

Early Christian (Pre- Augustinian) Views Regarding Infants

Hermas

Those who believed are such as these: They are like innocent infants, in whose heart no wickedness enters and who do not know what evil is but always remain in innocence.

Similiudes IX.xxx.1-3

Barnabas

Since he renewed us in the forgiveness of sins, he made us into another image, so as to have the soul of children, as if he were indeed refashioning us.

Epistle 6:11

Aristides

And when a child has been born to one of them (Christians), they give thanks to God; and if it should die as an infant, they give thanks the more, because it has departed life sinless.

Apology 15:11

Athenagoras

Although all human beings who die are resurrected, not all those resurrected are judged. If justice in the judgment were the only cause of the resurrection, it would follow, of course, that those who have not sinned, namely quit young children, would not be resurrected.

On the Resurrection 14

Irenaeus

Who were those who were saved and received the inheritance? Those obviously who believed in God and kept their love for him, such as Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun, and innocent children, who have no sense of evil. Who are those now who are saved and receive eternal life? Is it not those who love God and believe his promises and "in malice have become like little children"?

Against Heresies IV.xxxviii.3