

# Gnosticism Outline

## 1 - What is Gnosticism?

- Name from gnosis - Greek for knowledge
- Based on eastern mystery religions
- Basic concepts
  - Dualism: spirit good and material world evil
  - Gnostic soteriology: salvation through knowledge of secret mysteries
  - Speculative theology: many concepts from Greek philosophy

## 2 - Attraction of Gnosticism

- Goodness of human soul
- Compatible with Greco-Roman thought
- Opposed to the God of the Jews
- Syncretic - "Gnostic Christianity"

## 3 - Theology of Basilides

- Redefinition of key Biblical concepts
- Vicarious atonement through Simon of Cyrene

## 4 - Theology of Valentinus

- Christ as illuminator of internal knowledge
- Man is revelation unto himself
- "Christian Platonism"

## 5 - Theology of Marcion

- Strict separation of OT and NT
- Gospel invalidates the Law
- Docetism
- Views on Scripture

## 6 - Where is it manifested today?

- Dualism
- Asceticism
- Misuse of God's name
- Antinomianism
- Biblical criticism

## 7 - Gnostic controversy and doctrine

- Authority of Scripture
- Use of philosophy and logic
- Humanity and divinity of Christ