

# The Eternal Kingdom

7/17/19

Lesson 18

Introduction: In our previous lesson we were looking at the Apologists. Of an apologist is someone who writes a composition defending their beliefs and practices. On many occasions we will see evidence of letters that were written to Roman emperors. The same theme reoccurred time and time again, Christianity was pure and wholesome; the king would be wise to support it.

Our next apologist is...

## Tatian (125-200)

- Who converted him?
- What work did he author?
- In his work “Address to the Greeks”, what did Tatian attempt to reveal about Christianity?
- What was his work, “Diatessaron” about?
- What eventually happened to Tatian?

(Read material from book then look at bullets).

Justin converted Tatian and this speaks well of Justin’s zeal for the Lord!

He wrote “Address to the Greeks”. He illustrated the Greek philosophy and religion was not superior to the that of Christianity. Today we would view him as being intolerant. Politically incorrect. Tatian takes a swipe at Homer, who Plato considered the father of Greek education. He said that Moses was older than Homer; perhaps giving more credence and credibility than Homer (seemed to be a jab).

His work called “Diatessaron” was about the work and life of Christ. My mind hearkens back to Paul’s words in (1Cor.1:18-25 read and explain).

Tatian’s life has a sad ending. He departed from Christianity and went off into Gnosticism. His views of God and the Old Testament changed. He began to argue against marriage saying it was sinful (Match.com would have gone out of business if he were its CEO).

Tatian is an example of how a person can begin their life in Christ simple, pure, and passionate, but get sidetracked and become just the heretics he debated.

## Melito (169-190)

- Where did he preside as an elder?
- He wrote as many as twenty compositions
- In one apology penned around 170, he wrote to the emperor about what in particular?

(Read material and then discuss bullets).

Once again we have another apologist attempting to convince the emperor how Christianity can positively influence and affect the Roman world for good. Of course the only emperor that really listened to Christians was Constantine in the early 300's. We will discuss him a little later in our study. Just as a side note though, Eusebius was a personal advisor to Constantine.

## Athenagoras (177-180)

- How was he converted and what is its correlation to Hebrews 4:12-13?
- In his work “Supplication for the Christians”, what did Athenagoras argue and how does this correlate with Isaiah 44:6-20?
- What was his work, “The Resurrection of the Dead” intended to do for its readers?

He was converted by reading the scriptures and this aligns with Heb.4:12-13 revealing the power of God’s Word to convict and convert the soul.

In his work “Supplication for Christians” he argued that idols were useless and this was Isaiah the prophets exact remarks in (Isa.44:6-20).

The work of “The Resurrection of the Dead” was intend to get its readers to believe in the resurrection of Christ and the dead.

## Theophilus (190)

- Where was he bishop?
- What did he have in common Athenagoras regarding their conversions?
- Who did Theophilus write to and why did he write his composition to him?
- Theophilus wrote three parts to Autolycus. Which part revealed that Christianity was superior to paganism and what does this mean to the modern day Christian?

He was the sixth bishop of Antioch.

Both he and Athenagoras were converted by reading the scriptures.

He wrote a letter Autolycus with the hopes of converting him.

In the third part, Theophilus wrote about how Christianity was superior to paganism. What message does this convey to us? It should convey a message regarding the distinctiveness of the church. We are in the world, but not of the world (Rom.12:1-2). Jesus prayed that we would be "sanctified by His Word..." (Jn.17:16-17).