

piety and real interest in the things of the Lord. His paragraphs contain many phrases taken directly from the Bible, yet his letter also contains mythological references and unscientific statements such as are not found anywhere in the Word of God.

It is interesting to note that Clement never claims any special authority for himself. In his letter there is no trace of any idea of the Roman bishop's actually considering himself as having a position of authority over the church as a whole. He simply writes as the representative of one church, writing to another church urging its members to live closer to the Lord.

The writings of Ignatius, who was bishop of Smyrna at about 115 A.D., show a man on his way to be martyred, glorying in the opportunity to suffer and die for the Lord who had given His life for them. In Ignatius' writings we find the concept of episcopal control of the church in full bloom. He considers a bishop to be the authority over his own particular church, and urges people to be subject to their bishops. Yet his writings reveal no slightest suggestion that the bishop of any one church might exercise control over any other church. The letters of Ignatius are filled with quotations from the writings of the Apostle John and have gone far toward eradicating many of the extreme critical attitudes that were taken towards John's Gospel not long ago.

The few pages that we have from Polycarp show an earnest Christian who for over eighty years was an ardent follower of Christ. The story of the martyrdom of Polycarp has been repeated over and over and has brought encouragement and strengthening to succeeding generations of Christians. When Polycarp was brought before the Roman official and asked to renounce Christ, he said, "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He has never done me wrong. How could I turn against Him now?"