



Revivals And Church History :: Irenaeus - Rule Of Faith

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The church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith in on God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, earth, and the sea and everything in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations, the advents, the birth from a virgin, the suffering, the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and his appearance from heaven in the glory of the Father to gather all things into one and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that every knee should bow—of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth—and that every tongue should confess to him, and that he should execute just judgment towards everyone; that he may send spiritual wickednesses and the angels who transgressed and became apostates together with the ungodly, unrighteous, wicked, and profane among men into everlasting fire, but may, in the exercise of his grace, confer immortality on the righteous, holy, and those who have kept his commandments and persevered in his love—some from the beginning of their course and others from their repentance—and may surround them with everlasting glory.

As I have already observed, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points just as if she had but one soul and one and the same heart. She proclaims them, teaches them, and hands them down with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the understanding of the tradition is one and the same. For the churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the the world. But as the sun, that creation of God, is on e and the same throughout the world, so also the preaching of the truth shines everywhere and enlightens all men that a re willing to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Nor will any one of the leaders in the churches, however highly gifted he may be in reference to eloquence, teach doctrin es different from these, for no one is greater than his Master. Nor, on the other hand, will he who is deficient in powers of expression inflict injury on the tradition. For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does a person, who is able at great length to discourse regarding it, make any addition to it, nor does one, who can say but little, diminish it.

~ Against Heresies I:10:1