

DIVINE REVELATION IN SAINT IRENAEUS' THEOLOGY

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Abstract

In defense of the Church's faith against the teaching of the Gnostics, Saint Irenaeus analyzes the fundamental themes of Christian theology, including that of divine revelation. We consider that Saint Irenaeus' theology regarding the divine revelation is an important source for the current effort of the Christian community to address issues such as: how God reveals himself to people around the world, the justice of God, the relation between the Scripture, the economy of God, and the Tradition of the Church. In this paper we attempt to underline some coordinates of the Saint Irenaeus' understanding of divine revelation and how his theology can sustain the contemporary efforts of the Christian community to face the questions mentioned above.

Keywords: Revelation, Saint Irenaeus of Lyon, Adversus Haereses, Tradition, Scripture

1. Introduction

The personality and important contribution of Saint Irenaeus of Lyon to the development of Christian thought has been noted by theologians from the patristic era to the present day. Contemporary scholarly literature almost unanimously agrees that Saint Irenaeus is the most important and influential theologian of the Early Christian period. Although his work has long been neglected, the interest in Saint Irenaeus has grown considerably in the 20th century, when numerous studies and doctoral theses have been devoted to him from the perspective of dogmatic, biblical and historical theology, evaluating some of his fundamental theological concepts, including that of revelation.