

OTHER THOUGHTS

1. WOMEN

St. Clement explains St. Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 9:5 "Have we not the right to take a woman around with us as a sister, like all the other apostles?" to say that women were helping the apostles.

That is why he says in one letter: Do we not have the right to take with us a wife who is a sister, as the other apostles do (1 Cor. 9:5)? These apostles, in order to devote themselves to preaching without distraction, as befitted their ministry, took their wives with them, not as married women but as sisters, to be their fellow ministers to women in the households. Through these women the teaching of the Lord penetrated even into the women's quarters without any scandal. We also know what sort of regulations were given regarding women deacons by the noble Paul in his second (first) letter to Timothy (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11)¹.

His disciple Origen, in commenting on the role of Phoebe, writes that "even women are instituted deacons in the church," and that "women who have given assistance to so many people and who by their good works deserve to be praised by the Apostle, ought to be accepted in the diaconate²." Gryson, in an extensive commentary on these texts, insists that Clement and Origen are dealing only with theoretical considerations and not with concrete situations and a living practice in third-century Alexandria. Both Fathers use the past tense to explain biblical texts that refer to

¹ Stromata 3:6:53; David G. Hunter: *Marriage in the Early Church*, Minneapolis, 1992, p. 53.

² *Comm. on Rom. 10:17*; Carl A. Volz: *Life and Practice in the Early Church*, Minneapolis, 1990, p. 194.

women associates of the apostles, but there is no evidence of deaconess who are contemporary with the Alexandrians.

Let us recognize, too, that both men and women practice the same sort of virtue. Surely, if there is but one God for both, then there is but one Educator for both. One Church, one virtue, one modesty, a common food, wedlock in common, breath, sight, hearing, knowledge, hope, obedience, love, all are alike [in man and woman]. They who possess life in common, grace in common, and salvation in common have also virtue in common and, therefore, education too. The Scripture says: 'For in this world, they marry and are given in marriage,' for this world is the only place in which the female is distinguished from the male, 'but in that other world, no longer' (Cf. Luke 20:34). There, the rewards of this life, lived in the holy union of wedlock, await not man or woman as such, but the human person, freed from the lust that in this life had made it either male or female³.

The Logos is Educator to women and men alike. This was an attitude not found in traditional Judaism: the Jew gave thanks that he was not born a woman. It was not found in Greece, least of all in the Athens where Pericles declared that the greatest glory of a woman was not to be spoken of by men for good or bad. It was not found in Rome, where despite the freedom of some aristocrats the woman was under the authority of first the father and then of husband. It is authentically the spirit of Jesus, whose freedom in speaking with the woman of Samaria startled his disciples, who denied a twofold standard of morality over the woman taken in adultery, and whose attitude to Mary and Martha speaks of a new type of relationship. It is true to the early church, where Mary, mother of John Mark, played a prominent role, Nympha presided over a house church, Phoebe was deaconess of Cenchreae, and Priscilla was named before her husband Aquila. This partnership

³ *Paidagogos* 1:4:10 (*Frs. of Church*, 23).

between men and women was part of the Christian revolution, the Christian transvaluation, and Clement is in the true tradition in offering it⁴.



2. WIDOWS

Carl A. Volz states that St. Clement of Alexandria writes: "*Innumerable commands such as these are written in the Holy Bible and directed to chosen persons, some to presbyters, some to bishops, some to deacons, others to widows*⁵." **Origen also** speaks of special obligations required of widows, priests, and the bishop, and he writes that second marriages prevent aspirants from assuming ecclesiastical dignities - namely, that of bishop, presbyter, deacon, and widow⁶. A special vocation of widows was to prayer, fasting, and chastity. Origen adds others - to teach younger women to be sober, to love their husbands, to raise their children, to be modest, chaste, to be good housekeepers, to be submissive to their husbands, to be kind, to practice hospitality, to wash the feet of the saints, and to fulfill in all chastity all the other duties which are ascribed to women in Scripture⁷. Thus we find that widows are also given the task of teaching younger women and serving them as examples of virtue and charity⁸.

Tertullian and St. Clement of Alexandria referred to the widows' participation with the clergy in the healing of sinners and the comforting of those in distress⁹.

⁴ John Ferguson : *Clement of Alexandria*, Twayne Publishers, NY 1974, p. 72.

⁵ *Paid.* 3:12.

⁶ *On Prayer* 28:3; *Hom. on Luke* 17.

⁷ *Comm. on Rom.* 10:20

⁸ Carl A. Volz: *Life and Practice in the Early Church*, Minneapolis, 1990, p. 187.

⁹ *Who is the Rich...*34; *Tert. on Monagomy* 11; on *Penitence* 9-10; Carl A. Volz: *Life and Practice in the Early Church*, Minneapolis, 1990, p. 188.

3. SERVANTS

We must treat servants as we do ourselves, for they are men even as we are. God is the same to all, free or slave, if you consider.

We ought not to inflict torture on servants who do wrong, but only chastise them: 'He who spares his rod hates his son' (Cf. Prov. 13:24)¹⁰.

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4. MARIOLOGY¹¹

St. Clement speaks of the virginity in party thus: "*For certain people say that Mary examined by the midwife after she had given birth was found to be a virgin.*"¹²" The source is evidently the *Protoevangelium of James*.

St. Clement speaks of the Scriptures, like Mary, bringing forth truth.

He points to the Mary-Church parallel in the following words: "*O mysterious wonder! There is only one Father of all, only one Word of all, and the Holy Spirit is also one and he is everywhere. There is but one Virgin Mother. I like to call her the Church. Alone this mother has not had milk, for she alone is not a woman but a virgin and a mother, immaculate as a virgin, loving as a mother; and she calls her children and feeds them with holy milk: the Word a child.*"¹³"

St. Clement taught the virginal conception. He attributed the making of Christ's human body to the Holy Spirit¹⁴. Some of the early Fathers thought of the Word himself. "*But the Lord Christ, fruit of the Virgin, did not seek the sweet breast of a*

¹⁰ *Paidagogos* 3:12:81,82 (*Frs. of Church*).

¹¹ Michael O'Carroll: *Theotokos, A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, Delware, 1988, p. 103.

¹²² *Stromata* 7: 16. PG, 9, 529, 30.

¹³³ *Paidag.* 1:6: 21. PG, 8, 300-301.

¹⁴ *Excerpt from Theodotus* 60. PG, 9, 688B.

woman, did not ask her for his food. When the Father, full of kindness, rained down his Word, the latter became for men a spiritual food."



5. MARTYRDOM¹⁵

In Alexandria there was a tradition, going back at least to Clement, that a martyr is not one who dies, but one who is perfected¹⁶: *"We call martyrdom perfection, not because the man comes to the end of his life as others, but because he has exhibited the perfect work of love¹⁷."* He also says, *"If the confession to God is martyrdom, each soul which has lived purely in the knowledge of God, which has obeyed the commandments, is a witness both by life and word, in whatever way it may be released from the body, - shedding faith as blood along its whole life till its departure¹⁸."*

St. Clement sees in martyrdom the perfect work of love. But with the cool eye of reason he also rejects all reckless enthusiasm for it and any desire for it which stems from any motive but the love of God. He prefers, it seems, to emphasize the *Gnostic* martyrdom of a life lived according to the Gospel:

The Lord says in the Gospel, "Whoever shall leave father or mother or brethren," etc., "for the sake of the gospel and my name" (Matt 19:29), he is blessed; not indicating simple martyrdom, but the Gnostic martyrdom [cf. also Stromata IV 14], as of the man who has conducted himself according to the rule of the gospel, in love to the Lord....¹⁹

St. Clement thus sees both blood martyrdom and *Gnostic* martyrdom as sacrificial, but without making much of the point.

¹⁵ Cf. Fobert J. Daly: *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 120.

¹⁶ *Stromata* 4:4.

¹⁷ *Stromata* 4:4 ANF.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Stromata* 4:4; cf. also 4:18.

He prefers, it seems, the latter, but sees the virtue of love as towering over both.

St. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, St. Cyprian and St. Dionysius all defend flight from persecution - their own, and that of the brethren. St. Clement of Alexandria says that those who provoke martyrdom are accomplices in the crime of the persecutor²⁰. St. Athanasius gives the imprimatur to flight²¹. Canon 60 of Elvira, held in Spain at the dawn of the fourth century, says that those who destroy idols and are consequently killed are not to be considered martyrs. *"If anyone breaks idols and is killed on the spot, since this is not written in the Gospel nor will it be found that it ever happened in the days of the apostles, he shall not be received into the number of the martyrs"*²². It was for this reason that a person like Cyprian would flee from the authorities until he felt sure that his time for witness had come²³.

Alone, therefore, the Lord, for the purification of the men who plotted against Him and disbelieved Him, "drank the Cup," in imitation of whom the apostles, that they might be in reality Gnostics, and perfect, suffered for the Churches which they founded. So, then, also the Gnostics who tread in the footsteps of the apostles ought to be sinless, and, out of love to the Lord, to love also their brother; so that, if occasion call, enduring without stumbling afflictions for the Church, "they may drink the cup." Those who witness in their life by deed, and at the tribunal by word, whether entertaining hope or surmising fear, are better than those who confess salvation by their mouth alone. But if one ascend also to love, he is a really blessed and true martyr, having confessed perfectly both to the commandments and to God, by the Lord; whom having, loved, he acknowledged a brother, giving himself up wholly for God,

²⁰ Stromata 4:10

²¹ De fuga 22.

²² Canon 60

²³ Cf. epistle 81; Boniface Ramsey: *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 126-7.

for God, resigning pleasantly and lovingly the man when asked, like a deposit²⁴.

Although we do not wrong, yet the judge looks on us as doing wrong, for he neither knows nor wishes to know about us, but is influenced by unwarranted prejudice; wherefore also he is judged. Accordingly they persecute us, not from the supposition that we are wrong-doers, but imagining that by the very fact of our being Christians we sin against life in so conducting, ourselves, and exhorting others to adopt the like life.

But why are you not helped when persecuted? say they. What wrong is done us, as far as we are concerned, in being released by death to go to the Lord, and so undergoing a change of life, as if a change from one time of life to another? Did we think rightly, we should feel obliged to those who have afforded the means for speedy departure, if it is for love that we bear witness; and if not, we should appear to the multitude to be base men. Had they also known the truth, all would have bounded on to the way, and there would have been no choice. But our faith, being the light of the world, reproves unbelief. "Should Anytus and Melitus kill me, they will not hurt me in the least; for I do not think it right for the better to be hurt by the worse," [says Socrates]. So that each one of us may with confidence say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: what shall man do to me?" (Ps. 118:6). "For the souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, and no plague shall touch them" (Wisd. 3:1)²⁵.

When, again, He says, "When they persecute you in this city, flee you to the other," He does not advise flight, as if persecution were an evil thing; nor does He enjoin them by flight to avoid death, as if in dread of it, but wishes

²⁴ Stromata 4:9.

²⁵ Stromata 4:11.

us neither to be the authors nor abettors of any evil to any one, either to ourselves or the persecutor and murderer. For He, in a way, bids us take care of ourselves. But he who disobeys is rash and foolhardy. If he who kills a man of God sins against God, he also who presents himself before the judgment-seat becomes guilty of his death. And such is also the case with him who does not avoid persecution, but out of daring presents himself for capture. Such a one, as far as in him lies, becomes an accomplice in the crime of the persecutor. And if he also uses provocation, he is wholly guilty, challenging the wild beast. And similarly, if he afford any cause for conflict or punishment, or retribution or enmity, he gives occasion for persecution²⁶.

I. THE SACRIFICE OF THE CHURCH²⁷

According to St. Clement the sacrifice of the church is considered something intensely communal:

Breathing together is properly said of the church. For the sacrifice of the church is the word breathing as incense from holy souls, the sacrifice and the whole mind being at the same time unveiled to God.... Thus we should offer God not costly sacrifices but such as he loves. The mixture of incense mentioned in the law is something that consists of many tongues and voices in prayer, or rather of different nations and natures, prepared by the gift bestowed in the dispensation for "the unity of the faith" (Eph 4:13) and brought together in praises, with a pure mind, and just and right conduct, from holy works and righteous prayer²⁸.

II. THE SACRIFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN²⁹

²⁶ Stromata 4:10.

²⁷ Fobert J. Daly: *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 117-8.

²⁸ Stromata 7 :6.

²⁹ Fobert J. Daly: *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 116 f.

Through the fellowship with Christ who offered Himself as a sacrifice for us, we also become sacrifices for His sake. St. Clement said, "*We glorify Him who gave Himself in sacrifice for us, we also sacrificing ourselves*³⁰." The Christian becomes, like Christ, the offering itself: "*We have become a consecrated offering to God for Christ's sake*³¹."

*The sacrifice acceptable to God is unswerving abstraction from the body and its passions. This is the really true piety. Is not, then, Socrates correct in calling philosophy the practice of Death?... It was from Moses that the chief of the Greeks drew these philosophical tenets. For Moses commands holocausts to be skinned and divided into parts [cf. Lev. 1:6]. For the Gnostic soul must be consecrated to the light, stripped of the coverings of matter, separated from the frivolousness of the body and of all the passions which are acquired through vain and lying opinions, and divested of the lusts of the flesh*³².

St. Clement not only follows Philo in seeing Old Testament sacrifices as symbols of the soul's progress toward God, and Barnabas in rejecting the validity of a literal interpretation of these sacrifices; he also goes beyond this by using at some length the cult criticism of the pagan philosophers and poets and not continually referring to the authority of Scripture³³.



6. GOOD AND EVIL ANGELS

St. Clement of Alexandria and also Origen explain that the demonic order attempts to make man fall, lead him into slavery and make him an ally with themselves. The divine providence does not leave us helpless before the demons, for it supports us with the

³⁰ *Stromata* 7:3.

³¹ *Protrepticus* 4.

³² *Stromata* 5:11.

³³ Fobert J. Daly: *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 113-4; *Stromata* 7:6.

angels for our protection if we accept their actions for our sakes (Heb. 1:14); and to lead the believers to the heavenly wedding room if the believers wish.

For regiments of angels are distributed over the nations and cities (Deut. 32:8 LXX), and, perchance, some are assigned to individuals³⁴.

For by angels, whether seen or unseen, the divine power bestows good things. This method of operation is manifest in the covenants of the Jews, the legislations of the Greeks, and the teachings of philosophy³⁵.

The angels of God serve the priests and deacons in the ministering of earthly affairs³⁶.

So is he (the Gnostic) always pure for prayer. He also prays in the society of angels as being already of angelic rank, and he is never out of their holy keeping; and though he prays alone, he has the choir of saints standing with him³⁷.

The priest, upon entering the second veil, would take off his mitre beside the altar of incense. He himself would enter further in silence, with the Name engraved upon his heart. Thus he shows that the setting aside of the golden mitre which had become purified and light by the cleansing, as it were, of the body, was really a setting aside of the weight of the soul... He puts aside this light mitre when he has come with it inside the second veil, in the world of the intellectuals, that is, the second veil, alongside the altar of incense, beside the ministers of the prayers that are being offered, the angels. Then the naked soul, having become in reality a high-priest, is thereafter moved directly

³⁴ Stromata 6:17. [See Strom 7:2].

³⁵ Ibid. 6:17.

³⁶ Stromata 7:1; In Lev. hom. 9:8 [Jean Daniélou: *the Angels and their missions according to the Fathers of the Church*, transl. by D. Heimann, Westminster MD, 1982, p. 63].

³⁷ Stromata 7:12.

by the Word... Passing beyond the teaching of the angels, she goes on to the knowledge and understanding of things, no longer merely betrothed but dwelling with the Bridegroom³⁸.

Now the devil, being possessed of free will, was able both to repent and to seal; and it was he who was the author of the theft, not the Lord, who did not prevent him³⁹.



7. THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

Henry Chadwick says,

The soul is not a portion of God⁴⁰, but is created by God's goodness and as such is the proper object of divine love⁴¹. But this love is not automatic, as the heretics assume. It is one of the fundamental grounds for complaint against the Gnostics that their doctrine of the divine spark in the elect obliterates the gulf between Creator and creature⁴².

The Word of God became man, so that He might live among men as one of them (John 1:14). The Alexandrian churchmen looked at the incarnation as a sign of God's honorable concept of man. St. Clement of Alexandria says, "*He had taken upon Him our flesh ... He scorned not the weakness of human flesh, but having clothed Himself with it, has come into the world for the common salvation of men⁴³.*" He also says: "*O divine mystery!... O wondrous mystery!... The Lord was laid low, and man was raised up!⁴⁴*"

³⁸ Excerpt., 27; see also Stromata 7:3 [Daniélou, p. 92, 93].

³⁹ Stromata 1:17.

⁴⁰ Stromata 5:88.

⁴¹ Paidagogos 1:17.

⁴² Stromata 2:74; 77; Henry Chadwick: *History and Thought of the Early Church*, London, 1982, p. 172.

⁴³ Stromata 7:2:7,8.

⁴⁴ Protrep. 2:3:3.

We are indebted to the Gracious God not only for the existence of the universe for our sake and caring for it continuously on our behalf, and for our coming into existence from nothing, but also for the special love of God for us even before our creation. St. Clement of Alexandria states that man, ***the noblest of the created objects***⁴⁵, the ***dearest creature to God, the Hymn of God***⁴⁶, was in the Divine Mind before the creation. In His infinite love, God created the universe for man's sake, then He created man in His image and likeness to enjoy communion with Him. Man is chosen for himself and thus belongs to the Choosier⁴⁷.

*Man is justly dear to God, since he is His workmanship. The other works of creation, He made by the word of command alone, but man He formed by Himself, by His own hand, and breathed into him what was particular to Himself. What, then, was fashioned by Him, and after His likeness, either was created by God Himself as being desirable on its own account, or was formed as being desirable on account of something else*⁴⁸.

St. Clement, who discovers the redeeming work of the Creator acknowledges how man is the beloved creature.

*Therefore, man, the creation of God, is desirable in himself... Man is, then, an object of love; yes, man is loved by God*⁴⁹.

A noble hymn of God is an immortal man..., in whom the oracles of truth are engraved.

For where but in a soul that is wise can you write truth?

where love?

Where reverence?

Where meekness?...⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Paidagogos 1:3; 1:8:63.

⁴⁶ Protrpticus 10.

⁴⁷ Paidagogos 1: 3,4.

⁴⁸ Paidagogos 1:3; 1:8:63.

⁴⁹ Paidagogos 1:3:8 (Frs. of Church, 23).

For Clement, as for Irenaeus, Adam was created with childish innocence, and he was to achieve the purpose of his creation through further growth unto perfection⁵¹. This was delayed by the fall, which took place because man made use of his sexual capabilities before God had intended it⁵².

J.N.D. Kelly says:

In his primitive state, according to Clement⁵³, man was childlike and innocent, destined to advance by stages towards perfection. Adam, he states⁵⁴, “was not created perfect in constitution, but suitable for acquiring virtue... For God desires us to be saved by our own efforts.” Progress therefore depends upon free-will, on which Clement places great emphasis. The fault of Adam and Eve consisted in the fact that, using their volition wrongly, they indulged in the pleasures of sexual intercourse before God gave them leave⁵⁵. Not that sex was wrong in itself (Clement strongly repudiates⁵⁶ the *Gnostic* suggestion that it is), but the violation of God’s ordinance was. As a result they lost the immortal life of Paradise, their will and rationality were weakened, and they became a prey to sinful passions⁵⁷. But while Clement accepts the historicity of Adam, he also regards him as symbolizing mankind as a whole. All men, he teaches⁵⁸, have a spark of the divine in them and are free to obey or disobey God’s law, but all except the incarnate Logos are sinners⁵⁹. They are, as it were, sick, blind and gone astray; they are enslaved to the elements

⁵⁰ *Protrpticus* 10.

⁵¹ *Stromata* 2:22.

⁵² *Stromata* 3:17. Justo L. Gonzalez: *A History of Christian Faith*, vol. 1, 1979.

⁵³ *Prot.* 11:111; *Strom.* 2:22. 131.

⁵⁴ *Strom.* 6:12:96.

⁵⁵ *Prot.* 11:111; *Strom.* 3:17:103.

⁵⁶ E.g. *Strom.* 3:12:88f.; 3:17:102.

⁵⁷ *Strom.* 2:19:98; *Paid* 1:13, 101; *Protr.* 11:111.

⁵⁸ *Protr.* 6:68; *Strom.* 2:15:62; 3:9:63ff.; 4:24:153.

⁵⁹ *Paid.* 1:2:4; 3:12,93.

and the Devil; and their condition can be described as death⁶⁰. He nowhere hints, however, that they are involved in Adam's guilt and in one passage⁶¹ vehemently denies that a new-born baby which has not performed any act of its own can have "fallen under the curse of Adam." In another⁶² he explains Job 1, 21 ("Naked I came from my mother's womb") as implying that a child enters the world exempt from sin. On the whole, his insistence against the Gnostics that only the personal misdeeds that men have committed are imputable to them leaves no room for original sin in the full sense. On the other hand, although certain contexts⁶³ might seem to suggest that the connection between the general human sinfulness and Adam's transgression amounts to no more than imitation, he in fact envisages it as much more intimate. His teaching⁶⁴ seems to be that, through our physical descent from Adam and Eve, we inherit, not indeed their guilt and curse, but a disordered sensuality which entails the dominance of the irrational element in our nature⁶⁵.

In fact, the inspired word reserves the name 'man' to what is complete and consummate; David, for example says of the Devil: 'The Lord abominates the man of blood,' man in the sense that he is consummate in wickedness. Scripture calls the Lord man, too, in the sense that He is consummate in goodness. The Apostle, for example, writing to the Corinthians, says: 'For I have betrothed you to one man, that I might present you a chaste virgin to Christ,' or as little ones and saints, but, at any rate, only to the Lord. And in writing to the Ephesians he expresses clearly just

⁶⁰ Protr. 1:6 f.; 11:114; Paid. 1:9; Strom. 1:11:53; etc.

⁶¹ Strom. 3:16:100.

⁶² Strom. 4:25:160.

⁶³ Esp. adumbr. in Jud. 11.

⁶⁴ Strom. 3:16:100 f.; 3:9:63-5.

⁶⁵ Kelly, p. 179-180.

*what we are saying: Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ*⁶⁶.

*The soul consists of three parts*⁶⁷. *The intelligence, which is also called the reason, is the inner man, the ruler of the external man. But it is led by someone else, that is, by God. The part in which anger resides is akin to the beasts and lives close to madness*⁶⁸.

We are subject to the Devil, and thus become slaves of sin and death. This does not mean that human freedom is utterly destroyed. On the contrary, when God, by means of His Word, offers faith, it is man who must decide whether to accept it or not, thus exercising his freedom⁶⁹.



8. FREE-WILL

Man's freedom is the most important divine gift that God bestows on man. According to St. Cyril of Alexandria, the image of God in which man was created (Gen 1: 26) was his own free-will, and the spoilage of his human nature, that occurred by his disobedience to God, was the loss of his free-will.

According to Athenagoras, the dean of the Alexandrian School in the second century, man has the choice to do good or evil. Man has the freedom to sin or not to sin; otherwise he could not be condemned, rebuked, exhorted, or summoned.

St. Clement of Alexandria interprets the goodness of the first man not as being perfect but as having free-will to be advanced towards perfection . He said that Adam was childlike and innocent; "He was not created perfect in constitution, but suitable

⁶⁶ Paidagogos 1:5:18 (*Frs. of Church*, 23).

⁶⁷ Cf. Plato: *Republic* 4 *passim*, esp. 435-441.

⁶⁸ Paidagogos 3:1:1 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

⁶⁹ Cf. Osborn: *Clement*, p. 51; Justo L. Gonzalez: *A History of Christian Faith*, vol. 1, 1979, p. 208.

for acquiring virtue ... For God desires us to be saved by our own efforts⁷⁰."

Therefore the Alexandrians looked at Adam's life in Paradise as if it were a kind of divine life, because of Adam's free - will that grants him the ability to be in close contact with God. In this atmosphere, Adam and Eve received God's commandment not as a restriction that they had to suffer, but on the contrary, as a chance to express their love through obedience to God by their own free-will. In other words, without this commandment our first parents would find no way to accept God's love by practicing love, and had no way to have the experience of free-will.

According to St. Clement of Alexandria, the fault of Adam and Eve consisted in the fact that, using their volition wrongly, they indulged in the pleasures of sexual intercourse before God gave them leave⁷¹. Not that sex was wrong in itself, but the violation of God's ordinance was. As a result, their will and rationality were weakened, and they became a prey to sinful passions. He says: "*The first man played in Paradise, at liberty, since he was the child of God. Then he fell, through pleasure ... and was led astray through his desires... How great the power of pleasure! Man was free, in his innocence, and then found himself bound by his sins*⁷²."

His teaching⁷³ seems to be, that through our physical descent from Adam and Eve, we inherit, not indeed their own guilt and curse, but a disordered sensuality which entails the dominance of the irrational element in our nature, and a lack of knowledge, for sin is due to "ignorance⁷⁴."

J. Pelikan says:

⁷⁰ Protr. 11:11; Stromata 2:2:131.

⁷¹ J.N.D. Kelly: *Early Christian Doctrines*, 1978, p. 179-180; Protr. 11:III, Stromata 3:17:103.

⁷² Protr. 11: 111.

⁷³ Kelly, p. 180; Stromata 3: 6: 100f; 3:9:63-5.

⁷⁴ Stromata 3:16:100.

As a spokesman for the Christian faith, in response to the heathen and the heretics, Clement of Alexandria delivered just such an exhortation; "As far as we can, let us try to sin as little as possible." Only God could avoid sin altogether; but wisemen were able to avoid voluntary transgressions, and those who were properly trained in Christianity could at least see to it that they fell into very few⁷⁵.

St. Clement asserts free-will to all rational beings: good and bad angels and man.

*Now the devil, being possessed of free-will, was able both to repent and to steal; and it was he who was the author of the theft, not the Lord, who did not prevent him*⁷⁶.

*Above all, this ought to be known, that by nature we are adapted for virtue; not so as to be possessed of it from our birth, but so as to be adapted for acquiring it*⁷⁷.

FREE WILL AND GOD'S PROVIDENCE

Someone may ask: How can we interpret God's providence through the free will of men, for if God takes care of everyone, even of the number of hairs of the head (Matt. 10: 30) how will we accept the free will of others who would harm me or even kill me through their free will ?

Our God who in His goodness grants us free will, through His infinite wisdom uses this human freedom for the edification of His children, for He changes even the evil deeds to the salvation of others. St. Clement of Alexandria gives a biblical example. Jacob's sons sold Joseph as a slave, but God used this evil action for Joseph's glory. Joseph said to his brothers: "But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me

⁷⁵ J. Pelikan: *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, 1961, p. 284; Clem. Alex. *Paidagogos* 1:2:4:1-3.

⁷⁶ *Stromata* 1:17 ANF.

⁷⁷ *Stromata* 6:11 ANF.

here; for God sent me before you to preserve life... so now it was not you who sent me here, but God, and He has made me a father of Pharaoh, and lord of all, Gen 45:5-9; 'Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive' (Exod. 50: 19, 20).

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9. SALVATION IN THE LIFE OF BELIEVERS

The perfect believers or "*Gnostics*" who have true spiritual knowledge and practise fellowship with Christ attain the righteous life. St. Clement of Alexandria could have devoted a treatise to spiritual perfection in which the implication is that a life without sin is possible at least for a few in this world. The "*Gnostic*," or perfect Christian, Clement writes, has gained mastery over himself and is never tempted, except by divine permission, and then only for the benefit of others. His whole life is one of prayer and communion with God; he "*lives in the spirit with those who are like him in the choirs of the holy ones, even though he is still detained on the earth*⁷⁸."

The *Gnostic* becomes the image of Christ and in His likeness. Some scholars ask if there is a difference between the *image* and the *likeness* of Christ. Some of the Fathers, such as St. Clement of Alexandria and Origen, make a distinction between image and likeness. The image of God is what is received at birth, while his likeness is something achieved by the effort of a lifetime. "*The human person was given the dignity of the image in his first creation*," Origen writes, "*but the perfection of likeness is reserved for*

⁷⁸ Stromata 7:12:80; Boniface Ramsey: *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 64.

*the consummation*⁷⁹." Other Fathers, however, make no distinction whatsoever between the two words (*likeness* and *image*), and St. Cyril of Alexandria says rather bluntly that, if there is a difference, no one has been able to prove it to him⁸⁰.



10. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF BELIEVERS (GNOSTICS)

a. The true believer **searches for every knowledge.**

The Gnostic must be erudite...

*The Gnostic of whom I speak, himself comprehends what seems to be incomprehensible to others; believing that nothing is incomprehensible to the Son of God, whence nothing incapable of being taught. For He who suffered out of His love for us, would have suppressed no element of knowledge requisite for our instruction*⁸¹.

*If the love of knowledge produces immortality, and leads the kingly man near to God the King, knowledge ought to be sought till it is found*⁸².

b. The Gnostic is a **true pious worshipper:**

It is our purpose to prove that the Gnostic is holy and pious, and worships the true God in a manner worthy of Him, and that worship meet for God is followed by loving and being loved by God...

The service of God, then, in the case of the Gnostic, is his soul's continual study and occupation, bestowed on the Deity in ceaseless love. For of the service bestowed on

⁷⁹ De. Principiis 3:6:1; Boniface Ramsey: *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 67.

⁸⁰ De dogm. solutione; Boniface Ramsey: *Beginning to Read the Fathers*, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 68.

⁸¹ Stromata 6:8.

⁸² Stromata 6:15 ANF.

men, one kind is that whose aim is improvement, the other ministerial. The improvement of the body is the object of the medical art, of the soul of philosophy. Ministerial service is rendered to parents by children, to rulers by subjects.

Similarly, also, in the Church, the elders attend to the department which has improvement for its object; and the deacons to the ministerial. In both these ministries the angels serve God, in the management of earthly affairs; and the Gnostic himself ministers to God, and exhibits to men the scheme of improvement, in the way in which he has been appointed to discipline men for their amendment. For he is alone pious that serves God rightly and unblamably in human affairs...

And as Godliness is the habit which preserves what is becoming to God, the godly man is the only lover of God, and such will he be who knows what is becoming, both in respect of knowledge and of the life which must be lived by him who is destined to be divine, and is already being assimilated to God. So then he is in the first place a lover of God. For as he who honors his father is a lover of his father, so he who honors God is a lover of God.

Thus also it appears to me that there are three effects of Gnostic power:

the knowledge of things;

second, the performance of whatever the Word suggests;

and the third, the capability of delivering, in a way suitable to God, the secrets veiled in the truth⁸³.

The Gnostic is a **man of prayer**. Prayer is essential in his life, he practises the "Canonical Hours," at the same time that his prayers are not limited by a certain time or place, but all his life is changed into a prayer. He always thanks God for His providence.

⁸³ Stromata 7:1.

Now, if some assign definite hours for prayer - as for example, the third, the sixth, and ninth - yet the Gnostic prays throughout his whole life, endeavoring by prayer to have fellowship with God. And briefly, having reached to this, he leaves behind him all that is of no service, as having now received the perfection of the man that acts by love. By the distribution of the hours into a threefold division, honored with as many prayers, those are acquainted with... the blessed triad of the holy abodes⁸⁴.

His whole life is prayer and converse with God...

So he is always pure for prayer. He also prays in the society of angels, as being already of angelic rank, and he is never out of their holy keeping; and though he prays alone, he has the choir of the saints standing with him⁸⁵.

The form of his prayer is thanksgiving for the past, for the present, and for the future as already through faith present.

The Gnostic prays by his body and his soul, he prays through gestures and even by his silence.

Prayer is, then, to speak more boldly, converse with God. Though whispering, consequently, and not opening the lips, we speak in silence, yet we cry inwardly (1 Sam. 1:13). For God hears continually all the inward converse. So also we raise the head and lift the hands to heaven, and set the feet in motion at the closing utterance of the prayer, following the eagerness of the spirit directed towards the intellectual essence; and endeavoring to abstract the body from the earth, along with the discourse, raising the soul aloft, winged with longing for better things, we compel it to advance to the region of holiness, magnanimously despising the chain of the flesh. For we know right well, that the Gnostic willingly passes over the whole world, as the Jews

⁸⁴ Stromata 7:7.

⁸⁵ Stromata 7:12.

certainly did over Egypt, showing clearly, above all, that he will be as near as possible to God.

Prayer, then, may be uttered without the voice, by concentrating the whole spiritual nature within on expression by the mind, in undistracted turning towards God⁸⁶.

c. For the Gnostic, **earth is changed into heaven**. St. Clement who asserts the sanctification of the body together with the soul, says that the sanctified soul changes its body into heaven, by the work of the Holy Spirit.

*The soul is not then sent down from heaven to what is worse. For God works all things up to what is better. But the soul which has chosen the best life - the life that is from God and righteousness - exchanges earth for heaven*⁸⁷.

The Gnostics' aim is **to put their treasures in heaven**, not on earth:

*At any rate, we should repeat on every occasion that most inspiring of all our doctrines, that the good man, in his prudence and uprightness, 'lays up treasure in heaven' (Cf. Matt. 6:20)*⁸⁸.

*Such is the Gnostic laborer, who has the mastery of worldly desires even while still in flesh; and who, in regard to things future and still invisible, which he knows, has a sure persuasion, so that he regards them as more present than the things within reach*⁸⁹.

The Gnostics examine the pledge of heaven itself.

*O wondrous mystery... Man was cast out of Paradise; and now he receives a reward greater than that of obedience, the reward of Heaven*⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ Stromata 7:7 ANF.

⁸⁷ Stromata 4:26.

⁸⁸ Paidagogos 3:6:34 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

⁸⁹ Stromata 7:12 ANF.

⁹⁰ Protr. 11:3.

d. The believers **attain a kind of perfection** through the work of the Holy Trinity, as a pledge of the eternal perfection. They imitate God.

*But, they object, man has not yet received the gift of perfection. I agree with them, except that I insist he is already in the light and that darkness does not overtake him (John 1:5). **There is nothing at all in between light and darkness.** Perfection lies ahead, in the resurrection of the faithful, but it consists in obtaining the promise which has already been given to us⁹¹.*

The Gnostic is divine, and already holy, God-bearing, and God-borne⁹².

The Gnostic, as we already mentioned, struggles to be in the likeness of Christ, by divine grace.

He is the Gnostic, who is after the image and likeness of God, who imitates God as far as possible, deficient in none of the things which contribute to the likeness as far as compatible, practising self restraint and endurance, living righteously, reigning over the passions, bestowing of what he has as far as possible, and doing good both by word and deed. "He is the greatest." it is said, "in the kingdom who shall do and teach;" imitating God in conferring like benefits⁹³.

*But "it is enough for the disciple to become as the Master" (Matt. 25:10), says the Master. To the **likeness of God**, then, he that is introduced into adoption and the friendship of God, to the just inheritance of the lords and gods is brought; if he be perfected, according to the Gospel, as the Lord Himself taught⁹⁴.*

⁹¹ Paidagogos 1:6:28 (Frs. of Church).

⁹² Stromata 7:13.

⁹³ Stromata 2:19.

⁹⁴ Stromata 6:14 ANF.

The members of the church must be sanctified in their thoughts and dreams.

So it is said that we ought to go washed to sacrifices and prayers, clean and bright; and that these external adornments and purification are practised for a sign . Now purity is to think holy thoughts...

Sanctity, as I conceive it, is perfect pureness of mind, and deeds, and thoughts, and words too, and in its last degree, sinlessness in dreams⁹⁵.

e. The believer attains the heavenly peace, therefore he is **never anxious about tomorrow**:

'Do not be anxious about tomorrow' (Matt. 6:34). He means to say that he who has dedicated himself to Christ ought to be self-sufficient and His own servant and, besides, live his life from day to day⁹⁶.

f. The believer, full of joy in Christ, is **always smiling**:

Now, the proper relaxation of the features within due limits--as though the face were a musical instrument - is called a smile (that is the way joy is reflected on the face); it is the good humor of the self-contained... It is well that even the smile be kept under the influence of the Educator⁹⁷.

g. The Christian is **gentle and quiet**:

The Christian avoids obscenity with ears, mouth, and eyes. It is common, pagan, uneducated, and shameless. One could wish that all Christians had shown such balance and sanity. He also avoids jeering at anyone; it's a small step to insulting behavior and violence. If he has to sneeze or belch, he does so quietly. He does not pick his teeth so that the gums bleed. The Christian's society is calm, tranquil, serene, and peaceful⁹⁸.

⁹⁵ Stromata 4:22.

⁹⁶ Paidagogos 1:12:98 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

⁹⁷ Paidagogos 2:5:46 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

⁹⁸ Paidagogos 2.

*Let the gaze be composed, and the movement of the head and the gestures be steady, as well as the motion of the hands in conversation. In general, the Christian is, by nature, a man of gentleness and quiet, of serenity and peace*⁹⁹.

*The beauty of anything, whether plant or animal, is admittedly in its perfection. But man's perfection is justice and temperance and courage and piety*¹⁰⁰.

h. The Gnostic is **the Temple and the Altar of God**¹⁰¹:

The Christian or true Gnostic is now not just the offering and the offered but also the place of worship. St. Clement not only takes up the traditions which saw both the church and the believer as the true temple, and the soul(s) of the Christian(s) as the true altar¹⁰²; he also develops this theme still further: *. . . he who builds up the temple of God in men, that he may cause God to take up his abode in men. Cleanse the temple, and pleasures and amusements abandon to the winds and the fire, as a fading flower; but wisely cultivate the fruits of self-command, and present yourself to God as an offering of first fruits*¹⁰³.

St. Clement believes that the reception of the Eucharist is enshrining Christ within us as in a temple:

Such is the suitable food which the Lord ministers, and He offers His flesh and pours forth His blood, and nothing is wanting for the children's growth. O amazing mystery! We are enjoined to cast off the old and carnal corruption, as also the old nutriment, receiving in exchange another new regimen, that of Christ, receiving Him if we can, to hide Him within and to enshrine the Savior in

⁹⁹ Paidagogos 2:7:60 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁰⁰ Paidagogos 2:12:121 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁰¹ Cf. Robert J. Daly: *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 120 f.

¹⁰² Stromata II 20; IV 21; Paidagogos II 10: *Quis dives salvetur* 18 2.

¹⁰³ Protrepticus 11.

*our hearts so that we may correct the affections of our flesh*¹⁰⁴.

St. Clement also speaks of the heavenly temple¹⁰⁵, and of the whole church - in heaven as well as on earth - as a temple¹⁰⁶; but it was the temple here below, the temple of the Christian community and the Gnostic as a member of the Church, which particularly captivated his attention.

*How can He, to whom belongs everything that is, need anything? If God had a human form, he would, like man, have need of food, shelter, housing and what goes with these. Those who are similar in form and affections will require similar sustenance. And if the temple has two meanings, both God Himself and the structure raised to His honor, is it not proper for us to apply the name of temple to the church which by holy knowledge came into being in God's honor? For it is of great value to God, not having been constructed by mechanical art nor embellished by an impostor's hand, but by the will of God fashioned into a temple. For it is not now the place but the assemblage of the elect that I call the church. This temple is better for the reception of the greatness of the dignity of God. For the living creature, which is of high value, is made sacred by that which is worth all, or rather which has no equivalent in virtue of the exceeding sanctity of the latter. Now this is the Gnostic, who is of great value and who is honored by God. For in him God is enshrined, that is, the knowledge respecting God is consecrated*¹⁰⁷.

The altar, then, that is with us here, the terrestrial one, is the congregation of those who devote themselves to prayers, having as it were one common voice and one mind....

¹⁰⁴ Paidagogos I 6.

¹⁰⁵ Stromata 5:1.

¹⁰⁶ Stromata 6:14.

¹⁰⁷ Stromata 7:5.

*Now breathing together is properly said of the church. For the sacrifice of the church is the word breathing as incense from holy souls, the sacrifice and the whole mind being at the same time unveiled to God.... And will they not believe us when we say that the righteous soul is the truly sacred altar, and that incense arising from it is holy prayer?*¹⁰⁸

*At another time, He speaks of us under the figure of a colt. He means by that that **we are unyoked to evil**, unsubdued by wickedness, unaffected, high-spirited only with Him our Father. We are colts, not stallions 'who whinny lustfully for their neighbor's wife, beasts of burden unrestrained in their lust' (Cf. Jer. 5:8). Rather, we are free and newly born, **joyous in our faith**, holding fast to the course of truth, swift in seeking salvation, spurning and trampling upon worldliness. 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your King comes to you, the just and Savior, and He is poor and riding upon an ass and upon a young colt' (Zach. 9:9)¹⁰⁹.*

i. The true Gnostic attains **the new life in Christ as Festival**:

The true believer practices the pledge of the joyful heavenly life.

*Then, since we shall already be living the life of heaven which makes us divine, let us anoint ourselves with the never-failing oil of gladness, the incorruptible oil of good odor. We possess an unmistakable model of incorruptibility in the life of the Lord and are following in the footsteps of God*¹¹⁰.

"Joy" is one of the essential characteristics of the Church who is guided by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Truly we are called

¹⁰⁸ Stromata 7:6

¹⁰⁹ Paidagogos 1:5:14 (Frs. of Church, 23).

¹¹⁰ Paidagogos 1:12:98 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

to participate in the Lord's crucifixion, but He grants us His Spirit, the Paraclete, or the Comforter (John 14:16;16:1) who dwells within us even during tribulations and makes our hearts flow with unceasing joy (Phil. 4:4). Through grace we acknowledge the continuous presence of God within our soul that grants us unceasing joy. Our whole life changes into endless feast. St. Clement says:

*The (Gnostic's) whole life is a holy festival*¹¹¹.

*Holding festival, and that in our whole life, since we are persuaded that God is altogether on every side present. We cultivate our fields, praising; we sail the sea... The Gnostic, then is very closely allied to God, being at once graceful and cheerful in all things, graceful on account of the bent of his soul towards the divinity, and cheerful on account of his consideration of the blessing of humanity which God has given us*¹¹².

*I appeal to Isaac as an illustration of this sort of childhood. Isaac means 'rejoicing.' The inquisitive king saw him playing with his wife and help-mate, Rebecca (Gen. 26:8). The king (his name was Abimelec) represents, I believe, a wisdom above this world, looking down upon the mystery signified by such child-like playing. Rebecca means 'submission.' Oh, what prudent playing! Rejoicing joined to submission, with the king as audience. The Spirit exults in such merry-making in Christ, attended with submissiveness. This is in truth godly child-likeness*¹¹³.

Isaac rejoiced for a mystical reason, to prefigure the joy with which the Lord has filled us, in saving us from destruction through His blood. Isaac did not actually suffer, not only to concede the primacy of suffering to the Word, but also to suggest, by not being slain, the divinity of the Lord; Jesus rose again after His burial, as if He had

¹¹¹ Strom. 8:7.

¹¹² Strom 7:7.

¹¹³ Paidagogos 1:5:21 (Frs. of Church, 23).

not suffered, like Isaac delivered from the altar of sacrifice¹¹⁴.

There is **peace and joy** in the hearts of those upon whom the face of the Lord looks, but for those from whom He turns away there is an accumulation of evils¹¹⁵.

He (the Gnostic), all day and night, speaking and doing the Lord's commands, **rejoices exceedingly**, not only on rising in the morning and at noon, but also when walking about, when asleep, when dressing and undressing¹¹⁶.

St. Clement looks to the Christian life as an unceasing feast, asking us: "holding festival... in our whole life¹¹⁷."

j. The Gnostic practices goodness not through his fear of punishment, nor waiting for recompense, but through **his love to goodness itself**. He has Christ-like desires and goodness naturally through the work of the Holy Spirit.

We must then, according to my view, have recourse to the word of salvation neither from fear of punishment nor promise of a gift, but on account of the good itself¹¹⁸.

k. The Gnostic is **a spiritual king**.

And in truth, the kingly man and Christian ought to be ruler and leader. For we are commanded to be lords over not only the wild beasts without us, but also over the wild passions within ourselves¹¹⁹.

l. The Gnostic who is Christ-like **cannot hate any man**; for he has no enmity to men, but to the Devil, sin and heresy.

And who could with any reason become the enemy of a man who gives no cause for enmity in any way? And is

¹¹⁴ Paidagogos 1:5:22 (Frs. of Church, 23).

¹¹⁵ Paidagogos 1:8:70 (Frs. of Church, 23).

¹¹⁶ Stromata 7:12.

¹¹⁷ Stromata 7:7.

¹¹⁸ Stromata 4:6 ANF.

¹¹⁹ Stromata 6:15 ANF.

it not just as in the case of God? We say that God is the adversary of no one, and the enemy of no one (for He is the Creator of all, and nothing that exists is what He wills it not to be; but we assert that the disobedient, and those who walk not according to His commandments, are enemies to Him, as being those who are hostile to His covenant).

We shall find the very same to be the case with the Gnostic, for he can never in any way become an enemy to any one; but those may be regarded enemies to him who turn to the contrary path¹²⁰.

He never remembers those who sinned against him, but forgives them. Wherefore also he righteously prays, saying, "Forgive us; for we also forgive" (Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:4). For this also is one of the things which God wishes, to covet nothing, to hate no one. For all men are the work of one will¹²¹.

m. The Gnostic is **satisfied by his Savior.**

He who has God resting in him will not desire naught else. At once leaving all hindrances, and despising all matter which distracts him, he cleaves to heaven by knowledge¹²².



11. THE MORAL TENDENCIES¹²³

J. Lebreton states, "About the same date, Tertullian was given at Carthage the same moral teaching. But there was a great difference between them: Tertullian adopted a more vigorous treatment; he found, not in books, but in life itself the faults and follies he opposed, and he condemned them with such harshness that he often ran the risk of wounding those he wished to heal. The priests of Alexandria did not display the passionate ardor of the

¹²⁰ Stromata 7:12.

¹²¹ Stromata 7:13 ANF.

¹²² Stromata 7:13.

¹²³ J. Lebreton: *The History of the Primitive Church*, p. 904 f.

priests at Carthage, nor did he speak with the same tragic accent. He denounced with a polite smile the follies of the worldly life; he had a very just sense of decency and of what was fitting in Christians; and in him the noble human ideal, set forth by the best of the pagans, and traced out once more after them, has been transformed by the ideal model, the Christ, who projects His divine light upon all our life. These characteristics, so plainly brought out in the whole of the first book (of the *Paidagogos*), appear once more at the end of the work, where they are set forth in full light:

O let us foster a blessed discipline of teaching! Let us complete in ourselves the beauty of the Church, and as little children let us run to our good Mother. Even when we have become the hearers of the Word, let us glorify the blessed dispensation by which man has been brought up; he is sanctified as a child of God, and the education he receives on earth makes him a citizen of the heavens; there he finds the Father whom he has learnt to know upon earth; and all this formation, this teaching, this education, comes to us from the Word... To complete this praise of the Word, it remains for us to pray to Him. Be propitious to your children, O pedagogue, Father, Horseman of Israel, Father and Son, both one single thing, and Lord! Grant to us that by following your commandments we may complete the likeness of the image, and to realize as much as we can that God is good, and not a severe judge. Grant us to live in your peace, to be transported to your city, crossing without shipwreck the ocean of sin, and wafted on by the sweet breeze of the Holy Spirit, who is ineffable wisdom, night and day, until the dawn of the eternal day, singing a song of thanksgiving to the one Father and Son, Son and Father, to the Son our tutor and master, with the Holy Spirit. All to the One, in whom are all things and by whom all are one, by whom is eternity, of whom we are all members, to whom is glory and the ages. All to Him who is good all to Him who is wise, to Him who is just, all to Him! To Him be glory now and forever, Amen¹²⁴!

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¹²⁴ *Paidagogos* 3:12:90:1; 101:1-2.

12. CHARITY AND LOVE

When St. Clement speaks of love, especially towards our enemies, he knows that its cost is very expensive, but we practise it for the sake of our Christ to be in His likeness, and through this sacrifice **we are considered as martyrs**.

You have got a compendious account of the Gnostic martyr¹²⁵.

For the Gnostic, **love is his fortress**, in which he is protected from sinning, and even if he falls in sin, through love he has hope in His Savior to attain forgiveness of his sins.

Love permits not to sin; but if it fall into any such case, by reason of the interference of the adversary, in imitation of David, it will sing: "I will confess unto the Lord, and it will please Him above a young bullock that has horns and hoofs. Let the poor see it, and be glad." For he says, "Sacrifice to God a sacrifice of praise, and pay to the Lord your vows; and call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Ps. 50:14, 15). "For the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit" (Ps. 51:17).

"God," then, being good, "is love" (1 John 4:8,16)...

Whose "love works no ill to his neighbor," neither injuring nor revenging ever, but, in a word, doing good to all according to the image of God becomes like Christ.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10)...

By love, then, the commands not to commit adultery, and not to covet one's neighbor's wife, are fulfilled, [these sins being] formerly prohibited by fear.

It is God Himself who has brought our race to possession in common, by sharing Himself, first of all, and by sending His Word to all men alike, and by making all

¹²⁵ Stromata 4:14. ANF.

things for all. Therefore, everything is common, and the rich should not grasp a greater share. The expression, then, 'I own something, and have more than enough; why should I not enjoy it?' is not worthy of man nor does it indicate any community feeling. The other expression does, however: 'I have something, why should I not share it with those in need?' Such a one is perfect, and fulfills the command: 'You shall love your neighbor as thyself' (Matt. 19:19)¹²⁶.

It is unbecoming that one man live in luxury when there are so many who labor in poverty. How much more honorable it is to serve many than to live in wealth! How much more reasonable it is to spend money on men than on stones and gold! How much more useful to have friends as our ornamentation than lifeless decorations! Who can derive more benefit from lands than from practising kindness?¹²⁷

An Agape is in reality heavenly food, a banquet of the Word¹²⁸.

But there is another sort of beauty for men: charity¹²⁹.

Lavishness is not capable of being enjoyed alone; it must be bestowed upon others.

That is why we should shy away from foods that arouse the appetite and lead us to eat when we are not hungry. Even in moderate frugality, is there not a rich and wholesome variety?¹³⁰

If anyone object that the great High Priest, the Lord, offers up to God incense of sweet odor (Eph. 5:2), let

¹²⁶ Paidagogos 2:12.

¹²⁷ Paidagogos 2:12:120 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹²⁸ Paidagogos 2:1:5 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹²⁹ Paidagogos 3:1:3 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹³⁰ Paidagogos 2:1:14,15 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

this not be understood as the sacrifice and good odor of incense, but as the acceptable gift of love, a spiritual fragrance on the altar, that the Lord offers up¹³¹.

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13. CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE AND ACTIVE LIFE

St. Clement believes that the greatest lesson is to contemplate on one's self by the work of the Holy Spirit who reveals the kingdom of God within the believer, and illuminates his sight to acknowledge the divine love. Thus the believer can attain the likeness of Christ.

It is then, as appears, the greatest of all lessons to know one's self. For if one knows himself, he will know God; and knowing God, he will be made like God¹³².

"In contemplative life, one in worshipping God attends to himself, and through his own spotless purification beholds the holy God reverently, for self-control, being present, surveying and contemplating itself uninterruptedly, is as far as possible assimilated to God¹³³."

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14. WISDOM

St. Clement asks us to be wise through attaining the knowledge of God, of our nature and of oneself.

Wisdom, in its perfection, is the understanding of things human and divine, and includes all things; therefore, it is the art of living in that it presides over the human race.

¹³¹ Paidagogos 2:8:67 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹³² Paidagogos 3:1 ANF.

¹³³ Stromata 4:23 ANF.

*In that way, it is everywhere present wherever we live, ever accomplishing its work, which is living well*¹³⁴.

Wisdom creates an unceasing desire for learning, as it is written in the Book of Wisdom (6:12-20).

*For he (Solomon) teaches, as I think, that true instruction is desire for knowledge, and the practical exercise of instruction produces love of knowledge. And love is the keeping of the commandments which lead to knowledge. And the keeping of them is the establishment of the commandments, from which immortality results. "And immortality brings us near to God"*¹³⁵.

St. Clement states that the teaching of Christ is the source of wisdom and truth.

*The proof of the truth being with us, is the fact of the Son of God Himself having taught us... For the Son of God is the person of the truth which is exhibited; and the subject is the power of faith, which prevails over the opposition of everyone whatever, and the assault of the whole world*¹³⁶.



15. EXTRAVAGANCE OR LUXURY

St. Clement believes that moderate life in Jesus Christ is the royal way that leads us to heaven. He exhorts us not to live in luxury, nor to indulge in extravagance. At the same time, food, clothes, furniture should be appropriate to the individual, his age, his work, and the particular occasion. The best wealth is poverty of desires. Extravagance is unreasonable, contrary to the Logos.

A middle course is good in all things, and no less so in serving a banquet. Extremes, in fact, are dangerous, but

¹³⁴ Paidagogos 2:2:28 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹³⁵ Stromata 6:15 ANF.

¹³⁶ Stromata 6:15 ANF.

*the mean is good*¹³⁷, and all that avoids dire need is a mean. Natural desires have a limit set to them by self-sufficiency¹³⁸.

a. Concerning **food**: St. Clement deals with “Food and Drink” in *Paidagogos* 2:1,2. Concerning food, he says that we are to eat to live, not to live to eat. Our diet should be simple, directed to growth, health, and controlled energy. Avoid elaboration; avoid excess. We should not forget how much the love (*agape*)-feast, the taking of a common meal together, meant to the early church at least till the third century. Don’t eat and drink at the same time; they don’t go together. Concerning drink, “A little wine for your stomach’s sake” (1 Tim. 5,23). All right, but it is a small dose for strictly medicinal purposes. Otherwise, water is best, and the young should certainly abstain from wine; they’re hotheaded enough already! Besides wine swells the sex organs and encourages sexual curiosity. For the 18-30 age-group, he advocates moderation. The older are permitted freer refreshment, provided they keep the mind clear, the memory active, and the body under control. Wine is dangerous, and Clement cites Aristotle and a doctor named Artorius as authorities for his statement. He also says that women should not reveal too much of their bodies: it’s a risky business for the men who are attracted by the sight, and for the women who are aiming to attract them. And drunkenness, to return to the point, is out¹³⁹.

*You will never be able to become wise' if you indulge in such extravagance, burying your mind deep in your belly; you will resemble the so-called ass-fish which Aristotle claims is the only living thing which has its heart in its stomach*¹⁴⁰, and which the comic poet Epicharmis entitles 'the huge-bellied'¹⁴¹. 'Such are the men who trust in

¹³⁷ Cf. Seneca, Ep. 5, *passim*.

¹³⁸ *Paidagogos* 2:1:16 (Frs. of Church).

¹³⁹ John Ferguson : *Clement of Alexandria*, Twayne Publishers, NY 1974, p. 80-1.

¹⁴⁰ Aristotle, Frag. 326, in V. Rose, *Aristotelis Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1886).

¹⁴¹ Epicharmis. Frag 67, in G. Kaibel *Fragmenta poetarum graecorum* VI:1 (1899).

their belly, 'whose god is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind the things of earth.' For such men the Apostle makes a prediction foreboding nothing good, for he concludes: 'whose end is ruin' (Phil. 3:19)¹⁴².

God has provided food and drink for His creature, I mean man, not for his dissipation, but for his welfare. It is a natural law that the body is not benefited by excessively rich food; quite the contrary, those who live on simpler foods are stronger and healthier and more alert, as servants are, for example, in comparison with their masters, or farmer-tenants in comparison with their landlords¹⁴³.

We have been created, not to eat and drink, but to come to the knowledge of God. 'The just man,' Scripture says, 'eats and fills his soul; but the belly of the wicked is ever in want' (Prov. 13:25), ever hungry with a greed that cannot be quenched¹⁴⁴.

Other men, indeed, live that they may eat, just like unreasoning beasts; for them life is only their belly (Cf. Phil. 3:19). But as for us, our Educator has given the command that we eat only to live. Eating is not our main occupation, nor is pleasure our chief ambition. Food is permitted us simply because of our stay in this world, which the Word is shaping for immortality by His education. Our food should be plain and ungarnished, in keeping with the truth, suitable to children who are plain and unpretentious, adapted to maintaining life, not self-indulgence¹⁴⁵.

b. Concerning clothes:

We should not seek for expensive clothes, either, any more than for elaborate dishes. In fact, the Lord Himself set Himself to give special counsel for the soul, for the

¹⁴² Paidagogos 2:1:18 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁴³ Paidagogos 2:1:5 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁴⁴ Paidagogos 2:1:14 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁴⁵ Paidagogos 2:1:1,2 (Frs. of Church).

body and for a third class, external things, all separately. He advises that external things were to be provided for the body, the body to be governed by the soul, and then instructs the soul: 'Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat nor for your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than the meat, and the body is more than the raiment'¹⁴⁶.

I maintain that man needs clothing only for bodily covering, as a protection against excessive cold or intense heat, so that the inclemency of the weather may not harm him in any way. If that is the purpose of clothes, then one kind of garment surely should not be provided for men and another for women¹⁴⁷...

If someone should remind us of the full-length robe of the Lord, [we reply that] His multicolored tunic really represents the brilliance of wisdom, the manifold and unfading value of Scripture, words of the Lord that glow with rays of truth. For this reason, the Spirit clothed the Lord with another similar garment when it said in the psalm of David: 'I will put on praise and beauty, clothed with light as with a garment' (Ps. 103:1.)

Therefore, we must avoid any irregularity in the type of garment we choose. We must also guard against all waywardness in our use of them. For instance, it is not right for a woman to wear her dress up over her knees, as the Laconian maidens are said to do, because a woman should not expose any part of her body¹⁴⁸.

Dignity in dress comes not from adding to what is worn, but from eliminating all that is superfluous. The unnecessary luxuries that women wear, in fact, like tailfeathers, must be clipped off, because they give rise only to

¹⁴⁶ Paidagogos 2:10:102 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁴⁷ Paidagogos 2:10:106 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁴⁸ Paidagogos 2:10:113, 114 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

*shifting vanity and senseless pleasure. Because of such vanity and pleasure, women become flighty and vain as peacocks, and even desert their husbands. Therefore, we should take care that the women are attired properly, and clothed abundantly in the modesty of self-restraint, so that they will not break away from the truth through vanity*¹⁴⁹.

*Let the clothes be in keeping with the person's age, with the individual himself, the place, his character, and occupation. The Apostle well advises us: 'Put on Christ Jesus, and as for the flesh, take no thought of its lusts' (Rom. 13:14)*¹⁵⁰.

c. Concerning **perfumes and adornment with crowns of flowers:**

This matter includes a long and rambling section, which occupies rather more than an eighth of the whole second book of the *Paidagogos*, and makes one realize that this way of living, is an existential issue among the Christians of Alexandria. St. Clement begins with a direct pellucid assertion: “*There is no necessity for us to use garlands and perfumes.*”¹⁵¹ The rest of the chapter works this out, starting, with a good deal of symbolism, allusion, and wordplay, from the sinner who poured the ointment over Jesus. Christmas symbolizes the Christ. Precious stones allude to the Logos, and gold, the symbol of royalty, to him in his changelessness. Christian men need only the odor of goodness, women the royal unctions of Christ. In the literal sense, unguents have their uses. In moderation they can please without overwhelming the senses; they can keep off insects; they have their use in athletics. To use flowers for garlands is to exploit them; the flower and its beauty wither. It is a fine passage for any concerned with defense of the environment. Symbolism breaks through again. The husband is the wife’s garland, marriage is the husband’s garland, children are for both

¹⁴⁹ *Paidagogos* 3:11:57,58 (*Frs. of Church*).

¹⁵⁰ *Paidagogos* 3:11:56 (*Frs. of Church*).

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2:8:61.

the flowers of marriage, God is the gardener of the fields of the flesh, Christ is the garland of the church. The wreath symbolizes freedom from care; hence its use for the dead. Further, to make wreaths of flowers for our living is to mock the Savior's crown of thorns¹⁵².

Besides, it is inconsistent for us who celebrate the holy suffering of the Lord, who know that He was crowned with thorns, to crown ourselves with flowers. The crown the Lord wore is a figure of ourselves who were once barren, but now encircle Him as a garland through His Church, of which He is the head. That crown is also a type of our faith: it is a type of life, through the substance of wood; of joy, because it is a crown; of trial, because it is a crown of thorns, and no one can approach the Word without shedding blood. But the other crown, the one intertwined [with flowers], withers away; a wreath of wickedness, it falls apart and its flowers fade, just as the beauty of those who do not believe in the Lord withers away¹⁵³.

d. Concerning **adornment with precious stones and gems:**

Tradition assures us that the heavenly Jerusalem that is above is built up of holy gems and we know that the twelve gates of the heavenly city, which signify the wonderful beauty of apostolic teaching, are compared to precious jewels. These priceless stones are described as possessing certain colors which are themselves precious, while the rest is left of an earthy substance. To say that the city of the saints is built of such jewels, even though it is a spiritual edifice, is a cogent symbol indeed. By the incomparable brilliance of the gems is understood the spotless and holy brilliance of the substance of the spirit¹⁵⁴.

e. Concerning **women's earrings:**

¹⁵² John Ferguson : *Clement of Alexandria*, Twayne Publishers, NY 1974, p. 84-5.

¹⁵³ *Paidagogos* 2:8:73 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

¹⁵⁴ *Paidagogos* 2:11:119 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

The ears of women should not be pierced, either, to enable them to suspend earrings and ear pendants from them. It is contrary to nature. It is wrong to do violence to nature in a way nature does not intend. Surely, there is no better ornament for the ears than learning the truth, nor is there any that enters the ears in as natural a way. Eyes anointed by the Word and ears pierced to hear are ready to contemplate holy things and to hear divine things. It is only the Word who reveals true beauty which eye has never seen before, nor has ear heard¹⁵⁵.

f. Concerning **the beauty of the body**:

J. Lebreton says, "We find even here the moderation of the moralist: he allows women to adorn themselves to please their husbands, but they ought *"gradually to lead them to simplicity, by accustoming them little by little to greater moderation¹⁵⁶"*.

The Spirit gives witness through Isaiah that even the Lord became an unsightly spectacle: 'And we saw Him, and there was no beauty or comeliness in Him, but His form was despised, and abject among men' (Isa. 53:2 Septuagint). Yet, who is better than the Lord? He displayed not beauty of the flesh, which is only outward appearance, but the true beauty of body and soul: for the soul, the beauty of good deeds; for the body, that of immortality¹⁵⁷.

It is not the appearance of the outer man that should be made beautiful, but his soul, with the ornament of true virtue. It should be possible, too, to speak of an ornament for his body, the ornament of self-control¹⁵⁸.

But women, busy in making their appearances beautiful, allowing the interior to lie uncultivated, are in reality decorating themselves, without realizing it, like

¹⁵⁵ Paidagogos 2:12:127 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁵⁶ Paidagogos 3:11:57, Lebreton, p. 905, n. 39.

¹⁵⁷ Paidagogos 3:1:3 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁵⁸ Paidagogos 3:2:4 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

Egyptian temples. The entrances and vestibules of these temples are elaborately ornamented, the sacred groves and meadows are cultivated, the halls are adorned with huge columns, and the walls, each covered with some highly finished painting, glitter with rare jewels. The temples themselves are studded over with gold and silver and electrum, and sparkled with gems from India and Ethiopia which cover them, while the inner sanctuary is curtained off by an overhanging gold-embroidered veil. But if, anxious to see the lord of such a temple, you pass beyond into the interior of the sacred precincts, seeking the god that dwells in the temple, a pastophore or some other hierophant will look sharply about the sacred shrine, chant a hymn in the Egyptian tongue, and then draw back a bit of the veil that you might see his god, but he reveals an object of veneration that is utterly absurd. There is no god within, whom we were so anxiously looking for; there is only a cat, or a crocodile, or a snake native to the land, or some other similar animal suited for life in a cave or den or in the mud, but certainly not in a temple. The god of the Egyptians, then, turns out to be only a beast curled up on a rich purple pillow.

Women who are loaded down with gold seem to me much like that temple. They carefully curl their locks, paint their cheeks, stencil under their eyes, anxiously dye their hair, and practise perversely all the other senseless arts; true imitators of the Egyptians, they adorn the enclosure of the flesh to lure lovers who stand in superstitious dread of the goddess. But, if anyone draw back the veil of this temple, I mean the hairnet and the dye and the garments and gold and rouge and cosmetics¹⁵⁹ - or the cloth woven of all these things, which is a veil-- if he draws back this veil to discover the true beauty that is within, I am sure he will be disgusted. He will not find dwelling within any worthy im-

¹⁵⁹ The Scholion says this is a scarlet sea weed.

age of God, but, instead, a harlot and adulteress who has usurped the inner sanctuary of the soul. The beauty within will turn out to be nothing more than a beast, 'an ape painted up with powder';¹⁶⁰ as a deceitful serpent, it will devour man's intellect with love of ornaments and make the soul its den. Filling the whole soul with its deadly drug and vomiting out the poison of its deception, this serpent-seducer has transformed women into harlots (for gaudy vanity bespeaks not the woman, but the harlot).

Such women have little care for managing household expenses for their husbands. Rather, they unloose the strings of their husbands' purses and waste their fortunes on their own desires, that they might win for themselves a host of admirers charmed by their cultivated appearances¹⁶¹.

In his moderation, St. Clement advises women to take care of their beauty by practising works.

Beauty is the natural flower of health; the latter works within the body, while the former manifests the state of the flourishing organism which is unfolding itself. Accordingly, the best and most healthy activities, by exercising the body, produce healthy and lasting beauty¹⁶².

Work gives true beauty to women, it exercises their bodies, and embellishes them naturally, not indeed with the vesture which comes from the labor of others, a vesture without charm and good for slaves and courtesans, but with the vesture which a good woman weaves for herself by the labor of her hands¹⁶³.

g. Concerning **sleeping** and the **softness of the bed**:

¹⁶⁰ Adesp. 517, CAF 3:503; cf. Aristophanes. Eccles. 1072.

¹⁶¹ Paidagogos 3:2:4,5 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁶² Paidagogos 3:11:64:3 - 65:1.

¹⁶³ Paidagogos 3:11:67:1.

Practicing moderation needs a largely vegetarian diet, and early to bed without waiting for the others¹⁶⁴.

*But we must specially keep the softness of the bed within limits, for sleep is meant to relax the body, not to debilitate it. For that reason, I say that sleep should be taken not as self-indulgence, but as rest from activity*¹⁶⁵.

h. Concerning **laughing**:

St. Clement wants his laughter under control; he is afraid of degeneration into obscenity; he doesn't mind mild pleasantries, and prefers the smile to the belly-laugh. In this section (Paidagogos 2:2) he quotes Homer more than the Bible. The overall result is to make us wonder how much we, who inevitably rely on written sources, really know about ancient humor¹⁶⁶.



16. POVERTY OF HEART

*Poverty of heart is the true wealth (Matt. 5:3), and the true nobility is not that founded on riches, but that which comes from a contempt for it*¹⁶⁷. *It is disgraceful to boast about one's possessions; not to be concerned about them any longer very clearly proves the just man. Anyone who wishes can buy such things from the market; but wisdom is bought, not with any earthly coin, nor in any market, but is acquired in heaven, at a good price: the incorruptible Word, the gold of kings*¹⁶⁸.



17. AWAKENESS

¹⁶⁴ Paidagogos 2:7.

¹⁶⁵ Paidagogos 2:9: 78 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

¹⁶⁶ John Ferguson: Clement of Alexandria, Twayne Publishers, NY 1974, p. 83.

¹⁶⁷ A play on words: 'true nobility' he calls megalo-phronein, ('to think great things'), identifying it with kata-phronein ('to think down upon').

¹⁶⁸ Paidagogos 2:3:39 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

He who has the most respect for life and for reason will stay awake as long as he can, reserving only as much time for sleep as his health demands; much sleep is not required, if the habit of moderation be once rightly formed¹⁶⁹.

The care of discipline begets a constant alertness in our labors. Therefore, food ought not to make us heavy but enliven us so that sleep will harm us as little as possible. Incidentally, how capable a winless meal is of lifting one from the very depths to the peak of wakefulness ! Falling asleep, indeed, is like dying, because it renders our minds and our senses inactive, and, when we close our eyes, shuts out the light of day. So, let us who are the sons of the true light not shut out that light, but, turning within into ourselves casting light upon the vision of the inner man, let us contemplate truth itself, welcome its rays and discover with clarity and insight what is the truth of dreams¹⁷⁰.

When we do manage to keep awake the greater part of the night, we should not allow ourselves, for any consideration, to take a nap during the day¹⁷¹.

It is not the soul that needs sleep (for it is ever-active); the body becomes relaxed when it takes its rest, and the soul ceases to operate in any bodily way, but continues to operate mentally in keeping with its nature...

The soul, then, ever keeping its thoughts on God and attributing those thoughts to the body by its constant association with it, makes man equal to the angels in their loveliness. So, from its practise of wakefulness, it obtains eternal life¹⁷².



¹⁶⁹ Plato, *Laws* 7:808BC.

¹⁷⁰ *Paidagogos* 2:9:80 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

¹⁷¹ *Paidagogos* 2:9:81 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

¹⁷² *Paidagogos* 2:9:82 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

18. LOVE AND FEAR OF GOD

The Gnostics, true members of the Church, accept the divine call of sanctity not in fear of punishment nor for enjoyment of earthly recompense but because they love goodness for itself as they become gods (in image of God).

But he who obeys the mere call, as he is called, neither for fear, nor for enjoyments, is on his way to knowledge (gnosis)... It is possible for the Gnostic already to have become god. "I said, you are gods, and sons of the highest" (Ps. 132:6)¹⁷³.

Faith is the outward acceptance of God out of fear and respect¹⁷⁴, which leads us to His love. St. Clement claims that faith must be followed by fear and hope, which lead to love and finally to a "true *gnosis*"¹⁷⁵.

The Christian's calling is to love the Creator in His creatures¹⁷⁶. Love is the basic principal by which the Logos educates His children, unlike the education of the Old Dispensation which is based on fear. However, the Savior administers not only mild but also stringent medicines because God is at the same time good and just and as a successful tutor balances goodness with punishment. God's righteousness and love do not contradict each other. St. Clement refers here to the heretical doctrine of the Marcionites that the God of the Old Testament is not the same as that of the New. Fear is good if it protects against sin¹⁷⁷:

Such a fear, accordingly, leads to repentance and hope. Now hope is the expectation of good things, or an expectation sanguine of absent good; and favorable cir-

¹⁷³ Stromata 4:22,23.

¹⁷⁴ Stromata 2:12; 5:1; 7:12; G. Florovsky: *Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century*, 1987, p. 82.

¹⁷⁵ Justo L. Gonzalez: *A History of Christian Faith*, vol. 1, 1979, p. 208.

¹⁷⁶ Stromata 6:71,5.

¹⁷⁷ Quasten: *Patrology*, vol. 2, p. 10.

cumstances are assumed in order to good hope, which we have learned leads on to love¹⁷⁸.

The bitter roots of fear arrest the eating sores of our sins. Wherefore also fear is salutary, if bitter. Sick, we truly stand in the need of the Savior; having wandered, of one to guide us; blind, of one to lead us to light; thirsty, of the fountain of life of which whosoever partakes shall no longer thirst (John 4,13-14); dead, we need life; sheep, we need a shepherd; we who are children need a tutor while universal humanity stands in need of Jesus... You may learn if you will the crowning wisdom of the all-holy Shepherd and Tutor, of the omnipotent and paternal Word, when He figuratively represents Himself as the Shepherd of the sheep. And He is the Tutor of the children. He says therefore by Ezechiel directing His discourse to the elders and setting before them a salutary description of His wise solicitude: "And that which is lame I will bind up, and that which is sick I will heal, and that which has wandered I will turn back; and I will feed them on my holy mountain" (Ez. 34,14,16). Such are the promises of the good Shepherd.

Feed us, the children, as sheep. Yea, Master, fill us with righteousness. Your own pasture; yea, O Tutor, feed us on Your holy mountain the Church, which towers aloft, which is above the clouds, which touches heaven¹⁷⁹.

Notice how the justice of the Educator is manifest in His chastisements and the goodness of God in His mercies. That is why David, or rather, the Spirit through him, includes both when he says, in the psalm, of the same God: 'Justice and judgment are the preparation of Your throne. Mercy and truth shall go before Your face' (Ps. 88:15)¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁸ Stromata 2:9 ANF.

¹⁷⁹ Paid. 1,9,83,2-84,3 ANF.

¹⁸⁰ Paidagogos 1:9:87 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

In another place St. Clement mentions the fear and love as essential in our spiritual progress.

Righteous conduct also is twofold:
that which is done for love,
and that which is done through fear.

For indeed, it is said, "The fear of the Lord is pure, remaining forever and ever" (Ps. 18 [19]:10). Those who, because of fear, turn to faith and righteousness, remain forever. Fear does, in fact, motivate to abstaining from evil; but love, building up to free action, exhorts to the doing of good¹⁸¹.

The material He educates us in is fear of God, for this fear instructs us in the service of God, educates to the knowledge of truth, and guides by a path leading straight up to heaven¹⁸².

How can we gain true love? The answer is: By receiving the Logos Himself, the divine flame of love!

The heavenly and true love comes to men thus, when in the soul itself the spark of true goodness, kindled in the soul by the Divine Word, is able to burst forth into flame; and what is of the highest importance, salvation runs parallel with sincere willingness - choice and life being, so to speak, yoked together¹⁸³.

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19. ABORTION

But women who resort to some sort of deadly abortion drug kill not only the embryo but, along with it, all human kindness¹⁸⁴.

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¹⁸¹ Stromata 7:12:78:7; 7:12:79:1. (Jurgens).

¹⁸² Paidagogos 1:7:53 (Frs. of Church).

¹⁸³ Paidagogos 11. ANF, p. 204.

¹⁸⁴ Paidagogos 2:10:96 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

20. SINS AND PENANCE¹⁸⁵

According to St. Clement, the sin of Adam was his refusal to be educated by God and has been inherited by all human beings not through procreation but through the bad example given by the first man¹⁸⁶. Clement is convinced that only a personal act can stain the soul. He agrees with Hermas that there should be only one penance in the life of a Christian, that preceding baptism, but that God, out of mercy for human weakness, has granted a second, which can be obtained only once. He distinguishes between voluntary and involuntary sins which can be forgiven. Those who commit voluntary sins after baptism must fear the judgment of God. A complete break with God after baptism cannot be forgiven. However, in reality St. Clement does not exclude any sin for its greatness from the second repentance.

He who has received the forgiveness of sins ought to sin no more. For in addition to the first and only repentance from sins (that is from the previous sins in the first and heathen life - I mean that in ignorance), there is forthwith proposed to those who have been called, the repentance which cleanses the seat of the soul from transgressions, that faith may be established. And the Lord, knowing the heart, and foreknowing the future, foresaw both the fickleness of man and the craft and subtlety of the devil from the first, from the beginning; how that, envying man for the forgiveness of sins, he would present to the servants of God certain causes of sins, skillfully working mischief, that they might all together align with himself. Accordingly, being very merciful, He has vouchsafed, in the case of those who, though in faith, fall into any transgression, a second repentance, so that should any one be tempted after

¹⁸⁵ Esmat Gabriel: St. Clement of Alexandria, Coptic Church Review, Spring 1980, v.1, No. 1, p. 25; Quasten, p. 31..

¹⁸⁶ Stromata 3:16.

his calling, overcome by force and fraud, he may receive still a repentance not to be repented of. 'For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries' (Hebr. 10,26-27). But continual and successive repentings for sins differ nothing from the case of those who have not believed at all, except only in their consciousness that they do sin. And I know not which of the two is worst, whether the case of a man who sins knowingly, or of one who, after having repented of his sins, transgresses again¹⁸⁷.

He then who from among the Gentiles and from that old life has betaken himself to faith, has obtained forgiveness of sins once. But he who has sinned after this, on his repentance, though he obtains pardon, ought to fear, as one no longer washed to the forgiveness of sins. For not only must he abandon the idols which he formerly held as gods, but the works also of his former life must be abandoned by him who has been 'born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh' (John 1:13) but in the Spirit; which consists in repenting by not giving way to the same fault. For frequent repentance and readiness to change easily from want of training, is the practice of sin again. The frequent asking of forgiveness then for those things in which we often transgress is the semblance of repentance, not repentance itself¹⁸⁸.

St. Clement distinguishes in these passages between voluntary and involuntary sins. He is of the opinion that of sins committed after baptism only those that are involuntary sins can be forgiven. Those who commit voluntary sins after baptism must fear the judgment of God.

¹⁸⁷ *Stromata* 2:13:56-57 ANF.

¹⁸⁸ *Stromata* 2:13:58-9 ANF.

21. THE HOLY KISS

If we have been called to the kingdom of God, let us live worthy of that kingdom by loving God and our neighbor. Love is judged not by a kiss, but by good will. There are some who make the assembly resound with nothing but their kisses while there is no love in their hearts.

We should realize that the unrestrained use of the kiss has brought it under grave suspicion and slander. It should be thought of in a mystical sense (the Apostle speaks of it as holy [Cf. Rom 16:16; 1 Cor. 16 :20] . Let us, instead, taste the kingdom with a mouth that is chaste and self-controlled, and practise good will in heart, for this is the way a chaste character is developed.

There is another kiss that is unholy and full of poison, under the guise of holiness. Do you not realize that just as a poisonous spider touches a man only with its mouth, yet inflicts pain, so the kiss often injects the poison of lust? It is clear to us that the kiss is not charity, 'for charity is of God' (1 John 4:7)¹⁸⁹.



22. RICHES

Therefore, it is not he who possesses and retains his wealth who is wealthy, but he who gives; it is giving, not receiving that reveals the happy man. Generosity is a product of the soul; so, true wealth is in the soul¹⁹⁰.

Generally speaking, riches that are not under complete control are the citadel of evil. If the ordinary people look on them covetously, they will never enter the kingdom of heaven, because they are letting themselves become con-

¹⁸⁹ Paidagogos 3:12:81,82 (Frs. of Church).

¹⁹⁰ Paidagogos 3:6:35 (Frs. of Church).

*taminated by the things of this world and are living above themselves in self-indulgence*¹⁹¹.

*Holiness and that kind of reason which is more precious than any treasure are the true wealth, and are not increased by cattle or lands but are given by God. It cannot be taken away (for the soul alone is the treasure of such a man), and is a possession that is supreme for him who owns it, making him blessed in possessing the truth*¹⁹².



23. THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND EVIL

The Alexandrian Fathers in their controversy with the heretical Gnostics dealt with Divine Providence and its relation to evil. They had to answer the following question:

1. Are materials, bodies, birth, marriage, the world etc. evil things ?
2. How do we explain the temptations to which Christians are exposed and the triumph of unrighteousness in persecuting them?
3. How do we explain the existence of evil in a world governed by Divine Providence ?

I. THE WORLD AND EVIL

The Gnostics regarded the world as intrinsically evil, but the Alexandrian Fathers, especially St. Clement considered the world a divine gift to man, governed by the providence of God. It is the best of all possible worlds. God loves everything He created and hates nothing. Truly it is just a bridge for man to pass over into eternity and enjoy heavenly glories, but it is formed by the gracious God who creates no evil.

¹⁹¹ Paidagogos 2:3:38 (*Fathers of Church*, vol. 23).

¹⁹² Paidagogos 3:6:36 (*Frs. of Church*).

Floyd says: [Like the Gnostics, Clement conceded a gap between the Supreme Being and the visible world, but unlike them he saw it bridged by God Himself instead of by intermediary beings or demons. By the incarnation, on one hand, God entered the world as a human being, and on the other hand, by His example, passion, and death, He "pointed the path" towards unity with Him through grace. According to the Gnostics there is no solution at all for the relation between God and the world¹⁹³.

This is the highest excellence which orders all things in accordance with the Father's will and holds the helm of the universe in the best way, with unwearied and tireless power, working all things in which it operates, keeping in view its hidden designs¹⁹⁴.

II. MATTER AND EVIL

St. Clement of Alexandria opposes the Marconites who said that matter is evil; on the contrary, he declares that it is under the control of God; everything created by the Good God is good, even riches...

Wealth is like a tool which may be used skillfully or the reverse; it may be a servant of righteousness or unrighteousness. The words of Christ to the rich young man in Mark 10:17-31 are not to be understood in a carnal sense, but we must seek to penetrate their innermost meaning.

It is not the outward act, but something else indicated by it, greater, more godlike, more perfect, the stripping off of the passions from the soul itself and from the disposition, and the cutting up by the roots and casting out of what is alien to the mind...

Riches which also benefit our neighbors, are not to be thrown away...

¹⁹³ W.E.G. Floyd: *Clement of Alexandria's treatment of the problem of evil*, Oxford 1971, p.74.

¹⁹⁴ *Stromata* 7:2:8.

If you use (wealth) skillfully, it is skillful; if you are deficient in skill, it is affected by your want of skill, being itself destitute of blame, such an instrument is wealth. Are you able to make the right use of it ? It is subservient to righteousness. Does one make a wrong use of it ? It is, then, a minister of wrong. For its nature is to be subservient not to rule. That then, which of itself has neither good nor evil, being blameless, ought not to be blamed; but that which has the power of using it well or ill, by reason of its possessing voluntary choice. And this is the mind and judgment of man which has freedom in himself and self-determination in the treatment of what is assigned to it.

So, let no man destroy wealth, rather the passions of the soul, which are incompatible with the better use of wealth. So that, becoming virtuous and good, he may be able to make good use of these riches¹⁹⁵.

III. MAN'S BODY AND EVIL

Marcion considered the body of man, being formed of matter, as evil by nature; it is an enemy of the soul. Plato looked upon it as the grave of the soul. On the contrary, the Alexandrian Fathers-perhaps except Origen - had a sanctified view of the body, for the following reasons:

a. It is created by God, who is Good, and created no evil. He hates nothing, even the body, but loves all which He created¹⁹⁶.

b. The body is the instrument, the seat and the possession of the soul¹⁹⁷.

c. As a dwelling-place of the soul, it shares with her the sanctification wrought by the Holy Spirit¹⁹⁸, and man as a whole - body and soul - will be glorified in the world to come.

¹⁹⁵ *Quis Dives Salvetur* 12,14.

¹⁹⁶ *Strom.* 3:3:16.

¹⁹⁷ *Paed.* 1:8.

¹⁹⁸ *Strom.* 4:26:163.

d. The harmony of the body contributes to the goodly disposition of the soul and of the mind¹⁹⁹.

e. The Word of God assumed our humanity in its true meaning and received a real body to declare the sanctification of our bodies. He became Man that He might speak with the mouth of a man²⁰⁰. He did not despise our body which He took for Himself, assumed it to Himself as a proof of the essential worth of mankind (the whole human nature), matter and the world.

*Those, then, who look upon created matter and vilify the body are wrong; not considering that the frame of man was formed erect for the contemplation of heaven, and that the organization of the senses tends to knowledge; and that the members and parts are arranged for good, not for pleasure. This abode becomes receptive of the soul which is most precious to God; and is dignified with the Holy Spirit through the sanctification of soul and body, perfected with the perfection of the Savior. And the succession of the three virtues is found in the Gnostic (a believer who has spiritual gnosis or knowledge), who morally, physically and logically occupies himself with God...*²⁰¹

The soul is not good by nature, nor on the other hand, is the body bad by nature...

God improves all things to the good, but the soul which has chosen the best life, the life that is from God and righteousness - changes earth to heaven.

The harmonious mechanism of the body contributes to understanding, which leads to goodness of nature...

*He who in the body has devoted himself to a good life, is being sent on to the state of immortality*²⁰².

IV. AFFLICTION AND EVIL²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. 4:4:18.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 7:11:112.

²⁰¹ Ibid. 4:26.

²⁰² Ibid. 4:4.

According to the *Gnostics*, the problem of evil was insoluble. There was no explanation for the existence of evil in the world and afflictions which the believers suffer unjustly by persecutors in a world governed by the Almighty and Good God, where nothing takes place without His Good will. St. Clement of Alexandria and other Alexandrian Fathers offer the solution, in the following points:

a. The existence of evil does not contradict the divine providence or the goodness of God, for through this providence man attains free will, one of the best divine gifts. Therefore God does not prevent evil, but he does not cause it. The responsibility lies with him who makes a choice; God is not responsible²⁰⁴.

Osborn says:

Clement states the problem and gives his answer. God did not will that our Lord and the martyrs should suffer. Yet nothing ever happens which is not God's will.

"The only possible solution left, expressed concisely, is that such things happen without the prevention of God. Only this preserves the providence and the goodness of God. We must not think that God actively causes our affliction. That is quite unthinkable; but we should be of the conviction that He does not prevent those who cause them²⁰⁵.

A distinction is here made between what God causes and what happens without God's prevention. It would be inconsistent with God's providence and goodness for Him to cause evil. But it is not inconsistent with the providence and goodness of God for evil things to happen without his prevention.

Good things are caused by God. Evil things happen without his prevention...

203 See W.E.G. Floyd: *Clement of Alexandria... E.F. Osborn: The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, Cambridge 1957, Chs 6-8.

204 *Stromata* 8:9:27, 28.

205 *Ibid.* 4:86; 2:286:11.

Therefore what prevents is a cause, while what does not prevent judges the soul's choice justly; so that God is never in any way responsible for the evil in our lives²⁰⁶. The causes of sins are choice and desire²⁰⁷. Not that any one voluntarily chooses evil, but, pleasure deludes one into thinking that something bad is good and desirable. It is in our own power to avoid ignorance. The choice of what is base and pleasant and the deceptions of the devil.

Despite the activity of the devil, God orders all things from above for good. Nothing can oppose God, nothing can stand against Him, for He is the Almighty Lord. The thoughts and deeds of the rebellious are partial and spring from a bad disposition. Though they originate in a diseased condition the universal providence steers them to a healthy conclusion...²⁰⁸

A modern thinker has said, "Without freedom to choose evil, or the lower good, a man might be a well-behaved puppet or a sentient automaton, but not a moral agent. But the best possible world implies the existence of moral agents; its crown cannot be the puppet or the automaton"^{209, 210}

b. God does not prevent those who cause afflictions, for He bestows upon men free will, but He transforms their evil choice into good. He did not prevent the folly of the Cross, but brought good out of it²¹¹.

Osborn says:

God does not prevent his adversaries from doing evil but "He uses up for good the wrongs which his adversaries have dared against Him". Clement quotes Isaiah 5:5: "I shall destroy the wall and it shall become a trampling-

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 1:84; 11:54.

²⁰⁷ *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, Von Arim*, 3:236.

²⁰⁸ *Stromata* 1:86; 2:55:19.

²⁰⁹ *Temmant: Philosophical Theology, Cambridge 1925-30, vol. 2, p. 188.*

²¹⁰ *E.F. Osborn, p. 71-3.*

²¹¹ *Strom.* 4:12:87.

ground". This verse refers to the vineyard which produced brambles instead of grapes. God did not destroy it but removed the wall which had protected it. Animals were no longer prevented from trampling the vines under foot. Their trampling, though an act of aggression and destruction, was to have beneficial results. The brambles would be destroyed and the vineyard would be cleared of its wrong contents. God uses the crimes of the enemies of his vineyard for the benefit of the vineyard. For providence, as Clement goes on to say, is a form of correction, which benefits those who experience it.

There are other ways in which God turns evil into good. Philosophy is the result of a crime, wisdom was stolen from God, but God turned theft to good account.

It is the chief work of divine providence not to allow the evil which results from willful revolt to remain useless and unprofitable and to become altogether harmful. For it is the function of the Divine wisdom and virtue and power not only to do good (for this is the nature of God, so to speak, as that of fire is to heat and that to light is to give light), but also and above all to a good and useful end what has happened through the evils contrived by any, and to use to good account things which appear to be bad, as is the testimony which proceeds from temptation²¹².

† † †

24. THE GOODNESS OF THE WORLD

Henry Chadwick says,

On the question of the creation Clement firmly rejects the idea that the world is eternal or that it is created in time²¹³. He does not deny the existence of a qualityless matter as raw material and (like Philo and Justin) speaks with an ambiguous voice on creation *ex nihilo*...

²¹² Strom. 1:86, 2:55:22.

²¹³ Stromata 6:142; 145.

It is enough to say that nothing exists in being which is not caused by God, and that there is no part of His creation which falls outside His care²¹⁴. Once he declares that 'God was God before becoming Creator,' i.e. that the world is not necessary to God²¹⁵.

St. Clement of Alexandria believed that God created everything good, therefore He loved everything and hated nothing. By grace we also have God's view of everything, to find that everything in the world is good and beautiful. Evil and sin are strange to the world that God created, therefore we can truly have the same feelings of St. Clement that our world is the most beautiful world that can ever exist²¹⁶.

We praise God for creating the world for our sake, but we must not be enslaved to the love of the world.

*Divine Scripture, addressing itself to those who love themselves and to the boastful, somewhere says most excellently: "Where are the princes of the nations, and those who rule over the beasts which are upon the earth; they that take their diversion among the birds of the air; they that hoard up silver, and the gold in which men trust - and there is no end to their acquiring it; they that work in silver and in gold and are solicitous? There is no searching of their works; they have vanished and have gone down into Hades"*²¹⁷.²¹⁸



25. WEALTH

²¹⁴ Paidagogos 1:62.

²¹⁵ Henry Chadwick: *History and Thought of the Early Church*, London, 1982, p. 172.

²¹⁶ See our book: *God's Providence*, Ottawa 1987, section 7.

²¹⁷ Baruch 3:16-19. While our chief interest in this passage is in Clement's use of the term *Divine Scripture*, - h Jeia - - - grajh, - we include his full citation, since it is from a seldom-quoted and deuterocanonical book.

²¹⁸ Paidagogos 2:3:36:3; Jurgens: *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vo. 1.

The pagan author Celsus accuses Christians of being credulous and illiterate and gives the impression that they all come from the lowest stratum of society: they are woolworkers, shoemakers, washer-women, he says, who succeed in attracting to their absurd beliefs only those who are equally ignorant and low-born²¹⁹. It was towards the end of the second century that St. Clement of Alexandria produced his "*Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?*" perhaps at the behest of a rather large number of wealthy Alexandrian Christians who were worrying that they would have to divest themselves of their material goods in order to be saved²²⁰. We have already seen St. Clement's view of wealth, when dealing with this work.



26. MUSIC

Early Christian attitudes toward music were at first ambivalent. St. Clement of Alexandria was opposed to the use of instruments, though St. Basil of Caesarea believed music had an educational value, "that through the softness of the sound we might unaware receive what is useful in the words." Jerome speaks of the office of a cantor who was to lead in song²²¹.

The Spirit, to purify the divine liturgy from any such unrestrained revelry, chants: 'Praise Him with sound of trumpet' (Ps. 150:3-6), for, in fact, at the sound of the trumpet the dead will rise again; 'praise Him with harp,' for the tongue is a harp of the Lord; 'and with the lute, praise Him,' understanding the mouth as a lute moved by the Spirit as the lute is by the plectrum; 'praise Him with timbal and choir,' that is, the Church awaiting the resurrection of the body in the flesh which is its echo; 'praise Him with strings and organ,' calling our bodies an organ and its sinews strings, for from them the body derives its

²¹⁹ Origen: *Against Celsus*, 3:44 and 55.

²²⁰ Boniface Ramsey: *Beginning to read the Fathers*, p. 182.

²²¹ Carl A. Volz: *Life and Practice in the Early Church*, Minneapolis, 1990, p. 73.

co-ordinated movement, and when touched by the Spirit, gives forth human sounds; 'praise Him on high-sounding²²² cymbals,' which mean the tongue of the mouth, which, with the movement of the lips, produces words.

Then, to all mankind He calls out: 'Let every spirit praise the Lord,' because He rules over every spirit He has made. In reality, man is an instrument made for peace, but these other things, if anyone concerns himself overmuch with them, become instruments of conflict, for they either enkindle desires or inflame the passions²²³.

But as for us, we make use of one instrument alone: only the Word of peace, by whom we pay homage to God, no longer with ancient harp or trumpet or drum or flute which those trained for war employ. They give little thought to fear of God in their festive dances, but seek to arouse their failing courage by such rhythmic measures²²⁴.

Imitate the holy Hebrew king in his thanksgiving to God: 'Rejoice in the Lord, O you just; praise becomes the upright, "as the inspired psalm says: "Give praise to the Lord on the harp, sing to Him with the lyre" - an instrument with ten strings - "Sing to Him a new canticle" (Ps. 32:1-3). There can be little doubt that the lyre with its ten strings is a figure of Jesus the Word, for that is the significance of the number ten^{225, 226}



27. CONDEMNING OTHERS

You, however, shall not judge who is worthy and who is unworthy. For it is possible that you might err in

²²² The Scholion says: 'This word (alalagmou) means a shout of victory. To those who have conquered sensual uncleanness, a shout of victory is very appropriately assigned.'

²²³ Paidagogos 2:3:41, 42 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

²²⁴ Paidagogos 2:3:42 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

²²⁵ The Greek 'i' (iota) of lesous represents the numeral ten.

²²⁶ Paidagogos 2:3:43 (Fathers of Church, vol. 23).

your opinion. When in doubt and ignorance it is better to do good to the unworthy for the sake of the worthy, than to guard against the less good and thereby fail to fall in with the sincere.

For by being too cautious, and by aiming to test who you will or will not find worthy to be received, it is possible for you to neglect some that are dear to God; and for this the penalty is punishment in eternal fire²²⁷.

28. THE PASCHA (THE FEAST OF THE EASTER)

In his work "Stromata" he wrote,

Wherefore the tithes, both of the ephah and of the sacrifices, were presented to God; and with the tenth day began the paschal feast, the transition (diabasis) from all trouble and from all objects of sense²²⁸.

This is the first instance of a Christian writer interpreting the Pascha as *humanity's passing over*²²⁹.

† † †

29. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE

For St. Clement, the *Gnostic* has the experience of heaven, even while he is in this world. He is waiting for the eternal life to partake of Christ's inheritance. He attains the pledge of the above Jerusalem in his inner man.

I shall pray the Spirit of Christ to wing me to my Jerusalem²³⁰.

²²⁷ Who is the Rich Man that is saved? 23:2,3 (Jurgens).

²²⁸ Stromata 2:11:51:2.

²²⁹ Raniero Cantalamessa: *Easter in the Early Church*, The Liturgical Press, Minnesota, 1993, p. 149.

²³⁰ Stromata 4:26.

*Such, according to David, "rest in the holy hill of God," in the church far on high, in which are gathered the philosophers of God, "who are Israelites indeed, who are pure in heart, in whom there is no guile;" who do not remain in the seventh seat, the place of rest, but are promoted, through the active beneficence of divine likeness, to the heritage of beneficence which is the eighth grade; devoting themselves to the pure vision of insatiable contemplation*²³¹.

St. Clement believes that there will be different degrees in heaven.

Conformably, therefore, there are various abodes, according to the worth of those who have believed. To the point Solomon says, "For there shall be given to him the choice grace of faith, and a more pleasant lot in the temple of the Lord." For the comparative shows that there are lower parts in the temple of God, which is the whole church. And the superlative remains to be conceived, where the Lord is. These chosen abodes, which are three, are indicated by the numbers in the Gospel the thirty, the sixty, the hundred. And the perfect inheritance belongs to those who attain to "a perfect man," according to the image of the Lord.



30. TRUE AND FALSE BEAUTY

St. Clement deals with "Beauty" in his *Protrepticus* 4, and *Paidagogos* 3:1. The artists do their efforts to make beautiful statues for worshipping them, but beauty is realized through purity, chastity, inner freedom and dominion, and attaining the likeness of God. Also men and women want to be beautiful by wearing gold and precious stones, but it is the likeness to God, especially in

²³¹ *Stromata* 6:14.

practising love, that makes them thus. The dwelling of the Logos in man's heart makes him beautiful.

Beauty becomes ugly when it is consumed by outrage. Mortal, do not play the tyrant over beauty. Do not commit outrage against the bloom of youth...

*If you want beauty to be beautiful, **keep it pure.***

*Be a **king** over beauty, not its tyrant. Let it remain free.*

When you have kept its likeness pure, then and only then will I acknowledge your beauty. When beauty is the true archetype of all that is beauty, then and only then will I accord it worship²³².

*If one knows himself, he will know God; and knowing God, **he will be made like God**, not by wearing gold or long robes, but by well-doing, and by requiring as few things as possible...*

*That man with whom the Logos dwells does not alter himself, does not get himself up: **He has the form of the Logos**; he is made like to God; he is beautiful; he does not ornament himself; his is beauty, the true beauty...²³³*

Our Savior, the Logos, is the source of the true beauty of our bodies and souls, for He grants us immortality.

But it is not the beauty of the flesh visible to the eye, but the true beauty of both soul and body, which He exhibited, which in the former is beneficence; in the latter - that is, the flesh - immortality²³⁴.

† † †

31. YMNS

²³² Protrepicus 4.

²³³ Paidagogos 3:1.

²³⁴ Ibid.

F. Forrester Church and Terrence J. Mulry published the following Hymns written by St. Clement of Alexandria²³⁵:

*Bridle of colts untamed,
Over our wills presiding;
Wing of unwandering birds,
Our flight securely guiding.
Rudder of youth unbending,
Firm against adverse shock;
Shepherd, with wisdom tending
Lambs of royal flock:
Your simple children bring
In one, that they may sing
In solemn lays
Theirs hymns of praise
With guileless lips to Christ their King.
King of saints, almighty Word
Of the Father highest Lord;
Wisdom's head and chief;
Assuagement of all grief;
Lord of all time and space,
Jesus, Savior of our race;
Shepherd, who does us keep;
Husbandman, who tillest,
We, the people of his love,
Let us sing, nor ever cease,
To the God of peace above.*

*Let us receive the light
and we will receive God!
Let us receive the light
and become disciples of the Lord!
For he promised the Father:
"I will reveal your name to my brothers.*

²³⁵ F. Forrester Church and Terrence J. Mulry: *Earliest Christian Hymns*, Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1988, p. 83-5.

In the midst of the congregation I will sing to you."

*Sing, O Word, His praises
and reveal God, your Father, to me!
Your words will save me
and your song will teach me.
Until now I was going astray
in search of God.
But ever since you enlightened me,
Lord, you have taught me to find
him who is my God as well,
and I receive your own Father from you.
I became his heir with you,
for you have not been ashamed of your brother.*

