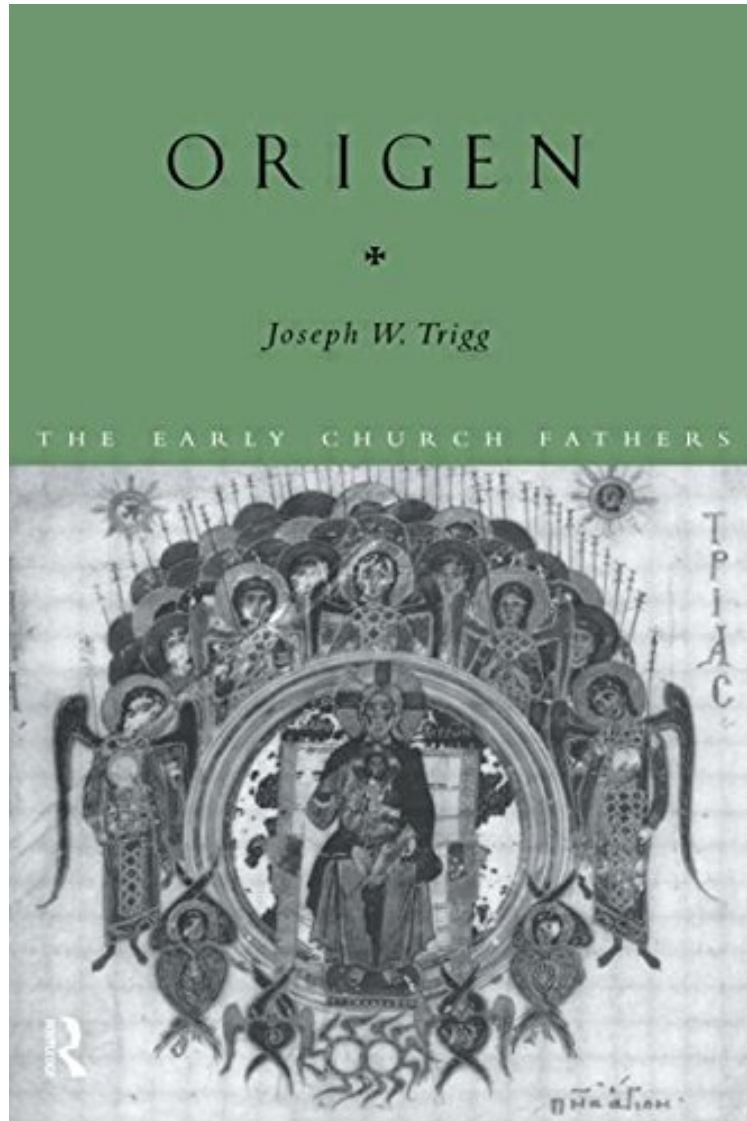


(Library ebook) Origen (The Early Church Fathers)

Origen (The Early Church Fathers)

Joseph W. Trigg

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Joseph W. Trigg : Origen (The Early Church Fathers) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Origen (The Early Church Fathers):

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Indispensable Introduction to Origen By Theophilus Another reviewer aptly wrote, "For more than four centuries, Alexandria was the intellectual center of the Roman Empire, and later the Pharos of Oriental Christianity. Its Bishop Athanasius played a vigorous part in defining basic Christian belief, while Cyril was the benchmark of Orthodox Christology. One of the most remarkable mystical traditions of

early Christianity, monastic life, began in Egypt in the third and into the fourth centuries. For the first six centuries, until the advent of Islam, Alexandria was the leader in Christian thought, theological doctrine, and liturgical innovation. In mid fifth century, after the schismatic council of Chalcedon, became then partially isolated by Byzantine- Roman church politics, even before the Arab conquest. The Christian Church in Egypt has preserved many early features down to the present day Coptic Orthodox Church."Origen is yet another fruit of early Egyptian Christianity. As one of the most prolific and groundbreaking early Christian writers, Origen is oftentimes difficult to understand, a fact compounded by the dichotomy between advanced seers and common believers in early Alexandrine Christianity. Oftentimes, Origen's commentary was directed to the common believer while offering hidden mysteries to the advanced seer. This book is a wonderful introduction to this prolific Early Church Father on several levels. It offers a basic introduction to those who are just beginning a comprehensive study of Origen while offering helpful in-depth analyses of Origen's texts to the intermediate and advanced scholars. Moreover, it places Origen's life and writings in constant social context to help the reader better understand the different motivations behind Origen's beliefs and writings. Although Origen is not considered a saint in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt, he is nonetheless one of many gems of early Egyptian Christianity. 64 of 67 people found the following review helpful. The Bible Through a Different Glass By E. T. Veal Origen (c. 185 - c. 250) is, with Tertullian, one of the two prolific ante-Nicene Christian authors who is not recognized as a saint. That verdict on Tertullian, an apostate to the Montanist sect, is not surprising. Origen, however, was the most prominent Christian teacher and scholar of his day, remained steadfastly loyal to the Church, died as a martyr and was admired fervently by such great and unquestionably orthodox theologians as Gregory of Nyssa. Notwithstanding such credentials, his ideas fell under suspicion soon after his death, and "Origenism" has since borne a taint of heresy. Joseph Trigg, an Episcopal clergyman and author of a previous life of Origen ("Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-century Church" (1983)), would like to restore his subject's reputation and introduce him to contemporary Christians. To that end, he has assembled this anthology of a dozen selections: seven Biblical commentaries, four homilies and a letter to St. Gregory the Wonder Worker. Most of these are excerpts from, or fragments of, longer works, but each is substantial in itself. None will be familiar to the non-specialist. Not included are Origen's best known treatise (the source of many later doubts about his orthodoxy), "Peri Archon" ("On First Principles"), and his apologia "Contra Celsum", both readily found elsewhere and neither typical of the author's work. Origen's great subject was the interpretation of Scripture. These texts illustrate his approach, which differs strikingly from that of any modern commentator. The underlying theory is that, because God is the author of the Bible, every word of the text is significant. But, because God is supremely subtle, that significance is not evident to the untutored reader. The plain, obvious meaning is, to Origen's mind, usually the least important. The deepest, spiritual truths can be uncovered only through learned scholarship, augmented by prayer. These principles lead to minute, painstaking analysis. Book I of the commentary on John's Gospel, 46 pages in this edition, is devoted to discussing two words. The conclusions reached through this effort can be unexpected and may often look arbitrary, as when Jeremiah's lamentations over Jerusalem are construed as an allegory of the mission of the Apostles or Jesus's washing of his disciples' feet is taken as symbolic of Christian pedagogy. Because this way of reading Scripture is so foreign to our habits, these writings, if perused quickly and carelessly, are more likely to bewilder than enlighten. Origen's method and assumptions obviously bear no resemblance to modern Biblical scholarship, despite his sedulous care to establish the most accurate possible text. Nor can he be grouped with the fundamentalists. He agrees with them that the Bible is the very Word (and words) of God. From that premise, he draws the unfundamentalist conclusion that statements of fact are frequently not to be taken literally and that ordinary Christians get little out of Scripture without expert guidance. To read Origen as more than an historical curiosity requires, then, the adoption of an unfamiliar perspective on the Bible. Fr. Trigg's introduction, while offering a useful account of Origen's career and posthumous reputation, unfortunately pays little attention to furnishing equipment for such a feat of intellectual imagination. A work like James Kugel's "The Bible As It Was", dealing with the very similar ancient Jewish hermeneutics, may help supply this need. Origen is one of the most famous names in early Christian history, and this collection, though not fare for a casual Sunday afternoon, is the best available way for laymen to see a great mind at work in its most characteristic mode. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. excellent By Peter excellent

Origen was the most influential Christian theologian before Augustine, the founder of Biblical study as a serious discipline in the Christian tradition, and a figure with immense influence on the development of Christian spirituality. This volume presents a comprehensive and accessible insight into Origen's life and writings. An introduction analyzes the principal influences that formed him as a Christian and as a thinker, his emergence as a mature theologian at Alexandria, his work in Caesarea and his controversial legacy. Fresh translations of a representative selection of Origen's writings, including some never previously available in print, show how Origen provided a lasting framework for Christian theology by finding through study of the Bible a coherent understanding of God's saving plan.

'The extracts from his works are well chosen and clearly translated ... Author and publisher are to be congratulated on

this volume, one of the first five in what promises to be a useful series' - Graham Gould, *Theology*'... we are in Trigg's debt for his labours.' - Thomas O.Loughlin, *Milltown Studies*'... it should whet the appetite of those who read it and encourage them to deepen their acquaintance with its subject ...' - Mary Sheather, *Journal of Religious HIstory*About the AuthorJoseph W. Trigg is Rector of Christ Church (Episcopal), Port Tobacco Parish, La Plata, Maryland. His books include *Origen: the Bible and Philosophy in the Third-century Church* (Atlanta 1983) and *Biblical Interpretation in the series Message of the Fathers of the Church* (Delaware 1988).