

Clement of Alexandria is a pleasant change from the narrow fanaticism often displayed by his predecessors. His mining of a variety of Greek philosophical ideas allows him to move beyond merely scripture and tradition to seek a way beyond faith alone where the intellect drives an incomplete journey to perfection.

Clement sees the Greek philosophical tradition as a source of ideas analogous to the traditions passed down through the law by the Jews. He incorporates Aristotelian logic, metaphysics from Plato and especially Stoic ideas of ethics. With Clement the unconscious Christian dependence on Hellenist ideas becomes acknowledged and so no longer targets for attack.

This allows a more optimistic view than his predecessors and a cheerful outlook a world away from the militant stance of Tertullian. He doubts the literal slant upon physical resurrection as seen in Justin and Irenaeus. He sees the Logos as “the mediator of everything in which the divine becomes manifest.”¹ This becomes the method by which man is educated into growth. This growth continues after death with our sins subject to fire and divine education to allow the completion of spiritual growth and fitness for the beatific vision.

Because he believed all good things come from the creator God, he does not deny life and takes a measured position between those insisting on celibacy, abstinence and vegetarianism and those approving licence and luxury.

¹ Paul Tillich, *A History Of Christian Thought* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968, 55.