

Symeon the New Theologian:

“Faith is shown by deeds like the features of the face in a mirror” (Discourses, 29.4)

1. Irenaeus and Gnosticism

Lecture: Gnosticism

1. The Gnostic Imagination: Cosmology and Cosmogony

2. The Gnostic Savior

3. Gnostic Eschatology

4. Gnostic Ethics

5. Brief Overview of Gnostic History

Simon Magus

Marcion

Valentinus

Manicheism

Mandeans

Kurt Rudolph, Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983/1977).

Giovanni Filoramo, A History of Gnosticism (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

Discussion: Irenaeus Against Heresies

2. Cyprian and Novatianist schism

Martyrs
Confessors
The lapsed

Discussion: Cyprian, On the Unity of the Church

Kenneth Hein, Eucharist and Excommunication: A Study in Early Christian Doctrine and Discipline. Bern: Herbert Lang, 1975.

Lecture: An Apostolic Church

1. The NT Witness to the Apostolic Character of the Church
2. The Early Christian Witness to the Apostolic Character of the Church
3. Irenaeus and the Meaning of Apostolic Succession
p370ff in Early Christian Fathers
4. Reformed Teaching on Apostolic Succession
The Second Helvetic Confession speaks of “the apostles and their successors” (chs 13, 17, 18),
stating that Jesus is:

the most perfect teacher of the world; in whom is hidden the wisdom of God, and which has come to us through the most holy, simple, and most perfect doctrine of all. For he chose disciples for himself whom he made apostles. These went out into the whole world, and everywhere gathered together churches by the preaching of the Gospel, and then throughout all the churches in the world they appointed pastors or teachers according to Christ's command; through their successors he has taught and governed the Church unto this day. (18)

3. Hermeneutics and Preaching

Discussion: Melito of Sardis on Pascha

Lecture: "An Invitation to Patristic Hermeneutics"

1) Tertullian's seven hermeneutical principles (early 3d century):

- 1) Scripture is to be interpreted as a whole in the light of its dominant ideas
- 2) the literal sense must be considered first--a spiritual sense should only be envisioned if the text calls for it [not all texts have literal sense--parables]
- 3) read the text in its immediate context
- 4) interpret the unclear from the clear--obscure passages must be interpreted by later clearer ones
- 5) Scripture does not contradict itself (cf pts 1 and 3)
- 6) interpret according to the rule of faith (regula fidei)--Trinity, Incarnation and church (essentially the Apostles' Creed)--never depart from what the Apostolic Churches believe and teach
- 7) the apostolic faith can never leave the church; heretics have no right to interpret Scripture

2) Origen's Threefold Sense

body	soul	spirit
historical	moral	spiritual

3) Examples of Moral Interpretation

Ambrose and Theodosius

4) Typology

5) What about Allegory? (Antioch and Alexandria)

Galatians 4

Discussion: Origen, On First Principles, Book Four

Chrysostom, Homilies 8 & 10 on Matthew