

# 10 - Early Church Apologists: Irenaeus of Lyons

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;  
~ 1 Peter 5:1-2 ~

“Error, indeed, is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outward form, to make it appear to the inexperienced (ridiculous as the expression may seem) more true than the truth itself.”  
~ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, preface

## I. Irenaeus the Man

### A. Background

### B. Evangelistic Zeal

## II. Irenaeus the Polemicist

### A. A word on pastoral polemics

### B. Against Heresies

#### 1. His Task

- a. To render it impossible for any one to confound Gnosticism with Christianity
- b. To make it impossible for such a monstrous system to survive, or ever to rise again.

#### 2. His Works: A Summary of *Adversus Haereses*

## III. Irenaeus the Churchman

### A. Laboring for Peace - The Quartodeciman Controversy

### B. The True Church and Doctrine

*“For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace; but the Spirit is truth.” 3.24.1*

### C. Apostolic Succession and Church Tradition

#### 1. Biblical Examples

#### 2. Correct Meaning