

circle. By the year 136, he moved to Rome, where it is said that he rose in fame to the point of nearly becoming the Bishop of Rome.

The Valentinian school taught that the Supreme God was incomprehensible and beyond description in any manner, in much the same way that the Jewish Kabbalists viewed the Limitless Light of Ain Soph Aur. Valentinus, like many early Gnostics, stated that the world was not directly created by God, but rather by creator angels, at least insofar as the creation of humanity was concerned. Valentinus also spoke of the demiurge or principal creator who was not equated with the one true God. The creation myth of Valentinus was similar in many ways to that of Saturninus and Basilides. The angels created Adam, however he received an essence from on high which instilled fear into the angels. Due to this fear, the angels attempted to destroy or disfigure their creation; therefore there came about a fall of Adam, or rather a degradation that his creators made him suffer through jealousy.

The pre-existence of the Christ is a basic precept of Valentinian Christology. Valentinus himself claimed to have had a vision of the Logos who appeared to him as a young child. So Valentinus, as did Paul, met the incarnating presence of Christ, and experienced the truth of the Christian Religion, rather than depending on faith based scripture reading or the authority of apostolic lineage, even though he allegedly possessed the apostolic Gnosis through Theudas. For the Valentinians it was Christ alone who was capable of liberating humanity and bestowing the Gnosis to them.

Valentinian Gnosticism became widespread over most of the civilized world including Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Rome, Gaul and Spain. The Valentinians are generally acknowledged as the authors of a number of Gnostic writings such as the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Truth and the Pistis Sophia. His most noted disciples Marcus, Heracleon and Ptolamæus carried on the work of Valentinus.

Marcion also lived during the first half of the second century and was born in Asia Minor on the Black Sea. He was a wealthy ship owner as well as a Bishop in the Church as was his father. Marcion was initially in good standing with the Church primarily due to his substantial financial contributions. After attending a synod in Rome in the year 144 he was excommunicated for heresy. This was most likely due to his doctrines concerning the God of the Old Testament and God as preached by Jesus. Marcion and his followers