
Infant Baptism

Apostolic in
Origin

Scripture

Luke 18:15–16 tells us in his Gospel, that

"they were bringing even (βρέφος) infants" to Jesus; and he himself related this to the kingdom of God: "Let the children come to me . . . for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

βρέφος - brephos - a new-born child, an infant, a babe

Scripture

and **St Peter** declared,

"Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is to you and to your *children*"

(Acts 2:38–39).

Scripture

The apostolic Church baptized whole "households" (**Acts 16:30-33***; **1 Cor. 1:16**), a term traditionally encompassing children and infants as well as servants.

While these baptism texts do not specifically mention—nor exclude—infants, the very use of the term "households" indicates a continuing understanding of the family as a unit, as it had always been under the old covenant. (*cf Abraham and his household*)

Scripture

Baptism is the Christian equivalent of circumcision, or "the circumcision of Christ": "In him you were also circumcised with . . . the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead" (**Col. 2:11–12**).

Thus, like circumcision, baptism can be given to children as well as adults. The difference is that circumcision was powerless to save. (**Gal. 5:6, 6:15**),
but "[b]aptism . . . now saves you" (**1 Pet. 3:21**).

Early Church

The first explicit evidence of children of believing households being baptized comes from the early Church—where **infant baptism was uniformly upheld and regarded as Apostolic.**

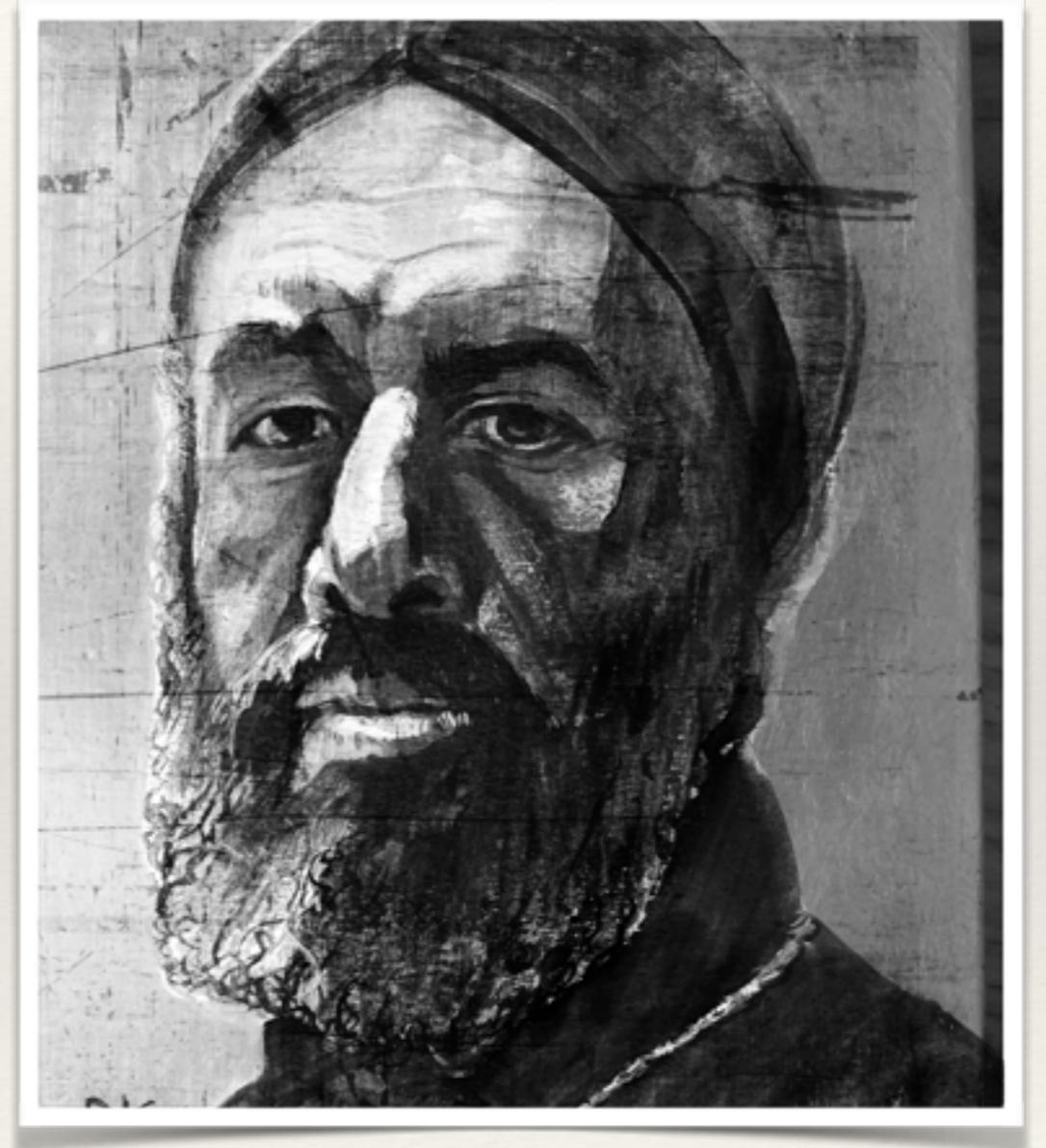
In fact, the **only reported controversy on the subject was a third-century debate *whether or not to delay baptism until the eighth day after birth,*** like its Old Testament equivalent, **circumcision!**

(more on this later).

Irenaeus

"He [Jesus] came to save all through himself; all, I say, who through him are **reborn in God: infants, and children, and youths, and old men.** Therefore he passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, sanctifying infants; a child for children, sanctifying those who are of that age . . . [so that] he might be the perfect teacher in all things, ...

(Against Heresies 2:22:4
[A.D. 189]).

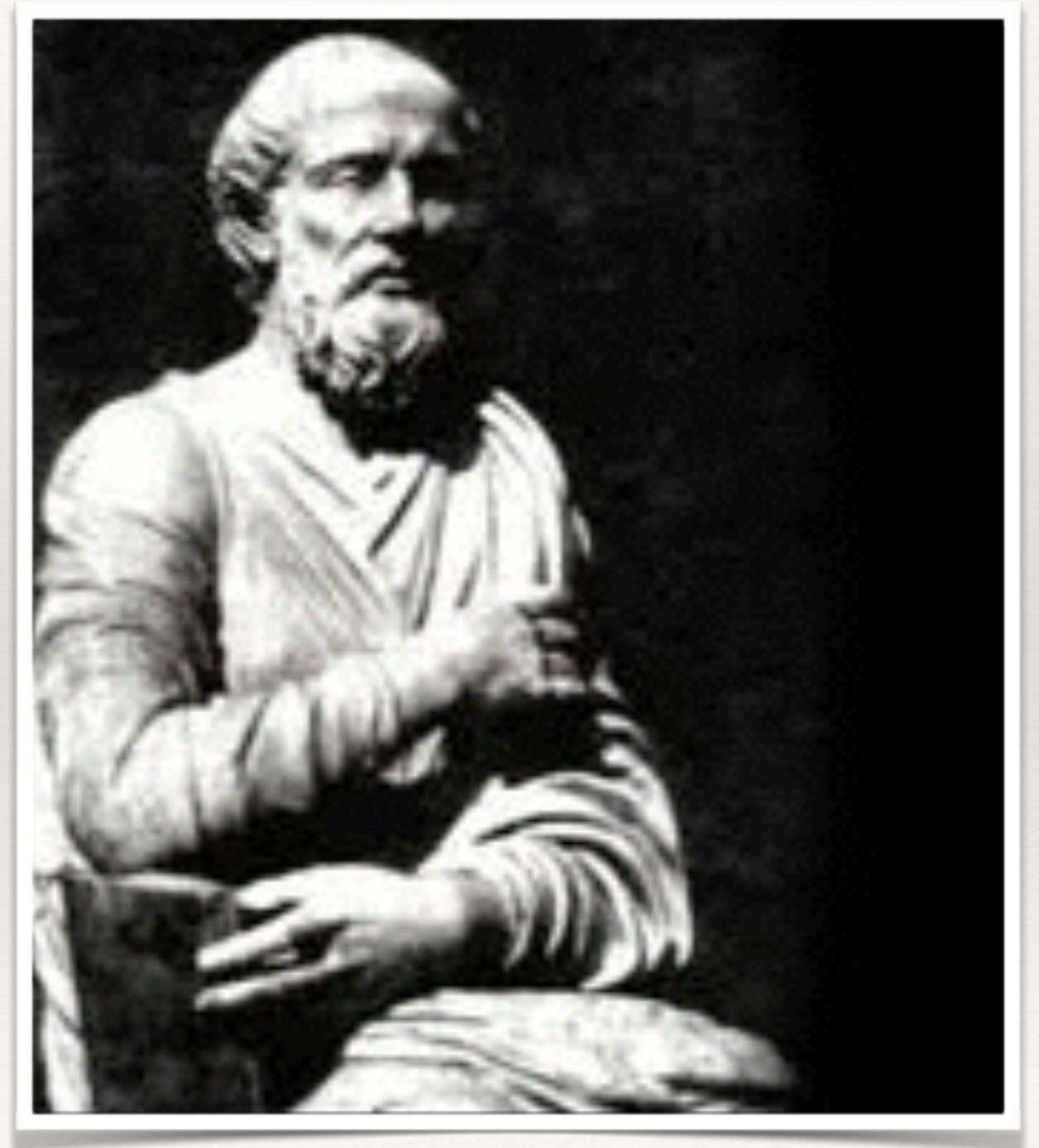


Student of Polycarp

Hyppolytus

"Baptize first the children, and if they can speak for themselves let them do so. Otherwise, let their parents or other relatives speak for them."

(The Apostolic Tradition 21:16 [A.D. 215]).

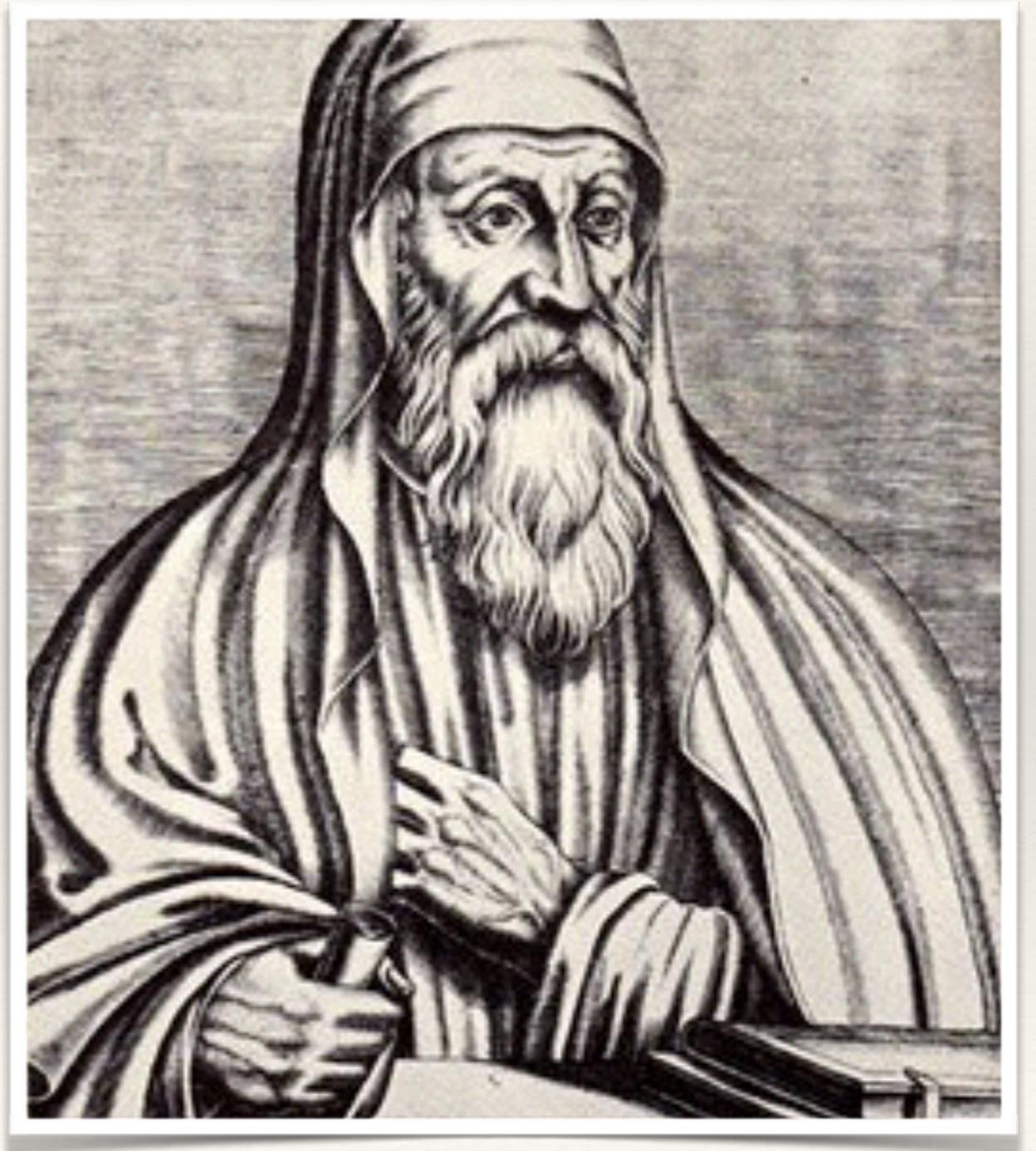


Origen

"Every soul that is born into flesh is soiled by the filth of wickedness and sin. . . . In the Church, baptism is given for the remission of sins, and, according to the usage of the Church, baptism is given even to infants. *If there were nothing in infants which required the remission of sins and nothing in them pertinent to forgiveness, the grace of baptism would seem superfluous*"

Homilies on Leviticus 8:3

A.D. 248



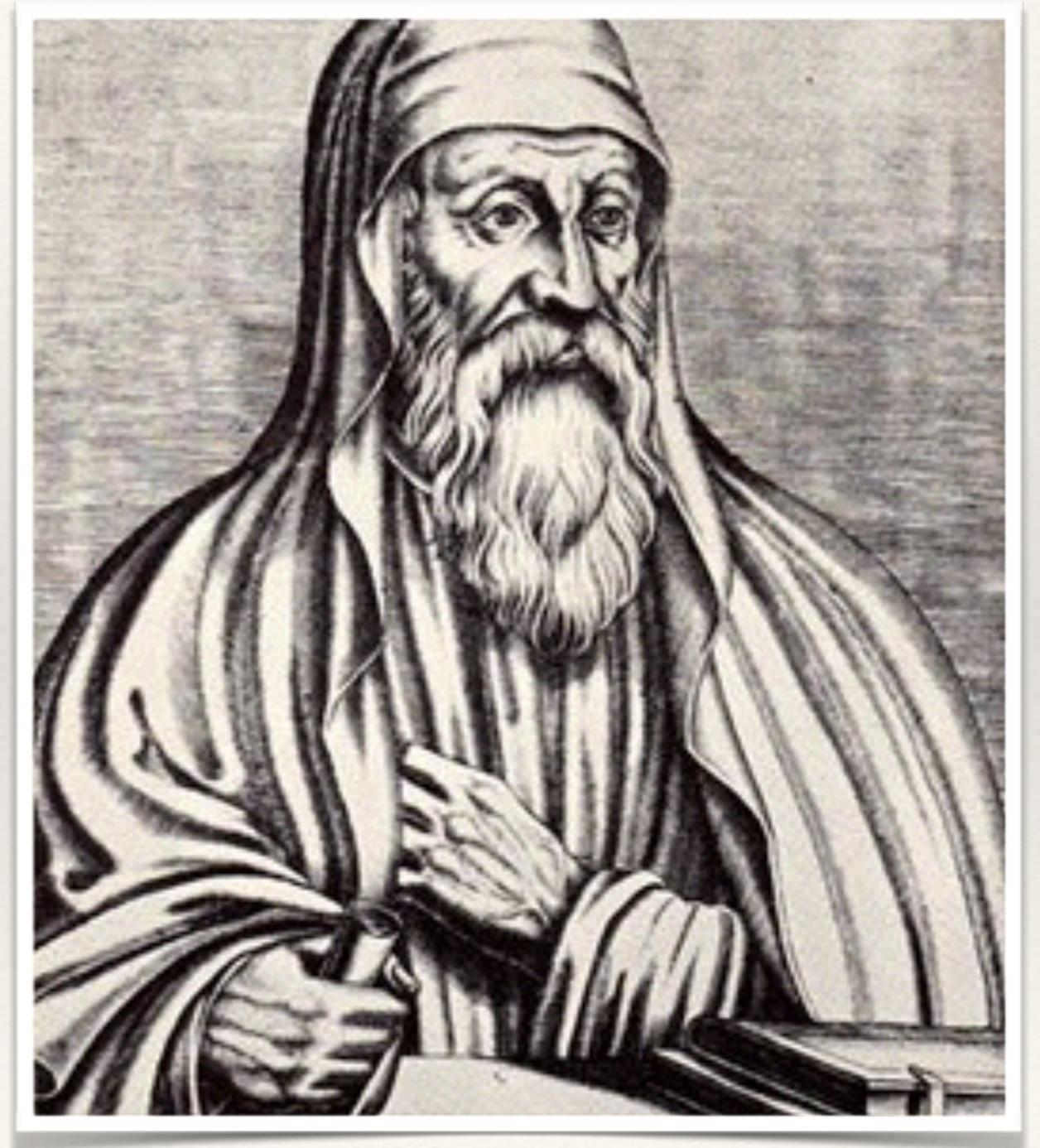
Origen

"The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants.

The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of [original] sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit"

Commentaries on Romans 5:9

A.D. 248



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"What did the Fathers do except seek and present the clear and open testimonies of Scripture?" — Martin Luther, Against Latomus (1521)

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Council of Carthage (AD 253)

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Key Facts:

<i>Date</i>	253
<i>Location</i>	Carthage
<i>Number of Participants</i>	18/66
<i>Purpose</i>	To criticize bishop Terapius of Bulla for admitting the priest Victor to communion before he gave proper penance.
<i>Key Events</i>	The council did not annul Terapius' acceptance into communion once again; baptisms were approved prior to the eighth day; Pope Lucius was congratulated on his return from exile.

Surviving Documents:

[Epistle](#) (Cyprian of Carthage)

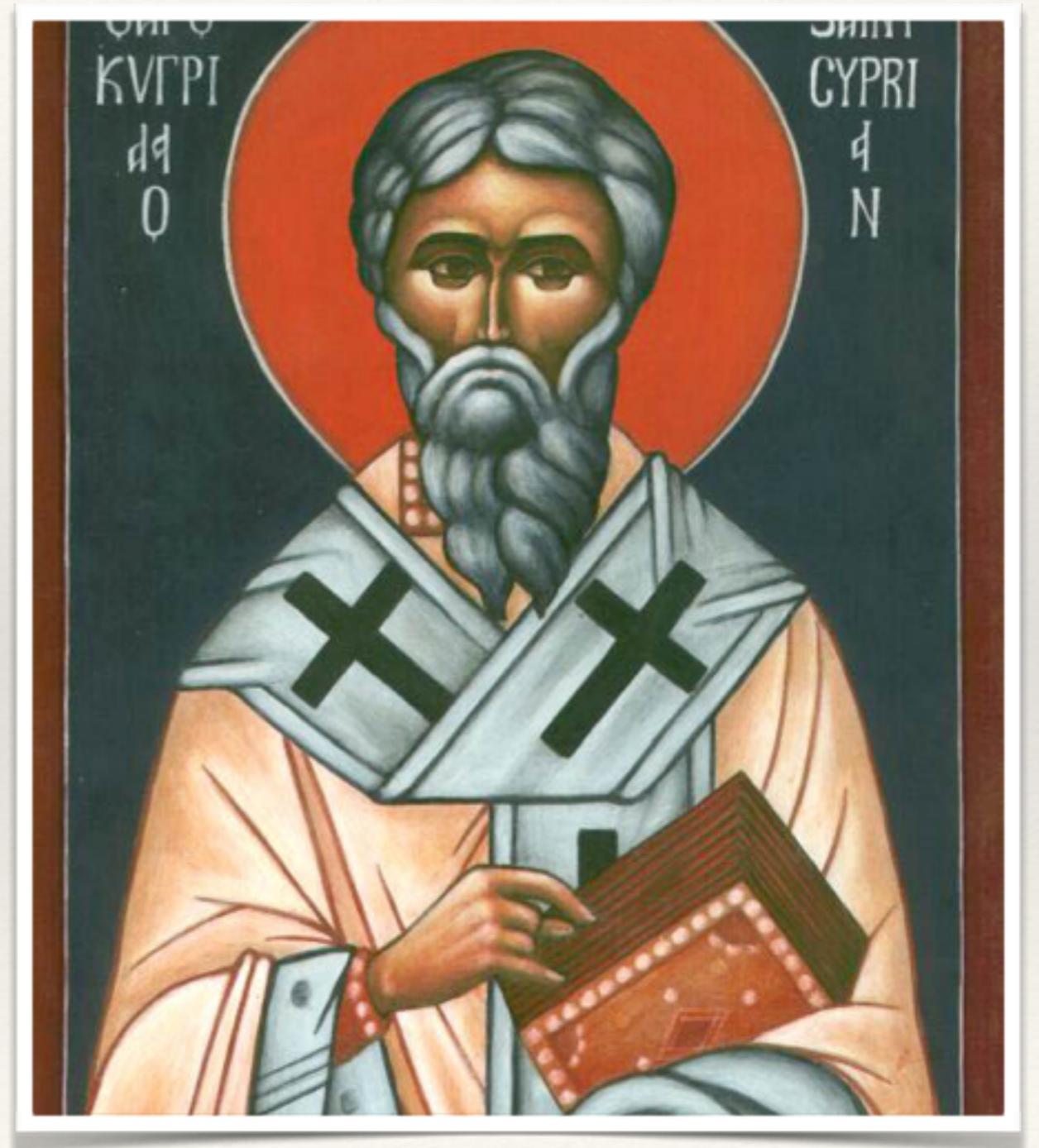
Cyprian of Carthage

"As to what pertains to the case of infants: *You [Fidus] said that they ought not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, that the old law of circumcision must be taken into consideration, and that you did not think that one should be baptized and sanctified within the eighth day after his birth.* In our council it seemed to us far otherwise. No one agreed to the course which you thought should be taken. Rather, we all judge that the mercy and grace of God ought to be denied to no man born" (Letters 64:2 [A.D. 253]).



Cyprian of Carthage

"If, in the case of the worst sinners and those who formerly sinned much against God, when afterwards they believe, the remission of their sins is granted and no one is held back from baptism and grace, **how much more, then,** should an infant not be held back, who, having but recently been born, has done no sin, except that, **born of the flesh according to Adam,** he has contracted the contagion of that old death from his first being born. For this very reason does he [an infant] approach more easily to receive the remission of sins: because the sins forgiven him are not his own but those of another" (*ibid.*, 64:5).



Modern Traditions of Men

Of this **modern not Apostolic belief** that one must *wait* to be baptized, St Cyprian and the choir of Apostolic Church Fathers before him, might simply quote Jesus:

“You nullify the word of God in favor of your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many such things.”

Mark 7:13 re.: qorban



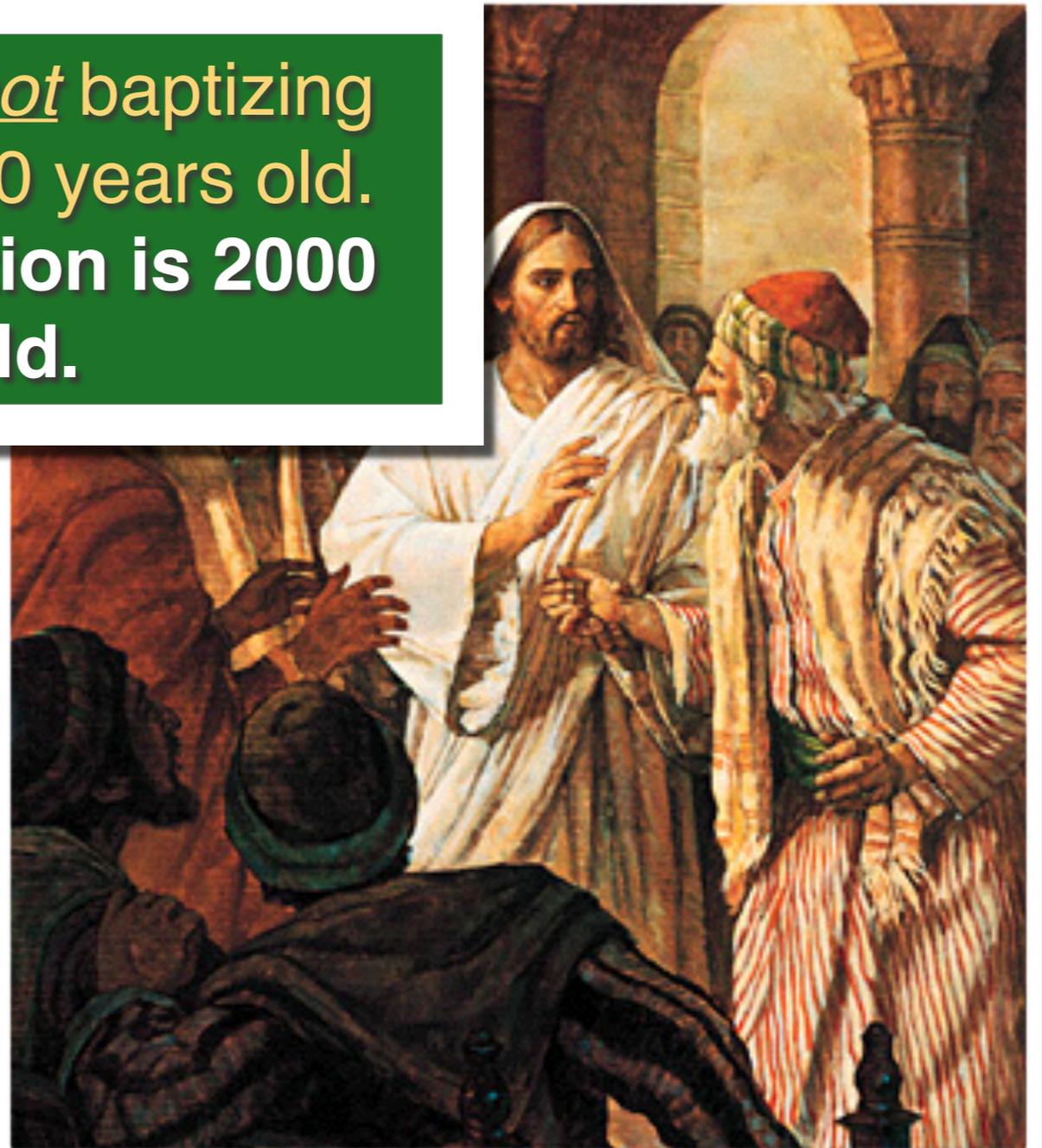
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The tradition of *not* baptizing infants is only 460 years old. **Apostolic Tradition is 2000 years old.**

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