

Chapter	Rhetorical Division	Topical Summary
1	<i>exordium</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address to magistrates of Roman Empire. Injustice of hatred of Christian name. • What sort of evil is it when the “criminal” is glad of the accusation?
2	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When charged, Christians are not allowed to defend themselves, which is unjust. • No investigation is done, which is unjust. Correspondence of Pliny the Younger and Trajan. • Torture used to induce Christians say that they are not what they are. • Christians treated differently from all other criminals.
3	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General hatred for Christian name • Sarcasm: “ut quisque hoc nomine emendatur, offendit”(3:4) “When someone has been reformed by this name, he offends”¹ • “Oditur itaque in hominibus innocuis etiam nomen innocuum” (3:5) “Thus, even a harmless name in harmless men is hated”. • Christians are condemned by Empire out of ignorance, and Christians are convicted simply because of a name, not because they have done anything wrong.
4	<i>propositio</i>	<p>“iam de causa innocentiae consistam, nec tantum refutabo quae nobis obicuntur, sed etiam in ipsos retorquebo qui obiciunt”: “My stand is that we are innocent of the charge. Not only will I refute the charges that are brought against us, but I will also turn them against those who make [them]”(4:1)</p>
4	<i>partitio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will make a detailed reply to the crimes we are accused of committing in secret, and show that you commit them openly.(4:2) • Making our existence unlawful is unjust. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If I can show that our existence is good, then your law is bad. • Unjust laws should be reformed. • If you charge that I am incestuous or murder babies, it is unjust of you not to investigate the truth of the matter.

¹ All Chapter:Section references refer to, and all Latin quotations are drawn from, Tertullian's *Apologeticum*, ed. E. Dekkers, *Corpus Christianorum Latinorum*, vol. 1 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1953-). English translations are the author's.

5	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • origin of laws on divinity: among Romans a god's divinity depends upon man's decision. • Tiberius learned of Christ's divinity and, despite the Senate, threatened the accusers of the Christians. (5:2) • Nero, who was a bad man, was first to persecute Christians. • Marcus Aurelius wrote a letter that credits Christian soldier's prayers with breaking a drought in Germany. (5:6)
6	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decadent Roman society ignores its own ancestral laws (6:1-6) • Prudent laws on gods (e.g., banishing Serapis and Isis from Rome), enacted by ancestors, have been repealed. (6:8) • Despite claims to venerate ancestors, modern Romans do not: "Habitu, uictu, instructu, sensu, ipso denique sermone proavis renuntiaſtis²". "By dress, way of life, arrangement, feeling, even in speech itself you have renounced [your] great-grandfathers." (6:9) • I will return to the area in which you primarily define Christians to be lawbreakers, that is, in the eagerness for worshipping gods (which is where antiquity made its greatest mistake) in the proper place ("in quo principaliter reos transgressionis Christianos destinastis, studium dico deorum colendorum, de quo maxime erravit antiquitas...suo loco ostendam")(6:10). • For now, I will reply to the charges you make about our secret crimes.
7	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either prove our baby-killing, baby-eating, incest, and other crimes, or quit accusing us. • Truth and hatred of truth started together, in the reign of Tiberius. • If we always escape detection, when did what we do come out? • Rumor is a curse, and the swiftest of all curses, as you say (6:8). And Rumor is a liar, and only lives while she tells her lies.
8	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reward for our "crimes" is eternal life. • We are people like you, and are no more able to commit the kinds of atrocities you accuse us of than you are.

² *renuntiaſtis* is 2nd pers. pl., perf. act. ind. of *renuntio*. The form is contracted from *renuntiaſtistis*.

9	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The kinds of things you accuse us of have been done by you – e.g., the sacrifice of babies to Saturn was committed in my own country down to the proconsulship of Tiberius. (9:2) • In the “pious city of the descendants of Aeneas (Rome)”, Jupiter is drenched with human blood at his games. • You expose your own unwanted children. (9:7) For us, murder of any kind is forbidden. • In your rites, e.g., when men are dedicated to Bellona, you yourselves drink blood. We do not drink any blood. (9:13) • You also commit incest (if only by mistake) (9:17) • We are guarded by chastity (9:19) • Now, on to our more conspicuous crimes.
10	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Tertullian addresses the issues of sacrificing to the gods, and sacrificing on behalf of the Emperors. Christians are thus accused of sacrilege and treason at the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since we don't sacrifice for ourselves, it wouldn't be logical to sacrifice for others. • If gods are not real we shouldn't worship them. If they are real, Christians would deserve punishment for not worshipping them. • Saturn was a man, as various writers report. If a man, he could not be a god. • I will show that Jove, too, was a man, born of man, and thus all pagan gods were mortal.
11	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Your gods are made, not born. They become gods after death. There is a supreme Deity, however, who made the gods out of men. Otherwise, where would they have obtained their divinity?</p> <p>Counter-argument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Deity would have no need of the gods to make and order the universe (11:5). • You may respond that these men were made gods to reward their merits. But the bad behavior of these gods (rape, murder, theft, etc.) surely doesn't deserve reward. • Your truly good men (Cato, Scipio, etc.) were not made into gods, which shows the folly of your whole argument. (11:16)
12	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Catalogue of tortures and death suffered by Christians for offending what cannot be offended, that is, the non-existent gods.</p>
13	<i>confutatio</i>	<p>“Sed nobis dei sunt, inquis” (13:1): “But, to us, they are gods, you say”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tertullian's reply: But if some of you worship one set of gods, and another group worship some other gods, each of you must be offending the other's gods. <p>Attack on practice of bestowing deity on dead emperors, and of giving god-like honors to the living, but dissolute (e.g., Antinous, the favorite of Hadrian). This practice would insult the existing gods.</p>

14	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your sacrifices consist of offering your trash (14:1). Various misbehaviors of the gods as recounted in literature. Example of Socrates shows how truth has always been hated,
15	<i>narratio</i>	Various examples in pagan literature where gods and their follies are mocked. Bloody "sacrifices" in the arena. Prostitution in the temples. Our religion has none of these, if you would only learn the truth about us.
16	<i>confutatio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not have a god with the head of an ass, and we do not worship a cross, or any other physical idol (like you do). We also do not conceive the Sun to be our god – this idea comes from the fact that we face East to pray (16:9). Caracature of Christ is discussed (16:13).
17	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We worship the One God, who made heaven and earth, the <i>cosmos</i>, as the Greeks call it (meaning "order"). The soul, no matter how mistreated, recognizes God: "O testimonium animae naturaliter Christianae!" ("O testimony of the soul, in its nature Christian!") (17:6)
18	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help us understand Him and his works, he has given us Scripture. At one time, we, too, laughed at all this. We come from among you. Christians are made, not born. (18:4)
19	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among you, antiquity gives validity to religious ideas. Our religion is very ancient, since it started with Moses, the first prophet. Moses lived 1,000 years before the Trojan War, which makes him earlier even than Saturn. Various other discussions of Judaism's antiquity, from which comes the Christian religion.
20	<i>narratio</i>	Power of our Scripture, and proof of divinity, is demonstrated by its ability to predict the future.
21	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Divinity of Christ The story of Christ was reported to Tiberius by Pilate himself (and Pilate was in his secret heart already a Christian). (21:24) If the Deity of Christ is true, the recognition of it makes a man good and requires him to renounce false gods.
22	<i>narratio</i>	Existence of spiritual natures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socrates recognized them. Plato recognized them. Angels and demons exist
23	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your gods confess themselves to be demons. (23:11)

24	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The confession of your gods that they are demons, shows that we worship the One God, and that your religion is not really a religion at all. But among you, it is lawful to worship anything at all, as long as one does not worship the True God.
25	<i>confutatio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tertullian considers the claim that the Romans rule the world as a reward for their religious attitude. One counter argument is that the dieties of the conquered cities would hardly have rewarded foreigners for conquering them. Another counter argument is that the Romans were great before they were religious (25:13). Another counter argument is that the Roman conquests required various sacrileges against the temples and people of the conquered cities.
26	<i>confutatio</i>	Rome is older than some of her gods. Judea lost its power because it sinned against Christ.
27	<i>narratio</i>	Our perseverance in fatih gives us the victory over demonic powers
28	<i>narratio</i>	Tertullian begins his defense against the charge of treason levelled at Christians. This chapter serves as an <i>exordium</i> to the following chapter.
29	<i>confutatio</i>	Let it be proven whether the beings to whom sacrifice is to be offered can give safety to the Emperor. If so, then the charge of treason is valid. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> However, the "beings" are actually made from Caesar's own property (from mines, etc). This proves that our "crime" is just that we do not subordinate the Emperor to his own property. You wage war on people who really know how to pray for the Emperor, and who can obtain his safety through their prayers.
30	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We pray on behalf of the Emperor to the True God. Since the Emperor cannot attack, subjugate, or levy taxes on Heaven, he is subordinate to it.
31	<i>narratio</i>	If you would investigate our beliefs and our books, you would learn that we are peaceable and have been instructed to pray for the civil government. 1 Timothy 2:2 is invoked.
32	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We believe that the longevity of the Roman Empire staves off the end of the world. In addition, we make oaths by "Caesar's health". We believe that God set the Emperors to rule over us.
33	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the Emperor was appointed by God, he is more ours than yours. I do not call the Emperor "god" out of respect for the Emperor. For if he were god, he could not be Emperor.
34	<i>narratio</i>	Tertullian attacks the divinity of the Emperor, pointing out that Augustus himself did not even want to be called "Lord", since that is a term used for God. Moreover, the emperor is really the <i>paterfamilias</i> of the Empire, which is a role that is incomptable

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35	<i>narratio</i>	Christians do celebrate the holidays in honor of the Emperor, but, unlike the pagans, they do it in a chaste and sober fashion.
36	<i>confutatio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since men who were called Romans are found to be enemies, why is it that we, who are thought to be enemies are denied the name of Romans? • We treat our Emperors in the same way we treat our neighbors: to think, speak, wish, or do evil to anyone is forbidden to Christians.
37	<i>confutatio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians are forbidden to hate anyone. • We are numerous and could rebel against the empire (37:4-6), but have never done so. We are harmless to you and, in fact, because we are so many we reduce the number of potential enemies you could have.
38	<i>narratio</i>	Since Christianity is no threat, we should be included among the tolerated groups ("inter licitas factiones", 38:1).
39	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Since I have proven that Christians are not wrong, I shall now prove that we are good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of Christian prayer for emperors. • Examples of Christian charity. • Voluntary offerings in the church. • Works of love. • Willingness to share our property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Except our wives. On that point we do not follow the practice of pagans. • The Christian "common meal" defended and compared to pagan practices (39:14-19). • Christian assemblies should be allowed: "Cum probi, cum boni coeunt, cum pii, cum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda, sed curia." (When honest, good people come together; when the pious and chaste meet together; it ought not be called a 'faction' but a 'senate') (39:21)

40	<i>narratio</i>	<p>The name 'faction' ought to be applied to those who come together in order to persecute the honest and good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various calamities that are blamed on Christians • "si terra mouit, si fames, si lues, statim Christianos ad leonem adclamantur. Tantos ad unum?" (If there is an earthquake, if there is famine, if a plague, at once they shout 'Christians to the lion'! So many to one [lion]?") (40:2). • Where were the pagan gods when various catastrophes happened in Italy? Moreover, no one back then complained about the Christians when, for example, Hannibal invaded Italy, or the Gauls sacked the Capitolium. • The troubles of the world are lighter today due to the intercessions of the Christians, but Jupiter, not us or our God, gets the credit. (40:14-15).
41	<i>confutatio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the pagans who are, in fact, the real danger to mankind. • Either our God is angry, or your gods. • If the pagan gods injure their own worshippers, as well as the Christians, they are unjust. • If you argue that the Christians' God injures His own worshippers, you ought to realize that He treats everyone the same on earth, because He is waiting for the end of the world to impose the final judgement. • Natural disasters come from God to chastise you, but to warn us. • In any event, we know that nothing matters in this life. We are merely anxious to get on to the next.
42	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Tertullian turns to another charge: we Christians are not good business people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assertions that Christians perform the trades just as well as pagans. • Refutation of charges that Christianity hurts temple revenue. The counter argument is that alms should be given to people, not the pagan gods.
43	<i>narratio</i>	<p>The people who really should complain about the Christians hurting trade are pimps, assassins, magicians, astrologers and their ilk.</p>
44	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Tertullian points out that the thieves and various no-goods who are haled into court are never accused of the crime of being Christian, and that the Christians who are brought into court are never accused of being thieves.</p>

45	<i>narratio</i>	Why are Christians so law-abiding? It is possible to conceal one's crimes from earthly judges, but not from God. Since we fear God, we are not committing crimes.
46	<i>confutatio</i>	<p>Tertullian addresses the counter-argument that the philosophers promote the same fine ideals as do the Christians, and so Christianity ought to be considered another philosophy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He points out that, if the argument is true, then Christians ought to have the same freedoms as philosophers. • Moreover, philosophers attack the gods, complain about the Emperors, and are rewarded, not punished. • Contrasts are drawn between the argumentativeness and sophistry of philosophers and the good behavior of Christians. • Tertullian points out that philosophers tear down truth but Christians guard it.
47	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tertullian describes various ways in which philosophers have distorted truth. • Various ideas about God that are help by Platonists, Epicureans and Stoics. • All these false ideas come from the Christian truth(47:11), and it is the spirits of error that have produced these falsehoods. • Since our ideas are older, then they are more true: "Si de nostris sacramentis, ut de prioribus, ero fideliora sunt nostra" (47:14).
48	<i>narratio</i>	<p>Tertullian sarcastically attacks the transmigration of souls: "Multis etiam locis ex otio opus erit, si velimus ad hanc partem lascivire, quis in quam bestiam reformari videretur." (48:3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian idea that a person comes back as that same person is more worthy of belief. • Bodily resurrection defended. • God's power sufficient. • God's judgement.

49	<i>narratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tertullian asserts that it is in no ones' interest to call ideas false or silly (as the philosophers do) if it is in the interests of all that these ideas be true. • Even if the Christian ideas are false and silly, they harm no one. • Your power over me depends on my will, since it is I who claim to be a Christian. Thus you have no real power over me.
50	<i>peroratio</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cruelty of the punishments against the Christians only proves their innocence. • Your cruelties simply help us gain adherents: "Semen est sanguis Christianorum" ("The blood of Christians is seed") (50:13). • Many pagans preach endurance of pain and death, but our deeds attract more disciples than their words. • Who would not want to join us, since we offer the grace of God? • Tertullian closes with "Ut est aemulatio diuinae rei et humanae, cum damnatur a uobis, a deo absoluihur" ("There is a rivalry between the divine way and man's; when we are condemned by you we are absolved by God.")