



# The First Epistle of Clement

*To the Corinthians*

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Clement of Rome

*Patristics · c. A.D. 96*

*The text of the translation is reproduced without alteration.  
Passages of particular significance for Eastern Orthodoxy are set in red,  
with brief notes in the margin.*

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## The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians

*The Church of God which resides as a stranger at Rome to the Church of God which is a stranger at Corinth; to those who are called and sanctified by the will of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. May grace and peace from Almighty God flow to you in rich profusion through Jesus Christ!*

1. Owing to the suddenly bursting and rapidly succeeding calamities and untoward experiences that have befallen us, we have been somewhat tardy, we think, in giving our attention to the subjects of dispute in your community, beloved. We mean that execrable and godless schism so utterly foreign to the elect of God. And it is only a few rash and headstrong individuals that have inflamed it to such a degree of madness that your venerable, widely-renowned, and universally and deservedly cherished name has been greatly defamed. 2 Indeed, was there ever a visitor in your midst that did not approve your excellent and steadfast faith? Or did not admire your discreet and thoughtful Christian piety? Or did not proclaim the magnificent character of your hospitality? Or did not congratulate you on your perfect and secure fund of knowledge? 3 You certainly did everything without an eye to rank or station in life, and regulated your conduct by God's commandments. You were submissive to your officials and paid the older men among you the respect due to them. The young you trained to habits of self-restraint and sedateness. The wives you enjoined to discharge all their duties with a conscience pure and undefiled, and to cherish a dutiful affection for their husbands; you taught them also to stay within the established norm of obedience in managing the household with decency and consummate prudence.

2. Moreover, you were all in a humble frame of mind, in no way arrogant, practicing obedience rather than demanding it, happier in giving than in receiving. Being content with, and intent upon, the provisions which Christ allowed you for your earthly pilgrimage, it was His words that you carefully locked up in your hearts, and His sufferings were ever before your eyes. 2 Thus all were blessed with a profound and radiant peace of soul, and there was an insatiable longing to do good, as well as a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the whole community. 3 Filled, moreover, with a desire for holiness, you stretched out your hands, with ready goodwill and devout confidence, to Almighty God, imploring Him to show mercy in case you had inadvertently failed in any way. 4 Day and night you vied with one another in behalf of the entire brotherhood, to further the salvation of the full number of His elect by your compassion and conscientiousness. 5 Guileless

and sincere you were, and bore one another no malice. 6 The very thought of insubordination and schism was an abomination to you. Over the failings of your neighbors you mourned; their shortcomings you judged to be your own. 7 You had no regrets when you had been charitable, being ready for any good deed. 8 Decked with the jewel of a virtuous life that commanded veneration, you fulfilled all your duties in the fear of the Lord, whose precepts and ordinances were engraved upon the tablets of your heart.

3. All splendor and scope for expansion were bestowed upon you, and then the Scripture was fulfilled: The beloved ate and drank, and he waxed large and fat, and then he kicked out. 2 From this sprang jealousy and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and anarchy, war and captivity. 3 Then the dishonored rose up against the honored, the ignoble against the highly esteemed, the foolish against the wise, the young against their elders. 4 For this reason piety and peace are far removed, because everyone has abandoned the fear of God and lost the clear vision which faith affords, and nobody regulates his conduct by the norms of His commandments, or tries to make his life worthy of Christ. On the contrary, everyone follows the appetites of his depraved heart, for they have absorbed that unjust and unholy jealousy through which death came into the world.

4. For this is what the Scripture says: And after some days Cain offered to God a sacrifice from the fruits of the earth, and Abel, for his part, offered of the first-born of his flock and of their fat. 2 And God looked kindly on Abel and his gifts, but paid no attention to Cain and his sacrifices. 3 Then Cain was greatly disturbed, and his countenance fell. 4 And God said to Cain: "Why are you disturbed, and why has your countenance fallen? When you offer rightly, but do not rightly discriminate, do you not sin? 5 Be calm: to you it will return, and you shall dispose of it." 6 And Cain said to his brother Abel: "Let us go out into the field." And this is what happened when they were in the field: Cain set upon his brother Abel and slew him. 7 You see, brethren, jealousy and envy brought on fratricide. 8 Jealousy was the reason for our father Jacob's flight from his brother Esau. 9 Jealousy caused Joseph to be persecuted with deadly intent and finally to end in servitude. 10 Jealousy compelled Moses to flee from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when he heard his fellow tribesman say: "Who has appointed you to be ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" 11 Through jealousy Aaron and Miriam lodged outside the camp. 12 Jealousy sent Dathan and Abiron alive to Hades, because they had rebelled against Moses, the servant of God. 13 Because of jealousy David not only incurred the envy of strangers, but was even persecuted by Saul, king of Israel.

5. But, to drop the examples furnished by antiquity. Let us come to the athletes nearest to us in time. Let us take the noble examples of our own generation. 2 It was due to jealousy and envy that the greatest and most holy pillars were persecuted and fought to the death. 3 Let us pass in review the good Apostles: 4 **Peter, who through unmerited jealousy underwent not one or two, but many hardships and, after thus giving testimony, departed for the place of glory that was his due.** 5 Through jealousy and strife Paul demonstrated how to win the prize of patient endurance: 6 seven times he was imprisoned; he was forced to leave and stoned; he preached in the East and the West; and, finally, he won the splendid renown which his faith had earned. 7 He taught the right manner of life to the whole world, travelled as far as the Western boundary, and, when he had given testimony before the authorities, ended his earthly career and was taken up into the holy place as the greatest model of patient endurance.

*The earliest witness to the martyrdom of Peter — with Paul just below: the two great apostles of Rome, commemorated together on June 29.*

6. These men who had led holy lives were joined by a great multitude of the elect that suffered numerous indignities and tortures through jealousy and thus became illustrious examples among us. 2 Owing to jealousy, persecuted Danaids and Dircae suffered frightful and abominable outrages and, securely reaching the goal in the racecourse of the faith, obtained a noble prize, in spite of the weakness of their sex. 3 Jealousy estranged wives from husbands, and thus perverted the saying of our father Adam: This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. 4 Jealousy and strife have laid mighty cities low and uprooted powerful nations.

7. We are writing this, beloved, not merely for your admonition, but also to serve as a reminder to ourselves; for we are in the same arena and face the same conflict. 2 Let us, then, give up those empty and futile aspirations, and turn to the glorious and venerable rule of our tradition. 3 Let us attend to what is noble, what is pleasing, what is acceptable in the sight of our Maker. 4 **Let us fix our gaze upon the Blood of Christ and understand how precious it is to the Father,** because, poured out for our salvation, it brought to the whole world the grace of conversion. 5 Let us pass in review all the generations and learn the lesson, that from generation to generation the Master has given an opportunity for conversion to those who were willing to turn to Him. 6 Noe preached the need of conversion, and such as heeded him were saved. 7 Jonas announced destruction to the Ninevites: they did penance for their sins and by their prayers propitiated God and gained salvation, although they were not of God's own people.

*The precious Blood, poured out for the salvation of the whole world — the heart of the Church's offering in the Divine Liturgy.*

8. The ministers of the grace of God exhorted through the Holy Spirit to conversion, 2 and the Master of the universe Himself exhorted to conversion with an oath: As truly as I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of the

sinner, but his conversion; and He added a kindly declaration: 3 House of Israel, be converted from your iniquity. Say to the children of my People: should your sins reach from earth to heaven, and should they be redder than scarlet and blacker than sackcloth, and should you turn to me with all your heart and say, "Father!" I will listen to you as a consecrated People. 4 And in another passage He says as follows: Wash and be cleansed and put away from your souls the wickedness which offends my eyes, rid yourselves of your evil doings, learn to do good, strive for justice, rescue the oppressed, sustain the rights of the orphan, and see justice done to the widow. Then come and let us argue together, says the Lord; and should your sins be like purple, I will make them white as snow; and should they be like scarlet, I will make them white as wool; and if you are willing and listen to me, you shall eat the good things of the land; but if you are not willing and do not listen to me, the sword shall devour you. Thus has the mouth of the Lord spoken. 5 It follows that He wants all His beloved to have a chance to be converted, and this He has ratified by His Almighty Will.

9. Therefore let us comply with His magnificent and glorious purpose, and let us crave His mercy and loving-kindness on bended knee, and turn to His compassion, after abandoning our vain efforts and our strife and the jealousy which but leads to death. 2 Let us fix our gaze upon those who have ministered so perfectly to His transcendent glory. 3 Let us take Enoch who proved irreproachable in obedience and was translated without a trace of his death. 4 Noe proved faithful in discharging his sacred duty and preached a rebirth for the world, and through him the Master saved all those living beings that peacefully entered the Ark.

10. Abraham, called the Friend, proved faithful in being obedient to the words of God. 2 Through obedience this man quit his country, his kith and kin, and his father's house, in order that by turning his back upon a little country, a slender relationship, and a small home, he might inherit the blessings promised by God. For He said to him: 3 Quit your country, your kith and kin, and your father's house, and go to the country which I will point out to you; and I will make you the father of a mighty nation, and bless and exalt you, and you shall be blessed; and I will bless those that bless you, and curse those that curse you; and through you all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed. 4 And again, when he separated from Lot, God said to him: Li; your eyes, and from the place where you now are look toward the North and the South and the East and the West; for all the land which you see I will give to you and your posterity to hold forevermore. 5 And I will make your posterity as numerous as the dust of the earth: if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your posterity also can be numbered. 6 And again it is said: God led Abraham out and said to him: "Look up at heaven and count

the stars if you can count them: so numerous shall your posterity be!" Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as justice. 7 Because of his faith and hospitality, a son was granted him in old age; and through obedience he offered him as a sacrifice to God on one of the mountains He had pointed out to him.

**11.** Hospitality and piety were the reason for Lot's delivery from Sodom, while the whole surrounding country was chastized by means of fire and brimstone. Thus the Master made it clear that He does not abandon such as hope in Him, but those of a refractory disposition He gives over to chastisement and torture. 2 For example, his wife, who was of a refractory nature and not in complete harmony with him, joined him in going forth, yet she was made a permanent memorial: she was turned into a pillar of salt to this day. It was to be made known to all that the double-minded and those who question the power of God become a warning example of condemnation to all generations.

**12.** Hospitality and faith were the reason why the harlot Rahab was saved. 2 For when spies had been sent out to Jericho by Jesus, the son of Nave, the king of the land learned that they had come to reconnoiter the territory, and he sent out men to intercept them, so that they might be put under arrest and executed. 3 Now, the hospitable Rahab received the spies in her home and hid them upstairs under flax straw. 4 And when the king's men confronted her and said: There are men in your house who have come to spy out our country; bring them out, for such is the king's order, this woman replied: Yes, the men for whom you are looking did enter my house; but they le; at once and are now on their way; and then she pointed in the opposite direction. 5 And she said to the spies: I know for a certainty that the Lord God is delivering this land into your hands, for alarm and fear of you have seized its inhabitants. So, when you succeed in conquering it, save me and my father's house. 6 And they said to her: Very well; your request shall be granted. As soon, then, as you learn that we are approaching, gather all your people under your roof, and they will be spared; for all that are found outside the house shall perish. 7 And they further gave her a sign: she was to hang out of her window a scarlet cloth, whereby they made it clear to all that through the Blood of the Lord all those that believe and hope in God would be redeemed. 8 You see, beloved, that the woman possessed not only faith but also the gift of prophecy.

**13.** Let us, therefore, brethren, be of a humble frame of mind, ridding ourselves of all arrogance and haughtiness and foolishness and passion, and do what the Scripture says; for the Holy Spirit declares: Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, or the strong man of his strength, or the rich man of his

riches; but, if anyone boasts, let his boast be in the Lord; thus he will seek and do what is right and just. Especially let us be mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spoke when inculcating gentleness and long-suffering. 2 This is what He said: Show mercy, that you may be shown mercy; forgive, that you may be forgiven; as you treat others, so you shall be treated; as you give, so you shall receive; as you judge, so you shall be judged; as you show kindness, so kindness shall be shown to you; the measure you use in measuring shall be used in measuring out your share. 3 With this commandment and these precepts let us strengthen ourselves, that we may live in obedience to His holy words, with humility in our hearts; for the Holy Scripture says: 4 On whom shall I look but on him who is gentle and meek and trembles at hearing my words?

14. It is right and holy, therefore, brethren, that we should be submissive to God rather than follow those who through arrogance and insubordination are the ringleaders in a quarrel fomented by detestable jealousy. 2 No ordinary harm, surely, but serious danger shall we incur if we recklessly yield to the caprices of men who plunge into strife and sedition to estrange us from the cause of right. 3 Let us be kind to one another in imitation of the compassion and goodness of our Maker. 4 For the Scripture says: The kind shall inhabit the land, and the innocent shall be left in possession of it; but the transgressors shall be exterminated. 5 And again it says: I saw a godless man rear his head to unseemly heights like the cedars of Lebanon; and I passed by, and behold, he was no more! And I searched for his place, and I did not find it. Cherish guilelessness and aim at sincerity, for posterity belongs to the peaceable man.

15. Therefore let us associate with those who piously cultivate peace, and not with those whose peaceful intentions are but a mask. 2 For somewhere it is said: This people honors me with its lips; but its heart is far away from me. 3 And again: With their lips they blessed, but with their hearts they cursed. 4 And again it is said: They loved Him with their lips, and with their tongue they lied to Him; but their heart was not sincere with Him, nor did they prove faithful to His covenant. 5 Therefore struck dumb shall be the treacherous lips that speak evil against the good man. And again: May the Lord destroy all the deceitful lips, the boastful tongue, the men that say: "Great glory will we win by our tongue, our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" 6 Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the sighs of the poor, I will now rise, says the Lord; I will bring relief, 7 and boldly will I act in bringing it.

16. For it is to the humble-minded that Christ belongs, not to those who exalt themselves above His flock. 2 The Sceptre of the Divine Majesty, the

Lord Jesus Christ, did not, for all His power, come clothed in boastful pomp and overweening pride, but in a humble frame of mind, as the Holy Spirit has told concerning Him; for He says: 3 Lord, who has believed our teaching? And the arm of the Lord—to whom has it been revealed? Looking at Him, we announced, as it were, a child, a root, as it were, in thirsty ground; there is no shape, no comeliness in Him; yes, we saw Him, and neither shape nor beauty did He have; but His shape was dishonorable and shrunken beside the shape of men; a man covered with wounds and the marks of hardship; one acquainted with infirmity; because His face is turned away, He has been dishonored and held in disrespect. 4 Our sins it is that this Man bears, and for our sake He is in pain; and we regarded Him as one afflicted and bruised and ill-treated. 5 But He was wounded for our sins, and languishes because of our iniquities; to give us peace He is under chastisement; by His bruises we were healed. 6 We all, like sheep, had gone astray; each man had wandered from his path. 7 And the Lord delivered Him up for our sins; yet He does not, because He is abused, open His mouth. As a sheep He was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb dumb before the shearer He does not open His mouth. Because of His abasement His condemnation was taken away. 8 As to His generation—who can fathom their minds? From the land of the living is He removed! 9 Because of the iniquities of my people is He come to death! 10 But I will deliver up the wicked for putting Him in the grave, and the rich for putting Him to death; for evil He has not done, nor was guile found on His lips. And the Lord is pleased to free Him from His evil plight. 11 If you make an offering for sin, you will see a long-lived posterity. 12 And the Lord is pleased to take away the torment of His soul, to show Him light, and mold Him through understanding, and thus to render justice to a just man who served many well; and He will take upon Himself the burden of their sins. 13 For this reason He shall count a numerous inheritance and divide the spoils taken from the strong, because He was delivered up to death and classed among the lawless. 14 And He took upon Himself the sins of many, and to atone for their sins He was delivered up. 15 And again He says Himself: I am a worm and not a man, a disgrace among men and the contempt of the people. 16 All that saw me mocked at me; they hissed at me, they shook their heads: “He trusted in the Lord: let the Lord deliver Him, let Him save Him, for He likes Him.” 17 You see, beloved, what the example is that has been given us; for, if the Lord was so humble-minded, what ought we to do who have come under the influence of His grace through Him?

**17.** Let us imitate the example of those also who wandered about dressed in sheepskins and goatskins, heralding the advent of Christ. We mean the Prophets Elias and Eliseus, as well as Ezechiel; and in addition to these, the

men of attested merit. 2 Abraham's merit was magnificently attested, and he was styled a friend of God; still, fixing his gaze upon the majesty of God, he said: But I am dust and ashes. 3 Furthermore, concerning Job the Scripture says: Job was good and irreproachable, sincere, God-fearing, who refrained from all evil. 4 Still, for his part, he accused himself in these words: No man is clean from defilement, even should his life last but one day. 5 Moses was called faithful in all his house, and God made use of his services to chastize Egypt with the shameful scourges inflicted on them; but even he, though magnificently honored, did not use boastful language; on the contrary, when granted a revelation from the bush, he said: Who am I that Thou sendest me? I am feeble of speech and slow of tongue. 6 And again: I am but steam from a pot.

**18.** And what shall we say of David and his attested merit? It was he of whom God said: I have found a man after my own heart—David, the son of Jesse; in everlasting mercy have I anointed him. 2 But he, too, says to God: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, blot out my iniquity. 3 Wash me more and more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my iniquity, and my sin is ever before my eyes. 4 Against Thee alone have I sinned, and what is evil in Thy sight have I done. Thou, therefore, art pronounced just in Thy words, and art acquitted when Thou art tried. 5 For, behold, I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin has my mother been pregnant with me. 6 Behold, Thou lovest sincerity of heart; the hidden secrets of Thy wisdom hast Thou revealed to me. 7 Sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Fill my ears with joy and gladness, and my battered bones shall exult for joy. 9 Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 10 A pure heart create in me, O God, and renew a right spirit in my inmost soul. 11 Do not reject me from Thy presence, and Thy Holy Spirit do not take away from me. 12 Restore to me the bliss of Thy salvation, and with a princely spirit strengthen me. 13 The wicked will I teach Thy ways, and the impious shall be converted to Thee. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, my Savior God! 15 My tongue shall exult in Thy justice. Open my mouth, O Lord, and my lips shall proclaim Thy praise. 16 For, hadst Thou wished a sacrifice, I would have offered it; but in whole burnt offerings Thou takest no delight. 17 A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit; a contrite and humble heart God will not despise.

**19.** The spirit of humility and modesty, therefore, of so many and thus well-attested men has by their obedience been helpful not only to us, but also to the generations before us, as well as to those who have received His words in fear and truth. 2 And so, since we are allowed to profit by so many glorious examples, let us hasten on to the goal of peace handed down to us

from the beginning, and let us fix our gaze upon the Father and Creator of the whole world and hold fast to His magnificent and superabundant gifts and blessings of peace. 3 Let us see Him in spirit, and contemplate with the eyes of the soul His forbearing disposition; let us consider how unimpassioned He is in dealing with all of His creation.

**20.** The heavens revolve by His arrangement and are subject to Him in peace. 2 Day and night complete the revolution ordained by Him, and neither interferes in the least with the other. 3 Sun and moon and the starry choirs, obedient to His arrangement, roll on in harmony, without any deviation, through their appointed orbits. 4 The earth bears fruit according to His will in its proper seasons, and yields the full amount of food required for men and beasts and all the living things on it, neither wavering nor altering any of His decrees. 5 The unsearchable decisions that govern the abysses and the inscrutable decisions that govern the deeps are maintained by the same decrees. 6 The basin of the boundless sea, firmly built by His creative act for the collecting of the waters, does not burst the barriers set up all around it, and does precisely what has been assigned to it. 7 For He said: Thus far shalt thou come, and thy billows shall be turned to spray within thee. 8 The ocean, impassable for men, and the worlds beyond it are governed by the same decrees of the Master. 9 The seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—make room for one another in peaceful succession. 10 The stations of the winds at the proper time render their service without disturbance. Ever-flowing springs, created for enjoyment and for health, without fail offer to men their life-sustaining breasts. The smallest of the animals meet in peaceful harmony. 11 All these creatures the mighty Creator and Master of the universe ordained to act in peace and concord, thus benefitting the universe, but most abundantly ourselves who have taken refuge under His mercies through our Lord Jesus Christ; 12 to whom be the glory and majesty forever and evermore. Amen.

**21.** Take care, beloved, that His blessings, numerous as they are, do not turn to our condemnation in case we do not—through a life unworthy of Him—do with perfect accord what is good and pleasing in His sight. 2 For somewhere it is said: The Spirit of the Lord is a lamp that searches the deep recesses of the soul. 3 Let us understand how nigh He is, and that none of the thoughts we entertain or the plans we devise are hidden from Him. 4 It is right, therefore, that we should not desert the place His will has assigned to us. 5 Rather than to God, let us give offence to silly, unreasoning men, to men conceited and arrogantly indulging in boastful speech. 6 Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Blood was sacrificed for us; respect our officials, honor the presbyters; subject the young to the discipline of the fear of God; train our wives in all that is good. 7 Let these exhibit lovable and

chaste manners, show forth a sincere and gentle disposition; by their silence let them manifest their courtesy of speech; without partiality let them perform their works of charity, and with a pure intention bestow them equally on all that fear God. 8 Our children must have their share of a Christian upbringing; they must learn how effective with the Lord is a humble frame of mind, what holy love can accomplish with God, how honorable and excellent is the fear of Him, and how it brings salvation to all who in this fear lead holy lives, with a conscience undefiled. 9 For a searcher is He of thoughts and designs. His breath indwells in us, and when it pleases Him, He can take it away.

22. To all these precepts the faith in Christ gives stability; for He Himself through the Holy Spirit calls us to Him as follows: Come, children, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 2 Where is the man that desires life, that loves to see good days? 3 Restrain thy tongue from evil speech. and thy lips from speaking guile. 4 Turn away from evil and do what is good. 5 Seek peace and go in pursuit of it. 6 The eyes of the Lord rest upon the good, and His ears attend to their petition. But the frown of the Lord is upon evildoers, to extirpate the memory of them. 7 The good man cried aloud, and the Lord heard him and delivered him from all his afflictions. 8 Many are the plagues of the sinner, but mercy will encompass those that hope in the Lord.

23. The all-merciful and beneficent Father has compassion on such as fear Him; willingly and with tender regard He bestows His graces on such as approach Him single-minded. 2 Therefore let us not be double-minded, and let not our soul mistrust, seeing His gifts are all-surpassing and glorious. 3 May the Scripture text never apply to us that says: Wretched are the double-minded, who doubt in their heart and say: "We have heard these things even in the days of our fathers; but, mark you, we have grown old and nothing of all this has happened to us!" 4 You fools! Compare yourselves to a tree. Take a vine: first it sheds its foliage; then it puts forth a bud; then a leaf; then a flower; and after that, a green, sour grape; finally, there is a bunch of fresh, ripe grapes. You see, it takes but a short time to bring the fruit of the plant to maturity. 5 In truth, quickly and suddenly will His will be accomplished, as also the Scripture testifies when it says: Quickly will He come and will not tarry; and suddenly will the Lord come to His temple—the Holy One, for whom you are looking.

24. Let us consider, beloved, how the Master continually calls our attention to the future resurrection, the first fruits of which He has made the Lord Jesus Christ by raising Him from the dead." 2 Let us consider, beloved, the kind of resurrection that occurs at regular intervals. 3 Day and night give us examples of resurrection. The night sleeps, the day rises; the day departs, the

night comes on. 4 Let us take the crops. The sowing—how and in what manner does it take place? 5 The sower goes out and puts each of the seeds into the soil: when they fall on the soil, they are dry and bare, and decay. But once they have decayed, the Master's wondrous Providence makes them rise, and each one increases and brings forth multiple fruit.

25. Let us consider the strange and striking phenomenon which takes place in the East, that is, in the regions of Arabia. 2 **There is a bird which is called the phoenix.** It is the only individual of its kind, and it lives five hundred years; and when it approaches dissolution and its death is imminent, it makes itself a nest out of frankincense and myrrh and the other spices; this it enters when the time is fulfilled, and dies. 3 But out of the decaying flesh a sort of worm is born, which feeds on the juices of the dead animal until it grows wings; then, upon growing strong, it takes up that nest in which the bones of the former bird are, and these it carries all the way from Arabia to the Egyptian city called Heliopolis; 4 and there, in daytime, in the sight of all, it lights upon the altar of the Sun and deposits them there, and then departs to its former home. 5 The priests then examine the public records, and find that it has come after the lapse of five hundred years.

*The phoenix — a beloved early image of the Resurrection, which passed into Orthodox iconography and hymnody.*

26. Do we, then, consider it a great and remarkable thing if the Creator of the universe will bring about a resurrection of those who have piously served Him in the assurance engendered by honest faith, when He uses even a bird to illustrate the sublime nature of His promise? 2 For somewhere it is said: And Thou wilt raise me, and I will give Thee praise: and, I lay down to sleep, and I slept; and I awoke again, for Thou art with me. 3 And, again, Job says: Thou wilt raise up this body of mine, which has patiently endured all these things.

27. Supported, therefore, by this hope, let our souls cling to Him who is faithful in His promises and just in His judgments. 2 He who has enjoined us not to lie will for that reason be Himself all the less capable of lying; for nothing is impossible to God except being untrue to Himself. 3 Let, then, our faith in Him be fanned afresh in us, and let us understand that all things are within His reach. 4 By His majestic command He established the universe, and by a command He can destroy it. 5 Who shall say to Him: "What hast Thou done?" Or who can resist His mighty strength? When He wills and as He wills, He can do all things, and nothing once decreed by Him can cease to exist. 6 All things are face to face with Him, and nothing is hidden from His counsel, 7 since the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork; day speaks out to day, and night imparts knowledge to night; and there is not a word, there is not a speech, but its voice is heard.

**28.** Since, then, all things are seen and heard, let us stand in awe of Him, and abandon accursed hankerings after evil deeds: thus shall we by His mercy find shelter from the judgment to come. 2 Indeed, whither can anyone of us flee from His mighty hand? What world is there to receive anyone deserting Him? For somewhere the Writing says: 3 Whither shall I go, and where hide from His face? If I should mount to heaven, Thou art there; if I should depart to the ends of the earth, Thy right hand is there; if I should lie down in the abyss, Thy Spirit is there. 4 Whither, then, can a man depart, or whither run away, from Him who embraces the universe?

**29.** Let us, then, approach Him in holiness of soul, raising pure and unsullied hands to Him, loving our forbearing and compassionate Father, who has made us His chosen portion. 2 For thus the Scripture says: When the Most High was dividing the nations and dispersing the sons of Adam, He fixed the bounds of the nations according to the number of God's angels; but Jacob, His People, became the portion of the Lord, and Israel His apportioned inheritance. 3 And in another passage it says: Behold, the Lord made His own a people from among the nations, just as a man reserves to himself the first fruits of his threshing floor; and from that nation shall come forth the Holy of Holies.

**30.** Since, then, we are a holy portion, let us do nothing but what makes for holiness, shunning slander, foul and sinful embraces, drunkenness and revolutionary desires and abominable passions, detestable adultery, and abominable pride. 2 For God, it is said, resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. 3 Let us therefore associate with those on whom divine grace has been bestowed; let us with humble minds put on the livery of concord, be self-restrained, keep ourselves free from all backbiting and slanderous talk; and let us seek justification by actions, and not just words. 4 For it is said: He who speaks much is bound to hear much in return; or does the idle talker imagine he is always right? 5 Blessed is the woman-born that is short-lived. Do not become a wordy babbler. 6 Let our praise rest with God, and not spring from ourselves; for God hates those that praise themselves. 7 Let the testimony to our good conduct be given by others, just as it was given to our fathers, those holy men. 8 Rashness, willfulness, and boldness belong to such as are cursed by God; mildness, humility, and gentleness are at home with those blessed by God.

**31.** Let us, then, cling to His blessing, and study the ways and means of securing this blessing. Let us unroll the records of antiquity. 2 For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not that he did what was right and lived up to the truth, enabled by faith? 3 With confidence because he knew the future, Isaac cheerfully let himself be led to the altar. 4 Jacob

was humble enough to leave his country because of his brother, and went to Laban and lived in servitude; and the twelve tribes were given to him.

32. Whoever considers these details without bias will appreciate the splendor of the gifts conferred by Him. 2 For to him all priests and Levites, the men that served the altar of God, trace their origin; to him, too, the Lord Jesus according to the flesh; to him kings and rulers and princes after Juda; nor are his other tribes in slight esteem, since God had promised: Thy posterity shall be as numerous as the stars of heaven. 3 Consequently, all were honored and made great, not through themselves or their own works or the holy lives they led, but through His will. 4 So we, too, who have been called by His will in Christ Jesus, are sanctified not through ourselves, or through our wisdom or understanding or piety or any works we perform in holiness of heart, but through the faith through which Almighty God has sanctified all men from the beginning of time. To Him be the glory forever and evermore. Amen.

33. What, then, are we to do, brethren? Shall we rest from doing good, and give up love? May the Master never permit that this should happen, at least not to us; but let us be eager to perform every good work with assiduity and readiness. 2 Why, the Creator and Master of the universe Himself exults in His works. 3 Thus, by His transcendent might He established the heavens, and by His incomprehensible understanding He ordered them: the earth He separated from the water now encircling it, and firmly grounded it on the unshakable foundation of His own will; the creatures which live and move in it He bade come into existence by His own command; to the sea and the beings living in it He assigned, with foresight and by His own power, definite bounds. 4 Finally, the most excellent and greatest being, man, He formed with His sacred and faultless hands in the likeness of His own image. 5 For this is what God says: Let us create man according to our own image and likeness. And God created man; male and female He created them. 6 And then, when He had finished all these things, He praised and blessed them, and said: Increase and multiply. 7 Let us realize that everywhere holy men feel honored by their good works, and that the Lord Himself rejoiced at having honored Himself by good works. 8 With this pattern before us, let us unhesitatingly submit to His will: with all our strength let us achieve the work of sanctification.

34. The good workman with assurance receives the bread of his labor; the slack and slothful cannot look his employer full in the face. 2 It is our duty, therefore, to be prompt to do good; for on Him depends everything. 3 Indeed, He says to us by way of warning: Here comes the Lord, and with Him comes the award He makes, to pay each one according to His work. 4

He urges us on, therefore, to trust in Him with all our heart and not to be slack and indolent in any good work. 5 Let Him be our boast and the ground of our confidence; let us be subject to His will; let us consider the vast multitude of His angels, and see how they stand in readiness to minister to His will. 6 For the Scripture says: Ten thousand times ten thousand stood ready before Him, and thousand times one thousand ministered to Him, and cried out: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole creation is replete with His splendor." 7 And so we, too, being dutifully assembled with one accord, should, as with one voice, cry out to Him earnestly, so that we may participate in His great and glorious promises. 8 For it is said: Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and heart of man has not conceived, what He has prepared for those that await Him patiently.

35. How blessed, beloved, and marvellous are the gifts of God! 2 Life with immortality; joyousness with observance of the law; truth with boldness; faith with confidence; continence with holiness! And all these blessings even now fall within our comprehension! 3 What, then, are the things that are prepared for those who wait patiently! The Creator and Father of the ages, the All-holy, alone grasps their number and beauty. 4 Let us, therefore, exert ourselves to be found in the number of those who patiently wait for Him, so that we may participate in the promised gifts. 5 But how, beloved, can this be done? If our mind is faithfully fixed on God; if we seek out what is pleasing and acceptable to Him; if we carry out what His irreprehensible will demands, and follow the way of truth, by ridding ourselves of every vice and wickedness, of avarice, strife, malice and fraud, gossip and slander, hatred of God, pride and arrogance, conceit and inhospitality. 6 For those who practice these things are hateful to God; and not only those that do such things, but also those that countenance them. 7 For the Scripture says: But to the sinner God said: "Why do you speak of my ordinances and why do you have my covenant on your lips? 8 You hated discipline and paid no attention to my words. Whenever you saw a thief, you ran along with him; and with adulterers you threw in your lot. Your mouth brimmed over with malice, and your tongue wove treacherous plots. There you sat backbiting and laying a snare for your very brother. 9 This you did, and I kept silent. You, man without principles, supposed that I should be like you! 10 I will put you in the wrong, and show you to yourself in your true light! 11 Now, take my words to heart, you who are forgetting God; or else He will like a lion carry you off, with no one to rescue you. 12 A sacrifice of praise will honor me, and there is the way in which I will show him the salvation of man."

36. This, beloved, is the way in which we found our salvation, Jesus Christ, the High Priest who offers our gifts, the patron and helper in our weakness. 2 It is through Him that we look straight at the heavens above. Through Him

we see mirrored God's faultless and transcendent countenance. Through Him the eyes of our heart were opened. Through Him our unintelligent and darkened mind shoots up into the light. Through Him the Master was pleased to let us taste the knowledge that never fades; for, being Himself the radiance of His splendor, He towers as much above the angels as the title He has inherited is superior to theirs. 3 For thus the Scripture says: He appointed winds to be His angels, and fiery flames His ministers. 4 But about His Son the Master spoke thus: Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thy inheritance, and the vast, wide earth for Thy possession. 5 And again He says to Him: Be seated at my right hand, until I make Thy foes a footstool for Thy feet. 6 Now, who are the foes? The wicked and those who run counter to His will.

**37.** Let us, then, brethren, do soldier's duty in downright earnest under the banner of His glorious commands. 2 Let us observe those who are soldiering under our commanders, and see how punctually, how willingly, how submissively they execute the commands! 3 Not all are prefects, or tribunes, or centurions, or lieutenants, and so on; but each in his own rank executes the orders of the emperor and the commanders. 4 The great cannot exist without the small, nor can the small without the great. A certain organic unity binds all parts, and therein lies the advantage. 5 Let us take our body. The head is nothing without the feet, and the feet are nothing without the head. The smallest organs of our body are necessary and valuable to the whole body; in fact, all parts conspire and yield the same obedience toward maintaining the whole of the body.

**38.** Therefore let the whole of our body be maintained in Christ Jesus, and let each submit to his neighbor's rights in the measure determined by the special gift bestowed on him. 2 Let the strong care for the weak, and the weak respect the strong; let the rich support the poor, and the poor render thanks to God for giving them the means of supplying their needs; let the wise man show his wisdom not in words but in active help; the humble man must not testify for himself, but leave it to another to testify in his behalf. He who is continent must not boast, knowing that it is another who confers on him the ability to remain continent. 3 Let us therefore reflect, brethren, of what clay we were made, what and who we were when we entered the world, out of what grave and darkness our Maker and Creator has brought us into the world, where He had prepared His benefits before our birth. 4 Since, then, we owe all these blessings to Him, we are obliged to thank Him in every way. To Him be the glory forever and evermore. Amen.

39. Witless, unintelligent, foolish, and uninstructed persons mock and sneer at us because they have an overweening opinion of themselves. 2 Really—what can a mortal do? Or, what strength is there in an earth-born creature? 3 For the Scripture says: There was no shape before my eyes; but only a breath and sound I heard. 4 How could it be otherwise? Can a mortal be pure in the sight of the Lord, or a man blameless in his actions, when He does not trust His servants and has noted some perversity in His angels? 5 Heaven is not pure in His sight—and we should be!—we who are dwelling in houses of clay, the same clay of which we ourselves are made! They are crushed as one crushes a moth, and they last not from morn to eventide. Unable to help themselves, they perished. 6 He breathed on them, and they died because of their lack of wisdom. 7 Raise your voice in appeal, and see if anyone will answer you, if one of His holy angels you will behold! For haughtiness destroys the witless man, and passion slays the wayward one. 8 I have seen it—uprooted is the fool, and his abode is suddenly consumed. 9 Beyond the reach of help his children are and insulted at the gates of lesser men, and there is no one to deliver them. What they have hoarded up the good shall eat, while they themselves shall not be rescued from calamity.

40. Since, therefore, this is evident to all of us, and we have explored the depths of the divine knowledge, we are obliged to carry out in fullest detail what the Master has commanded us to do at stated times. 2 **He has ordered the sacrifices to be offered and the services to be held, and this not in a random and irregular fashion, but at definite times and seasons.** 3 He has, moreover, Himself, by His sovereign will determined where and by whom He wants them to be carried out. Thus all things are done religiously, acceptable to His good pleasure, dependent on His will. 4 Those, therefore, that make their offerings at the prescribed times are acceptable and blessed; for, since they comply with the ordinances of the Master, they do not sin. 5 Special functions are assigned to the high priest; a special office is imposed upon the priests; and special ministrations fall to the Levites. The layman is bound by the rules laid down for the laity.

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*Ordered liturgical worship at appointed times — the root of the Church's liturgical order (typikon).*

41. Each of us, brethren, must in his own place endeavor to please God with a good conscience, reverently taking care not to deviate from the established rule of service. 2 Not everywhere, brethren, are sacrifices offered—be they perpetual offerings, or votive offerings, or sin offerings, or trespass offerings—but at Jerusalem only; and there offerings are not made in every place, but in front of the sanctuary, where the gift to be offered is inspected for blemishes by the high priest and the aforesaid ministers. 3 Those, therefore, that do anything contrary to what conforms to His will suffer death as the penalty. 4 You see, brethren, that the greater the knowledge vouchsafed to us, the greater the risk we incur.

42. The Apostles preached to us the Gospel received from Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was God's Ambassador. 2 Christ, in other words, comes with a message from God, and the Apostles with a message from Christ. Both these orderly arrangements, therefore, originate from the will of God. 3 And so, after receiving their instructions and being fully assured through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as confirmed in faith by the word of God, they went forth, equipped with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, to preach the good news that the Kingdom of God was close at hand. 4 From land to land, accordingly, and from city to city they preached, and **from among their earliest converts appointed men whom they had tested by the Spirit to act as bishops and deacons for the future believers.** 5 And this was no innovation, for, a long time before the Scripture had spoken about bishops and deacons; for somewhere it says: I will establish their overseers in observance of the law and their ministers in fidelity.

*Apostolic succession: the apostles themselves appoint the first bishops and deacons.*

43. What wonder, pray, if those entrusted by God through Christ with such an office have appointed the above-mentioned officials, seeing that also the blessed Moses, the faithful servant in all the house, has recorded in the sacred books all the injunctions given him; and the other Prophets followed his example and joined him in bearing testimony to the laws given by him. 2 For, when the priesthood had become an object of jealousy and the tribes were quarrelling as to which of them had been honored with that glorious dignity, he ordered the leaders of the twelve tribes to bring him each a rod with the name of his tribe written upon it; and he took the rods and bound them together and sealed them with the rings of the tribe leaders, and then deposited them on the table of God in the Tabernacle of Testimony. 3 He then shut the Tabernacle and sealed the keys just as he had done the rods, 4 and said to them: "Brethren, God has chosen for His priestly service that tribe the rod of which will bud." 5 When day broke, he called a meeting of all Israel, six hundred thousand men in all, showed the seals to the leaders of the tribes, opened the Tabernacle and produced the rods, and it was found that the rod of Aaron had not only put forth buds but also borne fruit. 6 What do you think, brethren? Did not Moses know the outcome beforehand? He certainly did know it; but he acted in this manner to prevent any insubordination in Israel, so that the name of the true and only God might be glorified. To Him be the glory forever and evermore. Amen.

44. Our Apostles, too, were given to understand by our Lord Jesus Christ that the office of the bishop would give rise to intrigues. 2 For this reason, equipped as they were with perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the men mentioned before, and afterwards laid down a rule once for all to this effect: **when these men die, other approved men shall succeed to their sacred**

*The unbroken chain of ordination, laid down "once for all" —foundational for Orthodox ecclesiology.*

**ministry.** 3 Consequently, we deem it an injustice to eject from the sacred ministry the persons who were appointed either by them, or later, with the consent of the whole Church, by other men in high repute and have ministered to the flock of Christ faultlessly, humbly, quietly and unselfishly, and have moreover, over a long period of time, earned the esteem of all. 4 Indeed, it will be no small sin for us if we oust men who have irreproachably and piously offered the sacrifices proper to the episcopate. 5 Happy the presbyters who have before now completed life's journey and taken their departure in mature age and laden with fruit! They, surely, do not have to fear that anyone will dislodge them from the place built for them. 6 Yes, we see that you removed some, their good conduct notwithstanding, from the sacred ministry on which their faultless discharge had shed lustre.

45. You are given to wrangling, brethren, and are jealous in matters that bear upon salvation. 2 You have looked deep into the sacred writings, which tell the truth and proceed from the Holy Spirit. 3 You know that nothing unjust or fraudulent is written in them. You will not find that law-respecting men were ever repudiated by holy men. 4 Law-respecting men were persecuted of course, but only by lawless men. They were put in prison, but only by unholy men. They were stoned to death by contemners of the law. They were killed by men animated by unjust and abominable jealousy. 5 Under such ill-treatment they bore up gloriously. 6 What shall we say, brethren? Was Daniel thrown into the lion's den by God-fearing men? 7 Or, were Ananias, Azarias, and Misael shut up in the fiery furnace by men devoted to the glorious and exalted worship of the Most High? Let no such thing be said! Who, then, were those that committed such acts? Hateful men and the scum of the earth carried their love of strife to such a degree of fury that they subjected to indignities men who were serving God with holy and irreproachable steadfastness; they did not realize that the Most High is the champion and shield of those who in perfect good faith worship His most holy name. To Him be the glory forever and evermore. Amen. 8 But those who confidently persevered, inherited honor and glory: they were exalted and had their names engraved by God in His memory forever and evermore. Amen.

46. It is our duty, then, my brethren, to follow examples such as these. 2 For the Scripture says: Follow the saints, for such as follow them shall be sanctified. 3 And again, in another passage, it says: With an innocent man Thou wilt be innocent, and with an elect Thou wilt be elect, and with one perverted Thou wilt deal perversely. 4 Let us, therefore, associate with the innocent and law-abiding; these are God's elect. 5 Why are quarrels and outbursts of passion and divisions and schisms and war in your midst? 6 Or, **do we not have one God and one Christ and one Spirit of grace, a Spirit**

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*One God, one Christ, one Spirit  
— the unity of the Church  
against schism, the very occasion  
of this letter.*

**that was poured out upon us? And is there not one calling in Christ? 7**

Why do we tear apart and disjoint the members of Christ and revolt against our own body, and go to such extremes of madness as to forget that we are mutually dependent members? Remember the words of Jesus our Lord. 8 For He said: Utterly wretched is that man; it would be better for him not to have been born than to be an occasion of sin to one of my elect; it would be better for him to lie at the bottom of the sea with a millstone hung round his neck than to pervert one of my elect. 9 Your schism has perverted many; many it has thrown into discouragement, many it has bewildered, and to all of us it has brought sorrow. And your schism persists!

47. Take up the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. 2 What is the most important thing he wrote to you in the early days of gospel preaching? 3 He was truly inspired when he wrote to you regarding himself and Cephas and Apollos, because already at that time you had engaged in factious agitation. 4 But that display of factiousness involved you in less guilt, for you took the part of Apostles, men of attested merit, and of a man in good repute with them. 5 But now consider who those are that have perverted you and vilified the venerable character of your celebrated fraternal charity. 6 Disgraceful, beloved, indeed, exceedingly disgraceful and unworthy of your training in Christ, is the report that the well-established and ancient Church of the Corinthians is, thanks to one or two individuals, in revolt against the presbyters. 7 And this report has reached not only us, but also people that differ from us in religion, with the result that, owing to your folly, you heap blasphemy upon the name of the Lord and withal create a danger to yourselves.

48. Let us, then, quickly blot out this blemish and fall on our knees before the Master, and with tears implore Him to have mercy on us and be reconciled to us and restore us to the venerable and holy practice of brotherly love. 2 For this is the gate of observance of the law, which opens out into life, as the Scripture says: Open to me the gates of observance of the law: I will go in by them and praise the Lord. 3 This is the gate of the Lord: observers of the law will go in by it. 4 Of the many open gates, therefore, this gate of observance of the law is the gate of Christ: blessed are all those who enter by it and walk the straight path in holiness and observance of the law, performing without disturbance all their duties. 5 Let a man be a man of faith, let him be able to utter knowledge, let him be skilled in the discernment of discourses, let him be pure in his conduct; 6 surely, he must think all the less of himself, the higher he apparently ranks, and seek the common good and not his personal advantage.

49. He who has love in Christ must observe the commandments of Christ. 2 The binding power of the love of God—who is able to set it forth? 3 The radiance of His beauty—who can voice it to satisfaction? 4 The sublimity to which love leads up is unutterable. 5 Love unites us with God; love covers a multitude of sins; love endures everything, is long-suffering to the last; there is nothing vulgar, nothing conceited, in love; love creates no schism; love does not quarrel; love preserves perfect harmony. In love all the elect of God reached perfection, apart from love nothing is pleasing to God. 6 In love the Master took us to Himself. Because of the love which He felt for us, Jesus Christ Our Lord gave His Blood for us by the will of God, His body for our bodies, and His soul for our souls.

50. You see, beloved, how great and wonderful love is, and there is no setting forth its perfection. 2 Who is able to possess it, except those to whom God grants this privilege? Let us, therefore, earnestly beg of His mercy, that we may be found to possess a love unmixed with human partiality and above reproach. 3 All the generations from Adam down to this day have passed away; but those who are perfected in love in the measure of God's grace, have a place among the saints, and they will be made manifest when the Kingdom of Christ comes to visit us. 4 For the Scripture says: Enter the chambers for a little while, until my anger and fury pass away; then will I remember the good day, and will raise you from your graves. 5 Happy are we, beloved, if we observe the commandments of the Lord in the concord of love; for thus our sins will be forgiven us through love. 6 For the Scripture says: Happy those whose iniquities have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered up; happy the man to whom the Lord will not impute his sin, and on whose lips there is no guile. 7 This blessing was pronounced on those chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be the glory forever and evermore. Amen.

51. Let us, then, ask pardon for our waywardness and for what we have done yielding to any wiles of the adversary; but those, too, who were the ringleaders in this quarrel and sedition, ought, for their part, to ponder on the common nature of our hope. 2 Surely, those who live in fear and love prefer that they themselves should suffer indignities rather than their neighbors; they prefer to have reproach cast on themselves rather than on that traditional concord so well and justly established among us. 3 It is better for a man to make a clean breast of his failings than to harden his heart in imitation of those who, after rebelling against God's servant Moses, hardened their hearts, and whose condemnation was brought to light: 4 alive they went down to Hades, where death shall be their shepherd. 5 Pharaoh and his army and all the leaders of Egypt, including the chariots and their riders, were swallowed up by the Red Sea and perished for no other reason

than that their foolish hearts were hardened after striking exhibitions of power had been performed in Egypt by God's servant Moses.

52. In need of nothing, brethren, stands the Master of the universe; nothing does He ask of anyone, except that confession should be offered Him; 2 for David the chosen says: I will confess to the Lord, and it will please Him better than a calf with budding horns and hoofs. Let the poor see it and rejoice. 3 And again he says: Sacrifice to God a sacrifice of praise, and pay to the Most High your vows; call upon me in the day of your affliction, and I will rescue you, and you will glorify me. 4 For a sacrifice to God is a crushed spirit.

53. Surely, you are acquainted, beloved, and well acquainted, with the Sacred Scriptures, and have explored the oracles of God; and therefore we write these things merely to serve as a reminder. 2 Now, when Moses had gone up the mountain and spent forty days and forty nights in fasting and chastizing himself, God said to him: Descend in haste, for your people whom you led out of the land of Egypt, have broken the law; they have quickly deviated from the way you had marked out for them: they have made themselves molten images. 3 And the Lord said to him: Once and even twice have I spoken to you thus: I have looked at this people, and behold, it is stiffnecked; suffer me to exterminate them, and I will wipe out their name from under heaven; and I will make you the ruler of a nation mighty and wonderful and much greater than this one. 4 Then Moses said: No, no, Lord! Forgive this people their sin, or else blot me also out of the book of the living. 5 O great charity! O unsurpassed perfection! A servant speaks boldly to the Lord; he asks forgiveness for the people, or else that he himself may be blotted out with them!

54. Now, then, who among you is noble, who compassionate, who full of charity? 2 Let him say: "If I am the cause of sedition and strife and schism, then I depart; I go wherever you wish; I do whatever the majority enjoins: only let the flock of Christ have peace with the appointed presbyters." 3 He who acts thus will win great glory for himself in Christ, and every place will welcome him; for the earth and all that is in it are the Lord's. 4 Those who live as citizens of God's Kingdom—a life that never brings regrets—have acted thus and will act thus.

55. But let us also adduce examples from the heathens. Many kings and rulers have during a time of pestilence accepted the advice of oracles and given themselves up to death in order to rescue by their own blood their fellow citizens. Many lei their own cities to prevent the spread of a schism. 2 We know of many in our own midst who gave themselves up to imprisonment in order to ransom others. Many gave themselves up to

slavery, and with the price they received for themselves, furnished food for others. 3 Many women, invested with power through the grace of God, have accomplished many a manly deed. 4 The blessed Judith, when the city was under siege, asked of the elders leave for herself to go out into the camp of the heathens. 5 Exposing herself to danger, therefore, she went out for love of her country and of her people that were in a state of siege, and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hands of a woman. 6 Nor did Esther, that woman of perfect faith, expose herself to less danger in order to rescue the twelve tribes of Israel from imminent destruction; for by fasting and chastizing her body she implored the all-seeing Master, the God of the ages, and He, seeing her self-abasement, rescued the people for whose sake she had incurred danger.

56. Let us, too, therefore, pray for those who are guilty of some fault, that meekness and humility may be granted them, and incline them to submit—not to us—but to the will of God; thus our compassionate remembrance of them before God and the saints will bear perfect fruit for them. 2 Let us, beloved, accept correction, which no one must take in bad part. A reproof which we administer to one another is honorable and extremely helpful, for it unites us to the will of God. 3 For Holy Writ says as follows: Severely has the Lord chastized me, but He did not give me over to death. 4 For, him whom the Lord loves He chastizes, and He always scourges the son whom He takes to His heart. 5 For, the good man, it says, will chastize me with mercy and reprove me; but let not the oil of sinners anoint my head. 6 And again it says: Well for the man whom the Lord reproves; and do not reject the correction of the Almighty; for He causes pain, but then He sets things right again; 7 He wounds, but His hands heal again; 8 six times He will extricate you from distress, and the seventh time evil shall not touch you; 9 in famine He will rescue you from death, and in war He will deliver you from the grip of the sword; 10 and from the scourge of the tongue will He hide you, and you shall not fear when evils approach; 11 you will laugh at the wicked and lawless, and of wild beasts you shall not be afraid; 12 for wild beasts shall leave you in peace. 13 Then you will find that your house will be undisturbed, and the tent in which you dwell shall not fail; 14 you will find that your posterity will be numerous, and your children will be like the herbs of the field; 15 you will go down into the grave like ripened corn to be harvested at the right time, or like a heap on the threshing-floor that is garnered at the appointed time. 16 You see, beloved, what great protection awaits those who let themselves be disciplined by the Master; for, being a kind Father, He disciplines us in order that we may obtain mercy through His holy discipline.

57. You, therefore, the prime movers of the schism, submit to the presbyters, and, bending the knees of your hearts, accept correction and change your minds. 2 Learn submissiveness, and rid yourselves of your boastful and proud incorrigibility of tongue. Surely, it is better for you to be little and honorable within the flock of Christ than to be esteemed above your deserts and forfeit the hope which He holds out. 3 For thus the excellent Wisdom says: Behold, I will speak out the words of my spirit; I will teach you my message. 4 Since I called you and you did not listen, and since I put forth my message and you paid no attention, but set my counsels at naught and disobeyed my warnings: therefore will I in turn laugh at your destruction; and I will exult when ruin overtakes you, and when you are seized suddenly by dismay, and the catastrophe is at hand like a squall, or when distress and siege come upon you. 5 Yes, when you call upon me for help, I will not listen to you. Seek me the wicked will, but they will not find me. For they hated wisdom and did not choose the fear of the Lord, and they refused to attend to my counsels and sneered at my reproofs. 6 Therefore they shall eat the fruits of their own way, and be glutted with their own impiety. 7 Because they wronged the little ones, they shall be slaughtered; and a searching inquiry shall destroy the impious. But he who listens to me will find shelter in hope and confidence and will rest secure from every ill.

58. Let us, then, be subject to His most holy and glorious name, and escape the threats which Wisdom has uttered in advance against the disobedient. Thus we shall find shelter, firmly reposing on the most holy name of His majesty. 2 Accept our counsel, and you shall have nothing to regret. For, as truly as God lives, as truly as the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit live, and the faith and the hope of the elect, so truly will he who in a humble frame of mind, with eagerness to yield, and unregretfully carries out the commandments and precepts given by God, be enrolled and be in good standing among the number of those who are on the way to salvation through Jesus Christ, through whom is to Him the glory forever and evermore. Amen.

59. But should any disobey what has been said by Him through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in transgression and no small danger. 2 But for our part we shall be innocent of this sin, and will offer earnest prayer and supplication that the Creator of the universe may preserve undiminished the established number of His elect in all the world through His beloved Son Jesus Christ, **through whom He has called us out of darkness into light**, out of ignorance into the full knowledge of the splendor of His name, 3 that we may hope in Thy name which gave existence to all creation. Open the eyes of our heart, that we may know Thee who alone art Highest among the highest and Holy, reposing among the

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*Here begins the great  
intercessory prayer (chs. 59–61)  
— among the oldest liturgical  
prayers of the Church outside  
Scripture.*

holy; who humblest the pride of the haughty, destroyest the designs of the heathens; who raisest up the lowly and humblest the lofty, makest rich and makest poor, slayest and bringest to life; who alone art the Benefactor of spirits and the God of all flesh. Thou gazest upon the deep, Thou beholdest the works of men, the Helper in danger, the Savior in despair, the Creator and Watcher of every spirit. Thou multiplieth the nations upon the earth, and from among all Thou hast chosen those that love Thee through Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, through whom Thou hast instructed, sanctified, and honored us. 4 We beg Thee, O Master, to be our Helper and Protector: deliver those of us who are in distress, raise up the fallen, show Thy face to those in need, heal the infirm, bring back the erring of Thy people, feed the hungry, ransom our prisoners, set the infirm upon their feet, comfort the fainthearted: let all the nations know that Thou art the only God, that Jesus Christ is Thy Son, that we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture.

60. For Thou hast made known the everlasting constitution of the world through the forces at work in it. Thou, O Lord, hast created the world, Thou who art faithful in all generations, right in Thy judgments, wonderful in strength and transcendent greatness, wise in creating, and judicious in establishing what has come into being, beneficent throughout the visible world and kind toward those that trust in Thee. O merciful and compassionate one, forgive us our iniquities and misdemeanors and transgressions and shortcomings! 2 Do not consider every sin of Thy servants and servant maids; but cleanse us as only Thy truth can cleanse, and direct our steps to walk in holiness of heart and to do the things which are good and pleasing in Thy sight and in the sight of our rulers. 3 Yes, Master, let Thy face beam upon us, that we may do good in peace and be sheltered under Thy mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Thy uplifted arm, and deliver us from such as hate us without cause. 4 Grant concord and peace to us as well as to all the inhabitants of the earth, just as Thou didst grant it to our fathers when they piously called upon Thee in faith and truth; grant us to be obedient to Thy almighty and glorious name, as well as to our princes and rulers on earth.

61. Thou, O Master, through Thy transcendent and indescribable sovereignty hast given them the power of royalty, so that we, acknowledging the honor and glory conferred upon them by Thee, may bow to them, without in the least opposing Thy will. Grant to them, O Lord, health, peace, concord, and firmness, so that they may without hindrance exercise the supreme leadership Thou hast conferred on them. 2 For it is Thou, O Master, O heavenly King of all ages, that conferrest upon the sons of men glory and honor and authority over the things which are upon the earth. Do Thou, O Lord, direct their counsels in accord with what is good

and pleasing in Thy sight, so that they may piously exercise in peace and gentleness the authority Thou hast granted them, and thus experience Thy graciousness. 3 To Thee, who alone art able to bestow these and even greater blessings upon us, we render thanks and praise through the High Priest and Ruler of our souls, Jesus Christ, through whom be to Thee the glory and majesty now and for all generations and forever and evermore. Amen.

62. What we have written to you, brethren, sufficiently explains what concerns our worship and is most helpful for a virtuous life to those who wish to live piously and dutifully. 2 For, concerning faith and repentance and genuine charity and self-control and sobriety and patient endurance—we have touched upon every subject, and reminded you that you are in duty bound to please Almighty God through piety and truth and long-suffering; you are to live in concord, without bearing malice, in love and peace, joined to constant forbearance. In this manner our forbears, mentioned above, were acceptable and cherished a humble frame of mind toward the Father and God and Creator and all mankind. 3 And we have all the more pleasure in recalling this to your memory because we are well aware that we are writing to persons who are believers and highly distinguished and deeply versed in the writings that contain God's educative revelation.

63. It is right, therefore, that we should adhere to so many and such notable examples and bow the neck and discharge the duty of obedience, so that, ceasing from that futile dissension, we may without any blame reach the goal set before us in truth. 2 You certainly will give us the keenest pleasure if you prove obedient to what we have written through the Holy Spirit, and extirpate the lawless passion of your jealousy in accordance with the pleas we have made in this letter for peace and concord. 3 We are sending trustworthy and prudent men, who have led blameless lives among us from youth to old age, that they may be witnesses between you and us. 4 We do this to make you feel that our whole care has been, and is, directed toward establishing speedy peace in your midst.

64. And now may the all-seeing God and Master of spirits and Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him to be a people set apart for Himself, grant to every soul that invokes His transcendent and holy name—faith, fear, peace, patient endurance and long-suffering, self-control, holiness, and sobriety, so that they may be well-pleasing to His Majesty through our High Priest and Ruler, Jesus Christ, through whom be to Him glory and greatness, power and honor, both now and forever and evermore. Amen.

65. As for our representatives Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito, accompanied by Fortunatus, send them back to us at an early convenience, full of peace and joy, that they may without delay bring tidings of peace and concord—the object of our most ardent desires—and that we in turn may without delay rejoice in your tranquillity. 2 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and with all that have anywhere in the world been called by God and through Him, through whom be to Him glory and honor and power and majesty and everlasting dominion, from eternity to eternity. Amen. CLEMENT'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS<sup>1</sup> St. Clement of Rome and St. Ignatius of Antioch, *The Epistles of St. Clement of Rome and St. Ignatius of Antioch*, ed. Johannes Quasten and Joseph C. Plumpe, trans. James A. Kleist, 1st ed., *Ancient Christian Writers* (New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1946), 9–49. 1