

Harmony 2.9-Monasticism and the Spread of the Church during the reign of Constantius

Note: Because this section contains only material from Sozomen, we have altered the format to save space and make reading easier. Only sections from Sozomen are contained within.

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Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
	<p>3.13.6 Many others, accounting it absurd to consume their time in altercations about words, quietly adopted the beliefs taught by the council of Nicaea. Paul, bishop of Constantinople, Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, the entire multitude of monks, Antony the Great, who was still alive, his disciples, and a great number of Egyptians and of other places in the Roman territory, firmly and openly maintained the doctrines of the Nicaean council throughout the other regions of the East. As I have been led to allude to the monks, I shall briefly mention those who flourished during the reign of Constantius.</p>	
Famous Egyptian monks		
	<p>3.14.1 I shall begin my account with Egypt and the two men named Macarius, who were the celebrated chiefs of Scetis and of the neighboring mountain; the one was a native of Egypt, the other was called Politicus, because he was a citizen and was of Alexandrian origin. They were both so wonderfully endowed with Divine knowledge and philosophy that the demons regarded them with terror and they performed many extraordinary works and miraculous cures.</p> <p>3.14.2 The Egyptian, the story says, restored a dead man to life, in order to convince a heretic of the truth of the resurrection from the dead. He lived about ninety years, sixty of which he passed in the deserts. When in his youth he commenced the study of philosophy, he progressed so rapidly that the monks nicknamed him "old child." And at the age of forty he was ordained presbyter.</p> <p>3.14.3 The other Macarius became a presbyter at a later period of his life. He was proficient in all the exercises of asceticism, some of which he devised himself. And what practices he heard among other ascetics he carried through to success in every form, so that by thoroughly drying up his skin, the hairs of his beard ceased to grow.</p> <p>3.14.4 Pambo, Heraclides, Cronius, Paphnutius, Putubastus, Arsisius, Serapion the Great, Piturion, who dwelt near Thebes, and Pachomius, the founder of the monks called the Tabennesians, flourished at the same place and period.</p> <p>3.14.5 The attire and government of this sect [the Pachomians] differed in some respects from those of other monks. Its members were, however, devoted to virtue. They condemned the things of earth, inspired the soul to heavenly contemplation and prepared it to quit the body with joy.</p> <p>3.14.6 They were clothed in skins in remembrance of Elias because, it appears to me, they thought that the virtue of the prophet would be thus always retained in their memory. And that they would be enabled, like him, to resist manfully the seductions of amorous pleasures, to be influenced by similar zeal, and be incited to the practice of sobriety by the hope of an equal reward.</p> <p>3.14.7 It is said that the peculiar vestments of these Egyptian monks had connections to some secret of their philosophy, and did not differ from those (vestments) of others without some adequate cause. They wore their tunics without sleeves in order to teach that the hands ought not to be ready to do presumptuous evil. They wore a covering on their heads called a cowl to show that they ought to live with the same innocence and purity as infants who are nourished with milk and wear a covering of the same form.</p> <p>3.14.8 Their girdle, a kind of scarf, which they wear across the loins, shoulders, and arms, admonish them that they ought to be always ready in the service and work of God. I am aware that other reasons have been assigned for their peculiarity of attire, but what I have said appears to me to be sufficient.</p> <p>3.14.9 It is said that Pachomius at first practiced philosophy alone in a cave, but that a holy angel appeared to him and commanded him to call together some young monks and live with them (for he had succeeded well in pursuing philosophy by himself) and to train them by the laws which were about to</p>	

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
	<p>be delivered to him. For now, he was to possess and benefit many as a leader of communities. A tablet was then given to him, which is still carefully preserved.</p> <p>3.14.10 Upon this tablet were inscribed commands by which he was bound to permit everyone to eat, to drink, to work, and to fast, according to his capabilities of so doing. Those who ate heartily were to be subjected to arduous labor, and the ascetic were to have more easy tasks assigned them.</p> <p>3.14.11 He was commanded to have many cells erected, in each of which three monks were to dwell who were to take their meals at a common chamber in silence and to sit around the table with a veil thrown over the face, so that they might not be able to see each other or anything but the table and what was set before them.</p> <p>3.14.12 They were not to admit strangers to eat with them, with the exception of travelers, to whom they were to show hospitality. Those who desired to live with them were first to undergo a trial period of three years, during which time the most laborious tasks were to be done and, by this method, they could share in their community.</p> <p>3.14.13 They were to clothe themselves in skins and to wear woolen tiaras adorned with purple nails, linen tunics, and girdles. They were to sleep in their tunics and garments of skin, reclining on long chairs specially constructed by being closed on each side, so that it could hold the material of each couch.</p> <p>3.14.14 On the first and last days of the week they were to approach the altar for the communion in the holy mysteries and were then to unloose their girdles and throw off their robes of skin. They were to pray twelve times every day, as often during the evening, and were to offer up the same number of prayers during the night. At the ninth hour they were to pray three times. And when about to partake of food they were to sing a psalm before each prayer.</p> <p>3.14.15 The whole community was to be divided into twenty-four classes, each of which was to be distinguished by one of the letters of the Greek alphabet, so that each might have a designation fitting to the grade of its conduct and habit. Thus, the name of Iota was given to the simpler, and that of Zeta or of Xi to the crooked, and the names of the other letters were chosen so that the purpose of the order most fittingly answered the form of the letter.</p> <p>3.14.16 These were the laws by which Pachomius ruled his own disciples. He was a man who loved men and was beloved of God, so that he could foreknow future events and was frequently allowed to converse with the holy angels. He resided at Tabenna, in Thebais, hence the name Tabennesians, which still continues.</p> <p>3.14.17 By adopting these rules for their government they became very renowned and, in process of time, increased so vastly that they reached to the number of seven thousand men. But the community on the island of Tabenna with which Pachomius lived consisted of about thirteen hundred. The others resided in the Thebais and the rest of Egypt. They all observed one and the same rule of life and possessed everything in common. They regarded the community established in the island of Tabenna as their mother, and the rulers of it as their fathers and their princes.</p> <p>3.14.18 About the same period, Apollonius became celebrated for his profession of monastic philosophy. It is said that from the age of fifteen he devoted himself to philosophy in the deserts and that, when he attained the age of forty, he went according to a Divine command he then received to dwell in regions inhabited by men.</p> <p>3.14.19 Likewise, he had a community in the Thebais. He was greatly beloved of God and was endowed with the power of performing miraculous cures and notable works, and he instructed others in philosophy with great goodness and kindness. He was acceptable to such a degree in his prayers that nothing of what he asked from God was denied him, but he was so wise that he always gave prudent requests and such as the Divine Being is ever ready to grant.</p> <p>3.14.20 I also believe that Anuph the divine lived about this period. I have been informed that from the time of the persecution, when he first professed his attachment to Christianity, he never uttered a falsehood nor desired the things of earth. All his prayers and supplications to God were duly answered, and he was instructed by a holy angel in every virtue. However, let what we have said of the Egyptian monks now suffice.</p>	
Monasticism spreads into Palestine		
	<p>3.14.21 The same species of philosophy was about this time cultivated in Palestine, after being taught in Egypt, and Hilarion the divine then acquired great renown. He was a native of Thabatha, a village situated near the town of Gaze, towards the south, which received its name from a strong wind that falls upon the sea nearby.</p>	

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	<p>3.14.22 When he was studying grammar at Alexandria, he went out into the desert to see the monk Antony the Great, and in his company learned to adopt a similar philosophy. After spending a short time there, he returned to his own country, because he was not allowed to be as secluded as he wished, on account of the multitudes who flocked around Antony.</p> <p>3.14.23 On finding his parents dead, he distributed his inheritance among his brethren and the poor. And without reserving anything whatever for himself, he went to dwell in a desert situated near the sea, about twenty stadia from his native village.</p> <p>3.14.24 His cell residence was a very little house and was constructed of bricks, chips and broken tiles. It was of such a width, height, and length that no one could stand in it without bending the head, or lie down in it without drawing up the feet. For in everything he strove to accustom himself to hardship and to overcoming luxuriousness.</p> <p>3.14.25 We have not known him to yield any of these in the high reach of his unboastful and tested self-control. He contended against hunger and thirst, cold and heat, and other afflictions of the body and of the soul.</p> <p>3.14.26 He was earnest in conduct, grave in speech, had a good memory, and was an accurate student of the Holy Scriptures. He was so beloved by God that even now, many afflicted and possessed people are healed at his tomb. It is remarkable that he was first buried on the island of Cyprus, but that his remains are now deposited in Palestine.</p> <p>3.14.27 For it so happened that he died during his residence in Cyprus and was buried by the inhabitants with great honor and respect. But Hesychas, one of the most renowned of his disciples, stole the body, conveyed it to Palestine, and buried it in his own monastery. From that period, the inhabitants conducted a public and brilliant festival every year.</p> <p>3.14.28 For it is the custom in Palestine to bestow this honor on those among them who have attained renown by their goodness, such as Aurelius, Anthedonius, Alexion, a native of Bethagathon, and Alaphion, a native of Asalea. They, during the reign of Constantius, lived religiously and courageously in the practice of philosophy and by their personal virtues caused a considerable increase to the faith among the cities and villages that were still under the pagan superstition.</p>	
Monasticism in Syria		
	<p>3.14.29 About the same period, Julian practiced philosophy near Edessa. He attempted a very severe and incorporeal method of life, so that he seemed to consist of bones and skin without flesh. The history is attributed to Ephraim, the Syrian writer, who wrote the story of Julian's life. God himself confirmed the high opinion which men had formed of him. For He bestowed on him the power of expelling demons and of healing all kinds of diseases, without resorting to the use of drugs, but simply by prayer.</p> <p>3.14.30 Besides the above, many other ecclesiastical philosophers flourished in the territories of Edessa, Amida, and around the mountain called Gaugalius. Among these were Daniel and Simeon. But I shall now say nothing further of the Syrian monks. I shall further on, if God wills it, describe them more fully.</p>	
Monasticism in Armenia		
	<p>3.14.31 It is said that Eustathius, who governed the church of Sebaste in Armenia, founded a society of monks in Armenia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus. He also became the author of a zealous discipline, having to do with what meats were to be eaten or avoided, what garments were to be worn, and what customs and exact course of conduct were to be adopted. Some assert that he was the author of the ascetic treatises commonly attributed to Basil of Cappadocia.</p> <p>3.14.32 It is said that his great exactness led him into certain extravagances which were altogether contrary to the laws of the Church.</p> <p>3.14.33 Many persons, however, justify him from this accusation and throw the blame upon some of his disciples, who condemned marriage, refused to pray to God in the houses of married persons, despised married presbyters, fasted on Lord's days, held their assemblies in private houses, denounced the rich as altogether without part in the kingdom of God, and condemned those who partook of animal food. They did not retain the customary tunics and stoles for their dress, but wore a strange and unusual outfit, and made many other innovations.</p> <p>3.14.34 Many women were deluded by them and left their husbands. But, not being able to practice celibacy, they fell into adultery. Other women, under the pretext of religion, cut off their hair, and behaved in a way unfitting for a woman, by dressing themselves in men's apparel.</p>	

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	<p>3.14.35 The bishops of the neighborhood of Gangroe, the metropolis of Paphlagonia, assembled themselves together and declared that such people should be regarded as aliens to the Catholic Church unless, according to the definitions of the Synod, they would renounce each of the formerly mentioned customs.</p> <p>3.14.36 It is said that from that time, Eustathius exchanged his clothing for the stole and made his journeys alongside other priests, thus proving that he had not introduced and practiced these novelties out of self-will, but for the sake of a godly asceticism. He was as renowned for his discourses as for the purity of his life. To confess the truth, he was not eloquent, nor had he ever studied the art of eloquence. Yet he had admirable sense and a high capacity of persuasion, so that he convinced several men and women, who were living in fornication, to enter upon a temperate and earnest course of life.</p> <p>3.14.37 It is related that a certain man and woman, who had devoted themselves to a life of virginity according to the custom of the Church, were accused of living together. He strove to make them cease from their interactions. Finding that his protest produced no effect upon them, he sighed deeply and said that a woman who had been legally married had, on one occasion, heard him speak on the advantage of celibacy. And she was so deeply affected by this that she voluntarily abstained from legitimate intercourse with her own husband. The weakness of his conviction was, on the other hand, indicated by the fact that the parties mentioned above persisted in their illegal course. Such were the men who originated the practice of monastic discipline in the regions above mentioned.</p>	
Monasticism spread West		
	<p>3.14.38 Although the Thracians, the Illyrians, and the other European nations were still inexperienced in monastic communities, yet they were not altogether lacking in men devoted to philosophy. Of these, Martin, the descendant of a noble family of Saboria in Pannonia, was the most illustrious. He was originally a noted warrior, and the commander of armies. But, accounting the service of God to be a more honorable profession, he embraced and lived a life of philosophy.</p> <p>3.14.39 At first, he zealously defended the orthodox doctrines against the attacks of the Arian bishops, and after being plotted against and frequently beaten by the people, he was driven from the country. He then went to Milan, and dwelt alone. He was soon, however, obliged to leave his refuge on account of the plots of Auxentius, bishop of that region, who did not hold soundly to the Nicene faith.</p> <p>3.14.40 And he went to an island called Gallenaria, where he remained for some time, satisfying himself with roots of plants. Gallenaria is a small and uninhabited island lying in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Martin was afterwards appointed bishop of the church of Tarracinae (Tours). He was so richly endowed with miraculous gifts that he restored a dead man to life, and performed other signs as wonderful as those done by the apostles.</p> <p>3.14.41a We have heard that Hilary, a man divine in his life and conversation, lived about the same time, and in the same country. Like Martin, he was obliged to flee from his place of abode, on account of his zeal in defense of the faith.</p>	
Other notable churchmen of the time		
	<p>3.14.41b I have now related what I have been able to ascertain concerning the individuals who practiced philosophy in piety and ecclesiastical rites.</p> <p>3.14.42 There were many others who were noted in the churches about the same period on account of their great eloquence, and among these the most distinguished were, Eusebius, who administered the priestly office at Emesa; Titus, bishop of Bostra; Serapion, bishop of Thmuis; Basil, bishop of Ancyra; Eudoxius, bishop of Germanicia; Acacius, bishop of Caesarea; and Cyril, who controlled the see of Jerusalem. A proof of their education is in the books they have written and left behind, and the many things worthy of record.</p> <p>3.15.1 Didymus, an ecclesiastical writer and president of the school of sacred learning in Alexandria, flourished about the same period. He was acquainted with every branch of science, and was conversant with poetry and rhetoric, with astronomy and geometry, with arithmetic, and with the various theories of philosophy.</p> <p>3.15.2 He had acquired all this knowledge by the efforts of his own mind, aided by the sense of hearing, for he became blind during his first attempt at learning letters. When he became an adolescent, he displayed an ardent desire to acquire speech and training, and for this purpose he visited the teachers of these branches, but learned by hearing only, where he made such rapid progress that he speedily comprehended the difficult theorems in mathematics. It is said that he learned the letters of the alphabet by means of tablets in which they were engraved, and which he felt with his fingers; and that he made himself acquainted with syllables and words by the power of attention and memory, and by listening attentively to the sounds.</p>	

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	<p>3.15.3 His was a very extraordinary case, and many people journeyed to Alexandria for the express purpose of hearing, or, at least of seeing him.</p> <p>3.15.4 His firmness in defending the doctrines of the Nicaean council was extremely displeasing to the Arians. He easily carried conviction to the minds of his audience by persuasion rather than by power of reasoning, and he caused each person to judge for himself on the ambiguous points. He was much sought after by the members of the Catholic Church, and was praised by the orders of monks in Egypt, and by Antony the Great.</p> <p>3.15.5 It is said that when Antony left the desert and went to Alexandria to give his testimony in favor of the doctrines of Athanasius, he said to Didymus, "It is not a severe thing, nor does it deserve to be grieved over, O Didymus, that you are deprived of the organs of sight which are possessed by rats, mice, and the lowest animals. But it is a great blessing to possess eyes like angels, with which you can contemplate keenly the Divine Being, and see accurately the true knowledge."</p> <p>3.15.6 In Italy and its territories, Eusebius and Hilary, whom I have already mentioned, were well-known for strength in the use of their native tongue, whose treatises concerning the faith and against the heterodox, they say, were widely accepted. Lucifer, as the story goes, was the founder of a heresy which bears his name, and flourished at this period.</p> <p>3.15.7 Aetius was likewise held in high esteem among the heterodox; he was a dialectician, apt in syllogism and proficient in debates. He was a diligent student of such fields, but without art. He reasoned so boldly concerning the nature of God, that many persons gave him the name of "Atheist."</p> <p>3.15.8 It is said that he was originally a physician of Antioch in Syria, and that, as he frequently attended meetings of the churches and thought over the Sacred Scriptures, he became acquainted with Gallus, who was then Caesar, and who honored religion much and cherished its professors. It seems likely, that as Aetius obtained the esteem of Caesar by means of these debates, he devoted himself the all the more to these pursuits, in order to progress in the favor of the emperor. It is said that he was well-versed in the philosophy of Aristotle, and frequently attended the schools in which it was taught at Alexandria.</p> <p>3.15.9 Besides the individuals above specified, there were many others in the churches who were capable of instructing the people and of reasoning about the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. It would be too great a task to attempt to name them all.</p> <p>3.15.10 Let it not be accounted strange, if I have bestowed commendations upon the leaders or enthusiasts of the above-mentioned heresies. I admire their eloquence, and their impressiveness in public-speaking. I leave their doctrines to be judged by those who have the right. For I have not been appointed to record such matters, nor is it befitting in history. I am only to give an account of events as they happened, not supplementing my own additions. Of those who at that time became most distinguished in education and discourse and who used the Roman and Greek languages, I have listed in the above narrative as many as I have received an account of.</p>	
Ephraim the Syrian and his influence on Osroëne		
	<p>3.16.1 Ephraim the Syrian was entitled to the highest honors, and was considered the greatest of the Catholic Church. He was a native of Nisibis, or his family was of the neighboring territory. He devoted his life to monastic philosophy, and although he received no instruction, he became, contrary to all expectation, so proficient in the learning and language of the Syrians, that he comprehended with ease the most complicated theorems of philosophy. His style of writing was so full of splendid oratory and richness and temperateness of thought that he surpassed the most approved writers of Greece.</p> <p>3.16.2 If the works of these writers were to be translated into Syriac or any other language, and stripped, as it were, of the beauties of the Greek language, they would retain little of their original elegance and value. The productions of Ephraim have not this disadvantage. They were translated into Greek during his life, and translations are even now being made, and yet they preserve much of their original force, so that his works are not less admired when read in Greek than when read in Syriac.</p> <p>3.16.3 Basil, who was subsequently bishop of the metropolis of Cappadocia, was a great admirer of Ephraim, and was astonished at his learning. The opinion of Basil, who is universally confessed to have been the most eloquent man of his age, is a stronger testimony, I think, to the merit of Ephraim, than anything that could be brought to his praise.</p> <p>3.16.4 It is said that he wrote three hundred thousand verses, and that he had many disciples who were zealously attached to his doctrines. The most celebrated of his disciples were Abbas, Zenobius, Abraham, Maras, and Simeon, in whom the Syrians and whoever among them pursued accurate learning make a great boast. Paulanas and Aranad are praised for their fine speech, although reported to have deviated from sound doctrine.</p>	

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	<p>3.16.5 I am not ignorant that there were some very learned men who formerly flourished in Osroëne, as, for instance, Bardasanes, who devised a heresy designated by his name, and Harmonius, his son. It is related that this latter was well-versed in Greek scholarship, and was the first to subdue his native tongue to meters and musical laws; these verses he delivered to the choirs, and even now the Syrians frequently sing, not the precise copies by Harmonius, but the same melodies.</p> <p>3.16.6 For as Harmonius was not altogether free from the errors of his father, and entertained various opinions concerning the soul, the generation and destruction of the body, and the regeneration which are taught by the Greek philosophers, he introduced some of these beliefs into the lyrical songs which he composed.</p> <p>3.16.7 When Ephraim perceived that the Syrians were charmed with the elegance of the diction and the rhythm of the melody, he became apprehensive, that they would adopt the same opinions. Therefore, although he was ignorant of Grecian learning, he applied himself to the understanding of the meters of Harmonius, and composed similar poems in accordance with the doctrines of the Church, and made also in sacred hymns and in the praises of passionless men. From that period, the Syrians sang the odes of Ephraim according to the law of the ode established by Harmonius.</p> <p>3.16.8 The execution of this work is alone sufficient to attest to the natural endowments of Ephraim. He was as celebrated for the good actions he performed as for the rigid course of discipline he pursued. He was particularly fond of tranquillity. He was so serious and so careful to avoid giving opportunities to slander, that he refrained from the very sight of women.</p> <p>3.16.9 It is related that a female of careless life, who was either desirous of tempting him, or who had been bribed for the purpose, contrived on one occasion to meet him face to face, and fixed her eyes intently upon him. He rebuked her, and commanded her to look down upon the ground, "Why should I obey your command," replied the woman; "for I was born not of the earth, but of you? It would be more just if you were to look down upon the earth from which you sprang, while I look upon you, as I was born of you." Ephraim, astonished at the little woman, recorded the whole transaction in a book, which most Syrians regard as one of the best of his productions.</p> <p>3.16.10 It is also said of him, that, although he was naturally prone to passion, he never exhibited angry feeling toward anyone from the period of his embracing a monastic life. It once happened that after he had, according to custom, been fasting several days, his attendant, in presenting some food to him, let the dish fall on which it was placed. Ephraim, perceiving that he was overwhelmed with shame and terror, said to him, "Take courage. We will go to the food as the food does not come to us". And he immediately seated himself beside the fragments of the dish, and ate his supper.</p> <p>3.16.11 What I am about to relate will suffice to show that he was totally exempt from the love of glory. He was appointed bishop of some town, and attempts were made to take him away for the purpose of ordaining him. As soon as he became aware of what was intended, he ran to the market-place, and showed himself as a madman by stepping in a disorderly way, dragging his clothes along, and eating in public. Those who had come to carry him away to be their bishop, on seeing him in this state, believed that he was out of his mind, and departed. And he, taking the opportunity to escape, remained in concealment until another had been ordained in his place.</p> <p>3.16.12 What I have now said concerning Ephraim must suffice, although his own countrymen relate many other anecdotes of him. Yet his conduct on one occasion, shortly before his death, appears to me so worthy of remembrance that I shall record it here.</p> <p>3.16.13 When the city of Edessa was suffering a severe famine, he left the solitary cell in which he pursued philosophy, and rebuked the rich for permitting the poor to die around them, instead of giving to them out of their excesses; and he demonstrated to them by his philosophy, that the wealth which they were treasuring up so carefully would turn to their own condemnation, and to the ruin of the soul, which is of more value than all riches, and the body itself and all other values, and he proved that because of their actions they were doing nothing for their souls.</p> <p>3.16.14 The rich men, revering the man and his words, replied, "We are not intent upon hoarding our wealth, but we know of no one with whom we can trust the distribution of our goods, for all are prone to seek after money, and to betray the trust placed in them." "What do you think of me?" asked Ephraim. On their admitting that they considered him an efficient, excellent, and good man, and worthy, and that he was exactly what his reputation confirmed, he offered to undertake the distribution of their alms.</p> <p>3.16.15 As soon as he received their money, he had about three hundred beds fitted up in the public porches; and here he tended those who were ill and suffering from the effects of the famine, whether they were foreigners or natives of the surrounding country. When the famine ceased, he returned to the</p>	

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	<p>cell in which he had previously dwelt; and, after a few days had passed, he died. He attained no higher clerical degree than that of deacon, although he became no less famous for his virtue than those who are ordained to the priesthood and are admired for the conversation of a good life and for learning. I have now given some account of the virtue of Ephraim.</p> <p>3.16.16 It would require a more experienced hand than mine, to furnish a full description of his character and that of the other illustrious men who, about the same period, had devoted themselves to a life and career of philosophy; and for some things, it would require such a writer as he himself was. The attempt is beyond my powers as a result of my weakness of language, and ignorance of the men themselves and their exploits.</p> <p>3.16.17 Some of them concealed themselves in the deserts. Others who lived within the civilization of the cities, strove to preserve an ordinary appearance, and to seem as if they differed in no respect from the multitude, working out their virtue, concealing their true value that they might avoid the praises of others. For as they were intent upon the exchange of future benefits, they made God alone the witness of their thoughts, and had no concern for outward glory.</p>	
Spread of the Christian religion		
	<p>3.17.1 Those who presided over the churches at this period were noted for personal conduct, and, as might be expected, the people whom they governed were earnestly attached to the worship of Christ. Religion daily progressed, by the zeal, virtue, and wonderful works of the priests, and of the ecclesiastical philosophers, who attracted the attention of the pagans, and led them to renounce their superstitions.</p> <p>3.17.2 The emperors who then occupied the throne were as zealous as was their father in protecting the churches, and they granted honors and tax exemptions to the clergy, their children, and their slaves. They confirmed the laws enacted by their father, and enforced new ones prohibiting the offering of sacrifice, the worship of images, or any other pagan observance.</p> <p>3.17.3 They commanded that all temples, whether in cities or in the country, should be closed. Some of these temples were presented to the churches, when either the ground they stood on or the materials for building were required. The greatest possible care was bestowed upon the houses of prayer, those which had been defaced by time were repaired, and others were erected from the foundations in a style of extraordinary magnificence. The church of Emesa is one most worthy to see and famous for its beauty.</p> <p>3.17.4 The Jews were strictly forbidden to purchase a slave belonging to any other heresy than their own. If they transgressed this law, the slave was confiscated to the public; but if they administered to him the Jewish rite of circumcision, the penalties were death and total confiscation of property.</p> <p>3.17.5 For, as the emperors were desirous of promoting by every means the spread of Christianity, they deemed it necessary to prevent the Jews from converting those whose ancestors were of another religion, and those who were holding the hope of professing Christianity were carefully reserved for the Church; for it was from the pagan multitudes that the Christian religion increased.</p>	

