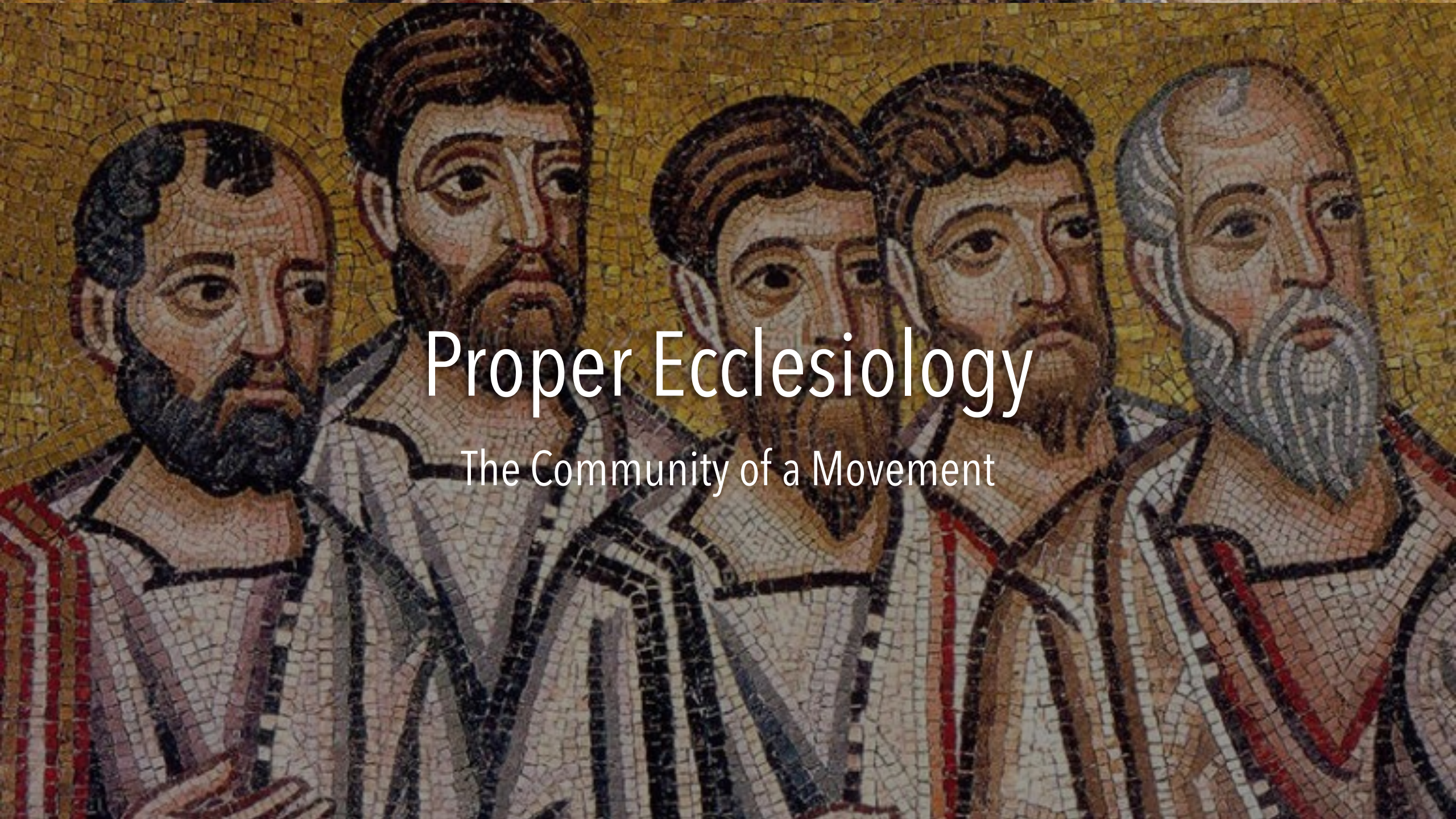


"Cover your ears, therefore, when anyone speaks to you at variance with Jesus Christ, who was descended from David, and was also of Mary, who was truly born, and did eat and drink. He was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate. He was truly crucified, and died, in the sight of beings in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth. He was also truly raised from the dead, His Father quickening Him, even as after the same manner His Father will so raise up us who believe in Him by Christ Jesus, apart from whom we do not possess the true life."

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Trallians 9

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Proper Ecclesiology

The Community of a Movement



Key Characteristics about the Church

Prayer

Leadership

Unity

Daily Gatherings

Corporate Study

Sacraments

Love

Submission

Spread the
Word

Encouragement


Leadership

Modalities

- Bishop-Elders-Deacons (Ignatius and Polycarp)
- Bishops-Deacons (Didache)
 - Prophets and teachers

Sodalities

- Apostles who were also prophets
- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Evangelists




“Pray without ceasing on behalf of others. For there is in them the hope of repentance that they may find God. See, then, that they learn by your works, if by no other way.”

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Ephesians 10

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Be eager to gather together regularly to give thanks and praise to God. For when you gather often in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith. Nothing is more precious than peace, by which all war, both in heaven and earth, is brought to an end.

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Ephesians 13

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If you love the good disciples, no thanks are due to you on that account. Rather, seek with gentleness to calm the more troublesome. Every kind of wound is not healed with the same plaster. Ease irritations with gentle applications. In all things be "wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove."

-Ignatius of Antioch, To Polycarp 2

EPHESIOLOGY

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Labor together with one another.
Strive in company together. Run
together. Suffer together. Rest
together and awake together. Do
these as the stewards and
associates and servants of God.

-Ignatius of Antioch, To Polycarp 6

EPHESIOLOGY

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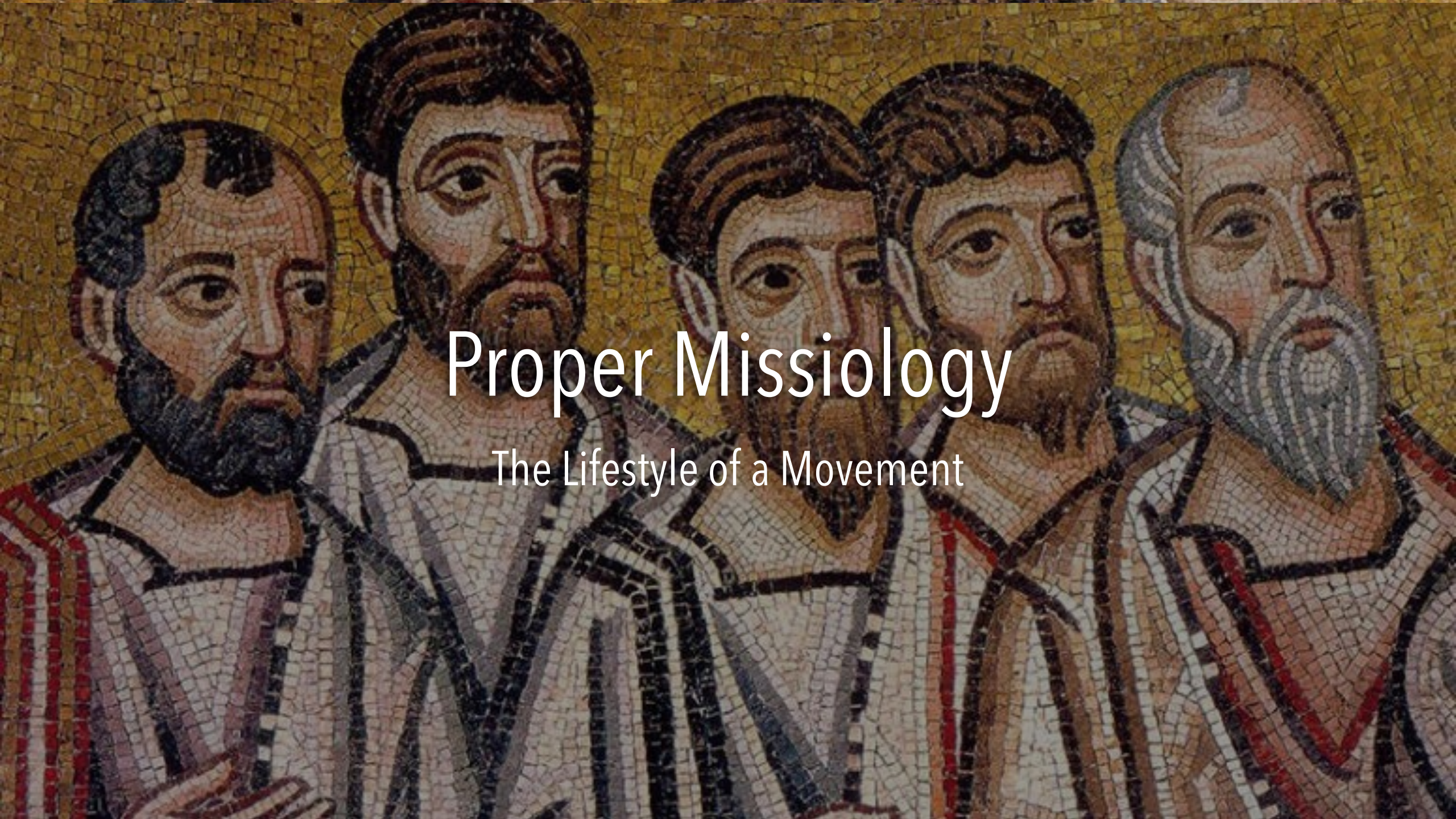


Having therefore received their orders, being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God with full assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went out proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And accordingly, proclaiming the gospel through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits to be bishops and deacons of those who believed after first confirming them by the Spirit.

-1 Clement 16.2-3

EPHESIOLOGY

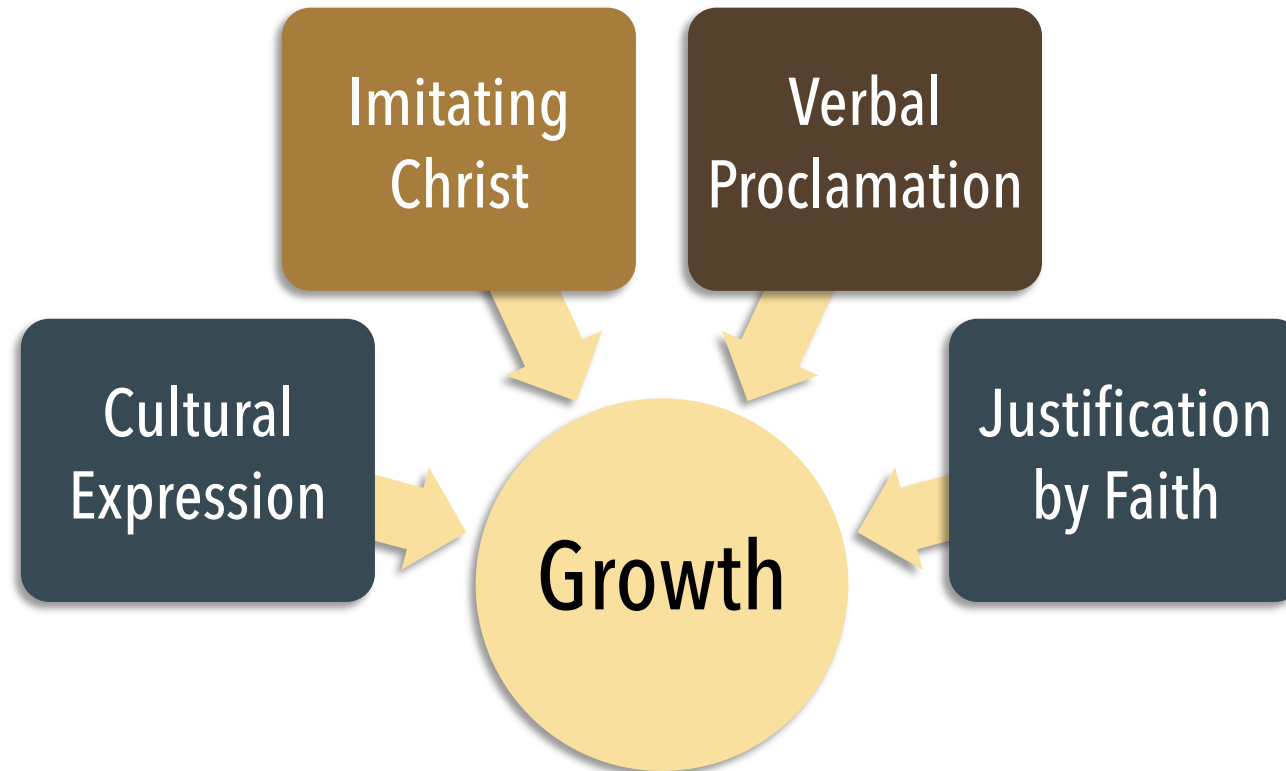
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Proper Missiology

The Lifestyle of a Movement

Characteristics of Missiology






“Since we know that God is not mocked, we should walk in a manner worthy of His commandments and glory.”

-Polycarp, To the Philipians 5.1


EPHESIOLOGY

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A stylized illustration of Ignatius of Antioch, an elderly man with a long, flowing white beard and hair, wearing a white robe with a large black cross on the chest. He is set against a golden circular halo. The background is a solid light brown color.

“Do not speak about Jesus Christ but long for the world.”

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Romans 7.

A stylized illustration of Ignatius of Antioch, an elderly man with a long, flowing white beard and hair, wearing a white robe with a purple and gold collar. He is set against a golden background with a faint circular halo. The illustration is positioned on the left side of the slide.

“The tree is made manifest by its fruit, so those who profess themselves to be Christians will be recognized by their conduct.”

-Ignatius of Antioch, To the Ephesians 14



Let us then be imitators of His patience. And if we suffer for His name's sake, let us glorify Him. For He has set us this example in Himself, and we have believed that such is the case.

-Polycarp, To the Philippians 8



"Let all the nations know you, that you alone are God, that Jesus Christ is your child, and that we are your people and the sheep of your pasture."

-1 Clement 59.4

EPHESIOLOGY

MASTER CLASSES

A mosaic depicting five men with beards and long hair, likely the apostles, set against a golden background. The men are shown from the chest up, wearing simple robes. A semi-transparent dark grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing a quote and its source. A small gold circle with white quotation marks is positioned above the text.

”

This means that every word which proceeds out of your mouth in faith and love will tend to bring conversion and hope to many.

-Barnabas 11b

A mosaic depicting five men, likely the apostles, with beards and long hair, wearing robes. The background is a golden-yellow mosaic. A semi-transparent dark grey horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing a quote and its attribution.

”

If you also desire this faith, you must first of all receive the knowledge of the Father. For God has loved humanity, on whose account He made the world.

-Diognetus 10

A mosaic depicting the faces of the twelve apostles, rendered in a traditional Byzantine style with gold backgrounds and detailed features. The text is overlaid on the top portion of this image.

Ten+2 Universal Elements in Movement Lessons from the Apostolic Fathers

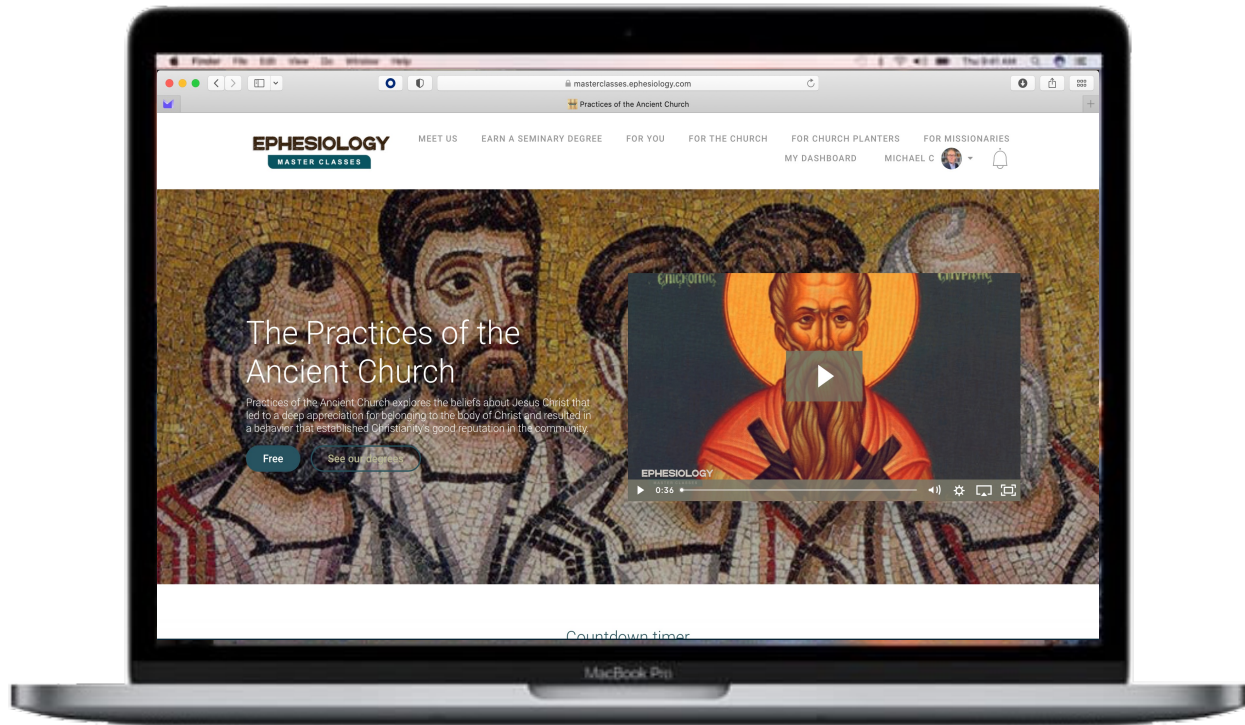
- Christology
 - God the Son
 - Eternal Word
 - Two Natures
- Ecclesiology
 - Leadership (modalities and sodalities)
 - Corporate Study
 - Prayer
 - Unity
 - Daily Gatherings
- Missiology
 - Cultural Expression
 - Imitation of Christ
 - Verbal Proclamation
 - Justification by Faith

A mosaic depicting five men with beards and long hair, likely the apostles, set against a golden background. The men are shown from the chest up, wearing simple robes. The mosaic is composed of small, irregular tiles in various shades of brown, tan, and grey.

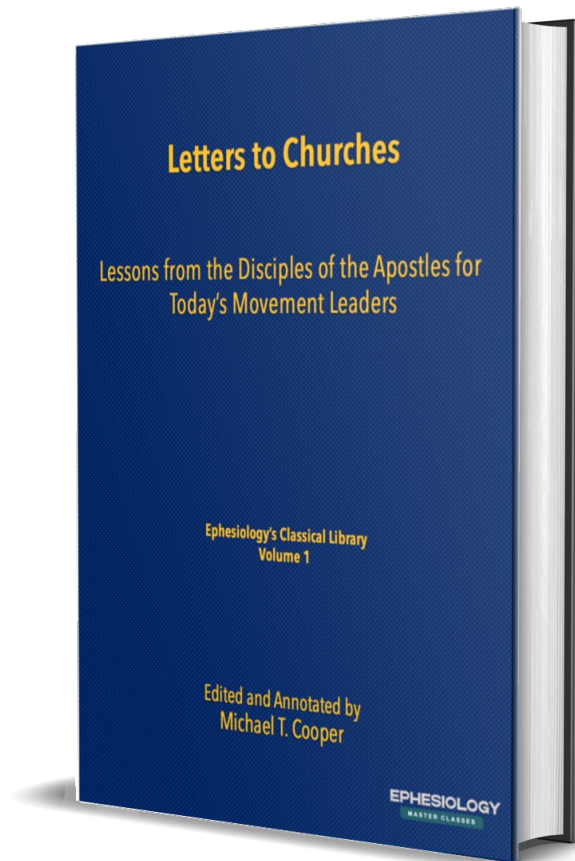
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A healthy movement will find its identity rooted in careful study of historically reliable authorities, culturally acceptable lifestyles, and adaptive community expressions which make them distinct as a group yet not foreign.

The Practices of the Ancient Church

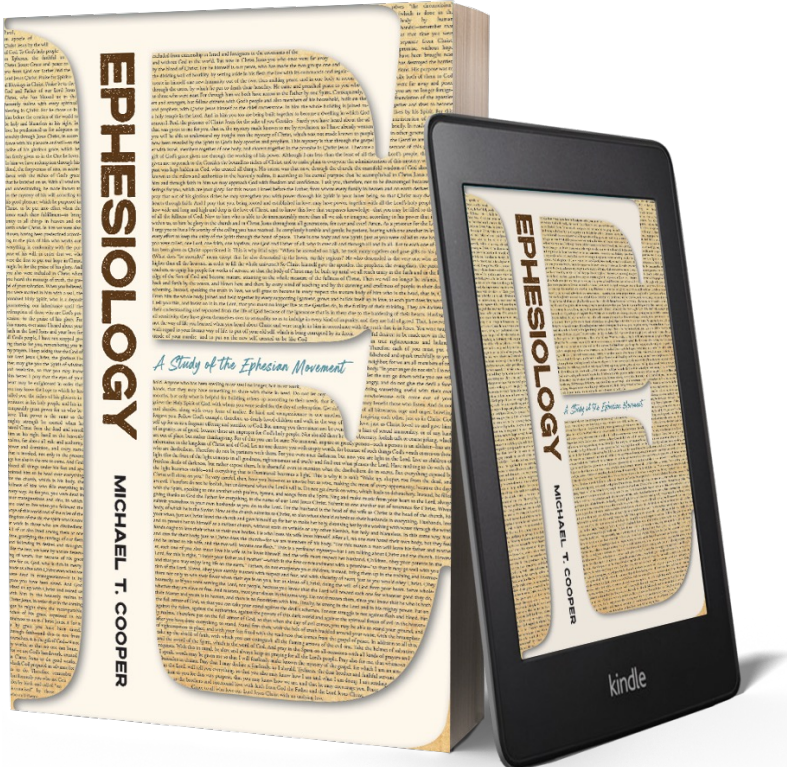


Forthcoming Resources



- Sacred Roots Project
 - 16 Volumes on Spiritual Friends
 - Samuel Morris Publishing
 - Lilly Endowment Grant
 - First Christian Voices: Practices of the Ancient Church (due out Spring 2023)
- <https://www.sacredrootsministry.org>

Five Pillars of the NT Movement



A mosaic depicting five men's faces, likely the apostles, with various expressions and features. The mosaic is composed of small, colorful tiles in shades of brown, gold, and grey. The text "Doctrine of Christ" is overlaid in white on the left side of the mosaic.

Doctrine of Christ

- Lowly not because He was poor, but because of what He endured (1 Clement 16)
 - Bore the sins of many (16)
 - Blood given for us (21, 49)
 - Rose from the dead (24)
 - Seated at the Father's right hand (36)
- Reveals knowledge, faith, and immortality of the Father (Didache 10)
 - Jesus is the means of knowing the Father (Ephesians 3)

A mosaic depicting five men's faces, likely the apostles, with various expressions and beards, set against a golden background. The text "Doctrine of Christ" is overlaid on the left side of the mosaic.

Doctrine of Christ

- Union of God and humanity (Ephesians 7)
- Conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary (Ephesians 18)
 - Seed of David (20)
 - Son of Man and Son of God (20)



Doctrine of Christ

- One Jesus Christ who came from the Father (Magnesians 7)
 - God reveals Himself by Jesus Christ His Son (8)
 - His eternal Word (8)
- Birth, Passion, and Resurrection (Magnesians 11)
- Died for us (Trallians 2)
- Jesus Christ our God (Trallians 7, Romans intro, Polycarp 8)

A mosaic depicting five men's faces, likely the apostles, with various expressions and features. The mosaic is composed of small, colorful tiles in shades of brown, gold, and grey. The text 'Doctrine of Christ' is overlaid in white on the left side of the mosaic.

Doctrine of Christ

- Jesus replaces all that is ancient (Philadelphians 8)
 - Cross, death, resurrection, faith
- All righteousness fulfilled by Jesus (Smyrneans 1)
 - Seed of David
 - Son of God
 - Born of a virgin
 - Baptized by John
 - Crucified under Pilate and Herod
 - Bodily resurrected (1, 3)
- Focal point of the universal church (Smyrneans 8)



Doctrine of Christ

- Suffered for our sins and raised from the dead (Philippians 1)
- God gives Him glory and a throne (Philippians 2)
 - All things are subject to Him
 - Every spirit serves Him
 - He judges the living and the dead
- Came in the flesh (7), bore our sins (8), and rose again by God
- Our everlasting High Priest (12)



Doctrine of Christ

- Revealed in the flesh (Barnabas 6)
 - Foretold by Abraham (9) and Moses (12)
 - Son of God (12)
 - Redeemer of our hearts (14)
 - Rose again (15)
- The Son of God is the Word (Diognetus 7)

A mosaic depicting five men's faces, likely the apostles, with various expressions and beards, set against a golden background.

Doctrine of Christian Living

- Justified by faith (1 Clement 32)