

Details of Theologians Cited

Abelard *see* Peter Abelard.

Anselm of Canterbury (ca. 1033–1109) Born in Italy, Anselm migrated to Normandy in 1059, entering the famous monastery of Bec, becoming its prior in 1063, and abbot in 1078. In 1093 he was appointed archbishop of Canterbury. He is chiefly noted for his strong defense of the intellectual foundations of Christianity, and is especially associated with the “ontological argument” for the existence of God

Aquinas *see* Thomas Aquinas.

Arius (ca. 250–ca. 336) The originator of Arianism, a form of Christology which refused to concede the full divinity of Christ. Little is known of his life, and little has survived of his writings. With the exception of a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, his views are known mainly through the writings of his opponents.

Athanasius (ca. 296–373) One of the most significant defenders of orthodox Christology during the period of the Arian controversy. Elected as bishop of Alexandria in 328, he was forced to resign on account of his opposition to Arianism. Although he was widely supported in the West, his views

were finally recognized after his death at the Council of Constantinople (381).

Augustine of Hippo (354–430) Widely regarded as the most influential Latin patristic writer, Augustine was converted to Christianity at the Northern Italian city of Milan in the summer of 386. He returned to North Africa, and was made bishop of Hippo in 395. He was involved in two major controversies: the Donatist controversy over the church and sacraments, and the Pelagian controversy over grace and sin. He also made substantial contributions to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the Christian understanding of history.

Barth, Karl (1886–1968) Widely regarded as the most important Protestant theologian of the twentieth century. Barth moved away from liberal Protestantism during World War I, and adopted a theological position which placed an emphasis on the priority of divine revelation. His early emphasis on the “otherness” of God in his *Romans* commentary (1919) was continued and modified in his monumental *Church Dogmatics*. Barth’s contribution to modern Christian theology has been immense.

Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330–79) Also known as “Basil the Great,” this fourth-century writer was based in the region of Cappadocia, in modern Turkey. He is particularly remembered for his writings on the Trinity, especially the distinctive role of the Holy Spirit. He was elected bishop of Caesarea in 370.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1906–45) A German Lutheran theologian, influenced by Karl Barth, with a particular interest in ecumenical work during the 1930s. He was arrested in 1943 and hanged by the Nazis in 1945. His letters and papers from prison include significant discussions of the suffering of God, and the need for theology to relate to a “religionless society.”

Brunner, Emil (1889–1966) A Swiss theologian who, while being influenced by his fellow countryman Karl Barth, developed ideas on natural theology which distanced them

during the later 1930s. He is particularly noted for his strongly personalist idea of revelation.

Bultmann, Rudolf (1884–1976) A German Lutheran writer, who was appointed to a chair of theology at Marburg in 1921. He is chiefly noted for his program of “demythologization” of the New Testament, and his use of existential ideas in the exposition of the twentieth-century meaning of the gospel.

Calvin, John (1509–64) A leading Protestant reformer, especially associated with the city of Geneva. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion* has become one of the most influential works of Protestant theology.

Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258) A Roman rhetorician of considerable skill who was converted to Christianity around 246, and elected bishop of the North African city of Carthage in 248. He was martyred in that city in 258. His writings focus particularly on the unity of the church, and the role of its bishops in maintaining orthodoxy and order.

Descartes, René (1596–1650) French philosopher noted for his emphasis on the role of systematic doubt, and the importance of “perfection” in discussion of the nature of God.

Edwards, Jonathan (1703–58) A leading American theologian in the Reformed tradition, noted especially for his metaphysical defense of Christianity in the light of the increasingly influential ideas of the Enlightenment, and his positive statements of traditional Reformed doctrines.

Gregory of Nazianzus (329–89) Also known as “Gregory Nazianzen.” He is particularly remembered for his “Five Theological Orations” written around 380, and a compilation of extracts from the writings of Origen, which he entitled the *Philokalia*.

Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 330–ca. 395) A leading Cappadocian Father, with a special interest in the relation of Christian theology and Platonic philosophy.

Gregory the Great (ca. 540–604) Also known as Gregory I. He was elected as pope in 590 and did much to establish the political power of the papacy, which reached its zenith in

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the Middle Ages. As a theologian, he is particularly noted for his pastoral and exegetical works.

Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1142) A theologian of Flemish or German origin, who entered the Augustinian monastery of St. Victor in Paris around 1115. His most important work is *de sacramentis Christianae fidei* (“On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith”), which shows awareness of the new theological debates which were beginning to develop at this time.

Ignatius of Antioch (ca. 35–ca. 107) A major early Christian martyr, noted for his letters to Christian churches in Asia Minor. Of particular interest is his vigorous defense of the reality of Christ’s human nature and sufferings, in the face of those who wished to maintain that they were simply an appearance.

Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130–ca. 200) Probably a native of Asia Minor, who was elected as bishop of the Southern French city of Lyons around 178. He is chiefly noted for his major writing *adversus haereses* (“Against the heresies”), which defended the Christian faith against Gnostic misrepresentations and criticisms.

Jenson, Robert (b. 1930) North America’s leading Lutheran theologian, noted for his major contributions to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Julian of Norwich (ca. 1342–ca. 1415) Little is known of the life of this English mystic, apart from the details she herself provides in her *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*. For at least part of her active life, she lived as a solitary in the city of Norwich.

Justin Martyr (ca. 100–ca. 165) One of the most noted of the Christian apologists of the second century, with a concern to demonstrate the moral and intellectual credibility of Christianity in a pagan world. His *First Apology* stresses the manner in which Christianity brings to fulfillment the insights of classical philosophy.

Lombard, Peter *see* Peter Lombard.

Luther, Martin (1483–1546) Perhaps the greatest figure in the European Reformation, noted particularly for his doc-

trine of justification by faith alone, and his strongly Christocentric understanding of revelation. His “theology of the cross” has aroused much interest in the late twentieth century. Luther’s famous Ninety-Five Theses on Indulgences (October 1517) are generally regarded as marking the beginning of the Reformation.

Melanchthon, Philip (1497–1560) A noted early Lutheran theologian, and close personal associate of Martin Luther. He was responsible for the systematization of early Lutheran theology, particularly through his *Loci Communes* (first edition published in 1521) and his “Apology for the Augsburg Confession.”

Methodius of Olympus (d. ca. 311) A noted critic of Origen’s theology, particularly the doctrines of the transmigration of souls and a purely spiritual resurrection body. His treatise on the resurrection develops the thesis of the continuity between the pre- and post-resurrection bodies.

Origen (ca. 185–ca. 254) Leading representative of the Alexandrian school of theology, especially noted for his allegorical exposition of scripture, and his use of Platonic ideas in theology, particularly Christology. The originals of many of his works, which were written in Greek, have been lost, with the result that some are known only in Latin translations of questionable reliability.

Paley, William (1734–1805) A leading English exponent of natural theology and the argument from design.

Pascal, Blaise (1623–62) An influential French Roman Catholic writer, who gained a considerable reputation as a mathematician and theologian. After a religious conversion experience in 1646, he developed an approach to his faith which was strongly Christocentric and experiential. His most famous writing is the collection known as the *Pensées*, first gathered together in 1670, some years after his death.

Peter Abelard (1079–1142) French theologian, who achieved a considerable reputation as a teacher at the University of Paris. Among his many contributions to the development of

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medieval theology, his most noted is his emphasis upon the subjective aspects of the atonement.

Peter Lombard (ca. 1100–60) A noted medieval theologian, active at the University of Paris, who was appointed bishop of Paris in 1159. His most significant achievement was the compilation of the textbook known as the “Four Books of the Sentences,” a collection of extracts from patristic writers.

Rahner, Karl (1904–84) One of the most influential of modern Roman Catholic theologians, whose *Theological Investigations* pioneered the use of the essay as a tool of theological construction and exploration.

Sayers, Dorothy L. (1893–1957) English novelist and dramatist, with a strong interest in Christian theology.

Tertullian (ca. 160–ca. 225) A major figure in early Latin theology, who produced a series of significant controversial and apologetic writings. He is particularly noted for his ability to coin new Latin terms to translate the emerging theological vocabulary of the Greek-speaking Eastern church.

Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225–74) Probably the most famous and influential theologian of the Middle Ages. Born in Italy, he achieved his fame through his teaching and writing at the University of Paris and other Northern universities. His fame rests chiefly on his *Summa Theologiae*, composed towards the end of his life and not totally finished at the time of his death. However, he also wrote many other significant works, particularly the *Summa contra Gentiles*, which represents a major statement of the rationality of the Christian faith.

Thomas à Kempis (ca. 1380–1471) A leading representative of the *Devotio Moderna*, who is widely accepted to be the author of the classic work of spirituality known as the *Imitatio Christi* (“The Imitation of Christ”).

Tillich, Paul (1886–1965) A German Lutheran theologian who was forced to leave Germany during the Nazi period, and settled in the United States. He held teaching positions at Union Theological Seminary, New York, Harvard Divinity

School, and the University of Chicago. His most significant theological writing is the three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1951–64).

Vincent of Lérins (died before 450) A French theologian who settled on the island of Lérins. He is particularly noted for his emphasis on the role of tradition in guarding against innovations in the doctrine of the church, and is credited with the formulation of the so-called “Vincentian canon.”

Wesley, Charles (1707–88) An English writer of hymns and a theologian, noted for his Pietist emphases and hostility to Calvinism. Along with his brother John, he contributed to a significant revival within eighteenth-century English Christianity.

Wesley, John (1703–91) An English theologian, pastor, and hymn-writer, remembered especially as the founder of Methodism. Like his brother Charles, he was deeply influenced by Pietism, which had a considerable impact on his early theology. His theology found its expression in hymns and sermons, rather than works of systematic theology.

Zinzendorf, Nicolas Ludwig von (1700–60) A German writer who reacted against the rationalism of the theology of his day, and emphasized the emotional and experiential aspects of Christian faith. There is a clear connection between Zinzendorf’s ideas and those of Pietism. He is remembered especially as the founder of a religious community at Herrnhut.

Zwingli, Huldrych (1484–1531) Also known as Ulrich Zwingli. A leading Swiss reformer, particularly associated with the vigorous denial of the real presence of Christ at the eucharist, a view usually designated “Zwinglianism.” He died in battle, as a result of his attempts to spread his reforming ideas in his native Switzerland.