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## 271-CHRISTIAN WAYS OF LIFE

of it as a necessary function of marriage,<sup>90</sup> even though he regards his own unmarried state as more desirable.<sup>91</sup>

An ascetic sexual ideal is encouraged by several writers in the early second century. In 2 Clement, for example, there is a quotation from apocryphal tradition: when the Lord was asked when his kingdom would come, he replied, "When the two become one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female neither male nor female." This is taken to mean that "when a brother sees a sister he should have no thought of her as female, nor she of him as male" (2 Clem. 12). According to Ignatius, "if anyone is able to remain in continence in honor of the flesh of the Lord, he is to do so without boasting." Boasting or publicity will bring about his destruction, though the bishop may be informed.<sup>92</sup>

In the Syrian church, it would appear, only unmarried Christians could be baptized,<sup>93</sup> and during the second century there were evidently bishops farther to the west who advocated compulsory continence. One of them was Pinytus of Cnossus in Crete, who was asked by Dionysius of Corinth not to lay such a burden on his people. Pinytus in turn criticized Dionysius for not giving more "solid food" to the Corinthians.<sup>94</sup> It would appear that the rigorist position was not influential, however, outside Syria. The fact that it was advocated by many ascetic-minded Gnostics was not in its favor.

On the other hand, an ascetic view was encouraged by conflict with licentious Gnostics, by opposition to popular slanders about Christian promiscuity, and by the penalty of *stupratio* sometimes imposed upon Christian women by Roman judges.<sup>95</sup>

In the *Didache* (2, 2) we find a list of sexual sins—based on the Decalogue—extended to include acts of pederasty and abortion, as well as the killing of a new born infant. The same condemnation was provided in Barnabas (19, 4–5). In general, the early Christian view was based on the axiom stated by Justin: "we either marry for the purpose of bringing up children or we abstain from marriage and are completely continent."<sup>96</sup> The idea that the sole purpose of marriage was the procreation of offspring, while not to be found in the New Testament (cf. 1 Cor. 7:2–9), was a commonplace in contemporary philosophy<sup>97</sup> and was reiterated by such writers as Athenagoras and Clement of Alexandria. "A man who marries for the sake of begetting children must

<sup>90</sup> 1 Cor. 7:3–5.

<sup>91</sup> 1 Cor. 7:7–8.

<sup>92</sup> Ignatius, *Polyc.* 5, 2.

<sup>93</sup> A. Vööbus, *Celibacy a Requirement for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syrian Church* (Stockholm, 1951).

<sup>94</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.* 4, 23, 7–8.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. F. Augar in *TU* 28, 4 (1905). For Gnostic sex mysticism cf. S. Benko in *VC* 21 (1967), 103–19.

<sup>96</sup> Justin, *Apol.* 1, 29, 1; see J. T. Noonan, Jr., *Contraception* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 9–106.

<sup>97</sup> R. Harder, *Ocellus Lucanus* (Berlin, 1926), p. 122.



