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Christian History Made Easy (Rose Bible Basics)

7. Christian History AD 90–250: Events, Names, and Terms

A reference-style overview of the early church from about AD 90 to 250. It lists the key controversies, leaders, and terms a student should recognize from this period, when the church was defining true doctrine against rival movements.

Key takeaways

- Gnosticism taught the physical world is evil and salvation comes through secret knowledge; by AD 140 Gnostics outnumbered Christians in some areas. Most were also Docetists, denying Jesus had a real body.
- Marcion pushed Gnostic ideas, rejected the Old Testament, and tried to cut sixteen books from the recognized apostolic writings.
- The Montanists ('New Prophets'—Montanus, Maximilla, Prisca) wanted to revive the Spirit's dynamic gifts, but harsh rules and failed prophecies got them rejected. Tertullian joined them late in life.

- The church was settling its Scripture and creeds: the Muratorian Canon (before AD 190) named nearly every New Testament book, and the 'Rule of Faith' became the Apostles' Creed.
- Key terms: Heresy (contradicting essential New Testament teaching), Gnosticism, Docetism, and the Rule of Faith.

Passages worth keeping

"Now, I suffer alone. Then, there will be another in me. He will suffer for me, for I am about to suffer for him."

Felicity's reply before martyrdom—the era's costly faith under persecution.