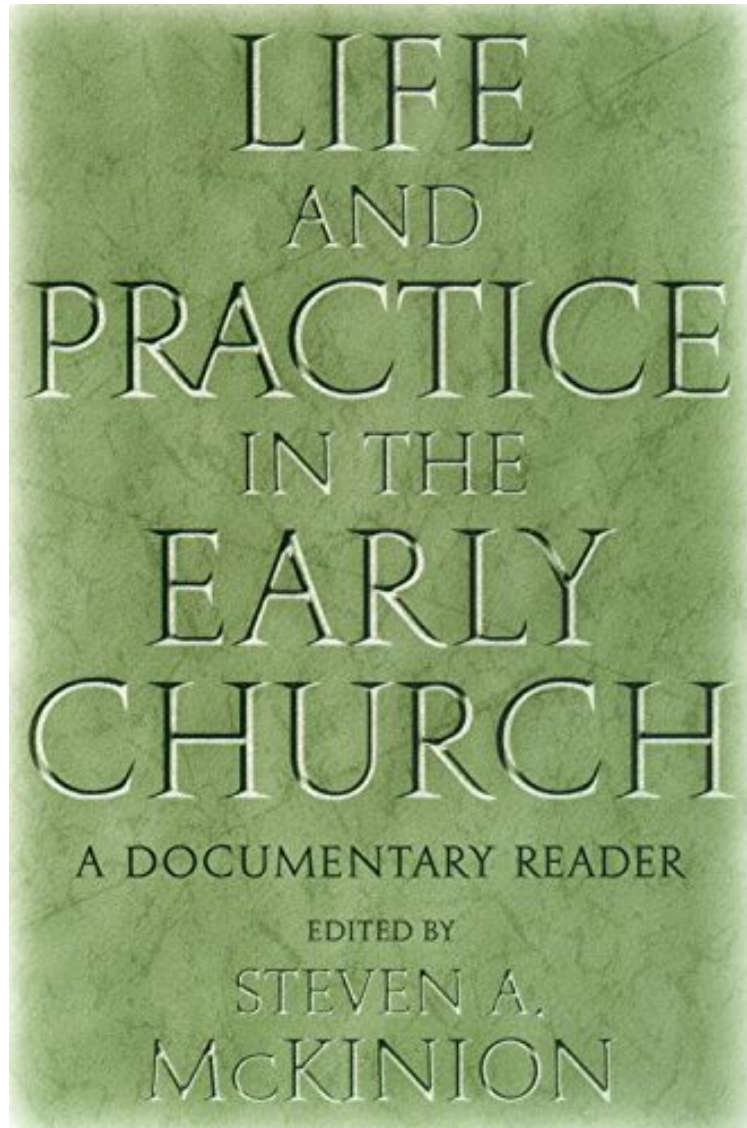


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Life and Practice in the Early Church brings together a range of primary texts from the church's first five centuries to demonstrate how early Christians practiced their faith. Rather than focusing on theology, these original documents shed light on how early believers "did church," addressing such practical questions as, how did the church administer baptism? How were sermons delivered? How did the early church carry out its missions endeavors? Early Christian writings reveal a great deal about the tradition, as well as the wider culture in which it developed. Far from being monolithic, the documents which present the voices of the early church fathers in their own words demonstrate variation and diversity regarding how faith was worked out during the patristic period. The texts illuminate who was eligible for baptism, what was expected of worshippers, how the Eucharist was celebrated, and how church offices and their functions were organized. Contextual introductions explain practices and their development for those with little prior knowledge of Christian history or tradition. The pieces included here, all in accessible English translation, represent such sources as Justin Martyr, Tertullian, the Cappadocians, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, and Augustine.

"The selections recapture the drama and counter-cultural nature of becoming a Christian and creating a community that stood out from the crowd...This collection offers easy access to early Christianity's daily life."-The Princeton Seminary Bulletin "This is a most judicious and perceptive collection. No existing selection of Patristic material has such focus. It will provide an invaluable textbook, and will stimulate discussion of how contemporary Christians may learn from the ancient Church."-Iain Torrance, author of Christology after Chalcedon About the Author Steven A. McKinion is Associate Professor of Church History at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. He is the author of Words, Imagery, and the Mystery of Christ.