The question I will be dealing with this week relates to the issue of heresy and orthodoxy in early Christianity. If you have a question you would like me to address, let me know!

- QUESTION:

As I am reading about Marcion being declared a heretic I wonder, who had the authority to do this?

RESPONSE:

It’s a very good question, and more significant than, on the surface, one might think. First some background.

Marcion was a second-century philosopher/theologian/teacher who eventually came to be branded as one of the arch-heretics of early Christianity. Our only sources of information about him are the writings of his enemies – proto-orthodox church fathers (church writers who embraced the theological views that later came to be endorsed as “orthodox” – that is, teaching the “right beliefs”) who saw him, and his views, as dastardly and demonic false teachings meant to led the faithful astray. It is much debated how much we can trust what his enemies said if we want to determine what it is that he really thought (think about it in modern terms: if you want to know what Republicans or Democrats actually stand for, would you ask the outspoken members of the *opposite* party?).

Certain things do appear relatively clear. Marcion maintained that ...

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