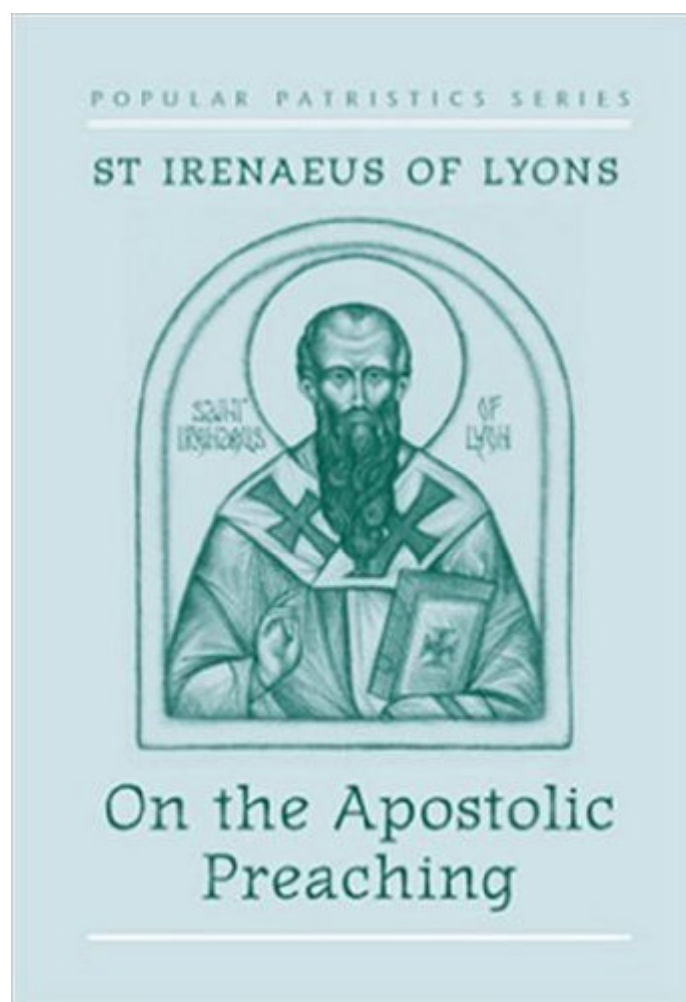


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On The Apostolic Preaching



Synopsis

St Irenaeus, the most important theologian of the second century, lays the foundation for all future Christian thinkers. Here he recounts all the various deeds of God, culminating in the exaltation of His crucified Son, Jesus Christ, and the bestowal of His Holy Spirit and the gift of a new heart of flesh.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"On the Apostolic Preaching" is a recently discovered work of Irenaeus, a second century theologian. Irenaeus is better known for his attacks on Gnosticism but he still has time to write a summery of the Christian faith for his friend Marcianus. In his book, Irenaeus presents the faith chronologically, from the creation of the world to the death of Christ. He masterfully interprets the Old Testament to show that Christ is the focus and the culmination of the Old Testament. When he does this, he is also attempting to refute a common Gnostic belief that the old bloodthirsty God of the Old Testament was a completely different creature from new gentle God of the New Testament. He continues and finds support in the Old Testament for nearly every aspect of Christ and for the actions of the Apostles. This book also contains one of the earliest explanations of the Trinity which is interesting to see how it compares to modern understanding on the subject. This book is a fascinating glimpse into the mind of a second century theologian and an interesting read.

A profound summary of the Christian faith from one of the church's earliest teachers. In this work

are conveyed the idea in scripture of the two seeds - one of promise and one of curse. The parallel of Mary to Eve and the virgin soil giving birth to Adam as the virgin Mary gave birth to the second Adam, Jesus. Profound theological themes that would come up again and again in the teaching of the church are summarized here giving us the sense of an ancient tradition going back to the preaching of the Apostles. This is a wonderful primer for anyone wanting a sweeping overview of scripture and the Church that confirms it in her sacred tradition. What better way to discover the teachings of the Apostles than from a teacher with a theological pedigree including perhaps the most profound of the Apostolic teachers - John to Polycarp and Polycarp to Irenaeus. This is also a solid historical snapshot of the ante-Nicene church and a summary of what they really taught. In this earliest of works we find the deity of Jesus and a rudimentary understanding of the trinity that cannot be glossed over as some late developments in church teaching. For the profound insights alone this is a beneficial work for Christians of all persuasions. For the historical significance it is essential to those interested in early church history. An insightful, inspiring, necessary work to have. The introductory material is about half the book and includes a history of the various source texts and translations. That material is also well written and helpful in placing Irenaeus's work in proper context.

This is a work by Irenaeus that wasn't discovered until fairly recently, so it is not included in the excellent 10 volume Ante-Nicene Fathers set. The work is essentially a summary of the Christian faith by the Bishop Irenaeus (lived around 177 AD). The work 'recounts all the various deeds of God culminated in Jesus Christ.' It, unlike the works of Justin and Athenagoras from the same period, is non-polemical and non-apologetic. There are quite a few notes, a nice introduction, and some Greek words provided in the text when the English translation provided is uncertain.

Assuming that this is a true representation of an actual writing, it is invaluable for all Christians in showing us what the manner of preaching was at the very beginning. Of this fact, I really have no doubt, and accept this writing as that of Irenaeus himself. Irenaeus was taught by Polycarp, who was a disciple of the Apostle John, so we have here a teaching of the preaching told by a second generation source.

This is just one of the books that prove people wrong. Many people spread the lie that Christians cannot know what early church doctrine was. There's a lie going around that the bible was formulated during councils a few hundred years after Christ. However, we have many writings from

people in the first and second century that contradict this lie. Irenaeus is one of these people; he learned partly under Polycarp, who in turn learned under John (one of Jesus' disciples). We have Polycarp's writings also. We also have contemporaries of Polycarp who left us writings. Just Irenaeus alone quotes almost the whole new testament and probably paraphrases the rest of it. Between these writers, the whole new testament is either quoted, paraphrased, or referred to. The letters and books in the bible we have today were already considered scripture before the second century. Actually, they were being spread around like scripture before all the apostles died.

"On the Apostolic Preaching" by St. Irenaeus of Lyon is amongst the definitive works of the Christian Church. St. Irenaeus was the most influential and influential Christian writer of the Second Century (about 101 to 200 A.D.) In his youth, Irenaeus had known Polycarp who had known the Apostles personally. The Apostles themselves had appointed Polycarp, who was later martyred in Rome about the late 150's, as Bishop in Smyrna. Irenaeus had journeyed to Gaul (France) and the Lyon area, which was subjected to one of the most violent persecutions of early Christianity by Rome. Irenaeus contended with this, and also with the growing threat to Christianity of the Heretical movements. However, the writings of Irenaeus tell little of Irenaeus himself. Two works are known to exist. (1) "AGAINST THE HERESIES" is a refutation of the heresies of the day, which much like the New Age works of our modern era, serve to pre-empt and subvert Christian doctrines. The commonality between ancient Gnosticism and New Age writings may come as a shock. Actually, they are one and the same. For example, the reader will find that neither Gnosticism nor New Age writing possess a full doctrine of their own. Both operate in a "parasitic" manner. They adopt themselves to any and all religious traditions, then invert, re-define or re-invent the theology of the tradition. Christianity is only one of the religions which ancient Gnosticism subjected to this process. What one finds in both movements is the absence of a core doctrine, and rational corollary doctrines derived from a single premise. Both are diffuse, scattered, and solipsistic (self-serving). (2) "THE DEMONSTRATION OF THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING" is the work reviewed here. It is more commonly referred to as "On The Apostolic Preaching".

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