# **Chapter 3: The Apostolic and Prophetic Church according to Iulius Africanus, Origen, and Tertullian**

## **Tertullian and the Tradition of the Church**

Tertullian (ca. 160– 220 CE) is said to have written with a loose hand, tense fingers, and often with his back against the wall. His appearances on the literary stage seem theatrical, nearly operatic. When addressing his audience, he always focused on his opponents.  Yet he was not necessarily the high-minded avenger of the righteous.[[1]](#footnote-1) The enemies with whom he was most concerned were Marcion of Sinope and his pupil Apelles. It is in opposition to these two men that he wrote more than half of his huge corpus of works, many of which survive to this day: *Adversus Marcionem*, *De resurrectione carnis*, *De carne Christi*, *De praescriptione haereticorum*. He wrote against other opponents as well, some of whom he singled out in his writings against Valentinus, against the Gnostics, against Praxeas, Hermogenes, and many others.[[2]](#footnote-2) His tools of attack and his shield were not primarily the Holy Scriptures—neither the Old nor the New Testament—because, as he himself admitted, these were the prime weapons of his opponents.[[3]](#footnote-3) However, this was not the only reason why he supplemented Scripture with other implements, particularly tradition and the prophetic charisma of the Holy Spirit. As a rhetorician, he knew all too well that words and their meanings create history and tradition beyond what is put down in writing. The living word is the real authority, not the ink that has dried. Tradition, which Tertullian prefers to Scripture, is an interpretive present rather than an interpreted past—an answer set in the past to a problem created in the present.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Tertullian is regarded as “the earliest Christian to write in Latin,” and poses “a special problem” since the those Christian church historians whose works have survived show “little interest in the development of Christianity in the western half of the Roman Empire, except when it impinged on the eastern half.” We know relatively little about Tertullian himself or his ecclesiastical environment.[[5]](#footnote-5) People in the East may only have been able to read the few of Tertullian’s works that were translated into Greek; Eusebius of Caesarea, in fact, mentions only Tertullian’s *Apology*.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Since Tertullian’s biography lies “hidden in obscurity,” scholars are left to reconstruct his life from the few scattered autobiographical references in his own writings, in which he reveals something about himself,[[7]](#footnote-7) namely, that he had been brought up a non-Christian (*De paen*. 1,1), had committed grave sins at one point or another (*De res*. 59,3), was aware of his own impatience (*De pat*. 1,1-2), and had paid regular visits to the amphitheater (*De spect*. 19,4).[[8]](#footnote-8) Several more details can be added to this information: from his writings to his wife we may gather that he was married but childless, enjoyed intimate relations with her, was in “full adoration of her body” (*carnis tuae integritatem*), paired with “frivolities” (*friuola*) and “impurities” (*spurca*), without having great interest in the procreation of offspring.[[9]](#footnote-9) Tertullian also confesses to adultery,[[10]](#footnote-10) and in general seems to have waged a personal struggle against the temptations of the flesh, as well as spiritual battles.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Although Tertullian is quite open and critical of himself, Eusebius, who admired him, dwells on his positive qualities. He claims, for example, that Tertullian was “well versed in Roman law,” and “otherwise distinguished himself, and was one of the most excellent men in Rome.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Jerome, an even more ardent admirer, turns Tertullian into a “presbyter, a man of the province of Africa and the city of Carthage, a son of the *centurio proconsularis,*” despite the fact that Tertullian calls himself a layman twice in his surviving writings.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Even less is known of Tertullian’s physical appearance. No early portrait or effigy has come down to us, but we can deduce from a statement that he never let a razor touch him[[14]](#footnote-14) and thus wished to pose as a philosopher by wearing a beard and toga. Yet though Tertullian has “never [been] the subject … of artistic representation ... [and thus] remains a faceless figure,”[[15]](#footnote-15) scholars seem quite ready to call him a wild[[16]](#footnote-16) “polemicist, moralist, theologian,”[[17]](#footnote-17) “a borderline figure,” “a trenchant yet elusive controversialist,”[[18]](#footnote-18) “an orator, polemicist, pamphleteer, and satirist,”[[19]](#footnote-19) “a firebrand, a puritan, a misogynist, a rigorist,” who could be “impatient, uncompromising, fiery, passionate, ardent, harsh, sarcastic, and even cruel.” In short, “it is not easy to like Tertullian.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

              Notwithstanding these accusations, both modern readers of Tertullian and those of the ancient world testify to his charisma and outstanding position among early Christian authors.[[21]](#footnote-21) However “his reception was initially hindered”[[22]](#footnote-22) due most likely to his ethical rigor, his criticism of the Roman Church, which he called a church of “psychics” (*psychici*)[[23]](#footnote-23) rather than clergymen, his turn away from it, and his embrace of the Phrygian “New Prophecy” of the prophetess Prisc(ill)a,[[24]](#footnote-24) a move that was not well stomached by ecclesiastical authors like Vincent of Lérins († approx. 450):

As that one [sc. Origen] holds by far the first place of all of us among the Greeks, so does this one [sc. Tertullian] among the Latins. For who was more learned than he, who more versed in divine and human things? With marvellous capacity of mind he comprehended all philosophy, and had a knowledge of all schools of philosophers, and of the founders and followers of sects, and was acquainted with all their rules and observances, and with their various histories and studies. Was not his genius of such unrivalled strength and vehemence that there was scarcely any obstacle which he proposed to himself to overcome, that he did not penetrate by acuteness, or crush by weight? As to his style, who can sufficiently set forth its praise? It was knit together with so much cogency of argument that it compelled assent, even where it failed to persuade. Every word almost was a sentence; every sentence a victory. This know the Marcions, the Apelleses, the Praxeases, the Hermogeneses, the Jews, the Heathens, the Gnostics, and the rest, whose blasphemies he overthrew by the force of his many and ponderous volumes, as with so many thunderbolts. Yet this man also, notwithstanding all that I have mentioned, this Tertullian, I say, too little tenacious of Catholic doctrine, that is, of the universal and ancient faith, more eloquent by far than faithful, changed his belief, and justified what the blessed Confessor, Hilary, writes of him, namely, that by his subsequent error he detracted from the authority of his commendable writings. He also was a great trial in the Church. But of Tertullian I am unwilling to say more. This only I will add, that, contrary to the injunction of Moses, by asserting the novel furies of Montanus which arose in the Church, and those mad dreams of new doctrine dreamed by mad women, to be true prophecies, he deservedly made both himself and his writings obnoxious to the words, If there arise a prophet in the midst of you, ...you shall not hearken to the words of that prophet. For why? Because, he says, the Lord your God does make trial of you, whether you love Him or not (*Deut*. 13:1-3).[[25]](#footnote-25)

Vincent already regards Tertullian’s apologetic writings as rhetorically outstanding, even exaggerated and not universally convincing. He also refers to Tertullian’s apostasy vis à vis the Catholic Church. In doing so, he turns Tertullian’s verdict against fickle people who threaten to turn away from the Church or who actually fell away from it. As proof, Vincent refers to Hilary of Poitiers, who praises Tertullian’s *De oratione*as an “extremely learned work” in his commentary on *Matthew*, but adds that his late work undermined his earlier authority.[[26]](#footnote-26) Consequently, Vincent castigates Tertullian for his turn to prophetesses in Phrygia, who initiated a movement known as Montanism.

              It may have been Tertullian’s ever greater distance from the Roman Church and his leaning towards this “New Prophecy” that robbed him of “the least interest in a history of the early church.” Nonetheless “the language he employs as well as the ideas he presents have the effect of creating a historical as well as theological picture of the first two centuries.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

              Tertullian accepts the Gospels and other New Testament texts as historical testimony of the words of the Lord and Apostles.[[28]](#footnote-28) He uses them to support and defend his various arguments. Scripture, he admits, must be interpreted in light of other books from Scripture,[[29]](#footnote-29) but he distinguishes this argumentative figure from a scientific discussion or a systematic study of scripture (*exercitatio scripturarum*) which he rejects as he finds it in the writings of his opponents.[[30]](#footnote-30) It is probably for this reason that despite his substantial literary output, he never seems to have written any commentary on a canonical text. The two books in which he does attempt a critical reading of a Gospel and Paul’s Epistles do not deal with the canonical version of these texts, but with the gospel of Marcion and its collection of ten letters attributed to Paul.

 According to Tertullian, scripture should be neither an object of investigation nor the rule of faith,[[31]](#footnote-31) which is the true authority.[[32]](#footnote-32) Consequently, he believes that one cannot argue over the correct interpretation of Scripture. Instead every argument is carried out over the answer to the question to whom the Scripture rightfully belongs,[[33]](#footnote-33) because the actual evidence presented by Scripture is “not expedient.”[[34]](#footnote-34) In this, as we shall see, Tertullian differs fundamentally from the older Irenaeus of Lyons, who, in Book II of his *Adversus haereses*, grounds his arguments in Scripture and, above all, takes issue with his opponents on this basis.[[35]](#footnote-35) Tertullian, by contrast, is of the opinion that “heretics have no right to challenge the Church’s appeal to Scripture, because Christians own the Scriptures,” while heretics “have nothing to do with the Scriptures,”[[36]](#footnote-36) or as he puts it:

[2] For no Divine word is so unqualified or so unlimited in its application that the words alone can be used in argument and their real purport be disregarded. [3] But among first principles I lay this down: that there was a one and definite Truth taught by Christ, which the nations are bound by every means to believe, and therefore to seek, so that when they have found it they may believe it. [4] Yet surely an indefinite search for a single and definite teaching is impossible. Thou must seek until thou findest, and thou must believe when thou hast found. And then nothing more remains for thee to do, save to keep what thou hast believed provided that thou believest also that there is nothing else to be believed, and therefore nothing remains to be sought for, since thou hast found and believed what was taught by Him Who bids thee seek for nothing beyond that which He taught.”[[37]](#footnote-37)

For Tertullian, the words of the Gospel (here, the previously cited verses *Lk.* 11:9; *Mt.* 7:7) are “divine utterances” (*voces divinae*)that do not grant any margin or space to interpretation. The text defines meaning, and everything should be clear and unambiguous to readers, because Christ “taught an assured doctrine.”  Searching for the truth does not require research, let alone open-ended research; it requires the ability to grasp and adhere to it and find faith. One finds this truth not in one’s reason, but rather in “what is ours, where our own people are, on the basis of what is ours.” Truth is located in the confines of one’s community and can only be discovered if any question does not violate the rule of faith.[[38]](#footnote-38)

Tertullian explains what he means by “ours” and the “rule of faith” as follows:

 [1] Now the Rule of Faith that we may here at this point make our profession of what we maintain is unquestionably that wherein our belief is affirmed [2] that there is but one God, the Selfsame with the Creator of the world, Who produced all things out of nothing through His Word sent down in the beginning of all things; [3] that this Word is called His Son, Who in the Name of God was seen under divers forms by the patriarchs, was ever heard in the prophets, and lastly was brought down by the Spirit and Power of God the Father into the Virgin Mary, became Flesh in her womb, and being born of her lived as Jesus Christ; [4] that thereafter He proclaimed a new law and a new promise of the Kingdom of Heaven, wrought miracles, was crucified, and on the third day rose again, was caught up into the heavens, and sat down at the right hand of the Father; [5] that He sent the Vicarious Power of the Holy Spirit to lead believers; that He will come with glory to take the saints into the enjoyment of life eternal and of the heavenly promises, and to adjudge the wicked to fire perpetual, after the resurrection of both good and bad has taken place together with the restoration of their flesh. [6] This Rule, taught (as it will be proved) by Christ, admits no questionings amongst us, save those which heresies introduce and which make heretics.[[39]](#footnote-39)

Instead of a historical narrative, Tertullian offers the “rule taught by Christ,” which follows a certain theological chronology. He omits the history of the beginnings of Christianity. To contemporary Christian ears it may seem unbelievable that Tertullian orients his readership towards this rule of faith, not Scripture:

Faith is posited in a Rule: it hath a Law, and Salvation that cometh from the observance of the Law, whereas argumentative skill depends upon curious inquiry, and possesses a fame derived solely from zeal in practice.[[40]](#footnote-40)

The law enclosed in the Rule of Faith is that of the Old and even more so of the New Testament. Tertullian opposes the acceptance of this rule of faith to skillful argumentation and in-depth study of the Scripture, which he views as inspired by excessive curiosity and addiction to scholarly status.

             That said, Tertullian does consult Scripture to fill the gaps in his rule of faith and to determine where the rule ends and Scripture begins. In doing so, he refers to Jesus Christ,

who “while he was living on earth, Himself declared what He was, what He had been, what was His Father's will which He carried out, what was the duty of man that He laid down, either openly to the people or privately to His disciples, out of the number of whom He had attached to Himself twelve special ones who were destined to be the teachers of the nations (*Lk.* 24:50; *Mt.* 28:19). [3] Consequently, when one of them was struck off (*Lk.* 24:9.33; *Mt*. 28:16; *Mark* 16:14; *Acts* 1:26; 2,14), He bade the eleven remaining ones to go and teach all nations, who were to be baptized into the Father and into the Son and into the Holy Spirit (*Mt*. 28:19). [4] Immediately, therefore, the Apostles (whose title denotes their being sent), having added to their number by lot a twelfth, Matthias, in the place of Judas (*Acts* 1:12-26), on the authority of a prophecy in a Psalm of David (*Ps*. 109:8; *Acts* 1:20), and having obtained the promised power of the Holy Spirit for miracles and for utterance (*Acts* 2:1-13), first throughout Judaea bore witness to the faith in Christ Jesus; and, having founded Churches, then went forth into the world and spread abroad the same doctrine of the same Faith to the nations. [5] In like manner, too, they founded churches in every city, from which the rest of the churches hereafter have derived the transmission of their faith and the seeds of their doctrine, and are daily deriving them in order to become churches. [6] Thus these churches themselves are also reckoned as Apostolic because they are the offspring of Apostolic churches.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Tertullian’s own position in this narrative is unmistakably clear. As a follower of the “New Prophecy,” Tertullian not only emphasizes the election of the twelve apostles, but also the prophecy-inspired election of Matthias and the Holy Spirit. Starting with the twelve “special ones,” the story leads to the proclamation of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the foundation of churches in all cities, and finally the further mission, which grows like a genealogical branch or a family tree, with the establishment of the first “apostolic churches,” that is, the mother- and foundational churches of the faith, by the Twelve.[[42]](#footnote-42) There is an implicit chronological authority embedded in this historical church structure and the way in which Tertullian draws on material in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles to explain the beginnings of Christianity.[[43]](#footnote-43) The passage also highlights Tertullian’s genealogical way of understanding the multitude of different churches as growing out of and being dependent on the one, original apostolic one.[[44]](#footnote-44) As proof of their unity he points to the mutual granting of peace, the designation of “brotherhood” and the practice of mutual hospitality, which recall  *Acts* 4:32-37.[[45]](#footnote-45) Heresies, according to Tertullian, always emerge later than orthodoxy, which from the outset serves as the standard against which deviations can be discovered and measured. And though he admits that such people already existed at the time as the apostles, but fell away from the Church,[[46]](#footnote-46) he nonetheless maintains that heresies are always subsequent to and deviant from orthodoxy and for this reason have no claim to Scripture or Tradition. He sees this confirmed by the fact that Scripture already warns of heresies[[47]](#footnote-47) and that most heresies appeared only after the reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE).[[48]](#footnote-48) Among the “Apostolic Churches where the very thrones of the Apostles at this very day preside over their own districts, where their own genuine writings are read which speak their words and bring the presence of each before our minds,” Tertullian counts those of Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus and Rome, four cities which are mentioned in the canonical *Acts of the Apostles* and whose people were also addressed by Paul.[[49]](#footnote-49) According to Tertullian, Rome’s authority is reinforced above all by the martyrdoms of Peter, Paul, and John.[[50]](#footnote-50)

              An important moment in Tertullian’s construction of the beginnings of Christianity, from which he himself was not far removed, is his pronounced expectation of the Lord’s return. which can be felt from Tertullian’s first works.[[51]](#footnote-51) His claim that the end of time (*extremitas temporum*) would commence immediately after the death of Maximilla, the Phrygian prophetess, as she herself predicted, may actually explain both his desire to “tighten discipline and demand asceticism” and his increased awareness of the works of the Holy Spirit.[[52]](#footnote-52) Tertullian points in particular towards the millennial kingdom—which follows an apocalyptic spectacle that he reports in detail—that begins with the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem, a coming “down from heaven for 1000 years after Christ’s Resurrection.” Tertullian sees this affirmed in the Old and the New Testament as well as in the “sermon of the new prophecy,” “which is our faith.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Accordingly, the “restoration of Judea” is a “heavenly promise,” which is why the “kingdom on earth,” that is, the “city of Jerusalem,” is “of divine origin.” The Phrygian prophecy, however, states that a visible image of this city already exists and

was recently fulfilled, during the expedition to the East: for it is admitted, even on heathen men’s evidence, that in Judaea for forty days there was a city suspended from the sky at the break of morning, that the whole fashion of the ramparts faded out as day advanced, and at other times it suddenly disappeared. This city we affirm has been provided by God for the reception of the saints by resurrection, and for their refreshment with abundance of all blessings—spiritual ones—in compensation for those which in this world we have either refused or been denied. For it is both just, and worthy of God, that his servants should also have joy in that place where they have suffered affliction in his name.[[54]](#footnote-54)

            Whatever one may think about Tertullian’s report of this vision, he clearly saw it as a historical reality that proved the validity of the Phrygian’s prophecy. Scholars have attempted to downplay Tertullian’s declared self-assignmentand attachment to this Phrygian prophecy and his separation (*disiunctio*) from the church of the psychics. But there are good reasons to assume that his explicit statements about his and his (imagined?) group’s departure (he speaks gladly of “us” (*nos*)[[55]](#footnote-55) and the rhetorically introduced “you” (*vos*)) indicate an intentional move away from the Roman Church and an embrace of an increasingly charismatic and prophetic cultic practice later in life. His writings, at least, refer to the others as members of a separate church community.[[56]](#footnote-56)

              Looking at Tertullian’s construction, there is a certain tension between his emphasis on spirituality and thus his lack of interest in the historical church, on the one hand, and his account of its creation and his emphasis on tradition—which he insists on in relation to heretics— on the other. He sees this tradition as having been brought to Carthage by God and Christ via the Apostles and the apostolic churches they founded and via them to himself. This tradition is at best supported by the Old and New Testaments, in particular the *Acts of the Apostles*. Yet despite the connection that Tertullian drew between his congregation in Carthage and that of Rome, he seems to have known little about the historical formation of the apostolic church in Rome,[[57]](#footnote-57) and grew increasingly alienated from Rome. This also underlies his anti-heretical construction of Christianity’s origins, which for him at best secures the earthly, psychic, but not the heavenly and spiritual church given and maintained by the Holy Spirit. Truth does not derive from bodily and physical experiences, but from the Holy Spirit and is only present in the spirit. In short, according to Tertullian, the true church descended from heaven with Christ and the spirit, inspiring the prophecy that the material world would come to an end in 1000 years.

Aland, K. (1960). Kirchengeschichtliche Entwürfe alte Kirche, Reformation und Luthertum, Pietismus und Erweckungsbewegung. Gütersloh, Mohn.

Balfour, I. L. S. (2017). "Tertullian and Roman law – what do we (not) know? ." Studia Patristica **94**: 11-22.

Barnes, T. D. (1985). Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study, Clarendon.

Beck, A. (1930). Römisches Recht bei Tertullian und Cyprian. Eine Studie zur frühen Kirchenrechtsgeschichte. Halle.

Blumenbach, H. (1735). De Senatusconsulto Q. Septimio. Flor. Presbytero Et. Iureconsulto Tertullianis Liber Viro. Illustri Gottfrido. Leonardo Baudisio Dedicatus. Lipsiae, Langenhemius.

Braun, R. (1965). "Aux origines de la Chrétienté d'Afrique : un homme de combat, Tertullien." Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé **2**(juin): 189-208.

Braun, R. (1977). Devs Christianorvm. Recherches sur le vocabulaire doctrinal de Tertullien. Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes.

Braun, R. (1985). "Tertullien et le montanisme. Église institutionelle et Église spirituelle." Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa **21**: 245-257.

Bray, G. L. (1979). Holiness and the Will of God. Perspectives on the Theology of Tertullian. London, Marshall Morgan Scott.

Butterweck, C. (2002). "Art. Tertullian." TRE **33**: 93-107.

Daly, C. B. (1993). Tertullian the puritan and his influence : an essay in historical theology. Blackrock, Four Courts.

Dunn, G. D. (2004). Tertullian. London [u.a.], Routledge.

Ferguson, E. (2012). Tertullian, Scripture, Rule of Faith, and Paul. Tertullian and Paul T. D. Still and D. Wilhite. London, A&C Black**:** 22-34.

Fredouille, J.-C. (1972). Tertullien et la conversion de la culture antique. Paris, Études Augustiniennes.

Geest, J. E. v. (1972). Le Christ et l'Ancien Testament chez Tertullien recherche terminologique. Nijmegen, Dekker & van de Vegt.

Grosse, S. (2011). Theologie des Kanons. Der christliche Kanon, seine Hermeneutik und die Historizität seiner Aussagen; die Lehren der Kirchenväter als Grundlegung der Lehre von der Heiligen Schrift. Wien Berlin Münster, Lit.

Harnack, A. (1895). "Tertullian in der Litteratur der alten Kirche " Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophisch-historische Klasse: 545-579.

Humfress, C. (2007). Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Lenclud, G. (1994). Qu’est-ce que la tradition? Transcrire les mythologies. Tradition, écriture, historicité. M. Detienne. Paris, Edition Albin Michel**:** 25-44.

Powell, D. (1975). "Tertullianists and Cataphrygians." Vigiliae Christianae **29**(1): 33-54.

Punt, J. (1996). "Paul, hermeneutics and the Scriptures of Israel." Neotestamentica **30**(2): 377-425.

Rankin, D. (1995). Tertullian and the Church. Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press.

Rankin, D. I. (1997). "Was Tertullian a Jurist?" Studia Patristica **31**: 335-342.

Raven, S. (1993). Rome in Africa. London, New York, Routledge.

Steinwenter, A. (1932). "Rez. Alexander Beck, Römisches Recht bei Tertullian und Cyprian (Halle, 1930)." Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung **52**: 412-416.

Stirnimann, J. K. (1949). Die Praescriptio Tertullians im Lichte des römischen Rechts und der Theologie. Freiburg in der Schweiz, Paulusverl.

Tertullianus, Q. S. F., F. o. Refoulé and P. C. d. Labriolle (1957). Traité de la prescription contre les hérétiques. Paris, Éd. du Cerf.

Tertullien, C. Moreschini and R. Braun (2001). Contre Marcion T. IV Livre IV texte critique par Claudio Moreschini,... introd., trad. et commentaire par René Braun. Paris, les Éd. du Cerf.

Vinzent, M. (2016). Tertullian's Preface to Marcion's Gospel. Leuven, Peeters Publishers.

Wilhite, D. E. (2007). Tertullian the African: An Anthropological Reading of Tertullian's Context and Identities. Berlin, Walter de Gruyter.

Wilken, R. L. (1980). The Myth of Christian Beginnings. Notre Dame, IN., Univ. of Notre Dame Pr.

1. See Vinzent, M. (2016). Tertullian's Preface to Marcion's Gospel. Leuven, Peeters Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See Tert., *De praescr.* 14,14; 15,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. A similar idea is proposed by Paul Ricœur, on which, see Lenclud, G. (1994). Qu’est-ce que la tradition? Transcrire les mythologies. Tradition, écriture, historicité. M. Detienne. Paris, Edition Albin Michel**:** 25-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Barnes, T. D. (1985). Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study, Clarendon. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Euseb. Caes., *De eccl. hist*. II 2,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See Barnes, T. D. (1985). Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study, Clarendon. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Tert., *Ad uxor*. I 5,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Tert., *De res.* 59,3. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Vgl. Tert., *De spect.* 1,1-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. So Euseb. Caes., *De eccl. hist*.II 2,4: ταῦτα Τερτυλλιανὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίων νόμους ἠκριβωκώς, ἀνὴρ τά τε ἄλλα ἔνδοξος καὶ τῶν μάλιστα ἐπὶ Ῥώμης λαμπρῶν, ἐν τῇ γραφείσῃ μὲν αὐτῷ Ῥωμαίων φωνῇ, μεταβληθείσῃ δ' ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶτταν ὑπὲρ Χριστιανῶν ἀπολογίᾳ τίθησιν, κατὰ λέξιν τοῦτον ἱστορῶν τὸν τρόπον ... What Eusebius means by his legal knowledge is not clear. Some scholars, like Beck, A. (1930). Römisches Recht bei Tertullian und Cyprian. Eine Studie zur frühen Kirchenrechtsgeschichte. Halle, have thus concluded that Tertullian was a lawyer (*iurisconsultus*), Some, like Steinwenter, A. (1932). "Rez. Alexander Beck, Römisches Recht bei Tertullian und Cyprian (Halle, 1930)." Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung **52**: 412-416. believe he was a *causidicus* (*causas dicere*, a barrister in court). Perhaps Tertullian was a rhetorician who used legal jargon. Hier., *De vir. inl*.53.1 is no more informative about Tertullian and Roman law. The discussion on the topic started with Blumenbach, H. (1735). De Senatusconsulto Q. Septimio. Flor. Presbytero Et. Iureconsulto Tertullianis Liber Viro. Illustri Gottfrido. Leonardo Baudisio Dedicatus. Lipsiae, Langenhemius. For a more recent survey, see Rankin, D. I. (1997). "Was Tertullian a Jurist?" Studia Patristica **31**: 335-342 .who discusses 19 studies between the years 1904 and 1997: Tertullian as lawyer: Harnack, 1904; de Labriolle, 1906; Beck, 1930; Evans, 1959; Rambaux, 1978; Hallonsten, 1984 und Quasten, 1992; Tertullian as barrister: von Campenhausen, 1964 and Rankin himself, 1997; Tertullian as rhetorician: Schlossman, 1906; Colson, 1924; Daly, 1947; Hanson, 1961; Sider, 1971; Barnes, 1971; Fredouille, 1972; Bray, 1977; Aziza, 1977 and Waszink, 1979; see also Balfour, I. L. S. (2017). "Tertullian and Roman law – what do we (not) know? ." Ibid. **94**: 11-22.who adds to Rankin‘s list Stirnimann, J. K. (1949). Die Praescriptio Tertullians im Lichte des römischen Rechts und der Theologie. Freiburg in der Schweiz, Paulusverl, Braun, R. (1977). Devs Christianorvm. Recherches sur le vocabulaire doctrinal de Tertullien. Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes. See also Humfress, C. (2007). Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity. Oxford, Oxford University Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Hier., *De vir. inl*. 53; on Tertullian as a layman, see: Tert., *De exhort. cast*. 7,3; *De mon*. 12,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Tert., *De spect*. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Dunn, G. D. (2004). Tertullian. London [u.a.], Routledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Wilken, R. L. (1980). The Myth of Christian Beginnings. Notre Dame, IN., Univ. of Notre Dame Pr. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Fredouille, J.-C. (1972). Tertullien et la conversion de la culture antique. Paris, Études Augustiniennes. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Bray, G. L. (1979). Holiness and the Will of God. Perspectives on the Theology of Tertullian. London, Marshall Morgan Scott. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Barnes, T. D. (1985). Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study, Clarendon. On Tertullian’s polemics see Braun in Tertullien, C. Moreschini and R. Braun (2001). Contre Marcion T. IV Livre IV texte critique par Claudio Moreschini,... introd., trad. et commentaire par René Braun. Paris, les Éd. du Cerf. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Dunn, G. D. (2004). Tertullian. London [u.a.], Routledge. With reference to Daly, C. B. (1993). Tertullian the puritan and his influence : an essay in historical theology. Blackrock, Four Courts, Raven, S. (1993). Rome in Africa. London, New York, Routledge. One can add Braun, R. (1965). "Aux origines de la Chrétienté d'Afrique : un homme de combat, Tertullien." Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé **2**(juin): 189-208. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Harnack, A. (1895). "Tertullian in der Litteratur der alten Kirche " Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophisch-historische Klasse: 545-579. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Butterweck, C. (2002). "Art. Tertullian." TRE **33**: 93-107. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Tert., *Adv. Marc.* IV 22. See Geest, J. E. v. (1972). Le Christ et l'Ancien Testament chez Tertullien recherche terminologique. Nijmegen, Dekker & van de Vegt. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Tert., *De praescr*. 33,9. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Vinc., *Comm.* 18,24(46) (74,9-78,5 Moxon): „Nam sicut ille [sc. Origenes] apud Graecos, ita hic [sc. Tertullianus] apud Latinos nostrorum omnium facile princeps iudicandus est. Quid enim hoc uiro doctius, quid in diuinis atque humanis rebus exercitatius? Nempe omnem philosophiam et cunctas philosophorum sectas, auctores adsertoresque sectarum omnesque eorum disciplinas, omnem historiarum ac studiorum uarietatem mira quadam mentis capacitate complexus est. Ingenio uero none tam graui ac uehementi excelluit ut nihil sibi paene ad expugnandum proposuerit, quod non aut acumine inruperit aut pondere eliserit? Iam porro orationis suae laudes quis exsequi ualeat? Quae tanta nescio qua rationum necessitate conserta est, ut ad consensum sui, quos suadere non potuerit, impellat; cuius, quot paene uerba, tot sententiae sunt, quot sensus, tot uictoriae. Sciunt hoc Marciones, Apelles, Praxeae, Hermogenes, Iudaei, gentiles, gnostici ceterique, quorum ille blasphemias multis ac magnis uoluminum suorum molibus uelut quibusdam fulminibus euertit. Et tamen hic quoque post haec omnia, hic, inquam, Tertullianus, catholici dogmatis, id est, uniuersalis ac uetustae fidei parum tenax, ac disertior multo quam fidelior, mutate deinceps sententia fecit ad extremum, quod de eo beatus confessor Hilarius quodam loco scribit: *Sequenti*,inquam, *errore detraxit scriptis probabilibus auctoritatem*; et fuit ipse quoque in ecclesia magna temptatio. Sed de hoc nolo plura dicere. Hoc tantum commemorabo quod contra Moysei praeceptum exsurgentes in ecclesia nouellas Montani furias et insana illa insanarum mulierum nouicii dogmatis somnia ueras prophetias adseuerando meruit ut de se quoque et scripturis suis diceretur: *Si surrexerit in medio tui propheta,* et mox: *non audies uerba prophetae illius.* Quare? *quia,* inquit, *temptat uos dominus uester, utrum diligatis eum an non*“ (trans. C.A. Heurtley, NPNF, altered). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Hil., *In Mt.* 5: „Quamquam et Tertullianus hinc volumen aptissimum scripserit: sed consequens error hominis, detraxit sriptis probabilibus auctoritatem“. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Wilken, R. L. (1980). The Myth of Christian Beginnings. Notre Dame, IN., Univ. of Notre Dame Pr. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Tert., *De praescr*. 4,1-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Tert., *Adv. Prax*. 18,2; 20,2-3. Here he shares the principle known from the Rabbis, see Punt, J. (1996). "Paul, hermeneutics and the Scriptures of Israel." Neotestamentica **30**(2): 377-425. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. This distinction is missing in Dunn, G. D. (2004). Tertullian. London [u.a.], Routledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Tertullianus, Q. S. F., F. o. Refoulé and P. C. d. Labriolle (1957). Traité de la prescription contre les hérétiques. Paris, Éd. du Cerf. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Tert., *De praescr*. 14,5. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Tert., *De praescr*. 19,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Grosse, S. (2011). Theologie des Kanons. Der christliche Kanon, seine Hermeneutik und die Historizität seiner Aussagen; die Lehren der Kirchenväter als Grundlegung der Lehre von der Heiligen Schrift. Wien Berlin Münster, Lit. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ferguson, E. (2012). Tertullian, Scripture, Rule of Faith, and Paul. Tertullian and Paul T. D. Still and D. Wilhite. London, A&C Black**:** 22-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Tert., *De praescr*. 9,2-4, trans. here and later by Bindley, with slight alterations. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Tert., *De praescr*. 12,5. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Tert., *De praescr*. 13,1-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Tert., *De praescr*. 14,4: *Fides in regula posita est, habet legem et salutem de obseruatione legis. Exercitatio autem in curiositate consistit, habens gloriam solam de peritiae studio*. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Tert., *De paescr*. 20,2-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Tert., *De praescr*. 21,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Tert., *De praescr.* 22,10: *probantibus actis Apostolorum*. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Tert., *De praescr.* 20,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Acts* 4:32-37: “32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all 34 that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. 36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.” [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Tert., *De praescr*. 35,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Tert., *De praescr.* 29,6. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Tert., *De praescr.* 30,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Tert., *De praescr*. 36,1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. See Aland, K. (1960). Kirchengeschichtliche Entwürfe alte Kirche, Reformation und Luthertum, Pietismus und Erweckungsbewegung. Gütersloh, Mohn. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Braun, R. (1985). "Tertullien et le montanisme. Église institutionelle et Église spirituelle." Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa **21**: 245-257. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Tert., *Adv. Marc.* III 24,4, trans. here and later Evans with alterations. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Tert., *Adv. Marc.* III 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Tert., *Adv. Prax*. 1,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Braun, R. (1985). "Tertullien et le montanisme. Église institutionelle et Église spirituelle." Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa **21**: 245-257. The playing down of Tertullian’s separation from the Roman Church can be seen in Powell, D. (1975). "Tertullianists and Cataphrygians." Vigiliae Christianae **29**(1): 33-54. On the other hand, one may readily agree that Powell is right in stating that we do not know of any formal schism between Tertullian and the Roman Church. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Barnes, T. D. (1985). Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study, Clarendon. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)