WRITINGS OF AMBROSIASTER

by Ambrosiaster

Writings of Ambrosiaster (c. AD 384). Ambrosiaster was an early church father whose writings have been preserved for the edification of the church.

15 Chapters

Table of Contents

0. Writings of Ambrosiaster
1. Commentary on 1 Corinthians
2. Commentary on 1 Thessalonians
3. Commentary on 1 Timothy
4. Commentary on 2 Corinthians
5. Commentary on 2 Thessalonians
6. Commentary on 2 Timothy
7. Commentary on Colossians
8. Commentary on Ephesians
9. Commentary on Galatians
10. Commentary on Philemon
11. Commentary on Philippians
12. Commentary on Romans
13. Commentary on Titus
14. Exorcism

Chapter 0

Writings of Ambrosiaster

Commentary on 1 Corinthians

On the Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, First Epistle.

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Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14-16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

- (Vers. 25.)
- (Vers. 26.)
- (Vers. 27.)
- (Vers. 28.)
- (Vers. 29.)
- (Vers. 30.)
- (Vers. 31.)
- Chapter II.
- (Vers. 1, 2.)
- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5, 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)
- (Vers. 15.)
- (Vers. 16.)
- Chapter III.
- (Vers. 1.)
- (Vers. 2.)
- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3-5,)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9, 10)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• Chapter VI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• Chapter VII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

- (Vers. 29.)
- (Vers. 30.)
- (Vers. 31.)
- (Vers. 32.)
- (Vers. 33.)
- (Vers. 34.)
- (Vers. 35.)
- (Vers. 36.)
- (Vers. 37.)
- (Vers. 38.)
- (Vers. 39.)
- (Vers. 40.)
- Chapter VIII.
- (Vers. 1.)
- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.)
- (Vers. 13.)
- Chapter IX.
- (Vers. 1.)
- (Vers. 2.)
- (Vers. 3.)

- (Vers. 4, 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7, 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.)
- (Vers. 13.)
- (Vers. 14.)
- (Vers. 15.)
- (Vers. 16.)
- (Vers. 17.)
- (Vers. 18.)
- (Vers. 19.)
- (Vers. 20.)
- (Vers. 21.)
- (Vers. 22.)
- (Vers. 23.)
- (Vers. 24.)
- (Vers. 25.)
- (Vers. 26.)
- Chapter X.
- (Vers. 1, 2.)
- (Vers. 3, 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6, 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• (Vers. 27.) • (Vers. 28, 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• Chapter XI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.) • (Vers. 5, 6, 7.) • (Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.) • (Vers. 18, 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21, 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24, 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.) • (Vers. 28, 29.)

• (Vers. 30.) • (Vers. 31, 32.) • (Vers. 33, 34.)

• Chapter XII.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• Chapter XIII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4-8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• Chapter XIV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• (Vers. 34.)

• (Vers. 35.)

• (Vers. 36.)

• (Vers. 37.)

• (Vers. 38.)

• (Vers. 39.)

• (Vers. 40.)

• Chapter XV.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25, 26.) • (Vers. 27, 28.)

• (Vers. 29.) • (Vers. 30, 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• (Vers. 34.)

• (Vers. 35.)

• (Vers. 36.) • (Vers. 37, 38.)

• (Vers. 39.)

• (Vers. 40.)

• (Vers. 41.)

• (Vers. 42.)

• (Vers. 43.)

• (Vers. 44.)

• (Vers. 45.)

• (Vers. 46.) • (Vers. 47, 48.)

• (Vers. 49.)

• (Vers. 50.)

• (Vers. 51.)

• (Vers. 52.)

• (Vers. 53.) • (Vers. 54, 55.)

• (Vers. 56.)

• (Vers. 57.)

• (Vers. 58.)

• Chapter XV.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.) • (Vers. 10-12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24.)

Prologue

Admonished by the command of the Lord, the Apostle spent one year and six months sitting among the Corinthians, teaching them the word of God. From this is where he acts with great confidence and affection of love with them, sometimes warning, sometimes rebuking, sometimes flattering, as a father. For there are many reasons why he writes to them. The first of which is this, that, dissenting from each other like heretics, they wanted to be called followers of Paul, or of Peter, or of Apollos, and not Christians: which the Apostle strongly reproaches. However, among them were those who dissented from these beliefs and were devoted solely to Christ. The second reason is that they began to take pleasure in eloquence and earthly philosophy, so that under the name of Christ they were imbued with things that are contrary to the faith. The third reason is that they were proud because the Apostle did not go to them. The fourth reason is because they allowed a fornicator to be among them. The fifth reason is to remind them of the previous letter that he had written before this one that is called the first. On Friday, because they had begun to inflict injuries and frauds on each other, and were seeking the accusations of unbelievers rather. The seventh reason is that in which he indicates that it is permissible for them to receive expenses, but to despise them; lest there be a semblance to rapacious pseudo-apostles. The eighth, however, is to respond to their letter; for they had begun to be disturbed by heretics concerning marriages. The ninth is in which he declares that everyone should remain as they believed. But the tenth [virgin], on the other hand, because nothing has been enjoined upon her. And there are other reasons, which will be seen in the body.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Paul, called as an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. To the Romans he begins differently; for there is another reason: but to these he writes that he is an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, because everything he did, he did by the will of the Son of God, who said to him: Go, I will send you far away to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21). From this he was called as an Apostle, that is, sent to the Gentiles by the will of God. By this also he touches on those whom neither Christ had sent, nor was it true what they were saying. For he frequently mentions both God and Christ, in order to show that Christ is not God himself the Father, but that he is the Son of God, and that he is also God the Father, not in union; when he is shown to be called the Son. For many sects had emerged, which claimed the Gospel of Christ according to their own interpretation, from which dry branches still exist, whose advocates were overthrowing the Churches. Hence the Apostle sets forth everything that is contrary to heresies, and asserts himself as a true preacher by virtue of being sent by the will of God through Christ.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) And Sosthenes, the brother, also greets you. He recommends himself to your society. The Church of God, which is in Corinth, is sanctified in Christ Jesus. Therefore, he writes to the Church because there were still no appointed leaders in each Church. And although he rebukes them in many things, he says: Sanctified in Christ Jesus. But he says this because they were regenerated in Christ and were sanctified, but then they began to behave improperly. This is to show that the entire Church was sanctified in Christ, but some of them were turned away from the

true tradition by the wicked teaching of false apostles.

You are called saints. That is, you are called to be holy, which means not deviating from the rule of sanctification. Together with all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every place of theirs and ours. That is, with both genuine Jews and Gentiles, because salvation is from the Jews. In every place where Gentiles, who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, are present, and where Jews are also mentioned, all are likewise one. For the pseudoapostles, who preached the name of Christ through the wisdom of the world, that is, mixing philosophy, rejected the old law and the prophets; for they denied that Christ was truly crucified, but only appeared to be crucified, like Marcion and Manichaeus. Therefore, the Apostle says: But we preach Christ crucified (I Cor. I. 23). They also did not confess the resurrection of the flesh, which the prophet Isaiah proclaims, saying: Those in the tombs shall rise (Isaiah XXVI, 19).

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Grace to you and peace from our God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. So that, because he had said, 'Those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,' he may not seem to have been silent about the name or gift of the Father, and may not perhaps give occasion for suspicion or an opportunity for division; he does indeed teach how Christ should be invoked correctly, but that all grace is from the Father, so that he may both show that the two, although one in divinity, are distinct, and may give preference to the authority of the Father.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) I always give thanks to my God for you. Although he writes to everyone in the church, he signifies in this way, that when he sometimes rebukes and sometimes praises, each person reading the letter understands what is said for them and what is said against them. For he writes to one congregation with two communities, so that when he reproaches those who are behaving badly, they understand that these things are written for them; and likewise, when he praises, let the one who remains in the rule understand that these things are said to them. Ideoque inquit:

I thank my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

(Vers. 5.)

(Vers. 5.) Because in everything you have been enriched in him, in all speech and all knowledge. This means that by receiving the grace and the knowledge of the truth, they have attained spiritual understanding; therefore, they give thanks to God for these things.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) As the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in them; because they were strengthened in faith, they hoped for nothing from men: but all their hope was in Christ, not captivated by any pleasures.

(Vers. 7.)

(V. 7) So that you lack no grace, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is evident that He expects this day of judgment, therefore He is vigilant and anxious. The future judgment of God is said, in which our Lord will be revealed, both to the faithful and to the unfaithful, so that unbelievers may know and understand that what they refused to believe is true, and perish; but the faithful may rejoice, finding more good than they had imagined.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) And he will also confirm you to the end without blame in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. With a cheerful spirit, he is confident in their hope and secure, for they will be blameless until the judgment to come. For amidst all the turmoil and upheaval, they could not be changed; undoubtedly they show themselves to remain steadfast in the same. While praising these, he invites those who had been led astray by the false apostles, for he preaches their faith and calls them to repentance.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Who can doubt the promises and faithfulness of God, for it will be just as he has said, that we, believing in Christ, are adopted as his children. For he gives us this gift, that we believe Christ to be the Son of God, so that we may begin to be like him, remaining in the same dignity, just as Christ remains, whom we believe to be the Son of God. For indeed, fraternity is a society, in such a way that it demonstrates to us how the faith of God will remain unharmed in this matter: so that we may not be found lacking in confidence and faithfulness, but rather persevering in adoption.

(Vers. 10.) (Verse 10) But I urge you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to all say the same thing. Everyone is now praying that they may have unity, especially in the matter in which the children of God, who have been reborn, are called. He is speaking to the entire Church now, so that those who had started to disagree would return to the faith they had started, which they saw being praised in those who persevered in it. And may there be no divisions among you, but be perfect in the same mind and in the same knowledge. He wants them to be perfect in the same mind he had given them, so that they would not disagree. He cites the example of those he praises above and challenges them to think and defend this.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) For it has been reported to me, brothers, by those who are of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Although you have been overturned, he still calls them brothers; just as in the prophet Isaiah God says to those who were with him, to those who believed in false prophets: 'You will be our brothers' (Isaiah 66:5); so that they would not disagree with them, as if they were brothers. But when he says: 'By those who are of Chloe's household', to some it seems that there are men who remain and bear fruit in the faith of God; to some it seems that it refers to a place, as if it were said: 'By those who are of Antioch'; but to some it seems that there was a devoted woman, with whom many worshippers of God were, whose faith was not denied; so that what they reported about the Corinthians, that there were contentions among them, was true. He said that there were disputes among them in order to show the diversity of their opinions on the discipline of the Lord. And he added what it was, saying:

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) But I say this, that each one of you says: I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. He exposes the error, but does not reveal the names of the authors; for they were not in one place, but went around to deceive the simple. For those whom he mentions were undoubtedly good teachers; but under their guise, he touches upon false apostles. For if he denies boasting in them, how much more in the wicked teachers, whose corrupt doctrine he indicates to be rejected! However, he designates among them those who said they are of Christ, not of man, whom he praises above.

(Vers. 13.) (Vs. 13) Christ was divided. He says Christ is divided because people have divided his glory among themselves. Just as heretics, who do not hesitate to call themselves either Photinians, or Arians, or Cataphrygians, or Novatians, or Donatians, or Manichaeans; in the same way, the Corinthians had begun to subject themselves to the names of various heretics, so that they seemed to honor men in the place of Christ: while they receive different things about Christ, they divide Christ. For one man receives only Christ, another confesses the pure God without man or body, another says that Christ was predicted by the prophets, another denies that the prophets spoke about Christ. Therefore, since Christ is both God and man, these people, claiming different things about him, divide Christ; and because they make many churches under their own name, he added: Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one would say you were baptized in my name. Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? If, however, we are baptized in Christ, in order to be justified in his name, what is it that we should make these men, the authors of this faith, unaware of the faith they have begun?

(Vers. 14-16.)

(Verses 14-16.) I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the wise person? Where is the scribe? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Finally, after renouncing the name of Christ, the Novatians and Donatians boast that they are called by their own names. Therefore, Crispus and Caius are Corinthians, whom he mentions as witnesses because they were baptized by the Apostle in such a way that they asserted no glory should be given to them for this reason. But the household of Stephanas are the firstfruits of Achaia, as he indicates in the final part of the letter, to whom he gives testimony that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

(Vers. 17.) (Verse 17.) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel. For preaching the gospel is more important than baptizing; therefore, he says that he was not sent to baptize, but to preach the gospel. For in the bishop, there is the dignity of all orders; for he is the head of the other members. By this, he also humbles those to whom they had given much, because they had been baptized by them (Acts 10:48); so that they may know that baptizing is not important, because not everyone who baptizes is fit to preach the gospel. For the words that are spoken in baptism are customary. Indeed, the Apostle Peter commanded Cornelius, a believing man, to be baptized with his household, and he did not deign to perform this act in the presence of the ministers; for if they had been lacking, he himself would have done it out of necessity. Therefore, he showed how much better those whom they worshipped were, but he did not allow this to be attributed to his own name, knowing that it is dangerous to claim for oneself the glory due to God's name; for it is like idolatry. Not in the wisdom of words, so that the cross of Christ may not be emptied. For the Christian preaching does not need pomp and the adornment of speech, and therefore unskilled fishermen were chosen to evangelize, so that the truth of the doctrine itself would commend itself, attested by virtue, so that it would not appear acceptable by the cleverness and cunning of men, not by truth, as in the disciplines invented by men, in which reason and virtue are not sought, but the arrangement of words: and through this, he seeks his own glory, who wants to adorn the faith of Christ with words. For she obscures herself by the splendor of words, so that not she herself, but he is praised; just as the false apostles, so as not to seem foolish to the wise of the world, preached Christ in the wisdom of men in a twofold way; so that they might study eloquence, and avoid those things which the world considers foolish in us: that they might not teach that the Son of God was made incarnate and born of a Virgin, nor the future resurrection of the flesh; for this the wisdom and reasoning of the world judges to be foolish: and by this the Apostle says that he does not preach Christ in the wisdom of men; lest the cross of Christ be made void; for whoever announces Christ in the wisdom of man denies the truth of the preaching, as I mentioned above.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. It is clear that those for whom the cross of Christ is foolishness are in perdition, for they have not been saved from the death of hell.

(Vers. 19.) (Verse 19.) But to those who are saved, it is the power of God. It is not obscure that to those who believe, the power of God is; for they believe that the cross of Christ is not weakness, but power, understanding that death has been conquered on the cross: those who have this sign are saved; for they cannot be bound by that. For it is written in Isaiah: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the intelligence of the intelligent I will reject (Isaiah 29:14). He destroys the wisdom of the wise, while he does what they deny is possible; and he rejects the intelligence of the intelligent, when he proves that God, whom they call careless, has undertaken those things which they consider foolish, namely that the Son of God would be crucified by being born of a Virgin for the salvation of humanity; which fact is truly attested by power, not words.

(Vers. 20.) (Verse 20.) Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? By these words, he is attacked both against the Jews and against the Gentiles; because both the Jewish scribes and the teachers of the Law think it foolish to believe in the Son of God. In a

similar way, the Gentiles regard this as a laughable matter. But the Jews, because this is not so clearly signified in the Law, doubt; but the Gentiles, because the reason of the world does not accept this; for it says that nothing can be done without a mixture, and they judge it foolish. However, this is a conqueror of the age, who determines things to be done by the movements of the constellations, and by calculations he determines the rising and setting of the twelve signs, thinking that nothing can happen without their motion. Did not God make the wisdom of this world foolish? The wisdom of this world has become foolish; thinking itself wise, it has proven to be ignorant. For what was considered impossible has been declared possible, thinking God to be careless. There is nothing more foolish than this assertion, that the world was created and yet God does not care for it. Why did he create it if it does not belong to him? But because they see some enjoying the world happily, while others are oppressed, and the righteous are despised, the wicked boast; therefore, they believed that God is careless. Whoever says that God is indifferent does not deny that He is evil or unjust; for He will judge the world, and He is unjust, withholding good, and allowing evil to happen. Therefore, if they observe, setting aside their hatred of divine law, they can see that this argument can be settled by us, who await the judgment of God, in which the oppressed will be uplifted and the violent will be humbled; for God shows no partiality (Romans 2:11).

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) For since the world, through wisdom, did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe. The world, that is, mankind, did not know God through its wisdom; for they ascribed His unique majesty either to imaginary beings or to the elements, ignoring Him and thinking that the things which are seen should be worshipped through the wisdom of the flesh. Therefore, it pleased God to establish preaching, which seemed foolish to them, so that those who believe in that which they despise might be saved, and they themselves might be condemned. Therefore, this is the vicissitude by which, by God's design, the false is condemned by the true.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) Since the Jews seek signs, and the Greeks seek wisdom. The Jews seek signs because they do not doubt that they could happen, but they inquire whether they have happened; knowing that Aaron's rod blossomed and produced fruit when it was dry (Num. 17:8); and that Jonah was swallowed by a whale and remained alive in its belly for three days and three nights, and was then vomited out alive (Jonah 2:1). However, above all, they seek to see something like what Moses saw, God in the fire; hence they say: We know that God spoke to Moses (John 9:29); even though it is greater that Lazarus, who was dead and decaying for four days, came out alive from the tomb (John 11:44). But the Greeks seek wisdom, for they do not want to hear anything except what is logically possible in the world.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews indeed a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness. It is a stumbling block to the Jews when they hear Christ professing himself to be the Son of God and doing away with the Sabbath. But to the Gentiles it is foolishness; because they hear things preached that do not accord with worldly reason and seem senseless to

them, such as the birth of a Virgin and the resurrection of the dead.

(Vers. 25.)

(V. 25) But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the power of God, which is stronger than words, persuades those who believe in Christ to understand: the Jews, who were seeking a sign, first understand Christ to be the power of God; and likewise the Greeks see Christ as the wisdom of God, considering the worldly wisdom they previously thought to be the greatest foolishness. Therefore, the power is of God, because through Him the Father God made all things; and the wisdom is therefore of God, because through Him God is known. For God could not be known, unless through him who was from him; because no one knows or has seen the Father, except the Son, and to whom the Son will reveal.

Because what is foolish to God is wiser than men. God's foolishness, he says, is not truly foolish, but rather it is considered foolish by men when it does not conform to worldly reason, since it is a spiritual reason. And through this, it is recognized as wiser by men, because spiritual things are understood more than carnal things. For spiritual things are not through carnal things, but carnal things depend on spiritual things; and therefore, carnal things are subject to spiritual things. And what is weak in God is stronger than men. Without a doubt, heavenly things conquer earthly things. Therefore, what is weak in God is not weak; because the weakness of Christ is a great victory. For he conquered, even though he seemed to be conquered, as it is said in the fiftieth psalm: And you will conquer when you are judged (Psalm 50:6). For the one who is unjustly killed is the true victor, establishing guilt in the one who kills.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Indeed, brothers, consider your calling; for not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. It is evident that there are few who are puffed up with worldly reasoning rather than being instructed, that is, those who observe and understand the movements of the stars. But he calls them strong according to the flesh, whom he also calls wise. And they are strong because they assert that the weakness of the cross of Christ is powerful; for injustice seems strong and appears to conquer for a time. They also call us newcomers, those noble ones through whom they trace the origin of their superstition to antiquity. Therefore, God did not choose this assertion, which is true only for a few.

(Vers. 27.) (Verse 27) But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. The foolish things of the world are that a Virgin gave birth and the Son of God was crucified; for those who believe consider this foolish. Therefore, God chose those who believe this to confound them, because He considers this foolish. The wise are confounded when they see many people confessing what a few deny; for it is not doubtful that the opinions of many are valued above the opinions of a few. And God chose the weak of the world in order to confound the strong. The same is true; because what a few consider weak, those who consider themselves wise in the world, doubting hope, virtue is affirmed by many; because more believe than do not believe, to their shame. For they see that the weak, named by Christ, have power over demons, perform miracles: but the injuries of the world are weak, and the suffering of the Savior is not known to bring about these virtues; because He allowed Himself to suffer these things in order to conquer death. For to endure unjustly, and to be able to resist and not to, is the glory of the patient, and the

condemnation of the oppressor.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28): And God chose the ignoble and contemptible things of this world, and the things that are not, in order to destroy the things that are. Therefore, He chose the ignoble and contemptible things, not because they truly are ignoble and contemptible, but because they are judged as such by the world. They despise worldly principles by believing in Christ, in order to destroy the things that are truly ignoble and contemptible. For those who judge are themselves more worthy of judgment and condemnation. For their assertion of error is found to be without foundation, and it was not from the beginning: but our teaching is from the beginning. Therefore, it is destroyed when it is asserted without testimony in mere words: but ours is proven not only by words, but also by the witness of virtue.

(Vers. 29.)

(Ver. 29.) That no flesh should glory in his sight. That is, that the wisdom of the flesh should be ashamed in its error, judging God; for the sense of the flesh is to doubt the power of God to have given birth to a virgin, etc., because this is the reasoning of the world, which is related to the flesh, and does not accept it.

(Vers. 30.)

(Ver. 30.) For from Him you are in Christ Jesus. From Him, that is, from God, who is omnipotent, are we in the faith of Christ; for it is God's purpose that we learn His truth and mercy through Christ. Truth is the mystery of the Trinity: mercy, on the other hand, because when we were captives, He redeemed us.

(Vers. 31.) (Verse 31) He has become for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To confirm those who believe, He says that Christ has acted according to the will of God, accomplishing what He has done; so that we may truly know that we have learned wisdom, and have been sanctified, and justified, and redeemed by God through Christ; for no one redeems except what is his own. Therefore, whether it is that we have been redeemed, or that we have been sanctified, that is, cleansed from the work of the flesh and the uncleanness of idols, or that we have been justified (for it is right to worship the Creator, despising all others), or that we have become wise through what we have learned from worldly things, this whole benefit is from God through Christ. But this is our redemption: Christ offered himself to the devil who desired it, in order to take away the contradiction of sin in himself, and thus to deliver his captives. As it is written: Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. This is written in the book of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 9:24). It is fitting, as the prophet says, that we should glory in God, for the one who boasts in the Lord cannot be put to shame. His works and his greatness in all things are evident. Therefore, let those who trust in idols be put to shame, those who did not create the heavens and the earth. Similarly, let those who boast in humans, whom they know to be devoid of virtue, also be put to shame. As Scripture says: 'Cursed is the one who trusts in man.' (Jer. 17:5).

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Ver. 1, 2.) And when I came to you, brothers, I did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, proclaiming to you the mystery of God. For I did not consider myself to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For he demonstrates in a progressive manner the pattern of our teaching, now proving that he has not taught them differently than what he has shown; for he spoke to them about the mystery of Christ in humility of speech and in the foolishness of preaching, as it appears to the world. He calls it the mystery, because what was incarnate was hidden from ages, with God, the Word of God. But they were heretics in whom they boasted, because they commended wicked doctrine and followed the wisdom of the world, emptying the cross of Christ, being ashamed to be called fools by the world; so that they would neither preach that Christ was born of a Virgin, nor teach that he was truly crucified; because it seems foolish to confess that the Son of God was born as a human and crucified. And the apostle John designates these (people), saying: Whoever denies that Christ came in the flesh is an antichrist; and whoever denies the Son, does not have the Father (1 John 2:23, 24); because they themselves said that the Father has been called the Son; from whom Marcion drew his error. These things seem to be hidden; because it does not reveal them, but wants them to be understood from the fact that worldly prudence is found, which is hostile to religion. But those things that it reproves, it wants to be learned from its judgment; so that it shows that it rebukes all things that ridicule us as foolish in Corinth. For the body itself reveals its structure, so that in it the function of the limbs may be discerned: this was evident in the Corinthians; for they were not ignorant of the reasons on which they were being argued.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) And I was among you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. Preaching Christ in the foolishness of human wisdom, he provoked hatred and persecutions, announcing it as a vain thing and an enemy to the Jews and the Gentiles.

(Vers. 4.) (Verse 4.) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom. It shows that he did not seek to acquire the favor of men, to please human wisdom, nor to study the art of words, but to demonstrate faith in the author, who did not want his teaching to be acceptable due to the noise of human tradition, but to the things themselves; for actions speak louder than words. But in the manifestation of the Spirit and power of God. For as words that are weak according to power, foolish things seem wise when adorned; God did not want his preaching to be commended by the testimony of words, but by power; so that the folly of the word being demonstrated, he might show wisdom through actions founded on spiritual reasoning.

(Vers. 5, 6.) (Verse 5, 6.) So that your faith may not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; we speak wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this world or of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory. But the wisdom is not of this world. He rightly says, the wisdom is not of this world, but of the future, in which the truth of God will appear to those who deny it; for this world does not comprehend this reasoning due to the weakness of earthly thinking.

Neither the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. It is clear that this wisdom of the rulers of this world is not, because they are being destroyed by it. For Christianity cuts out the errors that they have implanted, that is, idolatry, greed, and other vices, as the Apostle John says (1 John

3:8). For this reason the Son of God came, to undo the works of the devil.

(Vers. 7.)

(Versed 7.) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which is hidden. The hidden sense testifies that it was sent to reveal itself, which neither the leaders nor the powers knew, nor had the world heard; and by this it is considered foolish, because it is unknown: but it is rational and beneficial, as testified by the power, to which all the intention of human reasoning yields. Therefore, the wisdom of God is hidden, as it is not in words, but in power; not possible by human reason, but credible by the efficacy of the spirit.

What God predestined before the ages for our glory. So true wisdom, and co-eternal with God, is declared to have been predestined before the ages for our glory, we who believe. For God, being foreknowing of the future errors in the world that He was going to make, decreed this for the confusion of those who were going to make wisdom foolishness for themselves. But for our glory, who were going to believe and believe.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Which no prince of this century knew; for if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of majesty. The princes of this century not only include the men of the Jews and Romans, but also these princes and powers, whom he mentioned above, to whom this saying truly applies, against whom our struggle is a spiritual battle in heavenly places; for it was by their counsel and will that Christ was crucified (Ephesians 6:12). Finally, after the temptations, the devil departed, saying, 'Until the time' (Luke 4:13). And the Lord Himself said, 'The prince of this world has come, and he has found nothing in Me' (John 14:30). Therefore, the princes of this world crucified the Lord of majesty in ignorance; for the Jewish princes, how can the princes of this world be understood, who were subject to the Roman kingdom? And neither did the princes of the Romans crucify Christ; for when Pilate said, 'I find no cause of death in Him' (John 19:4). And when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' (Matthew 27:24). Therefore these leaders crucified Christ the Lord, whom he triumphed over freely in himself (Colossians 2:15); although the evangelist Mark says of the demons: 'For they knew that he was the Christ' (Mark 1:34). They knew that he was, but they did not know the mystery of his being, that he is the Son of God, as promised in the Law. Even Peter the Apostle said to the Jewish people: I know, brothers, that you did this evil through ignorance, and your leaders - not the leaders of this world. Therefore, if the servants killed the Lord through ignorance, the sin should not be attributed to them. But it is not permissible to ignore this. And although they did not know that He was the Lord, they were not ignorant that they were doing something impious. However, it is said that the Lord of majesty was crucified, even though He does not know how to die. But because the Word became flesh, that is, the Son of God became incarnate, death was attributed to Him; not because the Jews persecuted the flesh, but because they persecuted Him who was working through the flesh. And thus, although the Lord of majesty may be ignorant of death, as far as the desire of the Jews and the rulers of this world is concerned, they killed the Lord in the flesh.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) But as it is written: What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him. This is written in the Apocalypse of Elijah in the apocrypha. Through this example, it is said that an unexpected thing was done, which not only would not fall into human senses, but would also be hidden from heavenly powers, namely the incarnated Son of God; so that he could strengthen what he had said above, that if the rulers of this age did not understand God made man, how much more humans! But even if the words caused offense or scandal, faith should not have been denied to virtues and signs. For weakness and human ignorance, virtue should have been preferred, and it should have been believed what seemed impossible to human reason; and therefore, for those who love God, that is, for those who believe, He prepared this gift.

(Vers. 10.) (Verse 10) But God has revealed it to us through his Spirit. For the rulers of this age did not understand this, but God revealed it to believers through his Spirit; for the things of God cannot be understood without the Spirit of God. For not only does this sacrament declare itself to men, but also to the rulers and powers in the heavenly realms, who crucified the Lord; so that as it is proclaimed on earth, those in the spiritual heavens, who live under the elements of the firmament, may learn. Therefore, this is the singular apostle who obtained this grace; because no one else could explain the mystery of the Trinity in this way: hence he is called the chosen vessel by divine judgment (Acts 9:15). For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For this Spirit is of God, and it knows everything. And it is said that the depths of God because it knows all His power and knowledge, which is entirely impossible for creatures.

(Vers. 11.) (Verse 11.) For who knows the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? It is clear that our thoughts are known by no one except by our own mind, which is called the spirit. Finally, in the Gospel, among other things, it says: And his spirit returned to her (Luke 8:55). And no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. This Spirit of God has taught us what He knows by nature, not by being taught, and has taught us about the mystery of Christ, because He is not only the Spirit of God, but also of Christ.

(Vers. 12.) (Verse 12.) But we have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit who is from God. By this we know that we have received the Spirit who is from God, because the spirit of the world cannot know the things that have been revealed to us. However, the spirit of the world is present, through whom the fanatics who are without God are seized; for he is a more powerful spirit among the worldly ones. Therefore, he is accustomed to divining the things of the world by conjectures, which they call the python. This is the one who is deceived and deceives by appearances: this is the one who spoke through the Sibyl, following our senses, desiring to have a place among the heavenly beings. So that we may know what is given to us by God. For since the Spirit of God is given to us, we know what is given to us by God. For we would not be able to know these things if we had the spirit of the world; for the spirit of the world cannot know the Spirit of God. For no one knows the mind of God except the Spirit of God, who is from God; for the lower things cannot know the counsel of the higher, nor can a creature know the will of its creator.

(Vers. 13, 14.) (Verse 13, 14.) What we also speak. So that it may be clear for us to know what has been given to us by God; for these are also what we speak, so that others may learn through spiritual doctrine. For these things were divinely revealed to the preachers, that is, the apostles, so that they may teach the people and instruct the rulers of this world about the evil they have

committed. Not in the teaching of words of human wisdom, but in the teaching of the Spirit; for human wisdom does not perceive this meaning, nor is it apprehended by the studies of literature: but it is conceived through spiritual reason by faith, as the prophet Isaiah says: Unless you believe, you will not understand (Isaiah 7:9). For it is learned more by the natural law than by the course of the stars and the calculations of the signs which are marked in the firmament. Finally, believers see that what they believe is consistent not with human words, but with their own nature; for a work recognizes its maker: therefore, the Gospel speaks to our souls in spiritual things, arousing them to the knowledge of their Creator.

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. That is, to give spiritual effectiveness to those who reject worldly wisdom, which is contained in the mystery of faith, in order to enlighten the understanding of kind-hearted people; for those who believe what worldly wisdom considers foolish are spiritual. But the human animal does not perceive those things which are of the Spirit of God; he does not know them, for they are foolishness to him. For he, like livestock, lowers his senses to the earth; and therefore he only grasps what he sees: nor does he think anything can be done except in the way he knows. Therefore, he judges as foolish anything he hears differently than what he knows; for he does not consider anything can be done without mixture. Hence he laughs upon hearing that God has begotten a Son, whom he knows is simple and incorporeal; and that a Virgin has given birth, and that dissolved bodies are again called back to life; when these things are more for the praise of God, so that it is believed he has done, whose work cannot be investigated by reason; for he is God, who has made. Human weakness considers foolish what it does not understand through its own knowledge; when it should be even more foolish and wise because, since it is said to be made by God, it cannot be comprehended. And they cannot know; for it is spiritually discerned. Following human tradition, while denying the faith in one God, it has become spiritually done, which they think cannot be done by the reason of the flesh being inflated: and thus, the wicked, having been marked, are spiritually condemned.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) But the spiritual person judges all things, yet he himself is judged by no one. For the true reason of spiritual things is, namely, the believers; for whoever is called thus, is so called because of his belief; therefore, they themselves judge all things. For by their example, unbelief will be judged, but they themselves will be judged by no one. For who will condemn someone speaking the truth? For it is certain that all enemies of faith hold falsehood as truth; their accusation has already been brought to nothing, condemned by the judgment of truth; for as the Lord said, whoever does not believe is already judged (John 3:18).

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16) For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? The mind of God is that he commanded these things to be done spiritually, through which the wisdom of the world would be proven foolish, denying that what has been done could be done. This mind is unknown to anyone who has known it and displeased him, to correct the counsel of God; because whoever has known it, praises the power of God, but whoever denies that all things can be done, does not believe that God created the world. For what great thing is it to be believed that he has generated himself, who is not doubted to have created all things from nothing? For Jesus says: With God, all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). But we have the mind of the Lord. This means that as believers, we share in the same divine understanding.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.) (Verse 1.) And I, brothers, could not speak to you as spiritual, but as carnal. Now he speaks to those who, because they still served the pleasures of the world, were carnal. Although they were already baptized and had received the Holy Spirit, yet because after baptism they immediately returned to the old man, whom they had renounced, they are called carnal. For the Holy Spirit remains in the one in whom he has poured himself, if he remains in the purpose of regeneration: if not, he departs; but in such a way that if a man reforms himself, he returns to him. Always ready for good, diligent in repentance. When you were like little children in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not solid food. Even though you were reborn in Christ, it was not fitting to entrust you with spiritual things; having received the faith, which is like a spiritual seed, you did not bear any worthy fruit to God, so as to deserve to learn the words of perfection. Instead, you studied with the senses of imperfection, like little children. But the divine Apostle and spiritual physician would entrust to each person according to their abilities, so that no one would suffer scandal in spiritual matters due to their imperfection and lack of knowledge.

(Vers. 2.) (Version 2.) For you were not yet able. It clearly shows that they should not have heard what must be said to those who are confirmed. But you cannot yet; for you are still carnal. This strongly proves the folly of those who complained that they had not hitherto heard spiritual things; since they were still unworthy to hear. For the false apostles indiscriminately imparted their teachings to all, without distinguishing persons, in order to gain acceptance through hypocrisy. Whereas it is evident that our Lord and Author, Christ, dealt differently with the people than with His disciples, and also that there was a distinction among the apostles themselves; for He showed His glory on the mountain to three disciples, telling them to keep the vision secret until He rose from the dead (Matthew 17:9).

(Vers. 3.)

(Vers. 3.) For when there are among you envyings and contentions, are you not carnal, and do you not walk according to man? He shows the cause of indignity; because he who hopes for help from man is carnal. But he who, despising humanity, hopes in God, is spiritual; because God is spirit.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For when someone says, 'I am of Paul,' and another, 'I am of Apollo,' are you not mere humans? Just as those who boast in God and hope for all grace from Him are called gods, adopted by God; so also, boasting in humans, they are called humans and carnal, being confined by God's judgment. He says, 'I said, you are gods; but you shall die like humans' (Psalm 81:6). Therefore, he begins with his own example so that it would not be thought that he is destroying their presence out of envy, showing that it is a great mistake and pertains to the contempt of God when glory is given to humans when God is being preached. What, therefore, is lacking from being from a noble family, while still hoping for something from other people?

(Vers. 5.) (Verse 5.) So what is Apollo? And what is Paul? They are ministers, in whom you believed. But because they are only ministers, do not put your hope in them, but in God, whose ministers they are. They are to be thankful to Him, for it is His gift. They are servants, and even if unwilling, they must fulfill their duty. Wasn't Moses forced to go to Pharaoh? Wasn't Jonah

unwillingly sent to preach to the Ninevites? Wasn't Ananias sent to Saul, despite his objections, to lay hands on him? And to each one as the Lord has given: that is, as He has wished and known, He has divided the duties of ministry to each.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) I planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase. To plant is to evangelize and draw towards faith; to water is to baptize with solemn words; but to forgive sins and give the Spirit belongs to God alone. Therefore, if God gives the effect of salvation, there is no glory for man in this matter (Acts 2:4). For we know that the Holy Spirit was given without the laying on of hands by God (Acts 10:4), and that forgiveness of sins was obtained without baptism. Was he not invisibly baptized here, when he received the gift of baptism?

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Therefore, neither the one who plants is anything, nor the one who waters; but God who gives the growth. For the planted ones tend to die, and the watered ones rarely reach the fruitfulness they desire, unless God grants them a lively life. So, concerning the honor of God, man is nothing; but concerning the service, he is necessary, in order to be honored as a servant, not expecting anything from him that would bring harm to God.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For the one who plants and the one who waters are one. They are one, because both are hired workers; although their tasks are different. Each will receive their own wage according to their own labor. Although they are one, but because the one who proclaims the gospel is greater than the one who baptizes, their wages differ; and not only for this reason, but also for the sake of the sincerity of the teaching: so that the one who delivers the uncorrupted teaching may be worthy of a greater wage.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) For we are participants in the work of God: You are the cultivation of God, you are the building of God. This pertains to the role of the apostles, who are known to be helpers of God; for they are vicars of Christ.

(Vers. 10.) (Verse 10) According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise architect I have laid the foundation. He says that grace was given to him so that he would be worthy to preach the Gospel, and to demonstrate that this is not of human origin, but of God. Therefore, according to this grace, he says that he, as a wise architect, has laid the foundation. The wise architect is the one who, according to the teachings of the author, places the foundation, that is, the one who proclaims the Gospel according to the tradition of the Savior. But others build upon it. The buildings that are built afterwards are handed down by succeeding teachers, either bad or good.

However, let each one see how he builds upon it, that is, that the superstructures may correspond to the foundation; lest if they are oblique and frivolous, they may cause ruin, while the foundation remains intact; for if one teaches badly, the name of Christ remains, which is the foundation: but bad doctrine will perish, as the Lord says: Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted

will be uprooted (Matt. 15:13).

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. Therefore, no one can lay any other foundation, because even though there may be some heretics, they do not teach anything except under the name of Christ. For they cannot promote the comments of error in any other way, unless they preach with the name of the Savior interposed; so that the dignity of the name may make contrary and absurd things acceptable.

(Vers. 12.)

(V. 12) But if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones. Precious stones are those which fire does not corrupt. He placed three glorious types in the world, in which he signified good doctrine, wood, hay, straw: he placed three other types, but they are frivolous. In them corrupt and vain doctrine is distinguished.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) The one who does this work will be revealed; for the day will declare it, because it will be revealed in fire. This means that false teachings will become apparent to everyone in the fire; now it deceives some. And the quality of each person's work will be tested by fire. For through the fire, the examination will be made, and if it does not find anything that can be burned, it will reveal that person to be a good teacher; for bad and deceitful teachings are symbolized by wood, hay, and straw, to show that fire is their fuel.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) If someone's work remains, which he has built upon, he will receive a reward. For when nothing of evil doctrine is found in him, as in good gold, so it will be that he will receive eternal life with glory, like the three brothers in the fiery furnace (Dan. III, 23), because just as gold and silver and stones, which fire does not consume, so also a good teacher will remain incorruptible.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15.) If someone's work burns, they will suffer loss. The work that is said to burn is bad doctrine, which will perish. For all evil things will perish, like the path of the wicked; because they are not substances, but perverse assertions. However, to suffer loss is to endure punishment. For who, when placed in punishment, does not incur loss? But he himself will be saved, yet as if through fire. He said he will be saved, because the substance on which it is based will not be destroyed, just as bad teaching will be destroyed, because it is an accidental cause. Therefore, he said: yet as if through fire; so that this salvation is not without punishment, because he did not say: he will be saved through fire; so that, not being consumed by fire through his own merit, he may be saved, but when he says: yet as if through fire, he shows that he will indeed be saved, but will suffer the punishments of fire; so that, purified by fire, he may be saved, and not be tormented eternally like the unfaithful in the eternal fire: so that to some extent it is worth believing in Christ. For it is always necessary that one who sees himself defend the false as true should be ashamed; and in a similar way, one who has cast off falsehood and followed the truth will always have confidence in God; and one who has rejected impiety has submitted to piety. For whatever is outside the Catholic Church is contrary.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? He says that we are a temple of God, so that we may know that God dwells in us; for He must necessarily dwell in His own temple. And when He says that the Spirit of God dwells in us, it signifies that we should understand the Holy Spirit.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) If anyone violates the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is sacred, which you are. He stated this beforehand to convict those who were shamefully living and corrupting their own bodies by acts of violation, especially the one who had his father's wife, so that he would be condemned before his case was brought into the open. In short, in a similar, or rather the same, manner, when he judges his case, he speaks, saying: Do you not know that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you, whom you have from God (I Cor. VI,19). The higher temple of God he called; but in this place the temple of the Holy Spirit. Who would doubt here, that he signified the Holy Spirit as God?

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Let no one deceive himself: that is, let no one think that he can benefit himself by his own or human wisdom. It returns to the higher meaning: If someone seems to be wise among you in this world, let him become foolish, so that he may be wise. He says this because if someone understands the promised salvation and the mystery of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, let him become foolish, that is, let him flee worldly wisdom, so that he may be judged foolish by it, and then he will be wise. For the foolishness of the world is wisdom to God, as he believes that God has done things that the reason of the world does not comprehend, as I mentioned above. But the false apostles, desiring to appear wise in the world, denied that God had a Son, denied the true incarnation, and denied that the flesh could rise again.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Thus the foolishness of this world is wisdom with God, as God does what the world denies can be done; he proves the wisdom of that foolishness, and while many gods are spoken of, faith proves one, and they are confounded by their own prudence.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) For it is written: He catches the wise in their own cleverness. And again: The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile. This is found in the ninety-third psalm. In conclusion, the same meaning is conveyed; for knowing the vain thoughts of those individuals, in order to expose them as foolish, he reproves their wisdom, demonstrating the true nature of what they considered false and the falsehood of what they believed to be true.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Therefore, let no one boast in man. For human thoughts and plans are foolish and weak; it teaches that we should not boast in man, but in God, whose plans cannot be revoked: for

whatever men understand without God is foolish.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. In another place, he says of the same meaning: But we preach Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. (2 Corinthians 4:5) He calls servants instead of ministers; so that they may not defend themselves individually, but use everything together, as the Lord also says: For I am among you as he that serveth. (Luke 22:27) For the world is certainly ours, but let us perceive it according to God's will, and let us place the decrees of its course in God's will. And the present life is granted to us, but let us live it modestly and with the glory of God. Whether in death, let us willingly die for Christ, hoping for the future promise. Whether in the present, let us use the present in such a way as to not offend. Whether in the future, let us believe in the future, and let us commend ourselves more to them, because they are better.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) But you are Christ's: so just as these things have been granted and subjected to our judgment, so we also should be subjected to Christ; for we have begun to exist through him, both in our first origin and in our regeneration. But Christ is the Son of God. Christ is the proper Son of his Father, doing his will; so that we also may do his will. Therefore, if we are servants of Christ, what is it that we should hope for in terms of injury from human beings?

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) So let a man regard us, as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. This is what some of the Corinthians did not understand about him; but let a man understand this about him, that he is also God, who chose him. Therefore, he says that we are ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. For when he did not rely on the noise of words or human wisdom to be understood, he had to administer the sacrament of Christ, in which not words, but power was shining forth: not so that the man may appear glorious, but that God may. For he preached Christ as a colleague of the fishermen, just as they did. Therefore, when he proves himself to be a minister of Christ and the sacraments of God, he criticizes false apostles and denies that what they hand down is from Christ, through the fact that they differ from the apostolic tradition.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) Now the question arises among the stewards, to find out who is faithful. What he says applies not only to the persona of the pseudo-apostles, but also to the others, who, having received a dispensation, would constantly accuse with hesitation, either due to shame, fear, or certainly for the sake of their own commendation, either bad thoughts or behavior. For he was so steadfast here, that he would not even spare his own life, as long as he faithfully fulfilled everything.

(Vers. 3.)

(Vers. 3.) However, it is of little importance to me, whether I am judged by you or by a human day. He says that it is unfortunate to be judged by those whom he criticizes for such great vices, since he didn't even know how to judge himself according to just standards. Or by a human day, that is, because he was not to be judged even by the laws of the world, since you trust to be judged by those laws. For he surpassed human justice and aspired to celestial justice, as the Lord says: Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of God. (Matthew 5:20) Therefore, when he speaks of a human day, he also signifies a divine day; in which Christ will judge, because just as legal experts or pontiffs, who are called priests, have decreed certain days on which judgment is passed; so the day of the Lord has been defined, on which he will judge the world.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) But I do not judge myself; indeed, I am not conscious of anything against myself. It is evident that he who had a pure conscience was not anxious about himself. But I am not justified by this. Now he humbles himself and speaks as a man who can unknowingly incur blame. But the one who judges me is the Lord. He speaks rightly; for although he humbled himself, he gave the most to the Lord Christ; because he can reveal what is hidden from man while he judges the secret things, not to make him guilty but wise. Although he may be holy, he is still a human, who cannot help but have something hidden. Sometimes we think something is useful when it is not; for not all parts or sides of human conversation are described: but we are openly forbidden from those things which are serious. For certain causes tend to deceive us, arising from certain causes; so that we may think something is useful when it is not: which is indeed a trivial thing; since it is a free choice.

(Vers. 5.)

(Vers. 5.) So do not judge before the time, until the Lord comes. He warns them not to judge, since they are to be judged, and they may have double sin, as the Lord says: Do not judge, so that you may not be judged (Matt. VII, 1); but wait for the day of God's judgement, as if they were faithful and good. For it is an injustice of the judge if judgement or sentence comes from a servant before his knowledge.

He will also illuminate the hidden things of darkness and will reveal the counsels of hearts; and then praise will be given to each one by God. This is said, because on the day of judgment nothing will be hidden of those things that have been done or thought; and simplicity and hypocrisy will be revealed there; so that he who was despised may perhaps appear worthy, and he who was thought to be something may be found to be reprobate. For all things will be laid bare on the day of judgment, and then praise will be given to those who have acted or thought well. For indeed, the one who is praised, it is unlikely that he is worthy, as it is said in another place: For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom God commends (II Cor. X, 17), whom certainly nothing is hidden.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But I have transfigured these things, brothers, and Apollo on your behalf; so that you may learn in us not to go beyond what is written, that one should not be puffed up against another. Apollo and I have transfigured these things, while denying the false apostles' glories and perverse

traditions under our own authority, mainly referring to them as a group rather than individually; in order to prevent a greater discord among the people. For no one is willing to remain silent when their name or the name of someone they support is criticized: but if someone hears their name mentioned in a veiled manner, even if they understand that it is referring to themselves, they pretend not to notice. Therefore, he has dismissed their importance with this statement, when he says: I planted, Apollo watered, etc. (1 Corinthians 3:6), in order to teach them that nothing should be attributed to human beings in these matters.

(Vers. 7.) (Verse 7) For who distinguishes you? That is, there are some who, receiving more in baptism or in doctrine, claim that others have received less. This is what he is saying to those who thought that those baptized by others were considered to be something more: they were seduced by the eloquence of these people, so that they thought upside-down things were straight. For there was such discord among the people, that there were many factions: and thus the Apostle adapted his words without mentioning specific names to all parties; so that when the letter was read, each party could understand that their cause was being addressed. For what do you have that you did not receive? He says that he has gained nothing good beyond what he had received from others, so he complains in vain; for what they had, they had received from the Apostle. But it seems that he is speaking to a part of the people. But if you have received it, why do you boast as though you have not received it? This is how the apostles were acting as if provoked by the untrained; so that, hearing the same things they had already learned from the Apostle, they might belittle him and boast about their own teaching. They turned the glory of preaching onto themselves, commending their eloquence. But the Apostle wanted to appear contemptible, as long as it made the glory of God acceptable.

(Vers. 8.) (Ver. 8.) Now you are satisfied, now you have become rich, you reign without us. It is irony, they say; for the words are of one who is angry, not of one who confirms. For in them he both accuses them of great vices and says that they reign; for this is what they thought, boasting of those things which were taught by pseudo-apostles. And would that you would reign, so that we may also reign with you. Like a loving father wishes well for ungrateful children. For how could it be possible for them to reign without the apostles? For whatever is not handed down by the apostles is full of wickedness. Thus, however, the order had to be stated: So that you may reign with us; but because it was preceded by: And would that you would reign, it could not be stated in any other way than: So that we may also reign with you. To reign, however, is to be secure in the hope and promises of Christ, and to rejoice in the adversities that happen for the sake of his name; for they bring gain, not detriment. Where in another place he says: When I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:10).

(Vers. 9)

(V. 9) I consider that God has shown us, the last apostles, as if destined for death. He has appointed us to this role because he has always been in need, having suffered persecutions and hardships beyond others, just as Enoch and Elijah will suffer in the future as apostles. They will be sent before Christ to prepare the people of God and to fortify all the churches in order to resist antichrist, as the reading of the Apocalypse testifies, which says they will also suffer persecutions and be killed. Therefore, the Apostle compared their time to its proper time, saying: 'As if destined for death' (Apoc. XI, 8 et seq.), for they are about to come to kill.

Because we have become a spectacle to this world, to angels and to human beings. For even Enoch and Elijah will be a spectacle, to the extent that their bodies will be thrown onto the street in the sight of the whole unbelieving people. So too the apostles have become a spectacle; they were publicly ridiculed, treated with contempt, and suffered the death they endured. But when it says 'the world,' it means both evil angels and evil human beings. As David says in the seventy-seventh psalm: 'He tormented them with evil angels and evil human beings.' The mistreatment of the apostles is a source of entertainment to these evil angels and evil human beings. However, the world is called unfaithfulness, because it follows visible things.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) We are fools for the sake of Christ. Indeed, it is true that those who love Christ are foolish in the eyes of the world. But you are wise in Christ. The one who is wise in Christ is judged by the unbelievers, declaring Christ wrongly. In conclusion, because Marcion denies the Son of God and the possibility of God becoming incarnate, he is considered wise by the world, and Photinus, because he does not confess that Christ, through his birth, is God, appears wise to worldly people.

We are weak. We are weak, because without flattery and with foolishness, as it seems to the world, we were subjected to insults while preaching Christ. But you are strong. You are strong, because you profess Christ in a way that avoids offending others, so that you may be secure.

You noble ones. For whoever does not confess Christ, because he was promised to Abraham and preached from the beginning, is against Christ; because he attributes the antiquity of the promised Christ to others. But we are ignoble. The world considers ignoble one who confesses Christ, which the world denies, from the beginning. Therefore, it confirms all the aforementioned things that it seems to deny, and denies what it seems to confirm. For the words of one who confesses by denying and denies by confessing are that of an angry person.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) Until this hour we are hungry, and thirsty, and naked, and beaten, and unstable, and we labor working with our own hands. For freely and according to true faith, without any flattery, we preach Christ, and we expose the actions of a wicked life, they did not have favor among men, and they were beaten, that is, they were treated with insults, and they were unstable; because they were driven away, so as not to stay in one place for a long time, and teach many. Therefore they worked with their hands, because not only did they not have favor among men, but it was also unworthy to receive from those who were devoted to error, as it says in Psalm 140:5: But the oil of the sinner will not anoint my head. Because he also loses the freedom of argumentation and sins, who accepts from him who gives in order not to be reproved.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) We are cursed and we bless: for those who mistreated us were urging them to do good. We endure persecution and we bear it; because they did not resist those who persecuted them. We are blasphemed and we implore: for those who blasphemed were asking to be held accountable.

We have become like the rubbish of this world, the scum of all things until now. By not resisting anyone, nor repaying evil with evil, but always subjecting oneself; so that through patience, the despised and rejected may be restored to goodness. Until now, that is, even now among the Corinthians, for whom he suffered these evils mentioned above. And since he saw that his humility did not profit anything in these things, he laments, moved by pain, that such submission and injustice have yielded no fruit; but worse, they have even worsened.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) Not to embarrass you, I write this: that is, not to make you blush, I write this, but to correct you. But as if I were admonishing my dearest children. He still presents himself as a supplicant, so that they would not reject his admonitions when they were rebuked and provoked to anger. He does this as a healing physician, who by removing the thorns, alleviates the pain inflicted, in the hope and through flattery, so that the sick person allows himself to be treated.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) For even if you should have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. With these words, he shows that no one can love them with the same affection with which he loved them. For who would prefer the children of others over his own in affection? And therefore, they should not despise his admonitions, who also suffered so many evils for them.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) I beseech you, therefore, be imitators of me. Just as the holy Apostle beseeches his children to imitate him, that is, he willingly begs the sick to receive medicine! However, he wants them to be imitators of himself in this regard; just as he endured many dangers for their salvation from unbelievers and did not cease, as long as he preached the gift of divine grace to them day and night; so they, remaining in his faith and teaching, would not accept the wicked teachings of false apostles, but would resist, disregarding insults or slander, in order to preserve their spiritual affection for their father undamaged.

(Vers. 17.) (Verse 17.) Therefore, I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord. He will encourage them in this same Timothy, whom he passionately and faithfully appeals to in the Lord, so that they may learn what they have done wrong; for when he testifies to them, he convicts them. Who will remind you of my ways, which are in Christ Jesus, as I teach everywhere in every church. Through him, the faithful son in the Lord, he desires to bring them back to the rule of truth that he has handed down, so that, admonished by his words and examples of his works, they may repent, knowing that they were not incorrectly taught by the Apostle, when they learned to hold the same things that all the churches do.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) Just as if I were not going to come to you, some became arrogant. Certain Corinthians were indignant because he did not go to them, not out of desire, but out of pride, as if he considered them unworthy; whereas the Apostle's purpose was more to make the unworthy worthy.

(Vers. 19.) (Verse 19.) But I will come to you quickly, if the Lord permits. After receiving this reminder, he promises to go to them, but if the Lord allows; because God knows more than man, if it were worthwhile, He would allow it. And if he does not go, it would show that the Lord did not allow it, as a sign of their unworthiness. And I will not acknowledge the speech of those who are filled with pride, but their virtue. They are confused, for when they conversed deviously, they were indignant, as if they were worthy to be visited by an Apostle.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) For the kingdom of God is not in words, but in power. Just as the kingdom of God is not commended by the splendor of words, but by the power of miracles, so too these individuals would show themselves worthy to be visited by the Apostle not with bare words, but with the power of spiritual works.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21) What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness? He uses words of fear, so that those who were proud would be humbled, and if they truly desired the presence of an Apostle, they would prepare themselves to receive him, that is, cleanse themselves from every stain of sin, so that when he comes to them, he may have joy as if with beloved children.

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1.) (Vers. 1.) There is altogether a report of fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles. That he might show how grave this sin is, he said that it should not be allowed by those who do not know God; that likewise he might show with what punishment he should be punished, who, being established under eternal and divine justice, had committed so great a crime. So that someone may have the wife of their father. He revealed the nature of the pre-existing crime; so that he not only openly made him guilty of murder, but also showed those who adhere to him not immune to the crime, for in that in which one sins difficultly, it makes the guilty party more so.

(Vers. 2.) (Vers. 2.) And you were puffed up, and you did not grieve. Their pride is so greatly humiliated that it no longer makes them complain, but rather makes them supplicate. For they themselves were also participants, when they allowed the accused of such a great crime to go unpunished; so that they would all cast him out with one consent, if he refused to amend himself. But if anyone does not have the power to cast out or to prove who the accused is, he is immune, and it is not the judge's prerogative to condemn without an accuser, because even the Lord did not cast out Judas, although he was a thief, because he was not accused. To remove from among you the one who did this deed. Recognizing this act, it was necessary to expel him from the fraternity; for everyone knew his crime, yet they did not accuse him; for he publicly regarded his stepmother as his wife. In this matter, there was no need for witnesses, nor could the crime be concealed by any evasions.

(Vers. 3-5,) (Vs. 3-5) For I, indeed, am absent in body but present in spirit: that is, absent in appearance but present in the authority of the Spirit, who is never absent. Now, I have decided, as present in spirit, to deliver to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, the one who has committed

this, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus. For every pleasure of the flesh is from the devil, and therefore, when it is yielded to this pleasure, it is given over to Satan; for the flesh has this nature, that it should perish; therefore, when the soul joins itself with its desire, it weakens its spiritual strength and suffers destruction. Therefore, if someone was caught in the act of committing a shameful act, and was ashamed and expelled themselves, they would not perish, but would be followed by repentance. This decision to cast them out of the Church was not only agreed upon by everyone and done in the presence of the Lord Jesus, whose authority the Apostle held as a representative, but also meant that they should be rejected. When they are expelled, they are handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh; both the soul and the body perish, as it happens when things contrary to the law are done. However, in this case, the destruction of the flesh is attributed to the individual. Although all sins pertain to the carnal man, this desire of the flesh in particular hands the body over to hell; for when the soul is conquered, the soul tainted by filth, it becomes flesh by the lust of the flesh; just as a well-governed body is called spiritual. However, it is the mind that either, when overcome by allurements, makes the entire man carnal, or, remaining in the strength of its nature, surpasses the flesh so as to be called spiritual. May the holy spirit be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. Deliver the aforementioned contaminated to Satan, so that the spirit may be saved in the people of the Church on the day of judgment; for if it were not expelled, the spirit of the Church would not be saved on the day of judgment. For it abandoned all for the sake of contamination, so that on the day of the Lord, they might be found naked by the Holy Spirit, and hear from the judging Lord: Depart from me, I do not know you (Matthew 7:23); as he says to the Romans: But if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him. (Rom. VIII, 9); and in another epistle: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. (Ephes. IV, 30). For if He is grieved, He will depart and there will be no salvation: not surely for Himself, who is impassible, but for us to whom He has been given, that we may be proven to be the sons of God through Him. For a thing that is lost is not saved, not surely for itself, wherever it may be, it is necessary that it be; but for Him from whom it is lost.

(Vers. 6.) (Verse 6) Is your boasting good? No, it is not good; for they were joyful when they should have been more saddened by the brother's grievous sin, just as Samuel was grieved by Saul's sin. From this wrongdoing, evil teachers either concealed it or criticized it less diligently (just as the priest Eli did with his sons, who sinned against God), so that they would be loved by men. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? So too, one person's sin, which goes unnoticed, contaminates many. Indeed, all who are aware of it and do not avoid it, or who could expose it but choose to conceal it, are implicated. For it does not appear to be a sin to oneself when it is not censured or avoided by anyone.

(Vers. 7.) (Verse 7.) Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. This must be understood in two ways, because there is both the leaven of human doctrine, as the Savior says: Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:11), that is, of their doctrine. And in order to guard against bad doctrine, it is said for this reason, because when the fornicator is cast out, the old leaven is also cast out. But it is called old because it is the sin of ancient error. The new composition, however, is the doctrine of Christ. As you are

unleavened. Unleavened bread is so called because it is made from unfermented flour, when the children of Israel were expelled from Egypt; so that leaven would be considered old, but unleavened bread would be considered new. For they, having cast off the old errors of the Egyptians, were led to a new law; just as the Corinthians, after the errors of the pagans, were led to the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, he exhorts them to live according to the profession they had received from the Apostle under the name of Christ, and to be cultores of the new life: and this is to be unleavened. Our Passover, Christ, has been sacrificed. According to the Law, he teaches that the novelty of the Passover consists in this: Christ was killed so that a new preaching might make a new way of life. Since we observe the Passover, we should not follow the old life. Therefore, the Passover is a sacrifice, not a crossing over, as it seems to some. For the Passover came first, and thus the crossing over; for it is a model of the Savior and a sign of salvation. For not before the sign, but the cross; for in Egypt the children of Israel kept the passover in the evening, when they slew the lamb, and marked their door-posts with its blood; so that the passing Angel would not touch the places that had been sprinkled with the blood of the lamb (Exodus XII, 28).

(Vers. 8.) (Verse 8) Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, but with the leaven of sincerity and truth. For we have the joy of renewal, let us flee from the old things, casting away all impurity, which is corruption; because just as leaven corrupts the whole lump, so does a wicked life corrupt the whole person. Therefore, in order that we may not only guard against the shamefulness of life, but also from the desire for wickedness, he added: Not in the leaven of malice and wickedness, but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. This means that sincerity makes a clean life, and truth excludes all deceit.

(Vers. 9, 10)

(Vers. 9, 10) I wrote to you in the letter not to associate with fornicators. By saying 'I have written', he signifies that he had already warned them not to join themselves to evil men. And because they seemed not to have understood what he had written, he now interprets in this letter what he had written, saying: Not with the fornicators of this world, but that you should shun such brothers.

Either serving the greedy, or the rapacious, or idols; otherwise, you should have departed from this world. Therefore, it exposes their understanding, those who thought that perhaps he forbade them from the unbelievers, fornicators, or the greedy, or the rapacious, or those serving idols, not from the brothers; and therefore, they did not resent that he who had his father's wife was among them. So if you mix with these, he says, it would be better for you to die; for it is a saving for those who act wickedly, if they die sooner rather than remaining in sins longer.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But now I have written to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother if he is a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner - with such a person do not even eat. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person" (1 Corinthians 5:11-13). Ideo ait:

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For how can I judge those who are outside? It is true that a bishop cannot judge the unfaithful, but with regard to a brother in whom these vices are found, not only should he not receive the sacraments, but he should also not teach about common food, so that he may be ashamed and correct himself when he is avoided.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Do you not judge those who are inside? Let someone judge, while distinguishing to whom he should adhere as a brother, whom he should accuse, whom he should avoid. For those who are outside, God will judge. Above: Do not judge before the time, he says (I Cor. IV, 5); he does not prohibit it here. But earlier he strongly forbade judging unknown matters through suspicion, especially concerning a ruler, because it is only God's to judge hidden things; however, in this place, he also commands a brother to examine a brother (II Cor. XIII, 5), as he says elsewhere: Test yourselves if you are in the faith; prove yourselves (II Cor. XV, 5). But those who are outside will be condemned on the day of judgment; for the Lord has said: Those who do not believe are already judged (John 3:18). For where there is no hope, he should be considered as dead.

Remove evil from yourselves. Yet it remains, that good and evil deeds and people be distinguished.

Chapter VI.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Does anyone among you dare to bring a case against another before the unjust, and not before the saints? Unjust here signifies two kinds: those who do not believe and those who interpret the laws frequently given by God to the world with flattery, attributing authority to these idols and therefore being unjust; and also because in the Church the law is more present, where the fear of the Lord of the law is respected, it is better to bring a case before the ministers of God: for they more readily pronounce a true judgment from the fear of God.

(Vers. 2.) (Vers. 2.) Or, do you not know that the saints will judge this world? The Apostle says nothing in vain; he called it this world in order to show another; for even John the Apostle says (1 John 2:15): Do not love this world. And the Lord in the Gospel says: For God so loved the world, etc. (John 3:16). Therefore, this world is in error, not the higher one, to whose likeness it was made. Hence, man was placed in this world, made in the image of God, so that just as in the higher world all things come from one God, so in this world all might have their origin from one man. Hence it is that Moses, in Deuteronomy, says: 'When the Most High divided the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He appointed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the gods.' (Deut. XXXII, 18). What clearer proof can there be that this world is an image of the higher one and that it has a definite cause for its origin? For the earthly Jerusalem is the inferior one, whereas the heavenly one is our mother, as the same Apostle declares. (Galat. IV, 26). The earthly paradise, where man was placed, received him in order to work there and to guard it, as the Lord commanded (Gen. II, 8). And that celestial [man], in whom the Apostle was caught up, heard secret words (II Cor. XII, 2). Therefore the holy ones will judge this world: because by the example of their faith the unbelief of the world will be condemned. And if the world will be judged in us. Then this world will be judged in us, if the work of deceitful men is not found in

us. Therefore, such people are unworthy, who even judge the smallest things? That is, certainly those who are going to judge the world itself are not unworthy, to judge those things which belong to the world.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Do you not know that we will judge angels? Furthermore, he adds, saying: we will judge angels, that is, the spiritual powers, which he elsewhere states dwell in heavenly places, the same kind of angels that will be judged by us, as the world will be judged.

(Vers. 4, 5.) (Vers. 4, 5.) Therefore, if you have secular judgments, appoint those who are contemptible in the Church to judge them. Secular judgments are those pertaining to the body or physical matters. And because it should not be done this way, he added: I speak with reverence to you. Not because he mentioned a matter above, but which he did not specify; for there are also divine matters, as the same person says: Assistant to my business (Rom. XVI, 2). And perhaps the secular judgments, because he had prohibited them from being done among the wicked, although they heard that they should be heard or resolved by anyone in the Church; to their shame, he says: Appoint those who are contemptible in the Church to judge them. For there are both wood and earthen vessels in the Church; for by the former, he hath signified the indocile and inconsiderate among the brethren, that they might perchance choose ignorant men for their judges. This the Apostle learned by experience; for often had he found them lukewarm and unprudent in other matters. So there is no wise person among you who can judge between his brothers? Therefore, says he, let wise brothers be chosen to judge, whose judgment the world may admire. For it is a great shame if among those who are said to have known God, there is not found one who can examine the matter according to the Gospel law. But he says that a brother should be chosen as a judge because their church leader had not yet been ordained.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) But the brother contends with the brother in judgment, and this among the unbelievers. It is clear that he signifies that the unbelievers either requested arbitrators, as is accustomed to be done, or a public judge, to whom it is said: Today is a day of religious observance, it cannot be called a court day.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Now indeed there is altogether a fault among you, because you have lawsuits with one another. To be a fault means that a brother disputes with a brother, when it ought to be done to work together, so that they may be in harmony, as if they were brothers; especially when our faith strives for peace. For even though a Christian ought not to dispute, yet if something serious and that cannot be disregarded occurs, let him bring the matter to the Church; so that he may not both incur a loss at present, and perhaps cause offense.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) Why do you not receive more injustice? Why do you not receive more fraud? But you commit injustice and defraud, and this against your brothers. Now you rebuke these, whose injustice generates strife; for not only are they guilty of the fraud committed, but they also share in the wrongdoing of those who, compelled by their injustice or fraud, ask the unfaithful to judge: and

when they should not seek to pursue the fraud or injustices suffered, not only do they seek revenge, but they themselves commit fraud and injustice, so as to provide examples to be punished for their brothers. And what is believed to be done by someone who does not spare his own?

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) Do you not know that the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God? By saying this, he shows that they are not unknowingly sinning, and therefore they must be punished more severely. For if they are merciless before God, how much more so the unjust? Do not be deceived; for neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. He did not mention these things as if they were unaware, among whom he spent a year and six months, teaching the Gospel of God; but he warned, in order to restore reverence for the Law to them, and the merit for the kingdom of heaven (Acts 18:11).

(Vers. 11.) (Verse 11) And indeed you were this. In order that it would not seem to attribute this to everyone or certainly make everyone immune from these crimes if he remained silent (for he seemed to prohibit, not to reveal their crimes), therefore he says thus: And indeed you were this. And in order not to provoke them to anger, he added: But you have been cleansed; so that upon recognizing the crimes of the guilty, they might immediately breathe a sigh of relief upon hearing: But you have been cleansed. For some people are accustomed to feeling shame and correcting themselves when they hear good things said about them. But you have been sanctified, but you have been justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God. All these benefits of purity are realized in baptism, which is the foundation of the gospel truth. For there, with all sins deposited, the believer is washed, and justified in the name of the Lord, and through the Spirit of our God, becomes an adopted son of God. Through this, it reminds them of the greatness and quality of the grace they have obtained through the true tradition. But afterwards, going against this rule of faith by the urging of evil teachers, they laid off these benefits. Whereby it acts to bring them back to the true and original opinion; so that they may recover what they had achieved.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial. It seems that the Apostle said this because of the freedom of choice granted to him: Everything is permissible for me, etc.; so that it is allowed to commit fornication, but it is not expedient. But how can something that is prohibited be allowed? Or certainly, if everything is permissible, nothing can be called unlawful. But it is allowed, but not expedient. These things are whispered rather than asserted, either because of forgetfulness or negligence. For John the Baptist said to Herod: It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife (Mark 6:18). But John, perhaps devoid of human eloquence, was inspired in the womb; for if this is the case, he should have said: It is allowed for you, but it is not expedient. And likewise, the Lord said to the Canaanite woman: It is not allowed to take the bread of the children and give it to the dogs (Matthew 15:16). And again, the Lord said to the Jews: Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, how he entered into the house of God and took the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, etc. So, everything that is prohibited is not allowed; and everything that is not allowed is prohibited: but sometimes, with the help of a certain

reason, it is allowed, but not advisable.

I am allowed to do anything, but I will not be controlled by anyone. Everything is allowed for him, namely, what was allowed for his co-apostles, what is contained in natural law, not Moses' law; because Moses prohibited many things because of the hardness of the unbelieving and stubborn people's hearts (Matthew 19:8). However, if you consider the context, the Apostle meant something else when he said this; he said this in anticipation of a specific situation he would later address, just as he did with the person who committed incest; for he presents and indicates what he would do later. Finally, immediately after briefly recommending the matters at hand to his superior, he returns to the higher sense. He said this for the following reason: because it was allowed for him to receive support from them. But since he knew that the false apostles sought an opportunity to receive, he did not want to receive from them, lest the strength of evangelical truth be weakened by the appearance of a greedy stomach. For if he were to receive from those whom he was accusing of such great vices, he would be submitting the authority of his teaching granted to him by the Lord; for one cannot be steadfastly accused by one from whom he receives, especially since he is ready to give in order to humble his superior. And thus he says: But I should be brought under the power of no one.

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13) Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy both one and the other. The destruction of the stomach is when the act of eating ceases: but the destruction of food will only occur when the act of giving birth ceases. However, the false apostles, who were not interested in religion but in profit, did not want to be loved by sinners. But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord. Now it returns to a higher meaning: And the Lord for the body. What is the Lord for the body? It implies that He will bestow immortality upon the resurrected body; for a body dedicated to God will be rewarded with the spiritual gift by the merit of its leader, that is, the soul.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) But God both raised up the Lord and will raise us up by His power. This is the same meaning which He wanted to confirm by the example of the Lord's resurrection; for the power of God is Christ, by which He will raise us up and Himself the Lord. He said this because the Lord Himself raised up His body, just as He Himself said: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But He said this about the temple of His body (John 2:19).

(Vers. 15.)

(Ver. 15.) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Our bodies are the members of Christ, but in the new man, who was created according to God; for he is the head of the Church. Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Certainly not (Ephesians 4:24). He says, Certainly not, because the members clinging to a prostitute cease to be members of Christ.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is said, the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her. Sexual immorality joins them together as one, just as in nature, two become one. As it is written, 'They shall become one

flesh' (Genesis 2:24). It is clear that because the woman is from the man, both are one flesh.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But the one who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. For in those who do good, the Spirit of God is shared with God and with humans.

(Vers. 18.) (Verse 18.) Flee from fornication. It rightly warns that fornication should be avoided, through which the sons of God become the sons of the devil. Every sin that a person commits is outside the body. For although other sins are generated through the body, they do not bind and subject the soul to the carnal desire, as the act of sexual intercourse does, which binds the soul to the body to such an extent that in that very moment it is permissible for a man to think or intend nothing else; for the plunge and absorption of lust and carnal desire subject the very mind itself, making it captive. Unde subditur: But whoever commits fornication sins against his own body. It shows that this sin is very grave because from it the whole body decays; whereas in other sins, a portion is lost, not the whole. For the body is the whole of man and woman; because the woman is the portion of the man. For whoever commits another sin, sins outside himself; but the fornicator sins against his own flesh. Now, if someone were to end their life by hanging or kill themselves with a dagger, it would not seem that they are sinning against their own body, but against the soul to which they are doing harm. But fornication is a corporal sin, which affects both the body and the soul: for it is not without the desire of the flesh, since the flesh has its own motion, and the soul desires to sin in the flesh; although it can do nothing without the soul. Therefore, by sinning in the flesh, which is its source, it is said to sin in its own body; so that it may cease from fornication, as if sparing itself. Nevertheless, here Novatian, who commits fornication, seems to sin not in his own body, but in Christ's; for he pronounces it differently, so that he also says that he who commits fornication sins against the Holy Spirit: on account of the reason by which he is cut off from the Church. This cannot be explained by any reason; for the body of Christ is not one or two Christians, but all, while each one is a member. Therefore, someone who commits fornication sins against the body of Christ, even though he does not contaminate all. If it were so, as it seems to Novatian, all other sins would be outside God, and only fornication would be a sin against God. Even someone who goes to idols does not sin against God, nor does someone who denies it in persecution; for every sin that a person commits is outside the body of Christ, as it seems to them. But if someone wants to pronounce it differently, so as to deny that any sin outside of the body of Christ exists, they will be forced to say that every sin they commit is a sin against God and against the Holy Spirit, so that even a thief, a perjurer, and a liar are said to sin against the Holy Spirit. And how is that, which the Lord says: All sins and blasphemies will be forgiven men; but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit shall never have forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come (Matt. XII, 31)? It is evident, except for other sins, that there is another sin called the sin against the Holy Spirit. Some also think that the reason a person is said to sin against their own body when they commit fornication is because they are a member of the Church. By contaminating themselves, they sin against the Church, of which they are a member. Therefore, it must be said to someone who is a member of the Church, when they commit fornication, that they are not sinning against themselves, but against the Church. Furthermore, the Apostle says that when someone commits fornication, by acting against their own portion, they sin against their own body.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Do you not know that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? As stated earlier (1 Corinthians 3:16), it is said that our bodies are the temple of God, and here it is called the temple of the Holy Spirit; because in its essence, the Spirit is what God is. He said this, therefore, that we may keep our bodies undefiled, so that the Holy Spirit may dwell in us.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) And you are not your own; for you were bought with a great price. It is evident that one who is bought is not his own master, but of him who bought him, so that he may not do his own will, but the will of the one who bought him. And because we were bought at a dear price, we should serve our Lord more willingly; lest, being offended, He who redeemed us should deliver us back to death. For with what a dear price He bought us, that He should give His own blood for us.

Clarify and carry God in your body. This is to clarify and carry God in the body, so that we may walk according to His law; for through His law, He Himself is seen in us. To carry God, however, is to display the image of God in good actions.

Chapter VII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) However, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Stirred up by the corrupt minds of false apostles, who were teaching that marriage should be spurned through hypocrisy, so that they might seem more pure than others, they were inquiring about this through a letter from the Apostle. For since they were not pleased with this opinion, they pass over the rest and ask only this. To whom, however, he responds that it is indeed good not to touch a woman, although they do not affirm it simply.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) However, because of fornication, that is, so that nothing against the law may be committed, since when something is not prohibited by law, it is avoided; let each one have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. For those who seek expedience often err. For how could it be possible for these people, whom he finds in such great vices, to abstain from their wives? Therefore, he does not allow them, lest, abstaining from lawful things, they presume to engage in forbidden things, as the Manichaeans do.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Vers. 3, 4.) The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. They should submit to one another in this matter, for they are one body and their will should be united according to the law of nature. A woman does not have authority over her own body, but her husband does; likewise, a man does not have authority over his own body, but his wife does. This means that neither the husband nor the wife should give their bodies to someone else, for they are indebted to each other in this matter and should not give room for sin.

(Vers. 5.) (Verse 5) Do not defraud one another. This is said in order to agree with them in the matter of marriage, so that disagreement does not lead to fornication. Except by agreement for a limited time; that is, they should abstain from physical relations due to thanksgiving. So that you may have time for prayer. Although prayer should be constant, this meditation must be done every day; however, it commands that they devote time specifically to prayer, with intervals set aside for pleasing the Lord; for he must be appeased, and the spouse must be pure. Although marriages may be pure, one must still abstain from lawful things in order to more easily bring one's prayer to effect. For even those who desire to be sanctified by the law, among other things, would also abstain from raisins, by the command of the Lord; so that they might become holier (Num. VI, 4). For when someone refrains even from what is allowed, they show that they wish to receive what they pray for. And again, return to that same thing. Since the advice is given to spouses after days of prayer that they should return to natural use: Lest Satan tempt you because of your intemperance; he warns that you should abstain for intervening days, so that no opportunity is given to the devil, as Peter the apostle says: Behold the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. V, 8). For if the reason for creating children is leading the wife, it seems that not much time is granted for that use; because both feast days and procession days, and the very nature of conception and childbirth, according to the law, show that these times should be set aside.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verses 6, 7.) But I say this according to indulgence, not according to command. It is clear therefore that he gives this counsel, so that he may exclude fornication, not so that he may close off the way for those striving toward a better life. Moreover, I wanted all people to be as I myself am. Therefore, as far as it concerns a kind and caring teacher, he wanted all such people, if it were possible, to be as himself. However, he soon shows what kind of person he himself was in the following passages: But each person has their own gift from God, one indeed in this way, another in that way; that is, each person has a gift from God according to their own desire, so that if they wish, by the will of God, they may attain the ability. Therefore, no one should be constrained; lest, prohibited from what is lawful, he admits what is unlawful: but let him choose for himself what he will follow.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) Now, I say to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they remain as I am. But he would not say it is good for the unmarried to be as I am, unless he was whole in body. Nor would he say, I wanted all men to be like myself, if he had a wife, and he said this, not wanting to be unmarried. But far be it; for he has served in this way from his youth, so that he did not have a desire for this matter; indeed, since he was a young man, he was preoccupied with God's grace. After he said that everyone has their own gift from God, he showed in what matter it is better to be more inclined; because one is aided in that which one seems to desire with the eagerness of the mind.

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9.) But if they cannot restrain themselves, let them marry. In this matter, he wants them to strive for self-control, so that they may remain unmarried. But if they see that they cannot persevere due to the impulses of the flesh, since they are not more capable in this matter to be helped by God; for God helps the one whom He sees striving with all his strength: they should

certainly marry, if they fear burning. Perhaps they will be able to obtain this afterwards; for once the obstacle is removed, the will repairs itself with a stronger virtue. For it is better to marry than to burn. He did not say this: It is better to marry than to burn, as if it were good to burn, therefore it is better to marry; but he followed tradition. For we are accustomed to say: It is better to make a profit than to suffer a loss. But to burn is to be driven or conquered by desires; for when the will gives in to the heat of the flesh, it burns: for illustrious and perfect men, it is to suffer desires and not to be conquered.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Vers. 10, 11.) But to those who are married, I do not give this command, but the Lord. After speaking to the unmarried and widows, he speaks to those who are married, in the words of the Lord: A wife should not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. However, if a man should apostatize or seek to pervert the use of his wife, no other woman can marry him, nor can she return to him. And the man shall not dismiss his wife. It is understood, however, that this exception applies only in cases of fornication. And therefore, he did not add, as he did concerning the woman: if she departs, let her remain so; because a man is permitted to marry another woman if he dismisses his wife for sinning, for a man is not bound by the law as a woman is; for the man is the head of the woman.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For to the rest I say, not the Lord. This he said to show what the Lord commanded with his own mouth, and what he permitted to this authority, because the Lord speaks through him. For he says: Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me (2 Corinthians 13:3).

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. And if any woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. This is because in the beginning, when they were both heathens, it often happened that one of them would convert. And because they feared the corrupt worship of the false gods, as well as the contamination of their past errors, he instructs them that if they were content to live with the unchanged, they should also be content to be faithful to them.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the faithful wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the faithful husband. Their union demonstrates the benefit of good will, because they do not have a horror of the name of Christ. And it belongs to the protection of hospitality, in which

the sign of the cross is made, by which death is conquered; for it is sanctification.

Otherwise, your children would be unclean. Their children would be unclean if they willingly lived with them and formed relationships with others; for they would be adulterers, and as a result, their children would be illegitimate; therefore unclean. But now they are holy. They are holy because they were born from lawful marriages and because they were born under the reverence of the Creator, more inclined on their part. Just as whatever is done through the dedication of idols is unclean, so whatever is done under the profession of the Creator God is holy.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) But if the unbeliever departs, let them depart. The purpose of the religion is preserved by instructing that Christians should not abandon their marriages. But if the unbeliever departs out of hatred for God, the faithful will not be guilty of dissolving the marriage; for the cause of God is greater than that of marriage.

(28, q. 2, c. If the unbeliever.) For a brother or sister is not subject to slavery in this regard. That is, the reverence of marriage is not owed to one who detests the author of marriage; for marriage is not valid without devotion to God. Therefore, it is not a sin for one who is abandoned for the sake of God, if they join with someone else. For the contempt of the Creator dissolves the rights of marriage with regard to the one who is abandoned, so that they may not accuse the one who is joined with another. However, someone who departs in disbelief is considered to sin against both God and marriage; because they did not want to have a conjugal relationship under the devotion to God. Therefore, faithfulness in marriage is not required of them, because they left in order to avoid hearing that the author of marriage is the God of Christians. For if Ezra allowed his wives or husbands to be dismissed to appease God and not be angry, so that they could marry others of their own kind, it is not commanded that they should not at all marry again after being dismissed. How much more, then, if someone departs in disbelief, will they have the freedom to marry a spouse according to their own law if they wish? For that marriage should not be imputed which is made outside of God's decree: but when one knows and regrets that they have sinned, they correct themselves in order to deserve forgiveness. But if both believe, they confirm the marriage through the knowledge of God. But God has called us to peace. Indeed, it is true that one should not strive with one who departs; for he who departs is departing from God, and thus is not to be considered worthy.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) For what do you know, woman, if you will save the man? Or how do you know, man, if you will save the woman? He says this because perhaps those who do not abhor the name of Christ can believe.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) Unless to each person as God has divided. The Lord has divided to each person when they are saved, that is, He knows when they are able to believe and sustains them. And here He teaches that they should be awaited and that no offense should be taken from them, because their hope must be guarded; for if they should depart, they should be tolerated in silence.

Let each one remain in the condition in which he was called. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise, whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God. As I teach in all the churches, so I urge you also to do the same. Teach others this faith so that when they hear it being taught by others, they will be able to understand it more easily. It is easier for someone to be persuaded if they see that others are in agreement.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Has someone been called who is circumcised? Let him not try to remove the foreskin. This is what he said, that he should walk as he has been called; so that a Jew who becomes a Christian does not consider himself unworthy because he does not have a foreskin, giving glory to the foreskin. Who has been called in a foreskin? Let him not be circumcised. So that a Gentile who is called does not think he should be circumcised, because he hears that the sons of Abraham are preferred. For they are not preferred because they are circumcised, but because of Abraham's merit, whose sons they are in both cases, if they believe; if not, they will be worse off than the Gentiles; for it is worse to have been and not be, than to have never been.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing. It is evident that it neither harms nor benefits. But keeping God's commandments, that is, faith, makes God propitious if it is approved by good works.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) Let each person remain in the vocation to which they are called. This is confirmed by what was said above. Are you a slave? Do not worry about it. But if you can become free, make use of it even more. He encourages the servant to serve well out of fear of God, so that he may make himself worthy of freedom. Otherwise, if he were to be careless about doing good acts for his earthly master, the doctrine of Christ would be blasphemed, and he would not deserve God's reward. Because the Lord said: Whoever is faithful in little, is faithful also in much (Luke 16:10).

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) For whoever is called a servant in the Lord is a freedman of the Lord. Indeed, being delivered from the sins that truly prove one to be a slave, he becomes a freedman; for he is an absolute slave who acts foolishly, just as it pleased the ancients who called all wise men free, but all foolish men slaves. Hence, Solomon also says: 'To the wise servant, they shall serve as free' (Prov. 7:2). Therefore, whoever believes, even if he is a servant for a time, because he does a wise thing by believing in Christ, he becomes a freedman of the Lord. So if sins make slaves, just as Cham, the son of Noah, became a slave on account of sin and foolishness; when someone

receives the forgiveness of sins, they are set free.

Similarly, whoever is called a free person is a slave of Christ. He who has come from being a free person to becoming a slave of Christ: for he was free from God, which is a great crime. And therefore, having lost bitter and contrary freedom, he has obtained a condition that is advantageous, as the Lord says: 'Take my yoke upon you, for it is sweet; and my burden, for it is light' (Matthew 11:19). He has cut off pride and made unity; so that neither should the slave consider himself despised by the shame of his condition, nor should the free person, inflated with the exaltation of his mind, put himself above the slave.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) You were bought at a price, do not become slaves of men. It is true, because we were bought at such a high price that we could not be redeemed by anyone except by Christ, who is rich in all things. Therefore, whoever is bought at a price should serve more, in order to somewhat repay the buyer. Those who are bought from God, that is, from Christ, should not be slaves of men. However, those who subject themselves to human superstitions are slaves of men. The Apostle also mentions what he condemns at the beginning of the letter, because they say: I am of Paul: and another: I am of Apollos (I Cor. I, 12). However, he gave an article stating that Christ is to be confessed as God; when he showed that the servants of Christ are not to be called servants of man.

(Vers. 24.)

(Ver. 24.) Let each brother remain in the state in which he was called before God. This is what he said before, and to emphasize it, he repeats it.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) But concerning virgins, I have no command from the Lord. This is my response to their writings, as I have said before: About those things you wrote to me, etc. (Chapter 7, verse 1). However, I give advice, as one who has received mercy from the Lord, to be faithful. He denies having received a command regarding virgins, because as the author of marriage, he could not impose a disadvantageous thing against marriage, lest he accuse his own previous action. But he says, I give advice: not because it is displeasing or tainted with flattery; for he has obtained grace for this, to be capable in giving wholesome advice.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Therefore, I believe this to be good because of present necessity; for it is best for a person to be this way. He says that it is good to remain a virgin. And to show this more clearly, because of present necessity he says; for it is best, so that nothing so excellent and useful could be known to exist between good and best, as virginity; for it not only teaches that virginity is more commendable before God, but also in present life, since it is ignorant of the temporal needs suffered by marriage; and it is ignorant of the sorrows of childbirth, as well as the bereavement of children. So, in order to encourage this, it teaches that those who love it should profit from the destruction of present necessity, so that, having learned that this place is not only better with God, but also desirable in the present, they would pursue it with all effort. For there is only one thing that struggles, that it may overcome the desire of the flesh and be free in all other things. For since the

flesh is pleasant and sweet in its origin and nature, its indulgence seems delightful, and therefore to conquer it is a glory that does not come quickly.

(Vers. 27.) (Verse 27) Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek a release. These are the advices of remedies; for he says that no one should be freed from his wife except for reasons of adultery. For frequently those who dismiss their own wives, under the cover of abstinence, deceive others, with their intentions cooling off. But if he wishes to live harmoniously with his wife, let him encourage her, so that they may live more purely without scandal. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. So, knowing this, it is more acceptable to God and free from necessity, not to seek a wife; but nevertheless, to moderate oneself from others. If, however, what advantage is there in suppressing the desire of the flesh, that is, to reject what is permissible and subject oneself to things that are illicit?

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) But if you marry, you have not sinned. And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

However, the afflictions of the flesh will have things of this nature. That is, even though they are free from sin; in this life, however, they will have afflictions, the groaning of the belly, the nourishment of children, food, clothing, dowries, sickness, the care of the house, the necessity of a wife, the authority of a husband. But I spare you. He spares when he is more provoked by these things, which exclude the tribulations of the flesh and the mentioned anxieties. It can seem like sparing, when he allows and does not contradict those who want, what he shows to be burdensome.

(Vers. 29.) (Verse 29.) Therefore, I say, brothers, the time is shortened, and what remains is little. By saying 'shortened time' and 'what remains,' he indicated that the end of the world is imminent, although he knew that there was still some time left. But he should not have written differently because of those who will read these things at that time when very little time remains, so that they would not always think that the day of judgment is far off or that they would not fear or think it to be false. However, what is said, when it is still far off, greatly benefits by causing fear and prompting people to live a better life. Finally, here in the present, those who have matters to attend to before the judges are very anxious when the day of the trial is said to be imminent. This here signifies what he says elsewhere, both deceitful and true (II Cor. VI, 8). And those who have wives should be as if they had none. For since the end of the world is near, they should not be anxious to procreate, nor dedicated to even using them: so that they may be more inclined and vigilant in divine works, exercised in the care of the Law, resisting in the imminent battle. For there will be hardships unlike any before, and many will fall into the snare of the devil. Ultimately, none of us want these pressures to come upon us in our time, fearing the aforementioned pressures foretold by the Savior. (Matthew 24:15 and following). Therefore, as we wish and advise ourselves, let us also advise others, to abstain from the generation of many children, being more subject to prayer and the service of God, foreseeing the day of judgment, lest we be unprepared by the obstacles of present necessity, and they incur what we fear. Therefore, the faithful also want to refrain from what is lawful, so that they may not only appear innocent but also glorious. For it is a great virtue to let what is permitted pass, and it is not far from desiring what is forbidden.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30) And those who weep, as if not weeping; for they know that the end of the world is near, and soon there will be comfort for those who are oppressed for the sake of God's justice, so they console each other with this hope. And those who rejoice, as if not rejoicing; for those who rejoice in the present know that sorrow will soon come, especially for those who find joy in the world, doubting God's judgment. And those who buy, as if not possessing; for those who buy believe that there is little time left in the world, so they act as if they do not invest all their care in something that will quickly perish; rather, they take greater care of their souls, knowing that they are eternal.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) And those who use this world, as if they were not using it: that is, so as not to presume about its use; because it will quickly perish, with the world falling apart. For the form of this world is passing away. He said that the world will come to an end, showing that its form is passing away; and this is its end, that is, not the substance of it passing away, but the form. Therefore, if the form of the world perishes, undoubtedly all things that are in the world will perish. It passes away, because the world grows old every day.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32) I want you to be without worry. For with less concern for worldly matters, one is more diligently attentive to God's affairs. However, how we can be without worry is shown when he says: He who is without a wife, thinks about the things of the Lord. For with the absence of concern for marital matters, which are more burdensome than others in the world, the mind is trained to merit God: if indeed the mind sheds itself of these troubles with the hope of serving God more.

(Vers. 33.) (Verse 33.) But he who is with a wife is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife. For the care of the wife and the thought of children is of the world: for among other things, they sometimes admit things to be punished; lest they offend them, as Zorobabel, one of the chamberlains of Artaxerxes, relates (Ezra 4:13): for there is great bitterness in a house with a sad wife. Therefore, he is said to be divided, because he cannot devote himself to divine matters and do the will of his wife. A woman is distinct from a virgin. They are distinct not by nature, but by action; because we read in Numbers that women are called virgins (Num. 31:9). Therefore, the concerns of a woman are different from those of a virgin; but when we say woman, it is uncertain what it signifies unless the meaning follows; but when we say virgin, the expression is clear. Here the Apostle placed virgin after woman, in order to signify a woman who is not a virgin: by this, he wanted to show that a virgin is free from the troubles and labors that a woman experiences when united with a man.

(Vers. 34.)

(Verse 34) For the unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; that is, in mind. For while she does not take on the care of a husband and children with the hope of heavenly things, she thinks about how to keep her dedicated purpose to God, if indeed, while she sets aside earthly things in her impure body, she seeks after heavenly things. For it is the mind that either sanctifies or pollutes the body. For what

profit is there in having a clean body but a defiled soul? For the soul is either honored or condemned in its deserved state: But the married woman is concerned about the things of this world, about how to please her husband. For, being bound by marital duties, she is concerned about how to fulfill the rights of marital duty, subject to worldly necessities.

(Vers. 35.)

(Verse 35) But I say this for your own benefit; not to lay a snare for you, but for what is honorable. Because it seems harsh and burdensome to some, that which is more useful or better due to the temporary nature of habit; therefore, after giving a reasoned argument, he urges with the affection of charity that this is more useful, this is more honorable. It is honorable because it is holy and pure; it is useful because it is more worthy before God, and light in the world. So what shall we say? If virgins think about God, and married women think about the world, what hope is left for those who marry in God? If this is the case, there is doubt about their salvation: for we see virgins thinking about the world and being joined in marriage working on the Lord's works. Sanctity will not be imputed to these virgins by God, and rewards will be given to these marriages by God; because even though they were bound by earthly and bodily ties, they have worked to deserve something of eternal reward in the future. But to those not only will virginity not be imputed, but they will also be subjected to punishment, who, under the cover of a better hope, have made themselves lazy in performing the works of God, occupying their life and behavior with worldly cares and anxieties; as the prophet Jeremiah says: Cursed is he who does the works of God negligently (Jeremiah 48:10). These are the ones of whom it is said in another letter: Having a form of godliness, but denying its power (2 Timothy 3:5). But the Apostle speaks to those who desire to obey the heavenly precepts with marvelous devotion, showing and teaching by what short-cut one can more quickly reach God; for he who wishes to remain a virgin for the sake of winning God, knowing what reward he can receive, restrains himself from what is lawful, in order to become better; at the same time, he despises all the hindrances of the flesh, not ignorant that these are the things which hold back the steps of the one running, like the weight of chains.

(Vers. 36.)

(Verse 36) But if any man sees himself as above his virgin, if she is beyond puberty, it should be done in this way: let him do what he wishes, he does not sin if he marries. For earlier he encouraged keeping virginity and continence with a given reason, so that marriages almost seem useless and to be rejected in comparison to them: now, lest he be thought to deny marriage, he shows that a virgin does not sin if she marries; but he undertakes a matter of great labor, which does not have a reward before God, just as it does not have a punishment; for he wants Christians to be better in every way. Therefore, if there is any desire for marriage, it is better for her, already mature, to marry publicly according to the allowed law, rather than engage in shameful acts secretly and be embarrassed by them.

(Vers. 37.)

(Verse 37.) For he who has made up his mind and stands firm in his heart, not under compulsion but with the power of his own will, and has determined in his heart to keep his own virgin, does well. So then, he who gives his virgin in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better. A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies,

she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

(Vers. 38.)

(Verse 38) Likewise, he who gives his virgin in marriage does well. He does well because he is allowed to do what he does. And he who does not give her in marriage does better. He does better because he places merit with God and frees her from worldly concerns.

(Vers. 39.)

(Verse 39.) A woman is bound by law as long as her husband lives. This is said in order to teach that a woman, even if she is separated from her husband, does not have permission to marry. But if her husband dies, she is set free. These things also pertain to the aforementioned reasons, in order to show how blessed a virgin is, as she is subject only to God. For it seems to overcome natural subjection when that which has been humbled by nature is raised up. To whom she wishes to marry, she shall only marry in the Lord: that is, she shall marry whoever she deems suitable for herself; for forced marriages tend to have bad outcomes. Only in the Lord, meaning that she shall marry without any suspicion of impropriety, and she shall marry a man of her own faith: that is, she shall marry in the Lord.

(Vers. 40.)

(Verse 40.) However, he will be happier, if he remains in this state, according to my advice. When he says above, he marries, he speaks according to natural law; although the first marriages are from God, but second marriages are allowed. Finally, the first marriages are celebrated sublimely under the blessing of God; but the second marriages lack glory even in the present; they are allowed due to lack of self-control: and because younger widows tend to fall into it; and for this reason he allows second marriages. But because it is better to restrain oneself; so that one may be more worthy in the future, he gives a preeminent counsel with spiritual reason, to restrain oneself. For I also have the Spirit of God; so that he may show his firm and provident counsel, he commends this with humility of word and deep meaning.

Chapter VIII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) But concerning those things which are sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Now concerning knowledge, he speaks: what knowledge is, he does not immediately say, but he shows it in the context, saying that an idol is nothing.

Knowledge puffs up. It is clear that someone who has knowledge may boast in themselves, not outwardly, because they are wise, or in their own thoughts. For this is the nature of knowledge, to boast in itself, therefore it puffs up. But love builds up. Therefore, knowledge is great and beneficial to oneself if it is humbled by love, so that it may increase even more. For it is restrained by love, so that it may not be purely self-serving and intoxicate the one who possesses it, causing them to exalt themselves. Just as wine, when not mixed with water, confuses the mind; so too, knowledge makes one proud, unless it is tempered. For all things alone are tasteless and harmful; for neither can bread alone be eaten well, nor are the other foods pleasing without the addition, but harmful; therefore, charity builds. Charity itself may be called by one word, but it consists of many;

for without patience it cannot be, nor without humility, nor without the simplicity of the heart. Therefore, they were puffed up by knowledge, because there is no idol, who were eating the meats sacrificed against the salvation of ignorant brethren, knowing that it is allowed to eat meat; and because there is no idol, therefore the one eating is not defiled. There were scandals among the brothers, who did not have charity before their eyes; for it was easier for them to despise the flesh than to cause scandal to their brothers. For their knowledge was destroying the minds of ignorant brothers, who thought that there was some grace there with the idol; when they saw that more knowledgeable brothers were participating there and did not seem to be horrified. Therefore, he says: Charity builds up; so that, seeking the salvation of their brothers, they would not use their knowledge according to the laws there, lest they cause scandal to them.

Version 2.) But if anyone thinks that they know anything, they do not yet know how they ought to know. It shows that those who boast in knowledge do not actually know it as they ought to. For while they do not pursue charity, which is the mother of all goods, they do not know it as they should. Therefore, in order for knowledge to bear fruit, it must submit to charity.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But if someone loves God, he is known by Him. He loves God, who for the sake of charity lessens knowledge, in order to benefit his brother, for whom Christ died.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) Therefore, concerning the offerings of sacrificed food to idols. Now he discusses the cause itself, to show that through knowledge and without charity, not only does it not profit, but it also harms. We know that an idol is nothing, and that there is no God but one. It is true; for among Christians there is only one God.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) There are those who are called gods and lords, whether in heaven or on earth. For among the pagans, the sun, moon, and other stars are called celestial gods; on earth, Apollo, Asclepius, Hercules, and Minerva are called gods and lords.

(Vers. 6.)

(Ver. 6.) But to us there is one God the Father, from whom are all things, and we in him. For all things are from him, and we are in him. But when he says, "And we in him," he distinguishes us from others who are also from him but are not yet in him because they do not yet believe. And there is one Lord Jesus, through whom are all things, and we through him. For all things are indeed from the Father, but are created through the Son. But when he says, "And we through him," he means that we are reformed through him, through whom we were created, signifying that in the knowledge of God, having been made by him along with others, we have recognized through him the mystery of the one God after the astonishment of our mind and ignorance. Therefore He called God Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ His Son, that because God cannot but be Lord, in like manner the Lord also might be understood to be God, one God and Lord, by the preservation of the one principle.

(Vers. 7.) (Verse 7.) But not everyone has knowledge. That is, not all believers know the mystery of the one God; therefore, some think that those who believe in something worship idols. For some still eat with their conscience the idol as if it were a sacrificed image. For some of the common people still eat with reverence the image of the sacrificed, as if there were some divinity there. And the conscience of others, being weak, is defiled. The conscience is defiled if it is weak concerning God.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) However, food does not commend us to God. It is true that we will not please God just because we eat everything; nor will we offend Him if we despise certain things. For whether we eat or not, we will not lack anything. For even if the food of sacrifices is despised, it does not mean that there will be a shortage of what can be eaten; but if it is taken, it will not be excessive, to the point that it is not needed: and for this reason, it should be rejected; because living without it would not be a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) However, be careful that your liberty does not become an opportunity for the weak to stumble. In other words, do not let your ability to eat meat sacrificed to idols cause offense to your brothers and sisters who do not yet understand that idols are nothing.

(Vers. 10.)

(Ver. 10.) For if anyone sees him who has knowledge sitting in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) And will the weak brother perish in your knowledge, for whom Christ died? The weak brother will perish if he goes against the faith of the one God concerning what is sacrificed. Indeed, these are words of one who is angered and they show what evil knowledge can produce if it is not tempered by charity. In your knowledge: that is, your expertise causes him to be destroyed; when he sees that you do something that he understands differently. And you will be the cause of the death of a brother whom Christ allowed Himself to be crucified to redeem. And through this it is sometimes necessary to hide knowledge for the sake of charity; because without a doubt the salvation of a brother is more important than food: because although it is allowed, it is not expedient. It will be necessary to have known this, as it is necessary to know.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Thus, when sinning against our brothers and striking their weak conscience, we sin against Christ. For when they are not jealous of charity, by which Christ has freed us, they sin against Christ, not against Christ himself; because to sin against Christ is to deny Christ, but to sin against Christ is to sin against what belongs to Christ. Just as someone under the Law is said to sin in the Law, so too those who are under Christ are said to sin in Christ.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Because of this, if my food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble. He teaches that charity should be pursued to such an extent that things that are permitted are considered unlawful, so as not to hinder our brother. For it is such a great evil to not sin by doing what is unlawful, and to offend through what is permitted. Should the law not be observed in what is unlawful, and yet be blindly followed in what is permitted? For the law permits what it allows, but with the condition that it be done in moderation. Certainly, it is allowed to have a wife, but if she has committed adultery, she must be dismissed: likewise, it is allowed to eat meat, but if it has been offered to idols, it must be rejected.

Chapter IX.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen our Lord Jesus? While he appears to deny, he affirms; for he speaks in anger. He proves himself to be an apostle, for he was sent to the Gentiles, as the Lord said to him: 'I will send you to the Gentiles' (Acts 22:21). He also shows himself to be free, for he desired nothing from anyone, nor did he teach in flattery. And he has seen our Lord Jesus, while he was praying in the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 22:18). Is not my work in the Lord? Therefore they are working because he himself planted them in the Lord, preaching the word of God to them for a year and six months.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) Although I am not an apostle to others, I am certainly an apostle to you; for I was denied apostleship by the Jews who believed and still observed the Law. For he taught that circumcision is no longer necessary and that the Sabbath should not be observed. But to avoid causing offense to others, the other apostles chose not to openly disagree with him in this matter. Therefore, he was denied apostleship by them. For he was an apostle to those who witnessed the signs of his power in him. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord; for it is by preaching this that they have been converted from idols to the faith of the one God.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) This is my defense before those who question me. Now he begins to argue the case, which he previously introduced saying: 'All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.' Food for the stomach and the stomach for food (1 Corinthians 6:12). Thus, he begins this case by saying: 'This is my defense before those who question me.' And he adds what it is, saying:

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verses 4, 5.) Do we not have the power to eat and drink? This is what he said: 'All things are lawful for me.' Do we not have the power to lead about a sister as well, as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Therefore he added: 'And Cephas;' because he, being the first among the apostles, did not make use of his right to maintenance. Cephas himself is Simon Peter. For women, desiring the instruction of the Lord, and eager for virtues, followed the apostles, ministering to them with their possessions and services, just as they followed the Savior

ministering to him from their own means.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) Do only Barnabas and I not have the power to do these things? That is, we have the power to do them, but we do not want to. However, in order to be given the right to do them, he says that he spoke more honestly. And to strengthen this, he provides examples, saying:

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Verse 7, 8.) Who ever serves in their pay? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Who tends a flock of sheep and does not drink their milk? Am I speaking according to human judgment? That is, am I following human reasoning? Does not the same law say this? The aforementioned testimonies have been shown to agree with divine teachings, so as to demonstrate that there is indeed good reason for not wanting to receive expenses from them, since it shows both giving and receiving in so many examples.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) For in the Law (Deut. XXV, 4) it is written: You shall not muzzle the ox when it is treading out the grain. Does God care for oxen? Let us briefly address this; for it is written in the prophet Jonah: Should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals? (Jonah IV, 11). And the psalmist says: You save both people and animals (Psalm. XXXV, 7). So how can it be that God does not care for oxen and animals? But he does not care about the oxen and cattle themselves because of these things, but because of us, for whose sake they were made; therefore he cares about us, not them.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) Or rather, he says, for our sake it is written: for our sake indeed it is written. For all things said pass on to us through a figure. For he who plows and threshes in hope, ought to receive the fruit of his hope. It is true, because work is done with this hope, so that the fruit may be obtained.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share in this rightful claim over you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

(Vers. 12.) (Verse 12) If others have the authority over you, shouldn't we have it even more? For if those who are not your fathers through the Gospel do not have the same affection for you, they still have the power to receive, how much more so us? And it is implied, your apostles, because Barnabas was an apostle. But we have not used this power. Yet, we endure everything, so as not to create any obstacle to the Gospel of Christ. For a long time, he kept hidden his intention; for he showed that he did not want to accept any support, even though he had the right to, so that the power of the Gospel might not weaken. False apostles fooled those who sinned, wanting to

receive support; so much so that they did not seem to be sinning while in submission to them. But since this action goes against the discipline of the Gospel, he does not want to accept it here; so that he can freely criticize, and not be found among their number. For in order that the rule of Christian law might remain, it made lawful things unlawful, because they were offending through license.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Do you not know that those who work in the sanctuary live from the sanctuary, and those who serve at the altar share in the altar? In the sanctuary, it signifies the law of the Gentiles, but in the altar, that of the Jews. For the Lord decreed through Moses (Deuteronomy 18:3) that the priests should take a portion of what was offered.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) And so the Lord Jesus ordained those who proclaim the Gospel to live from the Gospel. Therefore, God did not follow the form of the Gentiles through Moses, but natural reason itself has it that one should live from where one labors. Therefore, He decreed this reason itself for nature and human conversation. However, adding this to the top still burdens the cause, so as not to make it slight or odious, which He commends with such great testimonies; and yet He does not want to benefit Himself, so as not to humble the freedom of argument.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) But I have not made use of any of these things. After showing in many ways that it is allowed to receive, yet he himself does not need it; for it is harmful to receive from sinners, as I mentioned before. But I did not write these things so that it would happen to me; for it is better for me to die. No one will detract from my glory. He speaks of his own glory in that, if the severity of the Gospel remains; and he chooses to die rather than violate the rights of the Gospel, knowing that this will benefit him more for future salvation. For indeed he refused the owed obedience that should be given to him; lest they take confidence in committing a wrong through this.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my reward? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17). For if I do this willingly, I have a reward. It is clear that no one receives a reward for the thing they do unwillingly. For if they do it willingly, they are deserving of a reward because they consent to the master, and what is done willingly is done better. But if they do it unwillingly, the responsibility is entrusted to me. And this is not unclear, because whoever does something without devotion does not do it willingly, but out of necessity. For since it is not within their power, they do it unwillingly because it was commanded to them.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) So what will be my reward? That, when proclaiming the gospel, I may offer the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. I want to be different from others, so that when they see that it is not advantageous, they do not even use what is lawful: if not, they will do things that are lawful, but in a way that causes harm.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) And I became to the Jews as a Jew, in order to gain Jews. It seems as though I pretended to be all things to all people, as flatterers usually do, but it is not so; for he is a divine man and a spiritual physician who knows the causes and wounds of all, and he diligently nurtures and sympathizes with them; for we all have certain things in common with everyone else. Therefore, he became to the Jews as a Jew; because for their sake he circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3), and he purified himself and went up to the temple, so that they would not have a reason to blaspheme through him (Acts 21:26). Therefore, he did what should now have ceased, but he did it according to the Law. For he agreed with them that the Law was from God and the prophets, and he showed that this Christ is of them, who was promised, so that his agreement would have an effect.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Those who are under the Law, are as if I were under the Law (even though I am not under the Law myself) so that I may profit them who are under the Law. Those who are under the Law are called Samaritans; for they accept only the Law, that is, the five books of Moses. They are descended from the Persians and Assyrians whom the king of Assyria, after removing the children of Israel into captivity, placed in the land of Samaria to inhabit (2 Kings 17:6); therefore, they also worship fire in the manner of the Persians. Therefore, the Apostle, while not denying that the Law was from God, seemed to be under the Law; but from it he taught them to understand Christ with a gentle word, just like the Samaritan woman who said to the Lord: 'I know that the Messiah is coming' (John 4:25); taught through the Law.

Those who are without the Law are as if without the Law (even though without the Law they are not of God, but they are in Christ's Law) in order to benefit those who are without the Law. He says this because when it is in Christ's Law, it is in God's Law; because what is Christ's, is God's: and what is God's, is Christ's, as it is said: All mine are yours, and yours are mine. In order to benefit those who are without the Law (John 17:10). For while he agreed with them, that is, the Gentiles, according to the natural reason, that the world was made by God, and that the things in it, and that the soul is immortal, and that we have our origin from him (for in the Acts of the Apostles it says: For in him we live, and move, and have our being) it was done as if without the Law, through which he introduced to them that Christ himself is the one whom God chose to judge the world, and that he is the one through whom all things were made.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) I became weak for the weak, in order to win the weak. He became weak, while refraining from lawful things for the sake of weak brothers, so as not to cause them to stumble. I became all things to all people, in order to save all. This was the behavior of a prudent and spiritual man, to become all things to all people, yet not going beyond the purpose of religion; because where he yielded, he yielded for the sake of making progress: and he did nothing other than what the Law commanded.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) But I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it. That is, I do all the aforementioned things in order to become a participant in the gospel's purpose, which concerns human salvation.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24) Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. Therefore I run in such a way as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) But every athlete who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one. Therefore, I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into submission, lest, after preaching to others, I myself should be disqualified.

(Vers. 26.) (Verse 26.) Thus I run, not as if uncertain. I run with great hope, knowing exactly what has been promised. Thus I fight, not as if beating the air. That is, I strive not primarily with words, but with actions. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. Therefore, I keep my body under control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified. Therefore, he confirms the validity of his preaching by demonstrating through his actions that he follows what he teaches. For anyone who acts differently than what they preach raises suspicion among the listeners, causing them to doubt

the promises. Therefore, he encourages others to practice not only with words but also with deeds, through his own example.

Chapter X.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (Exodus 13:21; 14:22). He wants us to be solicitous by the example of the Jews, who offended through their negligence (Numbers 9:22). Therefore, he says that they were under the cloud, because all the things that happened were made in the likeness of us, so that they would have the image of our reality. For being covered by a cloud and having been saved from their enemies, they are called baptized when they are freed from death. For they, that is, the Egyptians who died in the sea, while these, led by Moses, pass through successfully, were saved from death: which surpasses baptism. For not their past evils were imputed to them, but they were purified through the sea and the cloud, prepared to receive the Law, and the form of our future sacrament.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Vers. 3, 4.) And all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. The manna and water (Exod. XVI, 15; XVII, 6) that flowed from the rock are called spiritual because they were not prepared by the law of the world, but were created for a time by the power of God without the mixture of elements, containing in themselves the figure of a future mystery, which we now partake in remembrance of Christ the Lord. Therefore, the bread of angels is called so because it was created with the same power by which the angels exist. This signifies that He who was to come from heaven would spiritually nourish. Thus, the manna first came from heaven on the Lord's day to satisfy the people; however, the following rock is called which is understood as Christ. For where the help of man failed them, Christ was present; therefore, it followed that where it failed, He would come to their aid. For it was not the rock that gave water, but Christ.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) But God did not favor many of them. Therefore, he said this because they did not understand the received favor. For they were prostrated in the desert (Num. 26:65). It is fitting that one who has achieved great things should doubt in small things; not only does he not obtain these, but he also loses those. Therefore, since he has exhorted us to strive for better things above, he also says that he himself labors to be worthy of the promise. Now, in order to compel and persuade us with the terror of this example, he says that the Jews at that time received the gift of God and the grace, just as we did. And because they were negligent and doubted God's promise, they were prostrated in the desert. He showed that he himself must be afflicted in order not to be found in their number. Therefore, we must strive to become imitators of him.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Vers. 6, 7.) These things, however, were done in the form of ourselves, so that we would not desire evil as they also desired. This is the sense and reason that I mentioned above. Nor did they serve idols, as some of them did. Now he addresses those who, while reclining in idolatry, thought

that it was not a sin. As it is written (Exod. XXXII, 6): The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play: before the idol without a doubt; so that they would not believe themselves to be free from the crime, who feasted in idolatry. Now when Moses had gone up to the mountain before God, the calf idol having been made, for the purpose of offering dedication: The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play. This is indulgence, because they were always entertained, they were found to be unfaithful in the matters of God. Therefore, it warns us not to fall into this lack of confidence through the consent of indulgence in idolatry.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day twenty-three thousand men (Num. XXV, 1). This was their punishment, when they defiled themselves with the Midianite women; for the anger of God was kindled against them, and was appeased by the zeal of Phinehas the priest, who had a fervent devotion to God, so that not more of them were destroyed.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) Let us not tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and perished by serpents. They are said to have spoken against God and to have tempted Christ, because Christ was the one who spoke to Moses. Finally, let us not find ourselves in the same situation, lest we be handed over to the devil, whose serpents have a symbolic meaning.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) And do not murmur, as some of them murmured, and they were destroyed by the Destroyer. To murmur is to complain falsely to one another about superiors and rulers, as far as the meaning of the place is concerned; because murmuring tends to happen for a just cause. And they perished by the Destroyer. That is, they conceded their place to Judas, anticipating him; because by betraying Christ, he was destroyed from the number of the apostles by the judgment of God. Through these examples, he challenges us to a more corrected life; so that, if we are obedient to his warnings, we may receive a reward, or if we are disobedient, we may deserve a more severe punishment. For it is not doubtful that those sinning should be subjected to more torment, to prevent them from sinning.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But all these things happened to them in figure; but they are written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. The ends of the world are come upon us; for it is because of this that these things are known, that they, who were to come in the last age, might be instructed by their example in the faith of Christ. For usefulness also they were done to us, that if we shall continue in the fear of God, we may receive the promise to them made: if otherwise, it shall be doubled to us in punishment; because greater knowledge of the law makes us the more guilty.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. This is directed towards those who, presuming to have knowledge which allows them to eat anything, were causing a

stumbling block to weak brothers. And thinking themselves to be making progress in the teachings of false apostles, they had become worse. And they judged the Apostle, when they themselves were in the wrong. Therefore, pride is to be cut off, so that they may not be tempted, just as the Jews were tempted and perished.

(Vers. 13.) (Ver. 13.) Let no temptation take hold of you, except that which is human. And by this, they seem to be tempting the Lord by belittling the Apostle, because even then when they belittled Moses and doubted him, they are said to have tempted God. For everything that is not proven is tested; therefore, to overthrow this temptation, it warns with fear. But in order for human temptation to take hold of them, it encourages: for human temptation is to doubt the hope of God in man, because hope in man is in vain; so that in need or distress, one does not despair of God, seeking human help, just as the Jews, who doubted God, would invoke the aid of idols. This is human help; because the gods of the pagans are of the earth, and human error discovered their worship. Therefore, to suffer for Christ is a human temptation, through which one advances with God. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able: but will make with the temptation also a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Therefore, faithful is God, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able; because he has promised to give himself to those who love him the heavenly kingdom: and it is necessary that he give, because he is faithful. Therefore, in your trouble, he will be present for you and will not allow you to be burdened beyond what you can bear, but will make it so that either the temptation quickly ends, or if it is prolonged, he will give the virtue of endurance. Otherwise, he will not give what he has promised, because the one who suffers is overcome. For man is subject to weakness, and there will be no one who will receive [him]; but because God is faithful, who promised, He helps, so that He may fulfill what He promised. Finally, the Lord desires the days to be shortened, so that the chosen ones may be saved and may be able to obtain the kingdom of God (Matthew 24:22). However, how is he helped by God if he is only allowed to be tempted as much as he can bear? He is certainly helped, as long as he is not allowed to be burdened more than he knows he can endure; so that he who is known to be unable to tolerate beyond three days, may not be allowed to suffer on the fourth day.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) Therefore, beloved, flee from the worship of idols. He also now exhorts them to abstain from all participation in idolatry, so that not only hope, but also the spirit may be removed from it, lest temptation toward God arise from this. For no one who is devoted to an idol hopes for anything from it; for to hope or doubt about God is, just as Saul, having abandoned God who was angry with him for his sin, turned to idolatry, hoping for something from it (1 Samuel 28:12ff). To whom in fact it was harmful both in the present and it provided revengeful hell in the future.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Like wise ones, judge what I say. He provides examples to persuade more easily; because for those whom words are not enough, examples often persuade.

(Vers. 16, 17.)

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one

bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. Because we are one, we should bear one another's burdens and feelings; so that one faith may have one meaning and action.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) See, Israel according to the flesh: this is, understand, men seeing God, how they have carnal things, that is, idolatry. Are not those who eat the sacrifices, participants of the altar? For as we, partaking of one bread and one cup, are participants and sharers of the body of the Lord: so also those who eat the sacrifices, are participants of the altar of error.

(Vers. 19, 20.)

(Verse 19, 20.) So what am I saying, that something is sacrificed to an idol? Not that an idol is something; but those who sacrifice, sacrifice to demons. An idol is truly nothing; because an image appears of a dead thing: but under the cover of idols the devil is worshipped.

I do not want you to become partakers of demons. It shows them that this is only what appears in an idol: but it is a hidden mystery of iniquity, which Satan devised to corrupt the faith of the one God. Therefore, even the Apostle John says in his epistle: For this purpose the Son of God came, that he might destroy the works of the devil (John III, 9).

(Vers. 21.)

(Ver. 21.) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. As the Lord himself said: You cannot serve God and mammon (Matth. VI, 24) : for he who drinks the cup of demons, insults the cup of the Lord: and when he partakes of the table of demons, he opposes the table of the Lord, that is, the altar, and crucifies the body of the Lord. For this reason, Christ was crucified, in order to destroy the works of the devil. Therefore, whoever does the works of the devil resists Christ.

(Vers. 22.)

(Ver. 22) Do we strive to imitate the Lord Jesus? Are we stronger than Him? It is hardly possible for the humble to envy the powerful, for they know that what the powerful possess is not suitable for them to desire. Instead, they may either envy someone who is equal to them or nearly equal. Therefore, the Apostle said that it is impossible for humans to imitate the Lord Jesus because they know He is the Lord. If it were otherwise, He would not appear worthy to be called the Lord by those who strive to imitate Him, lest He becomes their Lord. For Satan has indeed found idolatry to be a great means by which people, by denying the Lord God, serve idols as if they were gods and lords. All things are permissible to me, but not all things are beneficial. Everything is said to be permissible according to the law of nature; for indeed, all things are clean. The discussion was about food and meat sacrificed to idols. For those things that are forbidden and prohibited, how can they be said to be permissible when even the things that are allowed sometimes indicate that they are not expedient? As the apostle Peter says: If this is the reason for a man to be with a wife, it is not expedient to marry (Matthew XIX, 10).

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) All things are lawful for me, but not all things are edifying. The same sense is that although all things are lawful, not everything is beneficial; because what is offered to idols does not build up; because it causes a stumbling block to a brother, as it was said above: therefore, sometimes it is necessary to refrain from lawful things, so that it may be profitable. Hence, he refused to accept support from them, even though he had the right, knowing that it was not expedient.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24) Let no one seek what is his own, but what is of others. It is true that while each one reclines in his own opinion, he satisfies his own will and puts a stumbling block to the weak conscience of his brother. Therefore, we must hasten for the charity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may prohibit more things that are necessary for the salvation of our neighbor than to our own will, just as the Apostle, a vessel of election and a spiritual physician, says: Not seeking what is profitable to me, but what is profitable to many.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Verse 25, 26.) Eat everything that is sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, for the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. In order to demonstrate that all things are clean, he reinforced this with an example from the twenty-third psalm: nothing is unclean in itself if the Lord calls it clean. And since he had already mentioned food in the previous section, he immediately follows with: Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience. But he submitted this so that the conscience may be free; for although something may be defiled accidentally, that is, an offering to an idol; yet he who buys it knows nothing about it, and is blameless before God.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) If anyone invites you from among the unbelievers to a meal, and you wish to go, eat whatever is set before you, without raising questions as to its origin. This means, simply eat what is served, without asking where it comes from.

(Vers. 28, 29.) (Verses 28, 29.) But if someone says: This is sacrificial meat, do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience. I mean not your own conscience, but the other's. This is directed to those who are capable, despising idolatry, because eating of the sacrifice is nothing, being certain that what is offered under the name of the Creator God cannot defile. But because another person, who serves idols, will boast, seeing you eating of the sacrificial meat as if you were venerating idols, therefore it should not be eaten. For in his conscience he will rejoice, because he sees you eagerly desiring what is sacrificed to idols. For why is my freedom judged by another person's conscience? This is said because when conscience is free from devotion to idols, why is it necessary to suppose that it eats meat sacrificed to idols for the sake of reverence? For it is judged not to differ from the one who worships idols, since it does not hesitate to eat what is offered to the idol.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30.) So if I am a partaker of grace, why am I blasphemed for that which I give thanks? That is, if I communicate the grace of God; because in His name I eat: why should anyone judge me

because I am devoted to an idol, when I do not hesitate to eat things offered to idols, that is, to blaspheme? And so he blasphemes me, and he rejoices in his idol; while he thinks I am a participant, he has the opportunity to remain in error, and a bad example is given to the brothers. For if it is commanded in the Law that lights, altars, inscriptions, and even the idols themselves be destroyed, see if it is not a sin not only to not do these things, but also to participate in such feasts; therefore it is not expedient to eat of the sacrifices.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Through these examples, he has made it clear that to eat food offered to idols, or to do anything in the realm of idol worship, is to be an enemy of God, for these acts are dedicated to the devil in an insult to the one true God. For when we eat, drink, or do anything to the glory of God, we celebrate a banquet with modesty, invoking the Creator. It is in these acts that we bring glory to God, as the actions and conduct of a Christian bring praise to God, and when children are born, they are hoped for from God.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) Be without offense to the Jews and Greeks, and to the Church of God. It teaches us to conduct ourselves in such a way that no one will be offended. The offense to the Jews occurs when they see Christians, who claim to accept the Law and the prophets, not abhorring the idols that they abominate. The offense to the Greeks, that is, the Gentiles, is when they are not only not rebuked for their actions, but also become more eager, as their idolatrous practices are not avoided. However, the Church of God becomes a stumbling block when it sees some from its own number adhering to things that are hostile to God.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33) As I please all in all things, not seeking what is profitable for me, but what is profitable for many, that they may be saved. To please all in all things is to act without causing offense to anyone for the advancement of their own utility, so that it may be beneficial to both them and to me.

Chapter XI.

(Vers. 1.)

(1 Cor. 11:1) Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. It is human that he says, so that we may be imitators of him, who is granted to us as a master by God. If he is an imitator of God, why not us of man? For just as God the Father sent Christ as a master and author of life, so Christ sent the apostles as teachers to us, that we may be imitators of them; for we cannot be his. Thus the Lord says to the Father: As you sent me into this world, so I also send them into this world (John 17:18). And because they were worthy imitators of him, he added: And for them I sanctify myself (Ibid., 19).

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) But I praise you, brothers, because you retain all my teachings and hold fast to the traditions that I passed on to you. However, I have to correct the way you behave and the way you live, because it is evident that your actions contradict these traditions. Therefore, I cannot commend you for this, but rather I am upset with you, because even though I was your apostle, you have forgotten my teachings. Instead, you have been following the traditions of other churches, even those that you have not yet learned about. And because of this, it seems as if I am teaching you something new, when I say:

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ. He has his authority; for man is indeed from God, but through Christ. The head of a woman, however, is man. For although the woman is also from Christ, she is made from man and therefore is subject to man. But the head of Christ is God. It is appropriate for the son to be called the head of his father, as if he were the father's offspring. However, the head of man is Christ in a different way than the head of woman, and the head of Christ is God in a different way. But God is the head of Christ, because he was born from him or by him. However, the head of woman is man, because she was formed from his rib by the power of God (Gen. II, 21) . But Christ is the head of man, because through him man was created when he did not exist. Therefore, one word has a different meaning; because both the persons and the substances differ.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. To pray means to entreat; but to prophesy means to declare the coming of the Lord with the voice of a symbol after prayer.

(Vers. 5, 6, 7.) (Vers. 5, 6, 7.) However, every woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled, dishonors her head; for it is one and the same as having her head shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. Therefore, woman is inferior to man, for she is his possession; for the origin of woman is man: from him she is, and therefore woman seems to be subject to man, so that she is subject to his authority. It is said that the honor and dignity of man prevent him from covering his head; for it is incongruous for the image of God to be hidden: for it should not be hidden, for the glory of God is seen in man. But the woman is the glory of man. There is a great difference between the glory of God and the glory of man; for man was made in the image of God, not woman. However, this image of God is in man, because one God made one man; so that just as all things are from one God, so all men may be from one man; so that the invisible God may have a visible image in one man on earth, so that one God may be seen in one man preserving the authority of one principle, to the confusion of the devil, who wanted to usurp dominion and divinity for himself, neglecting the one God. What the prophet Ezekiel signifies (Ezek. XVIII, 16), and the same the Apostle says, for he says: he sits in the temple of God, showing himself as if he is God (II Thess. II, 4).

(Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

(Verses 8, 9, 10.) For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Indeed, man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. Therefore, a woman ought to have authority on her head, even on account of the angels. The authority is signified by a veil, which the bishops are called angels, as it is taught in the Apocalypse of John (Apoc. II, 1 and following). And because they are certainly human, they are being rebuked so that they would not provoke the people, and what is right in them is praised. Therefore, a woman (33 quaest. 5, cap. Mulier) should cover her head; because she is not the image of God, but to show that she is subject. And because transgression began through her, she should have this sign; in the Church, out of reverence for the episcopal authority, she should not have her head uncovered, but covered with a veil: nor should she have the power to speak; because the bishop represents Christ. Just as before a judge, so before a bishop, because he is the vicar of the Lord, she should be seen as subject due to the origin of guilt.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) Nevertheless, neither is woman without man, nor man without woman in the Lord. Therefore, in the Lord, because God made both of them one and one; for they are one flesh and one body in the Lord, that is, according to the Lord who created. In conclusion, those who do not believe that woman is taken from man, these do not believe in the Lord or do not believe in the origin of humanity according to the Lord.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For just as woman comes from man, so man is born through woman. This is confirmed by what he said, that both are one in nature, and the origin of woman is man, as it is written in Genesis, made by the Lord Creator. But everything is from God (Gen. II, 22). After gradually explaining each point, in order to subject everything to God, while preserving one principle, he says: But everything is from God, so that no woman would be saddened because of her subjection, nor would man be exalted and become proud.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) You yourselves judge: is it proper for a woman to pray to God unveiled? This is why he criticized them earlier with irony, saying: I praise you because you remember everything about me, and hold on to my teachings everywhere (Verse 2). For when the tradition was that women should be veiled in the Church, they allowed them to be unveiled. Therefore, now he tries to persuade them not by the authority of tradition, which they ignored, but by the very nature of things, saying the truth.

(Vers. 14, 15)

(Vers. 14, 15) And does nature itself not teach you that indeed, if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? This is according to the Law; for it forbids men to have long hair. But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her as a covering. Naturally, this wants to be a decent and proper decree, so that a veiled woman may satisfy and give thanks to God. Therefore, hair is an indication of the covering, so that nature and will may be added. Finally, no woman can even approach power when it is revealed.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) But if someone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Church of God. After giving the reason to overcome the contentious, he asserts his authority; for neither did Judaism have this, wherefore he says: Neither we, nor the Church of God, as neither Moses, nor the Savior handed down in this way.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But I command this, not praising that you are coming together not for the better, but for the worse. Just as I correct specifically their behavior through reproof, so I also criticize their traditions, not certainly praising them, but admonishing them.

(Vers. 18, 19.)

(Vers. 18, 19.) First of all, by saying 'first,' he shows the type of sin from which the errors arise, which he rebukes; for where there is dissension, nothing is right. When you come together in the Church, I hear that there are dissensions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must be factions among you, so that those who are genuine may be recognized among you. Knowing that some are corrupted in their minds by the devil's cunning, he says: There must be factions. He did not desire or wish it, but because he knew it would happen, he said it, just as the Lord also said: It is necessary for scandals to come (Matthew 18:7). And: The Son of man must suffer (Luke 9:22), knowing beforehand that Judas would be the betrayer. But when he says, 'But that the a[p]proved may be manifested among you,' he signifies those who, by persevering in the tradition received, were examples of probation to the rest of the evangelical discipline for their condemnation. These are the ones he means in the beginning of the Epistle when he says, 'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfect in the same.'"

(Vers. 20, 21, 22.)

(Vers. 20, 21, 22.) Therefore, when you come together to eat, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? These notations are for those who came together in the church to offer their own gifts and claimed everything for themselves when the presbyters arrived (because not all places had appointed leaders for the churches yet), causing division. For the pseudo-apostles had sown dissensions among them, so that they would zealously guard their offerings: when with one and the same prayer the offerings of all were blessed, so that those who, as usual, had not offered, or did not have from where to offer, would be ashamed and confounded, not taking part; and they did it so quickly, that those who arrived later could not find anything to eat. Therefore, he says, if you come together in this way, so that each one takes his own, let these things be done at home, not in the Church; where one comes together for the sake of unity and mystery, not of dissension and the stomach. For the gift offered is for the whole people, because in one bread all are represented. Through that which we are one, we all should receive from one bread.

What shall I say to you? Do I praise you? In this, I do not praise. It is obvious that an error has been caught and corrected, so that they may correct it in the future and know this truth, which they had learned long ago in the beginning; repeating the form that was given by the Savior in a matter such as this, saying:

(Vers. 23, 24, 25.)

(Verse 23, 24, 25.) For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, he took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' He showed them the mystery of the Eucharist celebrated during the meal, that it is not just a meal; for it is a spiritual medicine, which, when reverently consumed, purifies the devoted person. For it is a remembrance of our redemption, so that, being mindful of the Redeemer, we may deserve to receive greater things from Him.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. For by the death of the Lord we have been set free, and by commemorating this we signify the new Testament that we have received, which is the new law that delivers those who obey it to the heavenly kingdom. For even Moses, after receiving the blood of the calf in a bowl, sprinkled it upon the sons of Israel, saying: This is the Testament that God has appointed for you (Exodus 24:8). This was the figure of the Testament, which the Lord named new by the prophets; so that the old may be, which Moses handed down. Therefore, the Testament was established by blood; for the blood of the divine blessing is a witness. In its likeness, we receive the mystical chalice of blood for the protection of our body and soul; for the Lord's blood has redeemed our blood, that is, it has made the whole man safe. For the flesh of the Savior was poured out for the salvation of the body, but the blood was poured out for our soul, as it had been prefigured by Moses; for thus he says: The flesh is offered for your body, but the blood for your soul (Lev. XVII, 11); therefore, the blood must not be eaten. If, therefore, among the ancients there was an image of the truth, which has now appeared and been made manifest in the advent of the Savior, how does it seem contrary to the heretics that the old and the new should be in agreement, when they themselves bear witness to each other?

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. He considers it unworthy who celebrates the mystery in a different way from what was handed down by Him. For he cannot be devout who presumes in a different manner than what was given by the author. Therefore, he warns that the devout mind of the one approaching the Lord's Eucharist should be according to the order handed down, because there shall be judgment, so that as each person approaches, they will give the reasons on the day of the Lord Jesus Christ; for those who approach without the discipline of tradition and conduct are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But what is it to be guilty, if not to endure the punishment of death from the Lord? For he was slain for those who despise his kindness.

(Vers. 28, 29.)

(Verse 28, 29.) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. He teaches that we should approach communion with a devoted mind and with fear, so that our hearts may understand the reverence that is due to him, whose body we receive. For this reason, let a person judge himself; for he drinks the blood in the mystery of the Lord, who is a witness of God's grace. If we receive Him with discipline, we will not be unworthy of the body and blood of the Lord; for we will be able to give thanks to the Redeemer.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30.) Therefore, many of you are weak and sick. And many sleep. To prove the truth that an examination is to take place for those receiving the body of the Lord, here he shows an image of judgement upon those who have unworthily received the body of the Lord, whilst they were being seized by fevers and illnesses, and many were dying: so that the others might learn from these examples, and, being terrified by the punishment of a few, might correct themselves, knowing that it is not without consequence to negligently receive the body of the Lord; and that he whom punishment delays here will be dealt with more severely, because he has scorned the example.

(Vers. 31, 32.)

(Vers. 31, 32.) But if we were to judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. This is why it is said: if we were to judge ourselves, we would not be judged by the Lord. And because we are disciplined, it is for our own good, so that we may be corrected through fear itself. For in a few, there is correction for all. Let us not be condemned along with the world, that is, with the unbelievers. For there is no difference between an unbeliever who approaches the table of the Lord without consideration.

(Vers. 33, 34.) (Verse 33, 34.) Therefore, brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home. The command to wait for one another is given so that the offering of many may be celebrated together and served to everyone. And if anyone is impatient, let him be fed with earthly bread at home. So that you may not come together for judgment: that is, do not carry out the mystery reprehensibly and with offense. But when I come, I will arrange the rest. He first shows that the head of salvation should be addressed in order, and how both sexes should come together in the Church, he mentioned before: in which matters, if there is an error, it is not a trivial sin. However, he promised to arrange himself the rest of the things that pertain to the building up of the Church.

Chapter XII.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) But I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, about spiritual things. You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. He mentions the example of the previous way of life that will be given to them so that, just as they were in the form of idols, worshiping idols and being led by the will of demons, so also those who worship God may be in the form of the Lord's law, walking as is pleasing to the Lord. For the form and image of each law should be seen in the profession and conduct of the one who cultivates it; for that person is the

image and likeness of the law of God, in whose faith and conduct the truth of the Gospel shines.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for profit. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these work that one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man individually as He wills. For schools are those which, when they are established in themselves, give dignity; so that an honorable place makes a man glorious, not his own praise. Therefore he says: No one speaking in the Spirit of God says anathema Jesus. For a voice which says anathema Jesus is uttered by human error; for whatever is false is from man. And no one can say Lord Jesus, except in the Holy Spirit. For the very statement by which the Lord Jesus is signified is poured forth not by flattery of men, as even idols are called gods, but by the truth of the Holy Spirit; for whatever is true, is said by the Holy Spirit. So, in the Christian rule, they did not consider the favor of men, and because of this, they would least allow themselves to be accused, as is the case with idols (for man invented that God should be called, who is not; and thus the bishops are subject to them); for it shows them that there is no human benefit in it, as it is said by the Lord Jesus: but rather a gift of God, who deigned to declare his mystery to men. For indeed, the profession itself acquires the forgiveness of sins, just as the worship of idols exaggerates. Therefore, he teaches them because they do not show any benefit to religion, saying: 'Lord Jesus, but they accept'; so that they would not think that the grace of God is like the idols of men in the law of the Lord, who is not. Ultimately, not understanding that the gift of God is in faith; each person has chosen for themselves who they would follow, saying: 'I am of Paul, and I am of Apollo' (1 Corinthians 1:12). Therefore, he humbles their pride, so that they may allow themselves to be challenged as I said.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) However, there are divisions of graces. This does not want to be attributed to human merits, but to the grace of God for the honor of His name. For just as when someone says 'Lord Jesus' in the Holy Spirit, they are expressing what they want, so too, when placed in the position of the order of ecclesiastical office, they have grace, expressing what they want, not their own, but through the effectiveness of the Holy Spirit. And for this reason, in the beginning, he says: Neither the one who plants is anything, nor the one who waters, but God who gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:7).

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Vers. 5, 6.) The same Spirit also. And there are varieties of ministries. Through the same Spirit, different gifts are said to be bestowed. And the same Lord. And there are varieties of operations. It now joins Christ to the Holy Spirit. And the same God, who works all things in all. To such an

extent, this is not to be given to men as if it were their own, but it is affirmed to be God’s alone, so that even the gift of the Holy Spirit and the grace of the Lord Jesus are said to be the work of one God, lest grace and gift be divided because of the persons of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but that the indissoluble unity and nature of the three may be understood as one work, so that it may lead all glory and divinity back to one. The divisions of graces are allocated to the duties of the Church, not to human merits. For if the Holy Spirit is the same Lord, and the Lord is the same God, and there are three, one God; since the glory, power, and nature of God belong to the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus is the same in nature as God, then certainly the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus, and God the Father are one. And indeed, each God is one, and the three are one God. Finally, with one operating, three are said to operate; so that the mystery of the Trinity may be enclosed in the nature and power of one God, since He is infinite.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. This means that the gift is received in order to govern one's own life with the divine reins and be useful to oneself and others, while showing an example of good conduct.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, that is, the ability to understand things not taught by books but revealed by the bright fire of the Holy Spirit; so that they may have an enlightened heart and be wise, discerning what should be avoided and what should be followed. To another, the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit: that is, the ability to know divine things. To another, the gift of healing in one Spirit: that is, the ability to heal the sick or afflicted.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) Others have faith in the same Spirit. This means, so that in professing and defending their faith, they may receive the opportunity without hesitation. Others have the ability to perform miracles. This signifies the power given to drive out demons or perform signs. Others have the gift of prophecy, which means they are filled with the Holy Spirit and can speak about the future. Others have the discernment of spirits. This means they are able to understand and judge whether something is of the Holy Spirit or of the world. Some are the different types of languages, others the interpretation of words. Interpret, as the words of those who speak in languages or in letters, faithfully interpreting through the gift of God.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But all these things are done by one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one as He wills. What was said above about the three persons, is now declared to be done by the same Holy Spirit, so that because they are of one nature and power, what one works, the three work: yet there is one God, whose grace is divided to each individual as He wills, not according to the merits of men, but rather for the edification of His Church; so that all the things which the world desires to imitate but does not fulfill, because it is carnal, may be seen in the Church, which is the house of God, through the offices, gifts, and teachings bestowed by the Holy Spirit, for the testing of truth among those who are despised by the world.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Vers. 12, 13.) For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit. Through this, it is taught that no person should be despised or considered superior, nor should glory, which is due to God alone, be given to humans. For in all things, there is one and the same glorious God, since we all have one baptism and one Holy Spirit. For this reason, because they were glorying in some things, they were despising others as if they were contemptible.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) For just as the body is not one member, but many. In saying this, he shows that unity has various functions, and this diversity does not contradict the unity of power; since the unity of the body does not consist in singularity, but in many members; so that they may mutually provide for each other what they owe.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) If the foot should say: Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? That is, it cannot be denied that he, who seems weak among the brothers, is of the body; because he is not powerful.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) If the ear says, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not part of the body,' is it therefore not part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? That is, if all were of one duty and function, how would the remaining needs of the body be fulfilled, since it is evident that many functions are necessary for the governance of the body?

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) But now God has placed the members, each one of them in the body as he desired. The will of God, because it is provident and rational, is said to have fit the members to the body; so that the body lacks nothing, but becomes perfect with many members.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) But if all were one member, where would the body be? It is clear that if all were of the same dignity, they would not be called members, nor would there be a body: and therefore they are joined together by the various functions of the members; for all could not be one member. And the reason why there are many is because they differ from each other in dignity.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) Now there are indeed many members, but one body. He says this because although the many members lack each other, they do not differ in the unity of nature, even though they are different; because this diversity comes together as one to fulfill the usefulness of the body, just as the various things that the world itself consists of, when they are different not only in duties, but also in natures; yet they contribute to the perfection of one world, and from all these a certain harmony is born in the fruits, which are beneficial to human utility.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) However, the eye cannot say to the hand, \"I do not need your works.\" This means, the superior cannot say to the inferior, \"I do not need you,\" because the eye can see, but it is the hands that work. Or again, the head to the feet: \"You are not necessary to me.\" This means, the one with a higher position and dignity cannot exist without the one who is humble; because there are things that the humble can do, which the exalted cannot, just as iron can do things that gold cannot. And so, honor is given to the head by the feet.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) But even more so, those members of the body that appear weaker are necessary. It is clear that although someone may be of high dignity, if they lack a subordinate who can bring them glory through their services, that dignity itself will be contemptible. For it is duty by which dignity is established. This is the case if the emperor lacks an army. Therefore, even though the emperor may be great, he still needs an army; for it is a member of his body, having before it tribunes, companions, and officers. All are soldiers, but the lower ones are more necessary, just like the limbs of a body, which, though they seem inferior, are more useful; for without eyes, the hand still works, and the foot, while walking, seeks sustenance.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) And those limbs of the body which we think to be more ignoble, let us surround them with greater honor. The same is true of our senses, because those that are thought to be without dignity, we find in them something to praise, just as we find in the less esteemed limbs something that pleases us more than what we find in the others. For how deserving of honor are our hands, when we grasp what we desire! Or our feet, when we go where we want! Therefore, we also add honor to them, for example to our feet; because they are humble and without dignity, we adorn them with footwear. And those things which are disgraceful to us, they have a greater abundance of honor. It is clear that our private parts, which seem shameful, while avoiding public view, cover themselves with modesty, so as not to offend through irreverence. In a similar manner, some of the brothers, though lacking in wealth and appearance, are not without grace, by which they are members of our body: for they usually walk with tattered clothing and bare feet. Therefore, even though they may appear contemptible, they are held in greater honor, because they tend to have a more virtuous way of life. For what appears to humans as despised, is often judged beautiful by God.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24.) But those things which are honorable for us require nothing. It is clear that the head does not need anything, nor the face, nor the hands, so that something may be added to them for

decoration: in the same way, for our brothers in whom the zeal for knowledge and the integrity of character is present, there is nothing that is added by us; for honor is duly rendered to them. However, for those who are despised or humble, exhortation is necessary in order to add some honor to them, so that they may become useful: if not, through the very contempt they will become more negligent about themselves, in which there should be more progress.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) But God has tempered the body, giving more abundant honor to that which lacks, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. Thus, human body is said to be moderated by God, so that all its members are necessary and, therefore, have mutual concern for each other, because one cannot exist without the other. And what is considered inferior is actually more necessary; as it has been explained or argued about brothers, no one should be despised as useless.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. This is not ambiguous concerning the members of the body of flesh; because if an eye, or a foot, or a hand is afflicted with some illness, the whole body feels it: thus it also teaches us to sympathize with our brothers, if something of this kind, or of necessity, arises. Whether one member is glorified, all the members rejoice. It is clear that the head or the other members are glad if the feet are well-taken care of or healthy. Thus we should also be cheerful if we see any brother who is a worshiper of God and has grown in the honesty of his character, that is, to be sound in judgment.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) But you are the body of Christ, and members individually. He clearly shows that he dealt with our cause through the analogy of the members of the flesh; because we all do not have the same function, but each of us has been given grace according to the measure of faith.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) And God appointed some in the Church, first apostles. Therefore, in the Church, he set apostles as the head, who are the messengers of Christ, as the same Apostle says: As ambassadors for Christ, we act as representatives (2 Corinthians 5:20). These are the bishops, as confirmed by the Apostle Peter, and as he says, among other things, about Judas: Let someone else take his office of bishop (Acts 1:20).

Let us understand prophets in two ways, those who speak of the future and those who reveal the Scriptures; although there are also apostles who are prophets, because the first rank encompasses all subordinates. Finally, even the worst, Caiphas, because he was the high priest, prophesied (John 11:51), due to the office itself, not his own merit. However, they were specifically prophets and interpreters of the Scriptures, speaking of the future (Acts 21:11), like Agabus, who prophesied future destruction and imprisonment for this Apostle in Jerusalem, and predicted a famine, which occurred during the time of Claudius (Acts 11:28). Therefore, although he is a better apostle, he sometimes nevertheless exceeds the prophets. And because all things are from one God the Father, he has decreed that individual bishops should govern individual churches. In the

third place, he mentions the teachers, those teachers who, in the Church, instructed children in the retention of literature and reading, following the practice of the Synagogue; because their tradition has been passed down to us. In the fourth place, he says:

Then virtues, then the charm of healings. For someone can be bishop, and have in himself the gift of the virtue of healings. Helps, administrations; that he may watch over divine matters with understanding: yet in such a way that, in some things which it is not granted to fulfill, he may receive from another what he lacks; because all cannot be granted to one. There are also administrators, who by spiritual reins are a teaching to humans. Kinds of languages; that the gift of God may be to know many languages. Interpretation of languages; so that this person may have the skill of interpreting languages, for the grace of God's favor.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29) Are all apostles? Indeed, it is true that in the Church there is one bishop. Are all prophets? It is not doubtful that prophecy is not granted to everyone. Are all teachers? That person is a teacher to whom the ability to instruct others is granted.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30) Are all able? Here one can have the ability to cast out demons, which God gives. Do all have the gift of healing? How can it be that all have the gifts of healing? Are all able to speak in tongues? Certainly not, unless one receives the gift in this matter. Are all able to interpret? He can interpret words, to whom God gives. These words should be inserted to the above meaning. For he explained, by giving a reason, that all have different gifts and not everyone is given everything, for example, the members. For example, a spiritual body signifies a body of flesh; and through this, we must bless God in all things and glorify His name, by whose grace it exists. We also find this principle in physical things; for although gold is better than silver, silver is more commonly used; and while copper is necessary, iron is more in demand. For almost nothing is made without iron, as it is inferior.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) You are eager for the better gifts. Soon he will complete this in those who are subject to him. And yet he shows you a more excellent way. Gradually he leads them to a more useful way, showing them the grace of all the aforementioned gifts, which seem to be in humans, whether in speaking, or healing, or prophesying, not pertaining to the merit of the individual, but to the honor of God. Therefore, he says that he will now show them a clearer way, which leads to heaven and places merit with God. But because the aforementioned things do not always pertain to merit, the Savior says: Many will say to me on that day, that is, the day of judgment: Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and perform many miracles in your name? (Matthew 7:22). And because this does not pertain to merit, but rather to the functions of the Church, for the confusion of the Gentiles and to proclaim the honor of God, the Lord says to them: Depart from me, I never knew you, you workers of iniquity (ibid., 27). For indeed, because the work of God was evident in them, they were negligent towards themselves; for even when the seventy-two disciples rejoiced because the demons were subject to them, the Savior said: Do not rejoice in this, that the demons are subject to you; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20). Therefore, if they were subject to the name of God, and

not by man's deserving, why is it now not the same, that men may have the grace of God? At the beginning, it was necessary for there to be acts in order to strengthen the foundations of faith. But now it is not necessary, because one people leads another to faith when they see their good deeds and simple preaching.

Chapter XIII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am like a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. It seems great to speak in various tongues, but it is nothing if one cannot understand the spiritual meaning behind it. This does not bring merit but rather shows the glory of God. It is like a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. For just as a piece of metal resounds with the impact of another and a cymbal rings, so also the one who speaks in tongues receives the effect and movement of the Holy Spirit, so that he may be able to speak, just as the Savior says in another place: It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks through you (Matthew 10:20). For even a donkey spoke with a human tongue to Balaam son of Beor, in order to proclaim the majesty of God (Numbers 22:28); and young infants burst forth in praise of God to the confusion of the Jews (Matthew 21:16). But the Savior not only showed that these [people], but also stones, could cry out for the condemnation of the unfaithful and the glory of God (Luke 19:40). And even in the early stages to commend the faith, those who were baptized spoke in tongues (Acts 10:46).

(Vers. 2.) (Verse 2.) And if I have prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have not charity, I am nothing. Truly, I am nothing; for prophecy is for the glory of God, as the prophet David says: Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory (Psalm 113:1). For even Balaam prophesied, though he was not a prophet but a diviner (Numbers 23:8 et seq.); and Caiaphas prophesied, not by his own merit but by the dignity of his priestly order (John 11:51); and Saul prophesied, even though he had been filled with an evil spirit due to his disobedience; but he did so for the sake of God, so that he could not harm David, whom he wanted to kill. And if I should know all mysteries; indeed, it profited the Jews nothing to be with the apostles and to learn the mysteries; for the enemy of charity delivered up the Savior (Ezek. XXVIII, 13 et seq.) And the prophet Ezekiel shows that the devil knew heavenly mysteries, when he testifies with a reproachful voice in paradise that he was an angel of God, and that he had precious stones, which the same Apostle signifies as the mysteries of divine doctrine (I Cor. III, 12): and it profited him nothing; because, being forgetful of charity, he leaped into pride. And if I have all knowledge. Knowledge is of no use to me if I do not have charity. Indeed, you write and the Pharisees gained nothing, as the Savior said: You have the key of knowledge, and you do not enter, nor do you allow others to enter (Luke 11:52); for by envy they corrupted charity, and reduced their knowledge to nothing. For even Tertullian and Novatian were of great knowledge: but because they lost the bonds through zeal for charity, they turned to schism and created heresies for their own destruction. And if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. To perform miracles or cast out demons through faith is the power and glory of God; and this does not profit unless one is a diligent follower of good conduct, as mentioned above.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) And if I shall have bestowed all my substance. It is evident that even if all substance is expended, it profits nothing without charity; for charity is the foundation of religion, and he who does not have the foundation does not have life. And if I shall have delivered up my body to be burned, it profits me nothing. Without charity, nothing profits; for charity is the foundation of religion. Therefore, whatever is done without charity is temporary.

(Vers. 4-8.)

(Vers. 4-8.) Charity is great-hearted, it is pleasant. Charity does not envy, does not boast, does not act improperly, is not ambitious, does not seek what is its own, is not easily provoked, does not think evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth: it endures all things, believes all things, hopes all things, withstands all things. Charity never fails. Such great praise of charity has been taught, that it seemed deservedly to be preferred before others, and in vain do those who give their efforts to other mandates labor, not obeying this one. Hence says the Apostle John: God is love (1 John 4:8); so whoever does not have love, knows that they do not have God. Therefore, in another epistle, the Apostle Paul says the same thing: But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us (Ephesians 2:4). Therefore, whoever does not have love is ungrateful for the mercy of God; because they do not love, through which they are saved. So that they may learn that they were seriously sinning, who prioritized the satisfaction of their own appetite over brotherly love. For this is what is beneficial in the present and abides forever with God.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verses 9, 10) Whether prophecies cease, or tongues cease, or knowledge is abolished. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect comes, that which is in part will be abolished. All the gifts of charisms will be abolished, because they cannot comprehend as much as the truth itself has. Neither can we grasp nor articulate the fullness of truth. For how can the human tongue encompass everything that belongs to God? Therefore, our imperfection will be destroyed, not that which is true will be abolished: but while what is lacking is added to the imperfect, it will be destroyed. For the destruction of imperfection is when what is imperfect is fulfilled in the true.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; but when I became a man, I put an end to childish ways. This is said because the saints, when they depart from this world, will need to come into it again in a greater way than they now think, just as the Apostle John said about the Savior: Then we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2). Therefore, in this life, we are like children in comparison to the future life; because just as this life is imperfect, so too is our knowledge.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. That is, I will see the things that have been promised, as I am seen; that is, to be present with the Lord, where Christ is.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Now remain faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity. Charity is rightly the greatest, because while faith is preached and hope for future life exists, charity is present, as I mentioned before. As John the Apostle says: By this we know his charity, because he laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16). It is justly the greatest charity, by which the human race is reformed.

Chapter XIV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Pursue charity, be zealous for spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. After charity, the study of prophecy should be given greater importance because although there are great spiritual gifts, as listed, this is still the better one that benefits the Church, so that all may learn the reasoning of divine law. For whoever applies themselves to this, they receive a gift, as Solomon says: 'To know the law is the mark of the best understanding' (Prov. IX, 33). For knowledge supported by charity does not puff up but is gentle, benefitting everyone.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to people but to God; for no one understands them, but they speak mysteries in the Spirit. This is what is meant, that whoever speaks in an unknown tongue speaks to God; for he understands all things; but in fact, they do not understand, and therefore they make no progress in this matter. They speak mysteries in the Spirit, not with understanding; for they do not know what they are saying.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For he who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. He is built up, indeed, when he learns the solution of questions. But exhortation is made to him so that he may desire to prophesy, and he is consoled because he sees the contempt of discipline in hope. For the knowledge of the law strengthens the souls and incites them to the progress of better hope.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself; but the one who prophesies builds up the church. For the one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the whole congregation, so that they may understand what is being said. Prophets are interpreters of Scriptures; just as a prophet predicts future events that are unknown, so here, by revealing the meaning of the Scriptures, which is hidden from many, one is said to prophesy.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) But I want all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who speaks in tongues cannot forbid it, for he says that this gift is of the Holy Spirit. But prophecy should be pursued even more, for it is more useful. For the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless there is someone to interpret. For if there is interpretation, then there is no lesser value, for it builds up the Church, and this is greater because it benefits everyone. For here through the gift of God he speaks in tongues, who also interprets, as it is

written in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:4).

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophecy, or by teaching? All these things have the same meaning; for no one can teach unless they are understood.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) However, things that make sounds without a soul, whether it be a flute or a lyre, if they do not give a distinction of sound, how will it be known what is being played on the flute or what is being played on the lyre? For if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle? Since examples are more persuasive than words, he commends examples by which they easily obtain that those who cannot interpret should not speak in tongues in the Church. Why would he speak, when no one understands him?

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) So also you, unless you give speech that is understood, how shall it be known what you are saying? For you will be speaking into the air; that is, accomplishing nothing. For there are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without signification. Forasmuch, it may be, as there are many kinds of languages, yet they have their own significations of words that they may be understood.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Vers. 10, 11.) If, therefore, I do not understand the power of the voice, I will be a barbarian to the one to whom I am speaking, and the one speaking will be a barbarian to me. It is not advised that they strive to appear barbarians to each other through an unknown language, but because it is a matter of harmony, they must strive for this; so that through unity of understanding, they may rejoice in common joy.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) So you also, since you are eager for spiritual gifts, seek to excel in building up the church. Therefore, the one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the interpretation. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. So what should I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? For you may be giving thanks well, but the other person is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; nevertheless, in the church I prefer to speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) Therefore, the one who speaks in a tongue should pray to interpret. The one who desires to speak in tongues is advised to pray so that they may receive the gift of interpretation; so that their devotion may benefit others.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. It is evident that my mind is ignorant if I speak in a tongue that I do not understand, just as the Latin people are accustomed to singing in Greek, delighting in the sound of the words; yet they do not know what they are saying. But the Spirit, who is given in baptism, knows what the mind prays for when it speaks or prays in a language that is unknown to it; but the mind, which is the soul, is unfruitful. For who can benefit, if they do not understand what is being said?

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit, I will sing with the mind also. This means that when someone speaks in this language, which they know, they are praying with both their spirit and their mind; for not only does their spirit, which I mentioned is given in baptism, understand what is being prayed, but their mind likewise does not ignore the psalm.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Furthermore, if you bless with the spirit; that is, if you praise God in an unknown tongue before those who are listening: Who takes the place of the unlearned? How can he say 'Amen' to your blessing, when he does not understand what you are saying? For the uninstructed listener, not understanding what is being said, does not know the end of the prayer, and does not respond 'Amen', that is, 'truly'; so that the blessing may be confirmed. Through these, the confirmation of prayers is accomplished, for they respond 'Amen', so that all things spoken may be confirmed with truthful testimony in the minds of those who hear.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) Well indeed, you give thanks well. He is speaking about someone who speaks to himself, because he knows what he is saying. But others are not edified. If indeed you come together to build up the Church, the things that are said should be understood by those who are listening. For what benefit is it for someone to speak in a language that only they know; so that the one who listens does not benefit? Therefore, in the Church, one should be silent so that those who speak may be helpful to the listeners.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) I give thanks to my God that I speak in the language of all of you. Since he said earlier that speaking in tongues is a gift of the Holy Spirit, he refers it to God that he speaks in the language of all. And lest he should seem to say this out of envy, he shows that all of them do indeed speak in tongues, yet it is not very profitable.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) But in the church, he says, I desire to speak five words by the Law, so that I may also build up others, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. It is more useful to speak with few words in the opening of speech, which everyone can understand, than to have a lengthy discourse in obscurity. These were Hebrews, who sometimes used the Syriac language, mostly Hebrew, in

their treatises or offerings for commendation. For they boasted of being called Hebrews because of the merit of Abraham, but the same Apostle considered it of no importance, saying: But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 6:14). Some people, imitating them, preferred to speak in an unknown language to the people in the church rather than their own.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) Brothers, do not be children in understanding, but be infants in malice, so that you may become mature in understanding. He wants them to be mature so that they may know what is necessary for the instruction of the Church, and so that, departing from malice and errors, they may strive for those things which are beneficial for the advantage of their brothers. For the one who acts in a way that benefits others, especially a brother, is truly mature in understanding.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) For in the Law it is written: 'In other tongues and in other lips I will speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord (Isaiah 28:11). The Lord spoke this about those whom He foreknew would not believe in the Savior. To speak in other tongues and in other lips is to proclaim the New Testament, as the prophet Jeremiah says: 'Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah' (Jeremiah 31:31). This is to speak in a different manner, so that the words of the Old Law do not remain the same; when they hear that the Sabbath is abolished, the new moon is no longer observed, circumcision ceases, sacrifices are changed, and foods that were previously prohibited are now allowed to be eaten, and that Christ is proclaimed as God from God. This is to speak in other tongues and in other lips, and even then they did not want to obey the faithless God. And it can be understood in this way, that because many of the Jews were malicious, and therefore it was not worthy to speak the Gospel to them openly, he spoke to them in parables; and understanding, they would not be revealed to them because they were evil, nor would they correct themselves in this way; so that they would make themselves deserving to hear the words of God through explanation. Hence the disciples say to the Lord: Lord, why do you speak to them in parables? And the Lord said, 'To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to them it has not been given; so that they may see and not perceive, and may hear and not understand' (Mark 4:11). They did not want to receive salvation unworthily, which they perceived to be based on their own merits, and they did not desire to turn to God in this way.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) Therefore, tongues are a sign. That is, the speeches of God are obscured by the veil of an unknown language, so that they may not be seen by the faithless. When unknown languages are heard, it is a sign that it has been done because of disbelief, so that the one who hears may not understand. Not for those who believe, but for those who do not believe: this is what he means when he says that tongues are useful for hiding the meaning from unbelievers. However, prophecy is for believers, not unbelievers. This is, it is not fitting for the faithful to hear languages that they do not understand; but for the unbelievers, who are not worthy to understand, as the prophet Isaiah says: Go and tell this people: You will hear with your ears, and you will not understand, etc.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) If the whole Church comes together in one place and everyone speaks in tongues, and outsiders or uninstructed people come in, won't they say that you are out of your minds? It is evident that if everyone speaks in different tongues, there will be a confused and disorderly crowd, like someone who is experiencing madness.

(Vers. 24, 25.)

(v. 24, 25) But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you. For every deception seeks darkness and shows false things as true; therefore, among us, there is nothing cunning, nothing under a veil: but simply one God is praised, from whom all things are, and one Lord Jesus, through whom all things are (1 Corinthians 8:6). For if there is no one who understands or from whom he himself is examined, he can say that there is a certain seduction and vanity, which is sung in languages because it is of modesty if it is revealed.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26) So what then, brothers? When you come together, each of you has a song: that is, he speaks praise to God through a song. Each has a teaching: that is, he has an explanation of the senses through spiritual wisdom. Each has a revelation: that is, he is under the influence of a prophecy of hidden things, which reaches the minds of all, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Each has a tongue; so that those who could speak in tongues would not be saddened, he allowed them to speak in languages, but with the requirement of interpretation. Therefore he says: He has interpretation; so that if an interpreter were present, there would be a place for speaking in tongues.

Let everything be done for building up. This is the conclusion, so that nothing is done in vain in the Church, and this should be worked at even more, so that even the inexperienced may make progress; so that nothing remains obscure for the body due to inexperience. Therefore, he wants everyone to come together with various spiritual gifts, so that, being eager in their souls, they may encourage one another and compete for the better gifts, for the enlightenment of the brothers.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) If anyone speaks in tongues, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and let one interpret. This means that two or three should not speak in tongues at the same time, but individually, so as not to appear insane. Therefore, to prevent the day from being dominated by those speaking in tongues and their interpreters, and to allow the prophets time to discuss and explain the Scriptures, who are the enlighteners of the whole Church.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church and speak to himself and to God; that is, let him pray quietly within himself or speak to God, who hears all things, for in the church he ought to speak in a way that benefits everyone.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) But let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others pass judgment. He maintained this method by saying: Let two or three speak, and let the others evaluate, as stated before. And he permitted others to ask questions about matters that may be unclear or that someone may not understand; these are different kinds of abilities, which can be clarified through a broader discussion.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30.) But if it has been revealed to someone who is sitting, let the one who was sitting first keep silent: that is, let the superior permit the inferior, if they are able, to speak, and let them not be upset; for it is possible for the gift to be given to that person also, so that they may speak, even though it was not granted to the superior. For just as the whole cannot be granted to one person, even though they are superior, so too nothing can be imparted to someone, even though they are inferior, so that no one may be empty of the grace of God.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be encouraged. This is the tradition of the Synagogue, which we want to follow, because indeed it is written for Christians, but those who were made from the Gentiles, not from the Jews; so that while sitting they may discuss, with the elders having authority in the chairs, the followers in the seats, and the last ones on the floor on mats. If it is revealed to them, they are instructed to give a place for speaking and not to be despised; for they are members of the body.

(Vers. 32.)

(v. 32) And the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets. For since it is the same Spirit who reveals the future to the prophets and inspires those who interpret the Scriptures, he pours himself out according to the nature and quality of the causes involved. Therefore, it is said that the spirit is subject to the prophets, in order to kindle their minds with the hope that the Spirit's efforts will assist the righteous. For it is with the greatest desire to proclaim the things of God that he comes to their aid, fulfilling the will of those who have a good purpose. For it is said about the Savior: 'They drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ' (1 Corinthians 10:4). This means that they were both subject to and followed; for when human support failed, Christ was present to offer assistance. In the same way, the Spirit is said to be subject in order to assist the good efforts when it prompts them; for someone is considered subject when they bring to completion the initiatives of another.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33) For he is not the author of dissension, but of peace. Therefore, since he is the author of peace, as the Savior says: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John 14:27); no one should prevent another from speaking, nor should one who is speaking, with the desire to contradict, resist; lest there be discord in the body. For those who are called to peace should strive for patience, lest the rights of peace be violated. As I teach in all the Churches of the saints. With these words, he encourages them to do what he has commanded, as he himself testifies that he preaches in a similar manner to the churches of the saints.

(Vers. 34.)

(Ver. 34.) Let your women keep silent in the church. Now he teaches what he had omitted to mention earlier; for he had previously commanded that women be forbidden in the church, but now he shows that they should be quiet and modest: so that it may be worth their while, because they are veiled (I Cor. XI, 5). For if the image of God is man, not woman, and woman is subject to man by the law of nature; how much more should they be subject in the church out of reverence for Him, who is His representative, and is also the head of man! For they are not permitted to speak, but to be in silence, as the Law also says. What does the Law say? 'Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' (Gen. III, 16). This is a specific law; hence Sarah called her husband Abraham her lord: and therefore they are commanded to be in silence, lest the judgment of the aforesaid law be weakened, of which Sarah, subject to her husband, was mindful, as it is said (Gen. II, 24). Although they are one flesh, they are commanded to be subject for two reasons; because they are of the husband, and through them sin entered.

(Vers. 35.)

(Verse 35.) But if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. It is shameful, because it goes against the discipline, that in the house of God, who has commanded them to be subject to their husbands, they presume to speak about the Law; since they know that men have authority there, and it is more proper for them to devote themselves to prayer in the house of God, keeping their mouths shut and opening their ears, to hear how the mercy of God has conquered death through Christ, which reigned through them. For if they dare to speak in the church, it is a disgrace; because they cover themselves so that they may appear humble: but those women show themselves shameless, which is also a reproach to men; for the insolence of women is also a criticism of their husbands.

(Vers. 36.)

(Verse 36) Has the word of God come to you alone, or has it spread among you? These are words of rebuke; for they were inflated as if this salvation had been promised to them alone; and by their example, other nations were called to faith, or there would be no one who could receive the grace of God, proclaimed by the apostles. For they boasted as if they were giving a favor rather than receiving it, by coming to faith; hence he says: Has the word of God come to you alone? For anyone who wants to buy something, which they know is not required by some, when they approach the purchase with a certain disdain, as if they were providing a favor to the seller. Therefore, the Apostle reproaches this in Corinth, who presented themselves in such a way with a sense of vanity; as if they themselves did not obey the words of faith, there would be no one who believed, as it is said to the Jews: It was necessary for you to speak the words of this life first, but because you rejected them, making yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46).

(Vers. 37.)

(Verse 37.) If anyone considers himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge the things that I am writing to you, that they are the Lord's commandments. By saying this, he touches on the aforementioned false apostles, by whom they were corrupted, who taught not divine but earthly things according to human desires. Therefore, he declares that he does not present anything of his own, but of the Lord, so that those whom he persuades may appear to be acquired by God, not by

men. With this confidence and steadfastness, he preaches, having a clear conscience, because he does not seek to please men, but God. He does not flatter sinners, that they may increase, but he warns them to stop.

(Vers. 38.)

(Verse 38.) But if anyone does not know, he will be unknown. Rightly so, because whoever does not acknowledge that he speaks what the Apostle says, he himself will also be unknown by the Lord on the day of judgment, as the Lord says: Amen I say to you, I do not know you. (Matthew XXV, 12).

(Vers. 39.) (Verse 39.) Therefore, brethren, have zealousness for prophesying. Even though he rebukes them and reproaches them in many things because they departed from his tradition, nevertheless he calls them brethren, for Isaiah says to the people of the Lord: Tell those who do not walk rightly in my ways: You are our brethren (Isaiah 66:5). So, in order to comfort them after the rebukes, he calls them brethren; and he encourages them to be zealous for prophecy, so that through constant discussion and explanation of divine law they may become more knowledgeable, in order to learn that the preaching of the false apostles is perverse. And do not forbid speaking in tongues. And this is because of love, so that those who can speak in tongues, if an interpreter is present, they may not be prohibited, so that there will be no division.

(Vers. 40.)

(Verse 40.) But let everything be done properly and in order; that is, according to the aforementioned order. And properly, that is done with peace and discipline.

Chapter XV.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1,2.) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. He shows them that if they have been deceived in this matter which is set forth, they have lost what they believed; for the whole hope of believers is in this sense, that the dead will rise again. But when he says, 'In which you also stand,' he is speaking to those who were firm in the faith of this tradition; for he speaks indiscriminately, so that both those who are in the faith may rejoice, and those who waver may grieve and correct themselves.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For I delivered to you as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He mentions the Scriptures of the Old Testament which foretold the coming passion of the Lord. For the prophet Isaiah says: 'He was led like a sheep to the slaughter' (Isaiah 53:7). And among other things: 'For he will be taken away from the land of the living, his life taken away from the sins of my people' (Ibid., 8): these things are recognized in Christ. But because it appears to signify a past time, it is not contrary; for with God, who knows all things beforehand, nothing is future; therefore it says that what will be in the future is as if it were already done. For in the Apocalypse of John the Apostle it is said: The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world

(Rev. 13:8). Because it is said to be done, since it will not be otherwise than as God knows, it is done; it is made for us, not for God, because with God there is nothing that can be called future. And in the Psalm it says: The Lord reigns from the tree (Psalm XCV, 10). And Moses, referring to his cross, signified thus, saying: Then you will see your life hanging before your eyes, and you will not believe (Deut. XXVIII, 66). Therefore, in the same cause and sometimes in the significance of the future time, it is placed, lest it be defended as not said about Christ by the wicked, if it signified the whole almost as past.

(Vers. 4.) (Verse 4) And because he was buried. There is no doubt that the dead are buried, as the prophet Isaiah says: And I will give the wicked for his burial (Isaiah 53: 9). And because he rose on the third day according to the Scriptures. All things are closed in faith; therefore, under the person of the people, the resurrection of the Lord on the third day is described as future. For the prophet Hosea says: After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight (Hosea 6:3). For just as all have risen in Christ, so all are dead in Adam; no faithful person denies this. In a similar way, in the psalm, speaking under the person of a man, it also signifies about Christ, saying: You have subjected all things under his feet; you have crowned him with glory and honor (Psalm 8:8).

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) And because he appeared to Cephas: that is, Peter. This was also reported by Cleopas and his companion to the disciples, as written in the Gospel according to Luke, which appeared to Peter alone. Afterwards, he appeared to the eleven (Luke 24:34). And this is recorded in the Gospel.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) Then He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once. This He speaks by His own faith. Of these, many remain until now, but some have fallen asleep. Of those whom the Lord appeared to after His resurrection, He says that many were still in the body at that time.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Then he appeared to James. He appeared specifically to James, just as he did to Peter. I think this was done to strengthen the faith in the resurrection through various appearances. Afterwards, to all the apostles. He appeared again to all the apostles on a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them, as Matthew the evangelist reports (Matthew 28:16). Before, in Jerusalem, eight days after his resurrection, that is, on the Lord's Day, with the doors locked, he entered and appeared to the disciples in order to strengthen the heart of Thomas, as the apostle John states (John 20:26). For on the mountain it is understood that he gave them the commandments.

(Vers. 8)

(Verse 8) But last of all, he appeared to me as to one born prematurely. And indeed, he appeared to me first in the sky, then while praying in the temple. (Acts 9:4; 22:17). He called himself born prematurely because he received the apostleship in Christ after the appointed time, after Christ ascended to heaven with his flesh.

(Vers. 9, 10.) (Vers. 9, 10.) For I am the least of all the apostles. He humbles himself and attributes it to the circumstances of the time; for he is lesser in time, not in dignity. But because he was also a persecutor, he inclines himself, saying: I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am. He gives glory to God, who chose him, and does not defend his own dignity, but declares himself unworthy. Therefore, he truly deserves more, knowing that the Lord has said: He who humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:10). And his grace toward me was not in vain. He says this because he did not receive less grace in his apostleship just because he persecuted the Church. But I worked harder than all of them. He adds to the argument that he was not only not inferior, but even more so because of the steadfastness with which he thrived in Christ, he was afflicted, and not taking it lightly, he became more worthy. Not I, however, but the grace of God with me. Lest he be thought to have boasted in himself, he immediately humbles himself, attributing not only this to himself, but to the grace of God; so that he always gives all glory to God, from whom he is rightly exalted.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) Therefore, whether it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed. This is what he indicated earlier, that he did not receive less grace in his preaching than the other apostles, but the same grace. Hence, it more clearly shows the unfaithfulness of the Corinthians, because when this faith had been made known to all the churches, they had turned away from this faith and hope, as he stated, saying:

(Vers. 12, 13, 14.)

(Vers. 12, 13, 14.) But if Christ is preached, that he rose from the dead; how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. These things were given by false apostles, who claimed that Christ was neither born, nor suffered in the flesh, nor rose from the dead: as denoted by the Apostle John, who denied that Christ came in the flesh. Where it says, Whoever denies that Christ came in the flesh, this is the Antichrist: and whoever denies the Son, does not have the Father either (I John 4:3). They would walk around and undermine the faith of some, so that they would not be considered foolish by the wise of the world; for the wise of the world consider the resurrection of the dead to be foolish. But if, he says, it is true that Christ did not rise, we are false preachers, and your faith is in vain. For this they have believed, as the Apostle preached, that the dead will rise, and they have been drawn to faith by this hope. But he asserts that this belief has certainly led to their detriment if they believed that it will not come to pass; and it is a matter of shame for someone to profess to believe something that is false. Therefore, he instills shame in them and says their labors are in vain; if what they heard from false apostles is true, that the dead will not rise: which certainly no one can bear to hear about themselves; so that seeing that this is against themselves, they would return to their original faith.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) We are also found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise. For if it is true that God raised Christ from the dead, then this person is a false witness against God and argues against his divine power. However, if it is

true that Christ was raised from the dead, then what should be said about someone who is both a false witness against God and claims that his work is foolishness?

(Vers. 16, 17.)

(Verse 16, 17.) For if the dead do not rise, neither has Christ risen. And if Christ has not risen, your faith is in vain; you are still in your sins. Therefore, those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. They are afraid that because no one wishes evil upon themselves, they should grieve that they have begun to believe what is against them. For who would not want to hear that their sins have been forgiven?

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Therefore, even those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. He adds to the terror, because they do not want to consider the loss of their loved ones as a destruction. For those who have departed from this world with this hope did not fear being killed; because they believed in the resurrection by the example of Christ, and it is not true, they have perished. He says this to them, who do not want to hear about the death of their loved ones; so that he may remove from them what they previously wanted to hear in error.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) If in this life we only hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. It is clear that both in this present life and in the future, we hope in Christ; for Christ does not abandon his servants here, but grants them grace, and in the future they will be in eternal glory. But if there were no hope for the future life, we would be most pitiable, as he said. For why endure fasting, vigils, hardships, a pure life, righteousness, mercy, and death, if there will be no reward for them in the future? But the incredulous ones enjoy this life.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21) But now Christ is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. By saying this, he is touching on the false prophets who denied that Christ was born and thus did not believe in the resurrection of the flesh; for he who is not born does not die. However, he proves that Christ has risen from the dead, because he was a man, so that it is not doubtful that a man was raised from the dead by God; and because by the sin of man death was found, the righteousness of Christ deserved the resurrection of the dead.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. This he says, because just as Adam, by sinning, found death and held all his descendants under its power, that they might be dissolved, so also Christ, without sinning, and by this conquering death (for he who does not sin conquers death, because death comes from sin), has acquired life for all those who are part of his body, that is, resurrection. Therefore, even though he grants a general resurrection, so that just as in Adam all, whether righteous or unrighteous, die, so also in Christ all, both believers and unbelievers, will rise again, even though unbelievers will rise to punishment, they nevertheless seem to be made alive, because they will receive their bodies, which will no longer

die but will suffer punishment in them without end, which they refused to believe.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) But each in his own order. Now he wants to explain the order of the resurrection, so that they do not think it is a fable; because it has not yet happened to the others: he explains their orders and times, when it happened, and when it will happen, so that the dead may rise. Christ is the beginning. As it is testified in the Acts of the Apostles that it is written in Moses (Acts 26:23). If Christ is passible, if he is the first to rise from the dead, etc. Therefore, he rose again in order to become a form for those who believe in him. Then, there are those who belong to Christ, who have believed in his coming. This must be understood in two ways: because in his second coming, the saints will rise again according to the faith of the Book of Revelation (Rev. 20:12), just as in his first coming when he rose again, many bodies of the saints also rose (Matt. 27:52), as a testimony to the defeated and plundered death. Therefore, under one meaning, it comprehends the twofold advent of the Lord.

(Vers. 24, 25, 26.)

(Verse 24, 25, 26.) Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. This is the saying, that when the kingdom is handed over, the end of the world will come, and the resurrection will be complete. But some, frightened by the harshness of the language, deviate from the intended meaning as they try to interpret it piously. For they shudder at the sound of the word, hearing, 'When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father' (1 Corinthians 15:24). They think that by this delivery of the kingdom, if it be understood according to the sound of the word, it will remain vacant, so that if He shall have delivered up, He Himself will no longer have it, as though the Father, by delivering up all things to the Son, should have emptied Himself. For the Lord Himself also says, 'All things are delivered unto Me of My Father' (Matthew 11:27). And afterwards: 'And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent' (John 17:3). Behold, while the Son reigns, the Father also reigns. But how can it be believed that the Son, in handing over the kingdom, will empty Himself, when the angel says to Mary: 'And the Lord God will give Him the throne of David, His father, and He will reign in the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end' (Luke 1:32)? And Daniel, speaking of the same kingdom, says among other things: 'The God of heaven will raise up another kingdom that will never be destroyed, and this kingdom will be eternal' (Daniel 2:44). Therefore, let no one doubt that the Son will always reign with the Father. Now, this is the tradition of the kingdom: when all things have been subjected to the Son and have worshipped him as God, death being destroyed, then the Son will show them that he is not the source of all things, but rather through whom all things exist. And this will be to hand over the kingdom to God the Father, to show that he himself is the source from which all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named (Ephesians 3:15): and then there will be the end. However, the destruction of death is the resurrection of the dead.

(Vers. 27, 28.)

(Verse 27, 28) But when he says, 'All things are subjected to him,' it is clear that he is excepted who subjected all things to him. And when all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will

also be subjected to him who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all. This is the same meaning that he now explains, to show what it means to give the kingdom to God and the Father. But he adds this to the meaning, because when the Father hands over the kingdom to the Son, he does not subject himself to him, as the Son subjects himself to the Father; for it is incongruous for the Father to be subjected to the Son. Therefore, the Father has subjected all things to the Son, so that he may be honored as the Father is honored. And when all things have confessed Christ as God, being placed under his feet, then Christ the Lord himself will be subjected to God the Father, so that God may be all in all. This is said because when the pride of all rulers and powers and dominions has been crushed, and they have worshiped Christ as God, then Christ, because of the unique authority of the Father, will indeed reveal himself as God, but from God, so that the sublime and ineffable authority of the one principle may remain. This is to submit oneself as the Son to the Father, that is, to be God in all things; because when every creature learns that its head is Christ, and Christ's head is God the Father; God the Father is in all things. (Phil. II, 10, 11), that is, that every creature may feel as one, that with one voice, every tongue of the heavenly, earthly, and infernal confess that God is one, from whom all things are. But if he had said: That God may be in all things; it would be understood that he is indeed in all things, but through affection or common sense; yet not that those same things are from him. But when he said, 'All things in all', he signified that both they are from him and in him: from him, because they are created by him; in him, because in the confession of all, God is one. Yet the Son is not subject to the Father as a creature is to the Son.

(Vers. 29.)

(V. 29) Otherwise, what will they do, who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for them? To such a degree does he wish to demonstrate the resurrection of the dead, that he provides their example, who were so certain about the future resurrection, that they were even baptized for the dead, if perhaps death had overtaken someone: fearing that the one who had not been baptized would not rise, or would rise in a bad way, the living were submerged under the name of the dead. He subjects: Why are they baptized for them? This example does not prove their actions, but rather shows steadfast faith in the resurrection.

(Vers. 30, 31.)

(Verse 30, 31.) Why are we also in danger every hour? I die every day for your glory, which I have in the Lord. By saying: Why are we also in danger? He distinguishes between people, showing that those who are baptized for the dead are not Catholic. Furthermore, he said above: Why are they baptized for them? Are we also baptized for them? For even Jephthah, though in a matter that could not be fulfilled, was found faithful in offering his daughter according to his vow, which he foolishly made (Judges 11:39). Therefore, it is not the action that is approved, but the perseverance of faith is held up as an example. He mentions the dangers and hardships faced by preachers, saying: What do we risk? and it is understood: unless because we hope in the future resurrection, as mentioned above. For being secure that true life will follow after this death, they do not fear the dangers inflicted by unbelievers, because of their zeal, whom they mourn because they believed they have lost. Therefore, he shows his concern, which he had for their salvation, because of the promised glory from the Lord, as it is also said in the Law: Lift up your voice like a trumpet; if they hear you, you will gain their souls. (Ezekiel 33:5). The Apostle hurriedly and always

anxiously worked, so that the glory for him would increase before God for the salvation of many.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) If I fought with beasts at Ephesus according to the judgment of men, what does it profit me if the dead are not raised? This means that if, according to human understanding (which does not see it as possible for the flesh, once dissolved, to be reformed and come to life, and therefore does not believe in the future resurrection of the dead), I am offered to beasts, I did not fear death and gained nothing. But this is not the case, because being certain of the promised life, I not only did not fear death but willingly allowed myself to be offered to beasts, as it is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles: For I am not only ready to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 21:13).

Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die. This is what the prophet Isaiah said about those who, as if there were nothing after death, cared only about their stomachs, just like those who corrupted the Corinthians.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33.) Do not be seduced, corrupt good morals with evil conversations. It means that by associating with evil people, one's good intentions can be undermined; for the constant influence of wicked speech corrupts the mind, and therefore one should avoid them. Indeed, whoever wants to preserve the faith they have received should especially avoid those who oppose it from the very beginning, so that they may fulfill what they have deemed beneficial.

(Vers. 34.) (Verse 34.) Be watchful, be righteous, and do not sin. It is warned to be watchful, lest by the deception of a depraved mind and led astray from faith, they are corrupted by not believing in the resurrection of the dead. It is commanded to be righteous, so that not only earthly justice is cultivated, but also heavenly justice; because earthly justice does not make one deserving, just as it does not make one guilty. For what is great about not taking what belongs to others, when this is out of fear? But what is truly great is to give from one's own possessions to someone in need, and this is true justice. And so that they would not sin, He subjected them; from which He wanted it to be understood that He did not command the preservation of temporal justice, but divine justice; because whoever preserves celestial justice is undoubtedly perfect in this present life. For some have ignorance of God, I speak this to your shame. They ignorantly believed that those who were being converted among them were foolish to believe in the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, they were ashamed as if to imprudent people; for they believed those who had ignorance of God, who taught against the decrees of God.

(Vers. 35.)

(Verse 35.) But someone will say: How will the dead be raised? With what kind of body will they come? You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

(Vers. 36.)

(Verse 36.) Foolish one, what you sow does not come to life unless it dies first? For with a human being, not necessarily by the authority of the Law does it act, so that it may persuade by examples, which if it were to accept, it would not err: but by natural reason, with which it flatters itself, so as

not to believe that dissolved and dead bodies can rise again. For it shows that dead things are restored to life and multiplied again, so that human error may be confounded.

(Vers. 37, 38.)

(Verse 37, 38.) And what do you sow? You do not sow the body that will be, but a bare grain, like wheat or some other grain; but God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. So if a bare grain is sown and by the divine will and the ministry of the elements it is raised, having many useful increases of human benefit, why is it not credible that the dead can be raised by the power of God, with their substance improved but not multiplied in number? What, therefore, is required from the unbeliever for the dead to rise with their bodies, when examples of this improved resurrection, not of lost substance, precede faith? Because each person will receive their own body, in which Adam was created, according to the examples mentioned above.

(Vers. 39.)

(Verse 39.) Not all flesh is the same flesh: but one is the flesh of men, another the flesh of beasts, another the flesh of birds, and another the flesh of fish. Though all flesh comes from the same mass, there is such diversity in them, that one expenditure would produce different kinds. Let the sophists of the world and the scrutineers of the stars now declare, if they can comprehend what is beyond themselves, when they do not know what is within themselves. Finally, all the worldly philosophers, who refused to humble their minds to the law of God, so as to accept His faith, always asserting different and contrary things, have confounded each other with empty disputes; because in none of these has the sign of testified truth been recognized, which would commend the doctrine by putting it before words, just as God has decreed for our discipline, which is not proven by words, but by power, to which words cannot resist. Just as from one substance different animals are made, so also in the resurrection different humans will be of different dignity, so that each one may appear as they deserve, since even here we see the diversity of bodies.

(Vers. 40.)

(Verse 40) And there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. Heavenly bodies are those of the resurrected, while earthly bodies are those before they die or resurrect. And just as Christ is heavenly, so the heavenly bodies are called as such. And from Adam, because he is earthly, the earthly bodies are called as such.

(Vers. 41.)

(Verse 41.) Other is the brightness of the sun, other is the brightness of the moon, and other is the brightness of the stars; for one star differs from another in brightness. He uses the comparison of one nature to explain the concept of an indiscriminate substance; for just as the sun and moon and stars, although they are of the same nature, are nevertheless of different brightness, so too humans, although they are of the same kind, will be rightly different in glory; so that the dignity of those who have the hundredfold number may equal the brightness of the sun, those who were the first rivals in order to be perfect, as it is said: Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:43). Those who have earned sixty points through good works should be compared to the brightness of the moon, so that they may have the merit of the second degree.

The merits of those who have attained thirty points, through their just labors, should be compared to the brighter stars, granting them the dignity of the third degree. As for the following stars, which are intermediate between the bright and the dim, sinful humans should be associated with them, as they have desired to attain no degree of honor among the three. But the resurrection of the wicked is similar to dark stars and the last of all, because they have followed error and are comparable to stars leading into error, as the Apostle Jude says in his Epistle (Jude 1:13). For unbelief cannot have a clear resurrection; just as a coal covered in its ashes is blinded, so too those enveloped in the darkness of their own deceit will be devoid of light.

(Vers. 42.)

(Verse 42.) Thus too will be the resurrection of the dead. He gives examples, so that there is no doubt that the resurrection of the dead will happen; so that, having received reason, no one doubts. It is sown in corruption, it will rise in incorruption. To sow is to bury, so that it may be corrupted: but to rise in incorruption is to not be able to be corrupted anymore, but to have the splendor of immortality.

(Vers. 43.)

(Verse 43.) It is sown in dishonor, it will rise in glory. It is sown in dishonor; because when it is placed in darkness, it becomes foul and infested with worms: but it will rise in glory; because it will be awakened and will be a light, and will suffer no damage from filthiness. It is sown in weakness, it will rise in power. It is sown in weakness; because it is immobile and unmanageable: but it will rise in power, because it will then be completely one and vigorous.

(Vers. 44.)

(Verse 44.) The animal body is sown, the spiritual body will rise. If there is an animal body, there is also a spiritual body. The animal body is sustained by food, in order to live; but the spiritual body, having no need for these things, is transformed into life. All the aforementioned is enclosed in this sense; for nothing else is contained in the higher state, except that the animal body dies and the spiritual body rises, which neither eats, nor drinks, nor becomes ill, nor is foul, nor is tainted by nature.

(Vers. 45.)

(Verse 45) The first man, Adam, was made into a living soul. This is said in Genesis (Gen. II, 7) because, by receiving the breath of God's spirit, man was made into a soul that was not alive; for the function of the spirit is to give life to the body, but in such a way that it does not have continuous life unless it uses the help of food and drink. But the last Adam was made into a life-giving spirit: that is, the one who was previously made into a soul was made into a spirit through resurrection; so that he cannot die, because he will become entirely living.

(Vers. 46.)

(Verse 46.) But not first what is spiritual; for the animal [comes] from Adam, but the spiritual [comes] through Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

(Vers. 47, 48.)

(Vers. 47, 48.) The first man is from the earthly earth, the second man is from the heavenly heaven: as the earthly, so are also those who are earthly; and as the heavenly, so are also those who are heavenly. The first man, Adam, is from the temporal earth, to whom death succeeds; the second man, Christ, is from heaven, who, rising, does not know to die: As that one is earthly, so are also those who are earthly; that is, because he is earthly mortal, mortal are also those who are earthly: but Adam, who sinned, found death, so that all are mortal because of him. And just as He is heavenly, so too are the heavenly ones: that is, because Christ did not sin, conquering death, He is heavenly; so too may those who believe be: although even those who do not believe will be spiritual in the future, but as spiritual wickedness, so that they may be dark. For now he is speaking of the holy ones, who will rise to glory; for just as those who do not believe are already judged, and those who believe are already called heavenly (John 3:18).

(Vers. 49.)

Therefore, just as we have borne the image of the earthly one, let us also bear the image of the heavenly one: that is, just as we have had the form of mortality through the sin of Adam, becoming slaves of sin, let us also have the form of life through the righteousness of the savior, becoming slaves of righteousness, not of the world, but of God; as we do those things that are worthy of immortality.

(Vers. 50.) (Verse 50.) But I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God. By flesh is meant perfidy, by blood, a shameful and luxurious life, because this desire is generated by the heat of the blood, so that it shows not only the unbeliever to be unworthy of attaining the resurrection, but also the one who obeys the desires and vices of the flesh. Therefore, he advises and instructs us on how we may deserve to obtain the kingdom of heaven. Nor will corruption possess incorruption. This is said because corruption and the lasciviousness of life must necessarily suffer punishment. For passion indeed posits corruption; for it is certain that all men will rise again immortal.

(Vers. 51.)

(Verse 51.) Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall all indeed rise again; that is to say, both believers and unbelievers. But not all of us shall be changed. Now the merit of each person at the resurrection signifies what their future will be like in each case.

(Vers. 52.) (Verse 52.) In a moment, in the blink of an eye, that is, quickly, without any delay. On the last trumpet; it is called the last because it is the final battle against demons, and princes, and powers, and the devil himself. For this will happen after a thousand years, during which the Savior will reign here, the Antichrist having been extinguished, when Satan will be released from his prison to deceive the nations of Gog and Magog, who are demons, so that they may fight against the camps of the saints; for temporal men will not be able to fight against the eternal. For John the Apostle also said: I saw Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon in heaven and his angels, who is the devil and Satan (Rev. 20:7). And therefore, this last trumpet says, because it was not once fought with him; because even in the Antichrist, the false prophets, who did signs and wonders before him, and he himself the victor, and in this place finally there will be a fight against him; so that he may already be sent to hell. And the Savior, among other things, says: Now the prince of this world will be cast down (John XII, 31). And so it happened, and he was

frequently defeated, as the prophet Isaiah says: How he has fallen from heaven, Lucifer, who used to rise in the morning (Isaiah XIV, 12). For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and we will be changed. For when the sinners and the impious rise, the saints will be changed in glory, so that flesh may become spiritual with glory, like lead, if it becomes gold. For the saints will rise in the coming of the Lord as it is said above (verse 23): Christ is the beginning; then those who are His in His coming, as it is contained in the Apocalypse; for sinners are not of Christ, who hear from the Lord: I do not know you (Psalm 1, 5). For it is also written in the first psalm: Therefore the wicked shall not rise again in judgment, nor sinners in the council of the just (Matthew 7:23). For the wicked have no reason to rise again; rather, they will rise in order to perish, seeing that what they refused to believe is true. But to perish is to be alienated from God, as it is said to the Romans: For as many as have sinned outside the law shall also perish without the law; and those who have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law (Romans 2:12). And by this judgment the sinners shall be judged; for they are unworthy to rise again with the saints, as it is said: Nor sinners in the council of the just.

(Vers. 53.)

(Verse 53) For it is necessary for this corruptible to put on incorruption, and for this mortal to put on immortality. Above, it was said that the dead will rise incorruptible, that is, they will be immortal, but not impassable; for those whom he speaks of will endure punishment for the qualities of their sins, so that they may exit, their debt having been paid: but the wicked are tormented by eternal punishment; for he says: 'He who does not believe is already judged' (John 3:18). And Isaiah the prophet also says: Their fire will not be extinguished, and their worm will not die (Isaiah 65:24). However, in the coming of the Lord and the saints will rise, and those who are alive will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, experiencing death as if it were sleep; for in that rapture, they will have both death and resurrection, as the same Apostle writes to the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 4:6 and following). For during the time of the Antichrist, there will be those who are either apostates, rebels, hiding, or suffering punishment, among the other Gentiles, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, along with their leader, the Antichrist, in his coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8), that is, at his command, they will be consumed by the fire through the angels of his power.

(Vers. 54, 55.)

(Verse 54, 55.) But when this mortal body shall put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? For after the resurrection of the wicked and sinful, death shall be absorbed in victory. For the words of one who insults are, 'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' For the resurrection of the dead is the victory over conquered death; but the devil is called death, against whom the insult is hurled; and he is called contentious, because through pride, although unequal in power, he resisted. So when he is defeated, he is killed and his spoils are taken from him; the one who fought against him will be angry.

(Vers. 56.)

(Verse 56.) However, the sting of death is sin. The sting signifies authority, because death received its authority through sin, as if sin was not present, the devil would have been silenced,

and death would not exist. But the power of sin is the law. Therefore, the power of sin is the law, because sin would not be imputed if there was no law.

(Vers. 57.)

(Verse 57.) But thanks be to God, who has given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He says that the triumph of the Savior has profited us; for what the Savior accomplished, He did not accomplish for Himself alone, but for us. Therefore, the victory is ours; for this reason, He became man while remaining God, so that by overcoming the devil, while not committing sin, He might acquire victory for us, who were held captive in death because of sin; so that the defeated devil, with Christ having been killed, who had not committed sin, might lose all whom he was holding captive because of sin. However, when he insults a man, he is made guilty, and thus the handwriting, that is, the sentence by which the human race was held in death, is erased, and being rescued, with the souls being led into heaven; so that they are not taken away from him by power, but by justice from God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Vers. 58.)

(Verse 58.) Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast and immovable, abounding in the work always, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. After all the necessary things have been explained for the organization of Ecclesiastical teaching and what should be avoided or followed has been demonstrated, he exhorts them to be firmly established in good works and always ready and plentiful in the works that produce fruit before the Lord. For through these things that have been explained, they will henceforth receive the reward of good work from the Lord, so that they may not be overturned by evil conversations.

Chapter XV.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) But concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me. Therefore, every Sunday, he commands the people to gather and assemble them, as they desire, for the gifts of God, and to place each of them in their own treasure as it were, so that when the Apostle comes, it may be found prepared for necessary uses; for what is collected gradually is neither burdensome nor lacking.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But when I come, I will send those whom you have approved by letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem. This consolation had a twofold effect, as it still does; so that it benefited the saints mentioned above, as well as the poor in the established Church, which now benefits both in terms of age and need. He says that he will send them by letter, those whom they have chosen as suitable for the distribution: these letters provide testimony to those sent, so that they may be received with grace.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) And if it is worthy, they will also go with me. He says this, if there is a significant collection, that he can also go; for it is worthy and necessary, so that if he himself goes, he may bring much comfort with him to the saints. This is what he signifies to the Romans, saying: For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to minister to them in material needs (Rom. 15:27); for they were from the Jews, of whom the Lord says, salvation is from the Jews, who were greatly envied in Jerusalem by the unbelieving Jews.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Verse 5, 6.) However, I will come to you after I have crossed Macedonia: and I may even stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may accompany me wherever I go. After giving them all the necessary instructions to make them joyful, he promised them his arrival, for which he strengthens all his admonitions by which he corrects them. Whoever hears that he is coming, from whom he received the law, will be more anxious so as not to be ashamed when he arrives.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) For I do not want to see you only in passing. Knowing that he had many things to do with them, he does not want to see them just briefly, and so that they would not be saddened, he promises to spend a lot of time staying with them; for whatever he does, he does with foresight. For I hope to stay with you for a little while, if the Lord permits. If the Lord, for then the Lord permits him to stay with them: he says permits; if they prove themselves worthy, by correcting the vices that he reproaches in them

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Vers. 8, 9.) But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. This is why he stayed in Ephesus; for he had found thirsty hearts there, to whom he could pour out the grace and mystery of Christ. But because the devil is always restless and envious of those who desire God, he added: And there are many adversaries; for the more suitable they were found for faith, the more those who would oppose and resist the teaching of the Lord were not lacking.

(Vers. 10-12.) (vv. 10-12) But if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is doing the work of the Lord, just as I am. Therefore, let no one despise him. Although Timothy preaches what he has received from the Apostle and is a suitable evangelist, because he does not have the same authority, he is commended so that he may not be rejected by those in the community who disagree with him and so his arrival may contribute to their salvation. For even the Gentiles could be stirred up to rebellion and discord among the common people, taking the opportunity to attack Timothy; therefore, let no one despise him, because he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am also doing; that is, let the apostle seek that he be received with my authority; for he himself was a bishop. Lead him in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers. He mentions the great merit of Timothy; not only does he command that he be honored among them, but he also shows that Timothy is to be led as the apostle of the Lord with obedience; so that he himself also awaited Timothy with the brothers for the sake of the Gospel of Christ. But I inform you about Apollo, my brother, because I have asked him a lot to come to you with the brothers; and certainly it was not his will to come now. However, he will come when it's convenient. Saying this, he showed that he had satisfied their will or request, when he fulfilled his vow to them,

and Apollo excused himself: he did not declare why he did not go to them, nevertheless he did not entirely excuse himself, but he postponed it. It can also be understood in this way, that Apollo touches them, signifying that Apollo did not want to go to them because they were in disagreement; so when they heard this, they sought peace; and therefore he said about Timothy: See that he is among you without fear; because some messengers were not well received: and by this Apollo will come when they are in agreement.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Vers. 13, 14.) Stay awake, stand firm in faith, act courageously, be strengthened: let all be done in love. Stay awake, he says, lest they be deceived in faith. Act courageously, that is, advise them to be strong in regard to the things that were entrusted to them: not like children, who are ignorant of what they are following. Be strengthened; that they may be strong both in voice and in action; for profession and good deeds make one perfect. But in order for these things to be done in love, he advises; for the things that are done with love have the fear and zeal of God; for whatever is done with the offense of a brother does not produce fruit. For some people must be provoked to do good, not to be saddened, for example, if you do not show mercy when someone discourages you, or if you are inhumane, or if you find fault with others, or if you eat something, taunting the one who abstains from it, so as to cause scruple for them. All things must be done in such a way that it is an exhortation to better things, not an insult, and then there is peace. Hence the Lord says, by this it is known if you are my disciples, if you love one another (John 13:35): but where there is contention and dissension, there is no love.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verses 15, 16.) Now I urge you, brothers, you know the household of Stephanas and Fortunatus, that they are the firstfruits of Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints; that you also be subject to such people, and to everyone who works and labors with them. The Corinthians of Achaia greet you; therefore, he speaks of them, through whom he encourages them to do such work; for they are of them. For this is great among Christians, because, having rejected greed, they give generously from their labors, having become imitators of the father God, who is rich in mercy. However, when he says, 'That you may be subject to such people,' he actually encourages them more to have others themselves as subjects, having become rivals in this work.

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Verse 17, 18.) But I rejoice in the presence of Stephanus, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus; for they have supplied what was lacking from you. For they refreshed both my spirit and yours. Therefore, recognize those who are like them. For there is a difference between giving a gift, as he says, to the holy ones, and rendering service to the ministers of the Gospel, as the Lord says: For the worker is worthy of his wage. (Luke 10:7). For the household of Stephanus is dedicated to both the ministry of the saints and to those who serve the churches, so that they may be of assistance to the Apostle, as well as to Fortunatus and Achaicus, who are fellow brothers. But when he says, 'They refreshed both my spirit and yours,' and the Apostle denies that he will receive from them, for he says, 'This boasting will not be broken in me in the regions of Achaia,' how did they refresh both my spirit and yours? But I believe his spirit was refreshed in those in whom they had made

progress; for he says a gift was given him, namely, that he made progress in those in whom he wished. Therefore, recognize those who are of this kind - that is, imitate them.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) The churches of Asia send you greetings. Through this greeting, they remind them to become like those who live in the same province. Aquila and Priscilla greet you in the Lord, together with the church that meets in their home. He mentions two types of churches, the public one where everyone gathers, and the domestic one where they gather through friendship. Wherever the priests celebrate the solemnities, it is called a church.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) All your brothers send greetings. It lifts their spirits when it shows that all of them remember these very things. Greet one another with a holy kiss. A holy kiss is a sign of peace, teaching that by embracing one another, discord is removed.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) My greeting in the hand of Paul. He shows in this letter that he signed it himself, and he added the words of the subscription, saying:

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha, which is translated as: If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus, who is coming, let him be cut off. Maranatha, for the Lord is coming, signifies. This is because of the Jews who claimed that Jesus had not come, therefore they are anathema from the Lord, who is coming.

(Vers. 23, 24.)

(Verses 23, 24.) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all, in Christ Jesus. Therefore, he put such a subscription because of those who were eager for dissension and did not love the Lord Jesus; for they would say: I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am indeed of Cephas (I Cor. I, 12). For he who loves Christ does not give glory to men, for there is no hope in men. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you; and it is understood, you who love the Lord Jesus. And since they did not love one another, therefore he says this: My love is with all of you in Christ Jesus; so that they would learn to love themselves with the same grace by which they were loved by the Apostle, not out of lustful desire, but in Christ Jesus.

Commentary on 1 Thessalonians

On the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1-4.)

• (Vers. 5.) • (Vers. 6, 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2-6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14-17.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6-11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14-17.) • (Vers. 18-22.)

• (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

Prologue

In order that he may exhort others to growth in faith by the example of these, namely the Thessalonians, he praises them for remaining in the received grace and for having grown in the pursuit of better things in order to obtain the rewards of progress. He encourages them to strive for perfection, so that the dignity sought by their virtues may provoke others. For they had embraced the spirit of such great faith that they endured the persecutions inflicted on them for the name of Christ with devoted hearts, even the persecutions brought upon them by their fellow citizens, the Macedonians, in hope of what is to come. So that he may express their merit and his joy from their progress in letters, he writes to them as follows:

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Version 1.) Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace to you and peace. Indeed, the names of three bishops are mentioned in the letter, but the thoughts and words are those of the Apostle alone. For, because they rejoice together in their progress, the letter is written to the people with the consent of the Apostle, wishing them peace and grace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Vers. 2, 3.)

(Vers. 2, 3.) We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers, constantly remembering your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father. For all good things are from God, therefore they first give thanks to Him for their progress, who has deemed it worthy not only to give his gift to people under sin, but to adopt them as his children, at the same time assisting them in enduring all destruction, so that they may become more worthy. Therefore, they say that they remember these things in their speeches because they were increasing in the work of faith in the other churches, in order to complete the work that had been started by the will of God. They were eager in the pursuit of love, patience, and the hope of the coming of the Lord, which is before God, who deigned to

incarnate his Son for the salvation of humanity. For it is pleasing to God if progress is made in Christ.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verse 4, 5.) Knowing, beloved brothers chosen by God, your election; because our Gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much fullness, as you know what kind of people we were among you for your sake. They indicate that they were humble among them, so that they would give them a form of gentleness, not because they lacked the great things that would encourage them to faith, because the strength of the gospel teachings provided the power of signs and wonders, in the Holy Spirit, that is, not in illusion, but in the truth of fullness, so that no need would lack assistance; but abundant grace would appear in both teaching and conduct, and in the healing of the sick; so that the perfect work of the Holy Spirit would appear in the churches of the Thessalonians, so that they would rejoice in the gift of God, who deigned to make them participants in the promise of Abraham.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Vers. 6, 7.) And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, receiving the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved - so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last! (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16) Being mindful of this thing, they rejoiced in the hope of the promise in their distress. Therefore, there is great exhortation for progress, when he says that both Christ and the apostles made themselves similar to provide an example to the rest of the believers in those places where their fame spread.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need to say anything. For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) So that we do not need to speak about ourselves. They themselves announce about us, about the kind of entrance we had to you: and how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the coming wrath. They say that they have spread the fame of their entrance and their conduct with the preaching of the Gospel, so that it is not necessary to speak of it; for it is superfluous to speak of things that are well-known. For the news of the apostles' arrival had spread to all the surrounding areas. And those who had received them with devotion eagerly shared the message with others. They had become more receptive to everything they had heard from the apostles, and thus abandoned their dead idols. They now eagerly awaited the arrival of

Christ from heaven, whom they had heard had died for the sake of human salvation and had risen victorious over death. They believed that he had ascended, with his flesh, into heaven in a cloud, which served to confound the worldly wise. These individuals, who consider worldly matters, believe that the weight of the flesh prevents it from being raised up to heaven. By this affection, the Holy Spirit is made so that the wise of the world may be put to shame.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. But after we had already suffered and been treated with contempt in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in the midst of great opposition. The affliction that he now mentions (Acts 16:16 and following) he suffered in Philippi with Silas because of the spirit of divination that a girl had, which has already been mentioned in its proper place. He who did not yield to pressures, but was found to be stronger, while he dares to preach and does not fear to speak, certainly in hope of the promised reward; so that even these may be secure in persecutions, rejoicing because of the future reward. Therefore, this is said to be the sign of a devoted and faithful preacher, if in distress he does not fear to speak the word of God, signifying thereby the empty one who suffers present fear of preaching. For he who is secure in the hope that has been promised does not yield in order to be crowned.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Vers. 3, 4.) For our exhortation is not based on deceit, or impurity, or idolatry, but as we have been approved by God; in order to be entrusted with the Gospel, we speak, not to please people, but God, who examines our hearts. This is why he speaks against false apostles, who preach with deceit and deception, not sent by God, in order to deceive the nations into serving the law of works. But this person, who is chosen and sent, proves himself through many actions; for he is found stronger in times of distress, and blameless in his conduct; so that there would be nothing in him that appears unworthy of God, with accompanying signs. For some were preaching Christ for the sake of gain, serving the favor of men; because they were more lenient in arguing, since they had no authority, and in tribulation they were weak; because their words were not from the heart, but in deceit. For everyone who does something without hope, succumbs when tribulation arises.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For we have never conducted ourselves in flattery, as you know, nor in opportunity for greed. God is witness. Now he reveals what he has already signified, when he says: Not in opportunity for greed, giving God as witness, because he did this from the heart, not in hypocrisy, as if despising little things so that perhaps more would be offered. Therefore, it is fitting for them as well, knowing and approving that no one was deceived; for the false apostles desired to be given the appearance of greed, so that by the opportunity itself, while they see true apostles receiving all things brought, they could themselves plunder simpler men without envy.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verses 6, 7.) Neither seeking glory from men, nor from you, nor from others; although we could have asserted our authority as Christ's apostles among you. It burdens the pseudo-apostles to the

extent that they deny themselves, even though they were entitled to receive honor from those who had neither ability nor shame, yet demanded honor for themselves; for they wanted to be commended themselves rather than the doctrine of God. However, the apostle who sought glory not for the present but for the future, made himself humble so that the preaching of God may be exalted.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) But we were little children among you, as if a nurse cherishes her own children; so desiring you, we desire to impart to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own souls; for you have become very dear to us. He shows so much affection towards them (which, because it is true, he wants to be proven not only by words but also by actions; for there can be deception in words), that, provoked by these exhortations, the apostles have their entire being in love.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day so as not to burden any of you. This is what he says in the Acts of the Apostles: 'All that was necessary for me and those with me, these hands have provided.' And in another letter he says, 'Whoever does not work should not eat.' And he says this against false apostles, who pretended to be preachers while living in idleness and indulging in food. So, in order to give an example of how Christian life should be governed and to benefit others, he dedicated himself to human labor, overshadowing the false apostles. Furthermore, those who engage in labor turn away from evil thoughts, occupying their minds and guarding against dangers.

(Vers. 10, 11, 12.)

(Verses 10, 11, 12.) We preached to you the Gospel of God. You are witnesses, as is God Himself, of how holy and righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. You know how we treated each one of you, like a father caring for his own children, urging, comforting, and urging you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who called you into His kingdom and glory. These things are evident, for they remind them of how they believed when we preached to them, and of the experiences they had with us, and the commands we gave them, so that they may be worthy of God who called them from earth to heaven, that He may raise their joy.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) Therefore, we also give thanks to God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it truly is, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. We give thanks to God, who has opened their understanding to receive His gospel. For the glory of those who preach is when those who hear readily believe; for they received the word with such devotion that they proved themselves to have understood that it is the teaching of God.

(Vers. 14, 15, 16.)

(Vers. 14, 15, 16.) For, brethren, ye have become imitators of the churches of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus: for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews; who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and

pleased not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always. But the wrath of God came upon them at the uttermost. He complains about the impiety and credulity of the distrustful Jews, who are not only enemies of their own salvation, but also of others, prohibiting them from believing and being saved, from the beginning of being parricides; for they should have spared the common Lord, who did not spare his own subjects and superiors: so that their sins may be filled up, to such an extent that they may never deserve to obtain mercy. Therefore, he says that the Thessalonians suffered the same things from their fellow citizens, imitating the patience of the saints and of our Lord Jesus Christ. He introduces the Jews as the authors of this crime, so that it may be recognized how much glory those are worthy of who suffer for the name of the Lord, and what vengeance is prepared for the hostile and unbelieving.

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Vers. 17, 18.) But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. Being separated from them through bodily absence, not in affection; for love cannot be divided nor separated: but they say that they desire to see their face for greater instruction. In fact, in divine matters, articles are lacking to comprehend what can be said; for a day is not sufficient to write down what can be expressed in one hour; and let me not say that there are certain mystical aspects of our religion that, due to sensual desires, should not be easily made public in order to avoid scandal. For not all things should be said to everyone, but words should be moderated according to the understanding of each individual, differently for the inexperienced and differently for the learned. Therefore, the presence of the body is required; for in this way the truth of charity is perfected. Although charity is not divided, the absence of the body creates longing: ultimately, the will is fulfilled by a kiss and embrace of souls. Satan, who also reached out his hands to the apostles, claimed to be an obstacle to this matter; so that the reason for truth would not be revealed to men. For he ignited the minds of the treacherous, so that they would detain them with beatings and chains; so that they would not speak the word of God. For the elders of the Jews said to the apostles, 'Did we not strictly command you not to speak in the name of Jesus to those men?' (Acts 5:40). But because what is not from God cannot stand, the obstacles of Satan are dissolved.

(Vers. 19, 20.)

(Verse 19, 20.) For what is our hope or joy or crown of glory? Are you not before our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy. It is evident that the perfection of disciples is the joy and crown of the teacher. For these are the ones who will bear the fruit of their labor; for the fruit of the teacher is the obedient disciple, whose good conduct benefits the teacher, and the fruit of the disciple is the labor that they produce. For the labor of the disciple in good work gives a crown to the master, with Christ as the judge.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1-4.)

(Vers. 1-4.) Therefore, no longer able to endure, we decided it was best to be left alone in Athens: and we sent our brother Timotheus, a minister of God in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you and

to encourage you concerning your faith, so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this task. For even while we were with you, we predicted that we would suffer affliction, as it has happened, and you know. He expressed the causes mentioned above. Therefore, they wanted to be present among them in order to strengthen their spirits; so that none of them would suffer scandal from the pressures of the apostles, who performed such great signs but were sometimes weakened; thus humiliated, they were subjected to beatings and chains. In order to excuse this matter, Timothy, a suitable teacher, was sent, who would show that the merits of Christians increase from here if they give thanks for suffering for the name of the Lord, from whom they expect the reward for this matter, and at the same time pour out prayers to God, that they may be steadfast. They had predicted that they would undergo such persecution, in order to demonstrate through their knowledge of this matter that they could escape and avoid these injustices, but because there is great hope in them, therefore he says that they willingly endure the inflicted ones.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Therefore, even I, not tolerating it any longer, sent to know your faith; lest by any means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor be in vain. That is why he says this, concerning certain ones, who could be deceived by the cunning of Satan; for in every group there is a strong part and a weak part, for whom he was concerned, lest he should lose the fruit of their faith. And because he could no longer bear not knowing what was happening with them, he sent Timothy, a bishop appointed by him, so that he could have certainty.

(Vers. 6, 7, 8.)

(Verses 6, 7, 8.) Now when Timothy came to us from you and brought us news of your faith and love and reported that you always have good memories of us, longing to see us as we also long to see you, therefore we have been comforted, brothers, in you, in all our distress and affliction, through your faith; for now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord. He explains why he writes to them in a joyful tone; for when the messenger arrived and the Apostle learned of their firm devotion in faith and love, he was delighted by their unity and writes to them, confident in the fruit of their faith and good conduct.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verses 9, 10.) For what thanks can we render to God for you, in return for all the joy with which we rejoice on your account before our God, night and day, praying exceedingly, that we may see your face and supply what is lacking in your faith? There is nothing so worthy that it can suffice as a compensation for the salvation of the Gentiles that has been acquired. And since they had advanced in the perseverance of faith and the action of a better life, he desires more and more to see them, so that they may learn those things that pertain to the perfection of a thousand, namely the sacraments of spiritual things, which should not be easily made public; so that they may know who and how immense is He whom they hoped for as their judge. For it is one thing to accept the faith, and another to interpret the faith; for one is a discussion about the nature of the Father and the Son, and another about the persons. The Father is uncreated, but the Son is created: as far as

the persons are concerned, they appear to be different, since there is an individual unity of nature; for unity is not in the person, but in the substance. However, the Holy Spirit should not be considered different; for He is considered the third. Therefore, whoever is not in doubt about the second person, also admits the third.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But may God himself, our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, guide our way to you. He requests that his journey be arranged in proper order, first by God the Father, for everything is from him; then by the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom everything exists. May the power and providence of the Father and the Son commend his arrival, and may it be pleasing to those who hear him, and may the obstacles of the devil be overcome in order to guide his journey.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Vers. 12, 13.) May the Lord multiply you and make love abound among you and towards all, just as it does towards us in you, to strengthen your hearts in blameless holiness before God our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. He desires to multiply their joy, in which He rejoices over them, and to have it overflow to all good works. He wants to find even more in them when He comes, worthy of praise, than what He had heard from Timothy. He wants them to be found blameless with the saints in the love of God the Father, and at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He begins to judge each one on His tribunal. He calls God because of the terror of His majesty: but He calls Him Father because of the goodness by which He deigns to adopt believers as His children, which will be manifested in the coming of the Lord.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore, brethren, we beg and beseech you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. This is what I said above, that he wants them to increase in good works according to the apostolic commandments, to accumulate their joy.

(Vers. 2-6.)

(Verse 2-6.) For you know what precepts I have given you through our Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no one overstep and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all these things, as we have forewarned you and testified. Although he praises them throughout the entire letter, he warns them not to be led astray by any deceit and not to seek revenge, which they have learned is the punishment of evils. Knowing that this pleases God, if they keep their bodies undefiled and behave sincerely with their brothers, so that they are not found to be like the Gentiles and thus be rejected from the name of adoption.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) For God has not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness. Therefore, whoever rejects these things does not reject man, but God, who has also given us his Holy Spirit. To emphasize this, he adds the person of God, saying: He does not reject man who disregards the commandments, but God. He says that God has given us the Holy Spirit so that we may live holy lives; for the Holy Spirit does not reside in a body that is subject to sin (Wisdom 1:4).

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verses 9, 10.) However, concerning brotherly love, we do not have a need to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another (John 15:17). For indeed, you do this toward all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Although he praises them for doing this, he also admonishes them to do it more fervently; for he indicates that those who are taught by God himself should be more ready in brotherly love. For because of His great love, God had mercy on us, and having become imitators of Him, we have shown ourselves rightfully adopted by God as His children.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) But we urge you, brothers, to abound more and to strive to be quiet and to mind your own business and work with your hands, as we instructed you. So that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. Again, he urges the same, that you excel in good deeds and work diligently. For this is pleasing to God and he reminds us of this frequently. For the path of righteousness must be followed in order to come to mercy by right. Those who are of lesser means should labor with their hands. By their very intention, they should be lifted from common restlessness and wrong thinking, so that their discipline may also be praised by unbelievers and they may be provoked to faith.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verses 12, 13.) But we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. It is clear, because if the resurrection of the dead is believed to be future, those who go forth with the sign of the cross should not be mourned. Truly, those who pass from here into Gehenna are the ones who should be mourned, so that they may learn that what they refused to believe is true. But the faithful will rise again to glory, so that those who in this world were considered foolish because of their faith may be seen as prudent; for they have provided for themselves glory. These are the ones who, through Jesus, that is, going out in the hope of this faith, will be brought with him in his coming; so that they may be seen by men. Yet, even though he himself prevents mourning over the departure of the deceased, he himself says elsewhere: 'I should not have sadness' (Philip. 2:27). But now it is explained in its proper place.

(Vers. 14-17.)

(Verse 14-17.) For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be

with the Lord. Therefore console yourselves with each other in these words. The sense of the Lord reveals Himself, when He says: We tell you this by the order of the Lord. For He explains in what manner the future will be, by the command of Judge Christ, with the holy Spirit revealing; so that through this hope, those who have sent ahead their beloved ones may not grieve, learning that in the coming of the Lord, the first to rise will be those who die in Christ. For Christ Himself, by the will of the Father, as the first angel of the heavenly host, as is contained in the Apocalypse of John the Apostle (Rev. XII, 7 et seq.), will descend from heaven to wage war in the name of God against the antichrist. And when he is destroyed, by his command the dead will rise. This is therefore to descend in the trumpet of God, to wage war in the name of God; for as He Himself said to Joshua the son of Nun (Joshua V, 14), He is the leader and prince of the army of the Lord, for which He is called the archangel. But when the voice of God descends in the trumpet, he is God; for both Scriptures contain this, just as in Exodus we read that an angel appeared to Moses in a flame, and immediately we recognize that God himself is in what is below, that is, the Son of God, the same Scriptures saying: And Moses approached, and said, I turn away, for I cannot look upon the face of God (Exod. III, 6). Therefore, he is God, because the Son of God is true God; and he is the leader and prince, because he is the head of all, for through him are all things. Therefore, with the first who rise again, who died in Christ, then we who are alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ in the air; so that all may come with the Lord to battle, and he may see those whom he had killed, alive; because just as the clouds are obedient to the Lord, so too are those whom he has deemed worthy to call his brothers. And thus, we will always be with the Lord; for in that sudden rapture, death will come and the soul, as if through sleep, will be restored in an instant. For when they are taken away, they will die; so that when they come to the Lord, they may receive the souls in the presence of the Lord; because they cannot be dead with God. Therefore, comfort one another with these words. With this hope, they encourage each other to console those who still mourned the departure of their loved ones, according to the pagan custom.

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

(Verse 1, 2, 3.) But concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, there is no need for me to write to you; for you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, 'Peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. This is what the Lord spoke about in the Gospel, saying: 'Be watchful, for you do not know the hour when your Lord will come' (Mark 13:32). And again: If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ,' or 'There he is,' do not believe it (Matthew 24:23). For immediately and unexpectedly he will appear, shining like lightning flashes from east to west, bringing with him the army of God the Father for the destruction of the antichrist and his followers. For when the wicked have been secure in the kingdom of the devil and have killed the saints, namely, Enoch and Elijah, they will rejoice in victory, exchanging gifts with one another, as the Apocalypse says (Revelation 11:7 and following). Then sudden destruction will come upon them. For Christ, in his coming, will destroy all of them; so that the holy ones, seeing that they have escaped, may glorify.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verse. 4, 5.) But you, brothers, are not in darkness, so that that day may overtake you like a thief; for all of you are children of light and children of the day: you are not of the night nor of darkness. In darkness signifies ignorance and falsehood, but in the day signifies knowledge and truth. Therefore, he says that Christians are not in darkness, but the Gentiles or unbelieving Jews are children of darkness; because they are worshippers of falsehood. Therefore, it signifies that the faithful should be secure; because they do not ignore the coming of the Lord, but anxiously await for Him to come. However, those who are ignorant and doubting about Him, He will suddenly catch them unawares and destroy them.

(Vers. 6-11.)

(Verse 6-11.) Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore, exhort one another and build each other up, as you are already doing. It is clear what he is saying; he reminds us not to act carelessly in the name of the Savior: therefore, we must fortify ourselves with three defenses, namely, faith, hope, and charity. For while faith remains, it stirs up hope; but hope is necessarily restless about the promise and does not sleep; charity, on the other hand, offers devotion to God, for it admits nothing contrary. Therefore, the Lord Jesus died for us and rose again, so that whether we are awake, that is, alive, or whether we are asleep, that is, dead, we may live together with him in eternal life. This is what he said above, that the faithful, both the dead and the living, will be taken to meet the Lord in his coming, and will always live with him. He teaches us to meditate on this and to build each other up in this understanding.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Vers. 12, 13.) But we ask you, brothers, to recognize those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. This is what he says in another letter (I Tim. 5:17) about honoring the elders with double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For it is possible that he who suffers poverty may feel reluctant to engage in the exercise that benefits the listeners. For what profit is it to have honor without fruit: or what great thing is it to offer carnal things to Him who bestows spiritual things? For just as riches beget negligence of salvation, so poverty, while seeking to be satiated, turns away from justice. Hence Solomon does not seek to become excessively rich; nor does he seek to become destitute. (Prov. XXX, 8). Nevertheless, this should be done in charity; so that the honor of the priest may be not so much from fear, but from love; so that it may also benefit Him who carries it out. For what is not done willingly does not lead to the desired result; although it may benefit the one taking action in the present, it will be of no advantage to the one giving in the future. And because disagreement generates many evils, it encourages them to be peaceful.

(Vers. 14-17.)

(Verses 14-17.) But we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays evil for evil to anyone, but always seek

to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you all. For it is necessary that some in the community be unruly, some timid, that is, fearful, and some weak in faith; therefore, he exhorts those who are level-headed and courageous, and founded in faith, with prayer, to assist them, so that they may be able to make progress, bearing with them; lest if a repayment of evils is made, they become worse. Therefore, nothing else but good should be pursued, not only in the case of brothers, but also in the case of everyone. For through good works, unbelievers can be drawn to faith, from which one may always rejoice in the Lord, that is, in what is good. Prayer must be constant; for diligent prayers prompt the judge's mind to grant mercy. Indeed, in all good actions, thanks must be given to God, who has granted this teaching in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Vers. 18-22.)

(Verse 18-22.) Do not extinguish the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. This is said so that someone speaking by the Spirit may not be easily silenced (for their fervent speaking is silenced by contradictory words), lest those who do not understand say offensive things against the Holy Spirit and sin out of ignorance. And it is not right for someone revealing scripture-like teachings not to be listened to patiently, but all words should be examined and judged; lest they reject the grace given to a brother when they resist and oppose it. Therefore, everything that is said should be examined; and whatever is spoken in a sober and good manner should be retained. For whatever agrees with the words of the apostles and the Lord himself should be considered well spoken and retained; but those things that seem to be opposed to the faith should be avoided. For the spirit of the world often deceptively speaks good things as if by imitation, and intermixes evil among them, so that through those things which are good, evil may be carried along and accepted; because the words of one spirit are thought to be the same, they are not distinguished from each other: but through what is allowed, the illicit is praised by the authority of a name, not by the reason of virtue. For under the name of the apostles and the Lord himself they teach and preach unspeakable and adverse things; and therefore they admonish that all things should be examined, because the words of the Lord cannot be different. Hence also is from where the epistle of the apostle John:"Do not believe every spirit," he says, "but test the spirits whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1), because if someone may say many good things, but in something that is contrary to faith, it is known that he is not the Holy Spirit. For no error can be found in the Holy Spirit. However, through the exercise of speech, there are certain spiritual things and certain carnal things; because every error is attributed to the flesh, or certainly, a clever commentary invents good through a certain deception; to insert evil into these, as I mentioned above: just as in the case of Montanus, and Priscilla, and Maximilla, the prophets of the Phrygians, the spirit of the world simulated good by a certain imitation; so that through many plausible and even true things, it would lie that it is the Holy Spirit.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) But may the God of peace sanctify you completely, so that your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God of peace is Christ; for He says: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John 14:27). Indeed, since everything that the Father has belongs to the Son, the Apostle wishes to sanctify us through Him; so that He may illuminate us with the piety of His mercy, and direct all our actions towards perfection, so that

the spirit given to us may be blameless. For then is a person whole, if we strive for a good life, having a pure soul and a blameless body, so that the whole person may be perfect. For the body can be pure, and the soul can be tainted by evil thoughts; therefore, it is said that the spirit in a person must be pure. But if a wicked life or thought intervenes, the spirit will not be whole; for it abandons a person who is subject to sin. For when the soul and body are in disagreement, even though the body is without sensation, they become alienated from it and, as if losing them, the spirit will not be whole; for it is given to a person that it may remain in him and be as if the head thereof. Therefore, he will not be whole; for when a man departs from him, he loses the parts that the Holy Spirit despises.

(Vers. 24, 25.)

(Verses 24, 25.) For God is faithful, who has called you, who will also do it. Brothers, pray for us. He speaks of God's faithfulness in His promises, so that they may confidently seek their reward. And because those who live rightly according to the Gospel can easily obtain what they ask for, he encourages them to pray for themselves; for many easily obtain what they desire.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. Holy kisses are in Christian greeting, the rest are carnal; for whatever is done without Christ is carnal, and therefore also mortal. For whoever despises the author of life is in death.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) I adjure you in the name of the Lord, that this letter be read to all the brothers. It obliges them to be diligent in reading the letter to all the brothers, so that they may know both their praises and their admonitions; by which they may be made perfect.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Thus he desires them to progress in good works, so that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may remain in them forever.

Commentary on 1 Timothy

On the First Letter of Paul to Timothy.

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologus.

• Caput I.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.) • (Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8-11.) • (Vers. 12, 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.) • (Vers. 18, 19, 20.)

• Caput II.

• (Vers. 1-4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

• Caput III.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.) • (Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• Caput IV.

• (Vers. 1-5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• Caput V.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22)

• (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25.)

• Caput VI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13-16.) • (Vers. 17, 18, 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

Prologus.

Timothy was the son of a faithful Jewish woman and a Greek father, which is why he could not be circumcised as a child. He learned the sacred scriptures from his mother, and with her guidance, he established a good life for himself. When the Apostle wanted to take him as a companion, knowing that Timothy would be a suitable steward of the Gospel truth, he circumcised him out of compulsion for the sake of the Jews. They insisted that as a Jew by birth, he should not be considered uncircumcised for the purpose of ministry, in order to avoid any hindrance due to his heritage. Therefore, he instructs this newly created bishop through a letter on how he should order the Church.

Caput I.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) Paul the apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of our God Savior, and Christ Jesus our hope, to Timothy his brother in faith. Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. He reveals himself as an apostle by the commandment of the Father and the Son, in order to proclaim salvation in God the Father and hope in Christ his Son; so that because no one denies that salvation is in God, nor does anyone doubt that hope is in Christ Jesus, whom he recognized as having been raised from the dead, as an example of this hope. In this way, Timothy writes in order to secure his ordination; because he was chosen by the authority of the Father and the Son to teach. He calls him a true son, but in faith, as he says to the Corinthians: In Christ Jesus, he says, I have begotten you through the Gospel (I Cor. IV, 15). This is the true and firm generation, which knows no end, knows no diseases and pestilence, and which is ignorant of hunger and thirst: but it has learned in the kingdom of God to lack nothing; because the glorious immortality of God's gift is to come in the kingdom of God and Christ, whose grace, mercy, and peace he desires to remain with.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Vers. 3, 4.) As I urged you to remain in Ephesus when I was going to Macedonia, so that you could instruct certain people not to teach false doctrines or devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculation rather than the stewardship of God's work, which is by faith; do so. A son should not be asked by his father, but out of love and to show him the form of humility, a bishop pleads with his fellow bishop not to allow the Jews to teach the people differently than what was handed down by the Apostle, so that they are not entertained by the myths that the Jews are accustomed to telling about the genesis of their origins, about Abraham, Isaac, and the other patriarchs, and about circumcision and the things that were later handed down by Moses; so that they are not deceived into practicing these things that were given to them in a fleshly manner. For what need is there to mention the generations, which are known to be infinite, and what and to what extent has been done under each of them; and not rather to seek salvation through faith in a concise way? For from there arise questions, when what, and when, and how, and why it was done, are being discussed: which hinders salvation.

(Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

(Verses 5, 6, 7.) For the purpose of this commandment is charity from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and unfeigned faith, from which some, having turned aside, have turned to empty talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor about what they

confidently assert. For charity is the greatest of all, and it has been said that this is the end, that is, the fulfillment of perfection, of all commandments; if, however, it is from a pure heart and a good conscience. For true charity cannot have a wicked life or a simulated faith, in which the entire Law and Prophets are fulfilled (Matthew 7:12). However, some Jews, ignorant of the mystery of the Law and the prophets, erred in thinking that even after Christ, the laws regarding new moons, circumcision, and dietary restrictions should still be observed. Therefore, he called their conversion a falsehood because they wanted to teach what they did not know.

(Vers. 8-11.)

(Verses 8-11.) But we know that the law is good if one uses it legitimately, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, fornicators, sodomites, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted. To say that the law, which was given through Moses, is good, does not deny it; but in such a way that its meaning is understood and how it was given is received. For he knows the Law, and for what reason it was given, who, preaching Christ, forsakes it in the respect that it is called the law of works: but he uses it in regard to the love of God, asserting and affirming what was said by the Savior in the Law and the Prophets. For he uses the Law legitimately, who is able to discern those things which were given for a time from those which are perpetual: and he who believes that the things which pertain to the sacrament of Christ should not be observed any longer in the future, as if he were believed to be coming, who has already come. If, therefore, everything is received in its proper places, things are good; if they are lacking, they will be wicked for the one who perversely asserts them; for it is a sin to set forth each thing least of all in its proper places. Furthermore, because the just have no need of the law, that is, those who have been justified by the remission of sins being accepted, lest they now live under the Law, from which they have been set free by the gift of God through the faith of Christ; so that for the future, the law of nature, which receives the knowledge of the Creator and exhorts to not sin, should be observed; and they should await the day of judgment, on which the just will be rewarded, keeping the natural law, which if the human race had taken as its leader, the law given in writing through Moses would not have existed. But because it was treated with contempt, as if it had no authority, Scripture was established; so that it would be known that it should be observed, both for the present time and because it will be required in the future, by those who established it, by whom it was neglected, and by whom it was observed. Therefore, not only because of wicked deeds and vices of the body, does it speak of the given Law, but also because of their faithlessness, by which they despised the Creator; so that they might learn to live well and give thanks to the Creator.

(Vers. 12, 13, 14.)

(Verses 12, 13, 14.) And I give thanks to Him who has strengthened me in Christ Jesus our Lord, because He considered me faithful, appointing me to the ministry, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. The grace of our Lord overflowed with faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. This is a trustworthy saying and deserving of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. But for this very reason I was shown mercy, so that in me, the

worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. But when he was confirmed, he appeared such that he was worthy and able to be the dispenser of the sacrament of the Lord; so that he might confirm by the Law those things which previously he considered incredible out of love for the Law, and he rejoiced in the persecutions which previously he had inflicted on the just as if rightly believing, grieving because he had done it, joyful because he was suffering. For he had learned such great hope in him whom he had previously denied, that he rejoiced more in suffering than he had previously exulted in persecuting. For it was not malice that prompted this, but error, which can easily be forgiven when it comes to its senses. However, the one who knows that what he denies is true; he is not acting out of error, but out of malevolence, and this is an incurable wound; for envy compels him to call the truth a falsehood, which he knows to be true.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) Human speech, worthy of all acceptance, because Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But for this reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all his patience as an example for those who were to believe in him for eternal life. What can be more grateful and joyful than proclaiming forgiveness to sinners? For who is there without sin, that he may not receive this gift with all gratitude, preferring God as the author of this and praising Him in Christ: Who, in order to cleanse humanity from sins, descended from heavenly things to earthly things, took on the flesh of sin; He mixed Himself with earthly things, in order to make them heavenly; He suffered death, in order to rescue him from death and restore him immortal to paradise. Who does not greatly praise these benefits, which God bestowed upon man, the Lord upon His servant, the Creator upon His creature; so that there would be even more in human benefits than there were before He made those things that did not exist, after He made them. For indeed, being abandoned by these, and despised, and sought after with insults, he added to not being asked for help, so that he would be more grateful and more worthy of preference, while he repaired, than when he did; so that he would show that he alone is able to do all these things. Therefore, in this way, Christ offered help to humanity, so that he would not violate his purity nor lose his power. For he desired to be born as a human, having certainty that he would not be violated by the touch of flesh: he mingled himself with human behavior, knowing that he could not be corrupted by sins: he allowed himself to be killed, knowing full well that death cannot have dominion over him, but that he can conquer it with his own power. Therefore, he did these things in order to show that he was capable of everything. For that humility does not lead to its diminishment, but to glory: not only his own, but also to those who believe in him; for it is a dignity to be the servant of the powerful. Although many had surely believed before the Apostle, among those who killed the Lord himself, the Apostle, however, in order to humble himself, still grieving for his own disbelief, first calls himself the foremost of all sinners. For since he imprinted himself more closely in knowledge of the greatness of his Salvation, and accusing himself for recognizing such goodness so slowly, not voluntarily, but being anticipated by his mercy, so that he himself would be a witness to his divinity, whom he had previously considered to be a dead man. This is his accusation, but true praise belongs to the Savior, who called him to grace, following the example of other believers who persecuted themselves; so that through his patience and magnanimity, he could show others what kind of person he would be to those who

opposed him so kindly.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But to the immortal and invisible king of the ages, to the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever, amen. These things pertain to the person of God the Father, whom he calls immortal and invisible because all immortality is from him, so that it is more fitting for him alone in truth; for whoever is immortal does not have it from himself, but from him. In the same way, it is read in the Gospel, with the Lord saying: "No one is good, except one God" (Mark 10:18). And again he says: A good man out of a good treasure brings forth good things (Matt. 12:35). Yet no one is good except one, God; for He is the source of goodness, from whom others drink, so that they may be good. He alone is the invisible God, for He has never been seen by anyone; for He works all things through the Son, whom we therefore say has been seen; so that even though he has appeared differently than he is, we still signify that he appeared. Therefore, let us proclaim honor and glory to God the Father in truth, whose mercy and providence Christ has delivered sinners from death.

(Vers. 18, 19, 20.)

(Vers. 18, 19, 20.) I commend this commandment to you, my son Timothy, according to the previous prophecies about you, that you may wage good warfare with them, having faith and a pure conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to the faith: among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. After remembering the great benefits of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ towards sinful mankind, who, even though deserving punishment, not only forgave them but also justified them and adopted them as His children, in order to instruct the people with ecclesiastical discipline, he shows in the following instructions that holy Timothy, being mindful of his own election, should fulfill that which he was predestined for. For he was predestined, when he was taken up by the Apostle, to be ordained, judged worthy to be a bishop, in order to fulfill the evangelical warfare in faith and pure conscience; for he who teaches faithfully cannot have an evil conscience. Then he exhibits the faith of his preaching if he abstains from all contrary things; for by the example of good works he provokes many to faith, trusting in the hope of his preaching; for whoever despises faith, undoubtedly has an evil conscience. For either the hypocrite is preached, or the open blasphemer, as were Hymenaeus and Alexander, who, deserting the faith, became shipwrecked, that is, stripped of truth, or leading a private life. For what is truth, if not life? They say that they were handed over to Satan, so that they may be corrected for the cause of blasphemy. But this tradition is because the Apostle, moved by their blasphemies, pronounced judgment against them; and the devil, who is prepared for this, to receive those who are against God into his power, having heard the judgment, chastises them; so that they may understand that they are bound by these penalties, because they blasphemed. Hence it is, where it is said in the Gospel among other things: 'Sin no more, lest something worse happen to you' (John 5:14), showing that sometimes infirmities are caused by sin in the body. And because they are done by the devil as a minister, the Lord declared, saying among many things: 'But behold, this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen years, ought she not to have been loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?' (Luke 13:16)?

Caput II.

(Vers. 1-4.)

(Vers. 1-4.) Therefore, I exhort first of all to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all men, for kings, and for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of our Savior God, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is the ecclesiastical rule, handed down by the master of the Gentiles, which our priests use to supplicate for all, praying for the kings of this world, so that they may have subject nations, so that we may be able to serve our God in peace, with a calm mind and quiet spirit. Also praying for those to whom lofty power is entrusted, that they may govern the republic in justice and truth, with an abundance of resources, so that joy may succeed the removal of disturbance and strife; for bread strengthens the heart, and wine gladdens the mind (Psalm 104:15). Also requesting for those who are in various needs, that they may be rescued and freed, and praise God, the author of their well-being. Also offering thanks for the daily providence of God that is granted to us for life, so that in all these things, God the Father may be praised, from whom all things come (1 Corinthians 8:6); and His Son, through whom all things exist, so that with all opposition and enmity subdued, we may be able to serve God with affectionate piety and chastity; for disturbance and captivity do not preserve piety or chastity. For where is the pious man, who is naked? And where is the chaste man, where his authority is not? So that these things can be preserved, rest is necessary; so that pleasing obedience to God may be rendered, who desires all men to be saved and to know the truth. This is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3). If indeed God, who is called omnipotent, desires all men to be saved, is his will not fulfilled? But in every expression the meaning and condition is hidden; hence Peter the apostle says: All Scripture needs interpretation (II Peter II, 20). For indeed God desires all men to be saved, but if they come to Him; for He does not will it so, that they be saved against their will: but He desires that they be saved, if they themselves also desire it. For certainly He who gave the law to all, has made no exception for salvation. Does a physician not therefore propose in public, that he desires to save all; if he is indeed asked by the sick? For there is no true salvation if it is bestowed upon someone unwillingly: nor can one rejoice in the received salvation if they have accepted the medicine against their will, if it is indeed possible; not to mention that medicine cannot have an effect unless the sick mind has accommodated itself to it; for this medicine is not physical but spiritual, which is neither beneficial to the doubtful nor to the unwilling. For faith is what gives salvation, and unless the entire mind has embraced it willingly, it will not only be of no benefit but also harm. For indeed faith has this power, that it may bestow divine healing upon the devout, and inflict disease upon the unbelievers, by which the whole man may perish.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. The will of God and Christ is one in saving mankind. Therefore, he acknowledges God the Father to be one, because all authority is from him, and one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus. For he was sent by the Father and made the arbitrator, reconciling God and men, bringing them to the knowledge of him. For because the Father and the Son are one, not in person, but in the unity of nature, he became the arbitrator between God and men, the Son of God, assuming flesh, born as a man; so that the man Christ Jesus would be the mediator between God and men, that is, not without divinity, for in him God was man, and man was God. And in order to be the

mediator between both and to reconcile both, he first did this in himself. For he could not, while preserving the unity of God, be called a mediator between God and men, as if there were another God who could bring back the rebellious man into grace with God; but instead, a man who would not transgress the given law became a mediator between the one who sinned and the one who was ignorant of sin; so that he could forgive sin and man could henceforth abide in the faith of God.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) He who gave himself as redemption for all, whose testimony was given in his own time, in which I am appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I do not lie), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth. For man, reconciled to God, was already subject to the infernal death; so that he could ascend to God, to whom he was reconciled, the Savior, in order to fulfill his purpose, suffered death against justice; descending to the underworld, he condemned the death of impiety that he had borne, taking away from them those whom he held; so that from now on, whoever bears his sign, cannot be held captive by it. To testify to the fact that by the time He rose again, destruction of death became resurrection of the dead. This hope is what the Apostle of the Gentiles was sent to preach, so that people could learn from him what hope there is in Christ. He is called a teacher for this reason, to teach faith and truth.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Therefore I desire that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute. It is advised to have a peaceful mind in prayer, so that the prayer may be effective, for holy hands are only when the heart is pure. However, it is also commanded to pray in every place, but understanding that a suitable place is meant, not an inappropriate or dirty place. For the Lord forbids praying publicly: but He advises against thinking that one should only pray in the Church alone (Matthew 6:5-6).

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) Likewise, women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. It instructs women to pray in a humble manner, not with pride; for whoever wants to be heard should humble themselves, removing all pomp from themselves, in order to appeal to God's mercy. A proud appearance does not achieve anything and does not make one be believed rightly. For who among the wise would not fear a woman adorned with boasting? How much more so the author God, who sees a body made free by itself, bound by metals! For a humble appearance is suitable for a good profession, so that it may not be judged as something other than what it appears to be: but she, who wishes to be seen in the house of God with pomp, not for the sake of God but for the sake of humans, achieves what she desires, to appear glorious, gaining nothing from God except a stain. For how splendid it appears to humans, so much more despised it is by God.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. For it is not permitted for a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence. Not only should a woman have

a humble demeanor, but she should also have her authority denied and be subject to her husband; so that she may be both in appearance and in obedience under the power of the man, from whom she derives her origin.

(Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

(Verses 13, 14, 15.) For Adam was first created, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and fell into transgression. Yet she will be saved through childbearing, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with self-control. Man is superior to woman, for he was created first; and woman is inferior, because she was created from man. It is also worth noting that the devil deceived not the man, but the woman; and the man, being deceived through the woman, brought sin into the world. Therefore, he must not have audacity, but should remain humble; for it was through the woman that death entered the world. 'Salvation,' he says, 'will be through the generation of children; if, however, they remain in faith, and charity, and pure life. For these are the children, who are regenerated through the faith of Christ; because if they persevere in their generation, the woman rising from the dead will be saved along with them, not that she will be saved by them, but through their generation; for when those who are destined for eternal life believe, one reaches the resurrection from the dead, and they are saved, those who believe and live a chaste life.' For as long as resurrection is deferred, so long as all the predestined believe in salvation.

Caput III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) Human speech: if someone desires a bishopric, they desire a good work. For a bishop must be of good life, therefore whoever desires a bishopric desires a good work. For by desiring this, they seem to desire a good life, as long as they do not deviate from what is expected of them, so as not to appear to have done this out of ambition or a desire for money.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) For it is necessary for a bishop to be blameless. He describes what kind of bishop he should be, so that no one desires the office of bishop unless he is faithful and able to abstain from all contrary things, so that he may not be unworthy of his profession. A man of one wife. Although it is not prohibited to have a second wife in terms of number, nevertheless, in order for someone to be worthy of the bishopric, he must even despise what is permissible because of the exaltedness of that order itself; for he must be better than the rest, who is eager for that seat.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Vers. 3, 4.) Sober, modest, well-groomed, hospitable, teachable, not addicted to wine; not a violent person, but gentle; not argumentative, not harsh; but one who manages his home well and has obedient children with all purity. Such a man, who keeps these virtues that are listed, says should be chosen as a bishop. For these are the signs of the episcopal dignity. But if someone desires higher things and dedicates their body and soul to God, they should not enter into marriage; they will become even more worthy. For he placed the inferior so that no one would doubt the superior.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) But if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he apply diligence to the Church of God? It is clear that then he can be proven to be a suitable leader if he has first governed his own house properly; for whoever is faithful in small matters will also be faithful in great matters (Luke 16:10).

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) Let him not, being newly converted, become proud and fall into the judgment of the devil. It is true that those who are inexperienced in the faith are often inflated with pride, especially if they receive a position of authority; for they are puffed up by novelty and power, thinking themselves more deserving than others. For when, in the first year of their conversion, they see honors bestowed upon them, they consider themselves called not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others. They think they do more good to the religion than they receive from it; and by being elated by this, they fall into the snare of the devil. For Satan brings down those who are proud with opportunity. And therefore it is written in Solomon: God resists the proud (Prov. III, 34). Hence in another letter the same Apostle says: If anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself (Galat. VI, 3). And the Lord says: Whoever exalts himself will be humbled (Luke XIV, 11).

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) However, he must also have a good testimony from those who are outside. Following the teaching of the Lord, he says that a future bishop must have a good testimony from outsiders, because whoever is faithful in small things is also faithful in great things, as the Lord says. And if you have not been faithful with worldly wealth, who will entrust you with true riches? So, if someone is not found faithful in worldly matters and human behavior, there is no doubt that they will not be suitable for divine matters. But if they have shown faithfulness to human beings, then even more so to God. Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. If the bishop does not have the fear of God before his eyes, but instead accommodates himself to the times, God will abandon him as if he were an unbeliever and a false prophet, and he will appear deformed and stained to all. For he acts differently than he preaches, accusing himself with his own words, being appointed to the flock of Satan. Therefore, great care must be taken in choosing the one who receives the governance of God's house. For if suitable dispensers of earthly matters must be sought, how much more for heavenly ones!

(Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

(Vers. 8, 9, 10.) Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. The qualifications for deacons are similar, for they are to be ministers of the priests. The qualities desired in bishops are the same, as he himself says, that they be blameless, not involved in public affairs, and not seeking shameful or petty gain. For they know that they engage in business in order to profit, and they do not seek anything else from what they do. However, they say that these profits are shameful if they are pursued under the cover of piety; for one is seen as shameful when one presents oneself as pure. However, after the bishop, they

submit to the ordination of the diaconate. Therefore, is it not because the ordination of bishops and presbyters is one and the same? For both are priests, but the bishop is the first; so that every bishop is a presbyter, but not every presbyter is a bishop; for the bishop is the one who is first among the presbyters. Finally, it signifies that Timothy was ordained as a presbyter, but because he did not have someone before him, he was considered a bishop. Thus, it also shows how a bishop is ordained; for it was not right or permissible for someone lower to ordain someone higher, for no one gives what they have not received.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) Women likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. For it is commanded that a bishop be appointed, and likewise a deacon, not desiring a different people; as the Lord says: 'Be holy, for I am holy' (Leviticus 19:2). Therefore, even women, who may seem inferior, should be without blame, so that the Church of God may be pure. But those who embrace the error of the Cataphrygians, because he addresses women after deacons, also defend with vain presumption that women should be ordained as deaconesses; even though they know that the apostles chose seven deacons. Was there then no woman found suitable, when we read that among the eleven apostles there were holy women? But in order to seem to support their own opinion with words, not the meaning of the law, the Apostles strive against the sense of the Apostles' words; so when that one commands that a woman should be silent in the Church, they on the other hand even claim the authority of ministry in the Church.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Ver. 12, 13.) Deacons should be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own households well; for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. He now adds what he had omitted concerning the ordination of deacons. He also shows that these men should be husbands of one wife, so that those who are chosen for the ministry of God are not those who have violated God's command. For God has decreed that a man should have one wife, with whom he is blessed; no one is blessed with a second wife. If they govern their children well, and their homes, that is, their slaves or domestic servants, they can be deemed worthy of the priesthood and have confidence before God; so they know that they are able to obtain what they ask for, now abstaining from sexual intercourse with women. For in ancient times it was allowed for Levites or priests to have wives; because they had a lot of free time from ministry or priesthood (for there was a multitude of priests and a great abundance of Levites, and each one served in divine ceremonies at a certain time according to the institution of David (1 Chronicles 6:31-32); for he established twenty-four classes of priests to take turns serving: thus Abijah had the eighth class, in which Zacharias served as priest, as it is recorded in the book of Chronicles (1 Chronicles 23:4 and following); so that when the time came for them to not serve at the altar, they attended to the care of their homes; but when the time for ministry was imminent, after being purified for a few days, they approached the temple to offer to God. Now, however, there must be seven deacons, and some priests, so that they may be paired in churches, and one bishop in each city. And through this, all women should abstain from the assembly; because it is necessary for them to be present in the church every day, and not to delay, so that they may be purified after the assembly as the ancients did. For every week an offering is to be made, even if not daily for the pilgrims, but at least twice a

week for the residents; although there are not lacking those who are baptized daily because they are sick. Therefore, it was permitted for the ancient ones because for a long time they were not seen in the temple, but were private. For if it is commanded for common people to abstain from speaking for a time for the sake of prayer, so that they may devote themselves to prayer, how much more so for levites or priests, who must pray day and night for the people entrusted to them! Therefore, they ought to be more pure than the others, because they are the ministers of God.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Verse 14, 15.) I write these things to you, my son Timothy, hoping to come to you soon. But if I delay, I want you to know how you ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. As for his knowledge, it was relevant that he would see him sooner: but because what pleases God is accustomed to be different, and his providence is only known to him, therefore, he says, in case I am delayed, I write to you so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the church which is the household of God; even though the whole world belongs to God, nevertheless his house is called the Church, of which Damasus is the current ruler. For the world is indeed in a state of perversion, disturbed by various errors; therefore, it is necessary that the house of God be said to be there, and the truth, where it is reverenced according to His will. To those who profess to be His servants, He has marked these virtues, which can be done by no other; so that unbelief, accused by these, may perish without excuse. For the signs and wonders of this truth are the foundation.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Indeed, by the confession of all, great is the mystery of this piety. No faithful denies the sacrament of truth preached in the Church, which he calls piety; for to those who recognize his magnanimity and mercy, he bestows eternal and divine gifts, except the forgiveness of sins, which he bestows here in the present. What was declared in flesh, was justified in spirit, was seen by angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed in this world, and taken up in glory. The mystery of God, which is Christ in the flesh, is declared to have been manifested, which was hidden in the spirit. For when the Son of God, who was born as a human, was in secret with God, he made himself known to creatures through his actions and preaching. And this is to be justified in the Spirit, to have shone with works and power, to have revealed who he was in the flesh. Then he appeared to the angels, no longer in the form of humility, but in power. Moreover, he appeared in humble form through the flesh for as long as death was conquered, so that his majesty, who was born as a human but was not entirely human, might be seen; so that the angels, recognizing the mystery that was previously hidden, would bow down to him as though to God, giving thanks because they have learned the truth that was preached to the nations, in order to be freed from error; in whom the world progresses so as not to be condemned. It has been entrusted to the world. For it has been entrusted to the world as a sacrament of God, so that its unfaithfulness cannot deserve forgiveness of error, as the Lord says of the Jews: 'If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin' (John 15:22).

It was assumed into glory. For what they had despised as weak and ugly, was assumed into glory; for after the cross the Savior openly manifested his person and power, and in the presence of the awed witnesses, he ascended gloriously into heaven.

Caput IV.

(Vers. 1-5.)

(Vers. 1-5.) But the Spirit clearly says that in the last times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving. For he is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Which the Holy Spirit will reveal to the churches for instruction and caution, he does not remain silent; so that the warned churches may be vigilant, lest they be deceived by such men. For what could be more clear and evident in order to avoid or rather condemn these men of pernicious doctrine, than to declare in plain words the falsehood and simulated doctrine of the demons; so that when the words of this assertion are heard, it would be known that this doctrine, composed by the devil, is false, which the Holy Spirit had foretold, which asserts false things about the incarnation of the Savior, which is now indicated in the Marcionites, although they may have decayed, in the Patricians, or especially in the Manichaeans (De Patricianis Philastrius, and Augustine haeresi, 61)? For they deny both the birth of Christ and prohibit marriage, and they teach abstaining from foods. He says that their conscience is cauterized, that is, corrupted by hypocrisy; because just as a cautery corrupts the skin and inflicts a mark, so also hypocrisy corrupts the conscience, which, with the malice of deceit, knows one thing and professes another, leading to destruction. For he now denies that these people can be changed in order to be saved; because just as a cautery cannot be changed, so their mind cannot be reformed; for there is nothing worse than hypocrisy. For these are the tales, just like the Jews, those who, understanding Christ to work by the power of God, were saying that these things were done by Beelzebub. For just as they mistreat the maker of man, not lamenting their own children, yet they prohibit marriage and withhold the flesh from Christ: and in order to bring harm to him, they teach that we should abstain from those things which he has appointed for our use; so that through that which they despise, they may seem to be evil and invented by an evil author. Hence it is from where the Apostle shows that all good things are from God, if indeed they are received with thanksgiving; for they will be impure to him who does not praise the Creator in them. For those who take them in such a way as to mistreat their author cannot benefit from them properly.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) Therefore, by presenting these things to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and good doctrine which you have obtained. What is so true, what is so clear and provident, unless that the Christian discipline is handed down incorruptibly, so that its fruits may be praised as plentiful and firm in the Lord's vineyard? This means that on the day of judgment, they will not be considered reprobates and deserving of being burned by fire. This is the duty of a good teacher and suitable minister of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is said that he has been nourished in the words of faith and good doctrine, which he has obtained since infancy. For he who was thoroughly imbued with all the books of the Hebrews, having received faith, made a perfect doctor.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) But reject worldly and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself towards godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Worldly words are understood as opposing; but old wives' fables are certain delusions. These things are brought about by the voices of some who make noise, so that it is considered as a discussion of a pointless matter, of which there is no effect except vanity. Therefore, it advises to avoid those things that are contrary, and similarly those things that are childish, composed of vanity; for there are some who, with warmth of spirit, engage in such debates. But it advises to give attention to piety, because it has great benefit. For those who show mercy, giving back to their elders what is owed to their parents, in the present life they will not lack God's help, and in the future they will have immortality with glory. However, bodily exercise is beneficial for a little while; for fasting and abstaining from food, while the authority of the Creator remains, does not profit much unless piety is added to it, by which the work of many is aided by prayers to the Lord for merit. Finally, the Gospel passage testifies that those who are generous to their brothers and obedient in various ways will progress to eternal life (Matthew 25:41), while those who dissent from this work will go into eternal fire. But the exercise of the body is nothing but the reins (i.e., the control) of the flesh. Therefore, if someone, because mercy is a great thing, endures the slippery (i.e., lustful) desires of the flesh, what will be the result? Without a doubt, they will be beaten; because it was necessary for that to happen, and this should by no means be neglected (Luke 11:42). But if someone only had exercise of the body, they will suffer eternal punishments, as the Lord promised in the Gospel (Matthew 25:41); for the whole goal of our discipline is found in mercy and piety. However, the fleshly exercise of the body is different from the spiritual exercise; for the fleshly ones nourish their bodies with indulgence and feasting, so that they may progress quickly towards destruction. But the spiritual ones temper their bodies with fasting and abstinence, so that they may become indifferent towards desires and be worthy of the future resurrection. For here, the body is disciplined because of the hope for the future; but there, it is cherished because of the despair for the future, taking care of its needs for a time, so that it may be more easily inclined to sin.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) The word is faithful and worthy of all acceptance. For to this we labor and suffer persecution, because we hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of the faithful. It is worthy indeed and acceptable to endure persecution for the hope that is in God, because in this present life hope is fleeting, but in God's promise it is firm and steadfast. For He is the Savior of all; for from Him and through Him all live, as far as this present life is concerned, and as far as the promised salvation, the faithful. For to those who know, after this life which ends in death, he promised to give another life which will flourish in immortality. Therefore, he says: Most faithful.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verses 11, 12.) Teach and instruct these things. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. Timothy, in terms of age, was young; but in terms of character and behavior, he was mature and serious. Therefore, he was advised to be a model of good works in every way, so that he would be admirable and respected even in his youth, and his actions would excuse his age. He was to be considered not

as a young person, but as an older one; and older people would be embarrassed unless they presented themselves in a manner that matched his seriousness and behavior. Young people, on the other hand, would regard him as their teacher and equal. Timothy, a remarkable and most holy young man, whose example serves to restrain the undisciplined youth and to punish the irreverence of the elders.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verses 13, 14.) While I come, attend to the reading, exhortation, and teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the eldership. The intent is for him to be devoted and dedicated to the exercise of reading, so that with all care and diligence he may excel in exhortation and teaching. Exhortation is when we stimulate some people to good work with gentle words: but to teach, when we make known to the minds of the listeners things that were hidden. For if the ruler of the people conceals these things, he neglects the grace given to him; for this reason, a leader is created for the people, to carry the concern for their salvation, by admonishing, teaching, so that the arrangement may have fruit: which arrangement God certainly established for this purpose, to advance the salvation of his people. Therefore, whoever is careless in this authority will be considered a despiser of God, called the least in the kingdom of heaven; for he will not be able to do what he does not deign to teach (Matthew 5:19). However, the giving of grace by the ordinator signifies through prophecy and the laying on of hands. Prophecy is whereby one is chosen as a future worthy teacher; the laying on of hands, on the other hand, is a mystical act by which the chosen one is confirmed for this task, receiving authority according to their own conscience so that they may dare to offer the sacrifice of God in place of the Lord.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) Meditate on these things, be in them; so that your progress may be evident to everyone. Pay attention to yourself and to the teaching, persevere in them. For by doing this, you will save yourself and those who hear you. It reminds us to be a model to everyone not only in good works, but also in the exercise of teaching. For it should be evident that progress is made in exercise, not only in teaching, but also in actions; for a good tree produces good fruit (Matthew 12:17): similarly, good teaching cannot have bad works; so that when good works are seen, they may be understood as the fruit of divine teaching, and listeners may be able to progress. For then they understand that the things which are said are true and to be feared, when they seem to be observed with great veneration by the very person who is teaching. This benefits the leader of the people in two ways: both because of his own good works, and because he will receive the reward of those who listen; just as if he is negligent, he will be accountable not only for himself, but also for them.

Caput V.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) Do not rebuke an elder, but encourage him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, in all purity. Because of the honor and wisdom that comes with age, he should be taught gently and encouraged to do good works, so that he may be more willing to accept correction. For he may fear being rebuked later, which is

shameful for an elder. Indeed, in all cultures, old age is esteemed and honorable. This is why both the Synagogue and later the Church had elders, without whom nothing was done in the Church without their counsel. I do not know by what negligence it became obsolete, unless perhaps through the laziness of learned men, or rather their pride, while they alone wish to be seen as something. He thinks that the younger ones should be admonished as if they were brothers, with affection for their love; so that, seeing that they are being advised out of love, they may correct themselves more easily, since they see that his actions do not differ from his preaching. But the elderly women as if they were mothers, so that while they see that they are being taught with gentle words, they do not receive it harshly, because they honorably progress; for it is harsh for the elderly when they are criticized by the younger ones. He wants to be calmed by a certain temperament, so as to make progress both in speaking and listening. He instructs young ladies as if they were sisters, to be taught so that they can readily acquire the discipline of good conversation. For when he sees that things necessary for a good life are not being insinuated to him with authority, he agrees, presenting himself as humble to the one admonishing him. For things that cannot be obtained by authority are usually obtained by flattery; for when animals guard their limbs, they still yield to flattery.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Honor widows who are truly widows. These widows should be considered honorable, who have been widows in fact: who, when they could have remarried in order to be better, and worthy of God, rejected second marriages. They knew that the marriage ceremony is blessed only once, imitating the most holy Anna, who served God with fasting and prayers night and day, having experienced the embrace of only one man (Luke 2:36).

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) However, if a widow has children or grandchildren, she should first learn to show godliness at home and repay her parents with gratitude, for this is pleasing to God. The widow should be tested in her conduct and lifestyle, so that she may be deemed worthy of being called a widow of the church, who does not submit to the ecclesiastical discipline for the sake of gain, but for the sake of defense. Merit should precede, so that the appropriate honor may be bestowed upon her when she comes forward; for she who has shown godly affection towards her own, and has managed her household well, kept God's law, becomes worthy of recompense from the church.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For she who is truly widowed and desolate, hopes in God and devotes herself to prayers night and day. A widow who has children or grandchildren should not be easily admitted to the Church's support, because if she has managed her household piously and diligently, it is necessary for her to be repaid by her own, just as she has repaid her relatives. But if, as is often the case, impiety has caused her to be despised by her own, whom she has treated kindly, it is fitting for her to be received by the Church, because she has faithfully followed the law of the Lord. Therefore, the widowed and deserted woman, scorned by her own, puts her hope in God; for she sees that she has no support from any side, and with her whole heart she devotes herself to God, from whom alone she expects help for life and salvation.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) For a widow who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. The phrase 'widow' signifies that she should devote herself to God, serving Him day and night in order to earn His favor through prayers; and to show that she has therefore despised second marriages, and that she is determined in following the discipline of the Lord. For if a widow indulges in pleasure or luxury, she is considered as living dead; because it is a kind of deceit, to do one thing and profess another: desiring not to serve and devote herself to God, but to seek the honor of being called a widow; whereas the very profession of the name indicates the choice of God, having rejected a husband, to whom she will serve with her whole mind for the sake of the promised life.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) And command these things, so that they may be blameless. It desires to have such great diligence of actions and character, that it cannot be reproached; for having been removed from the hope of worldly conversation and the duty of caring for the body, it has turned itself to God, in order to lead a commendable life. For by removing the occasions that usually open the door to sins, a good way of life can remain unharmed.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) But if anyone does not take care of his own, especially of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. He says that this widow, who was negligent in her affections towards her own, to educate them in the discipline and correction of the Lord, should be disrespected; because just as the unfaithful one, she did not obey the law of the Lord, so that she may be considered worse. For it is necessary that he who acts under the law and fear of God, despising it, be worse than he who is not subject to the law; for the former does not know, but the latter, knowing, despises it.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10) A widow should be chosen who is not less than sixty years old, who has been the wife of one man, having a good testimony in good works: if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality, if she has washed the feet of the saints, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. The widow is commended for her past deeds, and this is how she is instructed to be chosen; for her name is recorded in the church records by the judgment of the Lord, which her worthy old life declares. For by engaging in divine worship, and wearing oneself out in these things, one must be received in the bosom of the Church, to which one had once vowed oneself in lawful servitude.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) But refuse younger widows; for when they have lived in pleasure, they desire to marry in Christ. Thus, it is not fitting for younger widows to be taken into this profession, for faith should not easily be granted to the unstable age; especially since there are some examples of those who, after taking up the profession, do not have the name of widowhood in their deeds but are enticed by new marriages. For whoever thinks that they are living a life of pleasure in Christ does not continue to be innocent; for sensuality draws them towards its desires, so that they may be subject to sin; for pleasures are the gateway to sin. For it is not known where he aims, who loves a flowing

life.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Having condemnation; because they made void the first faith. What remains for such, it shows; so that they may not easily dare what is difficult to accomplish: Or if the mind is devoted to this, let them hold it within themselves for now; because they have learned it is rash to profess what should not yet be believed by youth. For he becomes liable to condemnation, who turns away from what he had done rightly. For as praiseworthy as it is, if he accomplishes what is believed to be beyond his abilities; he will be all the more deserving of punishment if he dares to impose on himself by the presumption of rashness what he cannot bear: Nor should it pertain to forgiveness, for he who is found unfaithful from the beginning.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) But at the same time, even the idle learn to go around: not only the idle, but also the talkative and curious, saying things that should not be said. Some virgins or widows, with the approval of their profession (for the word for this is glorious), are welcomed into the homes of the wealthy, who engage in this activity; so that they may obey their wishes, walking and searching for what they can bring to them, to delight them, so that they may be rewarded with idle gifts: and according to a bad custom, they seek more in stories than in work with their hands; so that they may appear proud and put together, acting against their own profession. What tends to be contrary to them even in this life is revealed; for that which they always consider hidden is revealed. For what is it, that they speak those things which are not necessary? For they are close to marriage, participants in many secrets, flatterers, and complainers of servants.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Verse 14, 15) Therefore, I desire that the young women marry, bear children, be homemakers, and give no occasion for the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some have already turned aside after Satan. Because the things she previously mentioned are contrary and unlawful, they lead to death. Therefore, she gives counsel and commands to do the things that are lawful. For it is better to take care of one's own household than to commit adultery in someone else's house, and it is much better to marry than to walk openly in evil under the pretext of being good. It is better to work with modesty to earn a living than to shamelessly rely on the possessions of others while being idle. For Satan finds opportunity in how he can overthrow unsuspecting souls, when those professing piety unjustly behave; for there is nothing so dangerous as when actions oppose profession. Satan does not conceal an obvious evil, for he delights in it; but he works to reveal that he is the son of himself, not of God, to those whom he sees to be deceived, which action does not displease God.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) If anyone has widows who are believers, it is his obligation to care for them and not burden the church, so that it may care for those widows who are truly in need. Isn't it wonderful that the Apostolic authority could foresee the future? It is evident that what he said is true: the widows of believers currently burden the church, as well as those who appear to be wealthy in the world. This is because, due to old age, they have ceased their work in the textile industry,

depriving themselves of both clothing and food, although not entirely but partially. This drives them to turn to the church out of their own poverty, in order to survive. It was necessary for them not only to provide for their own needy, but also to feed and clothe other needy individuals. What is greatly detrimental; for when it is given to these, it is either given less to others or not at all, to whom it should be given more, which are worthy to be ministered to at the Church's expense. Thus, it becomes burdensome when one is compelled to clothe many, when they should be clothing few: and the people, who could readily and frequently minister to a few, are compelled to dismiss more; so either they complain or they are slower to help. For when he commands that the wife of one man be chosen as a widow, now not only are there found among them the wives of two or three husbands, but also those who have lived more disgracefully: this sometimes happens through negligence, sometimes through the influence of someone insinuating themselves.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) Those presbyters who lead well should be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. Good stewards and faithful ones should not only be judged worthy of high honor, but also of earthly honor, so that they are not saddened by lack of resources but rather rejoice in their faith and teaching. For their diligence increases when they are not humiliated by poverty, and their authority grows when they see that they are also reaping the fruits of their labor in the present; not to be wealthy, but to not be lacking.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) For the Scripture says: \"You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain\" (Deuteronomy 25:4); and: \"The laborer is worthy of his wages\" (Luke 10:7). Such a reward ought to be for the one proclaiming the kingdom of God, so that neither is saddened nor exalted.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Do not accept an accusation against a priest. For the honor of this order is sublime (for such are the vicars of Christ), therefore an accusation against this person should not be easily admitted. For it should be incredible that someone who is a bishop of God has acted criminally, just as it is believable that an actor is the most disgraceful.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) But those who are delinquent, rebuke them publicly before everyone, so that the others may be afraid. How easily, however, a crime against a priest should not be believed; if, however, it is proven or if it is clear that he has behaved irreverently, then it is commanded to publicly rebuke him, so that both the others may be frightened, not only the ordained, but also the laity; for when they see a deserving man being rebuked for the sake of an error, it is necessary for them to be cautious.

(Vers. 21, 22)

(Ver. 21, 22) I testify before God, and Jesus Christ, and the chosen angels; that you guard these things, doing nothing with prejudice, nor inclining towards one side or another. Do not lay hands quickly on anyone, nor share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. He deposits this testimony before God the Father, and Christ his son, and his chosen angels, whom the Lord calls holy in the

Gospel (Mark 8:38). Therefore, these are chosen, because there are others who are reprobate, who are not angels of God, but of the devil, assenting to his apostasy. Therefore, under the test, it commands that those things which are necessary for the ordination of the Church be observed, so that nothing is done without prejudice; so that no one easily receives ecclesiastical dignity, unless first his life and morals have been discussed; so that, having been deemed worthy, he may be established as a minister or priest, so that later, if he appears reprehensible, the prince of the people may not perhaps regret not having clearly judged what he deserved, whom he ordained improbably; nor should he ordain someone whose sins give rise to suspicion, lest the ordainer be tainted by his vices and transgressions. So if there are completely hidden sins, the ruler will be immune; because his conscience is free. Suspicion indeed causes fear; for he sins if he does not prove, and thus he ordains. For he who is to be ordained should be proven better than the rest; for it is not enough that he is without crime; because his merits should precede good works, so that he may be considered worthy of ordination. The bishop, practicing these things, will show himself chaste to the religion: of which thing he will obtain the reward in the future.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) Do not yet drink water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. Now he gives special advice, that he may govern himself with wholesome doctrine; for God wants to be served wisely, not that by their excess they become weak and then require the support of doctors. For moderation must be observed, so that if possible, the begun obedience may be gradually advanced, rather than diminished by inconsiderateness. For intemperance disturbs the soul itself, so that when it is troubled about its weakness, it is not only not devoted to divine worship. For imprudence brings harm; the soul, placed in tranquility, raises the whole heart to God, praying with sound judgment for those things which are to be sought.

(Vers. 24, 25.)

(Vers. 24, 25.) Some people's sins are obvious, preceding them to judgment, while others follow after. Likewise, good works are also obvious, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden. No excuse should be understood for those who adhere to these sins, which are public, so that they may be more honorable by avoiding them. Therefore, this means that the man of God is to be distinguished from them, especially the steward of Christ, who also has the authority to correct them; and if they promise to amend themselves, they should be retained. But the bad works of others are revealed; for when they are alive, they are considered good, but when they are dead, they are exposed as impostors. By the same reasoning, as evil deeds are evident, so are good deeds; for a good life and modest actions cannot be hidden, and when done with piety, they make one perfect. But just as some evils are hidden for now, so are good deeds; for no one can know everything about people. But from what one sees and hears, one can prove and judge. Let them thoroughly consider whether the things that are said are consistent with the person about whom they are said, whether they are good or bad. And whatever may be hidden from men will be made known openly on the day of judgment. Therefore these things have been said so that they may know that they have a more serious cause than others. For he who, though evil, presents himself as good is worse than he who is openly evil.

Caput VI.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. Slaves are to serve their masters with obedience, giving thanks to God. For by faithfully serving their masters, they may also subject themselves to God's discipline.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) But those who have faithful masters, should not despise them; for they are brothers: but rather serve them; for they are faithful and beloved; those who receive benefits. If it is commanded to serve worldly masters with total diligence, how much more the faithful! For then it proves itself subject to the fear of God, if it has obeyed its faithful and temporal master with whole heart. May it not think it is to be despised, because it is called a brother for the sake of the common faith; for he will be more deserving of rebuke, who thinks that a faithful master is to be despised.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) Teach and exhort these things. He wants the Lord's teaching to be made manifest, so that the detractors may see that there is nothing to be criticized in it: considering at the same time what shameful things are hidden in their sacred rites, and they may be ashamed because they will be without excuse.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(V. 4, 5.) If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. He commands that those who deviate from the Catholic faith and refuse to submit to discipline should be despised, especially those who, when convicted and corrected, do not want to yield to their perverse state of mind and take pleasure in and feed on contentions. For he does not allow himself to be overcome by pride, since he rushes into conflict in order to seek favor, which is to be avoided by gentle and good men. For contention is never without a lawsuit, and it would be insufficient if only a lawsuit arose, but there would be blasphemies and enmities, which is foreign to the servants of God. But those who are corrupt in mind, deprived of truth, are considered useful; for they deem the pursuit of wealth and piety of God, not hoping for anything in the future; but rather focused on settling matters in the present, just like worldly sects, which are known to have been founded for immediate gain; I am aware that some people are pleased to hear this, that one must prosper in this life; and therefore it is necessary to abstain from such things.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) However, there is great profit in piety with sufficiency. Great riches and acquisition lie in it, if one is content with what they have; for there is more in oneself and in others, who, having acquired through the mercy of God for eternal life, believe that what they have is sufficient for the present, not hesitating to give from it. For every greedy person is impious, and harmful to themselves and others.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) For we have brought nothing into the world, so that we cannot take anything out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. It is in vain that mortal men strive for wealth and desire to become rich, openly declaring with loud voices, when they know that they have nothing of their own in the world. What does human desire profit, unless it exists as an enemy to itself? For it has brought nothing into the world, and it can take nothing out. What does it instill anxiety in itself, and seeks to gather together? Such will go out from here, as it came. Job also writes this and confesses in his suffering, saying: I came naked from my mother's womb, and naked will I return to the earth... blessed be the name of the Lord (Job I, 21). If the greedy did not hold onto it to their own destruction, a few would save what could benefit many with their own advantage.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10) For those who desire to become rich fall into temptation and a trap, and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evil, and some people, craving it, have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows. There is nothing harsher or more distressing than when an ecclesiastic, especially one in a lofty position, strives for the wealth of this world; for it harms not only themselves but also others. For it gives a contrary form to men; for it is necessary that many imitators of it exist for perdition. For the more honorable it is in order, the more it persuades to be imitated, especially in this matter, which is inclined in this life; for greed can admit all evils. Therefore, it is the root of all evils, because in order to fulfill its desires, which is impossible, it perpetrates wickedness, homicides, obscenity, and whatever is of crime; neither secure in the present, because always desirous; and condemned in the future.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But you, O man of God, flee from these things. He urges and commands the man of God to separate himself from this, so that he may be safe here and rewarded with divine rewards in the future. For he is not unjustly to be crowned, who rejects what persuades many.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) But follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and peace of mind. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession before many witnesses. Because greed is an unjust thing, it commands a person of God to pursue righteousness and godliness, and the other things it mentions; for one cannot avoid it unless they adhere to those things that are contrary to greed. But how can the greedy person be faithful, who denies by his actions what he seems to confess with words? And where is the lover of brotherhood, whose hands are dry? And how can one be patient, who always reaches out for what belongs to others? Or to what extent can one have peace of mind, who is consumed day and night by the greed of desire? But because this wickedness was foreign to the man of God, Timothy, he is commanded to engage in the good fight of faith. For faith is the victory, when all vices and crimes are brought under control, in order to attain the rewards of eternal life. And the confession of this faith is contained among the very basics of faith, as evidenced by the questions and answers of the ecclesiastical monuments.

(Vers. 13-16.)

(Verses 13-16.) I command you before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate a good confession: that you keep the commandment unblemished, blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: whom He will show in His own time, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and eternal power, amen. By great vigilance and foresight, the ruler of the Church gives instructions; for in his person the salvation of the whole people consists. He is not worried about the care of Timothy, but he is so circumspect for the sake of his successors, that they may preserve the order of the Church by following the example of Timothy; they themselves also, handing down the form to the future, would begin from themselves. Finally, he says, in order to keep, an immaculate commandment until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He binds it in such a way that he testifies before God and Christ that he has commanded this; and he instills terror, remembering the passion of Christ, of whose passion he must necessarily be guilty who despises this for the sake of which Christ suffered. Nor has he been silent about the day of judgment, which will come at the appointed time by the will of God, whom he alone pronounces blessed and powerful, the King of kings and Lord: for he alone is the one who possesses his own blessedness and power, received from no one, dominion and kingdom, as well as immortality. All these things the Father has, likewise the Son from the Father: but the light that is inaccessible belongs solely to the Father; for it has never appeared to anyone. Finally, he adds: Whom no man has seen, nor can see. Not because there is a different light of the Son; for it is written in the psalm: And in Your light we shall see light. (Psalm 33:10) That is, the light that the Father has is in the Son: but no one has seen the Father, and therefore the light dwells in the inaccessible. For there is no way for anyone to see God the Father except through Christ, who is from God; he has seen God. But because the Son does everything himself, he is said to appear and be seen. Therefore, that which was said above is the special privilege of the Father: To whom honor and eternal power, amen; this is true.

(Vers. 17, 18, 19.)

(Verse 17, 18, 19.) Instruct the rich of this world not to be arrogant in their wisdom, nor to hope in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment in doing good works; to be rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share, storing up for themselves a firm foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of true life. True life is that which we hope for in the future, which is not limited by sunset or the passing of time; for it is eternal and therefore rightly called truth: for it is the present image of life, not the truth itself. And because the image is not completely empty, it is acquired in this life; and in order to hasten to it, it is learned from the image that surpasses the truth, which is not attained by arrogance or the hope of riches, but by humility and the hope of God, who has promised this. For it is in Him that we must hope, because He provides what is necessary for our needs, not in the abundance itself, but in the source of it. For what hope is there in a transient and uncertain thing? Indeed, since some of them depart; but those who seem to stay in them do not gain any profit from them in the future, but rather loss; except when they share with the needy; for they are not eternal, so as to be preferred to the future life. They make the arrogant ones believe that they promise immortality. We have an example of resurrection in Christ; and Christ is not loved by many in the same way as wealth, of

which no example seems to have delivered anyone from death. Christ redeemed us, not with riches; for he himself showed forth the likeness of future life, that despising all these things, we may follow him; that we may come to the immortal and heavenly riches. Therefore, we must strive for this, that we may be rich in good actions, and acquire spiritual riches with these earthly possessions; let us sow on earth, so that we may reap in heaven, where the eternal treasure is stored.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called 'knowledge.' Some have professed this knowledge and have deviated from the faith. Grace be with you. It also reminds you to keep the things that have been said above, and to avoid contrary teachings that only use the name of 'knowledge' but deceive with their false profession, aiming to deceive the innocent. They pretend to have faith, but have turned away from it, bringing about unfaithfulness. And he subscribed with his own hand, saying: Grace be with you.

Commentary on 2 Corinthians

In the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20, 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• Chapter VI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• Chapter VII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• Chapter VIII.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.) • (Vers. 18, 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.) • (Vers. 22, 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• Chapter IX.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• Chapter X.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• Chapter XI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.) • (Vers. 32, 33.)

• Chapter XII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.) • (Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter XIII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

Prologue

The Apostle writes a second letter to the Corinthians, the main cause of which is this: Because in the first letter he had mainly reproved the teachers among them for certain sins, and they had been greatly saddened; now he consoles them, presenting his own example to them, and teaching them that they should not be upset that they were reproved for the sake of others' salvation, since he himself daily faces dangers and death for the sake of others' safety.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ. Now, assured of these things, confidently proclaims himself as an apostle of the Lord. In his first letter, he says that he was called as an apostle, but not approved by those who were led astray by the tradition. By the will of God. In order to confirm his apostleship, he says that he became an apostle by the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Lord Himself said to the Jews, 'I always do what is pleasing to Him, that is, to God the Father' (John 8:29). And Timothy, his brother. When he writes this, he sends the first letter through him to them, that is, with Timothy; in order to show them that he has heard from him about their goodwill, by which they subjected themselves to be rebuked. To the church in Corinth with all the saints who are in Achaia. Now he associates these saints with the saints of other churches, so that they may know that they have made progress.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Since it is one gift of God and Christ, therefore he wishes them to be participants in the grace of God, which is also of Christ.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Always in every letter he delivers the order of the mystery concerning God the Father, and concerning his gift. The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. From the very beginning he provides much refreshment to those who were saddened for the sake of reproof; for upon hearing that the Lord is not only the Father of all creation, but also of mercies, they were relieved with hope and made certain that they were reproved for this purpose, that they might find the mercy of God by converting. But why did he call God the Father of mercies, if not so that he might be recognized through mercy, and might both again regenerate and reform penitents, so that there may not only be forgiveness, but also restoration of the former state? And therefore he says 'mercies' because of the various sins, so that he may console those who are saddened on account of their offenses: that is, not to deny hope to those who have been converted.

(Vers. 4.)

(Vers. 4.) He who consoles us in all our affliction. This is what he said: God of all consolation, who is present in every affliction; so that we may also be able to console those who are afflicted by exhortation, by which we are exhorted by God. He has introduced two kinds of consolations; one by which those who suffer unjust affliction for the sake of the name of Christ are consoled, in order to be freed: the other by which those who are saddened for the sake of sins receive consolation, while hope is promised to them who are amending, by those who have been consoled by the Lord, and have been rescued from affliction.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) For just as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so through Christ our consolation also abounds. It is clear that for what we suffer, He Himself is present with us, comforting us, and delivering us from distress by His mighty intervention.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) But whether we are suffering distress for your encouragement and salvation, or we are receiving encouragement for your encouragement, which works through the patience of the same sufferings that we ourselves endure, so that our hope may be certain for you; because we know that just as you are partners in sufferings, so you will also be in consolation. He speaks generally; that just as the cause of believers suffered persecutions from the faithless, being subjected to insults and killings; so they would again be liberated by the help of God for the consolation of believers, lest they, having suffered scandal, would fall away from the faith; because the injuries of the apostles were the temptations of the believers, as it is written in the prophet Zechariah: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered (Zechariah 13:7). Although the faithful believe in the future, however, in the midst of the beginnings of affliction, they cause scandal to the new converts: for they think the promise is empty if they see the preacher oppressed with force. But if the believer is already strong, he sympathizes with his

master, trusting in the hope of the future; so that he may console together with whom he also sympathizes.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For we do not want you, brothers, to be ignorant of the affliction that was experienced by us in Asia; for we were excessively burdened beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life. Therefore, he indicates the sufferings of afflictions that were inflicted on us almost to the point of death, in order to show the evils that they endured for the sake of their salvation, so that they would not bear it more heavily if their errors were reproached by those who tolerated these harsh things for them. For who among doctors does not blame himself when he treats his patient carelessly, lest the care of medicine remain without effect?

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) Indeed, we ourselves have received the message of death in us, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God, who raises the dead. This great hostility of wickedness signifies that it has risen against the preachers of faith, so that they would have death before their eyes; finally, they say that they were delivered from that very oppression, claiming to have been resurrected. For they were so afflicted that they despaired of their present life. But because God does not deny his help to those in need, especially to his own, he delivered them from themselves, while they trusted in God. They were declaring that they would surely collapse under excessive pressure, unless God were present.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Vers. 10, 11.) He who has delivered us from such great deaths, and will deliver us: in whom we have hoped, that he will also still deliver us, you helping withal in prayer for us: that for this gift obtained for us, by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many in our behalf. Saying of this, that the grace of God is from many causes of consolation of the apostles, that is, of all the faithful, for whose sake also the tribulations of the apostles were augmented: and by this means, that they are for the sake of all, all should give thanks to God, when temptation ceaseth: or when it doth arise, all should pray together.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and sincerity, not in worldly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially towards you. And because these things are about the doctrine of God, he added: Not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God; to show that he had exhibited a free conscience not to human wisdom, but to the preaching of the Gospel. He rubs the past; for this signifies that in the first epistle he charged the preaching with being tainted and suited to human understanding (1 Cor. 2:4), accusing its preachers of two-fold carnal wisdom; because they preached according to the wisdom of the world, so as not to easily offend people, and they did this for the sake of gain, seeking their own carnal profit. Therefore, the Apostle never wanted to accept anything from the Corinthians, so as not to give them an opportunity, because he was similar to them in this matter. Hence, he says: 'More abundantly, having a simple conversation with you'; because even though he received from others, he did not want to receive from them, so as not to lose his authority to

reprimand them.

(Vers. 13.)

(V. 13) For we do not write to you anything other than what you have read and understood. She says that she writes things that not only could be seen in writing, but also could be clearly seen in her actions. She wants to prove that she fulfills what she speaks, by the deeds with which the mind and intention of each person is learned.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) But I hope that you will know until the end, just as you have known not in part, because we are your glory, just as you are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. He hopes that they will progress, from the fact that they had already begun to become better, knowing the affection of the Apostles towards them, and they boasted in it as children in the very dear father. Hence, the Apostle testifies that his glory is seen in obedient children; and it should be seen then, when it is advantageous, that is, in the day of God's judgment. Saying this, he warns to persevere.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Vers. 15, 16.) And in this confidence I intended to come to you before, that you might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. When I, therefore, was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I propose, do I propose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. Therefore, it is not idle because he wanted to go and did not go; for he wants it to be understood that there are some among them for whose sake he did not fulfill his desire, so that, by their efforts, they may be purified.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) Therefore, thinking about this, did I use levity? Or, do I think according to the flesh, so that it may be with me, 'Yes, yes, no, no'? Because he said, 'I wanted to come to you, and he did not go.' Therefore, did I use levity,' he says, 'because it seems that someone who says something and does not do it is using levity?' Therefore, so that they may not think this about the Apostle, he clarifies this; because he did not do it lightly, but with purpose, so that he would not fulfill what he had planned. But do I think, he says, whatever I think, according to the flesh? For whoever thinks according to the flesh, then does not fulfill what he plans, whether he defers to larger persons or is conquered by material gains or possessions, which the Apostle always rejected. But he does not fulfill what is spiritually planned when he meditates more carefully on something for the salvation of the soul; just as the Apostle also did not fulfill what he wanted, so that they might be made better through this itself, knowing that he had delayed for this reason, because certain people among them had not yet purified themselves from sins. He says, 'It is, it is not.' This signifies that he did nothing other than what he knew should be done; for utility should be preferred to volition. This is a spiritual sense, whereas the carnal sense is so transformed that it puts utility before volition.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) But God is faithful, because our word to you is not yes and no. It is yes. This is what he says to the Galatians: If I have destroyed, I also rebuild, I appoint myself a transgressor (Galatians II, 18). Therefore, faithfully proclaim the teaching of God: for this is what deceivers do. Often, in order not to offend people, they omit what is true.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who is in you, who was preached among us, by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not, Is and is not: but Is was in him. As for suitable preachers, this must be, that there is among them, Is, is, is not, is not; so that they do nothing other than what they know to be useful. For often we desire something other than what is useful; lest our will overcomes usefulness, therefore the Apostle preferred usefulness to his own will, so that he would not go to them. For in Christ Jesus there was not 'Is and Is Not,' but 'Is,' and in Him there was 'Was;' for He never wanted anything other than what is useful. For His will is always in accordance with utility, and He is not unchanged, so as to do unwillingly, like a human, what is useful, or to hesitate about some things and change His will.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) For all the promises of God in him are yes, and in him Amen, to God for glory through us. Now he which establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, is God; Who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith you stand.

(Vers. 21, 22.) (Verse 21, 22.) But he who strengthens us with you is Christ the Lord; and he who anointed us is God: who also sealed us and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts. He says that Christ confirms the Gentiles in the promised faith to the Jews; because he is the one who made both one (Ephesians 2:14), that is, circumcision and uncircumcision, making peace in one new man. Therefore, the Lord confirms us, and God who anointed us, that is, who bestowed royal honor, as the apostle Peter says: For we are, he says (1 Peter 2:9), a royal priesthood through the spiritual anointing, the type of which was in the kings of the Jews. He also sealed us and gave us his Spirit as a pledge, so that we may not doubt his promises. For if he believed in his Spirit even for mortals, there is no doubt he will also add it to the glory of the immortal. Yet the Father and the Son say one work; because he also says that he confirms Christ and God. For whoever the Son confirms, the Father confirms as well; and when the Father gives the Spirit, the Son also gives it; because the Holy Spirit belongs to both, as he says to the Romans: But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him (Rom. VIII, 9). Therefore, since he has spoken about the perfection of man, he has mentioned the Trinity in this place; for all the highest perfection consists in the Trinity. But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I have not yet come to Corinth. Now I am ready to come to you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, for I do not seek what is yours, but you. For children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? But be that as it may, I did not burden you myself; but, as some say, I was crafty, I took you in by deceit. Certainly I have not taken advantage of you through any of those whom I have sent to you, have I? I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and

walk in the same steps? All this time you have been thinking that we are defending ourselves to you. It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved. For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish; that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. I fear that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and that I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced. This is the third time I am coming to you. Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses. I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone, just as the Lord said to me. For the rest, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. In order to commend themselves to their minds, he gives God as a witness, so that they would not think themselves unworthy and despised by him; knowing this, they would reform themselves in order to deserve his presence. Not that we rule over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy; for you stand firm in faith. For faith is not a matter of necessity, but of will, therefore he says: Not that we rule over your faith; for rulership is for the sake of necessity. But he says, we are helpers of your joy; that is, just as there is sadness in evil deeds, so there is joy in correction. We are helpers of this joy, he says; because those who wish to amend themselves, offer admonitions to them; so that they may be able to accomplish what they have begun to desire.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) However, I decided this within myself, so that I would not come to you again in sorrow. It is clear that he did not want to come, lest by rebuking a few, he might sadden many, being saddened himself; for all the members sympathize with one another's sorrow.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) For if I cause you sorrow, who is there to make me glad except the one who is made sorrowful by me? This is said because he does not want to cause them sorrow, but because they had striven with sins, it was necessary for them to be made sorrowful, even against the Apostle's will; in such a way, however, that having become obedient afterwards, they would make glad those who were made sorrowful along with them, so that the one who had made them sorrowful by admonishing them would then be made glad by them while they are being corrected.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Therefore, I also wrote this very thing, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow from those whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence that my joy is the joy of all of you. Therefore, he says that he wrote these things so that when he comes later, there would be no reason for him to be saddened, with vices having been removed, but he would rejoice with them as if with beloved children, so that because he was afflicted by unbelieving tribulations, he would certainly rejoice with those who had believed. For the joy of the Apostles is the purification of the people; therefore they rejoice, because there is no condemnation in those who must rejoice together.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not to cause you sorrow but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. It is evident that when someone rebukes another out of this affection, they suffer more for that person's sins; they do not rebuke them in order to cause them sorrow, but to show them how much they love them. For the one who rebukes without this affection only causes sadness to their brother; indeed, they insult him who does not grieve for his brother.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) But if anyone has caused me grief, he has not grieved me, but in a measure, so that I may not burden you all. All those whom he mentions here in part are holy; for there are two parts in the people, as I have mentioned in the previous letter. Therefore, these are in part the holy ones, whom he signifies as being saddened by the error of their brother, just as he is himself. By saying this, he burdens the sinner, or the one who has sinned. For the one in whose fault many are troubled is more guilty: and by this he says:

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) It is enough for him who is such, this reproach, which is done by many. He will surely suffer great pain, who sees his fault disgust many. So in order to give more, and console; lest he who is of such a kind be absorbed by greater sadness. The advice is to help a troubled man for the sake of his own sin; because repentance, if it is from a true heart, that is, if he immediately feels pain when admonished, at once, it bears fruit. Finally, in the Book of Kings, it is stated that when the prophet accused Ahab, he was immediately moved and deserved forgiveness (3 Kings 2:20). And David, in the case of Uriah the Hittite, was rebuked because he recognized that he had sinned, and his sin was forgiven (2 Kings 12:13). Likewise, the Apostle ordered that he who had committed incest, having his father's wife, be reproved and rejected, but also called to repentance; so that, not seeing himself rejected for long, despairing of himself, he would give his mind to enjoying the world, as if he no longer had a place before God. For to be swallowed up in greater sorrow, to despair of oneself, to turn to the admission of sins, by which one burdened is swallowed up by the second death. For this is true repentance, to cease from sin; for thus one proves oneself to grieve for oneself, if one should cease from now on.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Vers. 8, 9.) Therefore, I urge you to confirm your love for him; for this is why I wrote, to test whether you are obedient in everything. As it is evident, they have proven themselves obedient in all other matters, especially those concerning ecclesiastical order. Therefore, they should also be obedient in this, to affirm their brother in love and welcome him into communion.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10). But if you have given anything to anyone, so have I. It is clear that he who commands it to be done, himself does it; nor can he refuse what he himself also begs to be done, as he writes, since he had the power to command. But in his first letter he brought a serious charge against him, so that everyone would be horrified by him; now when he wants to receive him, he prays that it would not be too harsh for them to have communion with him while his mind is still

inflamed against him. For they did not have as much foresight as the Apostle did; so that they would immediately understand that what the Apostle said must be done in this particular case: therefore he beseeches them to forgive him, indicating that God had also forgiven him; because the Apostle was doing nothing without the Spirit of God. Indeed, what I have given, if I have given anything, I have given for your sake in the person of Christ. Saying this burdens them; for if the master, when asked by the disciples, gave to whom they wanted, it was a sin; how much more should the disciples obey the master? And in order to show that what he had given was ratified by God, he said that he had given in the person of Christ what he had given: that is, he said that he had carried out the mission of Christ, by accepting it; so that the action of the Apostle might be the action of Christ, as he said: 'Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven' (Matthew 18:18). If therefore Christ forgave this person for whom they sought through the Apostle, how much more was he already unknown to whom he himself also exhorts to give?

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) Let us not be possessed by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his cunning. This says what I mentioned above, that consolation should follow a brother who is weeping for his sin; so that he may not be sorrowful for long, and be despised by the love of the Church, and begin to despair of himself, and seeing that the subtle devil is always lying in wait, may his mind be made vile, approach, and suggest to him; so that he may enjoy what is present, who has been cast down from hope of future reward; and may the brother possessed by the devil perish, to whom this opportunity for repentance was given, so that he might turn and reform himself, as the prophet Ezekiel says: I do not want the death of the one dying, but rather that he should turn back and live (Ezekiel 18:23). And again: 'Convertatur, inquit, et replantabo illos' (Ibid., 6).

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verses 12, 13.) But when I came to Troas for the sake of the Gospel of Christ, and a door was opened for me in the Lord, I had no rest for my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus. So, saying goodbye to them, I went on to Macedonia. The fact that he had gone to Troas indicates that he went there to preach the Gospel of Christ to them, and when he began to preach, there were those who accepted the word of faith. But because Titus was not there to comfort him, the labor was unbearable due to the incessant noise. For although some of them had opened their hearts to receive the word of God, yet the impudence of the unbelievers was not insignificant, rising up against the Apostle with the zeal of the believers; and these two things could not be fulfilled by one person, namely, to instruct the faithful and to contradict the unbelievers. Therefore, bidding farewell to those who had accepted him, he set out for Macedonia.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ Jesus. This is God triumphant through the apostles in Christ, making them victorious in the faith of Christ, so that faith may have a triumph over perfidy, while the unfaithful become believers and the malicious do not succeed in pursuing the faithful.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) And to manifest the fragrance of his knowledge through us in every place. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. The fragrance of the knowledge of God is in Christ, and it is through Christ. He said 'fragrance' because just as certain things, which cannot be seen, are known by their smell, and you understand that they are present in a place even though you cannot see them, so too God, because he is invisible, wanted to be understood through Christ. And the preaching of Christ (which, like a scent, reaches not only the nostrils but also the ears) hinted at God the Father as the creator and his only-begotten Son. The apostles, acting as ambassadors of this matter (as the Lord says to God, the Son to the Father: As you sent me into this world, so I send them into this world) manifest the fragrance of the knowledge of God and Christ through signs and wonders. The preaching of these things as true about God and Christ is proven by the testimony of power: which is why it is signified by fragrance, because while God is not seen, it is understood to be in the apostles through this invisible working, so that the truth of the doctrine may be made manifest. Therefore, he who rightly affirms Christ is a good odor to God, worthy of praise in those who believe and not to be blamed in those who do not believe. But he who wrongly affirms Christ is a bad odor to God, both in those who are faithful and in those who doubt; for he will be guilty in both cases. For he who doubts appears not to believe, because he finds fault with what he hears; and he who believes, believes wrongly. Therefore, the Apostle spoke of the reason of the Law, that just as in the Law he who offered sacrifices with good intentions was a good odor to God and acceptable, so now the power of preaching and the doctrine gives off a burning odor to God. For this reason, God provided the apostles with his help, so that they could impart the words of his knowledge to open ears, whether to Jews or Gentiles, along with the sacrament of the birth of the Lord Jesus according to the will of God and his Father, in the unity of saving faith, for the salvation of believers and the condemnation of the unbelievers.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) To some indeed we are the odor of death unto death. He says this because to the unbelievers the preaching of the cross of Christ is an odor of death; for when they hear the word of God, they receive it as if it were a pestilence, from which death arises: and it must necessarily happen to them according to their faith. But to others the odor of life unto life. It is true, because to the faithful the hearing of God's word is the messenger of eternal salvation, and it will happen to them according to their faith. Therefore, whether in those who perish or in those who are saved, the apostles were a good odor of Christ to God; because they preached sincerely and without flattery. For those who did not believe, they themselves laid a snare for themselves and their children, as the Lord says to the prophet Ezekiel: You preach, if they listen to you, you will gain their souls; but if not, they themselves will see it; however, you will be saved from their destruction (Ezek. III, 19).

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, as from God, we speak in Christ before God. Here the verse touches upon false apostles who adulterated the word of God with corrupt teaching and a wicked interpretation, removing the divine meaning and replacing it with human ideas. Among them were those who zealously held to Jewish traditions and did not teach about Christ properly. Therefore,

he says that these people are not worthy. But the apostles preached sincerely, as it was given to them by God, in front of God, that is, just as God gave it, with God himself as a witness, they spoke in Christ, not seeking their own glory, but the glory of God. This is to speak in Christ, to proclaim his honor and power.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) We begin again to recommend ourselves. Since he points out false apostles, exposing their evil comments, but testifies to himself as a true preacher, he seems to be recommending himself again, as in his first letter. And lest he appear to do this for any cunning earthly gain, he added: Do we need, like some others, commendatory letters to you or from you? By saying this, he clarifies his meaning and still points out the false apostles, whom he proves are going around the churches for the sake of their own honor and profit, to take away salvation, not to give it. Of these were those to whom the Lord says: 'You devour the houses of widows and orphans with long prayers, therefore you will receive a greater judgment' (Matthew 23:14). For they were invading both their possessions and their souls. But the Apostle did not touch their possessions, and by the truth of his teaching, he saved their souls. Therefore, he was commending himself not in a carnal but in a spiritual way for their progress in salvation, so that they would believe in him, who he truly was; for whoever thinks wrongly of something good, sins, and through this commendation, it benefits them more.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) You are our letter, written in our hearts. The letter of the Apostle is a sign of salvation. Therefore, it is rightly said that the salvation of the Corinthians was in the heart of the Apostle and those who were with him; for they always thought of their salvation. So, since the Apostles and those who were with him are in the heart, the letters are written in their hearts; for whoever always remembers someone, that person is written in his mind.

(Vers. 3.)

(Ver. 3.) What is known and read by all men: it is revealed that you are a letter of Christ, administered by us. It is clear that when they are called Christians, they are letters of Christ, indicating salvation, which God has given to all men through Christ, written by the apostles; for when they teach, they write. They are written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. For the things promised are eternal; therefore, they are called writings of God's Spirit, who is always present; but temporal things are written with ink, which fades away and loses its memory. Not on stone tablets, but on fleshy tablets of the heart. Now the old law is struck, which was first given on stone tablets and abolished with the breaking of the tablets under the mountain by Moses. But the new law is written in the soul (Exodus 32:19), that is, in the heart, not with a pen but with the Spirit; because faith is an eternal thing, it is written by the Spirit, so that it may remain: but the old precepts, as the world comes to an end, will cease. Therefore, just as the law differs from faith, so do the administrators of that law differ from the administrators of the law of faith.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) But we have such confidence through Christ toward God. The dignity of the apostles is manifested when he says: But we have such confidence toward God through Christ. To show that the ancients did not have this confidence toward God; because their administration was lesser.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Vers. 5, 6.) It is not that we are sufficient to think anything from ourselves, as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God, who also hath made us fit ministers of the new testament, not in the letter, but in the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Although he prefers the apostolic dignity, he nevertheless breaks forth into praise of God, not attributing this to human merits, but to His grace, who deigned to ordain the preaching of salvation for human life, which the old law held guilty, through the forgiveness of sins given through Jesus Christ our Lord. For the letters were given to Moses so that he might, according to the natural law, kill those who despise the Law. But the Spirit, that is, the law of faith which is not written but is contained in the mind, gives life to the guilty of death; nevertheless, if they turn themselves around, so that they are justified, they may sin no more. Therefore, the Law was rightly given so that there would be fear of sinning: but because the human race is weak, the mercy of God was given in the preaching of the apostles so that, having been forgiven of their sins, they might escape death by believing in Christ. This is the proclamation of the New Testament, which God had promised through the prophets.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) But if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. Therefore, because he could not provide for sinners, the law of faith came, which would save them, not only by forgiving them but also by justifying them. Therefore, there is a great difference between the law and the law; for at that time, those who were stained by sin could not look upon the face of Moses descending from the mountain with the law inscribed on tablets, because his face had become glorious and could not be seen by sinners who were worthy of death (Exodus 34:30). But now, the glory is made void by the law of the Spirit, since through the forgiveness of sins, the righteous have been made worthy to see and can behold the glory of God, just as Peter, John, and James saw the glory of Christ on the mountain (Matthew 17:2).

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) For if there is glory in the ministry of condemnation, much more will the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. This is said because the gift of God's righteousness through faith in Christ is greater than that of the old law; for there is more glory in salvation than in death: although he condemns justly, yet he advances more to praise if he pardons; so that the guilty one may correct himself.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) For that which was glorified in this part is not glorified, because of its surpassing glory. It is clear that the glory seen in the face of Moses (Exodus 24:29) was not a glorious act, for it did not benefit anyone. On the contrary, it was more of a hindrance. It did not bear the fruit of glory,

not due to Moses' fault, but because of the sinners. However, in this part there is no glory. The true glory is the one that abounds in grace, so that purified men, by the gift of God, cleansed from darkness, may be able to see the glory of Christ.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For if that which fades away was in glory, much more that which remains is in glory. He does not deny that there was glory in the law, or in the face of Moses, but it did not remain; because it was temporary in Moses, not truth. Therefore, with the coming of the Savior, the figure ceased; because the abiding truth appeared; so as much as there is a difference between an image and the truth, so much is the difference between the glory of the face of Moses and the glory of Christ. Therefore, he said above: Because of the surpassing glory. For the glory of the servant was as great as it should be believed, but this glory is as great as that of his father; because the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:11). For just as the glorious stars are bright in the evening but lose their brightness when the sun rises, so the glory of Moses is diminished in comparison to the glory of Christ.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Therefore, having such hope, we use much confidence. It tells us that our hope is to see glory, not like the glory that was on Moses' face, but the glory that the three apostles saw on the mountain when the Lord revealed himself (Matthew 17:2). Therefore, from this we must infer how much divine mercy has benefited us, and how much we have been deemed worthy to enrich with the gift of higher grace, which he had given to the Jews. For the Jews, when the glory of Moses' face was less, they were not able to look at it: but we, on the other hand, believe that we will see not the glory of Moses, which is inferior, but the excellent glory of the Savior. So the Jews, therefore, did not deserve to see the glory of the Lord; but we, on the other hand, are going to see the common glory of the Lord. And for this reason, we also owe it to render back, as much as we can, the benevolence of God; so that we may be more inclined in His love, who has given us confidence, cleansing us from sins, to see the glory of God. Now, therefore, it is necessary that confidence, prepared by good actions, may increase in us; for we will see as much as we believe.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) And not as Moses used to put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze at the end of that which is passing away. But their minds were hardened. For until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains, not lifted, because it is lifted in Christ. But until this very day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For with the arrival of worthiness through faith, unworthiness is emptied.

(Vers. 14.) (Verse 14.) But their minds were dull until this very day. He says they are dull as long as they do not believe. This dullness happens because of unbelief; therefore, when they convert to faith, the sharpness of their minds is sharpened so that they may see the splendor of divine light. This veil itself remains in the reading of the old Testament, until it is revealed; for in Christ it is abolished. He says that this dullness remains in the reading of Exodus, as long as they believe. For it is not revealed unless they believe; for in Christ it is abolished, that is, it is taken away by the faith of Christ; for when the sin is removed, they will begin to see what they could not see because

of sin.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil is lying over their heart. It is clear that when this portion of the Law is read, the opinion of those who are under the Law is being recited.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. To turn to the Lord means to believe in Christ; so that by acknowledging the Lord, one may receive forgiveness. This is to have the veil removed, and the judgment by which the guilty one was held under the Law is nullified.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. For God is Spirit, and through Christ, the Spirit gives the law: not written in letters, but revealed in faith to the souls; not teaching visible things, but urging to believe in invisible things; things that the soul understands spiritually, not things that the eye sees. This law gives freedom, asking only for faith; so that by believing in what is unseen, one may deserve to be liberated from their condition.

(Vers. 18.) (Verse 18.) So we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. It says that we, who have received the gift of God's grace, are beholding the glory of the Lord through faith, and are being transformed into the same image that we hope for, which is to be found like Christ in the glory image, as the apostle John says: We know, he says, that when He appears, we shall be like Him (1 John 3:2). From glory to glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord; that is, by the favor of God, we are transformed from the glory of Moses, which we were unable to behold because of guilt, to the glory which we believe is given to us by the Spirit of the Lord. For only as much glory will be given as is worthy of God to give through His Spirit; therefore He said: as from the Spirit of the Lord, to show that such glory is given which is suitable to the greatness of the Giver. For the glory of Moses was neither so great nor eternal; for he received glory according to the measure of the Law; so also, according to the measure of the law of faith, in which is the Spirit of God, glory will be given to those who believe. For God has granted to the faithful only that He may give them His Spirit, the pledge of that glory which He has promised.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Version 1.) Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) But we renounce hidden dishonor. In order for man to be worthy of that glory, he teaches that all shameful and polluted things, which can be done and thought, should be removed; so that they are not only driven out from action, but also from thought. These are the words of the inviter; for he exhorts to a better life under his own and his followers' persona, because of the aforementioned vices, which he often criticizes. These hidden dishonors can also be those who, with a perverse mind, pretend to preach in order to deceive; hence he added: Not walking in cunning, nor adulterating the word of God. For he advances to disgrace and deformation, he who cunningly fabricates doctrine to deceive the hearts of the simple; for he will be found repugnant on the day of God's judgment. For the craftiness of an evil mind, in order to satisfy its own desires, adulterates the words of God, inverting their meaning. Adulterating, however, is to exclude the true meaning by means of a false one. But in the manifestation of truth, commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God. He says this because in his preaching of the gospel he made himself suspicious to no one, adding furthermore, when he says: Before God; so that he may prove not only to humans but also to God, to whom nothing is hidden. Therefore, he calls upon the testimony of God, so that he may be believed, because he preaches in this way, as it is given by the Author: and God is a witness in this way, by giving signs and wonders to be done by his hands.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But even if our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. Indeed, the unbelievers do not see, blinded by their unfaithfulness, the splendor of God's power; for there is a veil upon their hearts, and a hardening of disbelief, especially among the Jews.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. The God of this world is said of the worldly-minded, because they, being hostile to the faith of Christ, blind the minds of infidels, so that they do not see the truth of the glorious gospel of Christ. Therefore, this is what they desire. For since they are malicious people and understand the truth, they say it is false, and in doing so, they assist themselves, in order that they may not believe what they do not want to believe. However, they assert that Christ, being the image of God, is only corporeal: and leaving aside his deeds, they only mention his flesh, of which Isaiah said: He has blinded their eyes, so that they may not see; and he has closed their ears, so that they may not hear up to this very day (Isaiah 6:10).

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we are your servants for Jesus' sake. He proves himself to be a servant of Christ to such an extent that, at his command, he testifies that he is a minister in preaching these things; so that they may be subject to the service of the Gospel for the benefit of these people. Therefore, calling them servants signifies ministers; but in order to speak humbly, he said so; in order to truly show that he

preaches the Gospel not for his own glory, but for the glory of our Lord, whom he obeys, whom he serves, just as the Lord himself says: 'I am in your midst not as one who serves, but as one who ministers' (Luke 22:27); not because of the merit of those whom he serves, but because of the command of the Lord.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) Because the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is saying that the mercy of God has been shown, so that we, who were unbelieving in ignorance, that is, in darkness, God may give light to the rest of the nations through us. How much further does he humble himself in order to exalt the glory of God alone and of Christ? For he is enlightened so that they may have knowledge of the glory of God through Christ. Therefore, he says that the knowledge of the glory of God, that is, not only of God himself, but also of Christ, who is his glory, so that he might indicate that not only God is to be known, but also his works and mercy and providence, by which he created and saved the human race, seen in Christ through the glory of his power.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God, and not of us. The treasure signifies the sacrament of God in Christ, which is manifested to believers, but hidden from unbelievers; for just as the treasure is concealed, so the sacrament of God is hidden within man, that is, in the human heart. Therefore, this treasure is said to be given by God in the mind and body, so that the excellence of His power may be revealed through men, specifically through preachers; that every tongue may be reconciled to its Creator, not for the honor of men, but for God, who manifests Himself through men: who, though humble and unskilled, have received power from God to speak and to perform mighty acts. Therefore, calling these vessels earthenware signifies the frailty of human nature, which can do nothing except receive its strength from God, and through these weak vessels, God proclaims His glory, not to man who was formed from clay, but to Himself.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Having suffered pressure in all things, but not constrained. Now he shows why the preachers were suitable; because God always helped them in their need. Therefore, he says, having suffered pressure but not constrained: this means that God did not allow us to be oppressed to such an extent that we would lose hope. Having suffered need, but not abandoned: that is, God, the shepherd, was present to those who were in need.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) They endured persecution, but were not abandoned. It is true, because God was counseling them so that their enemies would not have enough power over them. They were cast down, but did not perish: that is, they were struck with blows, but were not killed by God's intervention; for whether they were shut in or bound, they escaped from the hands of their enemies with God's help. Finally, when Paul and Silas were shut in, already beaten, and their feet were bound in stocks; they sang hymns to God cheerfully, becoming stronger than those who were not

beaten.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Always carrying about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. There is no doubt that in the martyrs Christ is killed, and in those who suffer for the faith, whether it be death, imprisonment, or beatings, they share in the sufferings of Christ, so that his life may be made known in their bodies. These sufferings are what demonstrate the merit for the future life that Christ promised. Hence, in another place he says: When I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians XII, 10). And again: Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:21).

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) So if we who live are handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that Jesus' life may also be made visible in our mortal flesh. For it is evident that the reason we are handed over to death for Jesus is so that we may not refuse to live, so that the life by which Christ rose from the dead may be bestowed upon our mortal flesh, that is, so that we may not fear death because of the promised resurrection.

(Vers. 12.)

Therefore death indeed works in us, but life in you. He says this because they were subjected to death for their salvation, preaching to the Gentiles and stirring up enmities both from the Jews and from the Gentiles, even unto death.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) However, having the same spirit of faith: that is, the common spirit through which faith is strengthened, we have with you. Therefore, for their sake, he endured such great sufferings so that they would be united in faith. As it is written: I believed, therefore I spoke; we also believe, therefore we also speak (Psalm 116:10). He gave this example from Psalm 115 to show that he is ready to endure all things because he believes in the future resurrection. Therefore, being secure about the future life, it does not care about the present life; for it is believed that, just as that blessed life is hoped for, this life is despised. Therefore, being secure because what he has believed is true, he dares to proclaim this, so as to make others participants in his hope. Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will establish us with you. With this hope, he says that we labor for faith, because the example of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus precedes those who believe; for just as all die in Adam, so also in Christ all will be made alive. For Adam indeed is the form of death, the cause of sin: but Christ is the form of life, because of righteousness; for he committed no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. And since he said that they are partakers of this common faith, he says that he will raise them up together with you; that there may be one faith in one house of peace. For when they understand that they suffer destruction on behalf of them, and are concerned for the sufferings of these as if they were their own, they will at the same time be partakers in the promised life; so that they may be grieved together, and may rejoice together. He speaks thus because of those who denied the resurrection, whom he also reproaches in the first letter.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Verse 14, 15.) For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace may, through the thanksgiving of many, abound to the glory of God. From His own gift, God did not want anyone to be alienated: and because not everyone receives the word of faith, the Apostle, knowing the will of God, did not fear persecutions and dangers, as long as he faithfully preached to all, so that more people could believe; so that the abundant gift of God would not be diminished by the thanksgiving of a few to the contempt of God, but would increase abundantly through the thanksgiving of many for the glory of God. How much, therefore, is this person worthy of honor, who always subjected his soul to death, so that the gift of God would not profit in a far different way than it was given? Is it not a great insult to him who, while preparing a lavish dinner and inviting many, has only a few in the highest place?

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Therefore, we do not faint. It is evident that these things pertain to the higher meaning; for as he shows his devotion even more inclined towards Godly matters, he adds these things, by which he proves that he does not fail in any way to fulfill that which is pleasing to God; yet he is confident in the promised resurrection. And although our outward self may decay, our inward self is renewed day by day. By afflictions, wounds, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness, the flesh decays, but the soul is renewed by the hope of the future reward; for it is purified by constant tribulations. For it progresses in affliction, it does not perish, so that it daily gains merit by the approaching temptations; for even the corruption of the body contributes to the immortality of the soul by merit.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) For the momentary and light affliction of the present time is working for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure. These present temporary tribulations that are brought upon us for the sake of faith are called momentary and light because they are temporary. However, they are working an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure for those who are patient. For with small labors, great rewards are given, and for light tribulation, a surpassing weight of glory will be repaid for eternity.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) They do not consider things that are seen, but things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are unseen are eternal. Those who desire heavenly and spiritual things profess to scorn present and earthly things; for in comparison to spiritual things, these are nothing. For just as a figure is to the truth, the figure perishes but the truth remains; and therefore the righteous do not fear leaving this world, but rejoice.

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) But we know that if our earthly house of this habitation is dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that

hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For he called this earthly body a house, because it is mortal: so that if we are dissolved from this, we will find a built house in the heavens, eternal. This house signifies an immortal body, in which, rising again, we will always be, whose form is already declared in the body of the Lord in heaven.

(Vers. 2, 3.)

(Vers. 2, 3.) For in this dwelling of ours we groan, desiring to put on our heavenly clothing; since when clothed, we are not found naked. Therefore, he says, we groan with prayers, so that the promised glory from heaven may be able to clothe those who rise again. Desiring this, they persist in prayers; lest when rising again, having received the body, they may be found naked, that is, distant from the promised glory. For this is necessary, that the soul, having put on the body, may be clothed with the judgment and glory of God, which is a transformation into clarity. For death is from the earth, but resurrection is truly from heaven; if indeed it is transformed into glory. Other codices have it this way: Indeed, stripped off, we are not found naked, that is, if we go forth from the body clothed with Christ; for whoever is baptized in Christ puts on Christ (Galatians 3:27). Therefore, if we remain in the form of baptism and tradition, stripped off from the body, we are not found naked; for Christ dwells in the inner man, and when we are clothed with Him, having received the Holy Spirit, we will be seen as worthy to be clothed with the promised heavenly glory. For in that light the promised clarity will be revealed, which will be seen as a sign of adoption.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For when we are in this body, that is, mortal, we groan burdened; because we do not want to be unclothed, but rather clothed upon; that mortality may be swallowed up by life. The same sense is declared, for this reason he says that we are burdened by the passions of the body and the storms of the world, to direct our appeals to God, so that we may not be changed, conquered, and made unworthy; but that when our end arrives, persevering in faith, we may be found clothed in the Holy Spirit, who is Christ in substance. For then we will be able to put on the promised glory, if, having been stripped of the body, we have not been deprived by the Holy Spirit. Thus the mortal is swallowed up by life, that is to say, that rising again we may be clothed with immortality with glory; so that it may no longer be possible to die, or to be entangled by sufferings: and this is to be swallowed up by life; for he is not to be said to be swallowed up by life who rises for this purpose, that he may be punished.

(Vers. 5.)

(Ver. 5.) But He who perfects us in this very thing is God: who also has given us the pledge of the Spirit. That which we groan and long for, that is, not to be divested, but to be invested, we may merit, according to the aforementioned sense, He says to perfect in the day of judgment. For He has promised and He is faithful, giving us the pledge of the Spirit for the fulfillment of this matter; He Himself is the seal of our adoption.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Vers. 6, 7.) Therefore, always confident and knowing that while inhabiting this body, we are sojourners from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by appearance. It is evident that we are with the Lord by faith, not by presence: and therefore we sojourn not by faith, but by appearance. And why, when he says the same thing in the Acts of the Apostles: For in him we live, and move, and are (Acts 17:28); does he say here that we sojourn from the Lord? If God is everywhere, how do we wander from Him when we are here? Without a doubt, God is everywhere, indeed all things are in God: but because the seat of God is in heaven and He is always seen there; therefore, when we are here, where He is not seen, we are said to wander from Him. For when we do not see Him, even though He is present, we are absent from Him.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Therefore, we dare and consent to journey away from the body and be present with God. He rightly says, we dare; for we have confidence in the promise of God, and knowing that it is much better to be there than in the world, they consent and desire to depart from the body, so that they may rest until the day of resurrection under the altar of God.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) And therefore we strive, whether present or traveling, to please Him. He says that this is to be done and that we should persist in good works, so that whether we are still in this life or present before the judgment seat of Christ, we may please Him. Therefore, if we observe discipline, we will please Him both here and there, because one who pleases Him here will not displease Him there.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. So, when Christ judges, each one of us will receive what he has done in the body, not without the body, whether good or evil. And he did not say 'deeds of the flesh', because the sins of the flesh are always punishable; but he said 'deeds of the body', since sometimes they operate spiritually, other times carnally.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I hope we are also well known in your consciences. For we are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses

against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:11-21) We are urging people, he says, to believe and to prepare so they do not incur and then repent when there is no fruit of repentance. But we are manifest to God; for this is what he preached, what God commanded; and God is said to know what is good. Finally, he says to those who do evil: I do not know you. But I hope that we are manifest in your consciences. Therefore it strikes their conscience, so that they themselves would be witnesses of the truth of their words.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) We do not commend ourselves to you again. Because above, testifying to his true preaching, he seemed to praise himself; therefore now he means the same thing, not saying this for his own praise, but for their glory; so that they may rejoice in having added to their preaching, with them as witnesses. But we provide you with an occasion to boast about us; so that you may have something against those who boast in appearance, and not in heart. He says this because many boasted in themselves about the apostles, claiming to have been taught by them, who have always been with the Lord. Therefore, he says here that he will give an account of himself, by which they themselves could boast against them, because he was an Apostle, from whom they had also learned. Hence, in another place he says: 'I have done no less than those who are considered apostles' (2 Corinthians 12:11). He says this under compulsion, so that his silence would not be a burden to them. Therefore, whoever boasts in their heart, suppresses pride, knowing that God gives grace to the humble, but resists the proud (James 4:6); for the mind of the proud does not produce fruit worthy of God.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Whether we surpass in mind, to God; or whether we perceive soundly, to you. He says this, because if he is considered to have spoken proudly or arrogantly, because he seemed to praise himself, but saying the truth, this should be forgiven by God. But if it is not understood as proud, but spoken for the glory of the listeners, he says he is beneficial to the Corinthians; so then it is said soundly to the listeners, if it is understood in this way, as it was said. But if it is considered to have been said boastfully, it should be forgiven by God as insane; for all pride is considered as insanity.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For the love of Christ urges us, judging this, that if one died for all. Because Christ, loving the human race, gave himself up to death in order to redeem them; therefore the apostles, in order to repay him, exhort men in some way to his service: and in order to attract them, it is necessary for them to testify that they preach the truth, while others teach false things; nor should they remain silent about their own merit, in order to designate the punishment of wicked teachers. So these things were not done with a boastful mind, but so that the gift of Christ might be understood by all, and that those who are faithfully devoted to him might give thanks to him. Therefore, because of the love of Christ, which is the reason and extent of his gifts to those who love him, they do not remain silent: not for the sake of boasting, but to invite those who hear to

devotion to him; so that the death of Christ may not appear fruitless, and so that the praise of the apostles may be acknowledged. For through the merit and glory of the apostles, the grace and beneficence of Christ and God are recognized.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Therefore all are dead, and Christ died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who died and was raised for them. For it is necessary for all to die because of Adam, and Christ died for all, so that he might free them from the second death; and therefore those who live in the body, knowing that Christ died for them, should be subject to him, confessing him as Lord. For since his death benefits them, his resurrection testifies to it. Therefore, he does not live for himself, who is ready to do the will of his master.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Therefore, from now on we know no one according to the flesh. Even if we have known Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know Him. Indeed, when Christ rose from the dead, the carnal birth ceases, the weakness of the body ceases, and the suffering of death ceases. Up to the cross, there was a suspicion of weakness in Christ. But afterwards, it appeared, what was not believed, as He Himself says: 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am' (John 8:28). Therefore, the Apostle mentions this in order to show with what devotion one must obey Christ. For the sake of human salvation, he was not only willing to be born as a human, but also to be mistreated and to die; so that those who understand how precious his death is may serve him more willingly, not as if they were repaying a debt to a human, but to God; for everyone must render obedience to him according to his person and merits.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! It is evident that through Christ, everything has been renewed, if one recognizes His dignity. For He becomes new to those who, previously, only seemed to be human, when it is understood that He is God. As weakness recedes, His divinity is recognized, and as the old error, which introduced the belief in many gods and led humanity away from the faith in the one true God, ceases, everything returns to the profession of simplicity, worshipping one God in the Trinity.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) But all things are from God. Although Christ has redeemed us, all things are still from God; for from Him is all fatherhood (Ephesians 3:15): therefore it is necessary to give preference to the person of the Father.

(Vers. 19, 20, 21.)

(Vers. 19, 20, 21.) He reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their sins against them, and putting the word of reconciliation in us for Christ, for whom we act as ambassadors, as God exhorts through us: praying for Christ to be reconciled to God. For He who did not know sin, He made sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. The almighty God, the father of Christ (when all things that he had done through Christ had

become perishable and transient, being forgotten by their creator) deigned to come down from his heavenly abode to earth as our Lord Christ, taking on a human form; so that he could be like a model for humans, making peace between themselves and their God, their creator. Therefore, God was in Christ. How? As if in a vicar or ambassador, as he was in the prophets, or in some other way? Is it not the case that just as it was in the prophets, it can be understood to have been in the Son as well? For the Son is naturally the ambassador of the Father. Hence, it is said: 'The Father is in me, and I am in the Father' (John 10:11); for the Father is understood to be in the Son, because their substance is one. For there is unity where there is no difference: and thus they are mutually together; for their image and likeness are one. So, seeing the Son, it is said to have seen the Father, just as the Lord Himself says: 'Whoever sees me, sees the Father' (John 10:9). Therefore, it is rightly said: God was in Christ; that is, the Father in the Son, reconciling the world to himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them; for the creature sinned against God, and did not repent, in order to return to him: God, unwilling that his work should perish, sent his Son, through whom he preached the remission of sins, to reconcile them unto himself through him, by whom he had created us. Therefore, whether by the Son or by his servants, God exhorts the people; for all authority must be referred to him, by whose will and providence Christ was incarnate to redeem mankind: who, when he desired to return to the Father, gave his disciples the commission received from the Father.

Praying for Christ, you are being reconciled to God. This is what I said, he who gave the apostles as vicars for Christ, so that they may preach to reconcile to God.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) He who did not know sin, for us he made sin. God says that the Father made his Son Christ sin, namely, he who did not know sin, that is, he who had not sinned; because being made flesh, he was not changed, but was made sin; just as one who becomes prefect does not lose what he was: but he certainly assumes what he was not. Therefore, Christ became man for the sake of sin, whom neither fate nor dignity touched in being born as a man. But because all flesh is under sin, therefore, being made flesh, it was also made sin. And since He was offered for sins, He is rightly called sin, because even the offering in the law, which was offered for sins, was called sin. That we might become the righteousness of God in Him, who knew no sin, as Isaiah says: He did not commit sin, and no guile was found in His mouth (Isaiah 53:9), as if a sinner was killed, so that sinners might be justified before God in Christ. For Satan suffered envy against the Savior, seeing Him teach men how to appease God, renouncing the devil; and for this reason he killed Him, not knowing what would happen against himself; for after the cross, Christ descended to the underworld, conquering death; for He who knew no sin could not be held by death; for death was made empty by sin, so that the death of the righteous might benefit sinners; so that henceforth death cannot hold those who bear the sign of the cross.

Chapter VI.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Moreover, we urge and implore you not to receive the grace of God in vain. The Apostle strives to undertake the care of human salvation in two ways: to be devoted to God's providence and to exhibit the duty of charity towards others.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) In an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee (Isaiah 59:8): this is written in the prophet Isaiah. It teaches the predestined grace of God in the time of Christ; for God has determined to pour out His mercy, so that He may generously provide assistance to those who ask for help in the name of Christ.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation; giving no offense to anyone, so that the ministry may not be discredited. He says the time has come, when sinners can make progress towards forgiveness: he says the time has come, when medicine can be administered to mortal illnesses; and therefore he is concerned about the salvation of the sick, lest by some neglect the grace of medicine should lack the desired effect of their good will. Therefore, by faith and their own vigilance, he removes every offense from those who are negligent, lest the laziness of these ones might give occasion for offense to the disciples. And thus they indicate that they are free, because they preach with absolute insistence what is salutary. Hence he added: Lest our ministry might be worthy of reproach; for their ministry would be worthy of reproach if they did not give examples in their actions of what they taught in words.

(Vers. 4.)

(Versed. 4.) But in all things let us commend ourselves as ministers of God. Ministers of God teach without flattery, so that they may please the one whose ministers they are, not like pseudo-apostles, who, knowing that they were not sent by God, sought their own present benefit. In much patience. Patience is what saves people; for if patience were abused, how could it have saved the Corinthians, whom he found wrapped up in such vices of character and errors of various sects after his preaching, whom his patience gradually brought back to true doctrine? In pressures. He endured pressures, knowing what has been promised by God for these. In necessities. It was necessary also to teach in a situation of necessity; because he had been sent by the Lord. In difficulties. Being troubled by the hope of the future, he did not give in to the opposition of the faithless.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) In afflictions. When frequently persecuted by Jews and Gentiles, he did not keep silent about the grace of Christ. In prisons. Often imprisoned and disregarding his own safety, he also preached the gift of God there. In troubles. He was so devoted to God that even disturbances did not diminish the trust he had in God. In labors. He did not cease to work with his own hands, in order to not be a burden to anyone, confident that this would be pleasing to God. During the vigils. He was so anxious about the duty entrusted to him that he did not even rest at night. During the fasts. He endured voluntary fasts at times, and at other times fasts of necessity due to scarcity, and he gave thanks to God who spiritually fed him; for he was content so as not to yield to the demands of the stomach.

(Vers. 6.)

(Vers. 6.) In castilate. Castitatem sive corporis, sive Evangelii vindicans, non paucos fecit inimicos. In scientia. Legis et Evangelii scientiam non in sapientia humana, neque in simulatione asserens

Deo se fidelem dispensatorem Christi exhibuit. In magnanimitate. Grandis animi erat in bajulandis infirmitatibus fratrum, et in contemptu mundi hujus; unde alio loco dicit: Mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo (Galat. VI, 14) . In kindness. He was kind, because as he would argue, so he would flatter; so that after reproof, he would console with gentle encouragement. In the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit shuns pretense (Wisdom 1:5). Therefore, since he taught sincerely, he bestowed the gift of the Holy Spirit of God. In genuine love. Feigned love is found in those who abandon their brothers in need; hence, he, always taking care of the needs of his brothers, was sincere in love (De Poen., dist. 2, c. Ficta charitas). For he bore with everyone, as he says elsewhere: Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? (2 Corinthians 12:29) For this is true charity, if one disregards their own benefit and cares for the well-being of the one they profess to love, which the Apostle has always done.

(Vers. 7.)

(Vers. 7.) In the word of truth. The word of truth was present in his teaching; for he handed down nothing else but what he had received from the Lord. In the power of God. The power of God was in him, which proved him to be a suitable minister through signs and wonders. By the weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. It signifies that he was free from both the faithful and the unbelievers. For the weapons of righteousness destroy wickedness.

(Vers. 8.) (Verse 8.) For glory and ignobility. He clearly declares himself to be an honest and faithful preacher to those who valued the glory of the Gospel of God. Similarly, he exhibited himself as a faithful minister of God to those who thought that the words of divine doctrine were ignoble and deformed; he is not afraid, nor does he allow himself to be ashamed to speak those things to them which they dread hearing. Through infamy and good reputation, he also presented himself as an honest steward of God to those who made a good reputation for the faith, and to those who made a bad reputation; he does not fear this envy, but remains steadfast. The deceivers and the truthful ones. The unbelieving deceivers called them faithful, while they called the truthful ones naive. This does not yield to hatred, in order to exceed the truth. They were unknown and they were known. The unknown ones were evil, the known ones were good; for they recognized the truth in them.

(Vers. 9.)

(Ver. 9.) As dying, and behold we live. Hated yet having, they daily thought that they would not escape the threats of injustice. But these, because they taught with God's favor, were kept safe by the help of Christ from present and future death. Tempted as if, but not handed over to death. They seemed to be tempted when they were treated in such a way that they appeared to give in. And because they were not conquered, they were not subjected to death. For he is handed over to death who does not remain in faith; and not to this death, but to the future death. It can also be understood as a present death; for God allowed them to be tested, so that they would grow in merit through trials: however, He did not allow them to be killed.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) As sad, yet always rejoicing. It is true, because this sadness produces joy, and those who were causing them grief were increasing their joy. As poor, yet making many rich. As far as the present life is concerned, they appeared to be poor: but they were bestowing spiritual riches

upon those who believe; poor on earth, rich in heaven. As having nothing, yet possessing everything. This was glorious in the apostles, that they possessed not only the things that were in their possessions, but also possessed their own masters without anxiety and without owning them; for everything had to be placed at their feet for the sake of virtuous acts, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 4:35).

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians. This is said for the sake of freedom and a clear conscience; for a guilty mind trembles when it speaks, loses its senses, and wanders in its words. Our heart is enlarged. Their heart is enlarged, who rejoice in the confidence of a good conversation in themselves, or certainly are not distressed by the hope of future reward in tribulation; because just as in this life, unless labor precedes, income does not follow: so also in divine matters, if destruction does not precede, reward does not follow.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verses 12, 13.) Do not be distressed in us, but be distressed in your own bowels, having the same retribution of reward. This he says, because they did not obey their masters, if the disciples were turned away, despising the power of doctrine; for each will receive reward according to their works; because as for the masters, they did not remain silent, with the Lord speaking to the prophet Ezekiel: Raise your voice and speak to the people; if they listen to you, you will gain them: if not, you will save your own soul (Ezekiel III, 19).

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) Just as I say to my children, I tell you, expand and do not bear the yoke with unbelievers. He encourages them to good behavior and hope, so that, trusting and purifying their consciences, they may rejoice in themselves, having confidence of a pure mind, just like their teachers, separating themselves from the company of unbelievers in evil works. And by doing well and hoping for the future, he wants to expand them in spirit; for whoever labors and does not believe in the future, like an unbeliever, is of narrow mind through the despair of the future.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) For what sharing of justice is there with iniquity? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Or what accord does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does the faithful have with the unbeliever? Or what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? It is clear that these things that he enumerates are contrary; and by this he teaches that we must flee from them, because the Lord says: No one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). For the law proclaims justice, so that iniquity may be avoided; it shows the light, which is truth, so that one may depart from ignorance, which is darkness; it proclaims Christ in the mystery of God, so that one may turn away from the devil, who wants to deceive as God; it promises eternal life to believers, so that they may be rid of unfaithfulness and be free from every error of the unbelievers; it prohibits the worship of idols because they are enemies of the temple of God. For you are the temple of the living God. There is nothing so hostile to man as an idol; for they compel him to depart from the faith in one God.

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Vers. 17, 18.) As God said (Lev. XXVI, 12): For I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from among them, and be separate, says the Lord (Isaiah LII, 11), and do not touch what is unclean; and I will receive you, and I will be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Almighty Lord. Meanwhile, let us explain the meaning of the main causes; and let us declare whose words they are: For I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. These are the words of Christ; for this is what Jeremiah also testified among other things, saying: After this he appeared on earth and lived among men (Baruch 3:38); for he dwelt in us, as the Apostle John says: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14). And because he is our God, Jeremiah says again: This is our God (Baruch 3:36). And because we are his people, there is no doubt; for we are the Church of Christ. Therefore, He wants us to be separated from all contamination, so that He may receive us as His children, as He says: 'Little children, I am with you only for a short time.' (John 13:33). And because He is omnipotent, I think there should be no doubt. For, as He Himself says, whatever the Father does, the Son also does in the same way (John 5:19). This means that the Son is capable of doing everything that the Father can do. If there is anything that the Father cannot do, then the Son cannot do it either. But the Son is capable, as He says of the Father: 'With God all things are possible' (Matthew 19:26). By this testimony he exhorted us to a pure life, and showed that our Lord Jesus, long ago our Lord, will receive us in the affection of his love, predestined.

Chapter VII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. It is clear what he is saying; however, the defilement of the flesh is understood in many ways. Therefore, he did not say, from the defilement of the flesh, but from all defilement; so that we may flee from all carnal vices; for everything that the law prohibits is carnal. In order to perfect holiness of the spirit in the fear of God. We perfect holiness in this way, if we follow the straight path in the fear of God; so that, abstaining from sins, we may be holy under the name of Christ. For those who seem to refrain from vices without professing Christ are sanctified according to the world, not according to the spirit of God; because those who are faithful are worldly in the eyes of God. But the rest, whatever they may be, are unclean. For whatever is without Christ is unclean, as it says in the letter to Titus: 'To the unbelieving, nothing is clean; their mind and conscience are defiled.'

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2) Be aware of us. We have harmed no one, we have burdened no one, we have deceived no one. He wants them to consider what he says, so that they may realize that what he speaks is true. And disregarding those whom he touches, they should redirect their attention to those whom they see truly loving them. For they were false apostles who not only harmed them but also corrupted their senses and burdened their pockets with the deceitful cunning of the serpent.

(Vers. 3.)

(Version 3.) I do not say this to condemn you. That is, I do not reject you, but I warn you in order to correct you; for the one who condemns someone does not forgive them. I have already told you

that you are in our hearts to live and to die together. From what has been said, he wants to know them, to understand what attitude he should have towards them. For those whom he wants to have as partners in present sufferings for Christ and in the future life, he does not reject them, but encourages them to make themselves worthy of participation.

(Vers. 4.)

(Version 4.) I have much confidence in you, I have much boasting about you: I am filled with consolation, I abound with joy in all our affliction. This confidence is due to the correction of the first letter, which they did not receive harshly, but gave me confidence that they were willing to be admonished; for they seemed to want to correct themselves, which is a reason for boasting. He also declares his own spirit consoled by this, to the extent that he testifies to abound with joy in all our affliction; for he sees hope in those for whom he suffers tribulations, and rejoices when he is troubled; certain that he will receive the reward from God for their acquired salvation.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) Indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest. He recounts the pressures and persecutions that believers endured, in order to provoke them to greater love. Our flesh had no rest, he says, so that they would have compassion on them, knowing that they were surrendering their lives for the salvation of the faithful, even to death. For before one tribulation and physical injury was digested, another came; so that there would be no rest for the patient. But since all flesh is devoid of understanding, therefore not having or obtaining any rest in this passion signifies: however, the soul, although it was suffering in the body; it still had rest in this aspect, in which it hopes for the reward that God will give for these tribulations inflicted by the faithless. Finally, in the very midst of affliction, they were singing hymns to God.

(Acts 16:9 et seq.) But we were afflicted in all things. According to the story, when the Lord called, they entered into Macedonia: and when many had believed, and Lydia, a woman who believed with all her household, had found consolation, it happened that a spirit of divination, that is, a python, went out of a certain girl, whom her masters seeing well that they had lost the hope of their gain, caught Paul and Silas, and brought them into the marketplace to the rulers: who having laid many stripes upon them, cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them diligently. And when he had received such a charge, he thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. This is the affliction that they suffered in Macedonia. And hence it is said: Our flesh had no rest.

Outside the battle, inside the fears. The battles were for the body, while it was being beaten: the fears were for the mind. For there is fear there where there is understanding: but fear was here because of those who believed, lest they be scandalized by his suffering. For what did he have to fear who was suffering? Furthermore, when he says in the Acts of the Apostles, not only to be bound, but also to be ready to die for the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 21:13). Therefore, it seems that he signified the whole person as afflicted in the flesh, so that in part the spirit, which is given to man, may remain, since it is impassible, it is not to be understood to have been able to be afflicted: but that the whole person may be said to be afflicted in the flesh, in part indeed impassible in spirit. It can also be understood in this way, that outside of battles, that is, in public, the treacherous ones would act against the faithful ones, while filled with rage, resisting the truth: the news of which

would generate fear inside, where the Apostle was. For what man would not fear difficulties? But because he was more inclined to God's matters, he overcame this fear with hope.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But God, who comforts the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus. For God is not forgetful of his own, but always gives them comfort in tribulation. He hastened the coming of Titus, so that he would be a relief to those who were weary. For great is the consolation of the patient, if he has someone who sympathizes with him.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) And not only in his coming, he says, but also in the consolation by which he himself was consoled among you. He adds more to the consolation; because he heard from Titus the prompt willingness of their conversion, to the extent that Titus, who was sorrowful for their disobedience, received consolation from their repentance. The Apostle shows the extent of his affection towards them, that he did not consider the lowest depths of the prison, nor the pain of wounds from a torn body, nor the nerves by which his feet were bound, but upon hearing of their correction, he rejoiced, and forgetting his own sufferings, he gave thanks to God for their salvation, considering it as if it were a recompense for his tribulations. Announcing to us your desire. Titus announced that he desired to correct himself; those who are learning what has been promised to those who live well are motivated by a desire for these things. Your weeping. They were overcome with weeping, sorrowful because they have sinned, and they can offer no excuse; hence the Apostle boasts in these things. Your zeal for me; those who are learning the love of the Apostle for themselves have begun to defend him against adversaries.

(Vers. 8.)

(Ch. 8.) So that I might rejoice more; hence, although I saddened you in the letter, I do not regret it. It is clear that I should not regret this matter, which had such an effect; since he rebuked their errors more severely in the first letter. No, he says, I do not regret having written too harshly; because the situation demanded it.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) And if he felt sorry, I see that although that letter, even though it saddened you for a while, now I rejoice. He says this, because if I were sorry, he says, out of love; because I saddened you, consolation would follow joy; it was advantageous that I saddened you. Not because you were saddened, but because you were saddened to repentance; for you were saddened according to God. Therefore, he says that he rejoiced; because they were saddened with shame, not with anger. For anyone who feels shame, they promise to correct themselves; but anyone who gets angry shows that they will become worse. So that you may not suffer any harm from us. So that all our actions have an effect on you, even the ones that have saddened you, are for your benefit.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) For the sorrow that is according to God works a stable repentance unto salvation. It is clear that whoever is sorrowful because they have sinned, is sorrowful according to God; for they

are grieved because they have done what God hates. This pertains to the stability of salvation. However, the sorrow of this world brings about death. This means, just as sorrow according to God works life, for they have repented and hope for God's mercy; so sorrow according to the world works death. For a detected sinner, he is sad as if he is to be punished, not having anyone to hope for mercy from; and if by chance there is currently no one to take revenge, he will not be able to escape the judgment of God.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For behold, this very thing, according to God, causes great concern in you. Indeed, it is true that one who repents is anxious lest they sin again. But excuse. It is right, for penitence has no excuse, but confession. But fear. It shows fear in the sinner who seeks forgiveness for their offense. But desire. One desires to be reformed, who knows themselves to be deformed by sin. But emulation. Zeal begins to endure the completion of good works, which he understands to be for himself, that for which he is rebuked. But revenge. It is necessary for one to avenge him, who feels affection towards himself: and he avenges himself, who afflicts himself as the cause of the offense. In all things, you have shown yourselves chaste in that matter. When all things that pertain to the progress of a better hope seem to be meditated upon, having zeal as the Apostles and their teacher in all the duties of human behavior, they strive to appear upright, guided by faith.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Therefore, even if I wrote to you, it was not because of the one who acted wickedly. By 'acting wickedly,' I mean the one who committed incest. It also applies to those who committed injustice and fraud against their brothers, as mentioned in the first letter. But it was not because of the one who was treated unjustly (I Corinthians VI, 7). They were treated unjustly because they suffered the opposite of what they did to their brothers. This is the meaning mentioned in the beginning of the letter, where it says: 'If you have given anything to anyone, so have I' (II Corinthians II, 10). For he shows that the reason why those who have sinned write that they ought to be forgiven by them, is not merely for their own sake, but rather for the sake of the Church; for when one member acts improperly, many are confused, and when one member suffers insult or harm, many are indignant; for if one part suffers, all the members suffer with it. But in order to demonstrate our concern, which we have for you before God. By correcting the unjust and sanctifying the polluted, and reconciling them to the Church, he shows that he has the concern for the whole people, as I mentioned above.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Therefore, we have also received consolation. He says that he received, and through this, gives consolation. But he received it when he learned to correct himself, those whom he was arguing with, so that they would reform themselves through repentance. And he gives it while calling them back to the Church, so that they would not remain sorrowful for long, despairing of themselves and turning to a public and destructive way of life. But in our consolation, we rejoiced more and more over the joy of Titus, because his spirit has found rest in all of you. Having heard that they wanted to correct themselves through the first letter, he received consolation. But upon learning from Titus that they were suffering from the pain of their mistake, he was increased in consolation, filled with joy; because the work he had begun to be desired by them began to be

approved, with Titus as a suitable witness, joyfully reporting it.

(Vers. 14.) (Verse 14) For in whatever matter I have boasted to any of you, I have not been put to shame. Before Titus came to the Corinthians, he heard from them, that is, from the Apostle and those who were with him, that the Corinthians had a good intention in correcting their vices; and when Titus returned and reported the same, the Apostle was not at all put to shame, but rather became eager; because Titus found nothing different from what he had heard from them. But just as we have spoken everything to you in truth, so also our boasting to Titus has become truth. Rejoicing in the spirit, the Apostle writes this, rejoicing in these things so that he may prove the effectiveness of them as true as his preaching, only for their correction. For the truth of the one who rebukes seems to be made evident in the very act, if those who are rebuked begin to amend themselves; for when they are corrected, they bear witness to the rebuker.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) And his affections are more abundantly for you. He says that the mind and affection of Titus are in them, because he has seen their progress; for a holy mind is in all good. Remembering the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you received him. The Corinthians, knowing that Titus was sent to them by the Apostle, were terrified at his arrival, for they had already been rebuked by him for their great vices. And because they had begun to reform their lives, they were anxious to listen to his instructions; so that when he returned, the Apostle could help calm their minds: therefore, he indicates that he praised Titus, for they respected him as an Apostle in Titus.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) I am glad that I trust in you in all things. Not only was he delighted in their good will, but also in their good works, by which they corrected what they had sinned. Therefore, in all things, he says, I trust in you.

Chapter VIII.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) However, we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in much testing of affliction, the abundance of their joy overflows. For the Macedonians have received the word of faith with devoted hearts, therefore they say that grace has been given to them from God; so that in the tribulation of Paul and Silas, which I mentioned above (Chapter 7, verse 5), they would not suffer a stumbling block: but with rejoicing of the mind, they would receive, with confident hope, the promises, in order to demonstrate themselves approved through these sufferings. And the deep poverty of those people abounded in the riches of their simplicity. Their vow declares that, although they had little material wealth, their souls were found rich in the service of the saints. For they worked with pure conscience, not to please men, but to please God.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Because I bear witness to them that they were willingly beyond their abilities. As much as was fitting and pleasing to God, who knew their strengths, they had given in their resources for

the ministry. And because they had devoted themselves to God with their whole heart, they wanted to offer more than their capabilities allowed.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) With many prayers, they were received into favor and communion of the ministry, which is done in the saints. He proclaims that they offered their ministry so simply and devoutly, beyond their abilities, that they offered it with tears, praying that they would be compelled to receive from them what seemed not to be receivable, because it was more than their substance could bear, lest afterwards the poverty of good works should cause them to regret. But because they showed themselves such, that they, with a pure intention, now postponed present things, in order to confirm themselves in the promises of the future with confidence of faith, it was deemed fit to accept from them; lest, by the grace of a good heart, it might cast away the fruit.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) And not as we had hoped; rather, they first gave themselves to God, then to us through the will of God. Therefore, he says, they should have been received from us; because, having first corrected their previous errors and vices of life and character, they devoted themselves to God beyond what was expected. For it seemed that they were simply doing this, so that the one to whom it was offered would not be afraid to accept; because they were not offering it with the intention of exposing the faults of their superiors, nor of accusing them; for gifts blind the eyes and bend the power of authority. Therefore, Dante dedicated himself to God while correcting his vices. Then, he should have saddened the brothers when they offered expenses, who wanted to be perfect just before they began. Therefore, following their example, he invites the Corinthians to complete with diligent mind what they had started, strengthened by this exhortation.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) So that we might request Titus, that just as he began, he might also complete this grace in you. Because he knew Titus' affection was sincere towards you, and that he would obey him; therefore, he indicates that he can more easily exhort them also to this work through Titus himself, so that just as he had success in his exhortation in other matters, he would also have it in this grace, in order to make them ready for the ministry of the saints: so that because they were already correcting their vices, they might also have the fruit of this generosity. For those who give to this, lest they be accused, they will have no benefit from this thing.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) But as you abound in faith, and in speech, and in knowledge, and in all diligence, and in that which is of us and of you, in charity, so you may abound in this grace also. He exhorts them to boast about these things among the other churches. For this is the proof of their improvement, if they are ready for the ministry of the saints.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) I am not commanding, but because of others' concern, and to prove the sincerity of your love. It is evident that it is not a command, but an exhortation; so that those who are enduring hardships may receive assistance, and their burdens may be relieved, demonstrating their

goodwill to God and to people. Undoubtedly, they will receive a reward for this.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. He is said to have become poor as Christ, because God deigned to be born as a man, humbling the power of his divinity, so that he might acquire for mankind the riches of divinity; as the Apostle Peter says, that we might be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Therefore, he became man, so that he might unite man to God, as it is written, 'I said, 'You are gods'' (Psalm 82:6). In this way, they are encouraged to become poor by giving generously; may their poverty benefit them, just as the poverty of Christ benefited us. And indeed, Christ became poor for our sake, but we in order to benefit.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(verses 10, 11.) And I give you this advice; for it is beneficial for you, who have begun not only to do, but also to desire, since last year: now therefore also complete the doing; so that just as your will is ready to desire, it may also be ready to be fulfilled from what you have. This I say, so that their will may be revealed in the work, if it is genuine, according to their abilities; so that they may give as much as they are able and willing in their hearts, in order to have a clear conscience: not in pretense, to please people, and not to have a reward from God.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have. For the Corinthians are being challenged to fulfill this ministry, so they are instructed to give only as much as they can, so that they will not appear burdened by giving more than they can afford, but rather to give willingly. For the one who gives under compulsion does not receive a reward. For the churches in Macedonia voluntarily offered prayers and requested to be able to give beyond their ability, and thus it was received with approval. For as much as they offer, they shall receive in like measure. For if someone gives only as much as they want or can, it is considered accepted; for it seems to be the result of deliberation: and thus one should give only as much as their mind is able and willing; so that they may receive compensation for this act.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verse 13, 14.) For it is not so that there may be relief for others, but distress for you. It is true that it is given in such a way as to not provide abundance to the givers. But at this time, equality should prevail. He says this so that he may divide what he has with the holy ones according to their needs; for no more is demanded than what one should retain for oneself. For it is said, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Leviticus 19:18). Hence, Zacchaeus said, 'Look, I give half of my goods to the poor' (Luke 19:8).

Let your abundance be for their need, and their abundance be for your need. This is what he says, that because they suffer want according to the time of the holy ones, abandoning all worldly things and dedicating themselves to divine works, in order to devote themselves to the instruction and prayer for the benefit of many; let those who believe and who engage in arts or business, or certainly have paternal resources, minister to the needs of the holy ones. And again, let the holy

ones, where the rich are, and these are in need, share with them, as if repaying them the service of their ministry, as the Lord says: 'As long as you did it to one of these least, you did it to me' (Matthew 25:40). So that equality may be achieved, as it is written. This is equality, that those who serve the saints in this time, may be given their turn in the future; for they make the saints indebted to them.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) He who had much did not abound, and he who had little did not diminish. This is read in Exodus (Exod. XVI, 18). For the holy ones have more in hope of the future age, and more than those who in this time appear wealthy; and yet they will be equal there; so that just as the poverty of these holy ones is sustained by the benefice, so too these wealthy ones will become holy in the future age, in which they appear poor. For they did not fully devote themselves to God, so that they would be poor here and wealthy there; but on this side, because they are wealthy here, they will be poor there, by the prayer of the holy ones who are placed here, they will be enriched in mind there. For it is not any kind of deserving to serve the holy with righteous labors.

(Vers. 16, 17.)

(Verse 16, 17.) But thanks be to God, who has put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. This is, seeing them making progress in good deeds, he became more concerned about their emotions; so that he went voluntarily to them, who previously had even excused themselves from them because of their vices.

(Vers. 18, 19.)

(Vers. 18, 19.) But we sent with him our brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; Not only that, but he was also chosen by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us to the glory of the Lord and to show our eagerness. They commend him, because he was unknown to them, so that they may know the high regard in which they were held by such men they were being sent to; and to rejoice with them, increasing them in the faith of the work of God, to the glory of whose work the vicar of Christ was zealously engaged, so that the Creator God of heaven and earth may be acknowledged in them.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) Avoiding this, lest anyone should criticize us in this abundance, which is administered by us. Since it was about ministry, therefore, he added this; lest he be judged as negligent in caring for the poor or the saints if he were to do this with less effort. For the apostles had decided among themselves about this matter, so that they would be mindful of the poor, as it signifies to the Galatians. Therefore, since the Apostle was blameless in all things (Gal. 2:10); lest he be considered negligent in this matter; therefore, he signifies that he is forewarning them, so that with this work completed, his concern and providence would be evident in all things.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) For we provide good things not only before God, but also before men. We provide good things before God, when He teaches us to do what He commands regarding the ministry of

the saints or the poor: but we provide good things before men; because He sends those to this work for exhortation, who do not cause scandal to them by their probity, but provoke them, so that the good doctrine of the Apostles does not fall into reproach through imprudent ministers.

(Vers. 22, 23.)

(Verse 22, 23) However, we sent along with them our brother, whom we have tested in many situations and found to be often anxious, but now even more so because of his great trust in you, whether through Titus, who is my partner and a helper to you, or through our fellow apostles, the glory of the churches of Christ. He calls Titus his partner because he himself was also a bishop, to whom he gave a trusted servant in all the churches of his province. He also adds Tertius, a brother who has been proven in many good works and is anxious. But in relation to the report of Titus, who brings good news about the goodwill of the Corinthians and the other messengers whom he calls apostles of the churches, the glory of Christ, he showed himself to be more concerned to see them and to encourage them in the ministry of the saints. For he received confidence when he heard that the Corinthians had become better. Therefore, he was eager to go to them, certain that they would be obedient in doing good works.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24.) Therefore, show the display of your charity and our rejoicing for you to the churches themselves. He reminds them to show their love in those whom he sends, so that they may prove the good things they have heard about them to be true. For in this way they would show that they had made progress in following the Apostle's advice if they received those sent by him with honor, so that the other churches would acknowledge that the good things they had heard about them were true. It therefore stimulates their spirits, because when one feels good about something, they usually present themselves as better.

Chapter IX.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) For it is unnecessary for me to write to you about the ministry that is carried out among the saints; for I know your willingness, for which I boast about you to the Macedonians. And these are words of encouragement. Indeed, it is unnecessary for him to write about the ministry that is carried out among the saints in order to appear well-disposed towards them, for it is superfluous to remind someone who you know will do it. But in order to demonstrate his diligence, it is necessary for him to write, and to make them more ready, and to make known what he says about the others. For things that are unnecessary tend to produce greater anxiety; for even the Lord, not doubting Peter's love for Him, asked him a third time: Simon son of John, do you love me? (John 21:17) This repetition of three times may seem unnecessary, but it is useful for the perfection of the admonition; so that Peter may know that he must take great care with diligence in fulfilling what is frequently commanded. For Achaia had been prepared since the previous year. After the Macedonians, Achaia, that is, the Church provinces of Achaia (not all, because the Corinthians are also Achaian), had prepared themselves, inspired by the emulation of the Macedonians, to minister to the saints. With these words he encourages the Corinthians even more, saying that they have been prepared since the previous year but now they should fulfill their promise to distribute their ministry according to each person's need. And their enthusiasm has

inspired many others. He then mentions that he has prepared Macedonia and now he wants the Corinthians to be prepared as he had promised. The other churches also took notice of the Corinthians' enthusiasm, and when they heard that they had previously been involved in many errors but had since corrected themselves and become people of good intentions, they were motivated to do good works. For if those who had behaved poorly after receiving the faith had shown this willingness, how much more should those in whom these vices were not found show it.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But I sent the brothers, lest our boasting about you should prove empty in this matter, so that you might be ready, as I said. He mentions these brothers, whom I previously mentioned, namely, Titus, and those he added as assistants, who were urged more fervently to fulfill the promise in the ministry of the saints, so that they would not only be encouraged by letters, but also face to face with frequent admonitions; lest the apostle's joy, in which he was boasting about them, should be emptied. Therefore, by often recalling this, he shows his concern for them, not wanting them to be confused.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) So that when the Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we may not be ashamed— not to mention you—about this confident boasting. Therefore, I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the generous gift you had promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Therefore, I thought it necessary to ask the brothers to go ahead to you and prepare in advance the promised blessing, so that it would be ready as a blessing and not as an imposition. In order to show his concern even more, he said that he had asked the brothers, who had been reminded, to fulfill what they had promised but had not yet fulfilled. As he mentioned earlier, Titus volunteered to go, meaning that he was not compelled but eagerly embraced the opportunity as soon as he heard about it, in order to show his willingness to go to them because of their hope. Now the writer is indicating that he did not ask them out of reluctance to go, but rather he is affirming his affection for them when he asks them willingly to go. This is so that what both they desire and he prays for may be done without further delay. Therefore, he interacts with them in such a way that they may be faithful to his promise, and he reminds them for the sake of their reputation not to deceive; but only to offer as much as they will not regret.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Ver. 6, 7.) But I say this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. He signifies a stingy person, from whom it is extorted, so that he may give; for he repents because he promised. This pertains to the slowness of those who long ago made promises and deliberated for a long time. For this stingy person, there is a small harvest; because he sows with hesitation; he does not know how to benefit from what he does. But he who sows in blessing will also reap in blessing. He sows in blessing, who does this with a good will under the hope of future retribution. Each person, according to the purpose of their heart, not out of sadness or necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. He teaches them to benefit in the future if it is done with a joyful spirit. Of those who give,

God chooses whom to repay, those who work with a devoted heart, as if storing up treasure with God. Anyone who gives reluctantly out of present shame, so as not to be found disgraceful among others who give, will not receive a reward.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. He desires that His power may be present to them, so that just as it convicts their hearts in repenting from sins and in the truth of teachings, it may also favor their endeavors, so that they may abound in every good work through God's grace. This is what He says and wishes, that in everything they may always have all sufficiency in God's guidance, and that they may not lack anything necessary for salvation. Therefore, if they choose sufficiency alone for themselves, they will be able to abound in the work of God; for by retaining what is sufficient for themselves, it is necessary to spend the rest for the use of the saints or the poor: and this will be to abound in every good work. For although what a small man gives may be little, it still abounds, because it is done with right judgment, and not only the amount is considered, but also the manner and mindset with which it is given. Finally, that widow in the Gospel (Luke 21:3) was praised for her small offering, while those who gave much were not praised. For that person's little is much, because they sent more than they could: but the rich sent less, even though they could send more; and therefore the small amount that was sent by that person, which exceeded their capabilities, was found to be more than the much of the rich; because they sent from what they had in excess. Therefore, whoever gives as much as they can, does rightly: however, that widow is held before them; because she sent all that she had.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) As it is written: He has dispersed, he has given to the poor, his righteousness endures forever. This is written in the one hundred and eleventh psalm, and by way of example adds to the care of the poor; so that in every good work they may abound. For if the righteousness of him who bestows upon the poor endures forever, how much more so the righteousness of him who ministers to the holy ones? For the poor can be called those who are publicly needy: the holy ones, however, are distinguished from these, because they are servants of God, devoting themselves to prayers and fasts, leading a pure life, as Anna the prophetess also did (Luke 2:37), who did not depart from the temple, serving with fasts and prayers day and night, setting aside all worldly care. Mercy, therefore, is called justice; because knowing that He who bestows all things is God, who gives to all in common, since His sun rises for all, and it rains on all, and He has given the earth to all: therefore, He shares with those who do not have an abundance of land, so that they may not seem deprived of God's blessings. Therefore, the just person is one who does not keep for himself alone what he knows has been given to all; and the just person is not only just in this time, but also in eternity; because in the future age, he will have this with him forever.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Verse 10, 11.) But he who provides seed to the sower and bread for food will also provide and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God. Everything is from God, and the seeds and the things that grow are by God's providence, and they are multiplied for the

use of humans. Therefore, God, who gives these things, also commands that they be shared with those in need; and through this, the one who gives according to God's will cannot be without an increase by God's providence to multiply the harvest of righteousness, for the giver adds to him so that he may have more to give. This is justice, that as God gives, one may repay from it, both to God and to one who lacks. For God desires these to be ministers to those who, choosing higher things, despise the riches of the present time, devoting themselves wholly to the things of God. For to each person, according to their good will, God grants aid; for those who desire nothing else here but to have sustenance and clothing, God has appointed guardians for those who desire to have these things, so that those who serve them well and sincerely may be enriched by the will of God, so that they may have something to give abundantly always, both in the present and in the future. For whoever sows once, will reap twice; so that if he considers future hopes, he does not want to have them subjected, but rather inclines himself to them; because he will receive a reward from God for this. For if he wants to humiliate them in the present, he loses hope for the future; for here he receives a reward for his work, not acting simply, as the Lord says: Amen I say to you, they have received their reward (Matthew 6:16).

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verse 12, 13.) Which works through us thanksgiving to God. Because the ministry of this service not only supplies what is lacking for the saints, but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God through the proof of this ministry, glorifying God by your obedient confession to the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with others, while they themselves long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. But thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift. This he says because whoever works through the stewards of God's gift, this work by which thanks are given to God, is not subject to begging but to God, from whose goods they know themselves to be nourished: not only are thanks given to them, but to the other brothers who, giving thanks to God, commend their work to the Lord; so that by giving to a few, they may be commended to God by the prayers of many. For by testing their minds in this work, they magnify the Lord in them, in whom they are strengthened by hope, obeying the Gospel of Christ with a submissive mind, so that they may not desire to be humiliated by them, but rather provide what is necessary for the saints. And this will be a gratitude for their sincere communication, commending themselves to their prayers and desires. For who would not desire to see their needs subjugated for the sake of God's name? Finally, the gifts of God are called; for it is God who gives to those who serve Him; because He who commands to be done is credited for what is given. But giving thanks to God in these things, and above all for His unspeakable gift. For the gift of God is what moves men to good works; for the promised hope incites to the aforementioned service.

Chapter X.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) But I, Paul, urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who am humble when present with you, but bold towards you when absent. This is what I mean: that he who is absent is also the same as when present. For he was not humble in appearance by flattery or submission to anyone, but he zealously guarded his stability, so that he would sometimes even refrain from what was lawful, lest he be swayed. Hence he says in another letter: All things are lawful for me, but I

will not be brought under the power of any. Food is for the stomach, and the stomach for food: but God shall destroy both it and them. (I Corinthians VI, 13). Therefore, he beseeches them in his absence, and presents the modesty of Christ; so that he may not be found harsher in person than he is in his letters; so that those who had not yet corrected themselves would soften their rigor and behavior upon encountering him; so that upon finding them moderate, he would rejoice in them, having suppressed his severity. Thus, he mentioned his confidence in the severity of his authority, which is perhaps thought to only exist in his letter and not in person; because in his first letter, he seems severe and excessively rigid: and therefore he warns them not to use the same severity in person as they did not expect.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) However, I ask that I may have the courage not in person, by which I am thought to dare against those who consider us to walk according to the flesh. It is the same meaning, which he repeats in order to clarify; for he prays that he may find such people, so that he may not be forced to be angry, but rather may find rest with them. Therefore, he has opened up what he previously indicated and further explains in the following, that this is the confidence, which he called boldness, given to him by Christ, of whom he is vicar; that he may take action against those who, acting in the name of Christ, do not obey, in order to correct the faults for which they are reproached. He says this about those who do not accept spiritual things, which were spoken by the Apostle. They thought of him as speaking of carnal things that should not be accepted. Therefore, he says: Those who think that we walk according to the flesh, because anyone who despises spiritual things considers them to be carnal.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. That is, we are positioned in the body but live spiritually. For the one who does what pleases God lives spiritually. Therefore, the one who obeys the desires of the flesh wages war according to the flesh; for every error is called flesh. But the one who obeys Christ, wages war against himself in faith and discipline.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful through God. Therefore they are powerful because they are incorruptible; for all carnal things are corruptible. Therefore they are called weapons because they fight against vices, having the signature of their emperor Christ, who is the enemy of vices. Just as an emperor defends his kingdom through his soldiers, so does the Savior defend the profession and discipline of the one God through us, his servants.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For the destruction of fortresses, destroying thoughts, and every height that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Spiritual weapons are the faith of incorruptible preaching. Through these, God conquers princes and powers, who are known to usurp authority for themselves, exalting themselves against the faith of Christ, inserting thoughts into the minds of men to divert them from the dominion of God, which the truth of faith destroys. Therefore, the princes and powers of darkness, who exalt themselves and arm the minds of the unbelievers to contradict

Christ, are called the munitions. Against them the law of God fights, scattering their schemes. They bring every thought into captivity and lead them to obey Christ. They captivate the mind by overcoming their reasoning and humble and meekly bring them to the faith of Christ, which they previously opposed.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) And ready to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. It is evident that he avenges disobedience; when he condemns it through obedience, then destroying it, when he leads those who resist to faith; so that the treachery from those whom it was defended against may be condemned.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Look at the things that are on the surface. Now he wants to consider those things that are obvious, that is, what he is about to say; because they are clear to judge. Therefore, he says: If anyone thinks he is a servant of Christ, let him think again within himself, because as he is a servant of Christ, so are we. He is speaking to those whose pride he touches, those who, with an inflated mind, thought less of the Apostle than was appropriate, as if they did not need his commands. He advises them that if they have confidence in themselves because they are servants of Christ, then they should not doubt about the Apostle; but they should also think the same way about him, even though he is unworthy; since they should certainly prefer the teacher of the Gentiles more to themselves. But here he teaches them humility, equating himself with them; even though he is a vessel of election and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. He wants them to consider this, which is certainly clear as day; because no believer should value the Apostle any more than themselves: how much more should no one value themselves any less than themselves? Therefore, he warns and teaches that they should not lose the merit of a good life due to the pride of their minds. For whoever knows themselves to be something should humble themselves, so that they may become greater.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For even if I boast a little more about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for tearing you down, I will not be ashamed. Now this means that although he humbled himself by comparing himself to you, if he should assert himself, he would not be ashamed, because he received the authority from the Lord to preach for the purpose of salvation, not destruction for those who obey. So if this one who was sent by the Lord humbles himself and compares himself to those who are lesser, how much more should those who were of no account not compare themselves, let alone consider themselves superior, to the influential?

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) But so that we may not appear to terrify you by our letters. He can seem to terrify through letters, who has neither any authority, nor confidence in arguing present: but he dares to do so while absent, because he fears while present.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Vers. 10, 11.) Because indeed letters are weighty and strong, but the presence of the body is weak, and the speech contemptible. Let him who is such think this, that as we are in word by letters when absent, so we are also present in deed. Therefore, he proves that he is not another absentee than present; because he was not a presumptuous person. For he had received power from the Lord; for whomsoever power is not given, he can dare when absent, but present he suffers shame. Therefore, the Apostle is not ashamed when he corrects; because confidence in his authority drives him to do so. He speaks these words for those who were falsely preaching, not sent by anyone, because they wanted to commend themselves.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) For we dare not join or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. They are those who commend themselves, who desire to rule without receiving authority, claiming authority for themselves. For the one who is sent does not assert authority for himself, but rather for the one who sent him, showing himself to be a chosen steward by the Lord. Therefore, he does not join or compare himself with those who preach without being sent, presuming beyond what is permitted.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) But we will not boast immeasurably by measuring ourselves by ourselves and comparing ourselves to ourselves, but according to the measure of the rule that God has apportioned to us, a measure to reach even to you. He says that he exercises such great power as is granted by the Author and does not exceed the measure. Therefore, our boasting will not be proud, he says, when we do not exceed the limit of the given authority. He placed glory in the authority with which he used to correct sinners, in order to save them. However, he does not boast in the exaltation of power, but for their edification. For he shows the power, about which if he wanted to boast, he would not be ashamed; because it is given to him by the Lord. But he uses it in such a way that he does not boast, except in the progress of the believers, reproving the wicked consistently; so that he may boast in their salvation, so that the power given may be of benefit to salvation, not to arrogance. Therefore, he testifies that he does not boast excessively in two ways; both because of the power given, as he said, and because he claimed authority only to the extent that his preaching may resound. Indeed, he trusted in those whom he himself had founded in the faith of Christ. For he assigned to each one the task to which they were directed in preaching, so that each might have their own cities to boast about in terms of their faith. By the will of God, this Apostle was called to preach to the Macedonians, and he was reminded by the Lord to preach to the Corinthians. Therefore, he speaks boldly to those whom he himself founded and to whom he came by the will of God; not with such confidence to the others, for they were under a different rule, that is, the part of another Evangelist.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For we did not go beyond our limits, as though we did not reach you. We were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. We do not boast beyond limits in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15.) For we have come to you in the Gospel of Christ, not boasting excessively in the labors of others. Here it is more clear that he is saying that he himself had established them. Therefore, he speaks with such confidence to them; for they had not been won over to the faith through the labors of others, as he says in another epistle: For in Christ Jesus I became your father through the Gospel (1 Corinthians 4:15.) Therefore, he who boasts in his own labor does not boast beyond measure. But having hope in the growing faith in you, we may be magnified according to our rule abundantly, so as to preach the gospel in a circle beyond you, not to boast in another man's line, in those things that are made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself, is approved, but he whom God commendeth.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) I magnify myself in you according to our rule in abundance, and also in the regions beyond you, I preach the Gospel. I am even more joyful about their faith, and I declare that I will necessarily preach beyond them to increase the glory of my preaching, where it has not yet been preached. So that we do not boast in what has been accomplished in another's sphere of activity. It is clear that a wise person does not rely on these things, nor does he hope for glory that is built on the labors of others. Therefore, the Apostle does not dare to preach to those who have believed through others, so that he may not seem to boast in the labors of others; but he relies on this, to preach to those to whom it had not been announced, so that he may seek glory in his own labor.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. In saying this, he indicated that confidence and glory should be given to the Lord, by whose grace it is; so that whoever trusts in the power of the gospel, may trust in God as the author; so that the gain of every divine enterprise may come forth as a profit for the Lord. But the one who does not receive power from God, cannot boast in the Lord; because he seeks his own glory.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends. It is true that the Lord commends and approves the one whom He finds worthy and sends to preach His gift; however, the one whom He does not send, He does not commend. Therefore, the one who preaches without being sent commends himself and is thus not suitable, but rather presumptuous and rejected.

Chapter XI.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) I wish you would tolerate my slight foolishness! But you also put up with me. Beginning to tell the truth about oneself, one says that they are foolish; for it seems to pertain to their praise. For this reason, it is said: Let not your lips praise you, but your neighbor (Prov. XXVII, 2). But he is compelled by pain here because those who should have thought well of him above others, felt indignation.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it! (2 Corinthians 11:2-4) Hence it is that we also read about it in the Revelation of John: 'These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; they follow the Lamb wherever he goes' (Rev. 14:4). By women, he signified error; for error began through a woman, just as Jezebel also called herself a woman because of her marriage to Ahab, who killed the prophets of Baal out of zeal for God (1 Kings 18:40); by which is understood idolatry, which corrupts morals and the truth of faith. For if you understand women to be called virgins because they have kept their bodies undefiled, then you exclude the saints from this glory; for all the apostles, except John and Paul, had wives. And see if it is fitting to accuse the Apostle Peter, who is first among the apostles, how much more so the others?

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) However, I fear that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. He shows why he is compelled to make a true statement about himself; for he acknowledges that glory has been given to him, not to praise himself, but to expose those who preach against Christ under the name of Christ, by whom the Corinthians were deceived; and this truth benefited them more than it did him. For he taught this to prevent the deceivers, whom the devil has likened to cunning in their malice, from being heard; because they endeavor to corrupt the hearts of the faithful from the truth of Christ. Therefore, fearing this, he is always anxious about them, lest they be violated.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) For if someone comes and preaches to you a different Christ, whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different Spirit, whom you have not received, or a different gospel, which you have not accepted, you would rightly endure it. Therefore he says: You would rightly endure if another Christ had been preached to you, or if another Spirit or another gospel had been handed to you, as he says to the Galatians: If anyone preaches to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:9). If it was wrong for the Galatians to accept something other than what was handed down by the apostles, how was it right for the Corinthians if a different Christ had been preached to them? But the Apostle knew that no other Christ except the one who was crucified was preached, therefore he says: You would rightly endure if a different and superior Christ had been preached to you by those who come. But to the Galatians he says: let them be accursed if they hear something different, not necessarily greater, but rather contrary. But, he says, if Christ himself is preached by those who are announced by us, and this Gospel; what is the reason that we are considered inferior, since nothing more is learned from them? He speaks above about false apostles, corrupters of faith, in this place however about true preachers; because the Corinthian people were fluctuating in various errors, so that some favored the false apostles, some heard from them the same words that they had heard from the Apostle: others, however, favored the apostles, because they had been with the Lord, deforming their apostle Paul, because he did not see the Lord in the flesh.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) For I consider myself in no way inferior to those who are considered to be super apostles. I do not want the grace of God to appear inferior in me; for he taught in the same way and did the same things as the apostles who seemed to be more influential. Moreover, he started teaching before them and had been with the Lord, so he was considered to have greater authority. And his apostleship was confirmed by remarkable testimonies, and he worked harder than the others and saw the Lord praying in the temple and speaking to him.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not lacking in knowledge. This does not apply to the apostles; for although they were not eloquent, being uneducated, yet they were filled with the Holy Spirit. But it does concern those whom the Corinthians preferred, on account of precise speech; for in matters of religion, the power of speech is necessary, not sweet sound. However, how does he humble himself by saying that he is unskilled in speech? And where is that which Festus said: Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad! (Acts 26:24)? Therefore, saying this, he did not want it to be understood that he did not know how to speak, but rather for the sake of those who wanted to be commended not by faith, but by eloquence. And yet, he declared himself to be unskilled in that regard, which is not a crime; but in that which seeks salvation, and the ignorance of which is not without crime, he did not declare himself unskilled; because one who is unskilled in speech is not guilty before God; but one who does not have knowledge of God is guilty of ignorance; because it is not allowed to be ignorant, especially in matters concerning salvation. Therefore the Apostle, disregarding eloquence, acted in such a way that faith would be acceptable through the testimony of virtue; so that eloquence would not commend faith, but rather virtue, to which eloquence yields. In all things, however, I am manifest to you. He says that he is manifest to the Corinthians in all things, because they were not ignorant that he had skill in speaking, and knowing this, others favored him in the area where they did not know him to be inferior; therefore he speaks with emotion, because this was worse, that when they knew him to be lacking in nothing, they would humble him before others; having seen through him not only the fulfillment of the preaching, but also the signs and wonders of the apostle being done.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Or did I commit a sin by humbling myself, that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! For it was proper that he should receive expenses from those to whom he preached the gospel of God, as the Lord had commanded, saying, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages' (Luke 10:7). But he rejected them in order to benefit them. He rejected the expenses for two reasons: so that he would not be found similar to false apostles, who preached not for the glory of God but for their own benefit, so that they would not have an opportunity to plunder. For if one is not receiving, he cannot ask for much from another. And so that the power of the gospel

might not grow weak; for he who receives from sinners loses the authority to rebuke. Thus, therefore, they are exalted, since it is not received by them in order that they may be corrected when caught, raised from death to life.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. And when I was with you and in need, I burdened no one. For the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my needs. So I refrained from burdening you in any way, and will continue to do so. As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. Therefore, he imposed shame on them; for he did not refute them with deceit when he himself served them, even though by this very service they would more easily fulfill what they had promised, knowing that they were debtors; so that their ministry may not now be very glorious, but a debt; lest they boast even from there.

(Vers. 9.)

(Ver. 9.) And when I was with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone. In fact, I wanted to be of such help to you that I comforted myself in my own poverty for the sake of your well-being. I endured poverty willingly so that they would not suffer any hardship. For whoever gives, believes they will be exalted and does not allow themselves to be accused. Indeed, my brothers from Macedonia provided for my needs. They always supported me, for they had already corrected their own faults. And just as it was not to be accepted from the Corinthians, so as not to cause them scandal, so it was necessary to be accepted again from the Macedonians, so that those sowing well would not lose their fruit.

(Vers. 10.) (Verse 10.) And in all things, without burdening you, I have saved myself and will continue to do so. He says he will always remain in that, in order to correct himself because of the false apostles who were seeking an opportunity to exploit them. The truth of Christ is in me, since this glory will not be infringed upon in me in the regions of Achaia. He urges all of Achaia to serve the saints: but he himself does not allow that he might not fulfill the glory that he has begun; for glory is to refrain from what is unlawful, especially for the salvation of others. Therefore, in the regions of Achaia, he did not want to use [it], but he used [it] in the others; and he promises even more under the testimony of Christ, saying that he will remain in [it]; lest he receive [anything] from the regions of Achaia at any time.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Why? Because I do not love you? God knows. In providing an explanation, God's knowledge serves as a witness to His love, which He had towards them. For He did not refuse to accept them because He did not love them, but rather, because He loved them, He wanted to benefit them by doing so, as I have said.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) But what I am doing, I will continue to do, in order to cut off the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things they boast about. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants,

also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

(Vers. 13.)

(v. 13) For such pseudo-apostles are workers, deceitful, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. They are deceitful because, motivated by greed, they did not preach Christ with a religious mind or as sent, usurping the apostolic name for themselves.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) It is not surprising, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. It is evident that Satan frequently deceives many by presenting himself as an angel of God, in order to deceive them. Therefore, Joshua was concerned about who appeared to him. (Joshua 5:13) And the apostles, in a boat, were terrified and thought it was a ghost. So, the Apostle Peter said to the Lord: Do not be afraid, it is I. (Matthew 14:27) But being skeptical, he said: If you are, command me to come to you on the water. (Ibid., 28) So that if he had firmly set foot on the water, he would know that it was true and not a phantom that appeared.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Therefore, it is not surprising if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. The ministers of righteousness are apostles, whose companions they pretended to be in order to deceive the listeners. Their end will be according to their deeds. Without a doubt, they will be judged according to the wickedness of their minds; because they pretend to be ministers of God not for the sake of God, but for the sake of their own belly. However, the end of them is declared to be according to their deeds: just as the works and concerns of the belly perish, so they also will be understood to perish.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if you do, receive me as foolish, so that I too may boast a little. Above (Chapter 2, Verse 1) he already said: I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness, and now he is repeating it; for he always introduces what he will later expound after many intervening points. Therefore, what he set forth above, he now begins to explain, for he is about to speak the truth and says that he is as foolish, because they seem to pertain to his praise. And I too, he says, will boast for a short while. He said 'a short while' because it is in words, not in meaning. Therefore, he does not truly speak these things for his own glory, but he wants to show them that those who are considered glorious have nothing more from this: and by this he says 'and I.' He says that this is the folly of an ignorant person, to pursue something for his own praise, while being forced to speak this. For it pains him that they would think highly of those who have nothing more from him, while despising this.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) What I am saying, I am not saying according to God. He does not speak according to God; because these things pertain to the swelling of the flesh, and glory does not arise from inflation before God; because humility is glorious before God. But it is like foolishness in this substance of boasting. He did not say complete foolishness, but in part; for it is the truth. But because sinful elevation is a harmful thing; therefore, although what is said is true; it is like

foolishness to praise oneself. But it is full foolishness if someone praises themselves with falsehoods: for one is proud of what is true, the other is foolish of what is false; yet the substance of this boasting is carnal in nature; for just as the flower of hay, so this glory fades away.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Because many boast according to the flesh, and I will boast too. This is what he says, because some of the Jews who believed presumed that they were children of Abraham. This is to boast according to the flesh, to claim nobility for themselves. They defend the privilege of their lineage because they are called children of his who have believed in God: 'The soul that sins shall die' (Ezekiel 18:20). So if this is boasting, he says, then I will boast too; because I am also a son of Abraham. But it profits nothing to be a son of Abraham before God; for it is faith that saves, not the propagation of Abraham's lineage. Therefore, this glory of the flesh is glory, as if, for example, it is said, a noble son of man.

(Vers. 19, 20.)

(Verse 19, 20.) For you gladly endure fools, being wise yourselves. He calls them fools who boasted about the circumcision of the flesh, and because they were being carried away by the Corinthians, so that they might appear glorious. Therefore, the Apostle also wants to be endured by them, so that he may show that he is like them, and yet not boast in this way according to God; hence he calls this boasting foolishness. He says he boasts according to the flesh; but he confesses that this is foolish, so that he may empty this boasting and show that he was driven by a compulsion to burst forth in praise of the flesh. Therefore, this is irony. For how can those who are often criticized be wise? Doesn't the ignorance of the Apostles have more wisdom than the prudence of these people? Here, the wise person endures the foolish, who with their patience allows them to make progress; not provoking or rejecting them, lest they make them worse, but certainly if they cannot make progress in them, they preserve their modesty. There is nothing of this sort among the Corinthians. So how then do they willingly endure the foolish, when they themselves are wise? Is it not because they do not want to be understood in the way their words sound? This is in terms of meaning and pronunciation; because indeed the same words do not have the same meaning, they are pronounced differently; so that sometimes he affirms, sometimes denies, what he says. For these wise ones, the foolish ones tolerated false apostles. For you endure, if someone reduces you to slavery. This is true; because they were reduced to slavery, not by wisdom, but by foolishness; so that they would serve the pseudo-apostles. If anyone devours. This is not false; because they were content to have their things devoured by false teachers. If anyone receives. To receive is to take someone's property by deceit; therefore, it means that they are taken by deceitful masters, and accept what is not beneficial. If anyone exalts himself. Exalting oneself is pride. Therefore, it refers to those who were proud, speaking ill of the Apostle; and they did not displease them. If anyone strikes you on the face. One is struck on the face, where an injury is inflicted. Now they signify those who were from the lineage of Abraham, deceiving them because they were uncircumcised, exalting themselves and humbling these people.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) According to their lowly status, I speak. By lowly status he means what he said above: 'And I will boast about myself according to the flesh' (2 Corinthians 11:18). For he does not say that it belongs to praise, because he was not weak in the one in whom they boasted, whom he secretly refers to. Hence he adds: 'As though we were weak in this matter.' It is clear that he was not weak in this glory, in which the Jews, whom they tolerated, believed themselves to be superior. As if he were an Apostle, but different in this respect, because he himself was of the seed of Abraham, and by this means he was not weak in this glory of the flesh. But those who were applied to the descendants of Abraham were considered weak. For they, as if weak, in that they were surpassing him, in that they were Israelites, in this very thing were willing to be punished. In order to show that in this glory of the flesh they were not different and weak, when he speaks of his own cause, he introduces also the person of Barnabas, his companion. And in the first letter he says: Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? (I Cor. IX, 6) Were they not therefore inferior in this glory, in which the Jews boasted, but not without reason? Finally he says, Who dares ? I speak foolishly, I dare too: that is, not being weak in the glory in which the Israelites boasted; nor indeed being shown to be prudent in this matter; for the prudent do not want to show themselves superior. Therefore, he says that he dares to be inexperienced in that which those who boast dare, because they are children of Abraham, so that he may discredit their glory: he declares himself to be foolish so that they may not appear prudent or noble in this matter.

Ver. 22.) They are Hebrews, and so am I; they are Israelites, and so am I; they are descendants of Abraham, and so am I. In this, he shows that he is equal to those he mentioned earlier, in order to prove that the accusations against him, by those who considered him unworthy, are false.

(Vers. 23.) (Verse 23.) They are the servants of Christ, and I speak as a fool, I am more. Speaking the truth about himself, he declares himself a fool, so that it may be understood that he is compelled to speak in praise of himself. For one who willingly reports those things that contribute to his own praise does not consider himself foolish. Therefore, he shows what things make him more of a minister of Christ than the rest of the preachers. For finding an occasion, he touches upon the lives of all, even the apostles, sorrowing because he was judged to be of less importance in the grace of God, even though he performed the same deeds as the other apostles and endured greater hardships for the sake of the faith. Where he also says in another letter: I have labored more than all of them (I Cor. XV, 10). In many labors. Therefore, he speaks of many labors because they also worked, but not to the same extent. For from morning until the fifth hour, he sought food with his hands, and then from the fifth hour until the tenth hour, he publicly debated with such effort, that he persuaded those who contradicted him. In prisons more abundantly. It is clear that he was sent to prison more frequently than them. In beatings beyond measure. Therefore, beyond measure, because it was beyond what was necessary. For they too were killed, but not only them. Often in death. It is true, because he often faced danger here more frequently than others.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24.) Five times from the Jews I received forty minus one. He says this because he was whipped five times by the Jews according to the law of Moses, receiving thirty-nine lashes, as it is written in Deuteronomy (Deut. XXV, 3). This is briefly summed up as happening five times.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) I was beaten three times with rods. I endured this from the Gentiles. I was stoned once. I was stoned by the Jews in the city of Lystra (Acts 14:18). Three times I was shipwrecked. For someone who is constantly sailing, it is easy to experience shipwrecks in stormy weather. I spent a night and a day in the deep sea. This happened when I was sent to Rome and appealed to Caesar (Acts 25:12). At that time, in deep despair of life, that is, in the deep sea, I faced death before my eyes. For indeed it is written in that place: So that we despaired even of living (II Cor. I, 8).

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Often on his journeys. Now he recalls other dangers, so that he may show himself to have been afflicted for Christ according to the flesh, both on land and sea. Dangers, he says, of rivers. If he recounts the dangers of journeys, what is it that he says? Dangers of rivers? But he was making the journey in winter; for certainly rain is continuous, and when he was making his way, he encountered the danger of rivers. Dangers of robbers. When the devil could not kill him in the city, he incited robbers against him on the road, when he carried nothing that robbers desired. Dangers from his own people. He speaks of the persecutions of the Jews, who were his brothers according to the flesh; for they were grieved that he had abandoned the Law and converted to the Gospel of Christ. Dangers from the Gentiles. He suffered persecutions from the Gentiles because of the mystery of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and the preaching of the one God. Dangers in the city. The danger in the city was so great that he had to escape through a window from those who were plotting against him (2 Corinthians 11:33). Dangers in the desert. This danger was brought upon him by the Jews, when they were plotting to kill him on the road (Acts 27:43). Dangers at sea. He already said before: Three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I was adrift at sea; what other danger was there at sea? But this is the danger, when at sea, that is, on the ship, the soldiers had planned to kill all the prisoners, so that no one would escape by swimming. The centurion prevented this danger from happening so that Paul would be brought alive to Rome. Dangers in fake brothers. These are false brothers, of whom he says to the Galatians: Now because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus (Gal. II, 4). For they were partly Christians, partly Jews, but in neither fully, who aroused envy against the Apostle because he proclaimed that the Law had already ceased with the coming of Christ. Finally, under their pressure, Timothy was compelled to be circumcised. Therefore, a fake Christian is one who imitates a Christian out of envy, and this person is a false brother. If only Jews were these fake brothers, and he calls them false brothers because of Judaism, why was it necessary to repeat it? For he already said above: Perils of the same race. But according to the flesh, they are not false brothers, but in Christ, they are false; because they are not fully committed to being Christians (2 Timothy 1:4). There were also other false brothers, such as Demas and Hermogenes (2 Timothy 4:9).

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) In labor and hardship. But it is true that there can be labor without hardship. But here he added: And hardship, in order to show that the labor itself was destructive. In many sleepless nights. There were many sleepless nights: some voluntary, others out of necessity. For being in distress, it was necessary for him to seek God's help and to teach, not only during the day but also during the night, as it is said in the Acts of the Apostles. In fame et siti (Act. XX, 31). Fugatus

frequenter a Judaeis persequentibus, necesse erat ut famem pateretur et sitim per inopiam. In jejuniis saepe. Saepius jejunavit, ut Dei adminiculo protegi mereretur: jejunat enim, qui dum habet quod edat, abstinet. In frigore et nuditate. In frigore fuit et nuditate, quandonaufragium passus est. Denique ignem fecerunt, ait et refecerunt nos propter pluviam imminentem et frigus Barbari in insula Melitae (Act. XXVIII, 2).

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) Apart from those things that are external to me, my daily concern is for all the churches. This concern, which he calls daily, comes from the use of tradition, so that he may instruct the people entrusted to him every day: but those things that he mentions above are imposed by necessity. For the day is given for work, the night for rest: but because the necessity was pressing, he also taught at night to help everyone. For if he hesitated not to afflict; lest he should be out of the grace of God.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) Who is weak, and I am not weak? He says he sympathizes with everyone and feels compassion in such a way that he can provide healing for their wounds. He continues with this in order to show how he cares for and governs the Church entrusted to him, and through this he should not be considered inferior to the other apostles; for as he has declared, he has worked even harder than all of them. For he faced greater persecution among the Jews compared to the other apostles; when he was persecuting the Church, he suddenly changed and became its defender, testifying and confirming that he heard Christ, whom he had previously thought of as a dead man, speaking to him from heaven (Acts 9:6 and following). Many people necessarily followed his testimony, knowing that he had defended himself not without reason as a persecutor. Because of this, the Jews were tortured and constantly sought to kill him. Who is scandalized, and I am not burned? To be scandalized is to suffer the desire of the flesh, as far as this matter is concerned. And because even unwilling people are often scandalized, enticed by the beauty or attractiveness of the body, or by the warmth of their own flesh: the Apostle, considering the necessity of human nature, says that he is burned; so that he may console those who are tempted, sympathizing with their weakness: not condemning them, but admonishing them in humility of speech; so that they may resist the enticements of the flesh in the hope of the promised reward; lest any of those who hear him, overcome by the desires of the flesh, despair of themselves, thinking that they can no longer bear God, if they correct themselves and remain in the same things, perish.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30.) If one must boast, I will boast of my weaknesses. This is said because if a Christian must boast, it must be in humility, which grows in the sight of God. Hence, it is said in another place: When I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:10), meaning that when I am more humble for the sake of my brothers' salvation, then I am exalted. Therefore, one must boast not of earthly descent, for one is of the seed of Abraham.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31) Father God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. He gives God as a witness, so that what I say may be easily believed; and this is especially true for those who did not honor him as a true apostle.

(Vers. 32, 33.)

(Verse 32, 33.) The leader of the Damascene people, who was in charge of guarding the city of the Damascenes, was trying to capture me. But I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and I escaped from his hands.

Chapter XII.

(Vers. 1.)

(V.1) If it is necessary to boast, but it is not necessary for me. The ruler of Damascus, seeing the Jews setting a trap for the Apostle, wanted to fulfill their evil plan through his power, so that he himself, if possible, could apprehend him, and so that it would please the Jews, and so that he would appear diligent in his entrusted duty if he would bring death to the disturber who was publicly causing trouble. In the midst of these beginning events, when the Lord appeared to him on the road while he was going to Damascus, the Jews became furious at seeing him, who had come to bring the bound believers in Christ to Jerusalem, to preach the sect, which he had come to condemn (Acts 9:2 and following): and it happened so that he escaped through a window in the wall, being let down in a basket by the disciples. Some people say that it was done unjustly because he was not freed by the help of God. But what could be done by humans, why was it necessary for him to be freed by the help of God, when the help of God is necessary only if human assistance fails? By this act, he does not say that it is expedient for him to boast, because the joy of present life is fragile; for if he had not escaped, he would have become a martyr. But because it is commanded to flee in persecution (Matt. X, 23), he escaped with diligence, for no one should expect to sin against himself. Therefore, he says, one should boast because he has escaped: but it is not expedient, he says, because of pride: because true growth comes from humility, and the help of God is effective for the meek, not the arrogant. Furthermore, because boasting of having escaped death, which is endured for the sake of faith, signifies empty suffering for Christ; therefore, it is not expedient to boast.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) But I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. He confirmed both, because he did not deny that both could happen: that he could be taken without a body, and in a body. And perhaps it may not seem great to some that the man of Christ was caught up to the third heaven; since it is said that the moon is in the third circle. But it is not so, because it is understood that he was caught up beyond all the stars of the world: and therefore it is magnificent and marvelous what he relates; for it signifies that he was caught up above the firmament, into the third heaven of the spiritual heavens.

(Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

(Verses 3, 4, 5.) And I know such a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know, God knows, that he was caught up into paradise and heard secret words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. For this I will boast, though whether I should boast is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. He says he was caught up twice, that is, first to the third heaven, and then into the heavenly paradise, where the Lord said to the thief that he would be with him in paradise, as it is written (Luke 23:43), in the Father's house: there where the city of God is said to be our mother Jerusalem. What then is surprising, if after the resurrection the body, having already been cleansed and made ethereal, is believed to become immortal in the heavens (Galatians 4:26); since the Apostle does not doubt that a still mortal body could be lifted up to the heavens, and taken up to the celestial paradise of God the Father? Concerning such a person, that is, one who is so worthy of God as to experience this, he declares himself to boast: and he does not want to openly say that he is speaking about himself, lest he appear to praise himself. And John the apostle, when it is known that he speaks of himself: This is, he says, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who also leaned on his chest at the supper (John 21:20); so that he may not seem to boast proudly of himself. But as for me, I will not boast, except in my weaknesses. Thus, he does not boast of himself, while he does not openly declare about himself. Indeed, in my weaknesses, he says, I will boast. For it does not seem glorious, but rather sorrowful, to expose the pressures of sufferings and the weaknesses of afflictions. Therefore, he says he glories in these things, knowing nonetheless that they lead to heavenly rewards. For what is more glorious for a future Christian than to recount the afflictions suffered for Christ?

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) For even if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. This I say, because if he boasts of his merit, which he has before God, he will not be imprudent; for he speaks the truth. Therefore, if anyone speaks of his merits, which have been shown to him, he is certainly not a fool; but if he remains silent, he is also wise. But for what reason does he not openly boast here? He now adds, saying: I am sparing, so that no one may think of me beyond what he sees in me or hears from me. Therefore, he shows the reason why he does not boast openly: 'So that no one may think,' he says, 'that I extend my glory beyond the limit allowed by my merits.' He refers to those whom he had as detractors for the sake of the Law, as I mentioned above. For of course it is good not to remain silent about the glory of one's merits, so that believers may be encouraged.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Vers. 8, 9.) For this reason, I pleaded with the Lord three times to depart from me; and he said to me: My grace is sufficient for you; for power is made perfect in weakness. The thorns of the devil, which he cunningly inflicts on the minds of God's servants to incite them to harm, so that they

would cease from him, testify that I pleaded with the Lord three times and did not obtain it: not because he is saying that he was despised, but because he unknowingly asked against himself, so that the temptations would cease from him, through which he was becoming more perfect. Therefore, he says to the Romans: For what we should pray, as we ought, we do not know (Rom. VIII, 27). From where he says this is the answer to himself, that the grace of God would be sufficient for him, by which either the strength to endure was added, or the time of affliction was shortened, so that devotion, while being pressed by the weakness of the affliction, is not broken and appears to be approved. Therefore, I will gladly boast more in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. It is clear that he teaches that we should boast in times of weakness, when we are humbled by injuries. But from Christ is given the power of endurance, so that the injuries which previously appeared harsh and therefore annoying, afterwards may be willingly embraced, so that they may be alleviated by the help of Christ. Therefore, he says that he is willingly to be killed, provided that he may be cared for by Christ, knowing that the medicine of Christ adds more to salvation than weakness takes away from health.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Therefore, I am pleased with weaknesses, insults; for when I am weak, then I am strong. It is true, that the Christian prevails when he is thought to be defeated: and then treachery is defeated when it congratulates itself on having won. Therefore, he rejoices when he is insulted; and he rises when he is oppressed.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) I became foolish, you compelled me. He says he was driven to show what he was. And indeed, he is not foolish who speaks the truth about himself: but he stoops down to make it clear that he does not reveal his merits willingly. For I should have been commended by you. It is evident that they should have provided him with testimony against his detractors, among whom he established the Church, and showed the signs and wonders of his apostleship; so that, with him being silent, they would defend him, who they had as a father in the Gospel of Christ. For I have done nothing less than those apostles. Very much, that is too much, as it seemed to some; for this is what the apostle Paul also was. Therefore, he says this, that he is not inferior in preaching or in performing miracles to his predecessors, the apostles, not in dignity but in time. For if it is supposed that time must be prescribed, John began to preach before Christ; and it was not Christ who baptized John, but John who baptized Christ. Therefore, does God judge in this way? Indeed, Andrew followed the Savior before Peter, and yet Andrew did not receive primacy, but Peter. Why, then, did the Apostle not seem to some; when he could do the same by God's grace, which the apostles could do? Therefore, he is sad and, compelled, he shows what he deserves from the Lord's favor. Hence, he is not only forced to profess that he is not lesser, but also that he has labored more than all. Therefore, it was displeasing to them, and he did not seem to be an apostle to those who rejected his preaching of the paternal law because of their jealousy, as enemies of the tradition of Moses; for he said that it had already ceased, showing more favor to the apostles and humbling him before them, since they did not assert anything so firmly against the Law.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) And if I am nothing, yet the signs of an apostle have been worked among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. Thus he humbles himself in order to lift up; yet he first mentions patience, because he has borne with them for a long time as though they were impatient and sick; so that, applying the medicine of signs and wonders, he might heal the wounds of their error.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) For what is it that you lacked compared to other churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this injury. Still, by humility he commends himself; for he shows not only that they had something more than other churches, but even more; for he preached the Gospel of God to them free of charge, which was not granted to any other churches, as the Lord says: 'The worker is worthy of his wages' (Luke 10:7). So, if I am worthy of mistreatment for the good work, forgive me: for every foolish person is an accuser of good things. So that he may show these inexperienced people, he asks for forgiveness for his action, for which he is worthy of praise.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) Look, for the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you. In order that it may not be thought that he did this at the beginning for his own commendation, but afterwards wanted to receive a reward for his preaching of the gospel, he shows that he persists in this intention; so that he may not appear to have later corrected his action and be reproached by detractors. For I do not seek what is yours, but you. He shows, therefore, that he is willing to be received by them, so that he may gain them for himself; so that, understanding that he values them above money, they may finally recognize his affection toward them. For children should not hoard for their parents, but parents for their children. He refers to himself as their father, as he says in the first letter: Through the gospel I have begotten you (I Cor. IV, 15). However, earthly parents are the ones who hoard for their children; for it is fitting that spiritual parents receive support for their present life. For it is not a great thing that they who convey spiritual things should obtain carnal things. But here he proves to such an extent that he does not want to receive that he transfers the cause of the earthly father to the spiritual one; so that he not only does not receive from them, but also, if it can be done, he himself gives to them, as I have already said. I have robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service (2 Corinthians 11:8). By saying this, he implies that they should understand how great and deserving those are who have neglected the care of such a great apostle.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) But indeed, I will gladly spend and even spend extra, and I myself will be spent for your souls. Now he openly shows the affection and charity that he had towards them; when he not only says that he is ready to spend his own resources for them, but also that he is prepared to lay down his own life for the salvation of their souls, just as the Apostle John says: Because we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers, following the example of the Savior (1 John 3:16). Loving you very much, I am loved less. He calls them to love; because they themselves should love him more, especially through whom they learned the way of salvation, through whom they were acquired for God, being made faithful from the faithless, and purified from the defiled.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) But be this as it may, I did not burden you; but in my cunning deceit, I captured you. It does not keep silent about everything that could be brought forward against me, in order to clear itself in every way; because it did nothing deceitful among them, but in simplicity, looking out for its own interests, with this twofold purpose: to provide for them before God, and not to seek their tribute here; for it is enough for me that which is promised by God in the future. For perhaps they suspected that I despised them because the offerings they made were small, in order to obtain greater things; so, reflecting on their own merits, I would not refuse money but would deem an unworthy sum contemptible.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) Did any of those whom I sent to you take advantage of you? This is what I mean, that those who were sent did not inform them of this, so that if they wished, they could offer the Apostle a worthy amount in return; for he did not want to accept it, because it was offered in a manner less worthy than he deserved. The Apostles understood this cunningly devised plan; to prove that what he did, he did not out of contempt, but out of greed.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) I asked Titus and sent him with his brother. Was Titus greedy towards you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not follow the same path? It is clear that when those whom he sent came, no such thing was said or done; their unity of opinion is proven in good faith, with no suspicion of greed.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Do you think that we are making excuses to you again? This is what he is saying: In the past, you doubted us, thinking that we were not sincerely acting with you. For false apostles were troubling them, claiming that the apostle was acting in this way in order to take more. We speak in the sight of God in Christ: everything, beloved, is for your edification. He desires them to truly and well-think of him, so that he may sufficiently make it known to them both by reason and testimony; for he is not trying to profit himself, but to edify them; in this way, he may provoke their love towards him, while not burdening their income and not yielding to the authority of power in accusing vices. Without a doubt, it is beneficial for someone who is corrected to make amends: if the superior rejects what is offered in order to argue freely.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) For I fear that when I come, I may not find you as I wish, and that you may not find me as you wish. For not all who were corrected in the first letter have truly repented of the vices for which they were admonished. Therefore, with authority, he intends to appear before them, so that they may be corrected out of fear, in order to find them as he wishes. And I will be found by you, not as you wish. He says this so that they may present themselves in a manner that pleases both him and the Apostle, and so that they may rejoice in each other. For he finds someone, whom he does not want, who makes himself such that he disagrees with him. Beware, lest there be quarrels, rivalries, enmities, dissensions, slanders, whisperings, swellings, seditions among you. Now he recalls the errors that he reproves in the previous letter; when they were showing partiality to people and were disagreeing with each other.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) When I come again, may God humble me among you, and may I lament many of those who sinned before and did not repent of the impurity, fornication, and debauchery they engaged in. This is to warn you so that he may not find them such as he found them before, with various vices of unclean works or, rather, names; for every work is without fault, but disorderly conduct gives it a bad name. For then it is unlawful when it is done differently from what is allowed. Therefore, he says that he humbles himself for those who sin; because he begins, as a loving father, to mourn the sins of his children. For what father does not rejoice in the good deeds of his children? Thus, it is necessary for him to mourn again if they turn to evil. Therefore, he warns that if anyone has not repented of past fornications, or other impurities or immoralities, they should do so now, as some whom he signifies have not done; so that when he comes, he may come without sadness among them. For when he says, 'And I would mourn for many of those who sinned before and did not repent,' he proves that some of them did repent and some did not. This is contrary to Novatian, who says that fornicators cannot repent and be received into communion. Here he proves that they did repent and thus were received in the peace of the Church. Therefore, he proves three forms of sin, as he mentions fornication, impurity, and uncleanness.

Chapter XIII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) This is the third time I am coming to you. As it is written: 'By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.' This is the second time I am coming to you. In accordance with the law, a matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. So when I come again, I will not be lenient with those who sinned earlier or any of the others.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) For I have foretold and I foretell, as being present the second coming, and being absent now I write to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again, I will not spare. He indicates that he has already said this in person, in order to correct them so they would not be rebuked with shame. And now he testifies that he says the same things again while absent, so that after the second rebuke, if they have not corrected themselves, he should not spare them.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) How do you seek proof of Him who speaks in me, Christ? They seek proof of Christ speaking in the Apostle, while they do not obey His commandments, desiring to test if He dares to be avenged; so that through this it is understood to be an authority of faith, so that it is feared in the future. For he who despises the master seeks to be corrected. He who is not weak among you, but is mighty in you. Christ is mighty in these things; for they have seen in His name the dead raised, demons driven away, the paralyzed healed, the deaf hear, the mute speak, the lame walk, the blind see. All of these are virtues, not weaknesses: in fact, they are the reason why people are drawn to faith.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For although he was crucified from our weakness, he lives by the power of God. It is true because Christ was crucified for our sins, in order to destroy death, and to free those who believe in him from it. Therefore, he allowed himself to be weakened for our sake, in order to conquer death for us. For he descended into Hell, who had no knowledge of sin at all, and was killed as if a sinner, and he destroyed the handwriting of Adam. So that from then on, those who have died in his name would not be held captive by death, but would have the confidence to go to heaven. Because of our weakness, he who is killed by our efforts is revived by the power of the Father; in order to prove to the disciples that what he taught was true, by demonstrating it in himself. Indeed, we are weakened in him. This pertains to the person of the apostles, who, while preaching him, that is, Christ, were weakened; while they were being mistreated, imprisoned, and beaten. But we live with him by the power of God towards you. It is clear that if they were weakened by the faithless among believers: this was not weakness, but progress; because believers become stronger from this, while they are weakened. Therefore, death is brought by the wicked, but life is towards the believers; for by the power of God they will rise again, to live with Christ.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Test yourselves to see if you are in faith: prove yourselves. He instructs that brothers should examine themselves to discuss with one another; they become more concerned if they compare themselves with each other. Therefore, he wanted this temptation to be understood as a test; because every test is a temptation, but not every temptation is a test. For if God is said to test, it is a test; but if the devil is said to test, it is a temptation, because he seeks to overthrow. And a person sometimes tries in order to test; sometimes, in order to capture. Do you not know that Christ Jesus is in you, unless you are reprobate? This is what he says, that if you do not know how to test yourselves, you do not know that Jesus Christ is in you, and this is to be reprobate, to not know the truth of one's own faith. For whoever has the sense of their faith in their heart, they know that Christ Jesus is in them.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But I hope that you will come to know that we are not reprobate. It provokes them to knowledge of faith, and to a righteous life. For when the apostles themselves begin to know their certain authority and merit before God, they will be able to be concerned about themselves as well.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) But I pray to God, that you do not do anything evil: not so that we may appear approved, but so that you may do what is good; while we, as if disqualified. With the same affection with which he always prays for them, that they may refrain from evil. Not so that we, he says, may appear approved, that is, not so that we may be seen as having authority, while you are sinning. But so that you may do what is good; while we, as if disqualified. What is this? Does the Apostle pray to be a reprobate? Certainly not: but he prays that those who are doing well, while they did not dare to correct, may be humbled, and may appear humbled or reprobate. For they seem to be approved by God, while they judge sinners by the authority granted to them. Therefore, if those whom they judge are not, when the authority ceases in them, they seem as reprobates.

(Vers. 8.)

(Vers. 8.) For we cannot do anything against the truth, but for the truth. He says this because power is not given against the truth, in order to accuse those who live well, but for the truth, in order to vindicate against him who is an enemy of the law. Therefore, power will cease if they do something good. Hence, he also says to the Romans: Do you want to not fear power? Do good, and you will have praise from it (Rom. XIII, 3). So when one does not fear by doing good, power is eliminated in him. This is like being rejected; because that ceases in him, from which power is proven.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) For we rejoice when we are weak, but you are strong. This is to be weak, not to exercise power: but these desire to be strong; so that, while doing good, they may overcome vices and refrain from seeking vengeance or correction from themselves. This we pray for and your perfection. Praying, we beseech that they may be perfected in it, neither sinning while perfected in the virtue of a good life, and in incorruptible faith.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) Therefore, I write these things while absent, so that I may not have to be harsh when present. It is clear that I admonish them while absent, so that I may find them more correct and not have to rebuke them with shame when I am present; so that the one who is sinning may be ashamed in the presence of the brotherhood. According to the power that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down. This power is what he wishes to be idle, for those who are doing well: if in any way, they exercise themselves in this, so that the corrected may be edified, not the mortified sinners. For those who are criticized are not destroyed, but are built up for life.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Furthermore, brothers, rejoice, be perfect, receive consolation, have the same mindset, act in peace; and the God of peace and love will be with you. This joy will come from repentance, from which perfection can arise: but before that, there will be consolation, so that they may renounce present pleasure in the hope of future things. Have the same mindset: this he says, because of the old disagreement; so that they may now think as one. Act in peace. If they are in agreement, they will have peace. And God of peace and love will be, he says, with you. God of peace is Christ, who said: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave you (John 14:27). He is also God of love; for again he says: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. And in this, he says, all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34). However, there is a different peace of God and a different peace of the world; for even the wicked and impure have peace, but it is for their damnation; for the peace of Christ is free from sins. Therefore he avoids treachery, despises deceit, and resists evil deeds. This is pleasing to God and friendly, but hostile to the devil. Whoever possesses this will have both love and their God for perpetual protection.

Greet one another with a holy kiss. This is an ecclesiastical greeting; because these kisses are not carnal, but spiritual, which unite minds in the embrace of bodies, not in the desire of the flesh, but of the spirit. All the saints greet you. They provoke them to holiness, so that they themselves may

dare to return the greeting to the saints; for they are greeted by the saints in order to imitate them. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. Amen. This is the mystery of the Trinity, and the unity of power, because it is the perfection of all salvation. For the love of God sent us the Savior Jesus, by whose grace we are saved. In order to possess this grace of salvation, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is necessary: for this Spirit protects the beloved and saved by the grace of Christ; so that the perfection of the three may be the fulfillment of man in salvation.

Commentary on 2 Thessalonians

On the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1-3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6-9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1-4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.) • (Vers. 7, 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

Prologue

Since in the first letter to the Thessalonians, among other things, he also wrote about the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the saints, he now writes another letter to them, in which he indicates, although obscurely (for he could not write openly), the abolition of the Roman kingdom, the appearance and condemnation of the Antichrist, and the disturbance of some brethren.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1-3.)

(Verses 1-3.) Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He writes to them with solemn words; for the beginning of the discourse is contained in the head of the letter: and these three, by whose names it is written, are the same as in the first letter (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is fitting, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring. This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. (Joan. XIII, 34.)

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verses 4, 5.) So that we ourselves boast of you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure; Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. For the very pressures themselves are examples of future merits in those who suffer, leading to glory; but in those who persecute, leading to destruction.

(Vers. 6-9.)

(Verse 6-9) For it is just before God to repay with affliction those who oppress you, and to grant rest to you who are afflicted, along with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his

mighty angels, in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. Since he said that the example of God's just judgment appears both for the good and for the wicked, therefore he followed by saying: Since it is just before God to render to each one according to his works. What is more just than for those who oppress the righteous in this world and make them suffer persecution, to suffer the same things in the future that they do: while they themselves rest with the other saints, who, coming out of great tribulation, will receive the eternal kingdom in the coming of the Lord from heaven; when he begins to come with his heavenly army and with fire to give vengeance to the pagans, who do not know that God the Father is Jesus Christ; and to the Jews, who, though claiming to know God, do not believe in the Gospel of Christ, which the Father God gave to them, in order to hand it down to his servants? May the presence of the Lord and the glory of his majesty consume them like a fire, so that they may pay the deserved punishment of eternal destruction, always enduring but never completely failing, so that the punishment itself may always in some way generate them, by which they are consumed.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) When he comes to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. It contains a double meaning; for he will come to punish the wicked and to glorify the good. For he himself will appear glorious and marvelous to those who believe, following the example and faith of the apostles, when they are crowned, and the Gospel testifies to them on the day of the Lord. However, he will appear severe to the unbelievers, when they begin to be confined by eternal punishments. For the glory of the disciples is the crown, and its truth is the punishment of the unbelievers; because what was preached was not believed.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verse 11,12) In which we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of His calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He adds joy and prayers, that because they are devoted, God may be pleased to help them, so that they may complete the work begun to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; so that the perseverance of the disciples may be a testimony to the master for His glory. The authority of a teacher is in the trust of the students, when they make themselves more worthy in gratitude received.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1-4.)

(Verse 1-4.) But we request you, brothers, in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering to Him, not to easily be shaken from your mind, nor to be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as if coming from us, as though the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way, because unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. He begs

them not to lightly and easily receive the opinion of the impending arrival of the Lord, as if it were certain; and he gives such commands, that even if someone were to speak as if inspired by the Spirit, they should not be believed; nor should assent be given if something were written in a treatise or letter, perhaps written in the name of the apostles. For deceivers often fabricate a letter under the name of some famous man, in order to commend by the authority of the name that which could not be accepted on its own merits. For this reason, lest they be found unwary because of the disturbance itself, able to be led astray into adoring the devil, who will boast of this in order that, appearing under the name of the Savior and deceiving the saints, he may desire to be adored, to deceive believers in Christ. But in order that the most shameless Satan may not have the opportunity or occasion for deceiving that he thinks he has, he has marked the time and signs of the advent of the Lord, because the Lord will not come before the downfall of the Roman empire occurs, and Antichrist appears, who will kill the saints, even though Roman liberty has been restored, under his own name however. Knowing that the Lord is coming to repress them, he will usurp His name for himself; and in order to appear that his kingdom is true, he will attract with him those who shall perish together with him; so that in the house of the Lord, in the seat of Christ, he may sit and assert himself as God, not as the Son of God. Wherefore in the Gospel to the Jews the Lord says: I came in my Father's name, and ye received me not; if another comes in his own name, him ye will receive (John 5:43). Therefore, from circumcision, it is to be hoped that he will come, circumcised, so that there may be trust for the Jews to believe in him. Therefore, when the Apostle writes to the Thessalonians, he instructs that all should be cautious in such matters.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Verse 5, 6.) Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) For the mystery of iniquity is already at work, only that he who now holds back may hold back until he is taken out of the way. The mystery of iniquity began with Nero, who, encouraged by his father the devil, killed the apostles with a zeal for idols, up until Diocletian and finally Julian, who, with a certain art and cunning, could not complete the started persecution because it had not been allowed from above. Satan uses these ministers to deceive men under the guise of a multitude of gods, as long as the Roman kingdom, that is what he says: Until he is taken out of the way.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Ver. 8, 9.) And then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: him, whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders. After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Antichrist will appear, as it has been mentioned. For in the last times, knowing that the devil is nearing his destruction, and with the Roman Empire falling, he will be sent down from heaven, cast down to the earth (as it has been stated in the Apocalypse of the Apostle John).

He will deceive and seduce people, performing certain signs of power, by the permission of the just God, in order to make himself be worshipped as if he were God. For he will imitate God, so that just as the Son of God, born or made man, demonstrated his divinity through signs and wonders, so Satan will appear in man, showing himself as God through the virtues of lies, as has been said. This is the revelation of the mystery of iniquity; for when the Antichrist appears, it will be known that he is like their God, whom the common people previously worshipped as gods by his command, of whom he will be the first or highest, which he will make credible through the virtues of signs. Therefore, he indeed spoke falsehoods of miracles, because he wants to be believed through signs which are not real, in order to deceive those whom he is about to deceive. This is why it was foretold to the saints, so that they may know what to beware of.

(Vers. 10.)

(Ver. 10.) And in every deception of iniquity for those who perish: because they did not receive the love of truth, that they might be saved. To them he says that the deception of iniquity of his wonders is advancing, who are about to perish; because they have rejected the charity of truth, through which they could have been saved, as the apostles preached, they are delivered to the devil; for they do not want to be saved, they are abandoned by God.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) And for this reason God will send them the operation of error, so that they may believe falsehood; so that all those who did not believe the truth but consented to iniquity may be judged. The operation of error is to place faith in falsehoods, so that those who did not want to acknowledge the clarity of light would think that darkness should be called light; so that the enemies of truth, who are inclined towards wickedness, may be condemned without contradiction, while the supporters of iniquity.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Ver. 12, 13.) But we must always give thanks to God for you, beloved brethren of the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation, through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. At this place, the foreknowledge of God resounds, because He knows the minds of all before their birth; and He is not unaware of those who will believe. Therefore, from the beginning, he knows that these faithful ones will be, who, by believing, make an increase of faith, not a detriment; for, being sanctified through the faith of the truth of the Gospel of the Son of God, they are acquired for an increase of the glory of the body of Christ, as he also says in another epistle: that all things may grow unto the increase of God (Colossians 2:19). For whoever, having deserted the devil, take refuge in the faith of Christ, makes an increase for God in the body of Christ, which they had previously caused a detriment.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you have learned, whether by word or by our letter. In order that the foreknowledge of God may remain for their salvation, he warns them to stand and persevere in the tradition of the Gospel; so that they may be diligent, lest they become sluggish in the works of God, and not fulfill what they have begun. For in

this way, they will know how to believe and be able to remain, if they are constantly urged by frequent admonition.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Vers. 15, 16.) But our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who has loved us and has given us eternal consolation and good hope in grace; may he comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work and word. For the Father and the Son are one power, one divinity and substance, therefore he did not hesitate to first mention our Lord Jesus Christ, then God our Father by his dignity, not by the truth of their nature: who loved us so much that he gave his Son for us (John 3:16), God for men, the Lord for servants, the true Son for the adopted; so that his death may be our life, and his resurrection our justification, and his second coming our rest of life, and glory forever; so that this hope may be the consolation of present troubles, through which they may be established and grow in good works and doctrine.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. Furthermore, he exhorts to pray that God may deign to direct his doctrine with tireless course and pour it forth through the mouth of his Apostle into the ears of the hearers, and that he may restrain and calm the seditions of evil men who distrust the truth, and that the confidence of speaking may increase to the Apostle for his fruit and the conversion of many.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But God, who is faithful, will establish them and guard them from evil. For God has promised his assistance to the faithful and good people in times of need, to confirm them. However, they were eager for both faith and good works, therefore God is called faithful in his promises, because his providence was around them.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) But we trust in the Lord concerning you, that you both do and will do the things which we command. In order that he may deserve to be entrusted with the entire defense of God, he does not doubt that those things which he commanded them in the name of the Lord will be done by them and will come to pass.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) But may the Lord direct your hearts in the love of God and the patience of Christ. This is what he desires for them from God, which he has no doubt can be granted; that in the love of God their hearts may be strengthened to await the coming of the Lord, so that, with the world condemned, his coming may be desired, who has conquered the world.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from any brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For not all obey the message, but they follow their own will and advice. Therefore, we instruct them to separate from them, so that they may come to realize their error.

(Vers. 7, 8, 9.)

(Vers. 7, 8, 9.) For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we did not live disorderly among you, nor did we eat anyone's bread for free; but in labor and toil, working night and day, so that we would not be a burden to any of you. Not because we did not have the right, but in order to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone is unwilling to work, he shall not eat! For it would not be reprehensible if he received bread from those who provided spiritual nourishment to their souls, which also gave immortality with glory to their bodies. Then indeed freedom can be exercised, if one does not subject oneself to the stomach or money, content with one's own bread; especially since it is more beneficial to praise, if, when it is allowed, and there is the opportunity to take, one abstains: such a person can benefit the listeners; for they will have reverence for this strictness, and they cannot disregard the things that are commanded by him.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) For when we were with you, we commanded you that if anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat. He not only taught with words, but also encouraged and acted accordingly; for a suitable teacher is one who fulfills with actions what he teaches with words. For only then do those who are learning know that what they hear is truly so, if they do not see it being neglected by the teacher. Although the things taught are not unknown to be clearly true, if they begin to be neglected by the teacher, it will be difficult for the listeners to progress: for actions persuade more than words. Therefore, those who make progress in both work and understanding, despite negligent teachers, should be rewarded with great prizes. Thus, the purpose was for those of average or humble status in the common people to learn the extent to which they were not losing their freedom. Hence, Solomon also says: Rarely, he says, put your foot toward your friend, lest he become weary of you when he is satisfied (Prov. XXV, 17). For the one who frequently gathers at someone else's table, being devoted to idleness, must flatter the one who feeds him; whereas our religion calls people to freedom. Therefore, if anyone refuses to eat, let them abstain from work; but because no one can live without food, let them devote themselves to the work of laboring, so that living according to their own discretion, they may be able to find favor with God.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) For we have heard that some among you walk disorderly, not working at all, but meddling in the affairs of others. And we urge such people to be quiet and to mind their own business, and to work with their own hands, so that they may walk properly and be in need of nothing. But those who desire to be idle and waste their time, they do so in order to find opportunities to enter the homes of the rich, walking in deceitfulness and carefully observing the words and actions of others, knowing what they want to hear, so that they may be gladly received and sought after. This behavior is greatly contrary to the teachings of the Lord; for their god is their appetite, and they diligently provide for their necessary but filthy desires.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) So we ask and encourage those who have this kind of life in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and earn their own food. In order to persuade them more easily, he urges them by invoking the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to obey what is beneficial for them.

(Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

(Verses 13, 14, 15.) But as for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey our word in this letter, take note of that person and have nothing to do with him, so that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. For this reason, he instructed each one to eat his own bread, so that no one would take advantage of the situation and show lack of kindness and compassion. Therefore, he immediately adds: But as for you, brothers, do not grow weary of doing good. For he does not come for reproach, who is compassionate and generous; but he who, although able to bear labor, wishes to spend his life in idleness. If his authority is not corrected by letters, this person should be noted, and it is commanded not to associate with him; so that he, who is avoided by everyone, may subject himself to the teachings of the Apostle. However, this is to be done without anger and insults, so that he may be patiently avoided; yet, if circumstances require speaking with him, he should be reminded to allow himself to be corrected, and not to disregard the teachings of the Apostle any further: also, familiarity with him should not be maintained as long as he remains disobedient. For if one is provoked to anger by insults, they will become worse; for they will be incited to contention and will begin to defend their mistake, then later be ashamed to correct themselves; lest they seem to first excuse and then confess.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) But God himself, the God of peace, grant you peace always in every place. The Lord be with you all. Always, with a good wish, he accompanies them, like dearest children, always desiring to remain in peace with them, which is the guide to eternal life. For the Lord has promised to be with those who are peaceable.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) The greeting is in my own hand—Paul’s. This is my signature in every letter; this is how I write.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. This greeting is written by the hand of the Apostle, wishing that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with them. Amen.

Commentary on 2 Timothy

On the Second Epistle of Saint Paul to Timothy.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1, 2.) • (Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25, 26.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1-5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 9-12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20, 21.)

Prologue

He writes another letter to Timothy, to urge him about ecclesiastical discipline and what the hope of the promise is, and to provoke him to martyrdom by his own example; and because it will happen that some will turn away from sound doctrine, because it seems harsh to them, and turn to fables, that is, to human inventions.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, his beloved son. For this reason, he is called an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in order to teach the extent and importance of the promise that exists in the future through faith in Christ; so that through his preaching, he may bring about the growth of discipleship in the salvation of the Lord. For they are suitable servants who by their perseverance and faithfulness enhance the work of their masters. He writes this to his beloved son so that he may become an imitator of this matter, passing on the same things to others, so that through a succession of translators he may be a competent teacher, through whom the affirmed truth may gain many to the promised life. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. He desires this grace from the Father in mercy, that it may be present to him, and from Christ Jesus our Lord, because God bestows his grace through Christ, so that there may be one grace from both.

(Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

(Verses 3, 4, 5.) I give thanks to my God, whom I serve with a clear conscience as my ancestors did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers day and night, longing to see you, as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. Because I am reminded of your good qualities, I give thanks to God, who was also mindful of Timothy, a remarkable man, and who has given us this gift from God; for it is not undeserved, as he thinks of good men. And because the same God is the God of the Christians as he was of the Jews, he testifies that he gives thanks to God, to whom his ancestors served. For when his ancestors hoped for what he began to preach, their faith was united. And because he succeeded in the service of his parents, and because he was still with them when they served God, he rightly says: To whom I serve as my ancestors did. How? In a pure conscience, he says; for he once persecuted the Church, but he did so out of love for God, not out of ill will. And in a similar way it is written in the letter to the Hebrews that Levi, who received tithes, also gave tithes to Melchizedek; for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. So here, he declares that he served God through his ancestors, just as Levi is said to have offered tithes through his ancestor. For Levi is the father of Jacob, the grandfather of Isaac, and the great-grandfather of Abraham. Therefore, he professes his great memory of Timothy and how he eagerly desires to see him again, being reminded of the tears that Timothy shed out of love when the Apostle was departing from him. Therefore, he desires his lover not undeservedly so that he may be filled with joy from shared happiness, for the sake of sincere faith, which signifies both in his way and in his mother, certainly and most certainly. Therefore, every affection here is because of faith, which was inviolate in them.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7) For this reason, I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of self-control. Therefore, he indicates that he remembers the sincerity of his parents' faith, in order to strengthen him. For who, upon hearing the praise of those in whom he himself participates, would not grow, adding courage to such virtues. Therefore, through the reception of the gift of grace accepted by the ordination of the priesthood, it rejuvenates itself, comforting its mind with the eagerness of the soul, rejoicing in itself, just as one rejoices in the newness of ordination. Finally, he adds: For God did not give us the spirit of fear, but of power. For a renewed man emerges from fear, receiving the spirit of joy because of justification; for every unjust person is in fear, not strong but weak: not in love but in hatred; not in the sobriety of the mind, but wounded by error. But if he lacks these, he will be unfaithful, weak, and undisciplined.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. It teaches us to have steadfastness and not to be afraid in professing our faith. For there is no reason to be ashamed of it, because even though Christ was seen in the flesh, He was also revealed as God in His deeds. Though He was crucified, He rose from the dead and appeared to many, and then, as He was being taken up to heaven, a cloud received Him (Acts 1:9). Therefore, it is not a cause of weakness, but of power; for where weakness is presumed, power is revealed. So, a foolish person who is proven to have conquered is said to be weakened. In this way, it does

not pertain to the Apostle to be ashamed since if he is said to be humiliated by pressures and beatings, on that account he confounds his detractors because he is seen to be wondrous in signs and miracles by his nod. So that it may be understood that he is not humiliated by weakness but by his will for a certain advancement in merits. Therefore, God allows his servants to be humiliated by the wicked so that He does not appear to unjustly give them rewards.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) But collaborate in the Gospel according to the power of God, who made us safe. For by the power of God death was conquered, so that we may be saved; according to this, it is fitting for us to partially repay the Redeemer. Since we cannot fully respond to all His benefits, let us faithfully and earnestly carry out His mission. And He called with His holy calling. A holy calling is when the chosen ones are elected to govern the holy people of God. And the elder is called holy, who is chosen as a leader of holiness. Not according to our merits. It is true; because if you were to investigate thoroughly, no man can be considered worthy to be a vicar of Christ; for all those he has chosen were sinners beforehand. Therefore, in comparison to others, these have been found worthy: but in reality, they are all unworthy. But according to His purpose, and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. Since by His own good pleasure God decreed long ago to save sinners (for God foreknew what would happen in man before He created him and sinned), He determined how they would be restored, at what time, by whom, and by what means they could be saved, so that it might not seem that this gift is granted by the merit of those who are saved or by those through whom they are called, but rather by the grace of God through faith in Christ.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) Now indeed, revealed through the illumination of the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. The gift of God, which was hidden in mystery before the ages, is testified by the incarnation and coming of Christ, when people began to receive the forgiveness of sins.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) He indeed destroyed death, but he illuminated life with eternity through the Gospel, in which I am placed as a preacher, and apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles. In what way Christ saved his people, he showed by saying that he destroyed death, which was hostile to man, so that it could not rise from the underworld: only then did he illuminate life with eternity, so that, rising from the dead, he could no longer die. For life is obscure, which is defined by time, while it is asleep, while it is ignorant, while it is poorly conducted. And how life is illuminated, he shows; because through the Gospel eternal life is given to believers, preached by the teacher of the nations.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) For this reason, I suffer these things. While proclaiming the gift of God, he endures the devil as an enemy; to awaken pressures to him, because he delivers the people from his jaws. But I am not ashamed. In this, he is secure, because through tribulations there is a great promised reward, he is not put to shame, but he boasts in pressures. For I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that day. This is what he

says, with what hope and confidence of the magnificence of the Savior he is secure; because what is entrusted to him, is safe. But what does he commend to them, if not their salvation? So that he, enduring it for them, may find salvation with them when he begins to judge; so that, punishing the unbelievers, he may declare them worthy of eternal life.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verses 13, 14.) Having the form of sound words, which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good that has been entrusted to you through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. He refers to his commandments and works as the form of sound doctrine, which he commands us to follow, so that we may keep them with the help of the Holy Spirit.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Vers. 15, 16.) For you know this, that all those in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. These ones he mentions were full of deceit; they pretended to be friends of the Apostle in order to learn from him, so that they could then slander him or cause trouble through others. But after they saw that they had been exposed, they turned away from him. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus; for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. This double kind of refreshment is to be understood: because he refreshed him both in the necessity of imprisonment with his own solace, and supplied whatever was needed to him or to those who were in need. For he was not ashamed to approach and seek the man placed in custody, in hope of those things which were promised; for those whom he mentions above, because they were ashamed of the cross of Christ, deserted the Apostle in his time of need.

(Vers. 17, 18.) (Verse 17, 18.) But when I was in Rome, he diligently sought me out and found me. May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day. When the Apostle came to Rome, he was guarded by soldiers after appealing to Caesar; then Onesiphorus, out of love and with great effort, sought him out. The Apostle found his visitation so welcome that he commended him to the Lord, that he may find mercy from the Lord on the day of judgment; just as he sought out the Apostle, may he also find mercy when seeking it from the judge. For he prays that the Lord, the Father of heaven and earth, may find favor with the Lord of the human race, namely the Son. This is similar to what is said in Genesis: And the Lord rained sulfur and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah from God out of heaven (Gen. XIX, 24). But you know better than anyone how much he served me in Ephesus. Because some people are accustomed to serving individuals rather than causes, wanting to please those in power, the Apostle Onesiphorus shows his general goodness, so that he does not seem to have presented himself to someone when he served the Apostle; it is well known that he was magnanimous to all.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) Therefore, my son, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and in the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses. Entrust these things to faithful men, who will be capable of teaching others. He commands that this person be steadfast and strong in teaching the grace of God, which has been given in Christ Jesus; and not only in grace,

but also in the mysteries that pertain to Christ. He wants the secrets to be handed down to faithful and worthy individuals who are able to teach others, not indiscriminately to common and negligent people; for a teacher must be chosen with great care.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Verse 3, 4.) Work as a good soldier of Christ Jesus; for no one who serves as a soldier of God entangles himself with worldly affairs; in order to please the one to whom he has proven himself. It is clear what it says: that no one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24); worldly affairs must necessarily serve greed, and unless they have lied, they cannot be completed. Therefore, it is a small sin. However, Ecclesiasticus proves himself to God so that devoted to Him, he fulfills the duty he has promised, diligent in spiritual matters, detached from worldly business; for it is not fitting for one to have a dual profession.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Even if someone competes, they are not crowned unless they have competed legitimately. God wants His soldier to be so well-trained in God's works or appointed duty that they can reach the merit of glory: fully attentive in Divine worship, spurning worldly things, diligent in heavenly matters; for it is in this way that they prove themselves, so that, while laboring here, they may be rewarded in heaven.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) It is necessary for the farmer working the land to first receive the fruits. Understand what I say; the Lord will give you understanding in all things. Such great self-restraint Timothy had, that he even restrained himself from lawful things; for this is what is meant, because he refrained from participating in the treasury, when the Lord decreed that those who proclaim the Gospel should live by the Gospel (I Cor. IX, 14). Therefore, the Apostle commands that he who is the first should take this, and then distribute to the others.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Ver. 8, 9.) Remember that Christ Jesus has risen from the dead, descended from David's seed according to my Gospel, in which I labor even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not bound. For there were many who would become children of the devil and deny the incarnation of the Son of God. Therefore, he mentions this, because they deceitfully strive to assert this under the name of the apostles. He adds, according to my Gospel, to exclude false conversations of evil intent. For it is not necessary to believe heretics more than the apostles themselves, who testify concerning their own preaching, which he complains of doing with labor. He was under pressure and in prisons because he offended both Jews and Gentiles by preaching incredible things, as it seemed to them. He angered the Jews because he taught that the Law should cease, and he made enemies of the Gentiles because he preached about one God in Christ. Therefore, they treated him like a criminal, binding and imprisoning him, hoping that he could be silenced, unaware that the word of God cannot be bound. Finally, often closed, he made not a loss but a profit; for he did not lack someone to preach to in prison, so that he could feed with the word of God those whom he could not freely invite to faith.

(Vers. 10.)

Therefore, I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. In order to save the predestined men to life by his preaching, he was subjected to hardships, knowing that he would achieve the desired salvation of those people.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) Faithful saying; for if we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign with Him. This signifies that we can attain immortality and the glory of Christ if we remain in the form of baptism, where all sins die; so that we may flee all old vices and crimes, and appear dead to sin, following the footsteps of the author. And if it is added to the case that we also endure tribulations and hardships for the sake of the Lord, by enduring these, we shall reign with Him; for it is worthy that the one who suffers reproaches and death for Him shall appear glorious in His kingdom. If we deny, he will also deny us. It is true, because if we have not confessed him before men, then he will also say to us in that necessity of the future judgment: 'I do not know you' (Matthew 25:12). This is the meaning of punishment.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) If we do not believe, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. No one can take away from the Lord what He has. For who is stronger than He, by whom all things have come into being? Nor can anything be added to the perfect; for it does not benefit Him who believes in Him, just as it takes nothing away from Him who does not believe in Him. Therefore, whatever is done, pertains to our advantage, so that we may not remain in ignorance. For He is not strengthened by us, since He is strong in Himself and with Himself.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) Remind them of these things, solemnly urging them before the Lord not to fight about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. Warn against quarreling, but give instructions with godly fear and awe, for quarreling can breed even more doubts in those who are already wavering. It is common for opposing arguments to be put forth in a dispute in order to stir up the minds of those who are just beginning.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Take diligent care of yourself, so that you may present yourself as approved to God, a worker who is not ashamed, correctly handling the word of truth. For some may say that contention is helpful to the listeners, but the Apostle, knowing that it is more harmful, commands that each person should take care to make themselves approved, by rejecting contention and calling those who strive with arguments as shameless. For it is necessary that contention forces out something, indeed many things that are said against conscience; so that inwardly in the mind it is lost, but outwardly it departs as the victor. For no one willingly allows themselves to be conquered, although they know the truths that they hear. But they behave well and with a clear conscience when they speak to those who are willing and peaceful. Therefore, the conversation between servants of God should be a comparison, not an argument.

(Vers. 16, 17.)

(Verse 16, 17.) However, avoid profane novelties of words; for they greatly contribute to emptiness, and their speech spreads like cancer. This same thing continues, that contentions be avoided; for it is not fitting for men of one faith to have contention, but in conversation let them suffer one another, and let them agree with good words: but if anything seems improbable, let it be dissimulated with peace. For adversaries and dissenters often provoke one another, from whom one is catholic, and the other profane. Therefore, this is a Catholic (person) to whom the Apostle commands to reject and avoid empty tales: they must be quiet, so that they may always speak from conscience and not allow themselves to be exposed to impious words. For they give some people an opportunity to grow worse; for there are not lacking those who, hearing profane things, conceive evil thoughts: therefore, contention is harmful.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Among these are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened and they have overthrown the faith of some. Now he warns to avoid their contentions, and he reveals their names, whom he also designates as profane and impious, straying from the truth. For they were denying what is clearly a cornerstone of Christianity, that they believe they will rise from the dead in the future. However, as we are taught in other Scriptures, they were saying that the resurrection took place in the past, denying the very faith they had initially embraced in the beginning.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) However, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal: the Lord knows those who are His, and let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. The foundation of God is faith, which contains what God has promised, a faith that cannot be broken by the comments of the faithless and heretics; for even though they deny the future things that we believe, God will still fulfill what we believe, according to His promise. Therefore, the sign of God's promise is our faith, which confirms the words of God. On the day of judgment, God will recognize those who have his sign, while opposing the wickedness of the faithless and heretical, which thinks to weaken the promise of God; for nothing is as unjust as going against the faithfulness of God. And so, as it was said by Moses, Dathan, Abiram, and Korah, when they presumed to offer sacrifices against God's commandment (Numbers 16:35): 'The Lord knows who are his.' With these words, he showed what destruction would await those who perverted the word of God.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) But in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay: and some indeed for honor, but some for dishonor. By saying this, he indicated that there are different types of people in the Church: some good and noble men, whom he wants to be understood as being represented by gold; some who are good but not as noble, whom he designates as silver; and others who are not good, whom he refers to as wood and clay vessels. I think this is clear to everyone, for the frequent preaching of the Apostle admonishing the Corinthians confirms this in the Church. But now in our Church it is openly declared, and in the temple of Jerusalem, in which there was a type of the Church, it is approved by public readings. For there were Sadducees there, from whose root came Hymenaeus and Philetus: of whose corrupt opinion when the Apostle had spoken, he immediately added this, that it is not remarkable

in the Church for there to be men who disagree. For even in the Church of the Corinthians, of which I have spoken, there were some who disagreed and denied the resurrection. However, Novatianus explains this in a different way, that the large house represents the whole world, which has a diversity of people; just as the Apostle used the example of a rich and opulent house, which, although it may be abundant, still has wooden and earthen vessels: in the same way, the Church, although it is called holy, still has sinful and corrupt individuals, as I mentioned above. He shows those deserving of contempt, not however to perish, but to be cleansed by fire; because they are necessary to the house in some way. But Novatian, being lifted up with pride, in order to defend the truth and holiness of his own Church, decided that this should be understood in such a way, as if the Church is in his own hands, and that he has all purified, on account of those causes by which he accuses us innocent ones. But why was it necessary to say something about the world in this place, or why did he assert that the world signifies a great house? For the Lord says to the apostles: 'You are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world' (John 15:19). How then are those who are denied to be of the world meant to be enclosed within the world? And the same apostle says: 'For what have I to do to judge them also that are outside?' (1 Corinthians 5:12). For in one house all are under one name; for all are considered under the name of their one Lord. But the world contains men of different professions, so that they claim to have different gods and lords. Therefore, it does not mean a great house, but the Church, in which all are under the name of one Lord.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Therefore, if someone cleanses themselves from these, they will be a vessel sanctified for honor, useful to the Lord, prepared for every good work. Now another heresy is refuted by its own deception, which asserts that certain souls are inherently evil and cannot be compelled to do good; for here it is stated that the wicked can be transformed into good, and the impure can be purified. Hymenaeus and Philetus could have cleansed their understanding if they had wanted to; they could have become vessels sanctified, prepared for honor.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) However, flee youthful desires. Youthful desires are harmful; for they are worldly pleasures, which are enslaved to all kinds of allurements; and by this they must be avoided by a servant of God. Rather, pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart. These are the things that must be pursued, which seem deviant and harsh to a youthful age. For whoever chooses righteousness does nothing contrary to it; and whoever loves faith, keeps commandments; but whoever follows love is humble towards all; and as for the guardian of peace, they provoke no-one to dispute.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) But avoid foolish and uninstructive questions, knowing that they breed quarrels. Foolish questions are from unbelievers and heretics. In the case of unbelievers, they compel modest people to argue; for their impiety is marked by excessive contradiction, and they become angry and say something against their superior. Some heretics pretend to be patient (although they cannot tolerate anything harsh from a Catholic) in order to present their perverse arguments; therefore, these should be ignored.

(Vers. 24, 25, 26.)

(Verse 24, 25, 26.) However, it is not fitting for a servant of the Lord to argue, but rather to be gentle towards everyone, teachable, patient, modest, correcting those who hold differing opinions. If God should grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, so that they may escape the snares of the devil, from whom they are held captive at his will. These things require no interpretation; they are clear. However, the value of modesty has been demonstrated; for if it is pleasing to some heretics because they appear humble, how much more praiseworthy and beneficial will it be in a Catholic, if he is gentle, in whom both sound judgment and gravity are evident and worthy of imitation!

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1-5.)

(Versions 1-5) But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, without self-control, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, headstrong, arrogant, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away. This is a prophecy of the holy Apostle, in which he foresaw the great evils that would come from heretics and Jews; for in these things, all those that are hostile to the faith are indicated. For the Apostle himself said: For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?(I Cor. V 12). For those who think badly of God and do not fear what pertains to His injury, how can they be benevolent in human conversation? Therefore he said: Having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: have thou nothing to do with men of such sort. For they are among them who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers desires: Ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(vv. 6, 7) For out of these are they who creep into houses and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Although this applies to all heretics, that they enter into houses and deceive men through cunning and deceitful words, just as the devil deceived Adam through Eve, it particularly applies to the Manichaeans. For there are none so importunate, so deceitful, so crafty, as those themselves who are known to worship one thing and profess another; to conduct themselves one way in private and claim something different in public. For they defend sanctimony, and with the support of their own laws, live shamefully. They praise mercy, while being found unjust amongst themselves. They assert that the world must be scorned, yet always proceed with meticulousness; boastfully proclaiming their dedication to fasting, though they all appear to be well-fed; the only thing they are able to hide with certainty is their pale complexion, in order to deceive. Therefore, the Apostle especially prophesied about those who are known not to have existed during the time of the apostles, just like the Arians; for Emperor Diocletian, in his constitution, designates this as a filthy and impure heresy, which recently, he says, emerged from Persia (See Collection of Mosaic and Roman Laws). These [heretics] find women who, out of vanity, desire to hear something new and through these [desires] they are pleased; they persuade them of disgusting and unlawful things;

for they are eager to learn, although they lack judgment for proving [the truth]. This is to always be learning and not to have knowledge of the truth.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Ver. 8, 9.) But as Jannes and Mambres resisted Moses, so these also resist the truth, men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest to all men, as theirs also was. This example is from the apocrypha (Exod. VII, 1 et seq.); for Jannes and Mambres were brothers who were magicians or sorcerers of the Egyptians, and by the power of their magic they falsely thought they could resist the miracles of God that were performed through Moses. But when the virtue of Moses grew in his works, they became humble and confessed with sorrow the God who worked in Moses' wounds. Therefore, in the same way, he says that these people will no longer make progress in the wickedness of their assertion; for their lack of skill will be made clear and their deception. And though unwillingly, they will confess their lack of skill in the end.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Verses 10, 11.) But you have followed my teaching, my conduct, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, my persecutions, my sufferings. They want to imitate the things that he enumerates; for these things will lead not to repentance, but to joy in the end.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verses 12, 13.) These are the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Therefore, he recounts what he has suffered, to show the help of God, by which he defends and protects his faithful servants from the audacity of Satan, to make them secure and upright, so that they do not fear what may be inflicted by the unfaithful, but in persecution they may be cheerful, knowing that all who live rightly in Christ are hated even by their own bodies. But evil men, on the other hand, make progress for the worse, while they see many giving their assent to them, so that they lead others into error. For while they are known to be evil and deceivers, and nevertheless to flourish and prosper in the world, they attract certain individuals, in order that they may become imitators of them, not only to be punished for their own errors, but also for those of others, whom they ruin by their example.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Verse 14, 15.) But you, continue in what you have learned and have been entrusted with, knowing from whom you learned it, and because from childhood you have known the sacred writings, which can make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. It is highly beneficial to possess knowledge of the Old Testament; for it is referring to the sacred writings themselves, which allude to the person of Christ and declare his incarnation for the redemption of mankind. He encourages him to advance in these matters; for this antiquity is the strength of novelty, knowing that the authority is firm from whom he learned; for he saw signs and miracles performed by him, before which every conversation becomes silent.

(Vers. 16, 17.)

(Verse 16, 17.) All Scripture is divinely inspired and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be fully capable and equipped for every good work. It is clear that all Scripture, whose author is shown to be God, is useful. It is given for this purpose, so that it may benefit the unlearned and restore the disfigured, attracting the wicked to righteousness, so that the person of God may be complete in every good work. For in the new man progressing step by step, God establishes that person.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2) I testify before God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, by his coming and his kingdom; preach the word, be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. He strongly commands that the gift of God be proclaimed diligently, so that with the witness of God the Father and Christ his Son, he may admonish to take care of this, and to insist on it; so that through constant preaching and frequent admonition, he may urge them towards better progress; and he encourages that this should be done without bitterness, so that those being argued with may agree more easily.

(Verse 3, 4) For there will come a time when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap up teachers for themselves, itching in their ears, and they will turn their hearing away from the truth and turn to fables. And this is similar to the prophecy of the holy Apostle, who, being aware of future events, urges us to be diligent in teaching; so that, being molded in faith and good works, skilled in sound discipline, we may remain strong; so that in the last times, when some have begun to turn from truth to error, they may persevere immovably. For those who are willing to be taught for the sake of their desires, he predicts that tales will be forthcoming; so that they turn to reliable and truthful teachers who teach them what they willingly listen to; because the truth will seem harsh to them, so that they abandon their own teachings and indulge in fables. For they do not want their evil deeds to be exposed: therefore, they desire teachers who cater to their morals; for their ears itch to hear fables of vanities composed under the name of doctrine, which they will take pleasure in. What is unique to no one else as it is to the Manichaeans, who have some different explanations, inflated with fancy names; even though they are trivial things and some delusions.

(Vers. 5, 6.) But you, be sober, endure all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry; for I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. He reminds and exhorts him to be watchful in ecclesiastical discipline, to act manfully, to explain the Scriptures, so that they may avoid empty fables, being prudent and well-informed. For the Apostle, knowing that his passion is imminent, wants to leave an example of godly conduct and sound doctrine in holy Timothy, so that through a translator suitable teachers would never be lacking, yet he calls his passion a pouring out; for he is offered to God, who suffers for his righteousness.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. He mentions that he has preserved all things that were beneficial and prosperous for himself and

others; for he not only showed his form in words, but also in deeds to those who listened; in order to be a faithful steward of the preaching of truth to his author, and struggling against the rulers and authorities of the world with every care and skill, to leave an example of how they could be overcome; so that the uncorrupted doctrine and the legitimate struggle of the combat would make them worthy of being crowned; for the righteous God will give the greatest rewards to those who love him and wait for his Son from heaven.

(Vers. 9-12.)

(Vers. 9-12.) Be diligent to come to me as soon as possible; for Demas has forsaken me, loving this present world, and has departed to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Luke alone is with me. Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. But I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. While it is certain that all the instruction of an ecclesiastical man is contained in the epistle, nevertheless, because of his great love, he desires his presence. However, he bears witness to Mark, because he remembers his past labors.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) Bring with you the cloak that I left in Troas with Carpus, as well as the books, especially the parchments. The apostle was a Jewish by birth and had nothing that was foreign to him. So why did he have a cloak? Well, because he was from Tarsus, and it is known that those from Tarsus were admitted into Roman society, so they were called Roman citizens. Therefore, it was necessary for them to have both a toga and a senate house where they could gather together wearing their togas, just like the Romans. For whoever at that time had met the Romans with gifts, they were granted perpetual immunity and were called Roman citizens and their brothers, according to the same apostle as a witness. Therefore, it is possible for him to have his father's cloak, if he had completely given himself to the Law.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Ver. 14, 15.) Alexander the coppersmith showed me many evils: the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Avoid him as well; for he strongly opposed our words. This Alexander and the aforementioned Demas were colleagues. They were with the Apostle before, pretending to be his friends. But because they are proven deceitful with time, both of them withdrew from him. However, this coppersmith, who was bolder in his evil deeds, departed from him in such a way that he even became an adversary to his words. Therefore, the one who dared to contradict the Apostle, not without reason, advises avoiding him, leaving him to the judgment of God.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) In my first defense, no one stood by me; on the contrary, all deserted me. May it not be charged against them. He declares that the sufferings and tribulations inflicted upon him are his defense; for suffering is the life of Christians, and persecution is their defense. The suffering inflicted on him defends him on the Day of Judgment, rendering the guilty parties. Therefore, in the very beginning of the inflicted suffering, he complains of being abandoned; and because he knows this to be a common circumstance, he does not want it to be charged against them. For even the disciples deserted the Lord when he was apprehended by the Jews, as it is written in the prophet: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered' (Zechariah 13:7).

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished and all the Gentiles might hear. Therefore, our Lord declares that He was fortified and increased in power by the help of God, to fulfill the proclamation among all the Gentiles. For this reason, He pardons those from whom He was abandoned in times of trouble, so that He may be well-received by God and not seek vengeance. It is for this reason that He believes Himself to be further aided by God, for He was abandoned by men.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) And I was delivered from the mouth of the lion. The Lord will deliver me from all evil deeds and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever, amen. Similarly, Peter, his co-apostle, says: Because our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). But since the devil did not find an opportunity to deceive the Apostle, he stirred up persecution and punishment against him through his followers; so that, though he may not be taken from this life as a sinner or as a righteous man, he would not encourage many to have faith. And when it was nearly fulfilled, the Apostle was providentially delivered by God, he insults him, testifying that he is weak because he was snatched from his mouth; because what he desired, he could not fulfill. Therefore, he congratulates himself for being snatched from death by the help of God, and he is so confident in God's providence that he believes he will be freed from future temptations: and not only freed at present, but also saved on the day of judgment, and reigning with the Lord Christ in eternal ages.

(Vers. 19, 20, 21.)

(Verse 19, 20, 21.) Greet Priscilla, Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus remained in Corinth, but I left Trophimus sick in Miletus. Be diligent to come before winter. Aquila and Priscilla are here, with whom I stayed and worked with my hands (Acts 18:3). Onesiphorus is here, who is mentioned in the second letter (2 Timothy 1:16). But why is it that, while the Apostle who raised the dead was present, Trophimus became sick? But the signs were done for the unbelievers: and because merit is placed by God for various reasons; so whether in tribulation or in sickness, he who gives thanks to God does not seek support from the opposing side in order to advance in merits with God. But he warned him to come to him in autumn because of the rains and the cold. Eubulus and Pudens, Linus and Claudia, and all the brothers greet you. The usual custom has been observed with the completion of the letter, the greeting of the brothers.

Lord Jesus Christ with your spirit. This is the signature of the Apostles, which he says is a sign in every epistle. And because the Son of God is also the Son of Man, and he is called Jesus and Christ, so that both the human and the divine are signified, he is called by two names. However, with each name, the dignity is designated, for which the names are given.

Chapter 7

Commentary on Colossians

In the Letter of the Blessed Paul to the Colossians.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1, 2, 3.) • (Vers. 4, 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12, 13.)

• (Vers 14.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.) • (Vers. 27, 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14, 15.) • (Vers. 16, 17.) • (Vers. 18, 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8-11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24, 25.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.) • (Vers. 2, 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.) • (Vers. 7, 8, 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

Prologue

The pseudo-Apostles of the Colossians were striving to overturn, so that after the preaching of Epaphras or Archippus they would entangle the simplicity of their minds with philosophical discussions: lest they despise the principles of the elements, by which human life is governed as if by a rudder. Therefore the Apostle exhorts and warns them in his letter not to consider any hope other than Christ, and not to be deceived.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

(Verse 1, 2, 3.) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. The beginning of the letter follows the usual custom, in which he continues to address the saints and faithful brothers, expressing his desire for the grace of God to abide with them through Christ.

(Vers. 4, 5, 6.)

(Verse 4, 5, 6.) We give thanks to God and to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying for you, having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth. Then, because of the love they had for the saints, they believed that their hope in God was strong, and that God would reward those who believed and loved one another, according to Christ, whose name has reached all the nations, so that they may multiply in their faith.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Ver. 7, 8.) And it is fruitful and growing, as it is also in you, since the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth, as you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ for you, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit. Following the example of the other Gentile churches, you continue to grow and produce vital fruit with joyful speech. So that from the grace they have received from God, they may increase both in number and in deed, adding to their faith and making them brothers and sisters in Christ. For many were attracted by the example of those good works, as attested by Epaphras, who served them as Christ's grace in place of an apostle, which they immediately embraced like a spiritual drink in the love of the Lord, which is not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Ver. 9, 10.) Therefore, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. The Apostle, hearing their devoted and ready willingness in the faith of Christ, prays for them, that with a more inclined knowledge of God's will, they may fulfill devotion with reasonable works, which they had learned from the heard faith of Christ, so that their faithful dedication and strength of faith, while producing something without consultation and without skill, may not lose the fruit of their labor. For this is eagerly accepted, because it is done with a devoted and wise mind.

(Vers. 11, 12, 13.)

(Vers. 11, 12, 13.) Growing and increasing in the knowledge of God, taking strength in every virtue according to the power of His glory, with all patience and longsuffering, giving thanks to God the Father, who has called you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light, who has delivered

us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son. May their works increase with knowledge, so that they may not be ignorant of the hope of their faith; for then they will be firm and steadfast, if they consider the things promised for the faith and the greatness of the glory of God's majesty in patience; so that they may endure with longsuffering the human race, which in its impiety not only neglects the Creator, but also persecutes those who love Him; so that they too may be patient, enduring insults and curses from unbelievers, or if they suffer oppression, awaiting the judgement of God without doubt, and rejoicing even more in the promised life with thanksgiving to God, who has deemed it worthy to call and lead the Gentiles into the promise of the Jews, which is eternal light, i.e., eternal life, everlasting truth. For we have been freed from the condition of darkness, that is, rescued from hell, in which we were held by the devil as well as by our own sin, through faith we have been transferred into the heavenly kingdom of the Son of God; so that God might show us the depth of His love for us, when He lifted us up from the depths of hell and brought us into heaven with His true Son. Now all believers, who are devoted with fixed minds, leaving the world, are led into heaven by the guidance of the Father's right hand angel, which was not granted before defeated death.

(Vers 14.)

(Verse 14) In whom we have redemption, and the forgiveness of sins. In the kingdom of His Son, God has transferred us, through whom He has redeemed and set free; for the forgiveness of sins sets free those who were once held captive by debts that they might not be held bound. For without the faith of Christ, no one has come forth from Hell; for one bound by sins cannot exit the gates of Tartarus. He is the invisible image of God. The invisible image of God cannot be visible, otherwise it is not an image; for what is invisible cannot be painted, nor can the visible see the invisible; for either it is a body that is seen, or a figure, or some formed substance that is brought forth by the eyes' glance, and yet the whole is still a body: but how can God, who is separate from all these things, have a visible image? But it is said in this way, so that the Son may be understood to be such as the Father is; so that because he is of him, and does not differ from him in the divinity of nature, he may be called his image and form; lest another god be believed by the unfaithful, even though this is contained in the name itself; for this reason, the true Son of God is called, so that it is believed to be of him. But because of a bad understanding, it is also added that he is called his image; so that when he appears, even though in human form, or certainly in fire, as to Moses (Exod. III, 2), it is understood that he is not the Father himself, but the Son: and by the fact that he is called his image, it is believed that he does not differ from him. Where he says to Philip: Philip, whoever sees me sees the Father also. How do you say: Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? (John 14:9). This is the unity and substance of the Father and the Son, that they are in each other; so that whoever sees the Son, sees the Father also. Now let us see how the Son was seen; so that we may understand in what way Philip, by seeing the Son, sees the Father also. Indeed, by their intellect they have seen the Son of divine works, not with physical eyes. The Son, who has accomplished these works, said that He is of the Father, in order to show the unity of power. He was also seen in a similar manner by Jacob, from which he received the name Israel, that is, a man who sees God (Gen. 32:28). For this reason, He is called the image of the invisible God, so that He Himself may be understood to be God, who is seen by the intellect. However, the Father has never appeared in any way, as it is stated in the Gospel: No one has ever seen God (John 1:18).

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16) The firstborn of all creatures. Before every creature, he testifies that the Son, begotten and not created, was born; so that his birth be distinguished from the creation of creatures: and to make this completely clear, he added: For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. Therefore, those things which were done by Him, are said to be done through Him, because He was born for this purpose, that He might create the creature: that is, to have made it in Him and through Him. For His birth does not profit Himself, but us; because He who was in these things had no need to be born. How then is the only Son of God the Father, how does He Himself know what things are uncreated of God the Father? For He was in God, who proceeded from God, so that He might be one God: and thus it happens, that there is neither any diminution of the Father, nor any progress of the Son, when He is born. And in order to clearly explain what and how great the power of the Son is, he shows what exists through him, namely Thrones, Dominions, and Principalities, and Powers; so that, therefore, it is believed that there is absolutely nothing less in him than in the Father.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) And he is before all. Before all he is; because he alone was born of God the Father, from the ungenerated substance of God. But by his power, which he has through generation from the Father, they subsisted; not that there is a sharing of substance with him, but they began to exist by the will of God the Father, with the Son acting. And all things consist in him. They consist in him, because without him they are nothing; for if they are not subject to him, they will go astray and become liable to destruction.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) And he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the preeminence. Christ is the head of the Church, if indeed all celestial and terrestrial beings have one mind, so that they may be the Church, which is of one faith. But if, lacking the head, they are cut off from the whole body, that is, from their Creator, they will be carried away by a certain insanity and vanity. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the preeminence. Since all things were created through him, through him they were also made subject to a certain negligence, to be reformed; lest his work be restored by another to the detriment of him; that just as he was born before all, so he would be the first again from the resurrection of the dead, having his former life restored; for he was born before all things from God, in order to create all things that did not exist. But again, he was born in the flesh from a virgin, in order to abolish the sin that had entered the world through the virgin Eve. Born, therefore, and dead, he rose again, so that he might recreate what he had first made, because they had been like dead through error, so that he might always be first and foremost in every life.

(Vers. 19.)

(V. 19) Because it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell. The fullness is in Him and remains; because He is always able to accomplish everything, so that nothing is excluded,

that cannot be achieved through Him; so that He might create, and reform, and raise up what has fallen, and give life to what is dead. Hence He says: As the Father has life in Himself, so He has given the Son to have life in Himself (John 5:26); and: As the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He wills. For the Father does not judge anyone, but has given all judgment to the Son (Ibid., 21, 22). What could be more just than that, unless that he who has done all these things through him should give judgment, so that all the fullness of divinity might dwell in him by virtue of what we have said, that he has all power in himself; that is, he is perfect God; for whoever does not have all these things is not God.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) And through him to reconcile all things to himself, making peace by the blood of his cross, whether things on earth or in heaven. This is what he mentioned above, that in order to restore all things that he had made, which had begun to diverge from one another in a certain error, and also from their author (for there is still error in the earthly heavens), he humbled him by becoming incarnate, so that being made man he might show and teach how those things which are in the heavens and on the earth could be reconciled to the Creator. In order to bring it to perfection, he allowed himself to be killed for the sake of mankind, so that those whom he had taught here on earth might not be held captive by the second death when they depart from here; so that his teaching might have the fruit of the first institution, and all things accomplished through him might live in him as in their author, just as Peter confesses in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 3:15).

(Vers. 21, 22.)

(Verses 21, 22.) And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind because of your evil behavior, but now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death, to present you holy, unblemished, and blameless in his sight. This is the message of the gift of God's grace to the Gentiles, that he may show them how indebted they are, and indeed greatly, through their actions of gratitude toward God; for they were once enemies of his plans, which he had determined to carry out through his servant Moses, whose teachings and authority they did not accept, devoted instead to their idols and their wicked deeds; for they worshipped the works of their own hands. But the mercy and providence of God sought them out, so that they might obtain the free grace of God and return to him with a clean conscience; that on the day of judgment, when no trace of their old errors would be found in them, they may join themselves to their Creator, who, in order to benefit the human race, became incarnate as a man to conquer death with his own body.

(Vers. 23, 24.)

(Verse 23, 24.) Indeed, if you persevere in the faith that you have been founded on, steadfast and immovable from the hope of the Gospel that you have heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven. Of which I, Paul, have become a minister, who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, which is the Church. He confesses that he rejoices in the tribulations he suffered, because he sees his progress in the faith of the believers. For tribulation is not empty when it is endured for the one for whom it is endured, it acquires for life. The sufferings that Christ speaks of are inflicted, of which they certainly pursue the teaching; so that he may burden the treacherous with the

credulity of their impiety, and may proclaim the charity of God to the faithful, whose Son now suffers injuries for us. Therefore, he now wants to be understood for what reason he writes to them, when he says: If indeed you persevere in the founded faith, so that they may know then that the passion of Christ would benefit them if they were to remain in the received faith. Therefore, the magnitude and infinite power of Christ have been declared from the beginning, to teach that our hope should be placed in him alone. For all things belong to him, and nothing can live without him, neither in heaven nor on earth. For he existed before all things, and all things consist in him, for he holds the highest position in all things. So if anyone thinks they owe devotion to any elements, angels, or Powers, let them know that they are mistaken. For here indeed is the Son of God, the head of all principality and power, whose Gospel was preached throughout the whole world, beginning from Moses, who said to the Jews: 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. You shall hear Him in all things whatever He says to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people' (Deut. XVIII, 15, 16). Therefore the Lord said to the Jews: 'For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me' (John V, 46). Therefore, this one must be heard and esteemed, and no one should be valued against him; because he who holds the head, has the rest of the body subject. For he who humiliates himself to his subjects, is completely mistaken; because a body without a head is not capable of containing the whole being for life.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Verses 25, 26.) Of which I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

(Vers. 27, 28.)

(Vers. 27, 28.) Now it has been revealed to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. This is the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations, but is now revealed to His saints. For God wanted to make known to them the glorious riches of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is He whom we proclaim as we admonish and teach everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. This mystery was hidden for ages and generations, but is now revealed to His saints. For before the preaching of faith, the Gentiles were obligated to be circumcised if they desired to adhere to the Law. But now, by the mercy of God, they have been accepted as they are into the faith. This was viewed as unworthy by the Jews, that Christ, in whom the hope of the Jews resided, would also make the Gentiles partakers of his glory.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) Admonishing every man, and teaching in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily. Which he avers to be true wisdom, which is in the doctrine of the Lord, when Christ is

acknowledged. This the Apostle himself testifies that he carries out with great care; that, instructing every man in this wisdom, he may present him perfect to God in the understanding of Christ, that he may attain to the mystery of the nativity from God, and the nativity from Mary, and of all his celestial and terrestrial works. He speaks of waging battle against the treacherous, with the support of signs of virtue, so that through these the unfaithfulness may be subdued. For whoever has dared to contradict with a certain subtlety of diabolical cunning, will, corrected by shame, necessarily yield to virtue.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

(Verse 1, 2, 3.) For I want you to know how great a concern I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me in person. May their hearts be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance and understanding, and to know the mystery of God, which is Christ. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I am just as concerned for those whom I have not seen in person, as I am for those whom I have proclaimed to in person, to show that they are loved by me just as much, even though I have not seen them, and to nourish their hearts in love. I write this letter to urge them and to help them understand the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, so that they may recognize the riches of wisdom and knowledge in Him, and worship Him as God. Therefore, every mystery of the sacrament of God is in Christ. For He is the one in whom every creature will perish unless they have hope; so that all power may be in Him, and whoever knows Him may seem to have knowledge of all things that exist, and no other besides Him should be worshipped; for all powers have their strength from Him. For since He is the one, He can do all things: that is why He is called the head of all, so that through Him all may appear to subsist. Therefore, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are said to be hidden in him. For the understanding of all knowledge of the celestial and terrestrial creation must be in him, who is the head of all things, whether of angels, or of the sun, or of the moon, or of the stars, or of other things; all knowledge and skill is in their creator; so that whoever knows him, needs nothing more, neither wisdom nor virtue; for he has recognized him, in whom perfect virtue and perfect wisdom are. For whatever he thinks he finds elsewhere, he will find fully and abundantly in this. For what is wiser than Solomon? what is more prudent than Daniel? For this reason, God gave them wisdom above all others, to make known to unbelievers that he is the author of all wisdom. Finally, Nebuchadnezzar says to Daniel, marveling at his wisdom: Truly, your God is the living God, who reveals mysteries (Dan. II, 47). Indeed, it escapes every unbeliever that all wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ; because they do not read astrology in the Gospels, nor geometry in the Apostle, nor arithmetic or music in the prophets: which are despised by our people, because they do not pertain to salvation, but rather lead to error and distract from God; so that while they study these disputes of reasoning, they do not care for the well-being of their souls. For what wisdom is so true as to have known what is beneficial and to have disregarded what is harmful? For it is harmful; because it hinders the soul from taking care of itself. Therefore, it is not without reason that whoever has recognized Christ has found the treasure of wisdom and knowledge; for he has known what is useful to him.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verses 4, 5.) I say this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments. For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Where the Apostle says that his spirit was present there, so that they, having reverence for him, might abstain from such men. For if the spirit of the prophet Elisha saw the deceit of Gehazi, who went to Naaman the Syrian to receive under his name things which had not been commanded him, and Naaman having descended willingly gave him more than had been asked for (2 Kings 5:26), how much more could the Apostle see in spirit the things he spoke of! For there was greater grace in the apostles than in the prophets. And he says that he rejoices in their way of life in order to make them more ready in the tradition of the gospel; so that, knowing how to please God, they may become more steadfast, and through this, worthy to learn the meaning of the progress of their faith to the benefit of their usefulness.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Vers. 6, 7.) Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, overflowing with gratitude. He warns and exhorts them so that their devotion would not diminish, and they would not depart from the faith they had obtained and be swayed by false teachings, accepting Christ in a different way than they had learned. For many corruptors of faith were going around to deceive the innocent, deceitfully and with false pretenses proclaiming Christ, whom he warns to avoid with great caution; so that they may be stable and firm on the foundation of the Trinity, abounding in hope for the future and giving thanks for the mercy of God.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Vers. 8, 9.) See to it that no one deceives you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ; for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Philosophy here refers to earthly wisdom, by which those who desire to be esteemed wise in the world are often deceived. It is composed of arguments and subtleties of certain trivial matters, as if it has investigated physical reasons, with some things mixed in that are exhortations to a good life or indications, at times about measurements, as well as about numbers, and at times about the qualities and quantities of elements arranged in order. In whose discussions, whoever falls into them will hardly and rarely escape; for he is held by plausible and fabricated reasons, esteeming nothing as true except what is seen and understood in the basic elements. And because those things that exist in the present and are seen with the eyes appear pleasing and enjoyable; they deceive some, who think that the spiritual reason should be despised and ridiculed due to the despair of the future, assigning all power to the stars, subject to carnal reason; lest they believe that heavy things can be lifted up to the sky, or light things come down to the earth, or anything corporeal be generated without the mingling of substances, opposing the power and providence of God. For they know from reading the ancient Hebrew volumes in divine matters that many deeds were done by Moses which human reason does not comprehend. Likewise, in the new books, deeds done by the Lord or by the apostles are prohibited from being believed by the carnal understanding. Therefore, he calls this tradition or philosophy deceitful and empty because it is not ordered by the power of God but by

the weakness of human reasoning, which restricts the power of God within its own knowledge so as not to believe that He could do otherwise than what carnal reason comprehends. They assign diversity to each element of divinity for the sake of worship, to bind the minds of the ignorant so that they do not extend themselves toward the true God. Therefore, it warns against following this tradition; because it is a worshipper of the world, not of God, who is one: nor does it lead to Christ, but away from Christ, in whom the perfection of divinity resides. For everything that the Father has, He has given to the Son, since He begot Him in the fullness of divinity in bodily form; so that, since He is the head and His creation is the body, everything that is thought to be possible for a heavenly creature is believed to be fully present in Christ; so that no one should believe that anyone else should be worshiped. For whatever one thinks is great in something, they will find even more in it; because all things have it from him, just as the limbs have it from the head: but he himself is always full.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) And you are filled in him, who is the head of all Principality and Power. It signifies more to those who believe to be given, than can be comprehended in the elements; for the one who is in Christ is filled with an abundance of divinity, which the elements do not possess. Ultimately, in those who believe, the Holy Spirit dwells, which could not be granted to the elements; for it was unworthy and incongruous for the invisible to dwell in visible substance, and the incorporeal in those things which are sensible. So let them listen and come, their worshippers, and believe in Christ; that they may become greater than those whom they now worship.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verse 11, 12.) In whom also you have been circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands, by despoiling of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen again by the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him up from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, forgiving you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. When they were buried in baptism, they rose again through the faith of God, who they believe will raise them from the dead, following the example of Christ. For there the old man is put off, and the new man is put on: he dies to sin, that he may live to righteousness: he renounces the elements, that he may be united with Christ, holding the pledge of the future resurrection, as an example of the Savior, who rose from the dead. Therefore, they are exhorted to persevere in renouncing the pomp and deceit of Satan. He therefore advises the cultivation of the elements, so that he may distract people from God and make them willing participants in his apostasy. For he cannot promote his own agenda under his own name, for he abhors it even by the name itself; he attempts to fulfill his own will under the name of another.

(Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

(Verses 13, 14, 15.) And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him, forgiving us all our transgressions, having canceled the handwritten document that was against us, which was hostile to us, and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made

a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in him. He says that the Gentiles were dead: first, because they did not want to accept the law that was given as a testimony by the Creator and to condemn vices; then, because they were unworthy of life due to the impiety of their sins; therefore, he separated them from the Jews as if they were enemies of the one true God. But the Jews, living in the confession of one God, when Christ came, learned the mystery of God, which they had been expecting for their justification: that in Him, what had been taken away from them, because it is impossible to be without sin, they might receive forgiveness. Therefore, after addressing the cause of the Gentiles, he includes the Jews, saying: forgiving us all our sins; so that after presenting the particular, he would also present the general; since he has forgiven all sins to everyone. But because, as the Lord says: To whom more is forgiven, he must love more (Luke 7:43): therefore, he warns the Gentiles, that considering the causes of their own evil, and what grace they have received from God in Christ, they should be solicitous with complete devotion concerning His service, from which they have been liberate from the diverse punishment of death. How, therefore, did He forgive us all our sins? By canceling the document of debt, which stood against us. And what is it to cancel? He said, 'And He took it out of the way.' So therefore He canceled it, when He took it out of the way. But how did He take it out of the way? By nailing it to the cross. And nailing it to the cross, He said that this was to strip the principalities and powers publicly, and to triumph over them in Christ. These things, as they seem, are obscure, and therefore they need to be clarified with care. This is the protection of God, which the Apostle explains through the significance of various causes. For he mentions many things that were done, so that the human race might attain forgiveness; not only did he forgive us our own sins, but he also took away that sin which came from Adam's transgression (which he called the handwriting in decrees), which prevented us from rising from the dead; for if he had not also removed this, those who had received forgiveness, upon departing from here, would have been held captive there in the underworld. Moreover, all sins were allowed so that they would rise from the dead. For indeed, death comes from sin, and the resurrection of the dead is achieved by the removal of sin: which could not have happened unless sin had affixed itself to the cross. For while the Savior conquers sin by not sinning, which held humanity captive, He also is killed by Him who is innocent: thus, sin is crucified. For sin, once defeated, is said to be mortified, for the cross is not the death of the Savior but of sin. For the innocent who is killed, makes those who kill him guilty. But let us understand sin as referring to the rulers and powers, whose desire Adam, the first man, sinned with. This name should be referred to the authors, whose death he signified by stripping them of their possessions; for it is their death, because they were conquered by the Savior, while they were stripping away the souls which they held captive, they are killed. They became the cause of their own fate: for while they held power over these souls by their authority, because they had sinned, they themselves were found to be greater sinners, since they killed the One who had conquered them by not sinning. And thus they were justly stripped publicly, as he said, on the cross; which is openly triumphed over by God in Christ. For he is triumphed over who is openly conquered, and his spoils are made public; for he is shown to be prostrated before all, who insulted others. However, the decree that he speaks of is not what the pagans call fate; because they do not assert that it is contrary to everyone; for they say that some are happy because of it, others unhappy. For this decree was said to be contrary to all; for the opinion was adverse to all men.

(Vers. 16, 17.)

(Vers. 16, 17.) Therefore, let no one judge you in food, or in drink, or in regard to a festival, or a new moon, or sabbath day, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. For some Jews judge the faithful because they eat foods that are prohibited by Moses, even though God has made all things clean: but the unworthy Jews are forbidden to eat these things. They also often criticize us because we despise their religious festivals, or because we do not observe the beginning of the months, which they call the new moons. But what offends them the most is that we do not observe the Sabbath, but rather spend it in leisure and feasting with luxury: which is more offensive than pleasing. But all these things are the body of Christ, for they are the words of the elements by means of their effects. Hence it is from this that He says in the Gospel: For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day (Matthew 12:8); for through Him all things were given, which were so given by Moses that they might be shadows or figures of things to come, which, when the truth appeared, the figure ceased. For just as in the absence of the emperor his image has authority, but in his presence it has none; so these things were to be observed in their time before the advent of the Lord, but in His presence they lack authority. Does someone who is acting in place of the master, in his presence, have dominion? If the deputies of the deputies are deprived in the presence of their superiors, how much more should the slaves themselves be seen as being in obedience, with the master present!

(Vers. 18, 19.)

(Verse 18, 19.) Let no one deceive you, desiring in the humility of their mind, and by the superstition of angels, that which they see, falsely elevating themselves, being inflated by the thoughts of their flesh, and not holding onto that head, from which the whole body, by joints and connections, is supplied and grows in the increase of God. What was previously warned under the name of philosophy, now he teaches more openly to be observed by those who, studying earthly wisdom, assert that these things which are adjacent or apparent to the eyes should be worshiped, so that their souls, bound under the firmament, may not strive beyond the firmament towards the higher heavens to worship the God of all. The work of the enemy is such that he always seeks to keep humiliated souls on Earth, where he knows that he, who has been cast down from heaven, will always face the just judgment of God. He simulates religion, although it is the greatest sacrilege. For he inflates the movement of the stars, which he calls angels, not by divine authority, but by human superstition, which is useless and only leads to harm. They refuse to hold onto the faith of Christ, who is the creator and Lord of all. From him, indeed, all have their origin; for this reason, they are also called his body, if indeed they acknowledge him. For those turned to him are rebuilt, united by the faith he supplies through the Gospel, as if members of Christ's body in charity, so that they may contribute growth to God. For when they return to him whom they had abandoned through error, diminishing the abundance of his riches while denying that they are his, they contribute growth to God. Because good things are acquired from lost things. This is about the pagans: He again says about the Jews that they also serve under the elements, not the elements themselves.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) Therefore, if you have died with Christ from the elements of this world, why do you still, as if living in this world, subject yourselves to regulations? Everyone who is baptized in Christ dies

to the world; for he renounces all superstitions and worships solely the faith of Christ. For having removed what is added to natural righteousness, the discipline given by God remains, through which one lives for God through the hope that is in Christ; but he dies to those to whom he was subjected by error, denying them to be gods. And so it happens that through the enmity of renunciation, those who are dead to each other are called man and cultivators of the elements. For by saying 'the world', he signifies the error of the flesh; for everything that is visible is attributed to the flesh. Hence it is where even the Apostle John says: 'Do not love the world, nor the things that are in the world' (1 John 2:15); that is, neither the elements by which the world is composed, nor the errors that human tradition has invented, let us love: but only Christ, who died for us; that he might unite us with his body from the perished ones. Therefore, those who are buried with Christ are dead to the elements, so that they may not care about them; for they have learned to hold onto heavenly things, which can give eternal life. For these things do not give present things and hinder them from being apprehended in the future. But whoever doubts about some things after baptism, thinking that certain things from the past should be revered, shows himself to be living according to the elements, which he determines should be worshipped, or he hesitates to despise them; he will remain within the cycles of the world, separated from God; because, being clothed with the old man, he will not be able to pass through carnal things.

(Vers. 21, 22.)

(Vers. 21, 22.) Do not touch, do not handle, do not taste, do not touch those things which are all for destruction and corruption by misuse according to the commandments and teachings of men. It prohibits all kinds of hope in worldly things; because it is empty, not to worship, not to consent, not to think that what they promise is corrupted. For their use and cultivation generate destruction; because the commandments and teachings are not of God, but of men, in which there is vain hope: indeed, when human error goes against the Creator; prohibiting faith in the one God, it promotes the superstition of many gods.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) Those who have the appearance of wisdom with their simulation of religion, and with humility of mind, and severity towards the body, not in any honorable way for the satisfaction and indulgence of the flesh. They think they have the wisdom of reason because they apply the name of religion to human tradition, so that it may be called religion, even though it is sacrilegious; because what is against the author was invented with a sacrilegious mind. Therefore, they invent a name so that they could assert what is false as true; and they humble human minds on earth, so that they do not elevate themselves to heavenly things: or they worship earthly things and fall away from heavenly things, and they hinder the body, of which Christ is the head according to the formation of the first reason. For they could not be joined again to their head, weighed down as they were, so as to be restored to their honored state; but as if cut off from the first part of the body, they give themselves entirely to the world to satisfy the desires of the flesh. For the provision of carnal pleasure is a human tradition, which claims that it is enough to satisfy what providence has bestowed upon the flesh; for it seems to have the reason of wisdom according to the flesh, since all bodily birth is from the elements. And thus, they say it is not inappropriate to incline towards those under whose rule the human race is governed, in order to subject themselves to those things which are most evident in the world. And they believe that spiritual things should not

be sought, since it is only permitted to use these leaders, and for this reason they disregard the Creator.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) For if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. He asserts that those who think of heavenly things, where Christ's throne is, where God the Father handed over to his Son the right hand, so that he may reign and judge; for it is not appropriate for a judge to sit on the left. However, resurrection has two forms, so that first the soul may rise from the earth to heaven, and then, with the body received, may rise to meet Christ.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) Taste the things above, not the things upon the earth. It exhorts us to seek the dwelling places of the eternal heavenly beings: but all those things which are in and under the firmament must be disregarded. Whoever occupies themselves with these superstitions will suffer hindrance; for they will not be able to transcend these things to which they have inclined themselves, as to their masters.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. To the worldly sense, Christ appears dead, and his disciples, although it is clear that he lives with all of them. Therefore, the life of Christ and his followers is hidden from the fleshly and worldly perspective in God, outside of the world, in his heavenly kingdom, where they live.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) When Christ appears, your life will also appear with Him in glory. Our life is Christ, for we read in the Acts of the Apostles that He is the author of life, who is not believed to be the future judge by the unfaithful (Acts 3:15). But when He comes with heavenly power and is seen to be what was least believed, then even those who believed in Him will appear with Him; and all unfaithfulness will be made manifest, for He lives with His own in glory. This consolation engenders confidence in hope, so that we may follow Christ, disregarding everything and being secure about the future life.

(Vers. 5.)

(Vrs. 5.) Mortify your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. For all these sins taken together signify the body, as it were in the epistle to the Romans (Rom. VI, 6). And thus describing each sin separately, he calls them members; that after they have received and preserved the account of the Gospel from the fullness of the Savior, they may give attention to the good works of life, abstaining from all impurity and evil desire, so that they may not lose the fruit of divine knowledge. For it is greatly harmful to know the truth but to affirm it not with actions that follow. Hence it is where the Lord says among other things: But he who knows the will of his master and does not obey, shall be beaten with

many stripes (Luke 12:47). However, he likened greed to idolatry, so that he might demonstrate that nothing is more wicked than it. Under one name, he designated two most evil and impious kinds, which by all means must be avoided; for idolatry is first and serious crime. For what is so harmful and disastrous as to attribute the name of honor to the Creator of God with wood, stones, or other metals, when they themselves do not allow a servant to be called by the name of his master, whom nature does not subject to servitude but rather a certain condition? On the other hand, greed is a different crime, not separated by malice but distinct by name. Hence, he says to Timothy: For the love of money is the root of all evils (1 Timothy 6:10); for it is capable of all sins, in that it fulfills the desire of its greed, drinking and thirsting always. Therefore, it is not undeservedly that under one name it reveals both evils; for they are almost accomplished by one work: because just as idolatry strives to take away the glory from one God, so that it may not have that which is peculiar to Him, the name of divinity worthy of Him alone; so avarice extends itself in God, so that if it can, it usurps for itself His creature, whom God made common to all. Hence God says through the prophet; Mine is the gold, and Mine is the silver (Haggai II, 9). Therefore, both are enemies of God; for they both deny what is his.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming. The judgment of God is said to be coming because of the mentioned evils, so that it may be avenged upon those who, having despised God and His Law, preferred to follow forbidden things.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) In which you also once walked, when you lived in them. How much benefit the grace of God through Jesus Christ has bestowed on them, it does not remain silent; so that they may rejoice in having escaped the wrath that is about to come upon the unbelievers of the whole earth, and may present themselves in such a way that they can obey his commandments, from whom they have been liberated from the second death.

(Vers. 8-11.)

(Verse 8-11.) Now, however, put away all of you, anger and indignation of the mind, malice, blasphemy. Let no obscene speech come forth from your mouth. Do not lie to one another. Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator; where there is no Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian and Scythian, slave and free: but Christ is all and in all. Now he forbids these things which seem to be lesser sins, lest, perhaps, because he has commanded that greater sins are to be mortified, these may be admitted or may be considered as not dangerous and not to be avoided: at the same time, also, in order that having put off the old man, that is, seeing themselves both in word and in deed as having been unstained, and having been made new in Christ through the acknowledgment of truth, which once was hidden but now is made manifest through the new law to those who believe; so that they may become like the image of him who created them. This image is to be understood in the context of a good life, as it says to the Corinthians in the first letter: Just as we have borne the image of the one who is of the earth, so let us also bear the image of the one who is of heaven (1 Cor. 15:49). He is therefore the creator of man, who commands us to bear his image in holiness and good works, which come from the knowledge of

the Son of God. For no one can have a good and clean life, unless they have someone to whom they can show it, from whom they can expect either reward or praise. But in the sight of God, both praise and reward are hoped for; because God's justice does not allow the one who has conquered the vices of the flesh to be least crowned. In this recognition, therefore, no one is received as unworthy, as if they do not deserve to approach the faith of Christ; for all who approach become one, having been erased what they were, and written what they have begun to be; so that because they are of one faith, in that very thing they are of one merit, so that those whom faith unites cannot be distinguished, on account of which they are different in nature and race or condition. For indeed everything and in all these things Christ is; because all are his members, everything is Christ; so that while their confession is one of his hope in all things Christ: and thus everything is his body, so that their confession and nature agree. But this is a different image, which is said to be created from knowledge of the Savior, and a different image to which the first man was made. For this image is also in a woman, when she acknowledges him who created her, and obedient to his will abstains from a shameful life and perverse action; but that image is in the man alone, as it says in the first letter to the Corinthians: For man indeed ought not to cover his head, seeing that he is the image and glory of God (I Cor. XI, 7). But if the woman also did not cover her head, she too would be the image of God. But it was inconsistent that, while being subject to man, she could be said to be the image of God; for it is thus stated in Genesis: 'And God created man, he created him in the image of God' (Gen. I, 27); so that just as God is one, one man would be made from him: that just as everything comes from the one God, so all the human race would come from one man, over the face of the whole earth. Therefore, one made one who would have the image of his unity. And the very likeness of the mystery of the Father and the Son in man and woman; Yet he separated the Barbarian from the Scythian, not as a slave from a free person, in Christ, in whom all are one; but in the savagery of their customs and the cruelty of their nation. For he wanted these Barbarians to be understood as worse, before they believe, when the books of the Greeks proclaim their justice, which they followed naturally, led by nature; to such an extent that stealing is considered a great sin among them, because the Greeks, it is said, diligently and skillfully sought the paths of justice, which they naturally praise for having grasped. But how everything degenerates! Afterwards, they began to be more worthy of blame than they were previously worthy of praise. For after their women began to use the law of their husbands, whom they first asserted were called Amazons, subjecting all of Asia against nature; it so happened that even the men became rabid like dogs, savage, wild, uncivilized, more than barbarians, to such an extent transformed, that they became accustomed to eating human flesh. What is surprising is that even the Romans themselves were very different from what they are now. For even the use of wine, for the sake of modesty, was unknown to their women, just as now it is with water; such was the authority of their discipline, that it did not allow the vessel to do what it wanted.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Vers. 12, 13.) So, put on as chosen ones of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; just as Christ forgave you, so also should you do. He encourages them to do these things so that they may have gain, which brings merit before God. However, fear causes one to abstain from sins; for they fear that by doing evil, they will be subject to punishment.

But these things which she now advises to be done pertain to the advancement of merits; for they are of the will, not of necessity. Therefore, he who abstains from unlawful things has praise; but he who also restrains himself from lawful things has both praise and reward.

(Vers. 14, 15.)

(Vers. 14, 15.) Over all these things, however, have charity, which is the bond of unity. And let the peace of God rejoice in your hearts, in which you are also called in one body: and be grateful. But because charity is greater than all, it encourages us to strive for it more. For then all that he commanded to be observed above can be brought to the fruition of rewards, if, guided by charity, they walk the path of the law; for whoever does something out of love, operates with their whole mind. Hypocrisy and pretense are not in charity; therefore, John the Apostle says: Fear, he says, is not in love. For whoever fears is not perfect: Perfect love drives out fear (1 John 4:18); hence the Lord prefers to be loved rather than feared. This is indeed the love that encompasses unity, this is the love that makes all one body, this is the love that has true peace, which is guarded by a pure heart. For peace can be called peace, even without charity; for charity always brings peace with it.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. These things should always be meditated upon, which proclaim Christ: these things should be held in the heart, which continually give thanks to God the Father; so that a melodious voice may serve Him, a psalm may praise Him, a hymn may exalt Him. And let this be known only to Him, who sees the hidden thoughts, from whom both hope and reward are expected. He commanded it to be sung in their hearts; so that it would not be done for the favor of men, and lose its fruit.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. For it has been commanded that God be praised in the heart and thanks be given to Him; now He encourages that the name of the Lord Jesus be praised and exalted in all our conversation, both in word and in deed, so that when our words are without reproach and our deeds are good, the Lord Jesus, whose disciples are considered reprehensible by the world, may be magnified. For then we truly give thanks to God through him, if we keep the measure of his commandments.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) Women, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. The command for women to be subject to their husbands was given by God, among other things, saying to the woman: 'Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you' (Genesis 3:16). Therefore, according to custom and discipline, she should fear her husband as if he were her lord, since he was the one from whom she came into being.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Men, love your wives, and do not be bitter towards them. The strictness of male law softens, so that no one has excessive dominion over his wife: but one must consider her affection, because she is his partner; lest he humiliate her further and think of contrary things.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is pleasing to God. Nothing else can please God except what is just and pious. Then, indeed, children can have a propitious God, if they repay their parents with due honor, being obedient to them, easy in serving them, and difficult in disrespecting them, knowing that children should never provide against their parents.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, lest they become discouraged. Fathers are encouraged to be modest towards their children, so that they are not oppressed by them, sin against them, and offend God, which they do not desire. Anger is an irrational thing, to the point that sometimes it does not spare even the one who is angry. For fathers must remember that they were once children themselves: and children must consider that they will become fathers in the future; so that with a balanced judgment from both sides, the children may be obedient, and the fathers may be modest.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) Servants, obey in all things your earthly masters, not serving only when they are watching you, to please people, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. For it is impossible to serve God in any other way than with a pure heart; for he sees the hidden thoughts of the heart: he also commands that we should serve people in the same manner. For whoever serves only to please people, secretly does something else; but whoever serves from the heart, such a person is outwardly as they are inwardly. So if anyone is faithful in this service, they will receive the reward from the Lord; for he himself said: Whoever is faithful in little, is also faithful in much (Luke 16:10). For if the one who seeks revenge in the present is not faithful, how can he expect the one who will judge him after death to show him faith? Therefore, in the case of the Lord's flesh, he wants the servant to be just and obedient, so that he can be faithful and obedient in both earthly and divine matters. For if he is suitable in the present, where he knows there are only corruptible rewards, how much more inclined will he be in devotion to God, whom he knows will give immortal rewards to the faithful!

(Vers. 23, 24, 25.)

(Verse 23, 24, 25.) Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. And if a slave acts unjustly, he not only offends a man, but also God, whom he despises in the commission of fraudulent acts against his earthly master. But if he acts well, he will not be a servant of man before God, as if he were of lesser worth: rather, he will be rewarded as a free man among men, a servant of Christ, which is a name of dignity.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Masters, give to your slaves what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. Let not earthly masters be arrogant, presuming authority, but rather temper and restrain their spirits, so that, with due consideration for the human race, they may recognize that God is the creator of all, not only of servants and free men, but of all freemen. But this has been made possible by the injustice of the world, so that while one invades the boundaries of another, then free men are led captive; hence they were called "captives" by the ancients, as they were seized by the hand. Here the condition and position even now appear, some are redeemed, others remain as slaves. But in the sight of God, this servant is held who has sinned (John. VIII, 34). Finally, the servant of Cham heard the cause of sin: Cursed be the child of Canaan, he shall be the servant of servants to his brothers (Gen. IX, 25). To this sentiment the ancients agreed, so as to define that all wise men are free, but all foolish men are slaves; because the wise man abstains from sins, so that he may be free, who follows what is right; but the servant who submits himself to sin through the imprudence of foolishness. And so Cham, because of his foolishness, who foolishly burned his father's nakedness, was called a servant. He showed therefore to the lords, that they are not truly lords, but as if through an image; for they are lords of bodies, not of souls. For only the Lord, and the author of invisible things, God, rules over both bodies and souls; so that considering these things, they may demand just services from them: such as they themselves also desire to be demanded from the common Lord. For when they themselves do not serve God as is worthy, whom they do not deny to have all power, and whose daily gifts are exhibited through the service of human creatures for their uses, they demand such heavy services from their equals (not to say brothers) that they cannot be borne, not considering that they themselves, whether they wish it or not, are slaves, and they should consider whose merit they are.

(Vers. 2, 3, 4.)

(Verses 2, 3, 4.) Standing firm in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving: praying at the same time for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (for which I am also in chains) to make it known, as I ought to speak. Instructing the wise in the mystery of the Lord Christ, and urging them to be cautious in avoiding the vices of sin, it shows the need to persevere in prayer, so that their merits may increase and temptations from the adversary may diminish. He considers them worthy to the extent that he believes he can assist them with prayers to boldly proclaim the Gospel, for which he had received the mission to manifest.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Ver. 5, 6.) Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each one. For it is necessary for us to walk among unbelievers and engage in conversations for the sake of worldly conversation. This is what it reminds us, that our conversation should be with wisdom itself because of the offense of the Gentiles, so that they may not take an opportunity to blaspheme through us and be stirred up to persecute. For what need is there to speak with someone whom you know to be stubborn and obstinate in mind, ready to make insults? Therefore, she advises that these things should be spoken with appropriate place and time, under the guidance of modesty and religion: or if such a person is present, who makes a lot of noise, then it should be kept silent. Otherwise, it must be dealt with differently with the powerful of the world,

differently with the average, and differently with the humble. Also, it must be dealt with differently with the gentle and differently with the angry, whom one must yield to, that is, redeem the time. For when you yield to the assailant's words on Sundays and the audacity of harmful time, you gain the injuries of dangerous time. For if the head, that is, the king, agrees with the body, then there is freedom to speak the words of God with gentleness, so that they may be provoked to do good. Nevertheless, when they are loud and bold for insults, you must always yield; for you conquer, while yielding.

(Vers. 7, 8, 9.)

(Vers. 7, 8, 9.) Concerning the things about me, Tychicus, the beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that he may know the things about you and comfort your hearts, along with Onesimus, the beloved and faithful brother, who is one of you. He will make known to you all the things that are happening here. And they have sent him with the purpose of making their affairs known to you and to be informed of what is happening with you. Although he says above that he is present with them in spirit and sees what they are doing, messengers are still necessary. For someone becomes more anxious when they see someone coming to consider their conversation; they fear even more if they think they are being watched. For although God sees everything and we know that everything is known to him, because we do not see ourselves being seen by him, we act differently.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Verse 10, 11.) Aristarchus, a fellow prisoner with me, greets you, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), and Jesus, who is called Justus. They are the only ones of the circumcision among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. Aristarchus, in particular, seems to be a man of good character and worth, as he is described as a fellow participant in the Lord's devotion and a partner in the apostle's labor. But when he commends Mark, he does not keep silent about what he is. When it is learned that he is a relative of the laudable man Barnabas, he is considered honorable. He also adds Jesus, whom he calls Justus by name. He testifies for these alone, because they were helpers to him in circumcision, assenting and sharing his opinion, so that they were now no longer preaching the necessity of circumcision, but were called his fellow workers in the kingdom of God. However, to preach that circumcision, sabbaths, and new moons should be observed is not spiritual, but earthly.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ, greets you. He always struggles for you in his prayers, so that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear witness that he has a great zeal for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. It is important for you to know how much he longs for you and the unity of your hearts, as it is a reflection of his own devotion and love for you.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) For I bear him witness that he has great labor for you, and for those at Laodicea, and for those at Hierapolis. He desires to make them anxious for their own salvation, and shows how great is the concern he has for them, since one becomes more concerned when they see another laboring for their own cause.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. Luke was truly beloved to the Apostle, because he always followed him, forsaking everything: he is said to have written both the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Greet the brothers in Laodicea, as well as Nympha and her household church. Since he was concerned for those in Laodicea, he instructs in his letter that they be greeted, considering Nympha dear, whose house is also greeted; for she seems to have been so devoted that her entire household was marked with the sign of the cross.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans, and you also read the letter from Laodicea. Because the instructions of the Apostle are general, and the letters written for the benefit of all churches; therefore he commands that this letter be read even by the Laodiceans, so that they may learn what they should do: and that the Colossians may read it as well, according to the aforementioned meaning.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) And say to Archippus: See to the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it. The leader of them all reminds them through themselves to be concerned for their own salvation; and since this letter is written for the sake of the people alone, therefore it is not directed to their ruler, but to the Church. For after Epaphras, who trained them, he here received the task of governing their Church.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) The greeting of my own hand—Paul's. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen.

Chapter 8

Commentary on Ephesians

On the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18, 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.) • (Vers. 22, 23.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1.) • (Vers. 2, 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 14, 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• (Vers. 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.) • (Vers. 22, 23, 24.) • (Vers. 25-28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.) • (Vers. 31, 32.)

• Chapter VI.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 5.) • (Vers. 6, 7, 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13-17.) • (Vers. 18, 19, 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.)

Prologue

The Apostle Paul did not establish in faith, but rather confirmed, suffering many evils for this from the faithless, as he says: 'If I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what profit is it to me, if the dead are not raised? (1 Corinthians 15:32)' And since he foresees his struggle not without the effect of their perfection, rejoicing in them, he encourages them in his writings to better things concerning the custody of the city of Rome; for when he came from Jerusalem he is understood to have conducted himself under custody with a surety, staying outside the camp in his own lodging. (Acts 28:16)

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus. He writes in his usual way, testifying that he is an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. He writes not only to the faithful, but also to the saints, for they truly become faithful if they are holy in Christ Jesus. A good life is then beneficial and regarded as holy, as long as it is held under the name of Christ; otherwise, it will be defiled, since it promotes dishonor to the creator.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He says that the grace of God is with the saints and the faithful, whom he calls our Father, because all things are from him and created and restored by him: our Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us by offering himself for us.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. This blessing is not worldly, but heavenly; not corruptible, but eternal. For the glory of Christians is not on earth, but in heaven, and it is in Christ. For every gift of God's grace is in Christ; so if anyone, rejecting Christ, seeks to be blessed by God, let him know that he is mistaken. However, God blesses differently than men. Certainly, the name of blessing is one, but it must be understood according to the merit of the person; for both God is said to do, and humans do: but God does so by His mere will impassibly; whereas humans do so by hand, effort, labor, and sweat. Therefore, God is blessed when He is praised with worthy praises; but humans bless God in such a way that He bestows the gift of His grace upon them, not according to their merits, but according to His mercy. And therefore he said: He who blessed us with a spiritual blessing; to show that a perfect blessing is given to those believing in Christ from heaven, that they may be filled with heavenly glory, lifted up above the powers of heaven. For

where I am, he says, there also will my minister be (John 12:26).

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love. For God, who knows all things, knew those who would believe in Christ, as He says to the Romans: Those whom He foreknew, He also called (Romans 8:29): not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles. Therefore, those whom God is said to call, persevere in faith: they are the ones whom He chose before the world in Christ, that they may be blameless before God in love, that is, so that the love of God may make their conduct holy. No one obeys anyone better than the person who obeys out of charity.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Predestining us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself. This is what God has determined, that believers in Christ would be adopted as sons by God, with Christ, the true Son of God, as their head.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) According to the pleasure of his will, for the praise of his glory. This pleasure God is said to have had: that by the grace given to men, he might promote the praise of his glory, so that our salvation may be the glory of God. With this he has graced us in his beloved Son. God has given us grace, for this reason we have believed in his Son Jesus Christ; for God, who loves his only-begotten Son, bestows divine gifts on his lovers.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. He demands a twofold grace; because he both redeemed us by his blood, and did not impute sins to us, that is, he redeemed and set us free.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) According to the riches of his grace, which he has lavished upon us, in all wisdom and prudence. It adds to grace because after the aforementioned benefits, the gift of wisdom and prudence in spiritual matters is added.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Ver. 9, 10.) To make known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, for the administration of the fullness of times, to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven and on earth. It pleased God, whose counsel cannot be revoked, to show forth in Christ the mystery of His will, in the time when He willed to reveal it to the acknowledgment of all creatures. And His will was this, that at that time all those who were in error, whether in heaven or on earth, might be reconciled to Him by Christ, when He made known that this is the gift of belief in Christ, so that their sins might not be imputed to them who receive the faith of Christ. Therefore, every creature in heaven and on earth, while learning of the knowledge of Christ, is restored to what it was created for. For when it is imbued with faith in the one God, having known the mystery of the Savior, it is restored from the error it had fallen into,

knowing for certain that its Creator is the one God and Lord. Hence, it is from this that John says in the Apocalypse: 'I saw Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon and his army in heaven' (Rev. 12:7). This contradiction is partly due to error, partly due to the presumption of usurped tyranny.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verse 11, 12.) In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. This is what he says, that the dispensation of the gospel was decreed by God; those from the Jews who believed in Christ. Therefore, none of the Gentiles were chosen for the apostleship; it was fitting that those who first hoped for the salvation promised to them in Christ should be chosen as preachers.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Vers. 13, 14.) In which also you, when you heard the word of truth of the Gospel of your salvation, believing, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; who is the pledge of our inheritance, for the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of his glory. The glory of God is when many are acquired to the faith, as the glory of a physician is if he heals many. Therefore, it pertains to the glory of God because he has called the Gentiles so that they may obtain the remedy of salvation through the promised faith of the Jews, having the sign of future redemption and inheritance, namely the Holy Spirit given after baptism. For indeed, the redeemed heirs have been designated, if they endure in regeneration; so that the first faith may obtain forgiveness, but the holy conversation, enduring with faith, may merit the crown.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) Therefore, I also, having heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. For according to the decree of God, He determined to make the Gentiles partakers of the promise made to the Jews, upon hearing the word of God at Ephesus, they received the faith in Christ, loving all the saints as the Lord commanded. For this reason, God gives thanks for their conversion and love, as He has deemed it worthy to unite the Gentiles with the Jews.

(Vers. 17, 18, 19.)

(Verse 17, 18, 19.) That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. It is clear that for this reason he says he prays for them, that they may know the hope of his faith in heavenly reward; for when they fully know what is the fruit of believers, they will be more inclined to cultivate religion. For now he seems to be making progress in this way, because if they are so devoted before they know the glory of the promise, they will necessarily become more inclined when they know it. However, he calls the Father the God of clarity, and the God of Christ, since the true Father of Christ is God, and God of creation. But the Lord himself says the same: I go to my Father and your Father, my God and your God (John 20:17). Therefore, he is the Father of all clarity, because all clarity, power, and dignity come from

him. He is both the Father of Christ, but differently; because here (in Christ) He (God) is the true Son, and the God of all, but not so is He the God of Christ. For thus God is the God of Christ; because God is from God (the Father): but the God of the others is the cause of terror, as He (God) Himself says in the prophet Malachi: 'If I am God, where is my fear?' (Malachi 1:6).

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of His mighty strength, which He worked in Christ, raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. He declares that the example of the salvation of the believers and the glory in the resurrection of the Savior is based on this, so that the faithful may know what is promised to them. For in a similar way, they will be exalted above the heavens in the future with Christ; as he himself says: Father, I want those who are with me to be where I am, and to see my glory (John 17:24). This is because of the incarnation of the Son of God, so that being made man, he may also be said to be above all the heavens, and sitting at the right hand of God above all creation, having the name of God by nature, not by adoption; so that those who crucified him may know that he is the Son of God. For indeed the honor that the Father gave to Him through generation, He was revealed when He was born as a suffering man, and having conquered death He rose again, ascending to where He had descended, above all the heavens. Therefore it is said, 'Truth sprung up from the earth' (Psalm 84:12). For because the Father has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22), He is said to sit at the right hand of God, as a judge. Finally, He Himself says to the disciples: 'Up until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and I will do' (John 16:24). Where it says to the Jews: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power of God and coming on the clouds of heaven (Matthew 26:64). For from the moment it became known, he began to be approached and requested, as if a judge.

(Vers. 22, 23.)

(Verse 22, 23.) And he subjected all things under his feet, and gave him as head over all the Church, which is his body and the fullness of him, who fills all in all. He says that the Father has subjected all creation to the Son, because through him all things were made (John 1:3), so that he may be the head and Lord of all. He subjected all things to him when he begot him before all things, so that through him he would make things that did not exist. By saying the whole Church, he comprehends everything that is in heaven and on earth, so that all its members may be made into a new man by confessing that he is the one through whom they were made by God. For they are joined together as members to the head, from which they draw their origin, so that all things in all may be filled. When they have returned to the confession of one God, bending their knee to Christ, it is fulfilled in all that all things may be in Him; for they are from Him and through Him they exist; departing from God, they seem to empty themselves. Hence, in another place, it is said: That all may grow unto the increase of God (Colossians 2:19).

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) And you, when you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world. He calls them dead because they follow the errors of the world; for whatever departs from the profession of the one true God is considered dead; because it does not remain in the root from which it derives its origin. According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience. The prince of power, that is, the devil, signifies that he has corrupted the understanding of the world; so that they would depart from the one God, embracing the opinion of many gods, in order to make them partners of his conspiracy, since they are found in the same impiety, denying one God. Therefore, this error of air calls itself a prince, in order to show that it has usurped this part for exercising domination. For air is one thing, and a prince is another: but because it rules in the world or in the air, it is called the spirit of the air.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) In these things also we were once conversant, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. It signifies unfaithfulness, when it mentions the desires of the flesh. For the will of the flesh is to indulge in visible pleasures, so as to call the elements which God has appointed to be the rulers of the world, gods; when this name is due to the one God, from whom are all things; so that as He has no partaker in power, so He should have no sharer in His name. However, Christ is not denied this name, because just as their nature is common, so will be the name. However, there is a difference between the Father and the Son, because the Father did not receive this name from anyone: but the Son received everything of the Father through generation, so that in power, substance, and name, the Son does not differ from the Father. Therefore, he says: Everything that the Father has is mine; and mine is the Father's (John 16:15). Therefore, it is neither unworthy nor contrary for Christ to be called God, but it is about God the Father, so that the authority of one God is preserved. For if anyone thinks it means something else when the desires of the flesh demand it, let them know that the Apostle lived a clean life because he followed the righteousness of the Law without complaint. But because he persecuted the faith of Christ, therefore he says that we have turned to the desires of our flesh. For every sin is called flesh, especially perfidy, which is the mother of all wickedness. No amount of good works and chastity will benefit anyone if they are faithless; for this perfidy stains all these things. Hence it is, that he added: And we were by nature children of wrath, as others also. For when a bad will is assumed in nature, it becomes a nature of wrath, that is, one that is to be subjected to vengeance, not by a change in substance, but by a bad will. For this is attributed to nature, that which follows; wherefore it is said in Isaiah: A wicked seed (Isaiah 1:4). And in order to show that it is a wicked seed, he added: For you have forsaken the Lord, he says, and have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger; so that nature which forsakes God may be called a wicked seed. For to deviate is to degenerate from the author: and when it presents a bad example to others, it is a bad seed; for it produces very bad fruits. But if it returns to the Author, its nature will be good, according to the Apostle, who, when changed, is called a vessel of election, as he acknowledges his Creator (Acts 9:15).

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) But God, who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us. These are the true riches of mercy, that it is bestowed even on those who do not seek it, as Isaiah says: 'I

am sought by those who did not ask for Me' (Isaiah 65:1); for it is an abundance of mercy to be given even to those who do not ask. This is the love of God towards us, that because He created us, He does not want us to perish; for He loves His work. For he did it because he loved what he did; for no one hates his own work.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) And when we were dead in our sins, he made us alive in Christ. We were alienated from God and dead, but by his grace he called us back, that is, he made us alive in Christ. For it is through him that he created us, and it is through him that he has transformed us in him, that is, to be his members. He is indeed our head; we have him as the author of our life, as the apostle Peter says: 'You killed the Author of life' (Acts 3:15).

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) By whose grace you have been saved. To this gift, he also adds the Gentiles, signifying that we are saved by the grace of Christ.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) And raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is saying that, as I mentioned before, there will also be holy people from the Gentiles, where Christ is their head.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) In order to show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. This signifies that in the future age, the immortal gift of God will appear as a reward for the faithful; which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love Him (I Cor. II, 9). These are the surpassing riches, so that believers are given as much as the mind cannot comprehend.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. It is true that every act of thanksgiving for our salvation must be referred to God, who gives us his mercy, to call back those who wander and do not seek the true path. Therefore, there is no reason for us to boast in ourselves; but in God, who has regenerated us through the heavenly birth by the faith of Christ, so that, being exercise in good works, we may merit to receive the promises which God has already destined for us, the newly born.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verse 11, 12.) Remembering that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—

remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. He continues to commend the gift and grace of God, desiring to always give thanks for it as if we are indebted to him. For this reason, he reminds us that through the blood of Christ, we have been made close to God, in order to show how much affection God has for us, who allowed his Son to die for us. And so, we should endure all hardships for his sake, knowing that he deserves more from us than anything our enemies can inflict upon us. For he is the Lord and is in need of nothing, yet he offered himself for us so that he may benefit us, not himself. For even if it did not benefit us, we might perhaps be compelled to die for our master: how much more, when not only does his death, but also our own, bring about an effect for us!

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) For he himself is our peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity in his flesh. He has made peace between circumcision and uncircumcision through the suffering of our Savior. The enmity, which was like a middle wall and separated circumcision from uncircumcision, and uncircumcision from circumcision, this Savior has broken, giving the law that neither a Jew presuming of circumcision should reject a Gentile, nor a faithful Gentile should despise a Jew, that is, reject his paganism: but that both, having been renewed, should follow the faith of one God in Christ. For everything that the Savior taught, he confirmed when he rose from the dead. However, the wall that was in the middle, dividing between the law of deeds and gentleness, signified a wall or fence, that is, not a stable or robust wall; because neither gentleness was a strong thing, as if invented by man, nor circumcision, and new moon, and food, and sacrifices or sabbaths a stable and fixed observance; for they were given so that they would cease when Christ came. Although God has given these things, it is only for a time; however, the preaching of faith remains firm without a successor.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Abolishing the law of commandments in decrees, in order to create in himself one new man, making peace. This is what I mentioned briefly above; that he abolished the law that was given to the Jews in circumcision, and in the new moons, and in food, and in sacrifices, and in the Sabbath, that is, he commanded them to cease; because they were burdensome, and so he made peace. Hence, the apostle Peter says in the Acts of the Apostles: Why do you impose a yoke upon the necks of the brothers, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? (Acts 15:10)

(Vers. 16.)

(Ver. 16.) In order to present and reconcile both in one body to God through the cross. By removing the enmity, Christ reconciled the peoples to one another first, and then made them peaceful to God the Father; so that men, who were made different through error, could become members of one new body of the same nature, of which Christ is the head.

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Verses 17, 18.) He killed the enmity within himself, and came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. This is the meaning: he killed the enmity within himself by dying for both Jews and Gentiles. The death of the Savior benefits everyone; for by rising from the dead, having conquered death which held everyone captive, he showed what hope believers have in him. From here, he commanded the preaching by which all were summoned to God the Father in the unity of the Spirit, with discord being broken, so that whether they were Jews (who are so called because the promise was made to their fathers) or Gentiles (who are so called because they did not receive the law given through Moses), with the previous custom being removed, they might accept the faith of Christ, through which they would become one.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are citizens of the saints and members of God's household. He reminds them to remember God's blessings, because when they were far from the knowledge and fear of God, they were included in His mercy so that they could become partakers of those who were near to God, becoming fellow citizens and members of God's family. Just as any nation of the Romans desired peace and accepted gifts, they became Roman citizens, just like the people of Tarsus and Cilicia, from where the Apostle claims to be a Roman citizen (Acts 22:26). In the same way, anyone who joins themselves to the Christian faith becomes a citizen of the saints and a member of God's household.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the chief cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. This is the fulfillment of both the new and old Testaments. For what the apostles preached, the prophets foretold. Although it is said to the Corinthians, 'God has appointed first apostles, second prophets' (1 Corinthians 12:28). But these are other prophets; in that place, he discusses the ordination of the Church, but here, he discusses the foundation of the Church. For the prophets arranged it; for the apostles laid the foundations. Where the Lord says to Peter: Upon this rock I will build my Church (Matt. XVI, 18), that is, in this confession of the Catholic faith I will establish faithful believers for life; for even David prepared the house of God, and marked the place where it would be built: but Solomon actually founded it.

(Vers. 21, 22.)

(Verse 21, 22.) In which every structure, compacted, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in which you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. This is the meaning, from which the Lord said: upon this rock I will build my Church. For the Savior has received two peoples in himself, and has made them one in the Lord, just as the cornerstone holds together two walls, firmly established in the unity of the house; for the faithful are the surface of the temple of God, living in the Spirit, so that they may become heirs of the heavenly dwelling.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) For the sake of this matter, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for you brothers. Because he shows the disposition of divine mercy, which was before the world towards the salvation of the

Gentiles; now, by the provision of God, Christ sending, he declares himself to fulfill the mission of this gift. For after his resurrection, the Lord sent his apostles in his place to preach (Matthew 28:19), directing them to the conversion of the Gentiles; for he said to him: Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21). Therefore, the word "usus" is used by Dominic when he says: Peace to those who are far away, and to those who are near.

(Vers. 2, 3, 4.)

(Verse 2, 3, 4.) But if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me for you: How that by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written above in a few words, as you reading may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Which in other generations was not known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body: and copartners of his promise in Christ Jesus, by the gospel: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the operation of his power.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Vers. 5, 6.) What was not known to the sons of men in other generations, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. For even though the Gentiles were allowed to become part of the Law earlier, they were required to be circumcised. And the prophets knew that the Gentiles would be fellow heirs with the people of Israel in God's covenant (for they also foretold this in many places). But it was hidden that they could be partakers of God's grace without circumcision, Sabbaths, new moons, and other such things, and that they could embrace faith in Christ and be saved. This is what it means to be in the Spirit: that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of God's promise in Christ. For indeed he who worships God in spirit does not have need of the work of the Law.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) By the Gospel, I have become a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, which was given to me according to the working of His power. To preach the mystery of His ministry, he made it known, which God has planned for the Gentiles according to the working of His power. For His power works through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, conquering death, in which He saved all. However, this is the dispensation of His Gospel, as far as the will of God is concerned, because He has decreed to save the Gentiles without the works of the Law.

(Vers. 8.)

(V. 8.) I have been given the least grace of all the saints. He humbles himself when he says he is the least, knowing that it is progress in humility. For he says that such great grace has been given to him, that this gift that was unknown in past ages, he claims has been granted to him in order to make it known to the Gentiles. For from where can he appear as the least of all the saints, who before being baptized was called a vessel of election? That I may preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the nations (Acts 9:15). He proves himself chosen to preach the gift of God in the

incomprehensible riches of Christ, which he has deigned to bestow on the desperate nations, so that they may be saved by faith without works. And it is evident that no one sends an excellent and great gift through an unworthy person. Therefore, showing how much he deserves from God, he humbles himself, so that his merit may increase.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) And to enlighten all men, what is the dispensation of the hidden mystery from ages, in God who created all things. He says that he was sent to teach the nations the mystery that was in God, from whom all things are; so that through him they may learn and understand that Christ is always in God, and with God, and that he has ordained to save the nations without the circumcision and other commandments of the Law. For the Jews were found unworthy to have such a teacher, for the Jews believed in Christ, yet they still observed the Law; which is abominable to God. Finally, the apostles say to their fellow apostle Paul: You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and all of these are zealous for the Law (Acts 21:20). Therefore, it happened that a vessel of election was sent to teach the Gentiles, so that they too would have full hope in their faith, not in the Law, but only in Christ. For when the sacrament was revealed, such a gift of Christ was given, which would have the effect of complete salvation; just as in great vows, the greatest gifts are given; so also, in the magnificent revelation of the mystery, for the sake of joy and delight, men were bestowed with such an exceptional gift, that it is sufficient for them in abundance of salvation.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) So that the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms through the church. God understood this so well, that He not only gave this message to the Gentiles; but also that through it the truth of Christ may be made known to the spirits in the heavenly realms, who are the rulers and authorities. Authorities, because they are more powerful among the other spirits: Rulers, on the other hand, because they are subject to the Authorities; so that, recognizing through the church, which has been drawn in various ways to life, the mystery of remaining in Christ, the one God, they may cease from error. For it is intended that ecclesiastical preaching should also benefit these people, and that they should abandon the sense of the tyranny of the devil, with which he armed himself against the faith of the one God through impious presumption. This sense is prescribed in the twenty-third Psalm, where the Lord God of the universe is demonstrated, saying through the Spirit of God by David: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein (Psalm 24:1). And in the following lines: Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Therefore it is said to these Princes, who are in error in the heavens, or rather to His ministers on earth, that they may take away the gates of their prince, that is, of the devil, from their minds, through which the error of asserting many gods has entered. For they are temporal; because all deceit is enclosed in time: The way of the wicked shall perish. But in order to elevate the eternal gates, justice urges and reminds them; for truth perseveres in everlasting ages. Therefore, it is said in the 117th psalm: This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter through it (Ps. CXVII, 20). For it is evident that the righteous enter the heavens, the kingdom of God, through faith, which is never corrupted, as the prophet Daniel testifies, saying among other things: Another incorruptible kingdom will arise

(Dan. II, 44); but the wicked enter the infernal Tartarus because of their incredulity. Therefore, this is the King of glory, Christ, who, by rising after death was conquered, appears to be the Lord and King of glory. For by the power of His might, He subdued hell, because He is the Son of God, who proclaimed Himself to be the King of the entire universe, both in heaven and on earth, to condemn the tyranny of the devil.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vv. 11, 12.) According to the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Christ has been revealed to the world, in which God intended to show His mystery for the salvation of humanity, so that the knowledge of God's mystery may bring salvation to mortals; as if the dedication of Christ's kingdom would bestow this grace as a reward to believers. Although it has already been done long ago, it still appears new to ignorant creatures.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart in my tribulations for you, which are for your glory. May the hope revealed in the mystery of Christ remind you not to be scandalized by the tribulations inflicted on the saints by the faithless. For it is to their glory, if the disciples are not scandalized by the tribulations of their Master, but remain steadfast in this hope; for it is through the trials of the faithful that they will be raised to the glory of the future age. This is the testing of the faithful, if they turn their hope to their faith.

(Vers. 14, 15, 16.)

(Verse 14, 15, 16) For this reason, I kneel before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit. This is my prayer with bent knees, that since he has been pleased to call the Gentiles to the knowledge of his mystery, he would also grant them, because he is rich, to be strengthened by his Spirit, that is, so that they are not disturbed by the carnal dangers inflicted by the faithless: but that they may be steadfast, awaiting the reward of this matter in the future.

(Vers. 17.)

(Ver. 17.) To let Christ dwell in the interior man by faith in your hearts. In this, He seeks to strengthen them so that they do not doubt, but rather believe that Christ dwells in them, whom they do not see with their eyes. So that the Spirit, given to them through the gift of God, may infuse this in them, that they may be certain that Christ is alive and is the Son of God, and that He dwells by faith in our hearts, so that when we have faith in our hearts, we may seem to possess Him. This is what profiting from it entails: that we may be secure in his help; for he does not abandon us, but is always present on account of his faith, which he sees in us. Indeed, for this reason the Spirit of him, who is also the Spirit of God the Father, is given to us, so that in his place he may keep us safe if we agree to him, and also reveal hidden things; through whom certainly we must not doubt that he dwells in us. For there is another advocate here, who differs in person but not in nature; for he receives from him, and proceeds from God (John 15:26). For in those things where the unity of nature is, they are one to another; whence the Lord says: All things that the Father hath are mine,

and all things that are mine are the Father’s. (John 16:15).

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) That you may be rooted and grounded in love, that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth. This is what Christ or the Spirit dwelling in us accomplishes, that we may be rooted in the love of God, bound by His blessings, and able to know God, surpassing in His majesty the immeasurable and incomprehensible, with the saints who are apostles and prophets. For when he says: Length, and width, and height, and depth; he certainly means that just as in a sphere the length is as great as the width, and the height as great as the depth; so too in God all things are equal in the immensity of infinity. For a sphere is bounded in a definite way: but God not only fills all things, but also exceeds them; for he is not enclosed, but contains all things within himself, so that he alone may be considered ineffable and infinite: and insufficient thanks are given to this grace, because although he is so great, he deigned to visit man, subject to sin and death, through Christ.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) Also, to know the surpassing love of Christ's knowledge. After the infinite and incomprehensible knowledge of God the Father and the indescribable mercy, Christ also wants us to recognize his love; because it surpasses human knowledge, and it is implied to be human; so that the love of Christ may be held above human knowledge. For who can comprehend the reason for this mystery of love, that God, for the sake of man, would be born as a man, and then die for men, the Lord for his servants, the Creator for his creatures, the righteous for the wicked? For what reason did He love us so? Or what did He lack that He needed anything? Is this love not above the knowledge of men? Or who among men can exhibit such love to someone; even though he may be unequal, and thus surpasses human understanding? Therefore, He wants us to know that our senses cannot attain, nor perceive, the depth of Christ's goodness towards us; so that we may always be supplicants and devoted to Him, and that we may persevere in His faith until death, even though we are unable to satisfy our debts in any way. For he acted on our behalf with actions that are beneath him due to the greatness of his majesty, so that we may serve him as much as we are able. That you may be filled with the fullness of God. For faith is not complete in the Father alone, nor is it perfect in the Son alone, therefore he added: That you may be filled with the fullness of God; so that honor may be reserved for both the Father and the Son through confession and thanksgiving: and that all things which are from God the Father, made and restored through the Son, may be believed; so that the fullness of divinity may be complete in the profession of the believers. For nothing will be lacking for a Christian, when he knows that God the Father is immense in all things: he also professes the ineffable and surpassing charity of Christ, and superior to human knowledge.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) But to Him who is able to do all things, and more abundantly than we ask or understand, according to the power that works within us: to Him be glory in Christ Jesus, and in the Church, and in all ages, forever and ever. Amen. This applies to the person of the Father, so that because He knows better what is useful, and what is not to be asked for, and when to give, and what and how much is needed; He Himself may govern those who trust in His providence and

power. To whom therefore be glory in Christ Jesus, because through him he bestows all things upon us: and because the honor of the Father is in the Son, and in the Church, that is, in the people, whom he has deemed worthy to adopt. For in the glory of the children, the glory of the father is manifested, as the Lord says (Matt. 5:16): Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Forever and ever. Amen, that is, in eternal truth.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) Therefore, I beseech you, brothers, that you walk worthy of the vocation by which you are called, as I, being bound in the Lord, urge you to do. Exhorting them to walk rightly in the commandments of the Lord, that they may be able to attain the promised glory. For just as a skilled physician urges the sick to conduct themselves well so that they may receive a healing remedy, so too the teacher of the Gentiles encourages them to perform worthy works of faith, that they may receive the promised rewards, knowing that the progress of this matter is for their own glory.

(Vers. 2, 3.)

(Verse 2, 3.) With all humility of mind and modesty, with magnanimity, bearing with one another in charity, eagerly preserving the spirit of unity in the bond of peace. Now, we should avoid discord and strive for charity, so that we do not lose the spirit of unity and peace: and through this, we endure with patience. For modesty brings progress; because when they tolerate one another, gently admonishing with understanding, they are corrected for the better, and peace will remain with them, by which they rightfully are called children of God; for the Lord said: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God (Matthew 5:9). Perturbation or restlessness causes strife, which often leads one to defend even those things that are known to be bad, so as not to appear weak. Hence arises discord, which destroys the bonds of peace.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) One body and one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling. For the sake of peace and harmony, he has subjected these things, so that because there is one body, there may be one people who share the same belief.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Verses 5, 6.) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all of us. He commends unity so that we do not disagree in anything, because unity is what we are called to. For if there is one Lord, that is, Christ, as he himself says in the Gospel: 'For one is your Master, Christ' (Matthew 23:10); one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all believers, there must be one mind and one heart of the people; for these things that he enumerates are elements of unity, as they agree in all. However, He said that the Father is God because He owes nothing to anyone, and that He is above all things and through all things. Therefore, through all things because all things are from Him, and it is necessary for Him to be above all these things which are from Him. And in all of us, that is, the faithful. For He is in us through confession; because we confess Him, and because He

has given us His Spirit, through whom without a doubt He is in us: He is not in the pagans; because the Father of Christ is denied by them.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. Now, in order to prevent the different gifts given to individuals from being thought to hinder unity, it purifies that this is not contradictory; because there is diversity in the gifts of offices, not in nature. But it only says that each one is given grace according to how much the Lord has deemed worthy to give; not, however, without the measure of equity, because He gives to each according to his abilities; so that he may draw as much as he thirsts.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) Therefore he says (Psalm 67:19): He ascended on high, he led captivity captive; he gave gifts to men. This is written in the sixty-seventh psalm. However, he began to give these gifts after his triumphs; for by conquering death, he was exalted on the cross, as he himself had said: And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (John 12:32). He plundered hell when he took away those captives who were held in bondage by the transgression of Adam, or were being held captive by their own sins, and ascending from there, he brought them into heaven (Matthew 27:52). From these, some rising up in bodies, appeared to many as evidence of conquered death; so that those who were perhaps not going to believe in the resurrection of Christ, were convinced by the resurrection of these, whom they knew to be dead; for they saw them, whom they recognized as having lived for a long time. Although captives, they are led unwillingly and as strangers; yet the Savior led both his own and the willing. For it is said that he provoked them to desire liberation by his appearances.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) But what is it that ascends except that it first descended into the lower regions of the earth? It is true that it descended in order to ascend, and not like humans who descended in order to remain there. For they were held captive in the underworld, a captivity that the Savior could not hold; for he conquered sin. Therefore, having triumphed over the devil, he descended to the heart of the earth, so that his preaching would be a manifestation to the dead, and so that all those who desired him would be freed. He could not help but ascend, because He had descended for this purpose; so that, by the power of His own authority, having trampled death and having allowed Himself to suffer for the sake of those who were captive, He might rise again.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) The one who descended is the same one who ascended above all the heavens, in order to fill all things. This is what the Lord says: No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven. (John 3:13) This is also mentioned in the psalm; it says: His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit is to the ends of it. (Psalm 19:6) Therefore, the one who descended from heaven to earth was born as a human. After dying, he descended to the depths, and on the third day, he rose again and ascended above all the heavens, showing the mockery of death to all creation.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Verse 11, 12.) And he himself gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and others as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry. The apostles are bishops (Acts 11:26); the prophets are interpreters of the Scriptures; although there were prophets in the early days, such as Agabus and the four prophetesses (Acts 21:9), as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles for the sake of promoting the basics of faith (Acts 7:2ff): but now interpreters are called prophets. The deacons are evangelists, as was Philip; although they are not priests, they can still evangelize without a pulpit, as did the blessed Stephen and the aforementioned Philip (Acts 8:5). Shepherds can be readers, who nourish the listening people with their reading; for man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4). The masters, on the other hand, are exorcists, because in the Church they restrain and discipline the restless; they are also those who used to teach infants through letters and readings, as is the custom of the Jews, whose tradition has passed down to us, but has become obsolete due to neglect. Among these, it is understood that there is a greater one after the bishop, who is said to prophesy because he has access to the hidden meaning of the Scriptures; especially because he reveals words of future hope, which order can now be called the presbyterate. For in the bishop there are all orders: because he is the first priest, that is, the chief among priests, and a prophet, and an evangelist, and the other duties of the Church to be fulfilled in the ministry of the faithful. However, once the Church is established in all places and the duties are ordered, the situation is different from what it had started as. For in the first place, they all taught and baptized on whatever days or times there was opportunity; for Philip did not seek a specific time or day to baptize the eunuch, nor did he impose a fast. Neither did Paul and Silas delay in baptizing the jailer and all his household, nor did Peter have deacons or seek a specific day when he baptized Cornelius and all his household: nor did he himself baptize, but he commanded the brothers who were with him to baptize, who had accompanied him to Cornelius from Joppa; for no one had yet been ordained except the seven deacons. So in order for the people to grow and multiply, it was allowed for everyone at the beginning to preach, and baptize, and explain the Scriptures in the Church; but when the Church encompassed all places, assemblies were established, and leaders, and other offices were ordained in the Churches; so that no cleric would dare to undertake an office that he knew was not entrusted or granted to him. And the Church began to be governed by another order and providence; for if all were able to do the same things, it would be irrational and common, and would seem very cheap. Therefore, from this it is clear that currently neither deacons preach among the people, nor do either clerics or laypeople baptize, nor are believers immersed on just any day, except when they are sick. Therefore, the writings of the Apostle do not entirely agree with the ordination that now exists in the Church, because these writings are from the very beginnings. For he also calls Timothy, whom he made a presbyter, a bishop, because the first presbyters were called bishops, so that when he left, the one following him would succeed him. In fact, in Egypt, presbyters sign if the bishop is not present. But because unworthy presbyters began to be found to hold the primacy, the practice was changed, under the observation of the Council, so that it was not the order but the merit that created a bishop, determined by the judgment of many priests, so that no unworthy person would wrongfully take office and scandalize many. In the Law, priests were born from the lineage of Aaron the Levite (Exod. XXVIII, 43): but now all are from the priestly lineage, as the Apostle Peter says: \"For you are a royal priesthood\" (I Petr. II, 9). For the building up of the body of Christ, the Church's ordination is said to be composed in the unity of profession, like the joining together of

the human body. So that in Christ, although different in rank, all may be one, having one head, Christ, that is, the author of life.

(Vers. 13)

(Verse 13). Until we all come to the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. He says that this ordination should last as long as all are destined to the life of one faith in the knowledge of Christ. To a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. He encourages us to work in such a way that the perfection of faith is achieved: the essence of which is that faith holds Christ as perfect and fully God, not measured by human standards, but held as a perfect God in the fullness of divinity. For it does not mean perfect in terms of age and measurement: but by this saying it wants us to become perfect in the fullness of the understanding of the divinity of the Son of God.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) So that we may no longer be infants, tossed about by waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. He wants us to be rooted and established in the discipline of the Catholic faith, which Peter the apostle, with divine revelation, professed (Matthew 16:16), and not to be carried away by the various and harmful assertions of different heresies, which are created by the wickedness of humans. This way, the enemy can bring about error under the guise of truth through these deceptive means. For this is the remedy of falsehood, that under the pretext of truth it introduces error: and not only under the name of truth, but also that, just as before we, who were humble in mind, wandered through various errors, now that we have become faithful, we may run to and fro, fragile and doubtful of the promised hope; for now that we have become Christians, we ought to be founded, because there is no ambiguity in our faith; for the power of miracles is commended.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ. He declares this to be the truth, that by looking at the love of Christ, with which He loved us and gave Himself up for us, we should submit ourselves to Him in all things, knowing that He is the source of all life, so that the members may be subject to the head, as if others do not acknowledge Christ as the head in error or with ill will, because all things were created by Him according to the will of the Father; however, we who hold to the Catholic faith must act with all devotion and care in order to bring not harm but gain to this faith, persevering in this affirmation, so that the false conversations of a depraved mind may be silenced by the armed truth.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) From which the whole body, being compacted and knit together by every joint of supply, according to the working in the measure of each single part, makes increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity. By which reason he says, that Christ is the head of all; for from him, he says, the whole body, that is, the whole chorus of Archangels and Powers, of Principalities and Authorities, subsists. Although these have their own proper numbers, and are legions, as the Lord himself said (Matt. XXVI, 53); yet because they are from one and through one, he calls all of them one body together. For just as the members, though they are of one body, are different in

actuality and dignity, so the creature is formed by God through Christ in such a way that it is, as it were, a certain chain of being, descending in an ordered manner to the firmament, from the powers which are under God's authority, namely the Cherubim and Seraphim, and the Angels whom the Lord himself calls holy, so that the whole is both united and yet distinguished by merits, I mean merits not only of duties, but also of natures. For not because it says all things together, will they be of one nature: but what separate parts do in bodies, not nature; so also in all these things, the distinctions are made by the natures themselves, not the parts. This, therefore, is what is labored for, that the creature may be reduced to one sense, and in that sense may be one body, while the profession of all is one, that it may agree in the love of the Creator for its own progress; for it rebuilds itself in the temple of the Lord, for it had been destroyed by the madness and fury of the devil.

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Verse 17, 18.) Therefore, I say and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them. Due to the hardening of their hearts, they have become callous and have given themselves over to sensuality, practicing every kind of impurity with a continual lust for more. However, that is not how you came to know Christ, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to take off your former way of life, the old self, which is corrupted by deceitful desires, to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. For those who follow in vain, the things that are idolatry are restrained by the devil, so that they do not walk in the path of the one God and thus become companions in their own destruction.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) And the blindness of their heart, who despairing, have given themselves up to impurities, unto the working of all uncleanness, unto avarice. The despair of the future resurrection of the Gentiles signifies the blindness of their heart. For they defile their own lives with the most shameful actions, not wanting to subject themselves to the law of faith; because it prohibits pleasure on account of the hope of future life, which they therefore consider laughable, in order to disgrace themselves by right and seem to desire the possessions of others with greedy desire, as if after this life there is no life.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) But you have not learned Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus. It is clear that Christians have not learned despair after this death, but hope for both; for to the faithful there is life, but to the unbelievers there is promised death, which is eternal punishment; so that whether in death or in life, one may learn in Christ; for whoever follows Him, through Him will rise to life: but whoever separates themselves from Him, will be handed over to Gehenna; for He Himself is the judge, and they will be condemned. And since there are some in the Church who do not follow the truth of Christ under the name of Christ, and therefore, just as there is truth in Jesus, if they are so well taught that there is truth in Jesus, then they seem to have learned from Christ and listened to him and been

taught in him: for Christ himself teaches what he is and how great he is to be believed, and what hope there is in him and what kind of believers they should be. For whoever has learned Christ knows that he has risen from the dead, so that he may be a model for the faithful, and therefore there is great hope for those who love God in this death.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) So that you may cast off, according to your former manner of life, the old man, who is corrupted according to the desires of error. Whoever has heard Christ, has learned this: that they should withdraw from their former behavior, which is called the old man because of the time of ignorance that has passed. Therefore, a person is one and the same, who, if they follow their former vices, is called old; but if they walk in the newness of life, alienated from the secular error, which is either in action or in sense, they are called inexperienced; not in the substance of the flesh or the soul, but in intellect and behavior of life. However, an old man is said to be corrupt because of his adulterated mind and shameful life.

(Vers. 23, 24.)

(Vrs. 23, 24.) But be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God is created in truth and righteousness. It is right and true to follow the straight path: he who walks in the will of his Creator is devoted to Him, which the Gentiles do not know. For he is called a new man, who is clothed with the renewed spirit of the mind, which is Christ; for he puts on Christ, who is born again in Christ through faith and is eager for the life that Christ has given. So that he may appear as having been created according to God; for in him anyone who has understanding is created; and therefore the truth and righteousness of God are unknown to the Gentiles. For when believers acknowledge God as the creator, keeping his commandments, they are created in righteousness and truth.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25) Therefore, putting away lying, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another (Zech. 8:16). For we were created in truth and justice, reborn in baptism; therefore, we are commanded to put away falsehood and to act with truth, not deceiving our brother. And since we are members of one body, let us support each other in truth for our causes.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26) Be angry and do not sin. For who can be prevented from becoming angry (since anger is a natural emotion, arising from causes, which usually relates to the benefit of the offender), therefore it is said that one must be angry (Psalm 4:5), but it warns not to sin in one's anger. For we often exceed the limit while being angry and find ourselves sinning, accusing the one who is sinning while being more angry and burdening the sinner more than they deserve. Therefore, this teaches that anger itself should be accompanied by moderation and one should not present oneself as excessively just to the wrongdoer, because some people tend to sin in such a way that they seem to be afflicted with wounds that they cannot bear. And he who could possibly be corrected is removed from life, not without the sin of the one who is angry. Hence is where Solomon says, 'Do not be excessively righteous, because there are those who perish in their righteousness' (Ecclesiastes 7:17). But we should be imitators of God, who has temperate justice;

for when it was just to punish the wicked, he endures them with his patience so that some of them may be corrected. He allows us to suffer as our own sinful slaves and does not quickly punish anyone.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) Let not the sun go down upon your anger: do not give place to the devil. Anger seeks to pass away, and not to be retained in the heart, so that, when the day arises, it may fall with the day; for if it remains in the mind, it gives occasion to the devil to glory. For it is necessary that an angry mind should think of evil, which the devil desires; for he finds a mind prepared for evil, into which he enters and deceives the man made for life with his own passion; because to think is the function of man, and to fill is the work of the devil.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) Whoever used to steal, should steal no longer; instead, they should labor with their hands doing what is good, so that they may have something to share with those in need. Let the conduct of the new person remain, and let them be encouraged not to return to past vices and sins; for it is of no use to be called new when the old self is proven by evil deeds. Therefore, not only is a Christian commanded not to steal from others, but they are also instructed to provide for those in need through their own labor, so that being dedicated to good deeds, they may repay what they had previously taken away, and henceforth store up treasures for their future. For whoever ceases from stealing, may receive forgiveness, but not glory. For what is great, or of what merit is it to restrain oneself from others? For one profits by merit, when one bestows from one's own wealth on the needy.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29) Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. In the servant of God, everything should appear good, and his purity should not be tarnished in any way. For what good is it to lead a clean life, but have a filthy mouth? The Lord says that everyone will be justified or condemned by their words (Matthew 12:37). It is not believable that someone who speaks badly can live a good life, for speaking badly leads to many vices. For one can speak evilly, who speaks shamefully, and who detracts from the good, and who speaks deceitfully, and who lies. These things inspire horror; for good and sober stories give grace and example to those who hear them; in order that they may honor God in His words, being edified in the faith of Christ.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. When we do good, the Holy Spirit rejoices in us, given to us, seeing his instructions benefiting our well-being, as it was said by the Lord: There will be such joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:10). Therefore, the Holy Spirit rejoices in our salvation, not for himself, who does not need joy; on the contrary, if we do not obey him, he is saddened because he does not make progress in us; for he desires us to belong to life. However, he is not saddened in such a way that he suffers, since he is impassible: but when he says he is saddened, he signifies this for our sake; because he abandons us insofar as we have offended him by

disregarding his teachings. Therefore, his sadness is our unworthiness, which prevents us from being called children of God; for he himself is the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies the children of God, remaining within us.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and blasphemy be taken away from you, along with all malice. He mentions that all these things, which can cause destruction to the soul, should be removed; for anger leads to indignation, and indignation leads to clamor, like the voice of a mad person, which is foreign to a servant of God. Through clamor, blasphemy sneaks in, which cannot be anything but evil. These things make life bitter, leading to death. Therefore, one must beware of them all; the fear of God should temper and control the effects of accidental causes. But because some people, when under pressure, prefer to hold on to their malice until they find an opportunity for revenge, therefore she added that all malice should be taken away; for it is not only evil to blaspheme, but also to pretend peace on the outside while meditating discord in the mind.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you. By the example of God the Father, he urges us to be kind and compassionate to one another, just as the Lord said: Be merciful, so that you may be like your Father who is in heaven (Luke 6:36). For if the Lord has shown mercy to his servants through his Son, how much more should the servants themselves show mercy to one another and forgive, if one sins against another? These are his instructions, who has shown mercy: that if anyone disdains these, without a doubt he will revoke the sentence through which he had shown mercy; and it will happen just as the Lord said in the Gospel about the one who, having received mercy from the Lord, was found to be unmerciful to his fellow servant (Matthew XVIII, 33).

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. This is what was said above, that we are commanded to be imitators of God the Father with this exhortation, so that if we obey, we may be considered beloved children of God. For indeed, the beloved son is the imitator of his father's good deeds.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) And walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. As God's imitators, he desires us to be kind and merciful, just as Christ, his beloved Son, loved us. Just as he loved us and gave himself for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for one another. This is what the Apostle John also said, following the example of the Lord, that we should lay down our lives for our brothers (1 John 3:16). Therefore, if Christ's death is a sweet-smelling odor to God, then God willingly accepted his death. If this is true, then those who crucified him according to God's will did not sin. But it is not so, because Christ is said to have offered himself to God while being killed, enduring in the will of his Father God. For he who is justly killed by offering himself to the devil is doing his will, so that he deserves to be killed.

Similarly, Christ, while adhering to God's will, displeased the devil, and therefore the devil killed him because he offered himself to God, executing justice. For in the offering, justice and truth are signified; for God regards this, and this is his acceptable sacrifice. Therefore, the undeserving one who is killed pleases God; not because he is killed, but because he preserved justice even unto death. For Christ accepted this death unto life; hence it is called the odor of sweetness to God. But to the Romans he says that God delivered him up for us all. (Rom. VIII, 32). Now, it must be investigated how God delivered him up or how he offered himself to God; for this, as far as the words go, seems contradictory. It is said that God handed him over when he allowed him to be killed, as the Lord said to Pilate: You would have no power over me unless it were given to you from above (John 19:11). It was indeed given to him, but to a willing power, that is, it was permitted for him to do what he desired, and that is to hand him over. For while he pretends, he hands over; for if he had not wished to permit, he would not have been killed. Therefore, he allowed him to be killed, but not forcibly by those who wanted to kill him, but willingly. Therefore, they are not immune from punishment because they were allowed to do what they wanted; for their condemnation lies in the fact that they desired it. And God allowed this for a reason, because He knew that this would be a future trial for many. It was fitting that He would allow their adversary, who believed he was acting on his own behalf, to carry out his plan; so that, attributing his own lack of foresight to himself, he would be tormented by remorse for his actions. Whether Christ offered Himself or God handed Him over, it is one and the same; for the will of both is united.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints. It is clear what he says. However, how serious a matter covetousness is, from which we turn a blind eye, when it is compared to fornication and uncleanness, and thus it seems to us as if it is a fault of no importance, even though it is a grave sin. Therefore, they cannot be saints in whom any of these things that he forbids are found.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) Either immorality, or foolish talk, or indecent joking, which are unrelated to the matter; but rather giving thanks. Since some people tend to do something shameful, or provoke laughter with foolish talk, as if it were not a sin, this is prohibited, because the servants of God should always appear sober and modest; for it is through foolish talk that sin is committed. Hence Solomon says: The fool, he says, brings about evil through laughter (Prov. 10:23). And the Lord says in the Gospel: for every idle word that men speak, they will give an account for it on the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36). And those things cannot be discerned without injury, which are said for the purpose of someone's insult; therefore, these things do not pertain to our salvation. Therefore, she advises that these things should be done and spoken, which promote our usefulness and the praise of God, in whose law we should meditate day and night; as it is written in the psalm (Ps. 1:2). For from the conversation and manners of the servants of God, even when they are silent, they are to be understood; so that as much as the truth differs from falsehood, so much do the servants of God differ from the servants of the devil.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) For know this, that every fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous one, who is an idolater, has no inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ. The reason why these things must be avoided is shown; because whoever is such, will not have a part in the kingdom of heaven, which is the Father and the Son's. However, in order to teach that greed is a dangerous thing, it is called idolatry, by which no sin is greater. Let us therefore see why greed is called idolatry. Idolatry appropriates and claims the honor due to God, and attributes it to a created being, asserting that it was responsible for its creation, which belongs solely to the Creator. Greed is equated with this because it also appropriates and hoards what belongs to God, denying it to others, even though it was intended for the common use of all. This results in the selling of goods for profit instead of providing for the needs of the poor. If these goods were not hoarded, they would be beneficial to everyone. In ancient times, there was no greed, only charity. Therefore, idolatry is rightly compared, because it harms many. It is also hostile to the Creator; for God wants and commands support to be given to the poor, which avarice contradicts. See if it can exist without the devil.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verse 6, 7.) Let no one deceive you with empty words; for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partakers with them. Empty and vain words they are; vanity indeed is the worship of idols, which certainly does not have its origin from God, but from error. Therefore, be aware and do not give assent to their words; for they always make noise and, by a certain seduction of deception, present the customs of antiquity against faith, judging that the reasoning of present things, not the hope of future things, should be affirmed. Therefore, vengeance from the heavens came upon them, so that they may know the truth which they did not want to believe. From this vanity, it teaches that the servants of God should be far from being entangled, lest they become partakers of their punishment.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Darkness is ignorance; because no one sees in darkness: but ignorance is the gentile state, or the perfidy from which they are led by the grace of God to faith, being made light, that is, truth; because the things that are manifest are made manifest in the light. Finally, the pagans celebrate their mystical rites in darkness, deceiving themselves with veiled eyes in caves. From these, the Christians, having become sons of light by knowing the truth, are said to be so, because God is light, and they receive His faith in truth.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true. This is said so that they may conduct themselves accordingly and be rightly called children of light. The works of light are done openly without fear, but the works of darkness are done in secret because they are illegal; for every sin is afraid to be openly committed.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Let us examine what is pleasing to God. From the greatness of holiness and goodness, it can be understood by which works God delights; for He Himself said: Be holy, as I am holy, your Lord God (Leviticus 19:2). And the Lord said: Be merciful, as your Father is merciful

(Luke 6:36). These things are pleasing to God; for in holiness is purification, but in mercilessness there is full and perfect justice.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) And do not participate in the unfruitful works of darkness. It warns us not to be contaminated by the actions of evil through agreement, because they are unfruitful towards goodness, and profitable towards evil.

(Vers. 12)

(Verse 12) But rather reprove them; for it is shameful to even speak of the things that are done in secret by them. He not only wants them to be separate from evil deeds, but also to expose the evil deeds of those who operate shamefully in secret. For then their sins are proven, if they are exposed; so that the sons of light, when they are justly accused by them, cannot contradict, but rather they will revere them. But when all things are reproved, they are made manifest by the light. It is true, because sins are seen when they are being rebuked; because the one who sins, as long as they are not corrected, does not seem to themselves to be sinning at all. For everything that is made manifest is light. In what is manifest, there is no ambiguity, nor can it be excused that the fault is open. Just as with the sun visible, it can no longer be denied that it is daytime; so too with manifest sin, rebuke is seen as false.

(Vers. 14.)

(V. 14) For this reason, it says: 'Arise, sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.' This sleep signifies a stupor of the mind, which is estranged from the true path. This estrangement is indeed a form of death, from which one is encouraged to rise again; so that, repenting, one may recognize the truth, who is Christ. Therefore, the unfaithful and wicked, sunk in the mire under the despair of life, are reminded to rise or emerge and have a share with Christ; so that they may pass from darkness to light and from death to life.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Vers. 15, 16.) Therefore, see how cautiously you walk, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. For above, He commanded that faithlessness and vices of life should be argued against by His servants, now in order to prudently argue against them for the sake of scandal, He has added; so that one must interact with the faithless cautiously, especially when the faithless reign, presuming about the profane king; so that if a Christian sees a restless and angry opponent, he should conceal it from him, and not even incite him to blasphemy and disturbance; but there, let him speak his words, where there is opportunity. For when interrogated among treacherous powerful people about what is, one should not remain silent nor deny; and if there is fear among them to argue, it should be dissimulated; for it is a disadvantage to sow seeds upon thorns. For it is prudent to know how to respond to each person; for there is someone who, although treacherous, is not completely obstinate, so as to not allow themselves to hear words of faith. There is again a situation in which the zeal of treachery boils so fervently, that not only is one not discussed with him but also when he is present, the matter of faith is not discussed; for during his uproar and blasphemy, many are scandalized. Wherefore Paul and Barnabas, when they heard blasphemies uttered against themselves, shaking off their clothing, departed from them

(Acts 13:46).

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. The Lord Jesus urges us to pursue peace. And the vessel of election: If it is possible, he says, let peace be made among all, having peace with everyone (Rom. XII, 18). And to Timothy: The servant of the Lord should not engage in disputes, but be kind to everyone (II Tim. II, 24). This is the will of the Lord, that the tasks of his servants be done with humility; for disturbance and contention, or quarreling with hostility, breed enmity. Therefore, he added these things on account of the previous ones, in which he wants to reprove the sins of men, the servants of God, so that because of this dissension and strife usually arise, they may reprove sinners with temperance and gentleness, lest, provoked to anger, they may leap into a dispute. Therefore, he wisely advises that this should be taken care of, so that there may be progress.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) And do not be drunk with wine, in which there is debauchery. The sober can have confidence in rebuking; for good conduct instills fear in the offender: and he who is rebuked will not bear it harshly, knowing that he is being advised towards the best conduct. For where there is drunkenness, there is also debauchery: and debauchery leads to indecency. Therefore, it is fitting for them to be sober, so that the laws of good conduct may be kept.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) But be filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. The Holy Spirit loves a virtuous life; for if we live well, we will be filled with Him, as it is written, to give thanks and praise to God with a diverse harmony of voices; so that praise to God may be sung in every language. For where the Spirit is, He always meditates on spiritual things; so that it may not be only on the lips, but may burst forth from the heart, as the ancient saying of the Lord through the prophet. For they honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. (Isaiah 29:13).

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21) Giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God and the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ. Giving thanks to God in all His gifts, who has also chosen to adopt us through His own Son Christ, through whom we have known Him and learned to worship God in the Spirit (for God is Spirit), subjecting ourselves one to another out of fear of Christ, who has commanded us to practice humility (John IV, 24).

(Vers. 22, 23, 24.)

(Vers. 22, 23, 24.) Women should be subject to their own husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church, he himself being the savior of its body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so also should women be subject to their husbands in everything. Women are commanded to be subject to their husbands by natural law, because the man is the authority of the woman; therefore, just as to the Lord, they should be subject to their husbands. From there Sara called her husband Abraham (Gen. XVIII, 12); just as

Christ is the head of the Church, so too is the man the head of the woman. For from Christ the Church takes its beginning, and is subject to him; so too is the woman to the man, that she may be subject. However, there is a distinction, because the woman is consubstantial with the man; but the Church can participate in Christ's name, not in his nature.

(Vers. 25-28.)

(Verse 25-28.) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her; in order to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water with the word; so that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives. Women are commanded to be subject to their husbands and to have reverence for them; husbands, on the other hand, are encouraged to love their wives in such a way that they even sacrifice their own lives for them, having zeal for their affection and discipline, so that they may be religious and holy. He who loves his own body, loves his wife. By natural reason, woman is a part of man's body, and therefore man loves himself in woman; but if he commits adultery, he sins against himself, because they are two in one flesh. Therefore, they do not divide the substance of persons, so that the number may become the nature of persons: but they are in the unity of nature.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) For no one ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the Church. By the example of the Savior, he encourages men to love their wives: just as Christ nourishes and cherishes his own body; so too, the husband should love his wife, because she is his flesh.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30) For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This is to be understood spiritually; for he said that we are his members, because he himself is the head of the whole Church; so that since we began through him, our head is said to be from whom the whole body subsists; so that every spiritual creature may be a member of his: if, however, it bends the knee in his name.

(Vers. 31, 32.)

(Verse 31, 32.) For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh (Gen. II, 24). He gave an example to commend unity, so that just as a man and a woman are one by nature, Christ and the Church may be understood to be one through faith. This is a great mystery, but I am speaking about Christ and the Church. The sacrament of this mystery signifies the great unity of man and woman. And this does not betray, but demands another cause, which does not disagree with the mentioned mystery, but pertains to the progress of the human race, that is, the Church and the Savior; so that just as a man leaves his parents and clings to his wife, so also the Church, leaving behind all error, clings to and submits to its head, which is Christ.

However, each of you should love his own wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband. Because there is one nature in both man and woman, therefore man is instructed to love his wife as himself, as if loving himself. On the other hand, woman, due to her inferior status, not

due to her nature, is commanded to respect and fear her husband.

Chapter VI.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right: Honor your father and mother. The law is given to children so that, since they depend on their parents, they should obey them; for it is right to show them reverence, through whom they came into existence.

(Vers. 3.)

(Vers. 3.) The first commandment of the promise is that it may go well with you and that you may live long on the earth. This promise is contained in Exodus (Exod. XX, 12) , that parents may be honored; that they may be well and of advanced age. However, how did he say this first commandment; when it is clear that the first commandment is contained as follows: You shall have no other gods before me. Then: You shall not make for yourself a graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath. Thirdly: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Fourthly: You shall observe my sabbaths, he says. Fifthly: Honor your father and mother, etc. (Exodus XX, 3 et seq.). But because the first four commandments pertain to God, it is understood that they are contained in the first tablet, while the others pertain to humans, such as honoring parents, not killing, not committing adultery, not stealing, not bearing false witness, and not coveting anything of one's neighbor. These six commandments are seen written on the second tablet, of which the first is: Honor your father and mother. For this reason, he said: This is the first commandment in importance, so as to distinguish between the commandments that pertain to God, and those that pertain to man.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So that the Law may be observed, which is provided, that children may honor their parents: to parents also another Law is given by the Apostle, that they may thus instruct their children, lest they despise the commandments of the Law; for if they are brought up in the fear of the Lord, they will be able to observe what is commanded. For if they provoke their children to anger, they themselves do not keep the measure of the Law; for they seem to compel them, so that they may be found transgressors. For in anger, no one recognizes what is beneficial; therefore, they should learn temperance from the example of their parents, so that they may follow what is beneficial. For parents should remember that they themselves were once children and certainly did not want to be provoked by their own fathers. Children should also understand that they will become parents in the future and would not want to be dishonored by their own children. Therefore, both should show to each other what they seek from each other.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as unto Christ. For our religion is higher than all and is the only powerful one, and it promises the kingdoms of heaven to those who believe. Therefore, in order that pride does not arise among men on account of this, all are commanded to fulfill the duties and obligations of their present condition, so that they may more strongly incite the hearts of the unfaithful to the worship of God,

which they see as both just and humble. For when the servants see that their masters have improved and made progress in faithfully rendering their duties, they liberally reward them with all freedom. Likewise, the servants, when they perceive the kindness of their masters, eagerly desire the loyalty with which human affairs are governed by such gentle restraints. For even a person who is in a position, if he has a servant, does not want to be despised by him; therefore, he should not despise his own master. And just as he wants to interact with his master, so he should also interact with his servant, and in this way he will be pleasing to God.

(Vers. 6, 7, 8.)

(Verse 6, 7, 8.) Not serving as eye-pleasers or people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, serving with kindness as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, he will receive this back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. For the sake of the fear of God, one should strive to show just and faithful services to men; for he serves God, whose rights he preserves in the service of a human master, whom he will repay on the day of judgment for just acts, and he attests this to all others. This thing can also benefit the salvation of the masters; for seeing that it is difficult for slaves who have been made faithful ministers by the grace of God, they were able to praise the glory of God.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) And you, masters, do the same to them, giving up threats, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him. Not ignorant, surely, are the carnal masters that God, the Lord of all, is common, demanding such services as they themselves would not willingly endure. For with what measure a man measures, it shall be measured to him again (Matthew 7:1); for the Lord is a just judge who discerns the cases, not the persons.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) Finally, brethren, be strengthened in the Lord and in the power of His might. After all the warnings and exhortations, and the religiously transmitted order of discipline, and the manifestation of the disposition of the mystery, He desires them to be strong in the confidence of God's power, so that knowing the sure hope of the promise, they may be ready for the obedience of God, steering against the waves raised by the enemy's folly. For God stirs up a tempest for His servants, but He Himself causes the shipwreck.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) Put on the armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the nations. The armor of God is steadfast faith, through which Satan has always been defeated. For your struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the Principalities and Powers of this world, against the rulers of darkness, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The Apostle warns that the destruction inflicted by the treacherous servants of God, instigated by the devil, is great and impossible for humans to overcome; therefore, he advises to take up the armor of God, by the power of which all the devices of the devil are defeated and destroyed. For he is the one whose companions are, whom he calls the rulers of these darknesses, wicked spirits, who live in the heavenly realms, in the firmament of the world. These are leaders of error, rulers of darkness, that is, supervisors of ignorance and treachery. For the rulers of darkness are capable of governing in

a perverse way, like masters of disbelief.

(Vers. 13-17.)

(Vers. 13-17.) Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Since we wage war against the most atrocious enemies and are clever in every kind of trickery, we must watch diligently and with great care, so that whatever they attempt, they may find us fortified and prepared. For it is necessary that God assist those whom he sees keeping watch in prayers and awaiting victory from his arms. In this kind of war, a sober mind and a pure conscience are necessary, because we do not fight against carnal wickedness, but against spiritual forces. For against earthly enemies, the body is strengthened by nourishment, and the mind is kindled by drinks, so that it may take on the boldness of resistance. But against spiritual wickedness, one must fight spiritually, and the weapons of sobriety and abstinence must be taken up; so that, infused with the Holy Spirit, we may conquer unclean and wandering spirits. Therefore, let us gird our loins with truth, if we are prepared to resist error. For everyone who wants to work, girds oneself; so that, with hindrances removed, one may work more diligently.

(Vers. 18, 19, 20.)

(Verse 18, 19, 20.) Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching in it with all perseverance and supplication for all saints, and for me; that speech may be given to me in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. If we conduct ourselves rightly, the Holy Spirit remains in us, and we can obtain what we ask for. Therefore, it is necessary to pray at all times in the Spirit, with a clean conscience and sincere faith, directing one's prayer to God. For one who prays with a polluted mind prays in the flesh, preparing to sin again, not by accident or deceit, but intentionally. However, it is possible not to sin unto death if one perseveres in prayer; in this way, the soul, diligently focused, is always meditating on God's Law, day and night, contemplating the things that God loves. Then, it is also possible to pray for the saints; for it is not unworthy for the members to care for one another, and it will not be considered presumptuous if suitable disciples intercede for their master, assisting him so that, having set aside obstacles, he may freely preach, as it has been handed down by the author; lest, weighed down by the force of tribulations, fear itself dull the sharpness of his teaching, having lost its severity. Therefore, he exhorts us to pray in two ways: so that his understanding may be filled with the spirit for speaking the full mystery, and so that boldness in asserting may be given to him, which God certainly willingly hears in prayer; for he sees his own mission despised in his Apostle, wherefore he will certainly not deny the effect in his cause, being indignant. For if it is customary and lawful for human ambassadors not to bring about destructions: with what presumption and boldness not only destructions, but even death are inflicted on God's ambassadors! And he says: For what purpose do I serve as a messenger in chains? For I was not allowed to speak freely, but in subjection and necessity, proclaiming the word of God in chains, blows, and deaths: for he was

stoned and fought with wild beasts at Ephesus (1 Corinthians XV, 32).

(Vers. 21, 22.)

(Vers. 21, 22.) But in order that you may also know what is happening with me, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know what is happening with me and he may comfort your hearts. Through Tychicus, the Ephesians learn what the Apostle is doing, and he also learns what the Ephesians are doing. There was no doubt about the Apostle, because what he was doing was divine, but it was necessary to know what he was doing among the unfaithful and their plots. But concerning the Ephesians, it must be known whether they were making progress or not. Therefore, in order for them to obey and gladly listen to the words of Tychicus, he recommends him, calling him a beloved brother and a suitable minister of God.

Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. May peace, which is the gateway of love, desire to be with the brothers, and love with faith; so that those who enter through peace may be able to remain in love, which is from faith. For this is from God the Father and from His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility. Amen. Foreseeing, the Apostle, having many who will lose hope in their faith, speaks of the eternal grace that will remain with those who love Christ, rightly speaking about Him and being in accordance with the will of God the Father. For those who speak ill of Him will have the grace taken away from them.

Chapter 9

Commentary on Galatians

On the Epistle of Blessed Paul to the Galatians.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12.)

• (Vers. 13.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21-24.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.) • (Vers. 21, 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20, 21.) • (Vers. 22, 23, 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• Chapter VI.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

Prologue

Anyone who believes in Christ and observes the Law of Works, misunderstands Christ: just as the Symmachians, who have their origin from the Pharisees, keep the entire Law and call themselves Christians, but they define Christ not as God and man, but as only a man. For if they understood Christ as God, they would not hope for anything from the Law of Works, that is, from new moons, Sabbath, circumcision, and the distinction of foods; because one who worships God and the Lord of the Law is above the Law: and one who agrees with the Lawgiver cannot be judged by the law. Finally, the law was not given for the sake of those who worshipped God, but for those who believed and acted badly, leading to contempt for the Creator. Hence it says to Timothy: For the law was not made for the just, but for the unjust and the wicked. (1 Timothy 1:9) And Moses says: You shall make the children of Israel fear. (Leviticus 15:31) And so the Galatians, or those who were subverting them, still having their hearts covered by the darkness of error, do not perceive the meaning of the prophet Isaiah when he says, among other things: For the Lord will make his word complete and shortened in righteousness; for the Lord will make his word shortened upon the earth. (Essay X, 23) If therefore they understood these things, they would depart from the Law, knowing that the preaching of John the Baptist had already ceased the Law, so that faith alone is sufficient for salvation, abbreviated from the Law. For in the Law is contained the predestination of God the Father, and of Christ His Son, and of the Holy Spirit, which was made manifest in the preaching; for if the sons of Israel were circumcised for the sake of the sign, that they might appear to be sons of Abraham according to the flesh, circumcision ought rightly to cease; because believers have the sign of conquered death, by which they are distinguished as being sons of Abraham, but according to faith; for to Abraham it was promised that he coming would conquer death. Finally, Abraham was awaiting this, rejoicing in the knowledge that he would soon be introduced into heaven, having sensed that he was born in the spirit. Hence the Lord said to the Jews: Abraham desired to see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced (John 8:56); for in the time when the children of Israel were still in the desert, before they were close to the Gentiles, they were not circumcised. But when they began to mix with the Gentiles, then they were circumcised by Joshua, from a rock that symbolized Christ: For the rock, he said, was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4), to signify through Christ the future circumcision of the heart, as Moses and the prophet Jeremiah had spoken: Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and circumcise the foreskin of your heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4); so that, having removed the darkness through the forgiveness of sins, they would become worthy to see the glory of God, which they were unable to see while under the Law because of sin. Therefore, in order to show that Christ is God, and that He did not learn from a human the things He taught, he begins as follows:

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Paul the apostle, not from men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. He testifies that he is not chosen and sent by men to preach, like some who were chosen and sent by the apostles to strengthen the churches; nor like others who were sent by the Jews to disrupt the churches, whom he calls pseudo-apostles; but that he was sent by the Son of God himself, whom he seems to deny being a mere human in this matter; because he gave commandments as if he were God, not as a mere human, and he chose

him by divine judgment. By which he designates himself as a suitable and firm preacher; because undoubtedly the one whom God chooses is much better than the one whom man chooses. He says that he is not chosen by man, as they thought about Christ, who compelled them to be circumcised; but by the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, by him who is God and man. This is immediately revealed when he says: And God the Father, who raised him from the dead. By saying this, he condemns two heresies, both Manichaeism and Photinism; because Manichaeus denies that Christ is a man, but does not deny that he was crucified, while Photinus does not concede that Christ is God, yet he does not dare to deny that he himself, that is, his own body, was raised from the dead. Thus, Manichaeus, by not denying the crucified Christ, seems foolishly not to acknowledge him as a man, and Photinus, by denying God with a certain impiousness, confesses that he raised himself from the dead. For indeed the Lord said: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But he said this of the temple of his body (John 2:19). Therefore, by raising himself from the dead, he signifies that he has raised his body from the dead; and yet he is said to be raised by his Father, because all the power of the Son is from the Father, so that the actions of the Son are the actions of the Father, from whom all things are.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) And all the brothers who are with me, the churches of Galatia. After he asserted his authority, he continues to strengthen his argument; in order to show that all those who were with him were also stirred up against them. Although his authority was sufficient to not be debated; nevertheless, in order to emphasize their wrongdoing, by which they had abandoned the faith from the beginning, he designates many who were incited with him to refute their error. For it will be easy for anyone to understand that they are mistaken if they see themselves criticized by many.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The benefit of both the Father and the Son reveals the upliftment of the human race. It does not indicate a lesser Son when it calls him our Lord, nor a greater Father when it calls him our God. Because the Father will not be a true God unless he is also Lord, and the Son will not be a true Lord unless he is also God. Therefore, if there is one grace of the Father and the Son towards us, why, he asks, do you think less of the Son and equate the law with him, serving partly Christ and partly the law, when you have read the Lord saying, 'For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath' (Luke 6:5)? So that they may see how great an insult is inflicted upon the Lord by them, when they compare the Lord to a servant.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) He who gave himself for our sins. Clearly shows that the Law is of no use when he says that Christ offered himself to suffer for us, in order to justify us whom the Law held guilty; so that, being freed from the Law through faith in Christ, we would no longer be sinners, but justified and called sons of God through a second birth. For when the human race was held captive under the dominion of the devil, the Savior offered himself willingly to the devil; mocking him with the power of his own virtue (for he desired to receive what he could not hold captive), he took away from him what he held unjustly. Therefore, having despoiled the underworld, He brought the trophy of souls to the Father, from whom all things are; a feat that the Law could not accomplish. Although it was

intended to be beneficial, it was turned against us sinners, becoming hostile; and it began to kill, not to give life. But Christ, by forgiving sins, not only revived us, but also joined Himself to us; so that we may be called children of God, being made so through faith. So, how great an error it is to return to the Law after receiving grace, which means, after obtaining freedom, to desire to be enslaved again; like someone rescued from the sword who forgets the favor and sells himself again to the slave-master? For the accuser is indeed the buyer who, having left it behind, returns again to the former owner. To free us from the present evil age. This is what he says because the Lord has given himself up to death, in order to free us from the error of the age, that is, so that we may be made partakers in the knowledge of the one God, rather than being turned aside by the understanding of this age, which with the passing of time draws to an end. For the malice of this present age lies in this, that it does not render appropriate reverence to God the creator and Christ the restorer; while human error fabricates many gods for itself, or while proper honor is not preserved for Christ by those who believe in him.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) According to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. In order to establish and confirm with authority what he says, that Christ has set us free, he adds that this was done by the will of the Father.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) I am surprised that you are being so quickly transferred from the one who called you by the grace of Christ to a different gospel. The gospel is good news, and in this case, the old law is set aside by the gospel of grace. But instead of embracing what has been promised and fulfilled, you have turned to the works of the law, thus losing what you had attained and falling back into slavery. This is why he expresses his surprise, because by rejecting the greatest and most beneficial gift, they have enslaved themselves to the works of the law, forfeiting their received freedom and quickly regressing. Normally, someone gradually transitions from evil to good, but these Galatians have easily turned from good to the burdensome deeds of the flesh. For it rarely happens that someone seeks destruction out of joy, and thus one marvels at the dullness of those who, while in safety, subject themselves to pointless labor. It is like a crazy sailor standing in the harbor, secure from the storm, who sets sail into the open sea; so that he is tossed about by various tempests. And so these people, through foolishness, subject themselves; so that they suffer the pains of a disfigured reputation and take on the yoke of servitude to the Law, with no hope of this matter being proclaimed. Therefore, they were called to another gospel, different from what these individuals were preaching, who had disturbed them. However, it was not another gospel from what the apostles were proclaiming, which these false apostles claimed to be different for the sake of undermining the Apostle who had instructed them. And in order to deceive the Galatians with this falsehood, it was necessary for the Apostle's gospel to be declared as something different from what the teaching of the Savior dictated. But the truth was that it was in harmony with the Old Law, as was being preached by them. There were some who posed questions to Paul and Barnabas about this matter, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Act XV, 2); for they were teaching the believing Gentiles that unless they were circumcised according to the custom of Moses and followed the Jewish customs, they could not be saved.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Which is nothing else but that there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. It is clear that they were doing this in order to turn the gospel of Christ into the law by changing traditions, so that they would be Jews in the name of Christ: and this is to pervert the gospel of Christ into the law.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Verse 8, 9.) But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. Do not marvel, brothers, that I have become so impassioned against those who oppose the Christian discipline, for it is for the salvation of the Galatians. This indignation shows that it is a serious sin to turn back to the Law after receiving the faith, for he affirms that the Gospel he preached to them is firm and true. It is as if he is saying that even if they, meaning the apostles themselves, should preach something different, they should not be listened to, as their reputation as apostles of Christ has spread everywhere. But if perhaps the devil, disguising himself as an angel of God, were to appear from the heavens in order to be easily heard, proclaiming these things, it would be known to be false, and it would be considered abominable. Therefore, if the apostles of Christ, whose excellent reputation was in performing signs and wonders, and an angel from heaven, whom spiritual reason can commend, were to teach differently than what they had been taught by the apostle Paul, he commanded that they be anathematized; how much more those whom he can commend no testimony to deceive? Therefore, he repeats the argument in order to confirm them in the initial tradition; for a repeated law makes the negligent more attentive.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Therefore, I make it clear that my intention is not to please people but to please God, so that they may turn back to God through repentance, whom they had rejected. Moreover, immediately following this, he adds: Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. This indicates that they were seeking to please those who had turned them away, not God, during the confusion in Galatia, just as he himself had once done when he persecuted the Church in order to uphold the traditions of the Fathers. For in order to be praised by the Jews according to their will, they said that the Law must be observed, so that if they were to preach the true Gospel of Christ, they would make enemies. But the apostle Paul, who taught that pleasing God with complete devotion, did not fear offending men as long as he was commending the glory of God. For he placed all present things behind future things, and commended himself with hope as a worthy servant of Christ. But those who seek their own gain under the name of the Lord cannot be worthy servants. But perhaps someone might say: Therefore, those who were preaching the Law, which is said to have been given by God, were serving men. How then can the Law be called suitable, whose preaching is reported to be tempered according to the will of men? Before the coming of the Lord, the Law was preached according to the will of God; for time was owed to it, so that it might be observed. But when the promised Lord came in accordance with the Law, the Law had to cease, according to the predicted judgement of the prophets. Where the Lord says: The Law and the prophets were until John (Luke 16:16); for it was not worthy that the authority of the

Law should be preserved in the presence of the Lord. Therefore, if anyone thinks that the Law should be kept from now on, he does not obey the will of the Lord, but contradicts it; for he satisfies his own desires.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) But I make known to you, brothers, the Gospel that was preached by me, that it is not according to man; for I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ. Now he begins to explain the beginnings of the letter; for he wants to make the meaning itself clear, that what he was teaching, he did not learn from man, lest there be any doubt about what he was teaching. Nor was his preaching suited to human judgment, so that it might seem unworthy of divine authority; but he says that he learned it from the Son of God himself through revelation, when he was already in heaven after his resurrection, as I have previously mentioned; and he testifies that what he learned is in accordance with his will and majesty, from whom he says he learned it. Spiritual things are those which, when preserved, confer merit with God; for they are carnal things, which, though preserved in their proper time, have neither merited nor unmerited anything with God: they have not been of use; for even those who did not keep the Law were under a curse, and those who kept it did not justify themselves before God, because the just one lives by faith. For those commandments were to be kept as a burden, not as a matter of worthiness.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my people, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. He briefly mentions his former persecutions against the church, in opposition to it, but then he says that he has left all that behind in order to be a servant of Christ. For he showed himself to be more devoted than those who had been appointed to uphold the law; not, however, seeking the favor of men, but thinking this to be advantageous before God. For through ignorance, when it pleased humanity, he believed he was serving God, having a clear conscience; for he did not yet know that the time for asserting the law was past, having followed the teaching of the fathers, either in error or in ill will; and with all diligence and fervor of mind he pursued this, so that he appeared superior to his fellow equals in the emulation of the law, thus raging against the discipline of Christ, showing no mercy to those who had obtained the covenants of faith. But when he learned by the revelation of God that this labor was empty and even contrary; he abandoned it and subjected himself to the grace of faith; so that his progress would be with God, he mentions. Therefore, if this person who is an Israelite, and who was supported by the dignity of a teacher among the Jews, educated by Gamaliel, a very wise man, having a place with the best men in life, abandoned the Law; how much more should those who were outside the Law not subject themselves to the Law? And if he rejoices in being freed from the yoke of slavery, what is it that they have bound their own liberty with the chains of the Law?

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verses 15, 16.) But when it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles,

immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood. While I had confidence in the Law, not knowing that the time for keeping the Law had passed, and with all zeal I opposed, thinking that I was doing God's will by resisting the Gospel of Christ; seeing that God approved of his zeal but recognizing his lack of knowledge, He chose to call him by His grace, knowing that he was now suitable to preach the Gospel of His Son among the Gentiles; for if he was so quick and faithful in the smallest matters, without seeking anyone's approval, how much more would he be steadfast in preaching, through the gift of God, in the hope of the promised reward? Therefore, the foreknowledge of God separates him from the womb of his mother, that is, before he was born or immediately after, God knew the future good, as he says to the prophet Jeremiah: Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, etc. (Jer. I, 5): so also the apostle Paul, knowing who he would become, met him; that before he converted, he called him, because it was necessary. Finally, he immediately received the dispensation of the gift of God, with all worldly care set aside; for he did not seek the advice of anyone, nor did he report to anyone what he would do: but immediately he preached Christ, for he is the Son of God. For just as future evils are often beforehand good, so future goods are accustomed to be beforehand evil.

(Vers. 17.)

(V. 17.) I did not go to Jerusalem to see my predecessors the apostles, but I went to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus. He says that he did not feel compelled by necessity to go to his predecessors the apostles in order to learn something from them; because God revealed to him through his Son how to teach. He speaks this in order to show that nothing else should be held but what he teaches: not to believe in men, but in God, from whom he testifies that he learned; and therefore, those who led them into the Law are false teachers, because what they taught was not handed down by God. So he went from Damascus to Arabia to preach, where there were no apostles, in order to found churches there so that Judaism would not be spread by false apostles. And from there he returned to Damascus to visit those to whom he had preached the gospel of the grace of God.

(Vers. 18.)

(Ver. 18.) Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. It was fitting that he desired to see Peter, for he was the first among the apostles to whom the Savior had entrusted the care of the Churches; not that he needed to learn anything from him, for he had already learned from the author himself, by whom Peter himself had been instructed: but because of his affection for the apostolate, and so that Peter would know that this permission had been given to him, as he himself had received it. Therefore, coming to him, he was received as a guest and stayed with him for fifteen days, as a harmonious co-apostle. He declares this in order to show that he had unity with the apostles and did not disagree with them in any way, as the false apostles whispered about him, in order to distort him among the churches of the Gentiles and insert their own evil teachings, claiming that they were consistent with the doctrine of the senior apostles.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) I returned again to Damascus and saw none of the other apostles, except James the Lord's brother. James was seen in Jerusalem, for he was appointed by the apostles as bishop

there, who also was previously unbelieving, as the Evangelist says: For even His brothers did not believe in Him yet (John 7:5). This James was the son of Joseph, who was therefore called the brother of the Lord, because Joseph was also called the father of Him, the Lord. For Mary said this to Jesus in the Gospel of Luke: 'Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.' (Luke 2:42). And in the Gospel of John, Philip said to Nathanael: 'We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' (John 1:45). In this way, the Lord, the brother of James and the others, who was also called the son of Joseph, was spoken of. For some, led by insanity, deny that these true brothers of the Lord, born to Mary, are called so, with their impious assertion that Joseph was not his true father. For if these were his true brothers, then Joseph will be the true father; because the one who called Joseph his father also called his brothers Jacob and the others.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) But the things which I write to you, behold, before God, I do not lie. As for the matter of his commendation, he gives God as a witness, that the things he is about to say are true, lest it should appear that he is making them up; for it does not befit his character to invent anything. But when he commends himself, he wants to benefit these people; for this commendation is advantageous to them, so that they may know that the things spoken by him are most true.

(Vers. 21-24.)

(Verses 21-24.) Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. But I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea that are in Christ: they only heard, "He who once persecuted us now preaches the faith that he once tried to destroy." And they glorified God in me. This is what he says, that when he defended Judaism against the faith, just as those who had been subverted by the Galatians; he was chosen by God, and taught to conceal his Judaism, and preach the new Law: so that the Jewish believers, whom he had once persecuted, rejoiced in him, giving thanks to God who turned the persecutor into a defender; so that the Galatians would know that they were deceived, and would profess themselves as Jews in the name of Christ, circumcising the flesh of their foreskin, even though Christ's law commands something different from Judaism; there circumcision of the flesh is carried out, here it is the circumcision of the heart: there they serve under the elements, new moons, and the Sabbath, here they serve only God in spirit; because it is believed in the heart: there the condition is the cause of sin, here there is freedom through the forgiveness of sins. So there is much distance.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. I went up according to a revelation and presented to them the Gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who seemed influential, so that I might not be running or had run in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. This matter arose because of false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us. But we did not yield in submission to them, not even for an hour, so that the truth of the Gospel might

remain with you. For it was on this occasion that the Galatians were subverted by the Jews, who said that Peter was teaching something different from Paul; hence, he was advised by the revelation of the Lord to go up to Jerusalem with the witnesses of his preaching, that is, Barnabas and Titus, one being a Jew and the other a Gentile; so that if anyone had stumbled because of him, their testimony would remove the obstacle, and he would explain to them the meaning of his preaching. But he conferred privately with the apostles, so that they would know that he did not disagree with the gospel rule, that is, so they wouldn't think that he was running or had run in vain, as some of the Jews who believed thought. For he could not learn anything from them, for he had been instructed by God; but by the will of God it was done for the sake of harmony and peace, that any hesitation or suspicion among his brothers and fellow apostles might be removed, and that it might benefit the Gentiles, who would see that his Gospel agreed with that of the apostles. Furthermore, they had given the law that those from the Gentiles who believed should not be troubled, but that they should only observe certain things, namely, abstaining from blood, fornication, and idolatry (Acts 21:25). Now let the Greek sophists, who claim expertise for themselves, say whether their subtle intellect naturally excels, which things have been handed down for the nations to observe. Did they not know, or did they know? But how can someone learn those things which they already know? Therefore, these things have been shown to be forbidden for the nations, who thought they were allowed: and thus they were not prohibited from homicide, since they were commanded to observe from blood. But they received this, which Noah had learned from God, to observe themselves from blood when eating meat (Gen. IX, 4). For how was it possible that the Romans, who have such authority in obeying commands, would not know that homicide should not be committed; especially since the Roman laws punish adulterers and murderers, false witnesses, thieves, evildoers, and the perpetrators of other evils? In conclusion, three of these commands are found to have been given by the apostles and elders, which the Roman laws are ignorant of, namely, to abstain from idolatry, bloodshed like Noah, and fornication. Those Greek sophists, not understanding, yet knowing that one must abstain from blood, adulterated the Scripture by adding a fourth commandment to be observed from strangulation, which, I believe, they will now understand by the will of God, because it was already said that they added it.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But neither Titus, who was with me, (that is, at that very time when I was in Jerusalem, Titus, who was with me) was compelled to be circumcised. Even though we were among the apostles and those who believed from the Jews, no one forced him to be circumcised. And it is understood, why should you be circumcised, when Titus, who seemed to be something, was not compelled to be circumcised, but was accepted as uncircumcised.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Vers. 4, 5.) However, because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. And even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. This matter arose because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery. To them we did not

yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. (Acts 16:3). The Greeks, on the other hand, say: 'We did not give in until the appointed hour,' and they say that this agrees with their reasons; because, they say, the one who was preventing it from happening did not need to say that he had done it, in order to prove that it needed to be done. But the divine apostle, knowing that this could be objected, presents it himself in order to anticipate the slanderers, and he gives the reasons why he was compelled to do what he did not want to do. However, he says, because of the false brothers who have been brought in. He says 'brought in' because they entered with deceit, pretending to be brothers when they were enemies. Those who infiltrated, that is, those who entered with humility pretending friendship. To explore our freedom, which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to subject us to bondage. To explore is to enter in such a way as to pretend one thing and seek another. In order to accuse our freedom, which we have in Christ Jesus. This is the freedom in Christ Jesus, not subjecting ourselves to the Law. To subject us to bondage: that is, they entered with deceit and deception in order to subject our freedom to slavery, forcing us to subject ourselves to the law of circumcision. We yielded to subjection for an hour; that is, for an hour we subjected ourselves to servitude, humbling ourselves to the Law, so that with Timothy circumcised, deceit and scandal among the Jews would cease. For they were prepared, as it is given to understand, to incite that commotion and sedition. For there was a reason how they had access to make false accusations; for Timothy indeed had a Jewish mother, but a Greek father: and so it happened that according to the Law the circumcised child would not be. However, the Apostle wanted to take him so that he could ordain him as a bishop, as he did (for everyone in that place spoke well of him), but he suffered the plots of the Jews. For they were investigating whether he would accept an uncircumcised son of Judea, intending to cause unrest because if he disagreed with the Greeks being circumcised, as the letter from the apostles had stated, or if he did not forbid the circumcision of the sons of Israel, because the apostles had not indicated anything about this in the same letter, the believing Jews were more enraged by his authority, as the letter itself did not prohibit Jewish parents from circumcising their children. Then, he said (Acts 16:3), taking him, he circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places. But they did not have a scandal among the Gentiles, for which reason Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. Therefore, he yielded for a time, so that the truth of the Gospel may remain among the Gentiles, since they do not subject themselves to circumcision. But there was no truth of the Gospel among the Jews, because those who believed circumcised their sons; for in Christ Jesus neither foreskin nor circumcision has any value, but faith working through love (Galatians 6:15). For not only history, but also literature indicate this, that he yielded. For above, it says that Titus, being Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised: and it adds, saying: But because of the false brethren secretly brought in. What does it now signify, if not that he yielded temporarily because of the false brethren secretly brought in? If not, how would the words or the meaning follow? Certainly, it denies that Titus was compelled to be circumcised: but because of the false brethren secretly brought in, what does it signify, if not that he yielded? But if he did not yield because of the false brothers who were infiltrated, he did not yield by his own will; for he indicated that he would yield if this is it: but he did not yield because of the false brothers who were infiltrated. Therefore, if there was no need to yield, why are they called false brothers, by whose help he did not do what he should not have done? So if this is it, they showed a favor to the Apostle; because it was for their sake that he did not yield, which he should have done. Therefore, why were they called explorers, if they did not want him to do what he was going to do: but he did

not do it because of them? But if he was not going to do it, undoubtedly he did it because of them: for there is no other explanation. The letters indicate this, because he yielded, and history proclaims the fact. For how could he deny that he yielded for a moment, when it is proven that he circumcised Timothy because of the Jews, which is to yield for a moment, and entered the temple purified according to the Law (Acts 21)? For he could only say that he did not yield for a moment if he was never found to have yielded. For either he would have ceased, because of false brothers, or he would not have ceased because of false brothers. Therefore, take one of the two. False brothers are those who were believers of Judaism.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But of those who are considered to be something, whatever they were in the past does not concern me; God does not show favoritism towards anyone. This means that the apostles, who were once ordinary and ignorant men without any status in the Law, were not hindered by this. For who can accuse someone whom God excuses? It is not a matter of who they were, but of what they are. The past does not condemn or vindicate. However, it is understood that the apostle was also knowledgeable in the Law and had a notable life, and because of this, he became the chief minister through the dispensation of the Gospel. For those who are considered something have contributed nothing to me. He says he has not received anything from the apostles, but from God, because the one who gives understanding to the unlearned in Christian doctrine, he himself also deemed it worthy to impart understanding of this kind to me when I was skilled in the law. Therefore, how could it happen that he learned from them, whom he found to be skilled, and by the grace of Christ made him even more skilled.

(Vers. 7, 8.)

(Vers. 7, 8.) But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to me as the gospel of the circumcision was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. For both are found to have accomplished both: but nevertheless, full authority is distinguished to Peter in the preaching of Judaism, and the perfect authority of Paul is found in the preaching to the Gentiles. Hence, he also calls himself the teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth (2 Timothy 1:11); for each one has received a distribution according to his abilities. For it was more difficult to draw and persuade those who were far from God to their faith, than those who were close.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verses 9, 10.) And knowing the grace of God which was given to me, Peter and James and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised; only that we should be mindful of the poor, which very thing I also was zealous to do. From the apostles, who were reputed to be something (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man’s person), they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me, but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision

(for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do (Galatians 2:9-10). And just as he gave companions to Peter, outstanding men among the apostles, so he joined Barnabas to himself, who was attached to him by divine judgment; however, he claims the grace of primacy granted to him alone by God, just as it was granted to Peter alone among the apostles (Acts 13:2): so that the apostles of circumcision may extend their right hands to the apostles of the Gentiles to demonstrate the harmony of the society; so that both, knowing that they have attained the spirit of perfection in the dispensation of the Gospel from the Lord, may show that they read nothing mutually against each other. They agreed only on this: that they were not instructed by the command or gift of the Lord, because it was easy to know this from the Law, so they were commanded to remember the poor to whom they preached, so that they would show mercy, as they were greatly redeemed by God. Therefore, these things that happened between them and the apostles make it clear that the Galatians know that what they received from them is true and approved.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” And for what reason did he add, saying: Because he was reproached? Surely he was reproachable by the truth of the Gospel, to which this act was opposed. For who among them would dare to resist Peter, the first apostle, to whom the Lord gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, unless it was another such person, who, knowing the confidence of his own election, steadfastly disapproved of what he had done without consultation.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verses 12, 13.) For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. All of them, including Barnabas, were acting in good faith, but because of the fear of those who came from James, they separated themselves from the Gentiles. It is contrary to the discipline of faith to associate with the Gentiles in the presence of those whocame from James, who were zealots for the Law and believed in observing both the Law and Christ with equal right. For they feared the boldness of those who challenged the Law. And if that were the only thing, it would not be reprehensible; but where the mistake was made, it was revealed in the things that were subjected to it. For even he himself yielded to the courage and boldness of the Jews, fearing that by this easily obtained scandal might arise, which would not be easily settled; because he purified himself according to the Law (Acts 21:26), and circumcised Timothy against his will (Acts

16:3).

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) But when I saw that they were not walking uprightly towards the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in front of everyone. He is specifically criticizing Peter, so that the others may learn from the one who is first. If you, being a Jew, live like a Gentile, how can you force the Gentiles to Judaize? Now he reveals the reason for the criticism; there would have been no error if he had concealed it from the Gentiles in the presence of the Jews, fearing scandal: but here is the whole reason for the criticism; because when the Jews came from James, he not only separated himself from them, with whom he had lived like a Gentile, but also compelled them to Judaize, for fear that the Gentiles would not know what was true of these matters. For they knew that he had not lived as a Jew; but after hearing from him that it was necessary to follow the example of the Jews, they hesitated on what was true. For if it was true that they should Judaize, they held him as a transgressor because he had lived as a Gentile; but if it was better and true that they should live simply, the overthrow of the Gentiles was due to their weakness, by which, deprived of the good, their work was laborious and ineffective. But the Apostle Paul, when he yielded for a moment, did not approve of this; instead, he exclaimed that it was a futile and empty matter due to the fury of the Jews. Indeed, he would not have given in to this matter unless there had been a reason, by which many of the Jews boasted of their audacity. Now, Timothy was the son of a Jewish woman and a Greek father (Acts 16:1); therefore, it happened that the child was not circumcised in accordance with the Law. Therefore, they were lying in wait, investigating whether he, being born a Jew, had taken on the uncircumcised condition, which they considered unlawful for the Jewish people. They were seeking an opportunity to hold him as a violator of the Law, and for this reason, he yielded for a moment to their fury.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(v. 15, 16.) We, by nature, are Jews and not sinners from among the Gentiles. However, knowing that a person is not justified by the works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law. By demonstrating that they have been deceived by clear reason, he shows them the need to keep the Law, in which no one is justified before God. For even though they themselves are Jews by nature and desire to be justified, they abandon the Law and turn to faith in Christ. For by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. He does not say that any justified person is justified by the works of the Law; for whoever are just, they are justified by faith, just as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other saints.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? Certainly not! For how can Christ be a minister of sin, who gives sins? Therefore, may it never be! But if we, seeking to be justified in Christ, are found to be sinners, then we acknowledge ourselves to be under sin; for faith extracts a man from the Law, that he may be justified. Therefore, if we submit to the Law, we are found to be sinners; for those who are under the Law are under a curse.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) For if what I have destroyed, I build up again, I prove myself to be a transgressor. It is evident that by approaching Christ, the Law is left behind; for the slave becomes free. But if he returns to the Law, he becomes his own accuser: for he condemns his own action.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) For I, through the Law, died to the Law so that I may live for God. This means that through the law of faith, I died to the law of Moses. For the one who is freed from the law is the one who dies to it, and they live for God, being a servant bought by Christ. I have been crucified with Christ. It is through this crucifixion that I am united with Christ. I am not captivated by any worldly desire, but I live for God, appearing dead to the world. For the one who does not engage in the things of the world or in deceit is dead to the world.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) But now I live, not I, but Christ lives in me. It is not doubtful that in him who is liberated from death by faith, Christ lives. For while he gives sins to the worthy one by death, he himself lives in him; for by his protection he is rescued from death. But now I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not ungrateful to the grace of God. Since eternal life is promised to Christians, therefore, he who now lives fortified by the helping of God, lives in the faith of the promised life. For here he contemplates an image of future life, which has been sought for us through the love of Christ at the will of God, as if a pledge. Therefore, he is not ungrateful to Christ, who perseveres in his faith, knowing that he has no benefit from anyone except from Him, and to act as an insult to Him if he were to prefer someone else whose help he could not have.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) For if righteousness were through the Law, then Christ died in vain. Nothing could be clearer; for if a man could be justified through the Law, then Christ would not have needed to die. But because the Law could not give forgiveness of sins, nor could it triumph over death and release the captives held by the cause of sin, therefore Christ died in order to accomplish what the Law could not. And thus he did not die in vain; for his death is the justification of sinners.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? The words spoken in anger are full of wonder; for they have been so corrupted that they do not even recognize that they have been deceived. He has used a preface; for everyone who is bewitched moves from good to evil, just as these have moved from freedom and security to servitude and anxiety. Before your eyes, Christ Jesus has been proclaimed as crucified. It is clear that to the eyes of fools, Christ appears condemned, that is, stripped or condemned: but to the eyes and senses of the wise, he not only appears not condemned, but he himself seems to have condemned death by his own cross; for the passion of the Lord is our life and the destruction of death. But because they began to feel angry when they were transferred to the Law, therefore he complains that in their minds Christ seemed to be condemned; and he added: 'Crucified in you.' That is, he was crucified in your understanding, as a man; for where there is not full hope, there is a man. Therefore, they did not

believe that there was full salvation in Christ, because they equated him with the Law. But in those who understand Christ appropriately, Christ lives in them, he was crucified in Photinus. For here truly died the one in whom Christ is said to have been crucified; for that is the charge brought against him in this place.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) This is the only thing I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain? Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith? And therefore, these people are called foolish and lacking in understanding because they were not able to provide for the needs of their own flesh. For one is usually led to pleasure or to the absence of pain. Therefore, the words of the questioner are confirming, since he says: This is all I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit from works of the law or from hearing with faith? He asks this of them in which they boasted and could not deny that they received the Holy Spirit through faith, not through the law. So that, repenting, they would acknowledge that they received the gift of God, in which they boasted, not from works of the law, but by believing in Christ, so that, being thankful to Christ, they would leave the law, which they had learned was of no benefit to them, behind. He proposes this, which at that time could not be denied, that the Spirit of God is in those who believe; for the gift of God was made manifest to men for the sake of commending the rudiments of faith; just as it was done in the very beginnings among the apostles and other disciples, as well as in those twelve who, because they had not been baptized in the true baptism under the name of John, but had been defiled, the apostle Paul commanded to be baptized in the name of the Trinity, upon whom he laid his hands, and the Holy Spirit fell upon them, and he ministered different languages with their interpretation; so that no one would dare to deny that the Holy Spirit is within them. Therefore, he calls the Galatians without understanding, who, knowingly and willingly, debasing themselves, subjected themselves to the care of the flesh.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Are you now being completed in the flesh, who began in the Spirit? He says this because, although they had ascended from lower things to the heights of faith, they had fallen from the heights to lower things. For by faith they had become spiritual, but now, having turned back to the Law, they had lost the grace of the Spirit that they had received. Consummation signifies destruction, that is, faith.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verses 4, 5.) You have suffered so much without reason, if indeed without reason. Many of them suffered for their faith from unbelievers; for at that time those who believed were a disgrace to others, whether to their own household or to strangers: for they were marked with a finger as if a mockery of majesty. Similarly, the Galatians suffered many things, having lost their sanity, because they had abandoned the Law. But because he added, 'if indeed without reason,' he shows that he hopes to be able to reform them. Who therefore provides you with the Spirit, and works powerfully in you, is it from the works of the Law, or from hearing the faith? The same

understanding is to which the insignia of virtue are added, which give testimony to faith, that it is a faithful and rational hope. However, no virtue accompanies the Law, which attracts one to its hope; for what is seen is not hoped for, but they are temporary, like the law of deeds, which we showed above.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) As it is written (Gen. XV, 6): Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. It shows by the example of Abraham, who is the father of faith, that righteousness is not imputed by works of the Law, but through faith; for he was justified by believing. And thus foolishly and imprudently did they subject themselves to the Law, which was not given for justification.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Do you understand, therefore, that those who are of faith, these are the sons of Abraham? It is true that believers are the sons of Abraham; for if Abraham was justified by faith first, all those who believe afterwards are his sons, whether they are Jews or Gentiles.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Now Scripture, seeing that God justifies the Gentiles by faith, foretold to Abraham: That in you all the Gentiles shall be blessed (Gen. XII, 3). It says this because Abraham is the pattern of all believers, so that those who believe may be blessed in him; for by following his faith, they become partakers of his same blessing.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) Therefore those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham; for as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse. It is evident that the faithful are blessed with the faithful, just as the faithless are punished with the faithless. For those who are under the Law are under a curse, because they are transgressors of the Law.

(Deut. XXVII, 26.) For it is written: Cursed be everyone who does not continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them. This is written in Deuteronomy, because if anyone were to omit anything from the Law, they would be cursed. And there are so many commandments that it is impossible to observe them. Therefore, even the apostle Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles, says: Why do you impose a yoke on the brothers, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Acts. XV, 10)? For these things were given to a negligent and proud people, so that they might have the Law in every aspect of their lives.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) But it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for the righteous shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4). And by this it is taught that we should depart from the law, lest righteousness obtained by faith perish. For the law does not come from faith, but the one who does them shall live by them (Ezekiel 20:21). The law is not based on faith, because it does not command belief. For all its precepts are evident, so that the one who keeps the law may live; but if not, it is necessary to be punished, because he has committed what he knew should be avoided. It

is possible to argue and say: If no one is justified by the Law, then what is the reason for criticizing someone who violates the Law? The truth is that no one is justified by the Law, but by God. However, one is justified by the world in order to be secure in this present life. But if one wants to be justified by God, in order to gain merit on the day of judgment, they must follow the faith of God; otherwise, they will be secure now but guilty in the future. Therefore, the Law is beneficial, but only what is written on the tablets; the rest, as it has been said, were given as a burden.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, by becoming a curse for us. Since no one could fulfill the Law, all were subject to the curse of the Law, so that judgment could be brought upon them. But Christ, being born as a human, offered himself as a sacrifice for us, redeemed us from the devil. By willingly offering himself to death for those who were subjected to the curse of the Law, he became a curse in this way, just as in the Law an offering for sins was called a sin. Therefore, being offered for the cursed, he became a curse; for he was also made a curse for the Jews, when he was killed as if he were a sinner. Therefore, he did not say 'Made for us a curse,' but 'Curse.' For he who was being offered up for his own sin was being made a curse, for he was dying for his own cause. And if you look closer, you will see that Christ was made a curse by those by whom he was killed; for the cross of the Savior is the sin and curse of the Jews. For it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree' (Deut. XXI, 15). This Moses said in Deuteronomy concerning those guilty of death, in order that it sufficed for them to be suspended on a tree until evening and to be removed for burial. Because, cursed is everyone, he says, who hangs on a tree; so that this, because he was hanged on a tree, would suffice for the punishment of death; lest if he were hanged any longer, his death would have a greater reproach than it ought: and it would become a stain to his race, if his death were further published. And thus the innocent Savior, being hanged on a tree, is not cursed, but those are cursed by whom he was hanged. However, as far as the Jews are concerned, offering him to Pilate to be killed like a sinner, they made him cursed, so that he would be killed as if guilty, when he was innocent, because he is worthy to be cursed with death according to the Law. For seeing that many were gathered together to his doctrine, they were jealous, saying: 'Behold, the whole world is gone after him' (John 12:19). And by this he is said to have been slain for us, and in a twofold manner for us; for when they thought that he ought to be slain, lest he should teach, they accomplished nothing; for both his doctrine increased, and he made void death in his passion. For descending into hell, he delivered the human race; for which reason he allowed himself to be slain, knowing that he was for us, and against the devil.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) So that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, and that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. This means that the blessing of Abraham, which was promised to him, passed on to the Gentiles through faith in Jesus Christ, after the Jews rejected and cursed him, even though they boasted in their adherence to the Law. The Lord said to the Jews: 'The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing its fruits' (Matthew 21:43).

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Brothers, I speak after the manner of men. Although it is a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) The promises were made to Abraham and his seed. It does not say 'and to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'and to your seed,' that is, Christ. This is what is written in Genesis to Abraham: 'And in your seed all the nations will be blessed' (Gen. 22:18). And surely this has been fulfilled in Christ, in whose name all nations will be blessed through faith. Therefore, the promise is not based on many, but on one, who is Christ. In this discussion, the Apostle designates those who falsify the testament as if they were guilty, who, believing in Christ, also hope for something from the Law; so that not only salvation promised in Christ, but also in the Law. Therefore, he proves that the promise of blessing was made only in Christ.

(Vers. 17.) (Verse 17) Now I say this, that the law, which was confirmed by God in Christ, four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate the covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. For if the inheritance is from the Law, it is no longer from the promise; but God gave it to Abraham through the promise. The Jews defend two opposing causes; for by no agreement, no argument can the Jews be persuaded that the promise given to Abraham is annulled by the Law, and rightly so. But they defend another thing against imprudent presumption, thinking that justification cannot come without the work of the Law, when they know that Abraham, who is the example of this matter, was justified by faith alone without the works of the Law. But in a certain blindness, they do not understand, nor do they consider that if justification is through the Law, then the promise is excluded; and if the promise is excluded, then the faith of Abraham will certainly be frustrated, which the Jews do not even allow themselves to hear, knowing that the promise is by faith of Abraham. This promise justifies through faith, not through the Law; just as Abraham was also justified by faith. Therefore, these are the heirs of the promise of Abraham, who succeed him, receiving the faith in which Abraham was blessed and justified. Therefore the testimony of the promise to Abraham is called a testament, so that after his death his heirs would be in the promise, his children made through faith. This cause ran until Christ the promise made to Abraham, so that after the death of Christ, believers would be heirs of Abraham's faith through the testament of Christ's blood. Therefore, the gift that was promised to Abraham was fulfilled for his children in Christ, although Abraham himself also received this gift there, where he was found.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) So why was the law given? It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one. Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. Nevertheless, the Law is called such because it teaches the things that, by God's command, are done in a bodily manner with sacrifices, firstborns, tithes, and

other such things. Arranged by angels in the hand of the Mediator. It calls angels the messengers of God, that is, Moses and Joshua the son of Nun, and the other prophets up to John the Baptist, about whom God says: Behold, I send my angel before your face (Malachi 3:1). Therefore, through these angels, the Law was ordained and arranged by God in the hand, that is, the power, of the Savior; for he himself is the mediator or reconciler between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5), to save those whom he wishes from among those who received the Law through the aforementioned angels. For He Himself says: Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He wills (John 5:21).

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) However, there is not one mediator. Undoubtedly, a mediator, that is, an arbiter, is not of one, but of two; for when two peoples fought against each other, always dissenting and enemies due to their different teachings, the Savior of these peoples came as an arbiter, cutting off the cause of their discord, so that they could be peaceful. He took away from the nations the multitude of gods and the worship of the elements, which was a stumbling block for the Hebrews. He also took away from the Jews the observance of the Law, namely, the new moons, circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, the distinctions of foods, and all the other things that the Gentiles abhorred. And thus, those who were previously enemies became peaceful. If therefore these things are in this way, why is it that the Galatians corrupt that judgment of the mind, having been converted to Judaism? For they render the judgment of the Savior useless, when, after making peace, they subject themselves to those things which were previously enemies of peace, as if repenting of it. Therefore, according to the understanding of the Galatians, Christ is not the arbitrator; because, being induced into the Law, they have made one out of two peoples, and surely there is no arbitrator of one people. He follows up this same sense to the Ephesians, saying: For he is our peace, who made both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition, the enmity in his flesh, abolishing the law of commandments contained in decrees, that he might create the two in himself into one new man, making peace (Ephesians 2:14). If he makes peace in one new man, he has surely taken away the hostility of both, through which they were at odds; and he has established this for them by his law, through which they might be peaceful. The Gauls burst in and converted to Judaism: There is only one God. He says this so that it would not be thought that by preaching Christ, he was preaching against the Law and the prophets, who declare that there is one God. He teaches that this God, as the judge, is to be understood by the assumption of flesh, as he says to Timothy: The judge of God and of men, the man Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 5): and that, according to how God is, he is not separated from the Father, but is one with the Father. For whether it be the Father or the Son, there is one God; for God is the name of nature and power, which itself teaches that the reason of names remains indivisible in the Father and the Son.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) So is the law against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all

sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. For it was not able to remit sins so as to make sinners just, but it was given for this purpose, to be a terror provoking men to a good life, punishing the irreverent. And therefore the Law was not given that it might give life, but condemn.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) But the Scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. This sense was also expressed to the Romans, saying: God has concluded all under sin, that He might have mercy upon all (Rom. XI, 32). He said this because, as I mentioned above, the Law was given so that sinners would know themselves to be guilty before God. For by manifesting their sins, they were concluded, so that they could not excuse themselves, but would seek mercy; so that when the promised one of Abraham came, He would demand only faith from them, as Abraham had; so that both their evils would come and they would merit justification. For this is what God had revealed through the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'He shall come out of Zion, who shall deliver and turn away wickedness from Jacob; and this shall be a covenant from me with them, when I shall take away their sins.' (Isaiah 59:20).

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) For before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. This means that the Law was our guardian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24.) Therefore the Law was our guardian until Christ came, so that we could be justified by faith. It is the same concept, because we were under the supervision of the Law until Christ came, who justified us through faith.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Vers. 25, 26.) But when faith came, we are no longer under a tutor; for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

(Vers. 27.)

- (Verse 27) For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. He says this because when believers are transformed, they put on Christ; when they are called this, it is because they believe.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither slave nor free: there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. It does not matter the background of the believers, so that no prejudice is given to what they were before they believed; for all of them have received the same gift. Before God, there is no distinction of persons, except for their character and way of life; so that people are distinguished by the merits of their faith, not by their identity.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) Therefore, if you are all one in Christ Jesus, then you are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise. The offspring of Abraham are all those who believe, for Abraham is the father of all believers. And if you are children, then you are also heirs of the promise, in order to obtain through faith what was promised to Abraham, so that we may share in his justification in the kingdom of heaven.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) However, I say that as long as a child is an heir, he is no different from a slave, even though he is the lord of all; but he is under guardians and managers until the time set by his father. It is true that fathers have established the law, and they have determined at what age the subject should become an adult; so that as long as he is a child, he cannot use his freedom, nor rule like an heir; but he is similar to the condition of guardians or managers, almost like slaves. By this example, it is proven that those who were under the Law were considered to have little worth and did not have freedom because they were subject to the condition of the Law due to sin.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) So also, when we were children, we were enslaved under the elements of this world. The word "elements" here refers to both the new moons and the Sabbaths; for the new moons are lunar days which the Jews observe, while the Sabbath is a day of rest. Therefore, before the promise came, that is, before the gift of God's cleansing grace justified those who believe, we were like imperfect and childish ones under the Law of God, enslaved to guardians and teachers; for our freedom was subject to the cause of sin. However, the Jews, like the pagans, did not hope for anything from the elements, but they worshiped the creator God in the creature.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verse 4, 5.) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. The fullness of time is the complete time that had been predetermined by God the Father when he would send his Son, to be born of a Virgin and become man, subjecting himself to the Law until the time of baptism, in order to show how sinners, cleansed and freed from the yoke of the Law, would be adopted as sons by the grace of God, as he had promised to those redeemed by the blood of His Son. But it was necessary for the Savior to be made under the Law, as if a son of Abraham according to the flesh; so that he, being circumcised, might appear to be the one who was promised to Abraham, coming to justify the Gentiles by faith, having the sign of him to whom the promise had been made. Therefore, it was no longer necessary for anyone to be circumcised; because the sign ran until the one who was promised came, to restore faith, in which Abraham

was justified in his foreskin, so that for those who believe, circumcision is not necessary. But Abraham was circumcised for this reason, because he believed he would have a son, in whom all nations would be blessed. Therefore, the sign continued until the coming of the promised one. But if they believed what Abraham believed, circumcision would not have been necessary. Otherwise, someone might argue, if Abraham believed and was circumcised, why are believers not circumcised?

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) And because you are sons of God, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out: Abba, Father. From these beginnings, he continues to write, saying: And because you are sons of God; and he refers to the Jews, when he says: God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. But when he speaks of the Gentiles, who were previously enemies but now believe in Christ, there is no doubt that the Jews who believe are also called sons of God, as it is well known that they have long been called by this name. For they had received the name of God as an image, so that it might be confirmed later through Christ; for it was not full without the Spirit. This is what he says to the Romans: The Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16). For in order to prove that we have been adopted by God as his children, he has given us his Spirit, who shows the sign of the Father in the children, so that, because we would not dare to say this in our weakness and unworthiness, he prompts us to dare to say: Abba, which means Father. In conclusion, it has long been forbidden for the Jews to say this.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Therefore, he is not a slave but a son. He is not a slave because he has been taken away from the power of the Law and made a partner of the blessing of the Son of God. But if a son, then also an heir through God. There is no doubt that someone adopts a son in order to make him an heir. But an inheritance comes from the death of someone; so why are mortal heirs called his, who always lives? But the Scripture speaks in our language so that we can understand; for in order to show that the father will give his possessions to his sons, it calls what he will give an inheritance.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) But indeed at that time, while being ignorant of God, you were serving those who by nature are not gods. Because previously, by ignorance, they would sin while serving idols, it indicates to them easily unknown, as it says in Genesis Abimelech to God: 'Lord,' he said, 'will you destroy a nation that is ignorant?' (Gen. XX, 4)

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you are turning back again to the weak and worthless elemental forces? Do you desire to be enslaved to them all over again? He is clearly referring to their previous behavior, noting that after they came to know God, they began to follow the ways of the pagans. And he adds more: These people did not truly know God, but they were known by God. For even though they did not seek after God, He called them to His grace. And yet, they were ungrateful and turned back to the things they worshipped before they knew God – these weak and worthless elemental forces –

instead of fully devoting themselves to Christ, in whom the fullness of the divine nature dwells. The weak and needy elements are said to be imperfect because they lack self-sufficiency to govern the world. But in Christ, there is perfect salvation.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) They observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. What the elements are saying, it now declares. The sun makes the day, the moon's course the months: but the seasons are spring, summer, autumn, winter: these four, having completed their own number, make the year. Therefore, those who observe the days say, for example: It is not appropriate to leave on the day after tomorrow; for after tomorrow, nothing should be begun: and thus they are more easily deceived. But those who worship the months, investigate the course of the moon, saying, for example: Instruments should not be completed on the seventh moon; a servant should not be brought home on the ninth moon, for example: and through these things, misfortunes tend to occur more easily. But they observe the seasons in this way, as they say: Today is the beginning of spring, it is a holiday, tomorrow is the Vulcanalia. And they say such things again: The future is uncertain, it is not allowed to leave the house. They celebrate the years in this way, as they say: On the Kalends of January, the new year begins, as if the years are not completed daily: but in order to recall the memory of that two-faced Janus, they use this superstition, which should be far from the servants of God. For if God is loved with all the heart, by His favor alone, there should be no fear or suspicion of these things; for whatever is done simply under the devotion of God can succeed prosperously.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) I fear lest I have labored in vain among you. The Galatians had been subverted in two ways: after receiving God's grace, they not only turned back to the Law, but also to their former errors. They were easily led astray by the Law, observing days and months; they were drawn to the observance of the Sabbath and new moons. Therefore, he says, I fear that I have labored in vain among you; for he saw them progressing for the worse, so that they could even completely depart from Christ.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Be as I am; for I am as you are. He says this so that they may make efforts to correct themselves, for it is not impossible for them to be like him, since he himself was once a human like them. And when he was in error, persecuting the Church, he was corrected and converted. Brothers, I beseech you, you have not harmed me. Now he acts more gently with them and begins to remember their good deeds, so that after receiving great corrections, they may be refreshed by hearing about their good works and may reform themselves through the works that have been given to them. Thus, they will not be further challenged by harsh rebukes and become even more embittered. Nevertheless, he says that they have not harmed themselves; for their sin condemns them: for the apostle had fulfilled the duty of dispensation entrusted to him, that he might preach to them with all diligence, as the Lord says to the prophet Ezekiel: 'You,' he says, 'preach: if they listen to you, you will gain them; if not, you will save your own soul (Ezekiel 3:21).'

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Vers. 13, 14.) You know that it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. For, having suffered scandal, they could say, 'What is the virtue or hope in this faith, when its minister is so humiliated?' But because they had already infected their minds with future hopes, they did not fear present outcomes for the sake of Christ's name, being certain that our faith has dignity not in earthly matters but in heaven, and that great rewards will be given for these tribulations. It puts shame in them; for after these praiseworthy acts they had been overcome, so that they seemed deserving of blame. But as you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. This they commend in them, that he was not deformed by afflictions among them, but rather commended, knowing that he suffers destruction for those who believe. So just as they received the Apostle as an angel of God, believing that the gift of God is what he preaches, thus they offer it to him, as if to the author himself, the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) So what was your happiness then? He says that these people were blessed among other churches, because the apostles were not discouraged by injuries, but grew in faith. I bear witness to you that, if it were possible, you would gouge out your own eyes and give them to me. Their vow in religion was so complete that not only were they well received by them, but they were also found to be strong in faith. And what is more commendable, they offered almost everything to be destroyed. From this, it hurts more because such great love had been undermined by wicked teaching.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Therefore, have I become your enemy by telling you the truth? This means that it cannot happen that I am your enemy, he says, whom I have experienced such great obedience from. But because no one wants to be accused of being wrong, therefore I seem to be your enemy, justly reproaching you.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) They envy you, but they want to exclude you so that you may envy them. The jealousy of the Jews signifies their downfall; for seeing them prosper in the gospel and having such great charity towards the apostle, they acted in order to deceive them. For they were enemies of the apostles because of the law, so that by maintaining the name of the Savior, they could make them Jews and rejoice in their downfall. For they would not tolerate the hearing of the promised grace given to the uncircumcised Gentiles. Therefore, they wanted to imitate their predecessors, so that they would be circumcised like them.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) However, strive for the better gifts, always strive for what is good, not only when I am present with you. The better gifts are spiritual, which will have an effect before God when imitated. These spiritual goods are the ones that he wants to be always imitated, not for a short time, as before, or only in his presence, but he wants them to continue in goodness from now on.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! Previously, he had begotten them in baptism through faith, but because they were found to be deformed and weak, as if through a premature birth, now with the pain of counsel he is reforming them in Christ. For although they conceive faith, they are least aware of the meaning of faith and are denied to have Christ formed in their souls; for if they had understood the grace of God in Christ, they would not have turned back to Judaism after having faith.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) However, I wish to be present now among you and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you. The one who is present wants to argue with them, to change his tone from praise to condemnation of them, so that they may be confused in two ways, both about their own error and the shame of the Apostle, which he suffered among those whom he had preferred to them.

(Vers. 21, 22.)

(Verse 21, 22.) Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, have you not read the Law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: one by a slave woman, and one by a free woman. This is found in Genesis, because when Sarah could not conceive, for she was barren, she offered her slave woman, Hagar, to her husband Abraham as a concubine so that what she had given birth to would be adopted by her. So it came to pass that Ishmael was born to Hagar. But then, by the will of God, a son was promised to Abraham by his wife Sarah, who was barren. She bore Abraham Isaac. Then Abraham began to have two sons, one from a slave woman and one from a free woman.

(Vers. 23, 24.) (Ver. 23, 24.) But he indeed who was born of the slave woman was born according to the flesh; but he of the free woman was born through promise; which things are said allegorically. For Isaac, who was born of the slave woman, was born according to the flesh; but Isaac, who was born through promise, was not according to the flesh, but according to the power of God; for Sarah was old and barren. For Isaac was born as a type of Christ; therefore these things are said allegorically, so that they may signify different things about the persons of Ishmael and Isaac. Ismael indeed signifies the nativity of the Jews, or of those who are slaves to sin; but Isaac signifies that of Christians, because they are born in freedom; for he is free who receives the remission of sins. For these are the two Testaments. Moses, taking the blood of the calf in a basin, sprinkled the people, saying: This is the blood of the Testament, which God hath enjoined unto you. (Exodus XXIV, 8). This is what he said: One indeed is from Mount Sina, engendering unto bondage, which is Agar. For Sina is a mountain in Arabia, which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem which is above is free: which is our mother. For it is written: Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband. This law held guilty the sinners, and they began to be servants of sin, becoming as the sons of Hagar, just like slaves.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) But Mount Sinai is in Arabia, which corresponds to the present Jerusalem, and is in slavery with her children. For Agar signifies the earthly Jerusalem, that is, the synagogue, which generates into slavery; for those who are generated by her are under sin.

(Vers. 26.)

(Ver. 26.) But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our mother. This, which is called our mother, is the rule of the mystery of the Lord, through which we are born again into freedom, just as she herself is free. Therefore, she is also called heavenly, because heaven is her abode: and those whom she generates will be there with her, as the Lord says: Father, those whom you have given me, I want them to be where I am, and they will be with me (John 17:24). This is eternal life; because those who believe are born again through it. For it is also said of the Lord that what is done in him is life. For just as the Father has life, so he has also given life to the Son, and life was the light of men (John 5:26). This life and light is the mother of the faithful. In Isaiah it is stated:

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) For it is written: Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband. (Isaiah 54:2). This earthly Jerusalem is said to have a husband, for she gives birth according to the flesh; but the heavenly Jerusalem, which is called our mother, is said to be barren, for she does not give birth according to the flesh, nor does she suffer the pains of labor. But she who produces without passion, spiritually exclaims with joy; for the desolate one (from whom, if not from Adam, who followed a desolate life to death), now has more children than she who has a husband, that is, those she generates carnally. For there are many more Christians than Jews, as it is said in the Apocalypse: 'And I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and tribes' (Rev. 7:9).

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) But you, brothers, are children of the promise, like Isaac. This means that you are not children of the flesh, but children of God. For Isaac was born as a type of the Son of God, and you should understand that those who are made children of God through conversion become children of the flesh. However, if they repent, they are children of God.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29) But as it was then, the one born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the Spirit; so it is now also. Not only Ishmael was born according to the flesh, but also Esau; for he himself was born as a type of the Jewish people. Concerning him, it is written by the prophet Malachi: 'I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau' (Malachi 1:3). Here Jacob persecuted, who was born as a figure of the Christian people, and was called Israel, that is, a man who sees God (Genesis 27:41). Similarly, he indicated that the Jews persecuted the Christians out of envy; therefore, they cunningly deceived the Galatians by their carnal tactics.

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30.) But what does Scripture say? Cast out the slave woman and her son; for the son of the slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac. These words are from Sarah, who symbolizes

the heavenly Jerusalem, giving birth to Isaac through the promise; so that, with the son of the slave woman, that is, the Jewish people, being cast out because of unbelief (for they are the slaves of sin, to whom forgiveness of sins is not given), the son of that free heavenly Jerusalem shall be the heir, who is the new people of the kingdom of heaven.

(Vers. 31.)

Therefore, we are not slaves of the son, but free, by which freedom Christ has set us free. So we were slaves of the son, while we were subject to sins: but having received the forgiveness of sins from Christ, we have been set free.

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore, stand firm and do not be held again by the yoke of servitude. It is advised to remain in the received grace, so that by not returning to the old, they may not lose the gift of liberty which they had achieved.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you are circumcised, Christ will be of no advantage to you. Now the power of open truth and authority does not remain silent, saying: Behold, I, Paul, tell you, that is, I am the teacher of the Gentiles, whose work you are in Christ, openly I say to you: Christ will be of no advantage to you if you are circumcised; For the Lord himself says: The law and the prophets were until John; since then the kingdom of heaven is preached (Luke 16:16). Therefore, before the new preaching began, circumcision was necessary; but now, with the law of faith succeeding, those things must be followed which simple truth commands; for the old and the new should not be mixed, by the authority of the preaching Lord; for he says: No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made (Matthew 9:16). And by this, not only will circumcision added to the faithful be of no benefit, but it will also obstruct; for it is a greater evil to become a slave while free, than to be born as a slave.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) However, I testify to every man who circumcises himself, that he is a debtor to the whole Law of doing. Some can keep the Law to some extent and not be circumcised, for many Romans in Judea kept the Law while uncircumcised. Hence, Paul the apostle said to King Agrippa of Judea: I know, King Agrippa; you believe in the prophets, I know that you believe (Acts 26:27). And a centurion, whose servant was about to die, sent for Jesus and asked Him to come and heal his servant; and some Jews who bore witness said to Jesus: He is worthy for you to grant him this, for he loves our nation and himself built us a synagogue (Luke 7:4, 5). Nevertheless, no one who is circumcised fails to keep the whole law; they are a debtor, for the law was given to those who are circumcised. He said this because they showed themselves to be so dull that they were worthy of bearing all the burdens of the law.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) You have been severed from Christ. You who are trying to be justified by the law have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(Verse 5, 6.) But we, by the Spirit, from faith, await the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through charity. It is clear what he says, that the hope of justification is in faith, through the Spirit, not through the works of the Law. For in faith, spiritual service is rendered to God with the devotion of the mind and the purity of the heart. Hence the Lord says to the Samaritan woman: God is a spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24). And thus neither the foreskin nor circumcision is of any value, but only faith working through love for justification; for faith must be strengthened by brotherly love, so that the believer may attain perfection. Finally, when asked about the greatest commandment, the Savior responded to the questioning scribe: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and your neighbor as yourself.' In these two commandments, He says, the whole Law and the Prophets depend (Matthew 22:37-40). The rest are imperfect, therefore, when perfection is contained in these two commands.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? The exercise of those believers in the work of faith was commendable, but the wickedness of evil people prevented them from completing their course with persistent effectiveness. Therefore, in order for them to repent, no longer allow those who advocated for the observance of the Law to prevent them from obeying the truth of the Gospel.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Your persuasion is not from God, who calls you. It is true, because the Jews were acting by human counsel to bring them under the yoke of the Law, not by God's judgment, who called them through his Apostle to grace.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) A little yeast leavens the whole lump. This means that even if those who mix the Law with faith violate faith, it will not bear fruit or be acceptable. He added this so that they would not mistakenly think that they have the grace of faith if they observe a few things of the Law.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) I trust in you, O Lord, that you will feel nothing else. He says he trusts in this hope concerning them, because they had entered the path of error not willingly, but being deceived. Therefore, having shown them the true way, he believes that they can easily return. But whoever troubles you will bear judgment, whoever he may be. Just as the one who turns a wandering person back is to be rewarded, as James the Apostle says in his letter: Whoever turns a sinner back will save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins (James 5:20); so too the one who forces the one walking in the right path to turn aside onto a way of error will obtain condemnation,

whoever he may be. For this reason, he subjects these; so that they would not defend themselves based on their merit, because they were descendants of Abraham according to the flesh. Finally, exalting themselves, they say to Jesus: We are children of Abraham (John 8:33).

(Vers. 11.)

(Ver. 11.) But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the offense of the cross has been abolished. For it is evident what he says; for he was considered as an enemy to the Jews, and they did not cease from their persecution of him, because he no longer taught circumcision. Finally, being compelled by the Jews and often being falsely accused by them, seeing that the judge was unjust, he appealed to Caesar. Therefore, the scandal of the cross has been eliminated (Acts 25:11). The preaching of the cross was a scandal to the Jews, because it invalidated the Sabbath and circumcision. However, if it had accepted circumcision, there would be no scandal, and the Jews would be peaceful with us. For they said of the Savior: This man is not from God, because he does not observe the Sabbath (John 9:16).

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) I wish that those who subvert you may also be cut off! This is similar to what was said to the Corinthians in the first letter: Whoever does not love the Lord Jesus, let him be accursed (1 Cor. XVI, 22). They are from the same corrupt flock, those whom their beliefs associate with; may they be cut off from the mercy of the Lord, those who have abandoned the grace of God for the Galatians: and not only spiritually, but also physically, He curses them; just as they were forcing the Galatians to be circumcised, they themselves should be cut off, so that their physical pain would be increased.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh. But through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But serve one another in love. Not in a romantic or physical way, but through the love of the spirit. Encourage each other to be subject to one another.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18). This is written in Leviticus, as mentioned above, because the perfection of salvation works through love; for whoever does not love their brother, does not love God, says the apostle John (1 John 4:20).

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed by one another. It is evident that discord among brothers is hostile to love; therefore, it is advised that they be peaceful and strive for what is good. For contentions give rise to quarrels, the result of which is the wasting of life.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) For the flesh desires against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do the things that you wish. He presents two laws, as he does also in the epistle to the Romans (VII, 23), which are opposed to each other: one of God, the other of sin. The one represented in the flesh, because it is delighted with visible things, eager for sins; so that with these opposing each other, the middle man does not do the things that he wishes. For the divine law restrains and drives away the law of sin, advising man to guard the strength of his nature, lest he be captivated by allurements. The latter, on the other hand, while acting in ambush, provokes man with flatteries, so that he may reject the commandment of the divine law. Therefore, when man agrees with the law of God, he contradicts the law of sin, persuading man not to do what the divine law commands. On the contrary, the law of God calls man back, so that he may not do what the law of sin suggests. Indeed, this man does not see it to be absurd; for he knows that it is in accordance with his own nature if he does what the law of God commands. In fact, he rejoices when he does these things; but when he carries out what the law of sin suggests, he sees himself as shameful and is horrified afterwards. Therefore, the commandments of the law must be kept by the spirit, and carnal things must be avoided; for conscience itself accuses, if it agrees with it, knowing that what the law of sin suggests is horrifying.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. It is not obscure, because one who has the Holy Spirit as their guide does not err; for the law governs those who err, as it says elsewhere: the law is not made for the righteous (1 Timothy 1:9).

(Vers. 19, 20, 21.)

(Verse 19, 20, 21.) The works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, impurity, obscenity, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, contentions, rivalries, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and things similar to these, which I foretell to you, as I have also foretold, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. All of these and things similar to them are the members of the law of sin, which the Apostle calls the works of the flesh; because these errors are from the world, from which also the flesh comes. For all sins arise from the fleshly part, not from the spiritual part; therefore, it is not absurd to call them works of the flesh.

(Vers. 22, 23, 24.)

(Vers. 22, 23, 24.) But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, chastity, goodness. Against such there is no law. But those who are Christ's have crucified their flesh with vices and desires. He did not say, 'The work of the Spirit is charity,' but 'the fruit of the Spirit'; for the law of the Spirit, which he mentioned above, bears fruit, so that the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven may be sought from these; for those

who are devoted to Christ, he calls them christs, that is, anointed ones. Hi carnem, id est, mundum crucifigunt, quando haec ex quibus errores oriuntur, condemnant. Hunc sensum et Joannes apostolus secutus, ait: Nolite diligere hunc mundum, neque ea quae in hoc mundo sunt. Si quis diligit mundum, non est charitas Patris in illo; quia omne quod in hoc mundo est, concupiscentia carnis est, et concupiscentia oculorum (I Joan. II, 15) . Qui ergo mundum, et quod in mundo est, non concupiscit, hic carnem crucifigit. For these vices, namely idolatry, sorcery, heresies, envy, hostilities, anger, and such, should not be attributed to the human body. Rather, they are called carnal because they pertain to the world, as I mentioned above. Meanwhile, he listed no more than ten things, which signify the fruits of the spirit; so that in them, everything seems to be encompassed according to the tables of God's Testament, in which no more than ten words of commandments have been given.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Vers. 25, 26.) If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. This means that if we live virtuously and honorably, we must have good manners and morals; for this is to live by the Spirit, to have an unblemished life. And so we walk by the Spirit if we strive for peace; for this produces charity. But empty glory is wanting to conquer where there is no reward; so that one may have the desire for contention and rivalry, knowing that these bring about discord and quarrels: But, he says, it is not fitting for a servant of the Lord to quarrel (II Tim. II, 24). For a good life produces arid fruits, losing the promised hope of chaste conversation: for a good and chaste life must be adorned with good habits and enriched with kindness.

Chapter VI.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) Brothers, even if a man has been preoccupied by a wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, instruct such a person with a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself, so that you may not be tempted as well, carrying each other's burdens. Now he addresses those who were stronger, so that they would not consider the person who may have been entangled in sin as unworthy and cast him aside due to the appearance of a righteous life, and therefore they should offer guidance. For they should be provoked with gentleness to reform themselves; for if they are rebuked sharply with authority, they will not tolerate being accused, but will begin to defend themselves, lest they appear shameful; and they will become worse. For if you take a person away from contention and audacity, you will have them subject to you; for humility has the power to humble even the proud. And in order to make this happen with all gentleness of spirit, he added: Don't let yourself be tempted; so that even for this reason he would not reject the sinner, knowing that he himself can sin. And in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ; for the law of Christ wants everyone to be saved: and by this, the one who advises a sinning brother to return to his purpose fulfills the will of Christ.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Verse 3, 4.) For if someone appears to himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one prove his own work; and then he will have glory in himself alone, and not in another. It is true, and no one is unaware of it, that if we consider our actions and our mind, we

do not consider ourselves superior to anyone, and we do not easily judge anyone. For whoever is exalted as if he were something, errs; for he does not know that growth comes from humility. For the Savior does not have words and deeds before his eyes, who, although he is Lord of all, humbled himself (Philip. II, 8); in order to give us an example of what we should follow if we desire to grow: and if we were to exalt ourselves, we would be brought low, which the folly of an inflated heart does; so that he may appear more commendable among men. For he scorns and despises sinners, and contends to appear righteous, just like that Pharisee whom the Lord denounces (Luc. XVIII, 10). Is he not truly ignorant, who is desirous of present glory? Is he not truly despairing of the future, who wishes to obtain the reward of justice in the present? Why? Because he is not just in deed, but he pretends justice through deceit; for he who wishes to be just, prefers himself to another, so that he may truly be just. For everyone knows more of his own evils than those of another.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) For each one will carry his own burden. Ultimately, he wanted to make this known to the proud, that no one is polluted by another's sin, as long as he disagrees, so that no one fears to join a sinner or to welcome someone who approaches him in order to gain profit from him.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) Let the one who is being catechized communicate in all good things with the one who catechizes him (that is, with the one who hears the word of God). This means that the listeners should share in all good things with their teachers. But if they act differently than they teach, then they should not be shared with or agreed with in those things, so that the law may be more of a guide to you than a person. For they work for themselves, not for you; because you follow what they teach.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked. It is certain to no one that imposture can be done to God, but each person will receive what they deserve from Him.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) For whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Here, it signifies the carnal vices that are typically committed in the flesh; so that the one who corrupts his own flesh will know that he will become subject to corruption. Indeed, it is he who presumes to engage in forbidden acts that corrupts the body. But the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. A Christian is both spirit and flesh; for in comparison to the Holy Spirit, the flesh is like unto man. So when he gives consent to the spirit, abstaining from those things which are contrary, he sows spiritually in order to reap eternal life. For the Spirit receives testimony, and immortality in place of reward. For just as one who corrupts and dishonors his own body does not belong to eternity, but to corruption, so too one who keeps himself uncontaminated will obtain eternal life. For this is eternal life, to live without punishment and to have glory. For if someone who is in distress denies that they are alive at present, how much more will they suffer as a stranger to God, the torment of fire!

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) But let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap an endless harvest. This is said because the one who is strong in sowing will also be strong in reaping, that is, they will receive in the same way as they have done. Therefore, it urges us to be ready to do good, and not to become weary, knowing that we will receive great rewards for small acts and eternal rewards for earthly ones, in the time that God has promised.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Therefore, while we have time, let us do good to all. The Gentiles have a time for doing evil; for people without God, how can they do good? But Christians, having been made so, have a time for doing good to all people; so that after receiving the faith, good works may profit the promised reward. Time is granted to life, therefore, so that we may now live rightly, giving an example to the Gentiles. Especially to those of the household of faith. It is true that we should be more readily inclined towards good in relation to our brothers because we are members of one another. Therefore, we should serve this matter which is beneficial, not circumcision, which is now an empty thing.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Know in what manner I have written to you with my own hand. He gives authority to his letter; for when he says, 'I have written with my own hand,' he wishes his letters to be obeyed. For where the hand is authentic, it cannot be said to be false; lest, perhaps, those who have been deceived might excuse themselves concerning the letter, as if it were either false or not from the Apostle himself, not wanting to be criticized.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Whoever wants to please in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised, so that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. Pleasing in the flesh means pleasing to people. Just as they preached Christ in order to live peacefully with the Jews, whom he calls pseudo-apostles, so they also taught to observe the law: something the Apostle never feared, but steadfastly spoke the truth and looked out for himself and those he was teaching. Finally, he said, 'I am not only ready to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Acts 21:13).

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) For neither do those who are circumcised keep the law; but they desire you to be circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. This is such as that saying to the apostle Peter: If you being a Jew, live after the manner of the Gentiles, how force you the Gentiles to Judaize? (Galatians 2:14) Likewise, these same people, though they themselves do not keep the law, unjustly insist on circumcision; so that they may appear to be defenders and lovers of the law: when it is clear that the one who faithfully executes its righteousness is the one who defends and keeps the law, and does not disregard the commandment given for life everlasting. Therefore, such was the Galatians' excuse. This is what they say, in order to suggest that they were deceived like fools and dullards, and that they boasted about their own sufferings.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. As the pseudo-apostles redeemed tribulations for the sake of Christ's name, considering them to be of little value, through hypocrisy, they were ashamed of these things. Similarly, the Apostle boasted in these things, knowing that a great reward would be for them. Just as his fellow apostles, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles: Then, he said, the apostles went out from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer reproach for the sake of Christ's name (Acts 5:41). Therefore, all hope is in Christ; he glories in his cross, to him the world is crucified; assuredly, the love of the cross of Christ is life, but the love of the world is to submit to death. Therefore, they are dead to each other: the world to the Apostle, and the Apostle to the world; while the Apostle desires nothing of the world, and while the world has nothing of its own that it recognizes in the Apostle, just as the Lord says: 'Behold, the prince of this world is coming, and he will find nothing in me.'

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Vers. 15, 16.) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. The new creature is our regeneration, this is what gives progress to those persevering; for the peace of God is upon them. For he who is peaceful with God, fears no enmity; for he is protected and made safe by the mercy of God, which has been promised and remains upon the Israel of God, not upon the Israel of man; for the Jews who do not believe are Israelites according to the flesh. Therefore, he signified two parts, upon which remains the peace and mercy of God, of believing Jews and faithful Gentiles.

(Vers. 17.)

(Ver. 17.) From now on, let no one trouble me. He did not want to suffer any more troubles, so that he would not be compelled to write again. But now he wants them to be more correct, so that after removing the errors, he can have a pause after so much weariness. However, if they prove to be more harsh and inflexible in turning back, then they will cease from him; so that he can dedicate his efforts and effectiveness to those from whom he hopes for reward or gain. For I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ on my body. He says this, angry because he saw that the passions he suffered for the sake of the believers were ineffective in them; because he did not hesitate to suffer wounds and chains for Christ's sake with steadfastness and faith in his teaching: but he suffered to have the scars of wounds out of love for the believers in his body; so that he would preach to them just as faithfully as the false apostles who had deceived the Galatians. Therefore, he does not want anyone who is not devoted to this matter to be a burden to him; for these scars, that is, the scars of wounds, are testimonies of those believers who suffer, that they are worthy of the future promise.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. He does not say the grace of the Law, but that it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with the spirit of those whom he calls spiritual brothers; for not all had completely fallen away.

Commentary on Philemon

On the Letter of Saint Paul to Philemon

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1, 2, 3.) • (Vers. 4, 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.) • (Vers. 10-14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.)

• (Vers. 17.) • (Vers. 18, 19.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• (Vers. 22.) • (Vers. 23, 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

Prologue

Philemon was not endowed with the dignity of ecclesiastical ordination, but he was an honorable man, one from the common people. For this reason, Onesimus, his servant and friend, writes him a letter; so that he may not only forgive him, but also give thanks to God; because he received him in such a way that he does not consider him a slave, but a most beloved brother.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1, 2, 3.)

(Vers. 1, 2, 3.) Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved brother, and fellow laborer, and to the beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to make the letter's authority from himself, he began by acknowledging his wrongdoing. Just as being bound is a disgrace because of sin, so on the contrary, for Christ to endure the chains of imprisonment is the greatest glory. For at the time he sent this letter, he was in custody. However, although Philemon was not a cleric, he nevertheless participated in the needs of the Church out of devotion, hence he says that he is a participant in these labors. For there are indeed many who, although worthy, excuse themselves, judging themselves unworthy of such a ministry; hence they appear truly worthy.

(Vers. 4, 5, 6.)

(Verses 4, 5, 6.) I thank my God, always making mention of you in my prayers, hearing about your faith and love which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; so that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the knowledge of every good thing which is in us for Christ's sake. I have great joy and encouragement because of your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother. Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you to do the right thing, yet for love's sake I appeal to you—since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus. However, the Apostle says that he adds this through prayers, so that his work is done with understanding of goodness; that is, he operates with such a mind that he expects the reward of this thing in the future.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) For I had great joy and consolation on account of your love; because the hearts of the saints have found rest through you, brother. It is evident that he expresses himself as being joyful because he was ministering to the needs of the saints: from which he rejoices even more, being certain that he was obeying his commands, whom he knows to be superior.

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Ver. 8, 9.) Therefore, having great confidence in Christ to command you, as it pertains to the matter; yet for love's sake I rather beseech you, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. As much as reason required, it was fitting to command a disciple as a master by the authority of the apostolic faith: but because Philemon was a good man, he entices him through affection to obedience, as if he were a companion in age, and a prisoner of Jesus Christ, that is, bound by the affairs of the Lord, or subject to his name in chains, just as the apostles themselves were. For indeed, there were Judas and Silas, who were leaders among the brothers, being from the common people, they had committed themselves to the Lord's work (Acts 15:22 and following); so that they could work together with the apostles for the sake of faith in God. Hence, Silas is found to be a partner in the apostle's labors.

(Vers. 10-14.)

(Verses 10-14.) I beseech you, for my son whom I have begotten in chains, Onesimus, formerly useless to you but now useful to both you and me, whom I have sent back to you. But I urge you to receive him as I would receive my own heart. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might serve me on your behalf while I am in chains for the sake of the gospel. But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your kindness would not be out of necessity but voluntary. It is not a great thing to humble oneself when one is lowly, but it is commendable for a noble man to humble himself. Therefore, the Apostle asks him, to whom he has the authority to command, to be in all things a model for the advancement of merits. Therefore, when Onesimus, a fugitive, returned to seek divine assistance, the Apostle baptized him while he was in custody in the city of Rome, seeing the hope of usefulness in him. He commends him in such a way that he indicates his suitability to serve in secular as well as divine duties, having been transformed from useless to useful.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) Perhaps he therefore departed for a while, so that you might receive him forever: not now as a slave, but beloved brother, especially to me; how much more to you both in the flesh and in the Lord? Onesimus, having offended his own master, fled on a long journey to the Apostle; to show that he did not depart for the purpose of being guilty of a crime, but so that, with sins forgiven, he might return useful to such an extent that he would not only become equal to his master in merits, but also a brother to the master himself. And so that Philemon may not suffer any disdain of pride, as is usual, as if the master were against the servant, he humbles himself when he calls him his brother both in the flesh and in the Lord; so that with the removal of the cause of human condition, because we are all descended from one Adam, we may recognize ourselves as brothers: especially when faith comes in the middle, which cuts off all pride.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) So if you consider me as a partner, receive him as you would receive me. He shows such concern for Onesimus that he says Philemon, whom he praises above, should consider him as his own companion if he welcomes him as he would welcome an apostle. This is what Solomon said: A wise servant will have free people serving him (Eccles. 10:28). This saying is meant to scare Philemon, so that he may at least take him in for this reason if he cannot be swayed by love.

(Vers. 18, 19.)

(Vers. 18, 19.) If, however, something has hurt you, or he is a debtor, impute this to me. Now he undermines the excuse of anger, lest perhaps he would complain that he was hurt by him in such a way that it would not seem fitting to forgive him. But if it were so, he says it must be imputed to himself, through whom the heirs of the kingdom of heaven will be in the future, who have sinned before.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) I, Paul, have written with my own hand, I will repay; to say nothing of the fact that you owe me your very self. If any offense has been committed, Onesimus has testified that he is fully capable of making amends; so that he may make satisfaction on his behalf. And speaking the truth, he raises himself up and says that he demands less from him than is proven to be owed. For he is compelled to make satisfaction as a servant; because he burdens himself with the debt.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Verse 20, 21.) So, brother, may I enjoy you in the Lord, refresh my heart in Christ. Having confidence in your obedience, I have written to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. I am now being affectionate, so that his obedience may be voluntary, in order to bear fruit. For by doing so, he provokes him to do more than is demanded of him; it often happens that when one sees themselves being thought highly of, they present themselves as even better.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) But at the same time, prepare for me a lodging; for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you. To make him more anxious and obedient, it is indicated that he will come; for those who are absent are usually despised. And the reason why the Apostle does not consider himself unworthy to be here yet, who has always suffered weariness and dangers, murders,

persecutions, and chains, and whose rest was only in Christ alone? But for the progress of the believers, and to confound the enemies of the cross of Christ, he offered his own flesh to sufferings, in order to obtain crowns of immortality for his soul and body.

(Vers. 23, 24.)

(Verse 23, 24) Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you. Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers, also send their greetings. They all send their greetings and testify to their share in his glory.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, amen. This is the subscription of the Apostle confirming the sent letter.

Commentary on Philippians

On the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.) • (Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10, 11.) • (Vers. 12-17.) • (Vers. 18-21.) • (Vers. 22-26.) • (Vers. 27, 28.) • (Vers. 29, 30.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1-4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.) • (Vers. 10, 11, 12.) • (Vers. 12, 13.) • (Vers. 14-18.) • (Vers. 19-24.) • (Vers. 25, 26, 27.)

• (Vers. 28.) • (Vers. 29, 30.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.) • (Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8-11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18, 19.) • (Vers. 20, 21.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2, 3.)

• (Vers. 4.) • (Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11, 12, 13.) • (Vers. 15, 16, 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

Prologue

The Apostle delivered the word of faith to the Philippians; for he was warned in a dream, as is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts XVI, 9), to go to them and open their ears to receive the word of the Lord. Therefore, he stayed with them for many days and instructed them in the teaching of the Lord. And because after his departure they did not turn to another, like the Galatians, but remained in the faith, not accepting false apostles, he commends them in a letter, rejoicing in the sincerity of their hearts. In their praise, there is also a criticism of others: for the Corinthians, after listening to the Apostle for a long time, were led astray by various false apostles when he departed. Therefore, these individuals are rightly praised.

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ. He identifies himself as an apostle because he is writing to those who have a correct understanding of him; therefore, he suppresses his own dignity, which was evident to them. However, he acknowledges his position; for those who confess Christ as Lord are truly free and have salvation. To all the saints in Christ Jesus. He writes to the saints in his own way, but those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, that is, those who confess Christ as both God and man. For Photinus denies that Christ is God, and Manichaeus denies that he is man; therefore, they are impure. So he does not write to those who suppress the truth with their own lies. He writes to those who are in Philippi. Who he should write to, he makes known. With the bishops and deacons: that is, with Paul and Timothy, who were certainly bishops; at the same time he indicates deacons, who ministered to him. For he writes to the people; for if he were writing to bishops and deacons, he would be writing to their persons, and it would be necessary to write to the bishop of that place, not to two or three, as he did to Titus and Timothy.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is evident that God is the Father, and Jesus Christ is our Lord. Does it not seem that the Lord is greater than

the Father? But among humans in the world, there is harmony between God the Father and Christ the Lord. Here, in the world, the Lord is greater than the Father because He is either the Lord of the Father Himself, or the Father does not generate a son of his own nature, but of a different nature. But God has begotten in such a way that those whom He has begotten are under His power, so that though they are born free, they are still His servants. When He hands them over to His own Son, He also makes them servants of His Son, so that He may be their Lord, as He says: Father, those whom you have given me were yours, and you gave them to me; so that they may be the servants of the one God in the Father and the Son (John 17:9).

(Vers. 3, 4, 5.) (Vers. 3, 4, 5.) I indeed give thanks to the Lord for all the remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making supplication for all of you with joy, for your fellowship in the Gospel. First and foremost, I give thanks to the Lord, from whom all prosperous things come to the faithful. In every prayer, I remember them with joy, because they have become partakers of the Gospel, as Peter the Apostle says among other things: 'That you may become partakers of the divine nature' (2 Peter 1:4). From the first day until now, for the Apostle foresaw their devotion and their firm faith from the beginning, and he rejoiced in them, always knowing that they would be an example to many.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Vers. 6, 7.) Confidens in hoc ipsum, quod qui inchoavit in vobis opus bonum, perficiet usque in diem Christi Jesu, sicut est justum mihi haec sentire pro omnibus vobis; eo quod habeam vos in corde et in vinculis meis, et in defensione et confirmatione Evangelii; quoniam omnes mihi participes gaudii estis. Securus de bonitate et justitia Dei, et de horum fide non ambigens, contidit quod Dei auxiliis adjuti, perseveraturi sint in fide usque ad diem Domini, inquo remunerandi sunt persistentes in fide. He should not have thought anything different about those whom he always experienced as unwavering in their devotion to God, seeing their direct and tireless course, so that he would consider them worthy to be sharers in his joy. Indeed, people who share the same faith ought to rejoice together in the hope of future immortality and glory.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the affection of Jesus Christ. And I pray that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

(Vers. 9, 10, 11.)

(Verse 9, 10, 11.) And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. With the help of God, he wants to imbue them with the order of Christian discipline, so that since they are established in faith, they may not be ignorant of the sacrament of their belief: and knowing how to discern what is useful from what is contrary, they may adorn the doctrine of the Lord with righteous deeds, producing the fruit of immortality to the abundance of all good things, so that the Master of the Gentiles appears glorious in them.

(Vers. 12-17.)

(Vers. 12-17.) But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill. Indeed, some out of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel; but some out of contention preach Christ not sincerely, thinking to add affliction to my bonds. These explanations are not necessary; however, for our concern, so that no doubts arise, let us proceed to explain them more clearly. Since he declared these people to be partakers of his joy above, it implies what progress his preaching has made, like a favor; so that all may know his sufferings for Christ. Through this humility, he indicates his glory, so that his lovers may have an opportunity to rejoice; for his dignity increases when his bonds in Christ are made manifest. In every praetorium and in all other places, that is, in all Judaism and throughout the Churches of the Gentiles; Judaism has the preeminence, for to them was made the promise, as it is said: 'Salvation is from the Jews' (John 4:22). Therefore, many of the brethren, following his example, dared to speak the word of God with confidence; for his steadfastness encouraged many not to pass by without proclaiming the gospel, having perceived by the example of the Apostle that God is present to protect those who love him; but others, false brethren, impelled not by confidence or the love of God, but by the contentiousness of zeal, are said to preach the word of God, as if envious. Therefore, many of the brothers were proclaiming Christ with sincere but different intentions; for some were acting with good will for the glory of God alone, while others were motivated by love as apostles, confident in God's protection. Again, he presents two other types, who were not preaching with a sincere heart; for some were acting out of envy towards the Apostle, causing conflict: while others were proclaiming Christ with cunning and deception, in order to incite sedition against the Apostle, as if he were the author of this sect, which had attracted many to their conspiracy. For indeed envy grew against the Apostle, when many appeared to teach from his side.

(Vers. 18-21.)

(Verse 18-21.) What then? However, in any way, whether by occasion or by truth, Christ is proclaimed: and in this I rejoice, but will also rejoice. For I know that this will result in my salvation through your prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my expectation and hope, that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death; for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. His first joy is in the brethren, who willingly proclaim Christ: then also in the fact that the deceit of men was arranged against him, so that Christ might be preached to his disadvantage and persecution. For he says that he profits in this that they had prepared for death; for he says that this is his life, if Christ is preached to all, and that he is even ready to die, so that this might be fulfilled, knowing that great reward and efficacy can be given to him for this desire: for ignorant malice always devises against him, while it does not know. Therefore, in order to overcome the malice of those who were plotting the ruin of his life with deceitful schemes, he testifies that he is fortified by the protection of God, and he declares that those who are truly companions of his joy assist him through prayer due to their common affliction, and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who would open paths contrary to their will and give grace and confidence in his words, so that he

would be able to suppress the uprisings that had arisen. Therefore, he says that he is not ashamed in any way in the teaching of Christ, because it is a great hope of promise, and because there is nothing shameful, dishonorable, or deceptive in it, as there is among the pagans, but rather, it is openly simple. For from here is where, with unwavering constancy, he does not yield to adversity, so that Christ may be magnified in his body, whether he is killed or escapes being killed. For from this, the hope in Christ is considered in its quantity and greatness; when not only is he ready to be killed and afflicted for him, but also to die. For he says that his life is Christ, whether in the present or in the future, just as the evangelist John testifies, saying: That which has been made, in him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:3-4). For this mortal life he hands over his body, so that he may receive it in eternity: and through this, he considers it gain to die for Christ.

(Vers. 22-26.)

(Verses 22-26.) So if I am to live in the flesh, this means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. And convinced of this, I know that I will remain and stay with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your confidence in Christ Jesus may abound in me through my coming to you again. It is clear what he is saying, that if he is in the flesh, he is not idle in his life; for he has the fruit of his work. He says, 'I do not know what to choose.' He is pressed by two reasons; for he has the desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is much better. He desires to be present with God, to enjoy the things he longs for and the promises he has received. But he says it is necessary for him to remain in the flesh for the sake of the believers' growth and instruction. And he is certain that he will continue to live in the flesh for the progress and joy of the believers, so that their glory may abound in the Lord, and he may advance in his apostolic mission when they see him again. Indeed, the sciences make progress, and they are more fully grounded in faith. To the extent that he had affection for believers, he does not choose this which he says is much better for himself, but he desires this which is expedient for many, certain also that this pleases the Lord, and that it benefits the salvation of many. Who, desirous of the third heaven, would despise all present care? Who, in longing for the higher paradise, would postpone all these things? Who, mindful of the secret words, would avoid human discourses? Who, after so many disasters, would not choose rest? But because he placed charity above all, he followed this in order to benefit his brothers.

(Vers. 27, 28.)

(Verse 27, 28.) Live your lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. He wants to display in them a worthy conduct of the Lord's teaching, so that he may not regret having chosen to remain in the flesh. Whether I come and see you or I am absent, I will hear about you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not being frightened in any way by your opponents, which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you. He wants them to be unanimous in faith and devotion against adversaries, so that he may hear from them in their absence what he saw and experienced in their presence; so that they may fear no threats or terrors from their adversaries, and may protect the faith, knowing that those who suffer for Christ benefit for salvation, but those who afflict them face destruction.

(Vers. 29, 30.)

(Verse 29, 30.) And this has been given to you by God for Christ, not only that you may believe in him, but also that you may suffer for him, having the same struggle that you saw in me and now hear about in me. Although he praises the grace of God in all things, he advances to their praise, saying that God has granted them to suffer for Christ; for he does not grant or give to anyone except to the lovers of Christ. Therefore, he says: It has been given to you for Christ's sake; so that it may be given to those who love Christ by the Father God, so that they may suffer for Christ as an argument for their merits, and following the examples of their teacher, may strive with complete confidence to triumph over unbelievers.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1-4.)

(Vers. 1-4.) Therefore, if there is any exhortation in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any participation in the Spirit, if there are any affections and mercies, fulfill my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should not only look out for their own interests, but also for the interests of others. He says this because if there is true encouragement of hope in Christ among you, by which we console one another, if there is consolation of common love, if there is fellowship of the Holy Spirit, through which we are united in one new body, if there are any affections, that is, if I am in your heart as you are in mine, if there are any mercies, that is, if there is any expression of piety in love, fulfill my joy. He indicates that these things that he enumerates should be proven true, if the commands that follow are observed; so that they may be of one mind and humble in spirit, not provoking one another, but rejoicing in love; so that the joy of the apostle may be complete in them. So, therefore, it restrains them, so that if they do not keep these things, they may not seem approved in other matters; so that, because they do not want to be seen as disapproved in other things, they also keep these things, so that they may be perfect. Without a doubt, there were among them those who disagreed and were restless, and those who pursued empty glory, wanting to contend and conquer with a fierce spirit, where there is no reward: but it causes disputes and breaks charity. For what kind of people can there be, in which there are vessels of gold but only silver, and not also wooden and earthenware ones? But good things can be changed into golden and silver by practice; because it is not a defect of nature, but of the will.

(Vers. 5, 6.) (Vers. 5, 6.) For indeed, have this mind among yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped. Christ always existed in the form of God, as he is the image of the invisible God. But the Apostle, speaking of the Son of God, when he became incarnate and made man, says this: Have this mind among yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, that is, both God and man. Though he was in the form of God, he lived among men and appeared to be God in words and deeds. For the form of God differs nothing from God; for therefore He is called the form and image of God, that it may be understood that He is not Himself God the Father, but that He is this, that God is. Therefore, He did not think it robbery to be equal with God, knowing that He was in the form of God, He did not steal, that He might say: I and the Father are one (John 10:30). And elsewhere in the Gospel of John: Therefore, the Jews persecuted Jesus because not only did He loosen the sabbath, but He also said that God was His own Father, making Himself equal to God (John 5:18).

Therefore, by right, he equated himself with God; for he who makes himself equal to the one who is inferior to him considers it robbery. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore, knowing that he is in the form of God, he showed himself to be equal to God. But to teach the law of humility, when the Jews were trying to seize him, he not only did not resist, but he emptied himself; that is, he withdrew his own power from action, so that he, being humbled, would appear to be weak without idle power. Taking the form of a servant, while being held and bound, and being beaten, he became obedient to the Father, whom he knew to be equal to himself; he did not defend his equality, but subjected himself. He teaches us to imitate this patience and humility, so that we not only do not put ourselves before our equals; but also humble ourselves, following the example of our author. However, it is said that he did not receive the form of God, but that he is in the form of God: but the form of a servant, while humbled like a sinner. However, servants are made from sin, just like Ham, the son of Noah, who rightfully received the name servant (Gen. IX, 25). For it does not seem to me, as it does to some, that he received the form of a servant when he was born a man. For see what he says: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, that is, in God and man. Before the incarnation, Christ can be called either Christ or Jesus; because both names signify the son of man and the Son of God together. What does Scripture say about the time before the birth? But Christ was the rock, and let us not tempt Christ, as some of them tempted him (I Cor. X, 4). Therefore, when Scripture wants to signify either God or man, it presents one of the two: either Jesus or Christ. For the Son of God, when he was born as man, was in the form of God; because although he seemed to be man, he was performing the works of God, so that in his deeds it would be evident that he is God, even though he was considered only a man. For the works signified a form, so that because of his works, not necessarily as the works of a man, this one who was in the work or form of God, would be understood as God. For what is the form of God, if not the example by which God appears, by raising the dead, restoring hearing to the deaf, cleansing lepers, and other things? But how is he said to have been made similar to a man, if he was only a man? And by what reason is it found that he is in the form of a man, if he were not also God? Except that, even before he permitted himself to be bent down, he was always seen in the power of God, afterwards he was found in the frailty of a man. For on the mountain, indeed, he appeared as God (Matt. 17:2); and walking on the sea, he was seen and understood not only as a man, but also as God. Moreover, what do those who were in the boat say? Truly, this is the Son of God (Matt. 14:33). Therefore, when this power ceased, he was seen as a man; for he said this as if to signify that he is also God. For the cause of his weakness, he says that God was made like to men. He explains this in the following, saying: He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross. Hence it is where he was found in the form of a man; for he retains his power, so that he appeared as a man and was killed, even though he does not know how to die.

(Vers. 10, 11, 12.)

(Verses 10, 11, 12) For this reason also God exalted him and gave him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. It shows what and how much humility deserves; so that we may seek

it more, trampling down pride. Therefore, Solomon says: God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (Prov. III, 34). Therefore, the Lord said: 'Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted' (Luke 14:11). This, therefore, is humility, if someone does not defend for themselves what they do not know is owed to them. In the end, that Pharisee (Luke 18:11 et seq.), speaking the truth about himself, was said to have exalted himself; and thus, he was humbled: but Christ did more, who, although He is God, became flesh and humbled Himself to men. Now let us see how the name given to Christ, which is above every name, as if the Son of God lacked or was imperfect; for he who lacks is imperfect. If, therefore, He was born perfect, how did He lack anything? The Son of God, born of God the Father, who denies this is an Arian; for before His passion, He showed Himself equal to God the Father, as I have mentioned above. Hence, it is evident that He was born perfect; for in His birth, He seems to have attained all things. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities[a] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. Moreover, in this letter, he reveals all these things, saying that there are celestial, terrestrial, and infernal things: for there are no others. However, it seems to some that the name "man" has been given to him, which is above every name, and which does not agree with any kind or reason. For if Christ, the Son of God, is the same both God and man, then God could not have become man, but remaining God, he would have needed these things which he possessed. Or if, according to his humanity, he needed these things which are God's, the Son of God himself would have given to himself, which were lacking to him according to his humanity. Indeed, this is said because of ignorance. And why is the Father said to have given, when he himself, who had become a man, had nothing? Or could not the divinity of the Son provide for his own body and soul, which were lacking? But perhaps because all things are from God the Father, therefore he is said to have given. If, therefore, all things are from the Father, why is it not said that he gave all things to his Son through generation? And although he has begotten a Son equal to himself, the order still requires that all things be done in the name of the Father. This the Father granted to the Son after the cross, so that all things may be saved in the name of the Son. Finally, the Lord says concerning the disciples to the Father: Father, those whom you have given me, I have kept; they were yours, and you have given them to me (John 17:12). And to the disciples he says: Until now you have asked nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive (John 16:24). Therefore, the Son received this in order to manifest after the cross what he received from the Father when he was begotten. For He then received a name from the Father, when He began to be known as a creature; for what He did beforehand,

and what He received, is known, for the things which He did, before He did them. In short, before the cross He said: All things are delivered unto Me by My Father (Matt. 11:27). How then can this be referred to His body, that the name of God should be given to the body, when it is manifest that Christ is both man and God; for neither is it fitting that God should be changed into flesh, nor is it possible that flesh should be made God? But perhaps, in order that by adoption God may be Christ, and this is the color; for Christ will begin to be truly God from part, and from part adoptive, or two gods. But Scripture signifies something else: for it signifies that those who emptied themselves, who received the form of a servant, who became man in the likeness of man, who obeyed the Father, have been given. If man obeyed God the Father, what great thing is it that the Apostle said? But this is great, because although he was equal, he obeyed. And what praise is there, if he was made in the likeness of man; that he be called man made in the likeness of man? But it cannot happen; for no one becomes like someone else, unless he is different, before he is made like the one he wants to be like; for he was made like someone by cause, not by substance. And who is it that emptied himself? Man. Therefore, he had. And how did he receive? But what could a weak thing, like man, empty himself? And in the form of God, was man indeed? But perhaps man was in the form of the Son of God. Now, let us consider, in whose form was the Son of God? And if indeed man was in the form of God, that is, the Son of God, then he was perfect before the passion. Therefore, he did not receive anything after the passion. But let us see what is written about him: For this reason, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Let us now consider these words and reflect on the power of language. Certainly, the name that is above every name is the name of God. But if by nature this name is not certain, then it is not above every name; for a proper name is only in the word itself, not in the nobility of nature. And for a creature to not bow down to God, it must not be created but rather begotten, not adopted. And how can it be that man is in the glory of God the Father? Even if God is adopted as man, he cannot be in the glory of God the Father; for this belongs to him who is born of God. For to be in the glory of God the Father is nothing else than to be equal to God; so that the glory may be one of the Father and of the Son, through their common substance and power; for this is the unity of nature. What, I ask, is contrary to this if the Son is said to have received the gift from the Father, since all things of the Son are from the Father, from whom they are believed to exist? But we call the substance of God nature, because Christ is born of it.

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Vers. 12, 13.) Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. God testifies to help good efforts; for every grace is always attributed to God; so that it is our will, but the doing is of God. For who could overcome the princes and powers, the rulers of these dark spirits in the heavenly places, except God alone, whom we have as enemies for the sake of envy? For they are indignant that we are called children of God. Therefore, it is not a new thing that he exhorts them, but rather that, as usual, being subject to the Gospel, they have care for their own conduct; for good conduct indeed brings about salvation.

(Vers. 14-18.)

(Verses 14-18.) Do all things without murmuring and hesitation, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, to my glory in the day of Christ, because I have not run in vain or labored in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For on this very account both rejoice ye, and congratulate me. That they may have the fruit of their faith and of their labors, they exhort them to do all things pertaining to Christian discipline without hesitations and murmurs; for if anything is done negligently and carelessly, it does not come to effect, but falls under reproof: but let them work with all simplicity, as immaculate children of God, that they may answer to the memory of their profession; that among unbelievers they may appear so clear in life, conversation, and manners, as the sun and moon are sublime in splendor amidst the stars. For just as the stars are obscured when the sun appears, so the unjust and unfaithful are seen as disgraceful and deformed in the presence of the faithful and just, so that the glory of the Apostle may be in the coming of the Son of God, whose planting produced such fruits. For his labor and effectiveness will be proven not to be in vain at that time. Therefore, even if I am sacrificed, he says, upon your sacrifice and ministry of faith, I rejoice. For if he has been oppressed by the faithless, he signifies that he is glad to have joined them in their conspiracy; for he knows that his death has an effect. For it is a great sorrow if someone suffers for those things in which he/she benefits nothing. Therefore, he/she declares that they should rejoice in those things and congratulate themselves; so that both the common people and the competent teacher may be partners in a common joy.

(Vers. 19-24.)

(Verses 19-24.) But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may be encouraged by receiving news about you. For I have no one else like him who will genuinely care for your welfare. All the others care only about themselves and not about the things of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope therefore to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself will also come to you soon. These matters are concluded and do not require interpretation; for after this letter, Timothy will indicate that he is coming to you, so that he may be aware of what is happening with them. For he was of one mind with the Apostle; therefore, he shows concern for them, unlike certain others who neglected the discipline and conduct of the brethren while they were seeking to commend themselves. For they were not preaching with a devoted mind, but for their own gain. And because Timothy was an excellent man, he says that he had him as an approved companion, who was with him as a most beloved son, serving the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, he calls him his son because he had been ordained by him: he says that he is sending him ahead, and that he himself will also come soon to them.

(Vers. 25, 26, 27.)

(Vers. 25, 26, 27.) However, I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and your apostle and minister in my need, because he longed for all of you and was deeply distressed because you heard that he was ill. In fact, he was near death, but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. All these things are clear; for Epaphroditus signifies that he will send this letter to them. For both

the people and Epaphroditus were sad due to his illness, and when they saw him, they were refreshed by his recovered health, and he was relieved of the anxiety he had to see them. For he was made their apostle by the Apostle when he sent him to them for their encouragement: and because he was a good man, he was desired by the people. So what is the reason that while the Apostle, who raised the dead, was present, Epaphroditus was instead afflicted with sickness to the point of death? Did the Apostle not pray for him and not obtain, as quickly as possible, his healing? But signs are done for the sake of unbelievers; for this illness did not happen to him for harm, but for growth. For there are different tests for believers; for one person is tested by sickness, another by the loss of loved ones, another by the loss of money, and another by trials, to see if they are found steadfast in need, not seeking help from different sources, in order to increase their merits. Therefore, the request of the Apostle was not ignored, but rather better provisions were made for him, for whom he was asking. But what is it that he indicates when he admonishes in another letter not to be saddened by the departure of the brothers, but in this letter he signifies that he will have sorrow if Epaphroditus had departed from the body? He had said that he would have sorrow upon his departure, over and above the sorrow that he had because of his illness; for he was necessary to the Churches. For he says to the Thessalonians: 'See to it that you do not grieve for those who have died, like the rest who have no hope' (1 Thess. 4:12). But if he had said that he would be sad about the death of Epaphroditus, it was because he needed his comfort and support, not because he was mourning as if lost.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) Therefore, I have sent him so that when you see him, you may rejoice again, and I may be of better spirits. It signifies the mutual affection between Epaphroditus and the people of Philippi, that upon seeing him again, they would be stirred to joy, and the spirit of the Apostle would be gladdened; because one's spirits are lifted when sending someone to visit loved ones.

(Vers. 29, 30.)

(Verses 29, 30.) Therefore receive him in the Lord with all joy, and hold such men in honor; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me. Although Epaphroditus and the people showed great love, he is also commended by the Apostle to make him even dearer, especially to those who may not have been so dear to him in their affection; for there is diversity among all people. Hence it is from here that the battle of his fame is remembered, because he did not hesitate to die for the work of the Gospel: that is, he was not deterred by the threats and pressures of the unbelievers, but he persevered in the encouragement of the faithful; so that he would fulfill what was lacking for the people in the tradition according to the dispensation of the Apostle. Therefore, he who does not retract his soul from death into destruction, entrusts it according to the present life, just as the Lord says: For whoever wants to save his soul, will lose it (Matth. XVI, 2). This is the destruction of loss; because according to the world, whoever gives up their soul for Christ, loses it; but in the future, they will preserve it.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. It is not burdensome for me to write the same things to you, and it is necessary for you. He shows his concern, which he has for their progress; because he is eager to write to them what is necessary for their benefit.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) See the dogs, see the evil workers, see the mutilation. These refer to those who, through the wickedness of their conversations, had subverted the Galatians, persuading them to be circumcised. He teaches that they are to be avoided and despised in every way, like dogs who first bark, and then cruelly bite into the flesh.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Verses 3, 4.) For we are the circumcision, who serve God in spirit and boast in Christ Jesus and not in the flesh, although I myself could have confidence in the flesh. It is evident that those who believe also circumcise their hearts, so that, having removed the mist of error, they may see and acknowledge the Lord of creation. This is to serve God in spirit and boast in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has given the law of the Spirit to make the glory of the flesh empty. However, the Apostle also had this confidence, if he wished, to boast about the circumcision of the flesh, but knowing that this glory was empty, he rejected it.

(Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

(Verse 5, 6, 7.) If anyone thinks he has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ. But the gains that seemed valuable according to human perception were found to be losses in comparison to Christ. Why losses, except because it was no longer the time for the Law to be kept? For all these things were empty and hindrances, so that one could not approach grace; and because these things are carnal, but ours are spiritual. Therefore he says about himself that he is from the tribe of Benjamin, so that he might elevate his lineage above those who trace their origin from the concubines of the patriarch Jacob's sons, or because of those who were proselytes. Where he says: I, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church; as to righteousness under the Law, blameless. Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. For if the human race began to be reformed in Abraham, who is also the father of faith, both the name and the Hebrew language come from him. For the first language, which was without a name, when it is attributed to him, receives its name from him. For there is no reason why it should derive its name from Heber;

for Abraham was a Chaldean, yet the Chaldeans do not have the Hebrew language.

(Vers. 8-11.)

(Verse 8-11.) Indeed, I consider everything to be loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, in the hope that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. When he was speaking above about the race of Abraham and about the Law and about the justifications of those who observe it, considering all these things as a loss in comparison to the promises of the Savior, now he adds not only these things: But he also says that all things are a loss because of the excellence, he says, of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. After the Law and its justifications, what will all these things be; unless the knowledge of Christ is placed before the life of the body and soul? For if, as it says in Colossians, in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. II, 3); all things that exist should be considered of no importance, in order to attain to the excellence of this wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, righteousness, which comes from faith and not from the Law, is sufficient and even abundant for salvation, which is granted by the grace of God through knowledge of Christ. For knowledge of the mystery of His incarnation, passion, and resurrection is the perfection of life and the treasure of wisdom. Where there is wisdom, there is also life; for life is not where there is foolishness. Finally, Solomon says: 'A fool laughs at misfortunes' (Prov. X, 23). For whoever understands that Christ became man and suffered, and rose again after conquering death, despising and rejecting all things, follows Him, seeking reasons to please Him; so that he may be able to repay Him in some way, and deserve to obtain even greater promises in the resurrection.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained. For if someone who is endowed with such great dignity still admits to lacking perfection, how much more should these people understand that they need to strive to attain the merits of justification! Therefore, he adds: 'But I press on, that I may lay hold of that which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.' For while he was wavering in error and the turmoil of his mind, doubting the way of the Lord, he grasped the mercy of God, like someone fleeing grace. He did this in order to learn the gift of God and the grace that he rejected, and to know that for this he would even be willing to die. And thus, he believed that he could not harm those who believed, but rather himself, if he did not believe, who was pursuing a benefit through ignorance. Therefore, he was apprehended ad hoc, that is, he was found because of God's foreknowledge, and he learned the mystery of Christ, so that in his whole life, by increasing meritorious acts, he might attain the destined reward, having earned it for the one whom he learned was killed for his sake.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verse 13, 14.) Brothers, I do not consider myself to have yet comprehended. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. This is what he said above, that to labor is to signify that one daily makes progress for the better, always striving for higher things, forgetting what is past in pursuit of what is better: not because they are evil, but because they are small in comparison to the merits that await. We should strive for improvement in order to attain the heavenly reward that is set before us; for such an admirable and invisible prize, it is certainly necessary to compete earnestly.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Therefore, let us who are perfect have this mindset. He denies that he is perfect above, but according to the promise, that more may still be added to merit. But in comparison to the others, who care less diligently for divine things, those are to be called perfect who walk the path of perfection with skill. Therefore, this must be understood, so that they may progress for the better. And if you feel differently about anything, God will also reveal that to you. He says this so that if they have devised anything more for the cultivation of improved conduct, they may consider it a gift from God, so as not to become arrogant because of it.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) However, let us strive to reach the same goal, to think alike and walk in it. Lest any presumption arise from this and it be thought that it was not revealed by God; therefore, he added, saying: Let us strive to reach the same goal, to think alike. This means, not to think beyond the rule of discipline in the conduct of faith, but to think what is common and modest in the truth of the Gospel.

(Vers. 17, 18, 19.)

(Verse 17, 18, 19.) Be imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who walk according to the example you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. Hi quos significat, e numero eorum sunt, qui Galatas everterant.Cum dolo enim ambulantes, Ecclesias Dei subvertebant, sub nomine Christi judaismum colendum praedicantes, quasi sibi Christus promissus sit. Quos cum dolore et lacrymis memorat; quia saluti credentium obsistebant, de cibis edendis, et non edendis quaestiones moventes, quasi salus in esca sit, aut venter Deus, quem juxta legem mundis escis delectari putabant, gloriantes in pudendis circumcisis; hoc est, terrena sapere: qui autem spiritalia sapit, in fide, in spe, in charitate gloriatur. But this place does not pertain to the quest of gain or indulgence, for God is the ruler of those who are driven by their stomachs.

(Vers. 20, 21.)

(Vers. 20, 21.) But our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of his glory, according to the operation whereby also he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Those who are concerned with spiritual matters are said to act in heaven, even though they are still on earth;

just as the evil Princes and Powers, though they are still in the firmament, have their conversation on earth. Therefore, the deeds of the Christians are in heaven, where their hope of salvation is, who is Christ, whom every believer awaits for the transfiguration of the body of flesh; so that what is earthly, may be clothed in a spiritual garment, and may be transformed according to the coming of His Majesty into the glory of His body, according to His power, by which He can subject all things to Himself. This is because through the resurrection of the dead and the change into glory, the power of the Lord will be manifested, subduing all Principalities and Powers; so that God Himself may be manifested and may be the Lord of all.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1) Therefore, my beloved and deeply longed-for brothers, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord, beloved. I urge you to persevere in the same faith, for their steadfastness is currently his joy and will be his crown in the future. For the disciples who are victorious in the battle, the teacher will be worthy of a crown.

(Vers. 2, 3.)

(Verse 2, 3) I urge Evodia and I plead with Syntyche to have the same mind in the Lord. And I also ask you, my true companion, to help these women who have labored with me for the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. He encourages Evodia and Syntyche to increase in wisdom, with the help of those he mentions, so that they may progress in their knowledge and understanding of God, as they have already done in the work of the gospel. He declares that all of them, who have been faithful, are recorded in the book of life.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice. The joyful Apostle, in their works and faith, desires that they increase their zeal in this pursuit, always rejoicing in the Lord. This is what he repeats, to show that he rejoices in them with true affection.

(Vers. 5, 6, 7.)

(Verses 5, 6, 7.) Let your moderation be known to all men: the Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Now others may seek to gain from their example; for when their modesty is made known, that is, their reasonable conduct, their works will shine, and there will be those who imitate their goodness; so that not only the progress of their own deeds, but also the increase of others may be attained; that as it is said (Psalms 127:2), they may enjoy the fruits of their labors. For when the fruit of their works is acquired for the good work, their labors, which have been acquired, will be of benefit to those who have begun to imitate good works by their example. The Lord, He says, is near. Be solicitous in nothing: that is, it is necessary to be prepared and to be vigilant in prayer and supplication, giving thanks to God, having set aside the solicitude of the world, hoping in and keeping in front of one's eyes what the Lord has promised, and for which reason He teaches that thanks should be given to Him; for as the Lord approaches, the solicitude of the world ceases. Why then are you anxious about things that will quickly perish?

And by this, your requests, he says, should be made known to God. This knowledge is acquired through constant diligence and vigilant prayer. Only then will the defenses of His peace, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts in Christ Jesus. He said this for the reason that one who has the peace of God does not fear any opposing thoughts; for anyone who loves God and is in Christ Jesus is secure in God's peace. For who does not fear him, whom he knows to be a friend of God?

(Vers. 8, 9.)

(Verse 8, 9.) Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. In conclusion, whatever is left, he explains as an imitation of perfection, so that those things which not only do not fall into condemnation but are also worthy of praise, when contemplated and practiced, may have the peace of God, following the example of the Apostle. Our God is truly the God of peace, who, not asked, as if mighty, not fearful, as if weak, exhorts to peace, to such an extent that He even forgives sins committed against Himself; when He could indeed, with the terror of His manifest power, and the ineffable magnitude of His own, not force even the unwilling to peace, but to subjection. But this kind of peace is of the world, not of God, whose very nature is peace.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) But I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that you have finally flourished again in this matter, so that you have concern for me, in which you were also aware; for you were occupied. Now he has shown an even greater zeal, because in the matter where they had become careless, they have acted with diligence and repeated their previous work, mindful of the example of their Apostle; to send their fruits to be stored with him in the heavenly storehouse, where neither moth nor rust destroy (Matthew 6:19).

(Vers. 11, 12, 13.)

(Verse 11, 12, 13.) Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. He does not rejoice in the work for his own sake, but declares himself satisfied primarily in their progress, with God's help, so that he may not be saddened by lack or rejoice excessively in abundance, knowing that abundance often leads to pride, while endured shortage acquires heavenly riches. However, their work shows kindness; it has benefited the needs of many.

(Vers. 15, 16, 17.)

(Vers. 15, 16, 17.) Now you, Philippian, also know that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone; for even in Thessalonica you sent aid for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Therefore, I mention this, so that when you

hear it, you may remember and give praise for his work, and have no doubt that it is accepted by God, but rather, may you apply yourselves to the study of faith.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) However, I have received everything and I abound; I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that were sent from you, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. He does not mention in vain that it should be done, nor does he exhort from elsewhere, what he admits has been done; except that it seemed that it was done either more negligently or less abundantly, as it was accustomed to be done by them; so that, remembering their previous works, they would know that they have done less than they had begun. For even though he does not disapprove of the act, but rather signifies that those who were more devout in their works were present before this; nevertheless, it is pleasing and acceptable to God, as if it were a pleasing sacrifice. Finally, the Lord says: Give alms, and behold, all things are clean to you (Luke 11:41). How pleasing, therefore, is the work, that it may cleanse every stain of man and every filth!

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Therefore he divided, saying: My God; that according to the things he bestowed by his merits, help would be present, and that their desires would be fulfilled in the abundance of his goodness in the glory of Christ Jesus. The glory of Christ Jesus is fulfilled, with the approval of God, when the desires of Christians are fulfilled according to the discipline of the gospel.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) But to God and our Father be glory forever and ever, amen. Here he does not make a distinction, but generally says: to God and our Father be glory. God is for the sake of fear, but the Father is for the sake of honor, and because from him is all origin; for he himself said through the prophet Malachi: If I am God, where is my fear? And if I am Father, where is my honor? (Malachi 1:6)

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21) Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Greet this one in Christ Jesus, who sanctifies himself; so that he may be worthy of Christ, who said: Be holy; for I am holy, the Lord your God (Leviticus 19:2).

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) The brothers who are with me greet you. The greeting of brothers provides comfort to one another, as it shows the images of those who have been separated. All the saints greet you, especially those from Caesar's household. This indicates a more favorable affection towards those who are from Caesar's household and shows them to be more important than the aforementioned brothers, because he calls them both holy and preferred.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, amen. Because questions arise regarding the person of the Savior, here he desires to confirm the solidity of his divinity in him and the guardianship of his grace to our spirit.

Chapter 12

Commentary on Romans

On the Letter to the Romans.

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologue

• Chapter I.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.) • (Vers. 29, 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• Chapter II.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5, 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19, 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.) • (Vers. 28, 29.)

• Chapter III.

• (Vers. 1 et 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.) • (Vers. 5 et 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11 et 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• Chapter IV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.) • (Vers. 7 et 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10 et 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17)

• (Vers. 18.) • (Vers. 19-22.) • (Vers. 23-25.)

• Chapter V.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.) • (Vers. 6 et 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter VI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.) • (Vers. 6 et 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9 et 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• (Vers. 19.) • (Vers. et 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• Chapter VII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.)
- (Vers. 13.)
- (Vers. 14.)
- (Vers. 15.)
- (Vers. 16.)
- (Vers. 17.)
- (Vers. 18.)
- (Vers. 19.)
- (Vers. 20.)
- (Vers. 21.)
- (Vers. 22.)
- (Vers. 23.) • (Vers. 24, 25.)
- Chapter VIII.
- (Vers. 1, 2.)
- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8, 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.)

• (Vers. 25.)

• (Vers. 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.)

• (Vers. 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• (Vers. 34.)

• (Vers. 35.) • (Vers. 36, 37.) • (Vers. 38, 39.)

• Chapter IX.

• (Vers. 1-3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.) • (Vers. 11-13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.) • (Vers. 29, 30.)

• (Vers. 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• Chapter X.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6, 7.)

• (Vers. 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.) • (Vers. 17, 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter XI.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3, 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.) • (Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• (Vers. 24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• (Vers. 27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

• (Vers. 29.) • (Vers. 30, 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.) • (Vers. 34, 35.)

• (Vers. 36.)

• Chapter XII.

• (Vers. 1-3.)

• (Vers. 4, 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17.)

• (Vers. 18.)

• (Vers. 19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• Chapter XIII.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4.)

• (Vers. 5.)

• (Vers. 6.)

- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8, 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.)
- (Vers. 13.)
- Chapter XIV.
- (Vers. 1.)
- (Vers. 2.)
- (Vers. 3.)
- (Vers. 4.)
- (Vers. 5.)
- (Vers. 6.)
- (Vers. 7.)
- (Vers. 8.)
- (Vers. 9.)
- (Vers. 10.)
- (Vers. 11.)
- (Vers. 12.)
- (Vers. 13.)
- (Vers. 14.)
- (Vers. 15.)
- (Vers. 16.)
- (Vers. 17.)
- (Vers. 18.)
- (Vers. 19.)
- (Vers. 20.)
- (Vers. 21.)
- (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23.)

• Chapter XV.

• (Vers. 1.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4-6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.) • (Vers. 15, 16.) • (Vers. 17-19.)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.) • (Vers. 22-24.) • (Vers. 25, 26.)

• (Vers. 27.) • (Vers. 28, 29.) • (Vers. 30, 31.)

• (Vers. 32.)

• (Vers. 33.)

• Chapter XVI.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 3-6.)

• (Vers. 7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.)

• (Vers. 10.)

• (Vers. 11.)

• (Vers. 12.)

• (Vers. 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• (Vers. 17-19)

• (Vers. 20.)

• (Vers. 21.)

• (Vers. 22.)

• (Vers. 23)

• (Vers. 24.) • (Vers. 25-27.)

• (Vers. 28.)

Prologue

In order to have a more complete knowledge of things, their principles must be sought first; for then the reason for their cause can be more easily explained if its origin is learned: for when we have shown the manner and reason for the given letters, what we say can seem true. Therefore, it is well known that during the time of the apostles, the Jews, because they were living under Roman rule, lived in Rome: from among whom those who believed handed down to the Romans that, professing Christ, they observed the Law: but when the Romans heard the report of the virtues of Christ, they were easy to believe, as they were intelligent: and not without reason, for those who were wrongly led were immediately corrected and remained in it.

So, as it is understood, the believing Jews did not accept that God is God, thinking there is only one God against God; therefore, the apostle denies that they received the spiritual grace of God, and consequently, they lack confirmation. These are the ones who had subverted the Galatians, causing them to deviate from the tradition of the apostles: for this reason, the apostle is angry with them because they were well taught but easily led astray. However, he should not be angry with the Romans, but rather praise their faith, because they had not seen any signs of virtues or any of the apostles, yet they received the faith of Christ in a Jewish manner, more in words than in understanding; for the mystery of the cross of Christ had not been explained to them. Therefore, when certain people who had believed rightly were coming, questions arose regarding the eating of meat and whether the hope that is in Christ is sufficient or whether the Law should still be observed.

Therefore, he writes to the Romans in four ways, arguing from the beginning about the nature of mankind with a physical reason; for these are the head of all nations, so that others may learn from them and all the gentiles. The first way is in which he shows what it is, and what it was, and whose it is, through which he strikes down heresies. The second way is in which he argues that they did not subject themselves to one God by the reason of nature, and the disgraceful and shameful things they did to each other, despised because of this by God; so let the believers rejoice. The third way is that they disregarded the Law given to them; hence they preferred the Greeks over the Jews. The fourth way is that he teaches that the Jews have deviated from the Law and the promise of God in the case of Christ, becoming like the Gentiles; so both are in need of the mercy of God, hoping for salvation not through the Law, but through faith in Christ Jesus.

Hence it is from where all industry aims to remove it, because the Law and the Prophets were until John (Luke 16:16): and it establishes them only in faith in Christ, and as if against the Law, it vindicates the Gospel, not destroying the Law, but preferring Christianity. For it asserts that Christ

was promised in such a way that with his preaching the Law would cease: not entirely, because the Law was shortened, which would provide salvation in a concise manner; for many things were given to the ancients because of the hardness of their hearts, so that it would be a burden, which the mercy of God has shortened through Christ by granting forgiveness for past sins. Therefore, ungrateful is he who desires to be under the Law of God's mercy; for Moses had said: Thus shall you make the children of Israel fear (Lev. XV, 31); so that wherever they turned, they would have the Law, so that they would be without worry. Therefore, in order to teach that hope of life and salvation should be placed in Christ without the Law, and to teach that He is the Lord of all, he begins as follows:

Chapter I.

(Vers. 1.) (Verse 1.) Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus. Among our ancestors, names were composed based on their meaning, like Isaac for laughter, and Jacob for heel. Similarly, this person was named Saul because of his restlessness. But after he believed, he called himself Paul, which means transformed. And since Saul, according to the aforementioned meaning, is interpreted as restlessness or temptation, when he came to faith in Christ, he called himself Paul, that is, as if transformed from a tempter to being peaceful, humble, or small; because our faith is peace. For before he experienced temptations from the unrest of the Jews, he later suffered temptations because of the hope which he had previously denied out of love for Judaism. But professing himself to be a servant of Christ Jesus, he shows that he has been freed from the Law. And for this reason, he establishes both, that is, of Jesus Christ: in order to signify the person of both God and man, because the Lord is in both, as the apostle Peter also testifies, saying: This is, he says, the Lord of all. Because therefore he is both Lord and God, as David declares: For the Lord himself is God (Psalm 99:3); which heresies deny. For it seems to Marcion that Christ, out of hatred for the Law, denies both Christ and his body, while he professes Jesus; but for the Jews and Photinus, on account of their zeal for the Law, they deny that Jesus is God. For whenever he says Jesus or Christ, sometimes he signifies God, sometimes man, as in this place among others: And there is but one Lord Jesus, by whom are all things (I Cor. VIII, 6), which undoubtedly belongs to the Son of God, according to whom He is God. And in another place: But Jesus increased in age and wisdom (Luke II, 52), which undoubtedly pertains to man.

Called an apostle. For this reason he knew and confessed God, he showed himself to be a worthy servant, saying: Called an apostle, that is, sent by the Lord to do his work. By this, he shows that he has this merit before God, who serves not the Law, but Christ; for the Lord is the Son of man, even of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8).

Separated in the Gospel of God. The Gospel of God is the good news of God, by which sinners are called to forgiveness: but the Apostle, because he held the role of a teacher in Judaism, being a Pharisee, therefore says that he separated himself from the preaching of Judaism into the Gospel of God; so that by disregarding the Law, he would preach Christ, who could justify believers in himself what the Law could not. But he is not against the Law, but for the Law: for the Law itself says this will happen, as the prophet Isaiah says: He will come from Zion, who will deliver and turn away captivity from Jacob; and this will be my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

Therefore, if the law of God was given through Moses, and the preaching of the new law of God is; what is it that it is said to be transferred from the law which God gave to the Gospel of God? This is how it is, just as someone who moves from the second degree to the first, and from good to better. For the law was given by God for the correction of discipline; but the Gospel of God is, through which the mystery of God is made manifest, which was hidden from ages in God: which is Christ. To which all the invited guests respond with double gifts; for they receive the forgiveness of sins and become children of God, so that they are no longer able to die the second death. Hence it is that the Lord says in the Gospel: This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (John 17:3).

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) What he had promised before. In order to prove that the hope of faith is ratified and complete in Christ, he first declares that his Gospel was promised by God: and in order to show that he is the suitable sponsor of life, before he came, he presents the testimony given to him, with Peter the Apostle as a witness: For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

Through his prophets. In order to more clearly indicate the salvific coming of Christ, he even demonstrated the individuals through whom he sealed the promise, so that the truth and magnificence of the promise might be seen in them. For no one announces a trivial matter to great forerunners. In the Holy Scriptures. In addition to this, he added it to complete a true protestation, in order to increase the confidence of believers and to commend the Law; for the Scriptures are holy, which condemn vices: and the sacrament of the one God is contained there, and the incarnation of the Son of God for the salvation of humanity, with the witnesses of signs and prodigies.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) About his son. It was fitting that since God promised his own Son to the world, he would promise him through illustrious men, so that from them it could be known how powerful the one who was being preached would be, and so that his coming in the holy Scriptures could be anticipated, and so that what was preached in the holy Scriptures could not be seen as false.

He who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, Him who was the Son of God according to the Holy Spirit, that is, according to God (because God is spirit, and without doubt, holy), is said to have been made according to the flesh the Son of God of the seed of David, according to that: And the Word was made flesh (John I, 14); that now there may be one Christ Jesus, the Son of God and man, that as He is true God, He may also be true man: He will not be true, unless He is of flesh and soul; that He may be perfect. For indeed, the Son of God, who is from eternity, was unknown by the creature; but when He willed to be made manifest for human salvation, He had to become visible and corporeal, because He willed to be known by His power and to cleanse man from sin in the body, conquering death. And so He is born from the seed of David, so that just as He was born as king from God before the ages, He might also take on a royal birth according to the flesh, being made by the work of the Holy Spirit from the Virgin, that is, being born: so that reverence might be reserved for Him and from this it might be known that He is more than man; because He was separated from the nativity of the human law, just as it had been

foretold by the prophet Isaiah: Behold, a virgin shall conceive in her womb, (Isaiah 7:14) so that it might seem like something new and worthy of praise, and God's providence regarding the visitation of the human race might be recognized.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) The Son of God, who was predestined in power according to the spirit of sanctification, through the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord. By calling Him the Son of God, He indicated the Father as God; but with the addition of the spirit of sanctification, He revealed the mystery of the Trinity. Therefore, when He was incarnate, His true nature was hidden; then He was predestined to be manifested in power as the Son of God, when He rose from the dead, as it is written in Psalm 84: Truth has sprung from the earth. For every doubt and uncertainty is trampled upon and suppressed by his resurrection; indeed, even when he was still on the cross, the centurion, seeing the wonders, confessed that he was the Son of God (Matthew 27:54). For even his disciples doubted in his death, as Cleopas said in Emmaus: 'We thought that he was the one who was beginning to free Israel' (Luke 24:21). And the Lord himself said: 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He' (John 8:28); and again: 'When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself' (John 12:32), that is, then I will be known as the Lord of all things. Therefore he did not say from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but from the resurrection of the dead; because he ascribes the general resurrection to the resurrection of Christ. For this power seems greater in Christ and a victory, that he operated with the power of death, with which he operated when alive. By this fact it is apparent that death has been deceived, so that he might redeem us; therefore he calls our Lord this.

(Vers. 5.)

(Version 5.) Through whom we have received grace and apostleship for the obedience of faith among all nations on behalf of His name. After the resurrection, the Son of God was revealed in power and bestowed grace, justifying sinners and appointing apostles, of whom He declares Himself to be a fellow worker. Thus, the apostleship was a gift of God's grace, not like the Jewish apostles. Therefore, they received this authority from God the Father through Christ the Lord, to represent the Lord with signs and make acceptable the Lord's teaching. Seeing the power that the unbelieving Jews envied in the Savior, they were more intensely persecuted by the crowds. For the power of learning is a witness, that because what is preached is incredible to the world, it becomes credible through deeds. Therefore, he calls the sent apostles to preach the faith to all nations, that they may obey and be saved; so that the gift of God may appear not only to the Jews, but also to all nations: and this is the will of God, that in Christ, and through Christ, he may have mercy on all, through his representatives who preach, that is: For his name; as he says elsewhere: For whom we are ambassadors (II Cor. V, 20).

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) In which you also are called by Jesus Christ. This means that while we are serving as ambassadors in all nations for the sake of Jesus Christ, among whom you also are called, the gift of God has been sent to all, so that when they hear themselves called among the others, they would know that they are not obligated to live under the Law, because the other nations have received the law of Christ without the law of Moses.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints. Although he writes to the Romans, he is also writing to those who are in the love of God. Who are these but those who rightly understand the Son of God? They are holy and are called saints. Those who live under the Law do not understand Christ and they do harm to God the Father when they doubt that in Christ is the perfect hope of salvation. Therefore, they are not holy and are not called.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He says that grace and peace are with those who believe rightly. Grace is because they are absolved from sins: peace, however, because they are reconciled to the Creator from enemies, as the Lord says: 'Into whatever house you enter, and they receive you, say: Peace to this house' (Luke 10:5). And in order to teach that there is no peace and hope without Christ, he added that grace and peace are not only from God the Father, but also from Christ Jesus. He calls God our Father because all things are from Him: but Christ our Lord, because we have been redeemed by His blood, we have become sons of God.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. Even before the preface is finished, he declares his joy above all, as the Apostle of the Gentiles, that when the Romans ruled the world, they subjected themselves to the Christian faith, which seems humble and foolish to the wise of the world. Therefore, since there were many things to rejoice in with the Romans (for they were remarkable in doctrine and eager for good works, and more zealous in doing good than in speaking, which is not far from divine religion), he says that his first joy is in their faith, which was evident everywhere; although not according to the rule handed down by the authorities of the truth, yet because what was from one God, they began to reverence with the name of Christ, he rejoices, knowing that they can make progress. And by this, He also shows His love for them, when He rejoices in their good deeds and encourages their progress.

Therefore, he says that he gives thanks only to his God, because it was not yet fully theirs; for from him is all paternity (Ephesians 3:15). But because every disposition of our salvation is from God, indeed, but through Christ, not through the Law, nor through any prophet, he says that he gives thanks to God, but through Christ, because the fame of their faith had progressed among many; so that he may attribute this itself to the providence of God through Christ. For indeed those who had believed were rejoicing, because they saw their leaders being made: or certainly those who had not believed, were able to believe by the example of these. For the inferior easily does what it has seen being done by the former.

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9) For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; That he may persuade charity, he gives God as a witness, whom he serves, to whom he also makes prayer for them, not by serving the Law, but by serving the Gospel of his Son, that is, not in what Moses the servant delivered, but in what the beloved Son taught; for as far as a servant is from a master, so far is the gospel from the Law: not that the Law is evil, but because the Gospel is better. Therefore, he serves God in the Gospel of his Son, in order to show that it is God's will for people to believe in Christ. To whom do I

serve? How? 'In my spirit,' He says, 'not in manufactured circumcision, nor in new moons, and Sabbaths, and dietary restrictions; but in spirit, that is, in the mind.' For God is spirit, and it is with spirit or the mind rather that one should serve Him; for whoever serves Him in the mind, serves Him in faith. These are the words that the Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman, who thought that God wanted to be worshipped on the mountain, saying: 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.' For the Father seeks such worshippers who adore him. The Spirit is God (John 4:23-24). Therefore, it is necessary to worship in spirit and truth; it is not the place that recommends prayer, but a devout heart. That is, to worship the Spirit of God in truth and in spirit, the one from whom all things come, and the one through whom all things exist (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Father seeks these worshippers. Therefore, he demands that they remember themselves in their prayers, so that he can sow charity in them; for he creates in them a desire for himself. For who does not love him, whom he hears to be mindful of himself? For if they gladly accepted the teaching under the name of Christ from those who were not sent, with adulterated words; how much more would they desire to hear from him, whom they knew to be an apostle, and whose words were accompanied by power!

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Begging, if in any way at last I may have a prosperous journey in the will of God, to come to you. He shows the sense of his prayer for them; for he says that he asks God to come to the City for their benefit with the will of God, whose gift he preaches. Then the journey is at hand, if what is to be done is done with the will of God. Therefore, he prays that whatever opportunity might be given, for whatever reason, for him to come to the City; because he was busy preaching to others: thus considering a prosperous journey, if he were to come with God's will; for God's will is provident. Therefore, it is a prosperous journey to undergo the labor of the journey not in vain. He asks that God fulfill this, calling them to His grace. He speaks with eagerness of mind; for he desires them, knowing that it is beneficial for both them and himself, as he says elsewhere: What is our joy and crown? Are you not in the coming of the Lord (I Thess. II, 19)? Indeed, the fruit of the Apostle is more abundant, if he gains many. Furthermore, because it is a greater joy if the powerful of the world are converted to God, for the more serious the enemies are, the more necessary the reconciled ones are. Therefore, his desire was thus given an opportunity, so that he would be compelled to appeal to Caesar and be directed to the city of Rome for another reason, by the will of God; in order to fulfill the purpose of his desire. Finally, after the shipwreck, the Lord stood by and said: Do not be afraid, Paul, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome (Acts 27:24).

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. But if he wanted to come more quickly, in order to draw them away from this tradition and to give them the spiritual gift, so that they may acquire God and become participants in the spiritual grace, in order to be perfect in their profession and faith.

Hence it is given to understand that above I did not praise their faith, but rather their ease and devotion towards Christ; for those who professed to be Christians lived simply under the Law, as it had been handed down to them. For the mercy of God was given for this purpose, that the Law

might cease, as I have often said; because God, concerned for human weakness, determined to save the human race by faith alone, in addition to natural law.

However, what is the point of correcting those writings and abstracting from physical sense, if he does not declare his necessary presence in order to minister spiritual grace to them, since what he writes is spiritual: unless it is because otherwise his words are usually taken to mean something else, as happens with heretics? Therefore, he desires to present the gospel doctrine in the way he writes it, so that it may not be removed from error under the authority of his letters, but rather strengthened. For while he could not persuade with words, he persuaded with power, so that he may make more progress in approaching them.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) That is, to be consoled in you by that which is mutual, your faith and mine. He says he is consoled with them, if they grasp spiritual things; because although he rejoices in their faith, he is saddened because they did not receive the faith correctly. The Apostle had this sentiment, that he would grieve for other people's faults as if they were his own. And through this, let us be consoled, he says, by one and the same faith, so that then there would be one consolation, if they were made one in faith in Christ; so that the administration of spiritual grace, as the Apostle preaches the Gospel, would produce this effect.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) But I do not think that you, brothers, are ignorant, because I have often intended to come to you, and I have been prevented until now. He reveals his intention and desire, which he does not doubt they know through those brothers who came to the City from Jerusalem or from neighboring cities for the sake of their religion, like Aquila and Priscilla, hinting at his desire to the Romans. For when he often desired to come, and was prevented, it happened that he wrote a letter; so that, not being detained for a long time in a bad situation, they would not be easily corrected. And he calls them brothers, not only because they were reborn, but also because among them, though few, there were those who thought rightly. Hence he said: 'Called saints' (Rom. I, 7). But what does it mean, 'Called saints'? For if they are already holy, how are they called to be sanctified? But this belongs to God's foreknowledge, because those whom God knows will be holy in the future are already holy in his sight, and they remain called.

However, it is said that it was prohibited until the time of the given letter, by God himself, who, knowing that they were still unprepared, directed the Apostle to other cities that were ready to receive the truth; although they carried the title of Savior, they were prevented by worldly vices from being worthy to learn spiritual things. Finally, when they wanted to go to Bithynia, they were prevented by the Holy Spirit, Paul and Silas (Acts XVI, 7): why, unless he knew that their attitude was still lacking? But the Apostle admonishes the Corinthians, with the Lord saying: Speak, do not be silent; for the people in this city are many (Acts 18:9, 10). Therefore, he says that he is not prohibited in vain, but he differentiated the causes of the customs, and he exhorted them to prepare themselves; so that, listening to him, they would become worthy to receive the spiritual grace to be ministered to them, abstaining from carnal vices. That I may have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. He expresses his desire to come to them for the sake of the common good, so that they may also obtain the spiritual grace of salvation, confirming their

profession of faith. That he may have fruit among them in his ministry to God, through which he calls them to the true faith, as he does with other Gentiles: for someone becomes more eager to carry out a task when they see many others agreeing to it.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) I am a debtor to Greeks and barbarians, to the wise and the foolish. He calls himself the debtor of those whom he mentions, because he was sent for this purpose, to preach to everyone: thus he also signifies that everyone is a debtor; for it is right to acknowledge God the creator, from whom are all things, and by whom are all things, and grateful honor is due, and the salvation of those who confess. Therefore, he includes the Greeks, who are called Gentiles, but also those who are called Romans, whether by birth or adoption; and he includes the barbarians, who are not Romans, whose nature is different, and who are Gentiles. But he called those who are educated in worldly reasoning wise in this world; whether they are observers of the stars, or students of measurements, or numbers, or the art of grammar, rhetoric, or music. He shows all of them that these things are of no benefit and that they are not truly wise unless they believe in Christ. But he called those who follow simplicity and are ignorant of these things foolish. He testifies that he was sent to preach to all of them. But he remained silent concerning the Jews, because he is the teacher of the Gentiles. And by this, he declares himself their debtor; for he accepted the teaching for this purpose, to transmit it: and while transmitting it, to acquire it.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Therefore, as far as I am concerned, I am eager to preach the Gospel to you who are in Rome. Although he claims that he is sent to preach to all the Gentiles, he asserts that he is ready to proclaim the Gospel of God to the Romans, among whom is the head and seat of the Roman Empire. For the benefit or rest of the members, it is important that the head is not restless. Therefore, he desires peace for the Romans, so that Satan does not boast excessively and he may have greater fruits from his work.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. With this statement he addresses those who had received an incorrect faith, yet the power of the apostles' teaching was commendable. Because it seemed incredible what was being preached, the signs and wonders performed by the apostles served as testimony, so there was no reason to doubt what they were saying, since such power was evident in them (for no words can surpass power, and thus, since no miracles had been seen by those people, their preaching was lacking in the power of God). Therefore, he says that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of God, but rather it is they who should be ashamed, because what they had delivered was subject to criticism, not confirmed by any testimony, and was not in harmony with apostolic doctrine. Therefore, the virtue of God is that which invites to faith and grants salvation to all believers, while forgiving sins and justifying them, so that the one who is marked with the mystery of the cross cannot be held by the second death. For the preaching of the cross of Christ is a sign of death overcome, as the Apostle John says: For this purpose the Son of God came, to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:9), so that every believer is not held by death, because he has the sign that death has been conquered.

First the Judean, and the Greek. That is, the one who is from the lineage of Abraham, and the one who is from the Gentiles; for in Greek it signifies a Gentile: but in Judean it signifies the one who is from the lineage of Abraham. For the Judeans began to be called so from the time of Judah Maccabaeus, who resisted the sacrileges of the Gentiles and gathered the people with trust in God, and defended his own race. He was, however, of the sons of Aaron. Therefore, although he puts the Judahite before because of the Fathers, nevertheless, he also says that he himself needs the gift of the Gospel of Christ. If, therefore, even the Jew is not justified except by the faith of Jesus Christ, what need is there to be under the Law?

(Vers. 17.) (Verse 17) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith. As it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith' (Habakkuk 2:4). He says the righteousness of God, because it is by faith that the ungodly is justified freely, without the works of the law, as it is also said, 'That I may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ' (Philippians 3:9). This righteousness that comes from God through faith is what is being revealed in the gospel, as it grants faith to the person for their justification. For in it the righteousness and justice of God is revealed, by faith and confession; for the righteousness of God is that which He promised and has given. Therefore, believing that he has obtained what God promised through his prophets, he proves God to be just, and His righteousness is witnessed. From faith to faith. What else is, from faith to faith, except that the faith of God is in him who has promised of himself; and the faith of man, who believes in the one promising; so that the righteousness of God who promises is revealed in the faith of the believing man. For in the believer, a just God appears; but in one who does not believe, he appears unjust; for he denies that God, who does not believe, has given what he promised. This is spoken against the Jews, who deny that this is the Christ whom God promised. As it is written: The just shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4). Therefore, following the example of the prophet Habakkuk, it is declared that the righteous live by faith and not by the Law, meaning that a person is justified before God not by the Law but by faith. For life by faith is not of this present world, but of the future; for the just shall live by faith, but before God.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. Where it is written in the psalm: The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork (Psalm 18:2). Therefore, by the natural law, the human race is made guilty; for they could have apprehended by the law of nature, testifying that the world was made by God, the sole author to be worshipped, what Moses delivered in writing (Deuteronomy 6:5): but they became wicked by not worshipping the Creator, and their injustice is manifest, since they, seeing the truth, have held it back, not acknowledging one God.

(Vers. 19.) (Verse 19) Because what is known about God is manifest in them. The knowledge of God is manifest from the structure of the world; for as God, who is invisible by nature, can also be known by visible things, it was necessary that he who created the world should manifest himself

through his own visibility, so that by the certainty of what is uncertain, he could be known: and by this, what is impossible for others to do, he is believed to be the God of all, who created this work. For God has revealed to them, that is, he has done a work by which he can be recognized through faith.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. The same sense is repeated to teach more completely that while the power and majesty of God cannot be seen by creature eyes, they are clearly seen by the intellect through the work of the world. Therefore, those who lived without the law of nature and the law of Moses are guilty, for they have overwhelmed the law of nature with the habit of sinning and have forgotten its memory. But they refused to perceive the law that was given for reformation, so that they would become doubly subject to condemnation.

Moreover, His eternal power and divinity are known in such a way that they are inexcusable. So that impiety cannot be entirely excused, He has also added the virtue of God, and the eternal divinity is known by human beings, and it has dulled their senses in a certain astonishment to honor God, whom they both know exists and works for their benefit; for it is beyond doubt that those things which are produced in the course of a year for human use, He Himself has decreed. Therefore, His power is eternal, through Christ, by whom He established things that did not exist, and they continue in Him. Even if the person whose identity is not yet known, their works are evident: But divinity, because the elements of things endure for themselves in their designated work. So that they may be without excuse. For in many ways, the guilty cannot be excused.

(Vers. 21.) (Verse 21.) For although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks. They were so ignorant that they did not acknowledge the one who is the beginning from whom all things have their origin, whether heavenly or earthly or infernal. And they did not give thanks to the one who has determined the properties and natural functions of all things. By speaking about these things, he intends to correct the present and the future. But they vanished in their thoughts. Indeed, they vanished; for seeing the world adorned with a wondrous order, fitted by Him whom they knew to be its maker, they kept silent. And their foolish heart was darkened. The cloud of error covered their hearts, because although they should have honored the creator more for the beautiful things that he made, they were dull and instead preferred to worship these things that they could see, saying that they were enough for their worship.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) For those claiming to be wise, they became foolish. Indeed, they consider themselves wise because they think they have investigated the laws of nature by studying the movements of the stars and the properties of the elements, but they reject the Lord of these things; therefore, they are foolish. If these things are worthy of praise, how much more worthy is their Creator! However, they are accustomed to bearing shame and using the pitiful excuse of neglecting God, claiming that through these things they can reach God, just as one can reach a king through his attendants. Is someone so insane or forgetful of his own safety that he would claim the honor due to the king for himself? And if anyone is found to have dealt with this matter, as a result they are

justly condemned for the crime of treason. And yet these people do not consider themselves guilty, who give the honor due to the name of God to a creature, and abandoning the Lord, worship servants, as if there is something more that should be reserved for God. And for this reason, one goes to the king through tribunes or associates; because man, of course, is king, and does not know to whom he should trust the republic. But to God, whom nothing is hidden (for he knows the merits of all), it is not necessary to win favor through an advocate, but through a devoted mind. For wherever such a person has spoken to him, he will respond to him.

(Vers. 23.) (Verse 23.) And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image resembling corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things. Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. How much dullness, how much foolishness, to call these wise men to their own damnation, among whom the image has more power than the truth; and the dead are more esteemed than the living! For departing from the living God, they favor the dead, among whom they are, as it is written in the Wisdom of Solomon: Mortal man fashions a dead image with unjust hands (Wis. 15:27). And he subjected birds, and quadrupeds, and serpents. With these as his subjects, he piled up punishment for their dullness, so that they would be beyond foolishness and vanity. For in this way, they diminished the majesty and glory of God, giving honor to the resemblance of God in these things which are least and small; for indeed the Babylonians first called God the fabrication of a certain Belus, a man who had once been dead, who is said to have exercised dominion over them. They also worshiped the serpent-dragon, which was killed by the man of God, Daniel (Dan. XIV, 26), of whom they have the likeness. The Egyptians, however, worshiped a quadruped, which they called Apis, in the likeness of a cow; an evil which Jeroboam imitated by setting up cows in Samaria for the Jews to sacrifice to. And they also worshiped birds, because the pagans considered the raven sacred. But of all the things I have mentioned, the Egyptians worshiped idols, and other things which I do not need to mention now. These things were done by those who considered themselves wise in the world; for even though they acknowledged an invisible God, they did not honor Him by their actions, nor could they understand the things that are visible. For it is difficult to be wise in great matters, but not to have sense in smaller matters.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24) Therefore, God gave them up to the desires of their hearts, to impurity, so that they dishonor their own bodies among themselves. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God delivered them over to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and likewise, the men, giving up natural relations with women, were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. But they, turning away from God, were handed over to the devil. However, to hand over is to permit, not to incite or instigate; so that they might fulfill in action what they had conceived in their desires, with the help of the devil: for they could not have such a good thought.

Therefore, they are delivered into uncleanness, so that they may afflict their bodies with insults among themselves. When he recalls the past, he also signifies the evils of the present time; because they are now continuously delivered so that they may afflict their bodies with insults. For those people who are now continuously delivered are said to dishonor their bodies mutually. Since the thought of the soul is in crime, they are dishonored in the body; therefore, unless the stain of the body is an indicator of the sin of the soul? For when the body is defiled, no one doubts that the soul is also tainted.

(Vers. 25.) (Verse 25.) They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie by giving the name of God, who is true, to those who are not gods. For they took away from stones and wood, or other metals, what they are, and gave them what they are not, and this is to change the true into the false. For they are no longer called stones or wood, but God: this is to serve the creature rather than the Creator. For they do not deny God, but they serve the creature; therefore they are not excused, but rather accused; because, knowing Him, they do not honor God. Who is blessed forever. Amen; this is true. Indeed, God says: blessed forever; because God remains; but he gives honor to the gods of the nations for a time of impurity; therefore, it is not true. But in God, truth remains. This blessing is assigned to the Son of God in another place, saying among other things: And from whom Christ, according to the flesh, who is above all God, blessed forever. Amen (Rom. IX, 5). Either both refer to Christ; or the same thing was said about the Son, which was also said about the Father.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Therefore, God delivered them to disgraceful passions. For their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and burned with lust for one another. Men did shameful things with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God handed them over to their undiscerning mind to do what is improper. They are filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and malice; full of envy, murder, rivalry, treachery, and spite. They are gossips and scandalmongers and they hate God. They are insolent, haughty, boastful, ingenious in their wickedness, and rebellious toward their parents. They are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know the just decree of God that all who practice such things deserve death, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. For if that is a part of the body which they suppose, how have they changed the use of nature when they do not have such a use given by nature? Above, he had already said that they were handed over to uncleanness, but he had not yet shown the quality of the work of uncleanness itself, which he now declares:

(Vers. 27.) (Verse 27) Likewise also, the males, leaving the natural use of the female, have burned in their lust towards one another; males with males committing shameful acts. Now He has made it clear how what He said earlier about women should be understood. But when He added: Likewise also, the males, saying that they burned in their desire; he clearly shows the sin of the women. Finally, He did not say about the men that they changed the natural use towards one another; because this kind of use is not granted to this gender, but to females. And what is surprising, when even today such women are found; just as that was invented by men, so too this was invented by

women? In fact, women accuse each other, and men likewise; it is clear therefore that those who have already changed the truth of God into a lie, would also change the natural use into that use, by which they would be dishonored, having become participants in second death. But since Satan cannot give another law, for he has nothing, he transforms what is allowed and lawful into another order, so that when they are done differently than what is permitted, they become sin. And they receive the compensation of the reward that was due to them, their own error within themselves. This compensation, they say, is the contempt of God, that is, turpitude and contamination; for this is the primary cause of this sin. For what is worse, what is more vile than this sin? For as great as idolatry is a pernicious and grievous offense; so too is its compensation horrible and foul passion.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Now he recounts all the evils that have been added to them, so that even if they were thus converted to their natural understanding, they would understand that these things had come upon them from an angry God.

(Vers. 29, 30.)

(Vers. 29, 30.) He says they are full of all iniquity. Here he speaks summarily and adds the members of iniquity: Malice, impurity, he says, avarice, wickedness, full of envy, murders, contention, deceit, malice, whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil. He calls malice the head of iniquity, whose work is fornication and avarice. This fornication includes adultery; for if he had mentioned adultery, he would have seemed to excuse fornication, as the Roman laws did. Therefore, because the lesser evil is stated, the greater evil cannot be considered unpunished.

Then he added, wickedness, whose passions generate envy and murder, contention and deceit. After this he added, malice, which gives birth to whispering and slander; and since these cannot be pleasing to God, he says: hated by God; and because they are not pleasing to men either, he says: insolent, proud, arrogant, inventors, that is, authors, of evil. Therefore, evil is not always present. However, these imitators of their father the devil have found the evil of idolatry, through which all vices are born in the world, and great destruction. But the devil, whom the Scripture testifies from the beginning to be a sinner (1 John 3:8), even though he strives for tyrannical presumption, nevertheless he has not dared to profess that he is God, saying: I am God. Finally, among other things, he said to the Lord: All these things have been given to me (Luke 4:6), he does not say: They are from me; or, they are mine. And in the book of Job, he demands to be given power (Job 1:12). Therefore, those who attribute deity not only to elements but also to fictions are worse.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) Disobedient to their parents. But with how much insolence they were seized, to the point that they did not even acknowledge their parents, who conceived them, and who were glad that they were born: instead, they despised those through whom they had come into being! This is

to be without understanding, without love, but of God; for there was in them the love of flesh. These, knowing the righteousness of God through the law of nature (for they knew that these things displease God, but they refused to hold them in their minds. For those who do these things are worthy of death), they so fully understood the justice of God that they do not deny that all these things they do are worthy of punishment and death. And not only those who do these things, but also those who consent to those who do them. For consent is participation.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) Those who have known the righteousness of God did not understand, for those who do these things are deserving of death, and not only do they do them, but they also approve of those who practice them. All of these evils are the body of sins, to which they have become enslaved, so that they may commit punishable acts. For this is the cause of evils, which began with the offense of the Sodomites against God, as mentioned before, and extended its branches to almost every part of the world, proclaiming the wrath of God as the cause of idolatry, which is the first part of error and impiety, which it condemns at first, so that when these things are corrected, vices of character are easily corrected as well. For when the seed of wickedness is removed, the fruits of evil wither away; for a tree does not bear fruit whose roots have been cut off. For this reason, Moses also (Gen. XIX, et seq.) mentioned the deeds of Sodom and Gomorrah, and did not remain silent about their destruction, in order to instill fear of avoiding this thing. Therefore, this vice and pollution of a dishonored life is not allowed by the one who contemplates God in his mind.

There are some who do not consider themselves guilty if they do not commit evil deeds, but rather approve of those who do. To approve is to remain silent when one could condemn, or to listen to such stories and be flattered. For the impure and wicked, who know well that their actions are not unknown and that they are not only not avoided but even honored, boast perhaps of being such. They cannot be confused in this matter, for they see themselves being favored and being obeyed by those who are not like them. And it is therefore fitting that they be held accountable for the same crimes. There are again others who not only do evil, but also consent to those who do; so that they not only do, but also consent to such actions. Therefore, the wickedness of these people is twofold: for those who do evil are not as bad as those who contradict those who do, knowing that those actions are wicked, they do not defend them. But those who both do and consent to those who do are the most wicked, to the extent that they do not fear God; but desiring that evil increases, they do not defend it in order to persuade others that it is not to be avoided.

Chapter II.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore, all humans who judge are without excuse. For in judging another, you condemn yourself; for you do the same things that you judge. Because by showing that those who do evil and those who agree with those who do evil are worthy of death, lest someone who does the same but does not agree with those who do it may think he can excuse himself, it teaches that such a person is without excuse. For it is not right that this person should be allowed to go unpunished; for by hypocrisy, he shows himself to be different from what he is found to be, and even worse. For indeed, he deceives, so that while he is deserving of punishment, he appears worthy of honor.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth upon those who commit such things. This means, we do not ignore that God will judge them in truth, when we ourselves judge them. For if it displeases us, how much more God, who is more just and zealous for His own work! Therefore, when He says that God will judge them, He instills fear; so that the one whom these unfaithful ones call indifferent, will truly say that He will judge the wickedness according to truth, that is, to repay each one according to their measure, and not to spare anyone.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) But do you think, O man, who judges those who do such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? This is because, by judging others for their evil and immoral actions while committing the same yourself, you are avoiding God's judgment. Surely not! For if you have escaped the judgment of God in this world, since all authority and judgment comes from Him, you will not escape it in the future. For indeed God will judge, with whom flattery ceases and partiality toward persons is absent. Or certainly if it seems just to someone that such a person be immune from punishment, let them speak. But if it is just that they not escape, let them believe that God will judge; so that what they deem just may be true and fulfilled, and so that they may admit that God, the creator of the world, prudently and carefully seeks the merits of his own work. For if he has made something and neglects it, he is called a bad craftsman; for by neglecting it, he does not show that the things he has made are good. But because it cannot be denied that he has made good things (for it is unworthy and improbable that he made good things as bad), it must be said that he takes care of them; for it would be an insult and an accusation if he were considered negligent in regard to the good things he has made. Indeed, by his will and providence, life itself is sustained by the service of the elements, just as the Lord himself says: He makes his sun rise on the good and the evil, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). Who, therefore, is more worthy of care, does not strive to preserve what he has done, in order to reward himself and to condemn those who reject it?

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) Do you despise the riches of his goodness, and patience, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God brings you to repentance? He says this so that you do not think that you have escaped, if God's goodness allows you to continue sinning for a long time; nor should you think that his patience is to be disregarded, as if he does not care about human affairs. But understand that he is hiding himself from you for this reason, because the judgment of God has not been promised to happen in this life, so that in the future life you will regret not believing in him as judge. For when you are suffering punishment without the benefit of repentance, you will regret, because you did not believe in the judgment of God, which you now see is true. For it is necessary that he be corrected more sharply, nay, tormented by everlasting punishments, whom the patience and forbearance of a long-suffering spirit has not corrected. He speaks with the utmost severity, knowing that a wicked mind can only be easily brought back from vices through fear.

(Vers. 5, 6.)

(V. 5, 6.) According to your hardness and impenitent heart, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds. Hoping for impunity in sins, not only does the stubborn and unrepentant person persist in his ways, but he even sins more gravely, secure in the belief that there will be no future vengeance, having an impenitent heart and unaware that he is accumulating wrath for himself in the day of wrath. For it is necessary for him to be punished with a more severe penalty, indeed to be tormented with everlasting flames, since he did not desire to amend his ways even in the face of God's long-suffering, but rather, adding to his contempt, he has magnified his sins. The day of wrath will come upon sinners, where they will be punished; therefore, they will have wrath because they will feel the punishment on the day of the revelation of God's just judgment. For it will be revealed, that is, it will be acknowledged, what is now denied as future; and therefore, when it is shown that it is not believed, it is revealed. For to them it is shown, who deny what is clear to believers; so that even unwillingly, they may confess the just judgment of God, when He will render to each according to their deeds. Will they not acknowledge that these things are justly done when they see the evils being reciprocally avenged?

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) To those who, by patient endurance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality, he will give eternal life. For there will be wrath and fury upon those who do not obey the truth but instead follow wickedness. There will be affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. But glory, honor, and peace will be given to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. Therefore, He will give them glory and honor. And lest this not seem very great in comparison to the present life, because even here they seem glorious and honored, He added: And incorruption; so that from this another glory and another honor may be understood, when incorruption will accompany it. For in the present life, honor or glory is often lost; because the one who gives, and what he gives, and the one who receives, are corruptible; but on the day of God's judgment, honor and glory will be given in an incorruptible manner, so that they may be completely eternal: for the substance itself will be glorified by a certain transformation of merits. Therefore, they seek eternal life, who are not only of good profession, but also of good character.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek. But glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. Anger is indeed not in the one who judges; but in the one who is judged, while he is being made guilty. For it is said that God is angry, so that he may be believed to be avenging; for the nature of God is immune to these passions. And in order to be believed not only to be angry, but also to be avenging, he added: And indignation; indignation is what by adding it on top of anger signifies that God will avenge his injury. But difficulties are the ones by which, being bound by the sentence, he will be troubled in punishment.

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9) Above every human soul working evil. In this work, he signifies not only actions, but also the profession of perfidy. For he speaks of the unbeliever; and for this reason, he

said above the soul, so that you may understand a spiritual punishment, not a bodily one; because the soul shall be bound by invisible torments. The Jews first, and then the Greeks. The Jew is always preferred by the prerogative of the Fathers, to either be crowned first or to be condemned; because the believer is more honorable on account of Abraham, but the unbeliever is to be treated worse; because he rejected the promised gift to the Fathers.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) But glory, and honor, and peace to everyone who works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Just as He has appointed three punishments for unbelievers, He has also appointed three great rewards for the faithful, that they may have a double honor, as children of God; let glory be for the transformation; but peace, because those who live a good life will be at rest in the future, undisturbed by any trouble; indeed, because every person who abstains from the opposite has peace before the judge.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For there is no partiality with God. For he shows that a Jew or Greek is not despised by God, if indeed they believe in Christ, but that both are justified by faith. Likewise, those who do not believe are equally guilty, for circumcision without faith is of no advantage, and uncircumcision through faith is beneficial. And by this, he teaches that God is not a respecter of persons. For he does not follow the prerogative of race, to accept one who doubts because of the lineage of his ancestors, or to reject one who believes because of the unworthiness of his parents; but he rewards or condemns each person according to their own merit.

(Vers. 12.) (Verse 12) For whoever has sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law. How can one sin without the law, when we are all subject to the natural law? But concerning the Law of Moses, it is said that the Jews are bound by it, as long as they do not believe; and also the Gentiles, but long ago, because they did not want to join. Therefore, unbelieving Gentiles become guilty in two ways; because they did not give assent to the law given through Moses, nor did they receive the grace of Christ; therefore, it is fitting that they perish. Therefore, just as the one who sins without the law will perish, so too the one who keeps the law without the law will be justified. For by naturally observing justice, one becomes the guardian of the law. For if the law is not given to the righteous, but to the unrighteous; the one who does not sin is a friend of the law. Only faith is lacking to him, through which he may be perfected; for it will profit him nothing before God to abstain from what is contrary, unless he receives faith in God, so that he may be righteous by both; for the former is the justice of time, the latter is the justice of eternity. And whoever has sinned in the Law will be judged by the Law. Because the Jews have the law, in which salvation is promised to them; those who do not believe or receive the promise will be judged by the law under which they lived. For the law itself accuses, and they will pay the penalty, for the cause of the Jews is more serious among themselves than among the Gentiles. For as those who believe are preferred, so those who doubt are found worse: for it displeases more the one who has lost what he had than the one who could not obtain what he did not hope for. For he did not enter the palace, but was sent outside.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) For it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. He says this because those who hear the Law are not the righteous ones, but those who believe in Christ, whom the same Law promised. And this is to fulfill the Law. But not everyone who hears the Law does it, because they do not believe in the Law; they do not receive the testimony that the Law gives. But the one who is not seen in the Law, because he is uncircumcised in the flesh, but believes in Christ, is said to have fulfilled the Law. And he who claims to be under the Law, that is, a Jew, becomes a hearer of the Law, not a doer; for he does not believe in Christ, who is written in the Law, as Philip said to Nathanael: We have found Jesus, whom Moses and the prophets wrote about in the Law (John 1:45).

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For when the Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Colossians 2:16) Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. Therefore, nature itself recognizes its creator by its own judgment, not by law, but by the reason of nature; for it perceives the workman in his work.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15) Those who do not have the law are a law unto themselves, demonstrating the work of the law written on their hearts. It is the same understanding; for while they believe under the guidance of nature, they show the work of the law not by letter, but by conscience. The work of the law, however, is faith, which, when exhibited to God with words, demonstrates by natural judgment that it is a law to themselves; for whatever the law commands, it voluntarily does, so that it may believe in Christ. The testimony is rendered by their own conscience. They believe based on their inner conscience, because they are aware that what they believe coincides with their own conscience; for it is fitting for a creature to believe in and worship its creator: nor is it absurd for a servant to acknowledge his master.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) And on the day when God judges the secrets of men according to my gospel, through Jesus Christ our Lord, they will accuse or even defend themselves with their thoughts. For he said that the Jews, who do not believe, will be judged by the law (for the law accuses them of rejecting Christ, whom it promised to them but they did not receive), but the Gentiles, who do not have the law, will be judged by their conscience if they refuse to believe. First of all, the accusers will be Gentiles who believe not in the faith of the Gentiles; just as the Lord said to His disciples concerning the unbelieving Jews: 'They will be your judges' (Matthew 12:27), for the perfidy of the Jews will be judged by the faith of the apostles, who, though they were of them, believed when those others did not believe. Then the Gentiles will be accused by their own thoughts, if, having been touched in their hearts by the faith and power of the Creator, they refuse to believe; or if,

through a certain stupor, they fail to consider that they should believe the words and actions of the Lord. They will defend themselves on the day of judgment, saying that they did not consider themselves obligated to believe. They will be judged not as evildoers, but as ignorant individuals; nevertheless, they will not be without punishment, because it is not permissible to be ignorant of this. For gens signifies a twofold kind, both believers and unbelievers; for he speaks earlier about believing nations, but he also includes those nations which do not believe; so that, just as believers are praised by their conscience, thus unbelievers are accused by their conscience. For although he seems least guilty to himself, who did not believe; because he could not handle this within himself, he is however convicted by reason; because he did not persuade himself that this was true, which he had seen confirmed by testimonies of virtues, and followed by many.

I think it can also be understood this way, if the whole question is believed to be about believing nations, because it says: What have I to do with judging those who are outside? (1 Corinthians 5:12) And, Whoever does not believe, he says, is already judged (John 3:18) . And, Because the wicked do not rise in judgment (Psalm 1:5) . For sinning without the law, they will perish without the law; and by this, they will not be able to stand before the judgment of Christ and give an account; because when they rise, they will be led to hell. For those whom he says are accused or defended by their own thoughts on the day of God's judgment, are Christians who deviate from the catholic truth, holding different opinions about Christ or the meaning of the law in the Church's tradition, whether they are Cataphrygians, Novatians, Donatists, or other heretics. The thoughts of these people will accuse each other on the day of judgment; if anyone understands the true catholic doctrine and chooses not to follow it, refusing to be corrected and ashamed to depart from what they have held for a long time, they will be accused by their own thoughts on the day of judgment. For two thoughts in a person will accuse each other, good and bad. Good accuses the bad, because it contradicted the truth: the bad accuses the good again, because it did not follow, as it perceived: and thus the defendant is established, who thought, feeling that the Catholic Church is good and true, and remained in heresy or schism. But the thoughts of that person will defend each other, who always thought this, considering what he followed to be beneficial. For he is about to say: I have always thought this, which I have followed, to be useful. This was my faith. He will have a lighter cause here, although it must be corrected; because he will not be accused by his conscience on the day of judgment. In this manner, the hidden things of men will be judged on the day of judgment by Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) But if you are called a Jew. The name Jew is given because it is a prerogative of their ancestors to be called Israelites. And yet, if we want to fully comprehend everything that pertains to the matter, we must consider that the name Jew has a threefold meaning. First, because they are the sons of Abraham, for he is considered the father of all nations because of his faith. Secondly, because of Jacob, who was called Israel for the sake of increasing faith; for the dignity of the father is elevated in his children. Thirdly, not so much because of Judas, but because of Christ; because he was born of Judah according to the flesh, they are called Judahites; because in Judah this was signified, which was to come in Christ. For it has been said: Judah shall be your leader (Judges 20:18); and, Judah, your brothers shall praise you (Genesis 49:8). The praise given to Judah is not approved, but to Christ, whom all daily praise, those whom he has deigned to call his brothers. For he himself said to the women: Go, and tell my brothers, that I go before you

into Galilee (Matthew 28:7). For who does not praise him, by whose benefit he lives? Therefore, the apostle, under this meaning, which is later in number, but higher in merit, wanted to encompass the whole: which the Jews, not understanding, defend the name of carnal Jew for themselves.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) And you rest in the Law, and you glory in God, and you know His will, and you approve of what is more useful, being instructed by the Law. It does not want to appear very great if a Jew believes; indeed, since he is instructed by the Law, it is very dangerous if he does not believe; for he has the Law as his guide. But if a believer is preferred, he makes the merit of the Fathers; because even though someone may flourish on their own, they still falter in their own things.

(Vers. 19, 20.)

(Verse 19, 20.) And you trust yourself to be a leader of the blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, having the form of knowledge and truth in the Law. These things are true; for this is a testament of the Law, to instruct the ignorant and subject the profane to God: or to provoke the impious, who are devoted to idolatry, with the promise made through the Law, to a hope of something better. Therefore, the doctor of the Law rightly boasts in these things, because he imparts the form of truth. But if it does not receive the one whom the Law promised, it boasts in vain about the Law, which it dishonors, while rejecting Christ, the promised one in the Law; and it will no longer be a teacher of the foolish, nor a master of infants, nor a guide for the blind, who are in darkness; but rather the leader of all of them to destruction.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Therefore, if you teach someone else, you do not teach yourself. This means that you who accuse the Gentiles of being without the Law and God, do not accuse yourself: for by doubting Christ, promised in the Law, you are found in the same things that you accuse.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) You preach against stealing, yet you steal; for you do what you preach should not be done. For while you deceive the faith of Christ through bad interpretation, you deny our Christ promised in the Law.

You say not to commit adultery, yet you yourself commit adultery (2 Corinthians 2:17). But you, by disregarding the truth of Christ and embracing falsehood, are adulterating the Law. This is why it is said elsewhere: 'You adulterers of the word of God.' When you curse idols, you commit sacrilege: you are sacrilegious, when you deny Christ, whom both the Law and the prophetic word designate as God; for Isaiah says: 'There is no God besides you; there is no other god.' You are indeed God, and we did not know it: God the Savior of Israel (Isaiah 45:14). Did the Jews not say of the Father: 'You are indeed God, and we did not know it,' when the whole Law of the Father proclaims His authority, from whom all things come? But because the Son of God always indeed appeared, yet He was hidden who He was; when He is recognized after the resurrection, it is said in confession: For You are God, and we did not know. And He who was thought to be only an Angel in the Law, and the leader of the army of the Lord: but when it is understood that He is the Son of God, it is said to Him with thanksgiving: For You are God, and we did not know. Therefore, by this He

signifies that He Himself was the one who indeed appeared to the patriarchs as God, and He was incarnate afterwards, but had not been understood by all.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) You who boast in the Law, dishonor God by transgressing the Law. You transgress the Law when you ignore its meaning, which pertains to the incarnation and divinity of Christ. And you dishonor God by not accepting His testimony about His Son. For He Himself said, 'This is my beloved Son' (Matthew 3:17).

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24) For the name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles because of you, as it is written (Isaiah 52:5). This was said by the prophet Isaiah because the name of God was blasphemed among the gentiles when the Jews, who were handed over for their offenses, did not pay attention to themselves but gave glory to their idols as if they had conquered the God of the Jews in the Jews. Likewise, in the time of the apostles, the name of God was blasphemed in Christ because the Jews, by denying Christ as God, were blaspheming both Him and the Father, as the Lord says: "Whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me" (Luke 9:48). And therefore among the nations he was blasphemed, because the Jews endeavored to persuade the believing nations not to believe in Christ as God; so that the blasphemy of the nations originated from the Jews or the authors of Photinus.

(Vers. 25.) (Verse 25.) Circumcision indeed benefits if you observe the Law. It can be said on the other hand: If circumcision benefits, why is it disregarded? But then it benefits if you observe the Law. Therefore circumcision must be observed; and in order for it to benefit, the Law must be kept. So what did it prohibit that it shows would benefit if the Law is kept? Therefore, it seems to be wrongly prohibited, which is not displeasing in itself, but is said to be frustrated through the negligence of another. But if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. This is what he says, that if the Law is not kept, a Jew becomes a Gentile. But circumcision was established for the sake of Abraham; because circumcision is from Abraham: for he could not build what he had destroyed. For he says this, to teach that it is then beneficial to be from the lineage of Abraham if the Law is kept, that is, if one believes in Christ, who was promised to Abraham; for those who are justified by faith have their merit and are elevated with the honor of the Fathers. For all salvation is in the Law of Christ. Therefore, he who believes in Christ keeps the Law; but if he does not believe, he is a transgressor of the Law. For he does not receive Christ, whom the Law prophesied would come for justification, which it itself could not give. And it will be of no benefit to him to be called a son of Abraham; for this one, who follows faith, is the true son of Abraham, by which he became worthy before God. Hence it is said: Your circumcision has become uncircumcision, that is, you have become like a Gentile, not believing in Him who was promised as the son through the sign of circumcision to Abraham.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) Therefore, if the foreskin keeps the commandments of the Law, will it not be counted as circumcision for them? The righteousness of the Law is Christian faith, as it is said elsewhere: Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. X, 4). Therefore, it is clear that if a Gentile believes in Christ, he becomes a son of Abraham, who is the father of faith.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) And it will judge that which is from nature, perfecting the Law, you, who are a transgressor of the Law by letter and circumcision. The believing Gentile, led by nature, condemns the Jew, to whom the Law promised Christ, but he did not want to believe in Him when He came. Therefore, how worthy of glory is the Gentile, who understood the author solely by nature, as the apostle Peter says: But you killed the author of life (Acts 3:15); all the more, the Jew is to be punished, who did not acknowledge Christ as the author either by nature or by the Law.

(Vers. 28, 29.)

(Vers. 28, 29.) For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. It is not obscure that the circumcision of the flesh does not have praise from God (for Abraham was not justified by circumcision, but by faith; later he was circumcised), but the circumcision of the heart is praiseworthy before God. For to circumcise the heart, cutting off error, is to recognize the Creator. And because the circumcision of the heart was to come, the first Moses said: Circumcise the hardness of your heart (Deut. X, 16). And Jeremiah likewise: Circumcise the foreskin of your heart (Jerem. IV, 4). This he said to the Jews who were following idols; for it is a veil around the heart, which, turned towards God, it circumcises: because faith removes the mist of error, and gives perfect knowledge of God in the mystery of the Trinity, which was unknown for ages. Therefore, the praise of this circumcision is from God, hidden from men; for it is the merit of the heart that God sees, not of the flesh. For the praise of the Jews is from men; for they boast in the circumcision of the flesh, because it is from the Fathers. Therefore, among other things, he says: 'And glory in their shame, those who are earthly-minded' (Philippians 3:19); that is, those who consider the circumcision of the flesh to be glory. For he is earthly-minded who boasts in the flesh; but he who boasts in the spirit, his praise is from God; for he is believed in by the spirit, not by the flesh.

Chapter III.

(Vers. 1 et 2.)

(Verses 1 and 2.) For what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision? Much in every way. Firstly, because they were entrusted with the words of God. Although there are many things that pertain to the honor and merit of the offspring of Abraham, this is the only thing that is explicitly mentioned, that their greatest praise is to be considered worthy of receiving the Law by which they could learn to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong; so that after this first thing, the nature of the others may be understood. But since the testimony of their race is shown to be of no profit to the carnal, that is, unbelieving, Jews, so that it should not appear that all, that is, even the believers, had been treated badly, he teaches that it is very advantageous for the believing Jews, because they are the children of Abraham. For to them the words of God were entrusted, while the Law, which had become obsolete through the sins of men, was seemingly transgressed with impunity by God. They rightfully receive the reformation of the Fathers, and are called the people of God. Egypt also is afflicted by various plagues because of their injustices: they are nourished with heavenly bread, they are a terror to all nations, as testified by the prostitute Rahab: to whom also Christ the Savior has been promised for sanctification (Joshua 2:9 et seq.).

Therefore, it is said to be very beneficial for the Jews in every way, because they are the children of Abraham: they are preferred before the nations, but those who believe.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) For what if some of them did not believe? Will their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? Certainly not! God forbid that He should punish the rest of the Jews because some of them did not believe the promises He made to the descendants of Abraham. They cannot be considered worthy of receiving what God has promised to the faithful. The promise was made in such a way that it would benefit those who believe. Therefore, God is not angry because of their unfaithfulness, that is, the unbelief of the Jews. He will still give eternal life to the rest who believe, as He promised through Christ by faith. Those who did not believe have made themselves unworthy without prejudicing the others. With these words, he commends the Jewish believers, because nothing hinders them, since many of them refused to believe.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For God is true, but every man is a liar, as it is written: That you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged (Psalm 50:6). To confirm what he said above, that God is faithful to his promises, and every man is a liar, he cited a prophetic example from the fiftieth psalm, in which both God is justified by his words and man is marked as a liar for the sake of unbelief. For both are read in the book of Psalms, that God is just and true, and every man is a liar (Psalm 85:15). He calls a man a liar who, while not believing what God has promised, says that he will not give what he has promised; and while he himself is a liar, for many reasons he pronounces God to be a liar, since he does not believe in his promises. Therefore, he calls every man a liar who is distrustful of God's promises. However, this applies especially to the Jews, whose case the Apostle discusses here. They saw Christ and denied that he was the one whom God had promised, and for this reason they are called liars. But God is true, who sent Christ as he promised; and thus he prevails when he is judged, because he will give what is denied to be given; for when he is not believed, he is pronounced a liar. But when he gives what is judged, he wins, showing himself to be truthful, and the other to be a liar, who does not believe his words. For he will see the Son of God in his glory, whom he denies: he will see the resurrection of the flesh, and know that the deception will be conquered by the promise and truth of God. For even Christ, when he was judged, conquered: for he was unjustly killed, and made the devil guilty, whom he had already overcome by not sinning, in order to lose again when defeated for the second time.

(Vers. 5 et 6.) (Verses 5 and 6.) But if our injustice commends the justice of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust, who inflicts wrath (I speak according to man)? Far be it. According to the sense of the prophet David, the Apostle says this: But David, when he had sinned in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, knowing that the promise cannot be given to sinners, begs that the justification of God's words may overcome the judgment by which those who sin are judged, and that he may reform the repentant, sanctifying him, in order to give him what he promised to the righteous. But by this he has added: If, however, our injustice commends the righteousness of God, etc., that is, if because we are sinners, God is justified; he will be unjust if he avenges. For if our injustice were to benefit him, without a doubt he would be unjust if he were to condemn sinners; because our injustice makes God just, if he gives to us sinners what he promised to the saints. For although we are sinners, we are nevertheless reformed through repentance; so that we may no longer be

sinners, but rather deserve to receive the promise as the forgiven. Therefore, this is not the meaning of the words of the prophet David when he says: 'Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge' (Psalm 51:4). This verse is wrongly interpreted by malicious people so that the sins and evil actions of humans may contribute to God's justification and that through our evil deeds, His goodness may be revealed, and our injustice may display His justice. Therefore, since God is not unjust when He inflicts wrath, He is no longer justified by our sins. For if He were justified by our sins, He would be unjust if He were to punish. But because He is not unjust when He punishes, it is clear that our injustice does not commend God's justice. But if he commended, he did not retaliate, because he is just. But by this he adds: according to man, he says. Far be it, that is, far be it, that God be called unjust; because this belongs to man, who is known to both err and be deceived, and deceive. For God, who is unchangeable, perseveres, and cannot not love what he has made.

Otherwise, how will God judge this world? It is true, because it would not be just for God to judge the world if its sins benefited him; so that by his will, sinners, while obtaining forgiveness, could see God as good. And if they did not sin, he would not appear just; for if they did not sin, not having anyone to forgive, he would not be good.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) For if the truth of God has abounded through my lie to His glory, why am I still judged as a sinner? It is evident, if lying benefits the glory of God, so that He alone appears true, sinners should not be accused of sinning; because they will be seen to sin not by their own will, but by His impulse: which is far from the truth.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) And are we to do evil, as some people slanderously claim we say, so that good may come? Their condemnation is deserved! Now someone will object, saying that we teach this in order to justify sinful behavior and claim that by forgiving sins, God appears to be good. This is blasphemy and goes against the true teachings of divine doctrine. For faith teaches that we ought not to sin, since it preaches that God will judge; but it consults for sinners, so that, having recovered their health, they may live under the law of God and not sin anymore.

Therefore he adds: Whose condemnation is just, that is, of those men who from envy interpret this against us, as was said above, the condemnation is just. For the Jews used to boast this, that they might accuse the apostolic doctrine, saying that while they preached the remission of sins, they gave occasion for sinning; as if men who were secure on account of the remission, would sin readily: when it is clear that after receiving faith it is dangerous to sin, and this is preached to the believers.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) What then? Are we better off? By no means. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.' Then he also shows that the Jews, who appear to be living

under the law of God and defending the dignity of their fathers, rightly deserve to be accused, especially because they have rejected the promise of the fathers, rendering the grace of God ineffective. To confirm this point, he added a prophetic example from the thirteenth psalm, saying:

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) As it is written, there is no one righteous (Psalm 14:3 and following). He began to enumerate their evil deeds and to add even worse ones, in order to make it clear that in these there seems to be no hope, unless they implore the mercy of Christ, who forgives sins.

(Vers. 11 et 12.)

(Verses 11 and 12.) Then he added: He is not understanding. It is true, because if he made an effort to understand, he would not be unjust.

He does not seek God. Nor is this hidden, because if he understood what would be beneficial, he would seek God: and not like King Asa of Judah, who, after experiencing many benefits from God, was so corrupted that when he suffered from a foot disease in the presence of a prophet, he did not seek God.

All have turned away, together they have become useless (2 Kings 15:23). There is no doubt that all who do not seek God are inclined to seek help from vanity: and vanity is an idol; therefore they become useless.

There is no one who does good, not even one. Because they have neglected God, they have become useless and are unable to do good; in fact, they have become corrupted and have gone from bad to worse.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Their throat is an open sepulcher. They were eager to devour good men with evil, if it were possible; just as the sepulcher is open to receive bodies, so is their throat against the good.

They were deceitful with their own tongues. Those who were accustomed to such evil deeds, what they spoke, was in deceit. The poison of asps is under their lips. This is said because the words of such people are like a trap. They speak in order to deceive; just as venom is poured out through the lips of a snake, so too are deceit and trickery through their lips.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. It is evident that the wicked always speak curses and bitter things against the righteous, bursting out in reproach and slander against them.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Their feet are swift to shed blood. This is what he said about the killing of the prophets, whom they killed eagerly, lazily for good, swiftly for murder.

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16) Crushed and unhappy are their ways. For they were hurried to do evil, their journey or step is troubled and unfortunate. And they did not know the way of peace. The way of peace is gentle and undisturbed; for every good life is tranquil, and modest actions themselves are

peaceful, and through them one goes to God. Therefore, those unwilling to know this have chosen the way of tribulation, through which one goes to Gehenna.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) The fear of God is not before their eyes. For they are without understanding and do not have the fear of God: For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, as Solomon says (Proverbs 1:7). And he did not say that they do not have the fear of God, but rather, he says, the fear of God is not before their eyes. For they see their own wicked works and do not tremble, and therefore they are said to not have the fear of God. Jeremiah the prophet signifies all of them, saying among other things: Then all arose against the prophet of the Lord, wanting to kill him. And it follows: But the whole people did not permit (Jerem. XXVI, 8, 16). Therefore, he says all of them, but the evil ones; and all of these, but the good ones. For when he says: All have turned away, he does not mean the entire people completely, but this part of the people, as the aforementioned prophet reports: In which all the evil ones have hidden themselves. For there are always two peoples within one people. This, therefore, is the people whom the Lord reproves under the name of Jerusalem, saying: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets (Matth. XXIII, 37). And in another place: Generation, he says, is evil and adulterous, and Nation of vipers (Ibid. XII, 39). Concerning this, the prophet Isaiah also complains, saying: Woe to the sinful nation, a wicked seed (Isa. I, 4)! For by their evil will, they produce evil fruits, they are a wicked seed. And because if they want, they can convert, the voice of the Apostle confirms in another Epistle, saying: We were also once by nature children of wrath, like the rest (Ephes. II, 3).

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) But we know that whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For just as there is one cause of all evils in evil, so too is there one cause of all goods. Therefore, in these things, the evil of all similar things is demonstrated. These pertain to the confusion of the Jews, who were bringing testimony for themselves and their parents from the law.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) So that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may become subject to God. He says this because the Jews, being bound in sins, the whole world becomes subject to God. For there is no doubt that the pagans have been overwhelmed by sins and impieties, and therefore the whole world is prostrated before God so that it can obtain forgiveness; because the whole world consisted of Jews and Gentiles, from whom the faithful were separated. Therefore, when he proves that the Jews, who received the law from God and to whom the promise was made, are obnoxious to sins, there is no doubt that all Greeks are guilty of death. Therefore, he says, let every mouth be stopped and the whole world become subject to God; while all those who have been proved guilty are in need of the mercy of God, both Jews and Greeks.

(Vers. 20.) (Verse 20) Therefore, because by the works of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, the law does not assert that men are justified before God; because they have not observed the law of righteousness in its precepts, but because they have refused to believe in the sacrament of the mystery of God, which is in Christ. For through this, God has decreed to justify man, not by the law, because the law justifies for a time, not before God. Therefore, those who

observe the law in time are righteous, not before God; because the faith by which men are justified before God is not in them. For faith is greater than the law; for the law pertains to us, faith to God. Therefore, the law has temporal justice, faith eternal. For when it says 'all flesh', it signifies all mankind, as the prophet Isaiah says: 'And all flesh shall see the salvation of God' (Isaiah 40:5); that is, all mankind shall see Christ, in whom the salvation of all is contained. And they are signified by flesh because they are subject to sins. For just as righteousness makes spiritual things, so sins make carnal things; so that man may receive a name from his action. For by the law is the knowledge of sin: but by faith the abolition; therefore, faith must be followed. What is this law, by which it is said that sin is known, and how is it known? For we see that the ancients did not ignore sin; for Joseph was sent to prison, although by deceit (Gen. XXXIX, 20); and the cupbearer and baker of Pharaoh, for the cause of sin (Gen. XL, 3). How, then, did sins go unnoticed? Indeed, the law is threefold; so that the first part may be of the sacrament of divinity of God: but the second is that which agrees with the natural law, which forbids sin: and the third is of deeds, that is, of the Sabbath, the new moon, circumcision, etc. This is therefore the natural law, which, partly reformed by Moses, partly confirmed by his authority, made known sin in restraining vices; not that it was hidden, as I said, but it shows the sins that are committed, not to be unpunished in the sight of God; lest perhaps someone, escaping for a time, should think that he had deceived the law. This is what the law shows.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21) But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. And lest this be thought to be done contrary to the law, he added that it has the testimony of God's justice from the Law and the Prophets, that is, because the Law itself had foretold this from another perspective: that there would come one who would save mankind (cf. Isaiah 19:20); which had not been granted by the law, namely, to forgive sins. Therefore, it is called the justice of God, which appears to be mercy, because it has its origin from the promise; and when the promise of God is fulfilled, it is called the justice of God. For justice is, because what was promised has been rendered: and when it receives those who flee to it, it is called justice; for not receiving the one who flees is iniquity.

(Vers. 22.) (Verse 22) But the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ. What else is faith in Jesus Christ, but that the righteousness of God itself is the manifestation of Christ? Through faith in the preaching of Jesus Christ, the gift promised long ago by God is recognized or received. To all, or above all, who believe, that is, above all Jews and Greeks, believing in the righteousness of the true God.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) For there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Because he had said that there is no distinction between Jews and Greeks in terms of

righteousness, in order to prove this, he added: For all, he said, have sinned. This should be understood in a general sense, so that both Jews and Greeks are included; hence he says: There is no distinction; for all here includes even the priests, to show that the law was of no use without faith. For the law was given in such a way that faith was to be in the law, which hoped for future salvation. Therefore, the death of Christ benefited all, for he taught what must be believed and observed in this world, and he rescued everyone from hell.

(Vers. 24)

(Verse 24) They are justified freely by His grace. They are justified freely, because they do nothing, nor pay any recompense; they are justified solely by faith as a gift from God.

Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It testifies that the grace of God is in Christ; because we are redeemed by the will of God through Christ, so that, being sent forth, we might be justified, as he also says to the Galatians: Christ has redeemed us (Galatians 3:13), offering himself for us. He permitted himself to be tormented by the devil, but triumphed. However, thinking he could retain Christ, he deceitfully accepted him, but because he could not endure his power, he lost all whom he held, together with him.

(Vers. 25.) (Verse 25.) Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed. In his blood. Therefore, in his blood, because we have been freed by his death; so that he might also make known his death, and condemn death through his suffering.

(Vers. 26.)

(Verse 26.) To demonstrate his righteousness, that is, to make his promise known, in order to free us from sins, as he had previously promised; and when he fulfilled it, he showed himself to be just.

Because of the preceding sins, in the patience of God. Knowing God's purpose of his kindness by which he intended to help sinners, both those who are in heaven and those who are held in hell; he waited a long time for both, canceling the sentence by which it seemed right for all to be condemned; in order to show us what he had decided long ago, to save the human race through Christ, as he promised through the prophet Jeremiah, saying: I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. And lest this gift should seem to have been promised only to the Jews, he says through Isaiah: My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations (Isa. 56:7). For although the promise was made to Judaism, yet God, knowing that the wicked Jews would reject his gift, promised to admit the Gentiles to receive his grace, so that the wicked Jews, being filled with jealousy, would be sent into wrath and torment. In this time, that is, our time, in which God has given what He had promised to give in the time in which He has given. So that he may be just, justifying the one who is from the faith of Jesus Christ. He rightly says, because in order to be just, He gave what He had promised: and what He had promised is to justify those who believe in Christ. But it is said in Habakkuk: but the just shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4); so that while he has faith in God and in Christ, he may be just.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore, he is addressing those who are under the law, that they may boast without cause,

flattering themselves about the law and the fact that they are descendants of Abraham, but seeing that no one is justified before God by the works of the law, but only through faith.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. He says that a Gentile is considered certain to be justified by believing and not by performing the works of the law, that is, without circumcision, or observance of new moons, or honoring the Sabbath.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) Is God only the God of the Jews? Not also of the Gentiles? Indeed, also of the Gentiles. Without a doubt, God is one for all. For the Jews alone cannot claim for themselves that their God is not also the God of the Gentiles; since they trace their origin back to one man, Adam, and no foreigner who desires to follow the law is prohibited. Moreover, some people went out into the wilderness with them from the Egyptians, as they were commanded to accept them (Exodus 12 and following), only on the condition that they be circumcised and eat unleavened bread or Passover with them. Likewise, Cornelius, a Gentile who did not become a Jew, received the gift of God and was found to be justified by divine testimony (Acts 10:31).

(Vers. 30.)

(Ver. 30.) For indeed there is one God who justifies the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith. In the circumcision, he signifies the Jews, because they have been justified by the faith of the promise, believing that this is Christ, whom God promised in the law. But in the uncircumcision, he signifies the Gentiles, who have been justified before God by the faith of Christ. For both Gentiles and Jews are justified in the same way, by believing. For there is one God for all, and he justifies all in the same way. What, therefore, is the benefit of circumcision of the flesh, or what harm is there in the foreskin, when it does not confer dignity or merit except through faith?

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) So, do we make the law void through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law. The law is not abolished through faith, but rather fulfilled; for its purpose is confirmed when faith reveals that what was foretold has come. This is especially relevant for the Jews, who mistakenly believe that faith in Christ is an enemy, unaware of the true meaning of the law. Therefore, faith does not make the law empty, but rather affirms that it should now cease; for it correctly affirms that the law was given at its appropriate time, but it should no longer be in effect. For in the very law it is said that with the fulfillment of the promise the law should cease; for the angel Gabriel, having been sent to the prophet Daniel who desired to know the meaning of this matter, among other things said this: at the coming of Christ, the anointing, that is, the royal unction, would cease, which signifies power. And he said, there will be no more judgment, which is the law, and my sacrifice will be taken away. Therefore, he said, my sacrifice, so that it would be known that the old offering would cease. Opening the understanding, the Savior said: 'The Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the Gospel of the kingdom of God is preached' (Luke 16:16). And because the law of Moses was coming to an end, God was going to give better commandments. The prophet Jeremiah foretold, saying: 'Behold, the days are coming, says the

Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah' (Jeremiah 31:31). These were the ones who received Christ when He came, according to the promise. Therefore, the Savior says, 'I have not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them' (Matthew 5:17). And because the house of God would not only be in Jerusalem, but also in other places, the prophet Zacharias says, 'I will make Jerusalem a praise in all the nations' (Zechariah 12:2), which is the Church.

Chapter IV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) What then shall we say that Abraham, our father according to the flesh, has found? After showing that no one can be justified before God by works of the law, he added that Abraham could not have earned anything according to the flesh. By saying 'according to the flesh,' he signified circumcision, because Abraham sought nothing through circumcision. For he was justified before he was circumcised.

(Vers. 2.)

(V. 2.) But if Abraham was justified by the works of the Law, he has glory, but not before God. This is the argument of the one proposing it. For Abraham was justified by faith, which is beyond doubt: therefore, he has glory before God. But because those who observe the law, whether of Moses or of nature, are presently justified, so as not to be blamed in the present judgment; therefore, he says: If Abraham was justified by the works of the law, he does not have glory before God; because whoever has made the law, said he, will live by it, that is, will not die as guilty: yet, he will not have merit before God because of this, but for the sake of faith.

(Vers. 3.)

(Ver. 3.) What does Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (Gen. XV, 6). It is clear that Abraham did not have glory before God because he was circumcised or because he abstained from wickedness; but because he believed God, he was justified, and he will receive the reward of his praise in the future.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) However, to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift, but as an obligation. To the one who performs works according to the law, that is, Moses, he is subject, either by nature or by the law; merit is not credited as a reward, so that he may have glory before God. For it is necessary to fulfill the law, because an obligation is imposed by the law; whether one wishes or not, he must fulfill the law, lest he be condemned, as it is said elsewhere: But those who despise, they bring damnation upon themselves; because they are presently subject to the thing (Rom. 13:2). To believe or not to believe is a matter of will. For no one can be compelled to that which is not evident, but is invited; since it is not extorted, but persuaded. Therefore, the one who assents should be rewarded, just like Abraham, who believed what he did not see.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) But to him who does not work, that is, to him who is guilty of sin; to him who does not work, what the law commands. But to him who believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. He says this because to the ungodly believer, that is, the Gentile, in Christ, his faith is reckoned as righteousness, just as it was for Abraham. So how do the Jews think they are justified by the works of the law, when they see that Abraham was justified not by the works of the law, but by faith alone? Therefore, the law is not necessary when the ungodly is justified before God by faith alone.

According to the purpose of God's grace. Thus, God decreed that with the cessation of the law, salvation would be sought solely through faith by the grace of God.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) As David also says. He fortifies this very thing by the example of the prophet. The blessedness of the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works. God pronounces blessed those of whom He has said that without any labor or observance, they are justified by faith alone before God. Therefore, He preaches the blessedness of the time in which Christ was born, as the Lord Himself says: Many righteous men and prophets have desired to see what you see and have not seen, and to hear what you hear and have not heard (Matthew 13:13).

(Vers. 7 et 8.)

(Verses 7 and 8.) Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin (Psalm 32:1 and following). Clearly blessed are those whose sins are forgiven without any work or effort, and their sins are covered, with no acts of repentance required except to believe. This man is also blessed, to whom the Lord does not impute sin. To forgive, and to cover, and not to impute, are one reason and one meaning; all things are obtained and given in the same way.

However, it seems that there is a threefold reason in these statements: because he used different words from different prophets, and because he descends from the plural to the singular. For when he wants to enumerate the names of sins through the words of God, because sins have different names, he speaks more extensively; however, the words are of one form and significance, because when he covers, he forgives, and when he forgives, he does not impute. For he speaks more extensively to praise the grace of God, in order to amplify grace. For he made three degrees on account of the variety of sins: the first degree is injustice or impiety, when the Creator is not acknowledged; the second, in the works of grave sins; the third, however, of light sins; yet all of these are wiped away in Baptism. By these three degrees he signified the entirety of the body of sin.

However, how can it pertain to the person who repents when it says: Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven; when it is well-known that penitents acquire the remission of sins through labor and groaning? Or how does it fit with martyrdom, which says: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin; when we know that the glory of martyrdom is acquired through sufferings and afflictions? But the prophet, foreseeing the blessed time in the coming of the Savior, calls those blessed who are forgiven and covered and whose sins are not imputed to them, without any labor or work through baptism. However, the Apostle, because of the fullness of time and because there is more grace in the apostles than there was in the prophets, testifies to greater

things which we obtain through the gift of baptism. For he declares that we not only receive the forgiveness of sins, but also justification and becoming children of God, so that this blessedness may have perfect security and glory.

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9.) Therefore, does this blessedness remain only in circumcision, or also in uncircumcision? That is, is this blessedness granted only to the descendants of Abraham, or also to those who are uncircumcised? For if at that time the Gentiles were not prohibited from entering into the law and the promise of Abraham, how could it be that in the time of Christ, those who came to grace would be prohibited? When did God fully extend His grace? For we say, that is, if we speak in terms of the law, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. It begins from the beginning, in order to exclude all caviling objections; for he who is excluded from the head has no ground on which to raise a question.

(Vers. 10 et 11.)

(Vers. 10 et 11.) How then was it reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. Abraham believed in God when he was still uncircumcised. What did he believe? That he would have offspring, that is, a son, in whom all nations would be justified by faith, just as Abraham was justified. For circumcision is a sign that he received as a seal of the righteousness of faith; for he believed that he would have a son, and he received the sign of this thing that he believed, so that he might be seen as justified. Therefore, circumcision has no dignity in itself, but is only a sign. This sign was given to the sons of Abraham so that they would be known as his children, who, believing in God, received this sign, so that they would be imitators of their father's faith and believe in Jesus, who was promised to Abraham and from whom Isaac was born in a symbolic way. For not all the nations are blessed in Isaac, but in Christ: For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12), says the apostle Peter.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) And let him be the father of circumcision not only to those who are of the circumcision, but also to those who follow the steps of the faith, which is in the uncircumcision of our father Abraham. This he says, because Abraham believed, and he became the father of circumcision, not only to those who are of his origin, but also to those who believe in the same way from the Gentiles. For he is the father according to the flesh of the Jews, but according to faith of all believers.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) For the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of the world was not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. It is clear, then, that the law had not yet been given, nor had circumcision been instituted when the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, which is Christ, who would cleanse the sins of mankind. Hence, John the Baptist says: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:19). Therefore,

Abraham did not become heir of the world through the observance of the law, but through faith. He became heir of the world as the heir of the land, which he obtained in his descendants. However, Christ is the heir of the Gentiles, as David sings: I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Psalm 2:8). For we will die and live with Him.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) For if those who are of the law are heirs, that is, if those who are of the law or under the law are heirs, then faith is made void, and the promise is nullified (Rom. XIV, 8). It is evident that if inheritance is by the law, then the promise made by faith to Abraham has been nullified. But the promise was not made through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; for the Apostle shows what harm it is to hope for inheritance through the law.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15.) For the law produces wrath. It is meant to demonstrate that no one can be justified by the law before God, and that the promise was not made through the law: For the law produces wrath; it was given for the purpose of making sinners guilty. But faith is a gift of God's mercy, so that through the law of being guilty, they may obtain forgiveness; therefore, faith produces joy. It does not speak against the law, but rather places faith before it; because those who could not be saved by the law are saved by God's grace through faith. Therefore, the law does not justify, but it works wrath on the sinner, that is, punishment; for it does not forgive, but it seeks revenge. Indeed, punishment is generated through wrath, and wrath arises from sin; and for this reason, the law is intended to be left behind, so that one may take refuge in faith, which forgives sins, in order to be saved. For where there is no law, there is no transgression. This is said because with the removal of the subjects from the power of the law, with permission granted, there is no transgression; for those who were sinners by transgressing the law have been justified. For the law of works ceases, that is, the observance of the Sabbath, the new moon, circumcision, the distinction of foods, the observance of dead animals or the blood of a weasel.

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16) Therefore, the promise is firm to all the seed, according to faith, so that it may be according to grace. The promise cannot be firm to all the seed, that is, to all mankind from every nation, unless it is from faith. Because the origin of the promise is from faith, not from the law. For those who are under the law are subject to judgment, but the promise cannot be given to those who are subject to judgment. And therefore, they must be purified first through faith in order to become worthy to be called children of God, and for the promise to be firm. For if they who call themselves children of God, while they are subject to the law, are not steadfast, because the children of God are free from sin. Therefore, if those who are subject to the law must be freed from it in order to receive the promise, how much more those who are not subject to the law! Therefore, it is not expedient to subject oneself to the law in order to find a quick remedy for the wound. Not only to him who is of the law, but also to him who is of the faith of Abraham. This is what he said above: To all the seed, not only to those of the Jews who came from the law, but also to those of the Gentiles who follow the faith of Abraham, which he had while he was still a Gentile, so that he might be righteous. For Abraham believed without the law, and therefore he is more closely joined to the Gentiles; so that the promise might be firm to those who believe, to whom he believed.

(Vers. 17)

(Ver. 17) . He is the father of all of us, as it is written: 'I have made you the father of many nations' (Gen. XVII, 4) . The example of Abraham confirms that he is the father of all, but only of those who believe: and thus the promise is firm if it is separated from the law for the sake of faith. For the promise of the kingdom of heaven is given to the righteous, not to sinners. And those who are under the law are under sin; for all have sinned, and it is not possible for anyone to be under the law and receive grace, as he also says to the Galatians: 'You have fallen away from Christ, you who are justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace' (Gal. V, 4) .

Before him whom you believed in, God. That he may teach all the Gentiles to believe in one God, he speaks to the Gentiles that Abraham believed in God and was justified before him, in whom the Gentiles also believe, so that they may be justified, so that there is no distinction between Jews and Greeks in faith; because circumcision and uncircumcision are removed, they become one in Christ; because Abraham believed in uncircumcision and was justified.

He who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that do not exist, as though they do. By saying this, he invites the Gentiles to faith in Abraham, who, when he was still uncircumcised, believed in God, whose faith is now proclaimed in Christ, and he was given life with his wife. For even though they were of old age, they were rejuvenated; so that he did not doubt that he would have a son by Sarah, whom he knew to be barren and in whom the flow of the female nature had already ceased; so that through these things they do not care about circumcision or uncircumcision, and are ready for faith: secure because they believe in him who gives life to the dead and because they believe that no one else has this power, and when he wills things that do not exist, they immediately exist by his will. Therefore, Abraham, even though he was not yet a father, was called the father of many nations, and he believed, confident in the power of God. And so, in order for the Father of Christ to be believed to be the same God, in whom Abraham believed, such a sign was given in Zachariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:13), when the promise was fulfilled in the world, with the impending coming of Christ, just as it had been given to Abraham and Sarah, when the promised was confirmed; so that, in a similar manner, bodies that had died of old age could generate the holy John, just as Isaac was born.

(Vers. 18.) (Verse 18.) He who believed against hope, in hope (Gen. XV, 5). It is evident that while Abraham had no hope of procreating, he believed in God, having faith to procreate against hope, knowing that God is able to do all things. In order for him to become the father of many nations, as it is written: 'So shall your offspring be.' (Gen. 15). This is in Genesis; for in showing him the stars of the sky, He said: 'So shall your offspring be,' and he was justified by believing. For he believed what seems impossible to the world, as it does not fit into the nature of things, that old men can generate and their seed can multiply in such abundance that it cannot be counted. Therefore, faith is precious, because it believes in what it does not know or see will happen: with this hope it consoles itself, for it is God who promises; of whom we should have a higher perception than human weakness can comprehend.

(Vers. 19-22.)

(Vers. 19-22.) And he did not weaken in faith: he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. In the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, being fully convinced that what He had promised, He was also able to do. Therefore, it was credited to him as

righteousness. This is worthy of praise and is proclaimed about Abraham because even though he knew his own inability, he strengthened his faith and believed that God was able to do what He had promised, even though it was impossible according to the laws of nature. Therefore, it is of great merit before God, he who, against his own knowledge, believes in God, not doubting that He, as God, can do what he knows cannot be done according to the reason of the world. For he is certain that God exists beyond the reason of the world; no one can be said to be within it, that which he created. Therefore, he is to be rewarded by God, because he gives more to his creator than he himself comprehends. Which indeed would be of no value if all thought alike, but the doubt of many commend the faith of those who believe in God. Therefore, it exhorts the nations to embrace this firmness of faith, so that they may receive God's promise and grace without any ambiguity, taking as secure example Abraham, because praise grows for those who believe in what is incredible and seems foolish to the world; for as much as what is believed is considered impossible, so much more honorable will be the believer: and yet it would truly be foolish to believe this, if it were said to happen without God. And therefore, Abraham's faith is all the more praiseworthy than the faith of others; because it was not attracted by any signs or wonders. But since the world is governed by a certain law and power, and is ruled in a defined manner by God: but men, being enamored with the love of the flesh, have neglected God the creator of this world; God, in order to remove error and to show himself as the lord of all, desired that it be preached that he is able and has done what is impossible for the world; so that those who believe this, having been condemned to damnation for neglecting God through their inflated reason of the world, may be saved and made subject to the dominion of God.

(Vers. 23-25.)

(Verse 23-25) However, it was not written for his sake alone that it was reckoned to him, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. He received the form of Abraham for the Jews and Gentiles, so that we may believe in God, and in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and be reckoned as righteous. Although what is now believed may differ, faith still has one gift. Therefore, we obtain this by believing: for believing that Christ is the Son of God, we are adopted by God as his children; for nothing more could he give to believers than to be called children of God, renouncing the faithless. For we are called children of God, but they are not even worthy to be called servants. For by his infinite magnificence, God gave this to those who love him, which is worthy of his majesty, not because humans deserve it; because in a gift, the greatness of the giver is considered more than that of the receiver, and from it, the giver receives more praise when he bestows great gifts upon the humble through Christ, who suffered death for our sake; so that, with permission granted, he might deliver us from the second death, that is, from the punishment of hell: and he rose to grant us the grace of justification through the joy of his triumphant victory over death, so that we might be worthy to be called children of God. For before the passion, those who were baptized received only the remission of sins, of which Satan, the enemy, killed the Savior. But after the resurrection, both those who were baptized before and those who were baptized afterwards were all justified by the gift of the faith in the Trinity and the reception of the Holy Spirit, which is the sign of believers, that they may be children of God. And in order to increase our justification to the highest degree, He who rose gave authority to His precepts, so that we may grow by imitating their merits and, having obtained glory, may appear

illustrious in the kingdom of God, with this assurance that, being justified, we cannot be held captive by death. For the passion of the Saviour has conquered death, which formerly ruled as the cause of sin, and it dares not hold fast those who have been justified by Him.

Chapter V.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Faith enables us to have peace with God, not the law, for it is faith that reconciles us to God, removing the sins that had made us enemies of God. And because the Lord Jesus is the minister of this grace, we are reconciled to God through him. Faith is greater than the law; for the law is our cause, but faith is of God. And the law pertains to present discipline, but faith pertains to everlasting salvation. But whoever does not think of Christ as he ought, will not be able to obtain the rewards of faith; because he does not hold to the truth of faith.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and glory in hope of the glory of the sons of God. And not only so, but we glory also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Not only that, but we also boast in our tribulations. For through tribulations, we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:21). Therefore, he teaches us to boast in them as well. Moreover, tribulation added to hope increases the reward; for tribulation is the proof of steadfast hope, which bears witness to the crown. Hence the Lord says: Blessed are you when they persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you because of the righteousness of God. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven (Matthew 5:11). Indeed, to disregard present things and those that bring delight, and to not yield to hardship while placing hope in future great merit, is esteemed by God. Therefore, it is to be boasted in tribulations, because one believes they will receive all the more, the stronger they see themselves in tribulation.

Knowing that tribulation produces patience. This means that tribulation operates patience, if the tribulation itself does not suffer from weakness or doubt.

(Vers. 4.) (Verse 4.) However, patience is a test. It is clear that if patience is as we have described, it will appear as a solid proof. But proof is hope. Hope is rightly said to be in the one who is proven, for he will be known to be worthy, and will receive reward in the kingdom of God.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) But hope does not disappoint us, for the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Hope does not disappoint, as we are considered fools and dull by the faithless, believing in things that are lacking in worldly reason. For we have the pledge of God's love in us, the Holy Spirit given to us. Indeed, the Holy Spirit, given to

the apostles and to us, proves the faithfulness of God's promise. And he granted us the ability to speak in different tongues with interpretations to strengthen our hope and to commend the love of God in us (Acts 2:4). He made us confident in his promise, because it is impossible for those who are dear to him to be deceived, for he is God who made the promise to them. And because human words cannot assert the reason of our faith without the testimony of virtues, which, when silent, cry out, it is reasonable to approve them to the confusion of the wise of the world. They fight against heavenly things with boldness of earthly words and with carnal weapons against spiritual ones, and they do not hesitate to call themselves wise. For just as the origin of an improbable foreign man is in a foreign land; so the truth of our faith journeys in lands: and because its nature cannot be explained in words, it is recommended by the testimony of virtue, which is a greater thing.

(Vers. 6 et 7.)

Why then did Christ, while we were still sinners, die for the ungodly according to the appointed time? For scarcely for a just man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Therefore, if he died for his enemies, it must be understood how much he excels for his friends. Therefore, among humans, that is, according to time, he was seen as dead; for he was judged by the irreverent and wicked spirits in the underworld for the salvation of souls. There are times in the world where the sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, and day and night do not remain in their state; for things that are subject to time and age are always changeable. Therefore, during this time, Christ died when he departed from the body. But where there is no time and age, there not only did he live, but he was found victorious. From this, the Savior wanted to commend his affection for us when he says: Rarely will someone die for a just person: but Christ died for the wicked. For if someone barely dies for a just person, how can it happen that someone dies for the wicked? And if someone may dare to die for one good person, or perhaps may not dare, because it signifies both to be difficult; as it can be seen, for someone to dare to die for the wickedness of many. For if someone dares to die for a just or good person, perhaps enticed by a certain compassion or desire for his good works, he lacks not only the persuasion to die for the wicked, but also the ability to provoke tears. But Christ died for the sins of the people, and not yet for his own, so that he might make credible all the things that the world despairs of. Therefore, he made two degrees: the just and the good. For even though the just person should be called good, he established the very categories, signifying the just through action and the good through nature, who is called innocent by simplicity. However, no matter how much better one's merit may be, as far as this place is concerned, they are just rather than good. Nevertheless, someone, for the sake of goodness, may dare to die; this may indicate that because the cause of innocence is more pitiable, someone may be compelled to do this. And good parents wish to die for their good children, not to mention wives for their good husbands. For if we want to consider goodness and justice, sometimes we discover a better person than a just one, sometimes it is preferable to choose goodness. For if, according to God's law, the one who is just is better than good; but the one who has not yet worked with himself to increase his goods; for by

exercise, the just person will improve his good nature. But if one is just according to the world, good is preferred to him because of innocence, since such justice is not without severity. Therefore, every good nature is good, and the justice of God's law is a fitting fruit for nature; and therefore justice is goodness, from which the just are always called good. However, not always are the good called just, for they are not called good on account of their works, but on account of their innocence. For justice is perfect goodness when it fulfills the good of its nature by its work.

(Vers. 8.)

(Ver. 8.) But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) For if, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us, much more now, being justified in His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. This is said because if God allowed His own Son to be killed for sinners, what will He do for the justified, if not protect them from wrath, that is, make them safe from the deception of the devil, so that they may be secure on the day of judgment, when vengeance begins to devastate the wicked? Since the goodness of God does not desire any to perish, He has given the most worthy death; so that He may add grace to those who understand God, and bestow upon them dignity and glory, while he heaps punishment upon the ungrateful. The ungrateful are those who, when called by God, resist, rejecting His grace, so that they may remain in their intentional error and wickedness.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. And not only so, but also we glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation. Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. For just as His death delivered us from the devil, so His life will deliver us from the day of God's judgment.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Not only this, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. He teaches us not only to give thanks to God for the salvation and security we have received, but also to boast in Christ Jesus in God, who has been pleased to call us his friends, even though we were impious and enemies; so that we may rejoice in all the benefits we have obtained through Christ: because through him we have come to know God, boasting in him, let us give him the same honor as we give to God the Father, as testified by him who is worthy, saying: 'Honor the Son just as they honor the Father.' (John 5:23). Therefore, he added the providence of God the Father and the gift that he gave through Christ, in order to make the person of the Son pleasing to us, because through one Christ we are redeemed by one

God the Father.

(Vers. 12.) (Verse 12.) Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned. Because above, it shows the grace of God given through Christ according to the order of truth; now it declares the order of one God the Father, through one Christ His Son; so that just as Adam, as one, that is, Eve, and she herself is truly Adam, sinned in all; in the same way, one Christ, the Son of God, conquered sin in all. And because it reveals the purpose of God's grace towards the human race; that it might show the very beginning of sin, which began with Adam, who was the first to sin; that it might teach that the providence of one God has restored what had fallen and been drawn into death through one. Therefore, through this one, we are saved, and it is by his will that we owe the reverence which we owe to God the Father. For the same author says in another place: He who serves Christ in these things is pleasing to God (Rom. 14:18); since it is written: You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve (Deut. 6:13). If, therefore, God alone must be served, and Christ commanded to serve, Christ is in unity with God, not a different or separate God. For when the law says that God alone must be served, it is preached that Christ, serving God in common, pleases. Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, so also through one Christ condemnation and the death of sin, offering eternal life, as it is further explained. In which, that is, in Adam, all have sinned. Therefore he says, that in Adam, when he is speaking of the woman, he refers not to her character, but to her race. It is clear, therefore, that all have sinned in Adam as in a mass; for he himself being corrupt through sin, all those whom he has begotten are born under sin. From him, therefore, all are sinners, because we are all from him; for he, by transgressing, lost this benefit of God - being made undeserving to eat of the tree of life, that he might die. But death is the dissolution of the body, when the soul is separated from the body. There is also another death, which is called the second death in Gehenna, which we do not suffer by the sin of Adam, but acquire through our own sins. It is from this death that the righteous are immune, except for the fact that they were in Hell, in the lower part, as it were, in a prison, who could not ascend to Heaven. For a sentence was given to them in Adam, which was erased by the death of Christ (Colossians 2:14). The sentence of the decree was that the body of one man would be laid on the ground, while the soul, imprisoned in the chains of hell, would suffer eternal destruction.

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13) For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. All have sinned in Adam, as I mentioned earlier, and sin was not imputed until the law was given; for people thought that they could sin with impunity before God, but not before other people. For the natural law had not completely become obscured, since they knew that they should not do to others what they did not want to suffer themselves. For sin has been so well known among men, that Jacob, when his father-in-law Laban was searching for his idols, considered it worthy of death when the theft was found (Gen. XXXI, et seq.). And Joseph, though falsely accused, was nevertheless imprisoned as if guilty (Gen. XXXIX, 20). Likewise, the baker and the cupbearer of Pharaoh suffered for their offense (Ibid. XL, 3). And Moses, having killed an Egyptian, was struck with fear of the law (Exod. II, 12). How then was sin not imputed, since there was no law? Or how was it punished, unless the law was known? The natural law always exists and was never ignored; however, it was believed to have authority only temporarily, not to make people guilty before God. It was not known that God would judge the human race and therefore sin was not imputed, as if sin

were not known to God, asserting that God was indifferent. But when the law was given through Moses, it was made clear that God cares about human affairs and those who commit wrongdoing will not escape the consequences, no matter the reason in the present. For certainly, if justice herself or nature did not consider crimes to go unpunished amongst themselves; how much more should they not have been ignorant that God, whom they knew to be the maker of the world, would require these things? Indeed, since Sodom and Gomorrah were condemned to perish by fire (Gen. XIX, 24), which forgetfulness had indeed concealed; but Moses, in order to confirm that God would be the judge, revealed it by writing. But when they disregarded God, they began to receive falsehoods in place of the worship of God, corrupted in mind, they trampled upon a part of natural law, which is the first part. Because natural law has three parts, of which the first is this, that the recognized Creator is honored, and His glory and majesty are not attributed to any creature: but the second part is moral, that is, that one lives a good life, with modesty governing; for it is fitting for a person who has the knowledge of the Creator to restrain their life by law, so that knowledge is not in vain: but the third part is teachable, so that knowledge of the Creator God, and the example of morals, may be handed down to others; so that they may learn how merit is placed with the Creator. This is true and Christian prudence.

(Vers. 14.) (Verse 14.) But death reigned from Adam to Moses. For sin was not imputed when there was no law, as I have said; but death reigned even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression. Death reigned with the security of its dominion, both over those who temporarily escaped its grasp and those who faced punishment for their evil deeds. For death saw them all as its own, because whoever commits sin is a slave of sin (John 8:34). But those who thought they could sin with impunity actually committed even greater offenses. They were more ready to engage in sins that the world seemed to accept as lawful. With this done, Satan rejoiced, secure in the knowledge that he had the man, left behind by God, in his possession. So death reigned over those who sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the future: which we will show in those subject to it. Therefore, it is evident that death did not reign over everyone, because not everyone sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, that is, not everyone, despising God, sinned. But who are those who, despising God, sinned; except those who, neglecting the Creator, served the creature, establishing gods for themselves to worship, to the injury of God? Therefore, the devil rejoiced in those (people), for he saw them as his own imitators. For even the father of Abraham, Terah, and Nahor and Laban claimed their own gods for themselves. And the sin of Adam is not far from idolatry; for he transgressed, thinking that he would become God. For he considered this more advantageous, which the devil persuaded, than what God commanded, placing the devil in the place of God; hence, he became subject to the devil. Similarly, those who transgress against God while they serve creatures sin in a similar manner, but not in the same way; for similarity tends to have something dissimilar. For it cannot be said that those who received the command not to eat from the tree, like Adam (Gen. 2:16), who sinned not by disobeying God but by transgressing the natural law. For whoever understood, whether through tradition or by natural knowledge, and worshiped God without bestowing honor upon His name and majesty, if he sinned, he sinned against God under whom he sinned, not against God as the judge whom he perceived. Therefore, in this kind of sin death does not reign. But in these, as I said, reigned those who served the devil under the appearance of idols. Because the law was not promulgated, they could not perceive God as judge. For the greater part of the world was ignorant that God would be judge; but very few in whom death did not reign; but in those

in whom it did, after this first death, as it is called, they were excluded from the second death, which is future punishment. But those in whom death did not reign, because they had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, were reserved in hope for the advent of the Savior, in the place of liberation: as it is read of Abraham, who, although he was among the dead, was nevertheless separated by a wide interval; so that there was a great chasm between the just and sinners (Luke 16:26). If there was a great chaos between the righteous and sinners, how much more so between the wicked, where there was relief for the righteous and burning for the sinners, but fervor for the wicked; so that before judgment, it would not remain hidden what each person deserved. And through this, death reigned over them, because it saw that its subtle works had advanced them to punishment as if they were enemies. For it was not hidden from him, this man made in the world, that he might proclaim the rule of the one God, which Satan had violated.

Just as it is not said to have occurred in Greek, so it is said to have been written that even those who have not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression have also reigned in death. For the whole complex seems to be this, that because death, that is, dissolution, was made through the envy of the devil, it is said to have also reigned in those who have not sinned. For they die, which is the desire of Satan. But if this were true, it would not be necessary to say: Death reigned from Adam to Moses; if it reigns from the beginning to the end in all. Or perhaps a step was taken, so that from Adam until Moses reigned, and from Moses until Christ, and from Christ until the end; in order that this statement might be of use, since it is not proved true even when so stated. For he said: From Adam until Moses, death reigned, because the Law was not made manifest, so that, after the Law was given, they might live under its authority, knowing what they should avoid, lest death should reign over them. Therefore, can it be said that death reigned over him who fulfilled this before the Law, led by nature, which the Law later commanded? Now see what is written about this: Sin, he says, was not imputed, because there was no law; and he added: But death reigned from Adam to Moses; certainly in that time, when there was no law; and it is agreed that because before the law was given, death reigned, it is said to have reigned upon those who sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, as we have mentioned above. For just as after the giving of the law, those who served idols or committed fornication, despising the lawgiver, death reigned over them; so also before the law, those who perceived the sense of the law, honoring its author, surely death did not reign over them: for it is said to have reigned, because the knowledge of one God had vanished on earth. Finally, the Law was given in this way: 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me; you shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness' (Exod. XX, 2). Thus, the Law was given so that death would not reign, and the old sins were abolished, and the human race would obey one God. Therefore, in another place, the same Apostle says: 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it' (Rom. VI, 12). With these words, he also shows that death still reigns if the law is despised. For what is the kingdom of death, if not when his will is done, while he commands, for the destruction of the one who obeys, whose will is the foundation of idolatry? And yet, this is how it is prescribed to us regarding Greek codices, as if they do not differ from each other; which leads to a culture of contention. Because, since no one can use their own authority to achieve victory, they adulterate the words of the law; asserting their own interpretation as if it were the actual words of the law, so that it seems that authority, not reason, is prescribing. Moreover, it is well known that certain Latin translations of the ancient Greek codices, which the simplicity of the times preserved and approved, have been changed a lot

to fit human understanding, after the departure of harmony and the disruption caused by heretics, so that what seemed fitting for a man is contained in the letters; hence the Greeks themselves also have different codices. However, I consider this to be true when both reason and history and authority are considered: for even today in Latin manuscripts, they are found as they were placed by the ancients, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Cyprian.

First of all, the kingdom of death began to be destroyed in Judea, because God was known in Judea. But now it is daily destroyed in all nations, as a great number of the children of the devil become the children of God. Therefore, death did not reign over all, but over those who sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression, as I mentioned above. However, Adam was already a foreshadowing of the future, because at that time God decreed in mystery to restore through one Christ what had been lost through one Adam, as it is said in the Apocalypse of the Apostle John: 'The Lamb,' he says, 'who was slain from the foundation of the world.' Denique subjecit:

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15.) But not as the offense, so also the gift. For if by the offense of one, many died; much more the grace of God, and the gift, by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. For if by one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift in the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one sin, so also is the gift: for the judgment indeed was by one unto condemnation; but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned through one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. These are the ones he says have died in the sin of one man, but the grace of God has multiplied for many; because in those who are said to have died in the sin of Adam, sinners in the same way, and in those who have not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression, the grace of God has abounded: but they were by God's judgment in the underworld because of ancestral sin, the grace of God has abounded in the descent of the Savior, giving indulgence to all, with them being raised triumphantly to heaven.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) And not as through one sin, so also is the gift: for judgment indeed is from one unto condemnation, but the gift is of many offenses unto justification. Clearly, it is different, for by one sin of Adam, those who sinned in the likeness of his transgression were condemned; but the grace of God, through Christ, justified men not by one offense, but by many, giving them remission of sins. This speaks to the magnificence of God's mercy and Christ; that while many are condemned to the second death in the lower hell because of Adam's sin, the gift of God's grace not only forgives them, but justifies them even though they deserved punishment.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) For if, by the offense of one, death reigned through one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. It must be understood that there is one meaning and no difference: for it says that death reigned, not reigns; because those who understood the judgment of God through the Law

were removed from its power. But death reigned because the fear of God without the manifestation of the Law was not present on earth. Therefore, the sense is superior, in that just as death reigned from Adam to Moses over those who sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression, so much more should the abundance of God's gift and grace reign in life through one Jesus Christ. For if death reigned, why not grace, which justifies many more than those over whom death reigned? How much more should we believe that grace reigns, which gives life through Christ?

(Vers. 18.)

(Ver. 18.) Therefore, as through one offense judgment came to all men to condemnation; even so through one righteousness the free gift came to all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one many shall be made just. And if by one man's offense death reigned through one, much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift and of justice shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offense of one, unto all men to condemnation; so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification of life. And as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one many shall be made just. Now the law entered in that sin might abound. And where sin abounded, grace did more abound. That as sin hath reigned to death so also grace might reign by justice unto life everlasting through Jesus Christ our Lord. But it is not true, because not everyone believes.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) For just as through the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one man, many will be made righteous. The word 'many' here signifies a greater number and multitude. For many followed Adam's sin by transgressing, but not all. And many will be made righteous through faith in Christ, but not all. Therefore, death did not reign over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression.

(Vers. 20.) (Verse 20.) But the law came in so that the offense would increase. It can be said, on the contrary: Therefore, the law should not have been given, so that sins would not increase; for if there was less sin before the law, there was no need for the law. The law was clearly necessary in order to show that sins, which were believed to be committed with impunity, would be imputed before God; so that from then on they would know what they should avoid. Hence the prophet Isaiah says: The law, he says, was given to assist (Isaiah 8:20): because although the seeds of justice are somehow implanted in human nature, the law was added so that by its authority and teaching, human nature would be advanced to produce the fruit of justice. For just as a birth perishes unless it has nourishment by which it may grow when fed; so too the natural disposition of justice, unless it has something to look up to and revere, does not easily progress but weakens, and gives way to incoming sins. For by the habit of sinning, it is oppressed, so that it does not grow into fruit, and through this it is extinguished. Therefore, the Law was wisely given as an aid, as the prophet testifies: but the people, following their ancient habit, multiplied sins. For by the very use of the Law, he began to sin more than he had sinned before; and so it came about that sins were not diminished by the giving of the Law, but rather abounded. For the Apostle shows what happened through the giving of the Law, not what the Law accomplished. But how did sins increase through the defect of the Law, which threatened that they should not be committed, but is

said to have entered in order that sin might abound? It is true, because as a supposed help, it entered to increase sin, and that with humility; but afterwards it began to have dominion over those to whom it had commanded that they should not sin, and they sinned. For the law began to show the abundance of sins: when what it had forbidden, there were more of than there had been. Therefore, in this manner, the law was given so that sin might abound; for the Apostle commended faith, through which sins are certainly blotted out, and said that the law was made, that sin might abound, as I have said above; because it was not given so that sins might be abolished, but so that they might abound: for it showed sinners even before the law, and held all guilty after the law. But where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more. It is evident that while sin abounded, grace superabounded; when the gift of God came as a result of a promise and covered all sins, so that the devil, in his envy, may lament that he gained nothing. For when the law was given for the benefit of humanity, the devil acted by persuading towards illicit actions in order to pervert it; so that what was intended to be beneficial would instead produce harm, as the commandments were disregarded, leading not to the utility of the Law, but to judgment for vengeance. At that time, the just and merciful God, in order to nullify the glory the devil had sought from the triumphed man, decreed that His Son would come, who would forgive all sins; so that the joy from the gift of grace would be greater than the sorrow from sin. For the joy of the gift of God also benefits those over whom Satan could not triumph; therefore, grace has abounded beyond sin, which Satan persuaded.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Sin reigned by causing those who sinned to progress into death, in which it boasted similarly that grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord; so that just as sin began through Adam, grace might also be through Christ. But grace reigns through righteousness, if we have received the remission of sins, we follow righteousness, so that, seeing that grace has fruit in the good ones whom it has redeemed, it may reign in eternal life, knowing that we will be eternal. Therefore, grace superabounds, because sin reigned for a time, but grace reigns forever. For the kingdom of God is the kingdom of grace, just as the kingdom of the devil was the kingdom of sin. Nevertheless, everything refers to Christ, so that all the grace of God is learned from Christ. In response to the higher meaning, he says:

Chapter VI.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) So what shall we say? Should we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin. For the one who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, knowing that Christ,

having been raised from the dead, will not die again; death no longer rules over him. For the death that he died, he died to sin once for all time; but the life that he lives, he lives to God. So you too, consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.\n\n(Verse 2.) Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, and do not offer any part of yourselves to sin as weapons for wickedness, but instead offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and offer every part of yourselves to him as weapons for righteousness. For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that, although you used to be slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching to which you were handed over, and having been freed from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you offered your body parts as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater lawlessness, so now offer them as slaves to righteousness, which results in sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. So what benefit did you then reap from those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now, since you have been freed from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. For it takes away the kingdom of the grace of God and hands it over to sin, which returns again to the old man, that is, to the customs of the past life. For we have received mercy for two reasons: so that the kingdom of the devil might be excluded and the kingdom of God might be proclaimed to the ignorant, thereby seeking dignity for ourselves.

(Vers. 2.)

(V. 2.) For how can we who died to sin still live in it? This means that while we were living in sin, we were dead to God; for one who sins lives in sin, just as one who does not sin lives in God. But thanks to the grace of God through Christ, and through faith and the regenerating bath of the Holy Spirit, we have begun to live in God, while being dead to sin, which is the devil; that is, to die to sin, to be freed from sin, and to become a servant of God. So let us not return to our former evil ways, now that we are dead to sin. For if we live in sin again, and die to God, losing our dignity, we will incur the punishment that we have escaped.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Therefore, baptism is the death of sin, so that another birth may follow, which, while the structure of the body remains, renews the person with a new mind, burying the old age of all evil actions.

(Vers. 4.)

(Vers. 4.) For we have been buried with him through baptism into death; so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the power of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. In saying this, he also signifies that which is first; for Christ raised his body from the dead, for he is

the power of God the Father, as it says: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He said this, however, about the temple of his body (John 2:19 and 21); and because he was raised to a new life, which no longer experiences death. But it is called "new" because it is the Christian discipline given by Christ. We who have been baptized have been buried with Christ (Coloss. II, 12) so that we may follow this new life in which Christ has risen. Therefore, baptism is a pledge and image of resurrection; so that, remaining in the commandments of Christ, we may not return to our past. For whoever dies no longer sins; for death is the end of sin. Therefore, it is celebrated through water, so that just as water cleanses the filth of the body, we may believe that we are spiritually cleansed and renewed through baptism, from all sin, so that what is incorporeal may be invisibly washed away.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. Then he says that we can rise again happily if we have been united with him in a death like his, that is, if in baptism we cast off all vices, being translated into new life, so that we no longer sin from then on. By this means, we will also be similar to his resurrection; for the likeness of his death will produce a most similar resurrection. John the Apostle mentions this in his letter, saying: We know that when he appears, we will be like him (1 John 3:2), that is, to rise immortal and glorious. For this likeness will not be such that it differs in nothing; for it will be similar in glory of body, not in nature of divinity.

(Vers. 6 et 7.)

(Vers. 6 and 7.) Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. He says that these acts crucify, that is, kill; in order to destroy the body of sin, which is all crimes. For indeed he calls all sins together the body, which he says is destroyed through a good life and the Catholic faith.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him (Galatians 5:24). It is clear that those who have crucified the flesh, that is, the world with its vices and desires, have died to the world and have died with Christ, and they are also imagined with eternal life and salvation, so that they may be worthy to become like the glory of Christ. But the flesh, that is, the body, is crucified in this way if its desires are trampled upon, which, with sin remaining in it, are created from the transgression of the first man: for the devil is crucified in the flesh; he is the one who deceives through the flesh. Therefore, sometimes the world, that is, the elements, is understood as flesh, but sometimes the human body itself, or even the soul following bodily vices.

(Vers. 9 et 10.)

(Verses 9 and 10.) Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, will not die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. The resurrection of the Savior demonstrates the security of eternal life, which can be attained through the pursuit of a better life. For those who live in accordance with God's will truly live, for they have eternal life.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. He speaks in this way to teach that there is no other way to die to sin and live to God except through Christ, in whom all hope is found. He is called our Lord, signifying that no Law can contribute to our salvation in the coming age, when we can only live to God through Christ.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Therefore, sin should not reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires. The mortal body is a result of Adam's transgression, but it is believed that through faith in Christ, it will become immortal. In order to obtain this promise, it is said that sin should not be obeyed, so that it does not reign in our mortal body. However, it reigns as long as it commands. If it does not reign, then this body will not be seen as mortal, because it is in the hope of eternity. He did not say mortal body for dissolution, but for the punishment of hell; so that he may be called mortal, who is to be sent to hell; because those who obey sin, do not escape the second death of hell, from which the Savior has freed those who believe in him. Therefore, by saying mortal body, he signified the whole man; for those who obey sin are called mortals: For the soul, he says, that sins shall die itself (Ezech. XVIII, 4), that is, the whole man, for no one will be judged without a body.

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13) But do not present your members as instruments of wickedness to sin. It shows that the devil attacks us with our own weapons; for he is given an opportunity through our sins; that, with God abandoning us and granting him power, he may deceive and destroy us. Therefore, we must keep our members controlled from all works of wickedness, so that our unarmed enemy can be subjected. And he did not say: Present your bodies, but your members; for it is through the members that mistakes are made, not through the whole body. But present yourselves to God as living from the dead. Death signifies ignorance and unbelief with an evil life; because life is to know God through Christ. For no one takes up life without a parent, but all things are brought forth to life through God by Christ; therefore, whoever does not know that God is the parent of all through Christ is not said to have life, that is, it is held as if it does not exist: for he denies himself, thinking that he is without God as a parent. Therefore, ignorance and a shameful life are death; these vices bring about that death, not the death that is common to all, but the death of Gehenna, as I mentioned above; so that the knowledge of God as Father, and holy conduct, may be life, not this life which is subject to decay, but the life of the future age, which is called eternal. Therefore, present yourselves to God, as it says, whom you have come to know for salvation; so that, renouncing a dishonorable life, you may be living among the dead. And let your members be weapons of justice to God. Such is our modesty that we desire to govern our conduct, so that our acts of justice, progressing towards God’s justice, may not offer weapons of worldly justice (for worldly justice without the faith of Christ is not life but death), but may offer them to Him for our defense: when we offer weapons to Him through good works, we make ourselves worthy to be helped by Him; for the justice of God despises the unworthy. For where there is the justice of God, there also dwells the Holy Spirit to help our weakness; just as we offer weapons to sin when we do evil, so too do we offer weapons to justice when we conduct ourselves rightly, preserving our members from all wickedness.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) But sin shall no longer have dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under grace. For if we walk according to the commandments that He gives, sin says that it cannot have dominion over us; for it has dominion over those who sin. For we are not under the Law when we do not walk as it commands; but if we do not sin, we are not under the Law, but under grace. But if we sin, we are turned under the Law, and sin begins to have dominion over us; for whoever commits sin is the servant of sin (John 8:34): and it is necessary for him to be under the Law as long as he does not receive forgiveness; for sin makes the sinner guilty by the authority of the Law: and therefore, to whom forgiveness is given, and he keeps himself from sinning from now on, neither sin shall have dominion over him, nor is he under the Law. For the authority of the Law ceases around him who has been freed from sin; for those whom the law holds guilty, they have been handed over to sin. Therefore, he who has been stripped of sins cannot be under the Law.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Law but under grace? Certainly not! For the Law is from God, and in order to avoid any opposition, He Himself established it. If the Law is from God, He said, why should we not be under the Law? This purifies and teaches that we, who have been freed from the Law by Christ, the author of the Law, should conform to the will of God. Although the Law was given for a good purpose (to show sinners before God and to instill fear so that sins may not be committed in the future), mankind, due to its own weakness, was unable to restrain itself from sinning and became subject to the curse of eternal death. Moved by His mercy and loving-kindness, God, who always helps humanity, provided a remedy through Christ to those who were desperate. By receiving the forgiveness of sins, they were delivered from the Law, which held them bound, and with the help of God, they were restored and renewed, so that by faith they could resist the vices by which they were previously enslaved. Therefore, we have not sinned by rejecting the Law of God, but we have followed His providence through Christ.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Now nev... (truncated) And the Lord said in the Gospel: No one can serve two masters (Matthew VI, 24). And in the law it is said: God is not mocked (Galatians VI, 7).

(Vers. 17, 18.)

(Verse 17, 18.) But thanks be to God that, though you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. For we are led by nature to faith, not by law, in which we are formed by the command of God, who shaped nature. For in nature we have the ability to know by whom, and through whom, and in whom we are created. Therefore, the form of doctrine is that in which the Creator has naturally handed us over, that is, what He has said: 'They are a law unto themselves' (Rom. II, 14) ; while they see that it belongs to their nature to believe what they believe; so that what the Law and the Prophets preached to the Jews about Christ, the Gentiles may believe with all their heart. Here he gives thanks to the Lord, because when we were slaves of sin, we obeyed with a believing heart in Christ, to serve God not by the law of Moses, but by the law of nature.

(Vers. 19.) (Verse 19) I speak as a human because of the weakness of your flesh. By mentioning the weakness of the flesh, it implies that he requires less of a person than is fitting regarding the worship of God. Finally, it is implied: For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness, resulting in more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. But what benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? The outcome of those things is death. But now, since you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the outcome is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Where the Lord said: Take up my yoke upon you . . . for it is sweet, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:29).

(Vers. et 21.)

(Verse 21) For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:20-23) Behold freedom, filled with blemishes and bound by miseries, whose work has a shameful reward. Whose end is death: death has been called the end of life and actions, to which either death or life succeeds. But in this place death is twofold, for from death one passes over to death.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) But now, freed from sin and becoming servants of God, you have your fruit for sanctification and, ultimately, eternal life. This means that if we have received the forgiveness of sins and strive to do good deeds, we will attain holiness and have an end, that is, an everlasting life. For we will transition from this mortal life, which he called the end, to a life that is without end.

(Vers. 23.) (Verse 23) For the wages of sin is death. He says the payment of sin is death, because through sin comes death; and therefore those who refrain from sin receive eternal life as a reward, because those who do not sin are spared from the second death. But by the grace of God, eternal

life in Christ Jesus our Lord. For just as those who follow sin acquire death, so those who follow the grace of God, that is, the faith of Christ, which forgives sins, will have eternal life, so that they may rejoice in knowing that they will attain this life, which is free from all weariness and has no end. This is what the holy Simeon desired when he asked to be released from here (Luke 2:29), so that he could go in peace, that is, into a life that experiences no unrest. And this gift, given to us by God through Christ our Lord, testifies that we should give thanks to God the Father through no other than his Son.

Chapter VII.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) Brothers, you who are ignorant, for I am speaking to those who know the law. I use the example of human law to strengthen their minds in divine doctrine; and once again to persuade them about heavenly things through earthly things, just as God is known through His creation of the world. For although all things are diverse, they are in some way similar to each other. The Romans know the law, for they are not barbarians; they have understood natural justice partly from themselves and partly from the Greeks, for the laws of Rome were derived from Athens, just as the Greeks derived them from the Hebrews. For before Moses, the Law was not hidden, but there was no order, nor authority. Therefore he speaks to those who are not ignorant of the Law:

Because the law governs man for as long as he lives.

It is not hidden that the entire life of man is under the law of nature, which is given to the world: this is the general law. Now, however, he proposes another law (although it is also general, but since it is not accepted by everyone, it becomes special) through which he wants to prove his assertion; for he wants to convey the truth gradually. Therefore, he says:

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) For the woman who is under the authority of a man, while the man is alive, she is bound by the law of the man. This law is from the Gospel, not from Moses, nor from earthly justice. Therefore, some things, following nature, and some things, learning from the law of Moses, have been perfected through the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, by the following example, it persuades more clearly that Christianity should be free from the law of works, not from all law; nor is it anymore necessary to live under the law, lest the grace of God be emptied by returning to the law; because the grace of God has freed man from the law, so that he may serve God with his spirit, that is, with his mind. For just as a woman, when her husband dies, is freed from the law of her husband, not from the law of nature, so also those who have been freed by the grace of God from the law are freed from the law by which they were held; so that when it is dead to them, they may not be adulterers but joined to Christianity. For if the law lives among them, they are adulterers, and being called Christians will profit them nothing, because they will be subject to punishment. For the adulterer will not be subject to the law, but to the Gospel, who, when joined to the Gospel, is dead to the law, but returns to the law afterwards; for the law is said to be dead when one who was held guilty by it is unknown to it, and the authority of the law ceases.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) But if her husband dies, she is released from the law of the husband, so that she is not an adulteress if she is joined to another man. Having been removed from the Law, having received the forgiveness of sins, and being joined to the Gospel, they are not adulterers of the Law; because she is dead to them. But if they, thinking that by observing the Law they can approach the Gospel, they will be adulterers; because they have joined themselves in faith to the living Law, and they will be adulterers in both.

(Vers. 4.) (Verse 4.) Therefore, my brothers, you have also been dead to the Law through the body of Christ. For our Savior allowed his body to be crucified by the devil, knowing it was for us and against him; therefore, he says that we have been made safe through the body of Christ. For to die to the Law is to live to God; for the Law rules over sinners. So to whom sins are forgiven, the Law dies, that is, to be freed from the Law. Therefore, through the body of Christ, we obtain this benefit; for our Savior, by giving his body, conquered death and condemned sin. For in him the devil sinned, when he killed him who was innocent, since he had no knowledge of sin at all; for when he defended a man as the cause of sin, he was found guilty, in whom he accused. Hence it happened that all who believe in Christ are delivered from the law, sin being removed; because conquering sin, which is the devil, through the body of Christ, does not have authority over those who belong to him, by whom he was conquered. For while he does not sin and is killed as guilty; he overcame sin from sin, that is, he condemned the devil by his own sin, which he committed in him: and he destroyed the handwriting of Adam's sin, which was a decree about sin (Colossians 2:14); when he rose from the dead, he gave this kind of form to those who believe in him, so that they could not be held by the second death. And by this, we have died to the Law through the body of Christ; for he who has died to the Law is free from guilt: and he who is guilty cannot escape the second death. That we may be the likeness of the one who has risen from the dead, that we may bear fruit for God. He says this because we are dead to the Law, so that we may be servants of Christ alone: and this will bring forth fruit for God. For it is given by God, who remains in his grace, to be deemed worthy of the promised resurrection.

(Vers. 5.)

(V. 5.) For when we were in the flesh. Since he says that he is in the flesh, and being in the flesh means being in the body, he denies that he is in the flesh, because here he is said to be in the flesh, who follows something that is prohibited by the law. Therefore, to be in the flesh is understood in various ways: for every unbeliever is in the flesh, that is, carnal; and a Christian living under the law is in the flesh; and whoever hopes for something from human beings is in the flesh; and whoever misunderstands Christ is in the flesh; and if any Christian leads a sinful life, they are in the flesh. Nevertheless, in this place we understand being in the flesh in this way, because before faith we were in the flesh; for we were living under sin, that is, following carnal desires, and subjecting ourselves to vices and sins. But to be in the flesh means not to believe in spiritual things, that is, to believe that a man can be born from a virgin without the involvement of a man, and that a man can be born again from water and the Holy Spirit, and that a separated soul can rise again in the flesh. Doubting these things, one is in the flesh, thus:

Vices, he says, of sins which are shown through the Law, were working in our members, so that they may bear fruit unto death. It is clear that one who does not believe acts under sin, and is dragged towards admitting vices; so as to bear fruit unto the second death: for death then

becomes profitable when one sins. However, he says that vices operate in the members, not in the body, lest there be an occasion for those who mistreat the body; for in evil speaking the tongue is accused, and in theft the hand is seized, and in deceiving the ears are rebuked, and in the rest, which even though they may come forth from the heart, are attested to by the Lord in the Gospel (Matthew 15:18); yet they are filled by the ministry of the members with works. This debate concerns the Jews and those who are called Christians, and who desire to live under the Law; that they may learn that they are carnal, and depart from the Law. However, he shows that the vices of sins, which prevail in those who live in the flesh, are revealed by the Law, but are not caused by the Law; for the Law is the indicator of sin, not the instigator, making sinners guilty.

(Vers. 6.) (Verse 6) But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. Therefore, sinners are not evil, but just, and good is spiritual. For who can doubt that it is spiritual to prevent sinning? But because he could not save man by forgiving sins, the law of faith was given, which would free believers from the dominion of the Law; so that they could restore themselves to life, whom the Law held guilty unto death. For the Law itself is the death to those for whom it works the cause of sin. So that we may serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Here he is thought to be touching on the law, which indeed he makes inferior to the law of faith; however, he does not judge it as an enemy. For this reason he says that we have been delivered from the law of death, so that we may serve the law of faith, which has bestowed on us a saving aid that the old law could not; lest we appear to make the grace bestowed on us void by serving the old law. The old law is certainly not the name of guilt, but rather of time or age; for it has become old, because it has ceased. But the law of the spirit is the law of faith; because faith is in the mind, and is not learned by works, but believed in the heart. And the mind itself understands that what it believes is of its own nature, and it is not seen with the eyes or touched with the hands. And the gifts that are hoped for are not visible, nor earthly, but spiritual. Therefore, the old law was formed on stone tablets; but the law of the spirit is written spiritually on the tablets of the heart, so that it may be eternal. The letter of the old law, however, is consumed by age. There is also another interpretation of the spirit of the law; that because the previous law inhibited evil deeds, this law, however, when it says that one should not sin in the heart, is called the spirit of the law; that it may make the whole person spiritual.

(Vers. 7.) (Verse 7) What then shall we say? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” But I did not know sin except through the Law. So the Law is not sin, but rather the index of sin; for it reveals both the hidden sins and the fact that they will not be without punishment before God. When this was discovered, man became guilty; and therefore, he does not seem to give thanks to the Law. For who willingly welcomes someone who announces punishment to him? But, thanks be to the Law of faith; because the one who became guilty through the Law of Moses is reconciled to God through the Law of faith: although the Law itself is just and good; for it is good to reveal the impending danger. But he is more thankful to the person through whom he was saved from danger and is alive. For I did not know what concupiscence

was, until the Law said in Exodus: You shall not covet (Exod. X, 17). It did not distinguish this concupiscence from sin, but rather mixed them together, signifying that even the suspicion of it not being allowed by God was sinful. I came to know, he said, that it is a sin. He acts as if representing the general case. Therefore, the Law prohibits concupiscence, which, because it is pleasurable, was not considered to be sin. Indeed, the cause seemed simple, to desire something of one's neighbor, but the Law declared this to be a sin; for to secular people, nothing seems so unpunished and peaceful as pleasure.

(Vers. 8.) (Verse 8) Therefore, taking advantage of the opportunity, sin was accomplished in me through the commandment, arousing every desire. By saying 'every desire,' it signifies all sins. For above desire, according to the Law, it mentions all other vices, and it says that every desire is accomplished in man through the impulse of the devil, whom it signifies in sin. Thus, the Law, which was given to benefit man, became the opposite for man. For the devil, seeing the help provided to man through the Law, rejoiced at his condition, both due to Adam's sin and his own, but then he realized that it was done against him. For whoever saw a fact done under the Law, certainly understood that his dominion was taken away; for man recognized how to escape the punishment of hell. Hence anger arose against man, so that he would overturn the Law; by admitting what was prohibited, he would offend God again, and he would fall into the power of the devil once more. He began not to command, but to deceive subtly; because the devil, knowing that man now belonged to the judgment of God, lost his dominion given in the Law. For without the law, sin was dead. This must be understood in two ways: that you should know that the devil is signified in sin, and also this very sin, which is called sin. For the devil is said to have been dead, because he stopped deceiving humans before the Law, but he was as if quiet; for he was secure in his possession. But he said that sin was dead, because it was believed that it would not be imputed to God: therefore it was dead before humans, as if one could sin with impunity. For the sin was not hidden, as I said above; but it was unknown, because God is the judge. And when the Law was given, it became evident that sin had revived. Why did it revive, except because it had lived before, and afterwards it was considered dead due to the negligence of men, even though it was alive? For it was thought that sin was not imputed when it was imputed. Therefore, he who was alive was considered dead.

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9) But I was once living without the law. What is living without the law, when the law has always existed, as I mentioned above; except that without the fear of God, man lived secure that God would not judge human actions. But when the commandment came, sin revived. Therefore, it said that sin had revived to signify that it had existed before: afterwards, however, the negligence of men was considered dead, even though it was alive, as false rumors are wont to be spread among strangers. Therefore, this signifies that in the beginning, sin was not hidden from being imputed to God, that is, it was alive: but when the habit of sinning had obscured this, it was considered dead; so that the crime was thought to fail along with the person. But when the Law was given or reformed, it revived among them, among whom it was considered dead; for they began to understand sin to be imputed.

(Vers. 10.) (Verse 10) But I am dead. A man is dead; for he sees himself guilty before God, who before thought he would not be liable for the sins he committed. And the commandment that was given to me, which was for life, I found to be for death. It is true, because the law was given for life; but when it made man guilty, not only of past but also of future sins, the law given for life became

for death. But, as I said, for the one who sins; for the obedient, it is unto life.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. Understand sin in this place as the devil, who is the author of sin. He found an opportunity through the law, how he could satisfy his cruelty by killing a man; so that because the Law threatened sinners, man, always admitting by his own instinct what was prohibited by it, offending God, would incur the vengeance of the Law; so that he would be condemned by that which was given to him for his own benefit. Because, indeed, the law was given against his will, envy flared up against the man, so that he would be stained with more wicked pleasures, lest his hand would escape.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) Therefore, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good. So that no suspicion remains in the Law, it commends it in such a way that it pronounces it not only just, but also holy and good. For the Gospel declares that the commandment is understood as the Law. For it says: If you want to enter life, keep the commandments (Matthew 19:17).

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13) So is death good for me if it is good? Far from it. Truly far from it; for how can it be possible that what is proven to be good is understood as death? But sin, in order that it may appear to be sin, worked death to me by that which is good. The devil said that he had received occasion through the good, in order that he might work evil to mankind, while he led him astray to death. For so that those things which were done wickedly before the Law might be proved to be sins through the enticement of desire, and might be avoided in the future, the Law was given, manifested in writing. Then Satan was inflamed, certainly through what is good; for he saw that provision was made for mankind, and he persuaded him to desire what is forbidden; so that, from the Law, death might come to him instead of life. This certainly must be attributed to human negligence, which weakened the strength of its nature by the desire to sin, so that it could not resist the temptations of the enemy. However, the enemy, who is signified by sin, received the opportunity to work death for man through the Law, in order to reveal himself as an enemy. For by enticing him to what is unlawful, it becomes evident that he is an enemy. Although he had already caused death for man before the Law, apart from the first cause of Adam, yet after the Law he discovered greater punishments for him in the underworld, where the second death is. For it is less of a crime to have sinned before the Law is made manifest, than after the Law. In order that the sin itself may be above measure, it sins by commandment (Genesis, 15:16). What is meant by 'above measure,' as though a limit were given to those who commit sin, when it is not allowed to sin? But these are God's words, saying, 'The sins of the Amorites are not yet complete' (ibid.). By this, He shows that there is a certain measure of sins, and when sinners have filled it, they are deemed worthy of the least judgment of life; just as Pharaoh, because he had filled this measure, God's powers and signs were shown to him, by which others were terrified to exercise themselves in the benefits of life, so that life in death may be learned. But there is another way, which the Apostle discusses; for he shows that sin is more under the Law than it was before the Law, and above this, he indicates that the wider extent of sins increased after the Law due to the envy and cunning of Satan; so that the providence of God would contradict man, who should not sin in the least with fear of the Law. Therefore, in order to overcome the envy of the devil and to establish His

providence for man, God changed the order by sending the Savior Christ, who would conquer both the devil and the ordinances of God towards man.

(Vers. 14.) (Verse 14.) For we know that the Law is spiritual. Since it speaks to those who know the Law, it says: We know that the Law is spiritual; for they would not subject themselves to the Law unless they recognized it as spiritual. It calls the Law of Moses spiritual, which was given on tablets: because it prohibits sin, it is spiritual; indeed, it prohibits the worship of visible and carnal things. These things pertain to the commendation of the Law, so that it might not be thought to be worthy of blame by anyone; because it exercises severity against sinners. But I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. Therefore it is from here that he says: the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. This means that the law is strong and just, and is free from guilt. But man is weak, and enslaved to either his own or inherited transgressions, so that he cannot use his own power to obey the law. Therefore, he must seek refuge in God's mercy in order to escape the severity of the law, and once freed from sins, with God's favor, resist the enemy from now on. For what is the subject of sin, if not to have a body corrupted by the vice of the soul, into which sin inserts itself and impels man, as a captive to sins, to do its will? Hence the Lord says among other things: The devil comes and takes away what has been sown in their hearts, so that they may not be saved (Luke 8:12). Therefore, the same Apostle says in another letter: For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12), which are known to be the followers of Satan. For before the deceit of man, before he made himself subject to death, there was no power for them to enter into the interior of man and insert perverse thoughts. From whence his cunning was made, that he would deceive man through conversation by means of the serpent. But after he deceived him and subjugated him, he received power to assail the interior man, joining himself to his mind, so that he cannot discern what is his own in thought, and what is not his own, unless he looks towards the law.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) For what I am doing, I do not understand. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) But if I do what I hate, I agree with the Law. The Law rightly forbids when it declares that it is against one's will to do what the law prohibits, and that it is in accordance with one's nature to do what the Law commands; because whatever is done outside of that, it says is hateful to itself.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) But now it is not I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. Therefore, I always call sin what it is, knowing that it is the devil with his angels; for if the first man had not sinned, all these things would not happen, and thus sin is what causes all these things.

(Vers. 18.) (Verse 18.) For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. He does not say, as it seems to some, that the flesh is evil, but rather that what dwells in the flesh is not good, but sin. How does sin dwell in the flesh, since it is not a substance, but a deviation from what is good? Because the body of the first man was corrupted by sin so that it could be dissolved: the corruption of sin itself remains in the body, holding firm the divine sentence given to Adam, which is a sign of the devil, by whose influence he sinned. Therefore, because of the fact that it remains as a result of the deed, it is said that sin dwells in the flesh, to which the devil approaches as if to his own law, and it remains as if in sin; because the flesh is already of sin, in order to deceive man with evil suggestions; so that man does not do what the law commands. For I am adjacent to wanting. It asserts so good, which the Law commands, that it say it pleases itself naturally and wants to do it. However, I cannot find perfection in good. And so, what is commanded by the Law pleases, and there is a desire to do it, but to fulfill it, there is a lack of power and strength; because he is so pressed by the power of sin that he cannot go where he wants, nor can he resist; for his power is of another Lord. For man is already burdened by the habit of sinning, and he more easily succumbs to sin than to the law, which he knows teaches good; and if he wants to do good, the habit suppresses him, with the help of the enemy.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) For what I want to do, I do not do good: but what I do not want, I do evil. He often repeats it to make it clear. Therefore, this is what was said above, that as a captive, he is compelled to do what he wants, sin.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) But if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. This is what I have already mentioned, that sin, not I, but sin living in me, fulfills its will. Does it mean that because he says a reluctant man sins, he should be seen as exempt from guilt? For he does what he does not want, compelled by the force of power. Not at all; for these actions are the result of his own fault and negligence. For by giving assent to sin, he has become its slave; for it first persuades so that it may then rule over the conquered. But the apostle, in order to show the grace of God, explains these things: from what great evils he has freed man, or what destruction comes from Adam, and what benefits he has obtained through Christ; in order to demonstrate to whom even the Law itself could not assist.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Therefore, I find the law willing to do good for me, because evil is present in me. The law of Moses asserts its consent to sin that dwells in the flesh, which forces one to do what man and the law do not desire.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man. He says that the mind is pleased with those things which are delivered by the law: this is the inner man; because sin does not dwell in the mind, but in the flesh, which is from the origin of sinful flesh, and through a mediator all flesh becomes sinful. For if the soul itself were from a mediator, and sin dwelled in it, because the soul of Adam sinned more than the body: but the sin of the soul corrupts the body. Therefore, sin dwells in the flesh as if at the door of the soul, so that it does not allow it to go where it wants. But if it were to dwell in the soul, man would never know himself; but now he knows himself and takes pleasure in the law of God.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. He mentions two laws, of which he desires to see one in his members, that is, in the outward man, which is the flesh or body. This is the opposing law, this is the one opposing the soul, dragging it captive into the condition of sin; lest, as he advances further, he should find an advocate. There is another law of the mind, which is the law of Moses, or the natural law, which is in the soul. This is the oppressive violence of sin, indeed its own negligence, because while it loves vices, it subjects itself to sin, so that it may be held captive by its own habit; for habit rules over man. Indeed, it mentions four laws: the first spiritual law, which is also natural, which was reformed by Moses and placed in authority, it is the Law of God: then the law of the consenting mind to the law of God: thirdly, the law of sin, which it says dwells in the members as a result of the transgression of the first man: but fourthly, that which appears in the members, while it suggests evil and departs. But these laws seem to be repeated four, when there are two, that is, good and evil. For the law of the mind itself is the spiritual law, or the law of Moses, which is called the law of God; but the law of sin is the same as that which, it is said, appears in our members, which contradicts the law of our mind.

(Vers. 24, 25.)

(Verse 24, 25.) Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. He calls himself a wretched man because he is born under sin. Indeed, is not a man truly wretched who has inherited this legacy of disobedience, having sin as a companion that grants Satan access to him? Adam paved the way, through which the enemy ascends to his descendants, unless the most merciful Lord in his loving-kindness had granted his grace through Christ; so that the redeemed human race, having received the forgiveness of sins, may repent from now on, with sin being suppressed and condemned. For he, being freed from evil and purged, resists his adversary, having received power against him, while he is assisted by God. This, as if introducing a more powerful law, he calls faith, which he also calls grace: which, however, has its origin from the spiritual law; because through it man is set free, so that because Moses gave the law, and the Lord also gave it, they are said to be two: but they are understood as one, as far as the meaning and providence are concerned. For that one is the initiator of salvation, but this one is the consummator. But I am not speaking of that part of the law which is included in the feasts and in circumcision and in the dietary laws; but of that which pertains to the sacrament of God and discipline. Therefore, by the grace of God through Christ, man has been freed from the body of this death. This is the death which he mentioned above, the death found in the condemnation of man through sin in the depths, which is called the second death; but the body of

death encompasses all sins; for many sins are like one body, as if each one were a member created by one author, from which man, saved by the grace of God through baptism, has escaped the aforementioned death. For he did not say that he was snatched away from a fleshly body, but he said this body, which signifies that it is destroyed above by baptism and the observance of the Law. For even when he says, 'Of the body of death,' he shows that there is another body which is not subject to death.

Therefore, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. When he says the law of God, he means both the law of Moses and the law of Christ. But with the flesh, I serve the law of sin. I myself, that is, the one who has been set free from the body of death. It is in the body; how is he set free from the body of death, except that he is set free from all evils? For the forgiveness of sins takes away all sins. Therefore, having been set free from the body of death by the grace of God through Christ, I serve the law of God with my mind or soul, but with the flesh, I serve the law of sin, that is, the devil, who instills evil suggestions in the soul through the subjected flesh. Therefore, since man is twofold, turned towards the flesh and towards the soul, he declared that he would serve the law of God with his mind; for the soul is devoted to God, and having regained its power, it can resist sin, which operates through the flesh. For because the flesh is corruptible and subject to death, it was made in such a way that it would not die in association and conjunction with the soul; it receives desires, which it transfers to the soul as a kind of burden, so that it also becomes burdened. But what rejects her? The death of God's grace.

I serve with my mind the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin, as it is said. For now my mind is set free and restored to good habit, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and can reject evil suggestions; for it has been given the authority to resist the enemy. For he who is no longer subject to sin cannot be investigated against his will. But the flesh, because it does not have judgment nor the ability to discern (for it is a brute nature), cannot shut the enemy out; lest he come in and persuade contrary things to the mind, and thus: I serve with my flesh the law of sin. For since man consists of both flesh and soul, by that part in which he is wise, he serves God; but by the other part in which he is foolish, he serves the law of sin. But if man had persisted in the state in which he was made, there would be no power for the enemy to approach his flesh and whisper contrary things to his soul. But in order that man, who was not completely restored by the grace of Christ to his original state, might not have been obstructed, a sentence was given to Adam (Gen. III, 17); for it would have been unjust to annul a sentence that was rightfully pronounced. Therefore, with the sentence remaining, the providence of God found a remedy so that the salvation which man had lost through his own fault would be restored to him; so that, having been healed, he would believe that his adversary, defeated by the power of Christ, would not dare to defend himself against him, and that with the sentence of the first death being annulled, man, joined with the race of Adam, would not be returned to the condition of the first origin, but would remain wholly immortal.

Chapter VIII.

(Vers. 1, 2.) (Vers. 1, 2.) Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh. It is true, because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who diligently serve the law of God. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. Man demands security through the

grace of God, so that he is not anxious about the suggestions of the devil, as long as he rejects them; for nothing can harm a person in the second death; for the law of faith, which is the Spirit, has set man free from the second death, condemned sin: nor does it hinder man now, because sin is present in the flesh, if he only resists it, remembering God's help: but he is also to be crowned, who suppresses the schemes of sin remaining in the flesh; for it is great wisdom to avoid the traps of the enemy of the household. The law of the Spirit of life, is itself the law of faith: for even the law of Moses is spiritual, because it forbids sinning; yet not of life, because it cannot forgive the sins of those destined for death, in order to give them life. But because it does not desire sin and calls back from death, it is called the law of the spirit of life, not consisting in the letter, but in the spirit; because it is believed in the heart, and it is the spirit that is believed. And thus this Law in Christ Jesus, that is, through the faith of Christ, frees the believer from the law of sin and death. The law of sin is that which it says dwells in the members, which strives to persuade the opposite: but the law of Moses is the law of death, because it puts sinners to death. For in another epistle, among other things, he speaks of the authority of the law: If the ministry of death, engraved on stone, was glorious (2 Corinthians 3:7). So it is not surprising if it is called the spiritual law and the law of death, since the Gospel is also the same. For it says elsewhere among other things: To some, the fragrance of life leads to life; to others, the fragrance of death leads to death (2 Corinthians 2:16). For those whom the belief in virtues or the sight or hearing of deeds attracted to faith, the fragrance of life was the Gospel; but for those whose senses were inflamed by the power of deeds to contradict, the preaching of faith was the fragrance of death. Therefore, since faith exists, it brings diversity to people, just as the sun, being one, melts wax but hardens clay. Therefore, whoever has experienced faith with the mind's sense of smell will also benefit from it. However, it is said, perhaps: If faith accomplishes the same thing that the Law does, why is it not also called the law of death itself; for it kills unbelievers? But it is not so. Faith has been given, which justifies those who flee to it, in order to forgive those whom the Law considers guilty; so that those who act under faith may be free from sin, for those who act under the law are subject to it. Therefore, those who do not obey the faith are not killed by faith, but by the Law; for those who do not come to faith are bound by the Law, and therefore all those who maliciously reject the words of faith remain in death.

Now let us see what the difference is when the spiritual law and the law of the spirit are mentioned. This is the difference: the spiritual law is called thus because it gives precepts through which one does not sin, for whoever does not sin is called spiritual; an imitator of the superior beings, that is, the celestial beings. But the law of the spirit is called thus because God, in whom faith is, is spirit. There, therefore, are the words, here is the reality: there are the things of God, here is God himself.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For what was impossible for the Law, in which it was weakened by the flesh, God, sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. He says this to make the baptized secure, because they have been freed from sin. For what was impossible, He says, of the Law. What is impossible? It is impossible for us, namely, to fulfill the commandment of the Law; because we were subject to sin. For this reason, God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. This is the likeness of flesh, because although it is the same flesh as ours, it was not conceived and born in the same way as our flesh. It is sanctified in the womb and

born without sin, and He Himself did not sin in it. Therefore, a virgin womb was chosen for the birth of the Lord, so that the flesh of the Lord may differ from our flesh in holiness; for it is similar in cause, but not in the quality of sinful substance. Therefore He was called similar, because He did not have the same nativity from the same substance of flesh; for the body of the Lord was not subject to sin. The flesh of the Lord was cleansed by the Holy Spirit, so that He may be born in a body like that of Adam before sin; however, the sentence was given only in Adam.

Therefore, when God sent Christ, he condemned sin in sin, that is, he condemned sin in his own sin. For when Christ was crucified by sin, which is Satan, he committed sin in the flesh of the Savior's body. By doing this, God condemned sin in the flesh, specifically where he sinned, as it is also said in another epistle: 'Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross' (Colossians 2:15); that is, in Christ. For it is usually asked about anyone who is condemned: In what cause was he condemned? It is answered, for example, in the case of murder. Similarly, sin was condemned in the flesh, that is, in the sin which he committed in the flesh. Thus, Satan, having become guilty of this sin, lost the power of tempting souls, so that he may not dare to hold those who have been marked with the sign of the cross, by which he was overcome, in the second death. Therefore, the Apostle addresses these matters for our security.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) In order for the justification of the Law to be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Therefore, he says that sin was condemned, so that the justification of the Law given by Moses may be fulfilled in us; for by the removal of the condition of the Law, we have become friends of the same, for friends of the Law are justified. But how is the justification fulfilled in us, unless when the remission of all sins is given; so that, with sins removed, one may appear justified, serving the law of God with the mind? This is not to walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, so that the devotion of the soul, which is the Spirit, does not consent to the desire for sin; for through the flesh the concupiscences of the soul are sown, which is sin. For if sin is condemned by the Savior, how does it exist? It is condemned by the Savior, and condemned in a triple manner. First, in the place where sin did not sin, it is condemned by dissenting from sin. Then, on the cross, sin is condemned because it sinned. Wherefore, when that authority was taken away from the devil, by which he held men in hell on account of the sin of Adam, he dared no longer hold those in whom the sign of the Cross is, bound. Thirdly, he condemned sin, when he made sins void by the grant of remission of sins. For whereas the sinner was to be condemned for the sake of the sin committed, yet in pardoning him He condemned the sin. Therefore if we also do not sin following the example of our Savior, we condemn sin.

(Vers. 5.) (Verse 5.) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. This means that whoever obeys the suggestion that is made through the flesh, understands the things that belong to the flesh. For to them, what follows seems pleasant, namely, desiring to go against divine law and use and holding the opinion of the flesh's error; for in the flesh, worldly error is signified in any way. But those who live according to the Spirit, they perceive the things that are of the Spirit. It is evident that those who restrain themselves from the desires of the flesh, live according to the law of the mind; for what appears to be beneficial to them is to align with the Law.

(Vers. 6.) (Verse 6.) For the wisdom of the flesh is death. The wisdom of the flesh is sin, which generates death. Wisdom is called such when it is foolish; because the errors of worldly people, conceived from visible things either in perception or in action against God's law, appear wise: especially because all their industry and cunning is in the service of sinning. They seem to be wise to themselves, if they take care of this more diligently; when there is nothing more foolish than sinning. There is another wisdom of the flesh, which, inflated by worldly reasoning, denies that anything can happen without reason. Hence, it mocks the Virgin's childbirth, the resurrection of the flesh. But prudence is the life and peace of the spirit. Truly, this is wisdom, which acquires life and peace; for, following spiritual things, despising the allurements of present life, it will have eternal life with peace, that is, without disturbance; where there is no turmoil and punishment.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Because the wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor can it be. It did not say that the flesh is hostile, but the wisdom of the flesh; that is, not the substance, but either evil actions or thoughts or assertions that arise from error. Therefore, the wisdom of the flesh is first found among humans in the study of the stars, and then in the enjoyment of visible things. These things are hostile to God, because they equate the Lord and Creator of the elements with what He has made, asserting that nothing can be done other than what the order of the world contains. Therefore, they deny that God would have made the Virgin give birth or that the bodies of the dead would rise; because, they say, it is foolish for God to do more than man's wisdom allows. O wise people of the world, who think that God should not act differently from the creature created by Him; so that He Himself may be considered similar to creatures! Thus, they are blind, not seeing the contempt they show to God. For the work that He deigned to do to proclaim His praise, they, the critics, assert to be unbelievable and foolish: and therefore, this fleshly wisdom cannot be subject to the law of God; for they sharpen their intellect for this purpose, to oppose the deeds of God.

(Vers. 8, 9.) (Vers. 8, 9.) For those who are in the flesh cannot please God. The wise of the world are in the flesh, because they study worldly wisdom, which contradicts God's law. For whatever is against God's law is carnal; because it is from the world; for the whole world is flesh: everything visible is accounted to the flesh; for the elements of the flesh are closely related, indeed they are the elements of the flesh. Therefore, whoever obeys worldly things is in the flesh. But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. Those who are in the flesh are said to not be in the flesh, if they agree with the Apostle John's statement that they do not love the world; for the opinion of a person forms their own nature, so that what they feel is called by that name. But if the Spirit of God dwells in you. He says this ambiguously, because those who were led by the Law were not yet of perfected faith: but He saw in them the hope of perfection. Hence, sometimes He speaks as if to the perfected ones, sometimes as if to those being perfected, that is, sometimes He praises, sometimes He warns; so that if they were to follow the law of nature according to the things mentioned above, they might be said to be spiritual; because the Spirit of God cannot dwell in one who follows carnal desires. But whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to Him. The one who previously spoke of the Spirit of God now speaks of the Spirit of Christ, because all things of the Father are of the Son. Therefore, he says this because the one who is subject to the aforementioned errors does not belong to Christ; he does not have His Spirit, which he received in order to be a son of God. The Holy Spirit forsakes man for two reasons:

either because he has the mindset of the flesh or because of his actions. Therefore, through these things which he warns, he encourages towards good conduct; for although men are uplifted by the goodness of God, nevertheless the called sons of God are burdened, unless they live in such a way that they may not seem unworthy of the name conferred upon them.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) The body is indeed dead because of sin, but the spirit is true life because of justification. The cause of sin asserts that the body is dead for those whom the Holy Spirit abandons, and it does not reach the passion of their death, that is, the Spirit. For the Spirit of God does not know how to sin; it is given for justification, so that by its help it may justify. Therefore, because it does not know how to sin, it is life; it cannot die, because death is through sin. And by this the sinner will die to himself, not to the Spirit whom he has received. For the Spirit will not be in the cause, who wants to justify. For this is the sign of justification in man, that through that which inhabits in him, the justified may appear to be a son of God. For the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in a fictional man, or in a body subject to sins, as Solomon says (Wis. 1:4): 'But if any one live again carnally, perhaps deserted by the Holy Spirit, he will die in his unrighteousness.' But when he says 'body', he signifies the whole man dead for the cause of sin, just as the prophet signifies the whole man under the term 'soul', as if the whole from a part; for he says: 'The soul that sinneth, dying it shall die' (Ezek. 18:4). Is it not without a body? This body he has put in the place of the whole man, that other one the soul. And another prophet, speaking of the whole man, signified him as flesh; for he says, \"All flesh shall see the salvation of God\" (Isaiah 40:5). And since the Holy Spirit is given to the one who is baptized, it is also called his own spirit. Therefore, the rest of the man's parts are called body in comparison to it, for the soul is called flesh when it sins; for it is called that which follows, as I have often said. In a similar manner, the Lord, when he did not wish his divinity to be feared in his passion, but wanted his humanity to be understood as being in sorrow, said: 'The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26:41); to signify that in his spirit he is God, but in his flesh he is man.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) But if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. He treats the same subject in a similar way; for by saying 'bodies,' he signifies the whole person. And because he previously said that the body dies a second death because of sin, here he promises that mortal bodies will be given life again through a good life, that is, the whole person.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Therefore, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, so that we live according to the flesh. It is right and evident that we should not obey the desires of Adam, who acted carnally, and who, as the first sinner, left us the title of death. Rather, we should serve the law of Christ, who redeemed us from the aforementioned death by spiritual means; for we are debtors to him who justified us, stained by carnal vices, through the washing of the Spirit, and made us children of God. For previously, placed in the flesh, we lived subject to the sins of Adam by way of example: but now freed, we must render service to the Redeemer. Indeed, this service does not profit Him

necessarily, who lacks nothing: but it acquires eternal life for us; for He loves us in such a way that He attributes to Himself what benefits us.

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13.) For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. Nothing could be truer, for if we live according to Adam, we will die; for Adam, by his transgression, sold himself to sin and was assigned to the flesh. For every sin is of the flesh; for this reason, vices and transgressions are born outside of ourselves, that is, through hearing, sight, touch, smell, or taste, and are assigned to the flesh. For every thought that looks outside is prone to trespass; for even the first man's trespass was born outside. Therefore, to live according to the flesh is death; for every action of the flesh is outside the Law. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. The body wants to be governed by the law of the soul; hence, it shows that if the acts and intentions of the flesh, which are orchestrated by the instigating powers of this world, are restrained by the holy Spirit, so that they do not receive the power to act, life is given. They are said to be put to death if they cease to exist; for they are not when they cease; because sin does not exist if it is not committed.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. These are said to be led by the Spirit of God, in whose actions the plans of the rulers and powers of this world are not seen; for in those in which they are seen, they are not the sons of God, but of the devil; because whoever is born of God does not sin, says the apostle John (1 John 3:9). For this is what distinguishes the sons of God and the devil. Therefore, the Lord said to the Jews who were doing evil and plotting murder, 'You are of your father the devil' (John 8:44).

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15.) For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again in fear. This means that, having received the Holy Spirit, we have been freed from the fear of evil actions, so that we may no longer do anything from which we would be afraid again. For before, we were under fear, because the Law was given, and everyone was placed under it. Therefore, the Spirit of fear was called the Law, because it was given to humans for the sake of sin, placing them under fear. But the Law of faith, which is signified in the spirit of adoption, is the Law of security, because it frees us from fear while granting forgiveness of sins and making us secure through these. And it is said to be the spirit of not being afraid in this way. But you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba, Father!' Freed from the fear of God, we have received the Spirit of adoption, so that, considering who we were and what gift of God we have received, we may order our lives with great diligence, lest the name of God the Father suffer injury in us, and lest we fall into the same ingratitude from which we have escaped. For we have obtained such grace, that we dare to say to God, 'Abba,' that is, Father! And therefore, let us take care that our confidence does not turn into rashness; for if we lead a life dissimilar to this word, by which we say, 'Abba, Father,' we do wrong to God, calling Him Father. Therefore, by His goodness, He has granted us this, which is beyond our nature, that by our deeds we may deserve what we are unworthy of in substance.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) The Spirit itself bears witness to our spirit that we are the children of God. And if we are doing well, and by this very fact the Holy Spirit remains in us, He gives witness to this voice and

our soul, with which we cry out in prayer: Abba, that is, Father. The Spirit of God bears witness, while He remains in us, that we do not speak rashly when we say, Abba, Father. Let us show a worthy life to this voice; and this is the testimony of the children, if through the Spirit there appears a paternal sign upon them.

(Vers. 17.) (Verse 17) But if children, then heirs: heirs indeed of God, but coheirs with Christ. For although God the Father cannot in any way be said to have died, yet Christ, his Son, is said to have died on account of the Incarnation; what is it then, that he who has died should be said to be the heir of the ever-living one; since heirs are certainly not of the dead? But this is the result of his humanity, not his divinity. For what is called inheritance among us is the gift of the Father, poured out upon obedient sons, so that the living one may rightly be the heir of the living one, not out of necessity but by his own merit. And so the Lord in the Gospel indicated that he, who is both human and divine, divided his living substance among the living, although he expressed this in a parable (Luke 15:12); for a parable is not composed without reason. Therefore, in order to make us prompt to obey God the Father, he exhorts us with this hope, saying that we will become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; so that because the hope of great reward is great, we may be even more inclined towards godly things, setting aside the care of worldly things. But what it means to be a coheir of the Son of God, we are taught by the apostle John; for among other things, he says: We know that when he appears, we shall be like him (I John 3:2). But if we suffer together, so that we may also be glorified together. He explains how we can become coheirs with Christ, saying: But if we suffer together, so that we may also be glorified together. Let us therefore see what it means to suffer together. To suffer together means to endure persecution for the sake of the hope of the future, and to crucify the flesh with its vices and desires, that is, to despise the pleasures and vanities of the world. For when all these things have died in a person, they crucify the world, believing in the life of the future age, in which they hope to become coheirs with Christ.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) Therefore, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. This exhortation pertains to the things above, by which he shows that the afflictions that can be inflicted by the faithless here are small in comparison to the promised reward of the future age. Therefore, he commands us to be ready for all destructions, because great rewards have been promised for these; so that the soul may console itself in tribulation and hope may increase. For we know that some, or rather many, endure difficult and hard labors for present gains, which are certainly of little benefit, and they cannot reach what they are striving for, because life itself is fragile and uncertain. Sailors expose themselves to such great storms and tempests for the sake of what advantages? When they know that in these things death is more before their eyes than life? And soldiers, even though victory is uncertain, do not hesitate to take up their swords, relying on the hope of a present reward. Therefore, we should endure much more for Christ, whose benefits have also been extended to us: he promises magnificent rewards with glory for small things, heavenly things for earthly things, and eternal rewards for temporal things! We are said to suffer for Christ, not because what we suffer benefits Him, but because He seeks an opportunity to reward us; for a good and generous giver seeks a cause to give, even to the unworthy or bashful. Finally, in order for the very destructions to be endured, he himself suggests strength.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) For the eager expectation of creation awaits the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation has been subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will also be set free from its slavery to corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) For creation is subject to vanity, not willingly, but by the will of the Lord and Creator. The creature, placed in the power of the Lord and Creator, is not willingly subject to vanity; for what is subject to it will not benefit itself, but us. So what is it in which it is subject to vanity, except that the things it generates are perishable? For it operates in order to produce corruptible fruits: therefore corruption itself is vanity; for all things that are born in the world are weak, perishable, and corruptible, and as such, they are vain. For they are vain, because they cannot maintain their state: for all things deformed by flux always return back confused into their nature. This is said of these things and Solomon, because all these things are vanity (Eccles. I, 2). It is not discordant from these things what David says, saying: Nevertheless every living man is vanity (Ps. XXXVIII, 6). For to eat and drink, and to take care of worldly things, is not this vanity? And yet this vanity is profitable; for it benefits those who are born in an unclean state, so that through these things, having been exercised in their bodies, they may learn the mystery of the Creator. For in comparison to eternal things, earthly things are vain; for they are good in themselves, since they are necessary.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) But because of him who subjected it to hope. What is this hope? He immediately subjected it, saying: Because the creature itself will be set free from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For the creature cannot contradict its own creator, it is subjected for his sake with hope. For it has this consolation placed in its labor, that it will have rest when all those whom God knows will believe have believed; for their sake also it is subjected.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) For we know that every creature groans and labors until now. To labor is to suffer. It is the very nature of things that every creature groans and suffers daily until now. Until now means as long as it is read. Even the elements themselves present their works with anxiety; for both the sun and the moon fulfill their appointed spaces with labor, and the breath of living creatures is constrained with great groaning to perform their services; for we see that these living things are compelled, against their will, to labor. So all these things await rest, to be freed from servile work. But if this were a servitude that led to earning merit with God, the creature would rejoice and not be saddened: but because it is subjected to the servitude of corruption on our account, it is saddened. For it sees its works perish daily; for daily its work arises and perishes. Therefore, it is right to be saddened, whose activity does not pertain to eternity, but to corruption. Therefore, as much as can be understood, they are sufficiently concerned for our salvation, knowing that they will make progress in their own liberation more quickly, if only we recognize the author sooner. Therefore, knowing these things, let us present ourselves worthy with all care and diligence, so that we may also be an example to others, not only moved by our own mercy, but also for the sake

of the one who suffers injuries day and night, groaning; for we tend to be more watchful in the causes of others.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) Not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. In addition to the creation groaning, we ourselves also groan, longing to be set free from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For in this world of Christianity, it is like a stormy sea. Just as the sea is stirred up by opposing winds and threatens those sailing on it, so the worldly system, influenced by the conspiracy of the wicked, disturbs the minds of believers. And the enemy causes such diversity of troubles that it becomes unclear what should be avoided first. For if power ceases to be against us, it agitates the minds of individuals; and if even they are subdued, it creates a fire among domestic households; and if this is accomplished, it causes discord amongst the brothers by its own artifice; so that when the house has been struck at its four corners, it causes ruin from some part. Therefore, with one accord, it must be fled from by Christians; for they ought to follow the example of the holy Simeon, who, knowing that war is waged here against faithlessness, asked to be dismissed in peace (Luke 2:29). This is why each individual who prays, prays for everyone, that the kingdom of God may come (Matthew 6:10). For then there will be deliverance of our body, that is, of all Christians: for in the body he has signified all, because we are members of one another. The Apostle, indeed, as a divine man, thinks well of us, saying that we groan, in order to be freed from here, just as Simeon also groaned: but I see that we are held by the pleasure of the world. Therefore, through these things that have been said above, he shows the extent to which a creature suffers for our sake. For when we, for whom his service is helpful, and who have the Spirit of God as our helper, groan, desiring to be liberated from this, in order to obtain the promised rewards. Therefore, the more a creature groans, which neither has the Holy Spirit as its helper, nor suffers for its own sake, and in addition to this, sees those things which it produces by its own labor being offered as sacrifices to idols, the more it is against the divine law! Where it hurts the most, and wishes to be freed sooner, knowing that this leads to the Creator's injury.

(Vers. 24.) (Ver. 24.) For we are saved by hope. This is said because by hoping for what God promised in Christ, we have merited to be freed. Therefore, we are freed in hope; for nothing else will happen, but what we believe. But hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(Vers. 25.)

(Verse 25.) For what does anyone see, what does he hope for? But if we do not see what we hope for, we hope for it through patience, we wait for it. There is no doubt that those things are hoped for which are not seen; for future things are awaited. This expectation is patience, which deserves much from God; so that, day by day, desiring to come the kingdom of God, he does not doubt, because it delays.

(Vers. 26.) (Verse 26.) Moreover, the Spirit also helps our weakness in prayer. For above, he mentioned that we groan and pray for liberation, and when in pain, either we want what is said to happen soon or to be quickly lifted up, so that we may attain merit. And it seems we pray with

feeble words, since the desired outcome is denied to us. For it is weak to ask against reason, and by this, he shows us that this weakness is helped by the Holy Spirit given to us. However, it helps because it does not allow things that should be asked for before, or things that are contrary, to happen. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought. The weakness of our prayer signifies our ignorance; for we are mistaken in thinking that what we ask for is beneficial, when it is not. Finally, to the same Apostle, who prayed three times that the temptations would cease because they were frequent, the Lord said: 'My grace is sufficient for you; for power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. 12:9), that is, one's merit is established when they are patient in tribulations. He learned, therefore, that what he was asking for was against himself. There is sometimes a proud and foolish request, as was the case with the two apostles James and John, to whom it was said when they were asking for inappropriate and excessive things: You do not know what you are asking for (Matthew 20:22). But the Spirit himself intercedes for us with unutterable groanings. The Spirit of the Lord is said to intercede for us not with human words, but according to his own nature. For when he speaks about God, he speaks to God; and he must speak in the same way that he speaks about the one who he is. For no one speaks a different language with their fellow citizen. For the Spirit, given to us, pours himself out in our prayers, so that he may cover our lack of knowledge and foresight with his movement; and he may ask from God those things that are beneficial to us.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) But the one who searches hearts knows what the Spirit desires, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. It is evident that to God, to whom nothing is hidden or secret, the prayer of all spirits is known; how much more so the Holy Spirit, who is of the same substance, and speaks not by the impulse of air, or like angels, or like other creatures, but as befits His divinity! Therefore, He speaks to God, even though He appears silent to us; for He sees even when He is not seen, and He requests those things which He knows please God and benefit us. Then indeed the same Spirit intercedes for us, since He knows that we ask for things contrary through ignorance, not through boasting.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) But we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. This is said because even if those who love God have prayed imperfectly, it will not be against them; because knowing the purpose of their heart, God does not impute to them laziness, which they ask for; but He grants those things which are to be given to those who love God. Hence, the Lord also says: But your Father knows what things you have need of, before you ask Him (Matthew 6:32). Therefore, those who are called according to the purpose are those whom God foreknew would be suitable for Himself, so that before they believed, they would be known.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

They are predestined in the future age to become like the Son of God, as I mentioned above. That He may be Himself the firstborn among many brethren. Rightly is He called the firstborn, who was

not made before every creature, but was born: after whose example God vouchsafed to adopt men for His sons. Christ is also the firstborn in the resurrection. He is also the firstborn from the dead, whose nature is unknown. And the firstborn, ascending into heaven after the victory. Therefore, the firstborn is called our brother in all things; because man was deemed worthy to be born: but He is the Lord; because He is our God, as the prophet Jeremiah says: This is our God, and there shall no other be accounted of in comparison with Him (Baruch 3:36).

(Vers. 30.)

(Verse 30) But those whom he predestined, he also called. To call is to help or convict someone who he knows will listen, concerning faith. And those whom he called, he also justified; and those whom he justified, he also glorified. This is what he says above, that those whom God foreknew to be suitable for himself, they remain believers, because it cannot be otherwise, unless those whom God foreknew, he also justified; and through this, he glorified them, so that they may become like the Son of God. Of the rest whom God did not foresee, he does not care in this grace, because he did not foresee them as future worthy. But if they believe, or are chosen for a time; because they seem good, so that justice may not seem despised, they are not permanent so as to be magnified, just as Judas Iscariot and the seventy-two, who, though chosen, after experiencing scandal, departed from the Savior (John 6:71).

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? It is clear that with God testifying for us, who is there to accuse us, when the judge himself has foreknown us and deemed us worthy?

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32) He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. This is why he encourages us to be confident in our faith, so that he shows us that God, as if foreseeing our faithlessness, gave up his Son to death for us before we were faithful.

How is it not also the case that He has given us all things with Him? God has once decreed that believers in Christ should be rewarded. For indeed, if He has bestowed upon us what is greater and essential, that He would deliver His true and beloved Son for us, even while we were still ungodly; why should He not be believed to do what is lesser for us who believe in Him? For now, rewards are ready for those who believe; for it is less for us that He would give us all things with Him, than to deliver Himself for our sake to death.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33.) Who will accuse God's elect? No one dare or can deny the judgment and foreknowledge of God revealed in us. For who can disapprove of what God approves, since no one is equal to God?

God who justifies (Isaiah 50:8). This is in the prophet Isaiah, where he puts it as his own; because there is no one else who, what God proves, should argue. Or perhaps he himself accuses us God: but he cannot accuse what he justifies.

(Vers. 34.)

(Verse 34.) And who will be the one to condemn? It is Christ who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. He denies accusing us to God, because he justifies us. And he cannot condemn us, because he loves us so much that he died for us, and rising again, he always pleads our case with the Father. His plea cannot be disregarded, because he is at the right hand of God, that is, in the honored position of being God. So let us rejoice in the faith of God the Father and of his Son Jesus Christ, who will judge us. Hence is that which Peter the Apostle says: Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not (Luke 22:31, 32). In this way, the Savior intercedes for us; knowing the audacity and power of our adversary, when he stirs up against us, if we do not assent to him, the Savior intercedes for us; so that he may not presume anything violently against us, and his insolence may be restrained. For this reason, therefore, the Son is said to intercede, since he himself does everything, and is equal to God the Father; and because God is said to be one, so that the Father and the Son are not regarded as singular or separate, the Scripture speaks in this way to distinguish the persons, so that it may not present the Son as unequal; and it may prefer the Father, because he is the Father and because everything is from him.

(Vers. 35.)

(Verse 35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? That is, who can turn us away from the love of Christ, who has bestowed upon us such great and countless benefits? Tribulation? No, for the steadfast love of Christians overcomes all torment. Indeed, love is increased in the one who, forbidden to love the one whom they have experienced kindness from, believes they are sowing seeds of merit and recalls the aforementioned benefits.

(Vers. 36, 37.)

(Verse 36, 37.) Is it stress? Is it persecution? Is it hunger? Is it nakedness? Is it danger? Is it the sword (as it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.')? But in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. This is written in the forty-third psalm. It is clear, therefore, that all these things, which are listed, cannot be compared or compared to the love of Christ, which he has sown in us. For we receive much greater benefits from Him than these are all, which seem adverse. For if we die for Him, which seems more grievous in these things, He has died for us: but He in order to benefit us; but our death does not profit Him, but us. For we lose temporal life, in order to have eternal life restored to us. And what is it to be wondered at, if servants die for a good Lord; when the Lord has died for servants, and for the wicked? Therefore, they conquer through kindness, and encourage the soul to persevere because of the one who loved us.

(Vers. 38, 39.)

(Verse 38, 39.) For I am confident that neither death. This confidence is from the promise of Christ, who has promised to help his dedicated faith in times of trouble. Neither life, nor angels, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. These are all the things that are brought forth for our abduction by the devil, which it mentions in order to fortify us; so that if they come, we may confidently resist them with hope and the help of Christ, armed with faith. For what if death is inflicted, is it not a great gain

to find the opportunity by which we may more quickly enter into the promised kingdom? And even if the present life promised to us be strengthened by dignity, it ought not to turn us away from the hope of the benefit of Christ, whom we know will be of use to us not only in the future, but also in the present. Nor indeed, if an angel shows himself to us in order to deceive us, being suborned by the deceits of his father the devil, should he prevail against us; since we know that nothing is to be preferred to Christ, who is the Angel of great counsel. Nor if a miracle is performed by someone, as it is said to have been performed by Simon the magician, who is said to have flown in the air to scandalize the people of Christ, should it diminish our faith in the Savior, who, according to the knowledge of the witnesses, ascended above all the heavens with the help of a serving cloud (Acts 1:9). Nor should it take away our devotion to the Lord Jesus, whom we know descended from heaven to unite earthly things with spiritual things. Neither, if through the imagination, which it plans to deceive, it shows us a deep wonder with horror, by which we may be terrified and succumb to it: nor is it fitting that we break faith with Christ, whom we know descended for our sake into the depths of the earth and released the human race from death pressed down. Nor, if it promises us future things, which it promised to Eve (Gen. III, 4), will we give our consent to it, being separate from Christ, whom we believe and know to be God by virtue and nature. And even if by skill and cunning they may momentarily fashion another creature, as Jannes and Mambres fashioned before Pharaoh, it is absurd that through these things they should call us back from the true creator God, whom we know has created a creature in Christ his Son that exists for eternity (2 Tim. 3, 8). To some, it seems that he speaks of another creature in reference to idols; but this is not true, because he should be understood to mean that creature which Satan seems to fashion under the guise of seduction. But who is led astray from these things, from which he has departed by manifest error? But he feigns and meditates on these things, through which he can deceive even the elect. Therefore, there are no things that can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus; for God demonstrates His love for us in Christ, while he delivers him for us.

Chapter IX.

(Vers. 1-3.)

(Ver. 1-3.) I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites. As regards the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake; but as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Therefore, Christ and the Holy Spirit, who know all things, provide witnesses: and their testimony cannot be rejected by those who bear witness to the Apostle, as they commend him for the power of the miracles, which they performed through him. For since the protection of Christ is so great, and he shows extraordinary love for the human race, and promises glorious and immortal rewards by his glorious dignity, his own kind, which is according to the flesh, is saddened; because by their unbelief, they have deprived themselves of this eternal and saving benefit. Therefore, he said, I do not desire; for he knows that it is impossible for such an honorable member, without any preceding fault, to be separated from the Christian body; however, he does show affection and love for his own kind.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) The adoption of these ones is of the children. It just proves that it is right to be sad when he praises their race, because once adopted sons, they rendered the affection and grace of God the Father void. He added also that it makes others sad for them, saying:

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5.) And glory, and covenants, and legislation, and service, and promises, whose Fathers, and out of whom Christ according to the flesh, who is above all God blessed forever. Amen. Such great praises of the nobility and dignity of the Jewish race and the enumeration of the promises, that it brings grief to everyone on their behalf; because by not receiving the Savior, they have lost the preeminence of the Fathers and the merit of the promise, becoming worse than the Gentiles, whom they used to abhor previously because they were without God: for it is more grievous to have lost dignity than to have never had it. Meanwhile, he is speaking about Salvator.

God is blessed above all things forever. Amen. For when no mention is made of the paternal name, and the discourse is about Christ, it cannot be delayed that God be spoken of. For frequently the Scripture, on account of the profession of the one God, if it speaks of God the Father and joins the Son to God, calls God the Father and the Son the Lord. But if anyone does not consider that the statement is about Christ: 'Who is God,' let him give the person to whom it was said; for mention of God the Father is not made in this place. But what is surprising, if in this place he declared with an open voice that Christ is God above all, about whom in another epistle he confirmed this meaning with such a discourse, saying: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Philippians 2:10)? These are all the things over which God is Christ. For apart from these, there is nothing, so that Christ is not God above all; and every creature cannot bow the knee, except to God. Finally, the Apostle John, when unaware that the angel desired to worship him as God, hears the words: 'Do not do it, for I am your fellow servant. Worship God.' (Apoc. XIX, 10). And the Lord indeed did not allow himself to be worshipped, except because he is God; if not, he would be considered to have usurped and sinned, which God forbid; since he himself, rebuking the devil, shows that the Lord God is to be worshipped and served alone. (Matth. IV, 10). Therefore, nothing is prejudiced against God the Father, when Christ is worshipped as God; because when it is said that only God is to be served, Christ is also served. For he says elsewhere: Whoever serves Christ in these things, pleases God (John 10:4). What therefore remains, except that the Father be God, and the Son be God; and yet each is believed to be one and the same God? For whether someone worships the Father or the Son, they are said to worship one God; and whether they serve the Father or the Son, they offer service to one God. Therefore, there is no distinction; for whoever worships the Son, worships the Father also: and whoever serves the Father, serves the Son as well. And so, in order to prove that this confession is free from flattery towards this godhead, he put at the end, Amen, which means, true; so that he might show Christ, the God above all, blessed forever in truth.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6) But the word of God did not fail. The word of God did not fail when it said, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called' (Genesis 21:12), that is, this happened as God had foretold. So that those who are the children of Abraham according to the flesh should not be called his seed, but those who have received the faith through which Isaac was born, which was transformed in the time of Christ,

not as something particular, but as something general. So that just as Abraham believed concerning Isaac, they might believe concerning God and Christ, because the Son of God was born to redeem the human race.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Not all who are from Israel are Israelites, nor are all the descendants of Abraham his children; but 'In Isaac shall your descendants be named.' This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said: 'About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.' And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— she was told, 'The older will serve the younger.' As it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.' For all these sons are indeed the sons of Abraham through Isaac; for the entire lineage of the Jewish race is descended from Abraham through Isaac. But, as I said, these are truly the sons of Abraham who follow the promise that was made in Isaac; and therefore the other sons are not considered to be sons of Abraham. For Abraham, by believing, received Isaac because of his faith in God. In this, the mystery of future faith was foreshadowed; so that those who had the same faith in which Isaac was born would be brothers of Isaac; for Isaac was born as a type of the Savior, through the promise, so that anyone who believes that Christ Jesus was promised to Abraham would be a son of Abraham, and truly a brother of Isaac. It is therefore said to Abraham, 'In your seed all nations will be blessed' (Gen. 22:18); which certainly did not happen in Isaac, but in him who was promised in Isaac to Abraham, who is Christ, in whom all nations are blessed by believing. Therefore, the rest of the Jews are children of the flesh, deprived of the promise; nor can they deservedly be considered descendants of Abraham, who do not follow the faith through which Abraham proved himself worthy.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) That is, not those who are the children of the flesh, these are the children of God; but those who are the children of the promise are considered as descendants. It is clear that the children of the flesh cannot be considered children of God; for these are the ones born out of the desire of the flesh, but those who are born out of faith spiritually, according to what was promised to Abraham, so that they may be considered as descendants, as believers.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) For this is the word of promise: At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son. This is found in Genesis, which is a foreshadowing in Christ, that Christ, the promised son of Abraham, would come, in whom the word of promise would be fulfilled, so that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in Christ. For when the promise was made to Abraham, and he heard: In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; Christ was certainly promised to him through Isaac, in whom we see this fulfilled.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Not only this, that is, Sarah, but also Rebecca, having Isaac as the father of our ancestors, from one union. Therefore, it is not only said that Sarah in a type gave birth to Isaac, but also that Rebecca became Isaac's wife. But there is a different reason in Isaac, a different one in Jacob and Esau; because Isaac was born in the likeness of the Savior, but Jacob and Esau have the type of two peoples, that is, believers and non-believers; so that, although they are from one, they are still different. For in each case a genus is signified, so that those who are of one genus are called such, who are one in the cause of faith or perfidy. For one is signified in many, not through the transfer of flesh, but through a common cause; because the children of Jacob are said to be from Esau, and the children of Esau are accounted from Jacob. For not because Jacob is praised, are all born from him, called his children by merit: or because Esau is displeasing, are all born from his origin reprobate; since we see both perfidious children made from the transfer of Jacob, and faithful and dear to God from Esau. For it is not doubtful that many are treacherous of Jacob, for all the unbelieving Jews or believing Jews have their origin from him; and because the good and faithful ones are from Esau, Job, who is from the sons of Esau, the fifth descendant from Abraham, that is, the grandson of Esau, proves it.

(Vers. 11-13.)

(Verses 11-13.) For when they had not yet been born and had not done anything good or evil, so that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not by works but by the one who calls, it was said to her, 'The older will serve the younger,' as it is written: 'I loved Jacob, but Esau I hated.' This is found in Malachi. The foreknowledge of God is demanded in these cases, because nothing else can happen except what God knows will happen. For knowing what each of them would become, he said, 'The younger will be worthy and the older will be unworthy.' He chose one by foreknowledge, and rejected the other; and in the one he chose, the purpose of God remains; for nothing can happen except what he knew and proposed in him, that he may be worthy of salvation; and in the one he rejected, the same purpose remains, which he proposed concerning him; for he will be unworthy. He, as if knowing beforehand, is not a respecter of persons; for he does not condemn anyone before they sin, and he does not crown anyone before they conquer. This pertains to the case of the Jews, who defend their prerogative because they are the sons of Abraham. But the Apostle consoles himself, saying that because he had said that he had continuous sorrow of heart, it is the cause of their disbelief, whose adoption was of the sons, and the establishment of the law, and from whom Christ, the Savior, as he himself says: Because salvation is from the Jews (John 4:22); having examined the Law, he found that not all who are from Israel will believe, nor should all those who are called sons of Abraham be called Abraham's sons, as I mentioned above. Therefore, he minimizes his own pain, once finding the aforementioned, that not everyone will believe; so that it hurts only those who suffer from envy in disbelief. However, they can believe what he reveals from the subjects. Nevertheless, it is not very regrettable for those aforementioned unbelievers; because they are not predestined for life; for the foreknowledge of God once decreed that they would not be saved. For who mourns for someone who is considered dead? But as the nations that were once without God enter in, and as they receive the salvation that they lost, the pain is revived; but again, because they themselves are the cause of their own destruction, it is subdued. Therefore, God foresaw that they would be of evil will, not including them in the number of the good; although the Savior says to those seventy-two disciples, whom he chose as the second class, who later departed from him: Your names are

written in heaven (Luke 10:20). But this is for the sake of justice, because this is just; so that each one may be rewarded according to their merit. For they were chosen for the ministry because they were good; and their names were written in heaven for the sake of justice, as I said: but according to foresight, they were among the number of the wicked. For God judges about justice, not about foreknowledge. Whence he also said to Moses: If anyone sins before me, I will blot him out of my book (Exod. XXXII, 34) so that he may appear to be blotted out according to the justice of the judge, when he sins; but he never existed in the book of life according to foreknowledge. Hence the apostle John says about this: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us (I John II, 20). There is no partiality in God's foreknowledge; for foreknowledge is that by which God knows the future will of each person, in which they will remain, through which they may be either condemned or crowned. Finally, those whom He knows will remain in goodness are often previously evil, and those whom He knows will remain in evil are sometimes previously good. Therefore, the complaint ceases; for God is not partial. Therefore, how could the ministry of salvation have been obtained if he were not good? For it was fitting for the judgment of God that he be chosen at the time, just as were those seventy-two men whom I mentioned earlier (Matt. XVII, 5). This is why Judas, after committing the wickedness of the whole, ended his life by hanging himself, moved by repentance. For it is not possible for any good to be completely obliterated; indeed, since nature cannot be changed, only the will can be. Not in all cases, however, because there remains in nature something that can be a testimony to the Creator.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14) What then shall we say? Is there injustice with God? Certainly not! For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion' (Exodus 33:19). So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth' (Romans 9:17). Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. You will say to me then, 'Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?' But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why have you made me like this?' Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? (Romans 9:19-21). Therefore, he anticipated him before the appointed time because it was necessary, and he condemned Pharaoh before the future judgment so that it would be believed that he would judge.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) For to Moses he says: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy: and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy. Therefore mercy, he says, is of him to whom I will have mercy, that is, I will have mercy on him, to whom I knew beforehand that I would give mercy, knowing that he would turn to me and remain with me: And I will show mercy to him, to whom I will have shown mercy, that is, I will give him mercy, whom I knew would return to me after error with a right heart. This is to give to him to whom it should be given, and not to give to him to whom it should not be given; to call him whom he knows will obey: but not to call him whom he knows will not obey. But to call is not to fight, but to urge to receive the faith.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) Therefore, it is of God's mercy, not of one's will or effort. It is right, because what is asked should be determined not by the will of the petitioner, but by the discretion of the giver. For whether it should be given must be weighed by the judgement of the giver; for when Saul, who had sinned, asked for forgiveness, he did not receive it (1 Samuel 15:24): but on the other hand, David, who had sinned and asked for forgiveness, obtained mercy (2 Samuel 12:8). Therefore, the judgement of God, not of the giver, must be followed; for he who desires the salvation of all does not judge unjustly, while justice remains; for the inspector of hearts knows whether the petitioner is asking with this intention, so as to deserve to receive. And although it is dangerous to discern the judgment of God; nevertheless, for the sake of those who are doubtful, so that their minds may obtain healing, lest they think the judgment of God is unjust, saying: He calls one and neglects the other; thinking they can excuse those who are to be condemned, let us rather prove this by actions rather than words; for where there are examples of deeds, no one dares to complain or make any excuse. There were two, David and Saul, let us examine their histories to see what each of them is found to be after the judgment of God; so that if Saul is found to have done well after not receiving mercy, let us not deem God's judgment unjust, may it never be: or if David, having received mercy, is found to have despised God, let us consider whether he remained in the same state in which he obtained mercy, and, to be concise, both of them suffered the necessity of the kingdom. And how great was the need for David, that his own son would want to deprive him of the kingdom! In that need, he wept, walking barefoot so that the king and leader of God's people might flee, so greatly humbled that he did not even respond to his servant who cursed him to his face; so that through patience he might make God propitious to him, through whom he believed the kingdom was reserved for him (2 Samuel 15:16). But Saul, on the other hand, was not found in such need; for civil war is a worse evil than external war: moreover, he bore the fact that he was not heard once or twice, even though he was unworthy, and did not persist in prayer; so that he might make merit for himself, by which he might be worthy: but impatient and indignant at God's judgment, he sought help from the idols that he had previously condemned as of no importance. Behold, the just judgement of God is made manifest even to those who are unwilling.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) For the Scripture says (Exodus IX, 16) to Pharaoh: For this very reason I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. Other manuscripts have it as follows: For this reason I have saved you, that I may show My power in you. Whether it is 'raised you up' or 'saved you,' the meaning is the same; for it is saying that when Pharaoh, whose name was the title for the kings among the Egyptians, just like the Roman emperors are called 'Augustus' kings: this Pharaoh, therefore, being guilty of so many evils as to be unworthy of life, persisted in his wickedness and did not want to reform himself; thinking either that he deserved to live or that God, whom he often considered deceivable, was powerless to inflict punishment, he hears from God: For this very reason I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth; so that in this other nations may learn that there is no other God besides this one, who was the God of the Jews and has become the God of the Christians; although they were also Christians, and we are now Jews because of Judah, from whom Christ came according to the flesh; for the ancient Jews, hoping for the coming of Christ as their redeemer, were Christians: for Rahab the harlot says to the spies

sent by Jesus the son of Nun, who was previously called Hoshea: We have heard of the mighty works and the plagues that were done in Egypt by your God, and we were greatly afraid; for we fear you (Joshua II, 9). Therefore, Pharaoh was saved for this purpose, so that many signs and plagues would be shown to him as if he were already dead. But when he was raised, he was called 'raised' because, having died in the sight of God, he received a little time to appear alive, so that it would be in his punishment and in various types of torment until death, that all those who were without God, terrified by fear, would confess that this God alone is with the greatest admiration, from whom these punishments are inflicted. The ancient doctors also sought in this way, in the case of men deserving of death or having received a sentence of death, how they could be beneficial to the living by revealing the things that were hidden in a man; so that they might understand the causes of illness and the punishment of the one dying might lead to the salvation of the living.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) Therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens. So you say to me. He speaks from the perspective of someone contradicting, who thinks that God, neglecting justice, shows favoritism to someone; so that he might choose one of two equals, and reject the other, that is, afflict one in order to believe: and harden the other, so that he may not believe. To this, he responds with authority, while still maintaining justice, speaking from the previously mentioned foreknowledge:

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) What is still being sought for? For who can resist His will? First, it is said that no one can resist Him; for He is most powerful above all. Then, because God is the parent of all, and therefore He wishes no harm to anyone; for what He has made, He wishes to remain unharmed. For it is not fitting for Him to be unjust, whose benevolence is so great that not only did He create things that did not exist, but He also bestowed upon them eternal life and glory, so that His work might have something similar to His majesty. Therefore, he who is so provident and good should not be doubted because he is just.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) O man, who are you, that you answer God! Great is, he says, the unworthiness and presumption for a man to respond to God in adversity, to judge the just as unfair, the evil as good, the inexperienced as perfect, the weak as the strongest, the corruptible as the incorruptible, the mortal as the immortal, the worthless servant to the master, the creature to the creator. Does the formed thing say to him who formed it, 'Why have you made me like this?' (Isaiah 45:9) This is from the prophet Isaiah, which he puts here as if it were his own, to show that he cannot complain against the author of his work; for it is in the power of the author to create whatever kind of creature he wishes.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Does not the potter have power over the clay, to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor? It is clear that some vessels are made for honor, which are necessary for honorable uses; but others are made for dishonor, which are instruments for common use; yet

they are all made from the same substance, but differ based on the will of the craftsman. So it is with God, when we are all from the same substance and all sinners, some are shown mercy and others are despised, not without justice. In the potter, there is only the will; but in God, there is the will with justice; for He knows whom He should have mercy on, as I mentioned earlier.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22) But if God, wanting to show His wrath and make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction. He did this to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, including us, whom He also called, not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles. As He also says in Hosea: 'I will call those who were not My people, My people, and her who was not beloved, beloved.' 'And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, You are not My people, there they will be called sons of the living God.' Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: 'Though the number of the sons of Israel may be as the sand of the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will execute His word on the earth, completing it and cutting it short.' And as Isaiah said before: 'Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah.' What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes on Him will not be put to shame.'

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23) And in order to show the riches of his glory in vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory. The patience and long-suffering of God is itself, which prepares the wicked for destruction and the righteous for the crown; for the righteous are those in whom the hope of faith is. For he sustains everyone, knowing the outcome of each individual; and therefore, patience prepares those who are corrected from evil or who persevere in good, for glory. But the riches of glory are a manifold dignity prepared for those who believe. However, for those who turn from good to evil, and persist in their evil deeds, it prepares them for destruction. This is to manifest his power with great patience; for he is not immediately avenged, as he long endures in silence. When he begins to seek vengeance, his power will be revealed; for though he could avenge immediately, he has long endured so that the unfaithful cannot complain when they are condemned. To prepare, however, is to know what is going to happen.

(Vers. 24.)

(Ver. 24.) Those whom He called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles. He prepared those whom He called for glory, whether they were near or far, knowing that they would remain in faith.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Verse 25, 26.) As it is written in Hosea: I will call my people, my people; and the one not beloved, beloved. And it shall be in the place where it was said to them: You are not my people; there they

shall be called sons of the living God. This is clearly predicted concerning the Gentiles, who were not previously the people of God. But later, receiving mercy and being called the people of God, they became beloved, having been adopted as sons in place of the Jews who were rejected. Thus, in the place where it was not said to them: You are my people, there they shall be called sons of the living God. For before the sons of God were nowhere called except in Judaea, that is, in Jerusalem, where the house of God was, as it says in the seventy-fifth Psalm: God is known in Judaea (Psalm 75:2). But afterwards in the prophecy of Zechariah: I will make, he says, Jerusalem a praise among all nations (Zechariah 12:2); because the sons of God were to be in every place, and the house of God in all the places, which is the Church. Hence the Lord says to the Jews: Because the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and will be given to a nation producing its fruits (Matthew 21:43).

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27.) But Isaiah cries out for Israel. This is what he says, that Isaiah cries out for those who believe in Christ (Isaiah 10:22). For these are truly Israelites, as the Lord says to Nathanael: Behold, truly an Israelite, in whom there is no deceit (John 1:47).

If the number of the children of Israel is like the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved. When the Jews reject the deserving and promise of the fathers, they are the ones who do not receive it; these are the remnants, who persist in believing in the faith of the promise made to the fathers, having become faithful. For those who do not believe in the one whom the Law alone promised is sufficient for salvation, depart from the Law. Therefore, it is necessary that apostates, who do not receive Christ, be considered violators of the Law. Therefore, God says that only the believers from the greatest multitude will be saved, whom He foreknew.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28.) For he will finish the word and shorten it in righteousness; because the Lord will make the word shortened upon the earth. He promises to save these, whom he calls the rest, by the word, which, justly defining, the Lord has shortened upon the earth; for it is fitting that the creature should obtain salvation in the name of the Lord the Creator alone, that is, through faith; because with all these things abolished, the new moons, and the Sabbath, and circumcision, and the law of meats, and the offerings of cattle, faith alone is placed for salvation. What is abbreviated from the Law; because what is in faith, is held in the Law as the principal of the Law, as the Savior says: For Moses has written about me (John 5:46). Therefore, the rest of the Jews are saved through the abbreviated Law, but others cannot be saved because they are rejected by the definition of God, through which He has decreed to save the human race.

(Vers. 29, 30.) (Vers. 29, 30.) And as Isaiah prophesied: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah I, 9). This seed, which is the only one left and reserved for the reformation of the human race, is Christ, and his teaching, as he himself says: The seed is the word of God (Luke VIII, 11). Therefore, what was promised to us long ago, having removed what was burdensome from the Law, he has left for redemption; so that, having been granted forgiveness of sins, we would not be punished by the Law, as Sodom perished. Therefore, he says that the Savior, who was left to us as a support of life, which the Law could not provide, whom God decreed to be born from the beginning: who, being found alone without sin,

having overcome the enemy of the human race, would erase the sins of all. This is also found in the Apocalypse of John: No one, he says, was found worthy, whether in heaven or on earth, to open the book and its seals; except the Savior, who conquered death (Rev. 5:3). Therefore, this is the seed that God reserved long ago, so that it would bear fruit at the time when the sins of both the Jews and the Gentiles were full. And the fruit of it is the forgiveness of sins; for if Christ had not been reserved (whom therefore it is called the seed, because through him the human race was restored), the offspring of Abraham would have perished; because they were overwhelmed by sins, and the Law was not able to benefit them. Therefore, he teaches that this is the one to be followed, who has provided the protection of life. So what shall we say? That the nations, which did not pursue righteousness, have attained righteousness, that is, the righteousness which is from faith. For righteousness is in the Law, which is believed by the world, which forbids sin; therefore the nations are said not to have attained this righteousness, which is recognized by nature as the teacher, but rather the righteousness which is from the faith of Christ; for to God this is true and lasting righteousness, if it is recognized. For what is so just as to know God the Father, from whom are all things, and Christ His Son, through whom are all things (I Cor. VIII, 6)? First therefore this is justice: to acknowledge the Creator, and then to guard what He has commanded. Therefore, the nations that did not formerly seek justice, that is, the Law, which bore witness to the Creator, when Christ came, found an overflowing abundance of justice surpassing that of the scribes and Pharisees. For those who then did not pursue what was lesser, later understood what was greater. But the Jews, who were placed under the Law, and who should have made progress, deteriorated.

(Vers. 31.)

(Verse 31.) For by pursuing the Law of righteousness, Israel did not attain the Law of righteousness. The perfection of the Law is faith, which the Gentiles, by embracing, seem to fulfill the entire Law. However, the Jews, due to their envy, do not believe in the Savior, and while seeking to justify themselves by adhering to the commandments of the Law, such as observing the Sabbath, circumcision, and so on, they have not attained the Law, meaning they have not fulfilled it. And those who do not fulfill the Law are considered transgressors of the Law. For He fulfills the Law, who came from the law of Moses to the faith of Christ.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) Why? Because they were not justified by faith, but rather by works. For those who despised the faith, which, as I have said, is the perfection of the Law, claimed that they were justified by the works of the Law. That is, through observing the Sabbath, new moons, circumcision, etc., being forgetful of the Scripture which says, 'The just shall live by faith' (Habakkuk 2:4). The righteousness of the Law is called so because these things were given to the Jews by God as a result of the hardness of their hearts. For example, if someone were to accidentally step on a dead mouse or touch any dead creature, or if a lizard were to fall into a vessel, they would be considered unclean (Leviticus 11:29). With great care they observed these regulations, and they would become unclean for any reason. But if the blood of a weasel had stained the floor, it was not to be expiated without serious attention, and he was to abstain from better foods. But the Sabbath and circumcision possessed their own righteousness in their appointed time; for they were given in a symbolic form. The Lord showed this through the prophet

Ezekiel, among other things, saying: Therefore I gave them not good precepts (Ezek. 20:25); for they were irreverent and unfaithful. But in the coming of Christ, because he was going to give the gift of salvation, he proclaims through Jeremiah, saying: I will give them a new covenant, not like the one I gave to their fathers (Jerem. 31:32). This testament he calls the Law, which they have not reached, as I mentioned above. For when the Gentiles who believed wanted to impose this burden of observance on the Jewish believers, then the apostle Peter said: Why do you impose the yoke on the neck of the brothers, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear (Acts XV, 10)? For since the time of Christ, the promised indulgence has been given in the Law; for the prophet Isaiah says: He will come from Zion to deliver and turn away wickedness from Jacob. And this is the testament that I will make unto them, saith the Lord: I will take away their sins (Isaiah 59:20), that is, the new testament promised by God in Christ.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33.) They stumbled against the stone of offense, as it is written: Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame. This is found in Isaiah (Isa. VIII, 14; XXVIII, 6). It is known by the testimony of many that Christ is signified by the stone or rock; for the prophet Daniel says of this stone, that it was cut out without hands from a mountain, and it struck and crushed all the kingdoms, and filled the whole earth, which is clearly spoken of Christ (Dan. II, 34). And in the Law it is written: 'The rock from which water flowed was called Christ; but the rock, it is said, was Christ.' And among all things, Peter the apostle said to the Jews: 'This is the stone, which was rejected by you, the builders' (1 Cor. 10:4). Therefore, the stumbling block is set in Zion: Christ (Acts 4:11). Now Zion is the height, or the city itself, Jerusalem, which is rightly called lofty because of its knowledge of God, in which the Savior, appointed by His Father God, became a preacher and a stumbling block to the Jews when He proclaimed Himself the Son of God, born of the Holy Spirit from a woman. But they took offense at him because of his family background. 'Isn’t this Joseph’s son?' they asked. How then can he say, ‘I came down from heaven’?” They did not understand that Jesus was speaking to them about the Father. So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.' This statement made many of his disciples go back to the lives they had led before they followed Jesus. These things were done without hands, because they were made by the Holy Spirit from a virgin without a man.

Chapter X.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Vers. 1, 2.) Brothers, indeed the desire of my heart, and my prayer to God, is for their salvation; for I testify about them that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. But the righteousness based on faith says, 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'' (that is, to bring Christ down) 'or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).' But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess

with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For indeed, ignorantly seeking to establish their own righteousness and not subjecting themselves to the righteousness of God. He says that they did not believe in Christ due to their ignorance, having a zeal for God but not knowing His will and plan, they acted against God whom they claimed to defend. Regarding them, he says that they did not reject Christ out of malice and envy, but out of error. To them, the apostle Peter also says: 'I know, brothers, that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders' (Acts 3:17); for they were ignorant that this is the Christ whom God had promised, and they claimed that another was to be expected. Preferring their own righteousness, which they had from the Law, to the righteousness of God in faith. For he himself is righteousness, since he fulfilled what God had promised in him.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4.) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. He says this because the one who believes in Christ has the perfection of the law. For since no one is justified by the law, because no one fulfills the law except those who hope in the promised Christ; faith is placed, which yields to the perfection of the law; so that with all things passed over, faith may satisfy the whole law and the prophets.

(Vers. 5.)

(Ver. 5.) For Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the Law, that the person who does these things will live by them (Lev. XVIII, 5). This means that the righteousness of the Mosaic law did not make these guilty ones righteous temporarily, if it were observed, that is, they lived by doing the Law; for they were debtors. This statement is found in Numbers and in Leviticus.

(Vers. 6, 7.)

(Verses 6, 7.) But the righteousness that is from faith says like this: 'Do not say in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (Deut. XXX, 12)' This was said in Deuteronomy, which the Apostle interprets here concerning Christ, saying: 'This is to bring Christ down.' Or, Who shall descend into the deep? That is, 'To bring up Christ again from the dead.' This is the Apostle's own. Therefore, he says this righteousness is of faith, if one does not doubt the hope of God, which is in Christ; lest doubting, one might say: Who could ascend into heaven?' For this reason, he suffered so that, with the power of the Father, he could rise again after conquering death, and ascend to heaven with the souls he had saved from the underworld. Indeed, whoever saw the Savior in the underworld hoped for salvation from him and was freed, as testified by the Apostle Peter. For it is said that he even preached to the dead (1 Peter 4:6). Therefore, whoever does not doubt this in their heart is justified by faith. However, fear justifies by the law; for they fear the law, because they see it inflict punishment on sinners. Therefore, the greatness of the law is not based on

justice or merit before God, but on the present: however, faith, because it is foolishness to unbelievers, has its reward before God, in whom what is not seen is hoped for.

(Vers. 8.)

(Version 8) But what does Scripture say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (Deut. XXX, 14). This is written in Deuteronomy, because it is not far from our mind or mouth, what is said to us, so that we may believe; for even though it is not seen with the eyes, it does not differ from the nature of souls and the logic of speech, which we believe. For in nature itself, there are seeds implanted, which, when cultivated by hearing and will, bear witness to the Creator.

(Vers. 9, 10.)

(Verse 9, 10.) This is the word of faith that we preach. It does not say the works of the Law, but only faith to be given in the cause of Christ. For if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with the heart that one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Whatever he has spoken above, he has here shown it to be the rule of faith, to believe that the Lord is Jesus, and not be ashamed to profess that God, raising Him from the dead, brought Him to heaven with a body, from where He had come to be incarnate; lest he incur the Evangelical sentence saying: Many, he says, of the rulers believed in Jesus, but openly did not confess Him because of the Jews. For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. (John 12:42).

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For Scripture says through Isaiah: Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame (Isaiah 28:16). For when the examination of all things begins on the day of judgment, and all false theories or teachings are brought into confusion, then those who believed in Christ will triumph, seeing that what they believed is true: and the wise will be seen as foolish, as they were thought to be contemptible and foolish among others. There is true approval where there is reward and condemnation.

(Vers. 12.) (Verse 12) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. In general, all will either be confounded because of their unbelief, or exalted because of their faith; for without Christ, there is no salvation with God, but rather punishment or death. For the Jews cannot be commended because of the prerogative of their fathers, since they did not receive the merit and promise of the fathers. And the Gentiles have no testimony by which they can be commended according to the flesh, unless they believe in Christ. For the same Lord is Lord of all, rich toward all who call on him. It is evident that this applies to everyone, whether Jews or Greeks, because without calling on the Lord Jesus, no one can live with God. Therefore, since the Lord is Lord of all, as agreed by the Apostle Peter, who says: 'He is the Lord of all,' he is not rich, however, except in those who call on him, for they will receive recompense. But to the unfaithful, he is not rich, because they are not sharers in his good things, nor will they receive what they did not believe he would give. And yet he did not say that God is rich to those who believe, but to those who invoke him; so that even after one believes, the mind does not cease to ask for what it has been taught to ask for by God at all times, as is written in the Gospel according to Luke, because the adversary is subtle and cunning, one must always pray; to those who believe, only forgiveness of sins is given. It follows that one who is devoted to prayers is liberated from evil and can obtain what God has promised to

those who are vigilant with their whole heart (Luke XVIII, 1 et seq.).

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13) For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. This was said in Micah. For it is God himself, who appeared to Moses, saying: My name is the Lord (Exodus 6:3). This is the Son of God, who is also called Angel and God; not that he himself is the one from whom all things are, but that he is the one through whom all things are, so that it may pertain to him, because he is called God, because the Father and the Son are one: but Angel, because he is sent as the messenger of the promised salvation by the Father. And he is called the Son in order that he may not be believed to be the Father himself, but born of him. Therefore whoever shall invoke the name of the Lord shall be saved. In this sense, Moses also spoke: Whoever, he said, shall not listen to that prophet, shall be exterminated from the people (Deut. XVIII, 18, 19). If he himself is the Lord of all, he is invoked by his servants. And because this is true, he added:

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? Certainly, the Jews themselves do not believe in Christ, whom the Lord has mentioned. This follows from what I said above, that one must believe first, in order to have the confidence to ask. Or how will they believe in him whom they have not heard? It is clear that they cannot believe in the one to whom obedience is denied. But how will they hear without a preacher? And this is not obscure; for the one who resists the preacher does not accept his author.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15) Or how will they preach unless they are sent? Nor does this question receive an objection; because they will not be true apostles, unless they are sent by Christ, nor will they be able to preach without an author; for they do not provide any testimony of signs of virtue. As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace! This is what the prophet Nahum says (Nahum 1:15). The feet symbolize the coming of the apostles who go throughout the world and proclaim the coming of the kingdom of God; their coming illuminated people, showing them the way of peace to God, which John the Baptist had come to prepare. This is the peace towards which believers in Christ hasten. Finally, holy Simeon, because there is discord in the world, rejoices at the birth of the Savior: Now, he says, Lord, dismiss your servant in peace (Luke 2:29); for the kingdom of God is peace. For when all discord is removed, all will bow the knee to one God. Finally, Jerusalem, the heavenly city, is interpreted as the vision of peace, which is our mother.

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16.) But not all obey the Gospel. It is true, that although the world is enlightened by the splendor of the Lord's discipline, there are those who resist, who call light darkness. Their minds have become dull with error to the extent that they cannot accept the splendor of the true light. The Gospel accuses them, saying: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (John 1:5). For Isaiah says: Lord, who has believed our report? (Isaiah 53:1) This means, who has believed what we have heard from you and spoken? He confirms by the prophetic example that the Jews are opponents of the Gospel truth. For the law reproves the Jews, because as it was in the past, so it is now. This number does not include those who do not receive faith.

(Vers. 17, 18.) (Verse 17, 18.) Therefore, faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. It is evident that unless something is spoken, it cannot be heard or believed. But I ask: Have they not heard? Yes, indeed they have heard, but they refused to believe. For even though faith comes from hearing, there are those who hear but do not believe. They hear, but they do not understand, because their hearts have been blinded by malice. And indeed, their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. So much so, it testifies that the preaching of God has been heard by the Jews, that even the whole world declares the fulfillment through divine proclamation; for the very structure of the world proclaims the Creator. For what the Psalmist said about creation (Psalm 19:4), the Apostle says about the evangelists, because their preaching of the name of Christ has been heard everywhere and has reached every place. For even though the presence of the preaching man was lacking, his sound and fame reached, just as the opinion of his virtuous deeds had reached to all the peoples in Egypt, as testified by Rahab the prostitute. For if it reached every place, the Jewish apostolic preaching could not have gone unheard; so that none of them is excused from the crime of disbelief.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19) But I say: Did Israel not know? That is, did they not know? For through the above-mentioned testimonies, the kind of unbelief among the Israelites is argued, as it seemed that he complained with sorrow about all the Israelites: Israel does not deny that they knew and obtained what was promised to them in the Law. But it is believed that those who are more of Israel in spirit than in flesh, whom God also foreknew, would believe. For everyone has heard, but not everyone has believed; therefore:

Moses says: in the song of Deuteronomy: I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, by a foolish nation I will anger you (Deut. XXXII, 21). These are the words of someone indignant, because the Jews have always been found to be lacking in trust: and he assigns one generation and cause to all the evils; while he rebukes those present, he especially touches on those to come, to whom this pertains. For the condemnation of all these things is one if they persist in their lack of trust. Therefore, envy was born in them when they saw a nation that had previously been without knowledge of God, being senseless, calling their own God, who had been of the Jews; and they obtained the promised gift, through which they were afflicted with jealousy, and their anger was extended, so that they would pay the rewards of their wickedness and unbelief. For nothing consumes a person as jealousy does, which God, as an avenger of unbelief, has set forth because it is a grave sin. For they are always tormented when they hear that the Law and the prophets pertain to us who believe in Christ.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) Isaiah dares and says: I have been made manifest to those who did not seek me; I have been found by those who did not ask for me. (Isaiah 65:1) For above, he has used the words of Moses concerning the exclusion of the Jews, and he has added the example of the prophet Isaiah; so that he might more clearly teach about God's pursuit, having expelled the Jews, willingly offering grace to the Gentiles to the reproach and death of the Jews. For Isaiah the prophet testifies to these things on behalf of Christ.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.” (Ibid., 2) This Israel is carnal, that is, the sons of Abraham, but not according to faith; for the true and spiritual Israel is the one who, by believing, sees God. All day long, always signifies; for they are always disobedient. Therefore, they are rebuked for not believing, so that they may know that they themselves are the cause of their own destruction. This can also be understood about the savior, who on the cross with outstretched hands, condemned the sin of those who were killing him. For that reason, it proclaims the heinous crime of the Jews mentioned earlier, that Isaiah dared to speak about those who were enemies of God, showing that they would become friends: and also those who were called Israelites, because they were disobedient, were to be rejected as enemies.

Chapter XI.

(Vers. 1.) (Verse 1) Therefore, I say: Has God rejected his inheritance? God forbid. Because he showed the unbelieving people of Israel, so that it would not be thought that all Israel was distrustful, he showed that he has not rejected his inheritance, which he foresaw, that is, the children of Abraham, whom he knew would be faithful to him. For he would not promise them the kingdom if he knew that none of them would believe. Therefore, the inheritance of the Lord, according to the Law, is the children of Abraham, but those who believe. For I myself am also an Israelite, from the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. He teaches by his own example a part of Israel that is saved, which God foreknew would be saved, or still has the possibility of being saved; and a part of Israel that is considered destined for destruction because of constant disbelief.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. This is what the Savior says: Father, those whom you have given me, I have kept, and none of them is lost, except the son of perdition (John 17:12). Likewise, those whom God foreknew would believe, none of them has been rejected from the promise, because it has happened just as God foreknew it would.

(Vers. 3, 4.)

(Verse 3, 4.) Do you not know what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life (1 Kings 19:10). But what does the divine response say to him? I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal (ibid., 19:12). These things are clear, for they show not only that Elijah has remained faithful to God and not worshipped idols, but also that many others have remained in the faith of God, just as there are not a few Jews who have believed. This matter is congruent with the history; for many were hidden in caves (III Kings XVIII, 4) because of Achab, king of Samaria, and Jezebel his wife, who, believing false prophets, persecuted the prophets of God and urged the people to idolatry.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) So therefore, even at this time, a remnant according to the election of grace has been saved. That is, just as it is, he says, even now there are those who remain in the promise of the law, with many departing whom God previously knew. For those who received Christ, as He was

promised in the law, remained in the law; but those who did not receive Him departed from the law. Therefore, they are called the believing remnant, that is, those who remain in the law.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) But if it is by grace, it is no longer based on works. It is evident that grace is a gift from God, not a merited reward for works, but rather granted by a gracious reason, with mercy intervening.

Otherwise, grace is no longer grace. Rather, it is true that if it is a reward, it is not grace; but because it is not a reward, without a doubt it is grace. For to forgive sinners is nothing other than grace, and to those who do not seek it but it is offered to them, so that they may believe. Therefore, there is a twofold grace, because this is fitting for God, who abounds in mercy; that He both seeks out those whom He provides with His care free of charge.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) So what then? What Israel was seeking, it did not obtain, but the elect obtained it. The rest were hardened. As it is written: God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, to this very day. And David says: Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution to them. Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever. So I ask, did they stumble in order to fall? Absolutely not! But by their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel jealous. Now if their transgression brings riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness bring! Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. In view of the fact that I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if I may somehow make my own people jealous and save some of them. For if their rejection brings reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? If the firstfruits are holy, so is the whole batch. And if the root is holy, so are the branches. Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, though a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them and have come to share in the rich root of the cultivated olive tree, do not boast that you are better than those branches. But if you do boast, consider that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." True enough; they were broken off because of unbelief, but you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but beware, because if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either. Therefore, consider God's kindness and severity: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness toward you, if you remain in His kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not remain in unbelief, will be grafted in, because God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from your native wild olive and against nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these - the natural branches - be grafted into their own olive tree! I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you will not be conceited: A hardening in part has come to Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come from Zion; He will remove godlessness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins. Regarding the gospel, they are enemies for your advantage, but regarding election, they are loved because of the patriarchs, since God's gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable. As you once disobeyed God, but now have received mercy through their disobedience, so they too have now disobeyed, resulting in mercy to you, so that

they also now may receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience, so that He may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who has ever first given to Him, and has to be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

(Vers. 8, 9, 10.)

(Verses 8, 9, 10.) But the rest have been blinded, as it is written: 'God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day' (Isaiah 6:9). And David says: 'Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them' (Psalm 69:23). Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see, and make their backs bend forever. Therefore, he curses the table of evil men, because there the innocent are usually deceived; for they are deceitfully called to the feast, so that they may be destroyed. For in this way, Ammon, son of David, was deceived by his brother Absalom (II Reg. XIII, 27), and the wicked Holofernes believed he could deceive the holy Judith through a banquet (Judith XII, 1), and on the table of the wicked Herod, the wicked ones raged against the head of the prophet John (Marc. VI, 28). There is one meaning of the two prophets regarding such people, who from the beginning of faith have been found to be enemies of good. But some of them were reformed and corrected, albeit slowly: however, some remaining in stubbornness, did not escape the severity of the sentence, being permanently bent, that is, blinded; so that they may not be able to see the path of truth (which they had rejected out of malice, turning away from it) and reach the grace of salvation. For the one who, having understood, refused to believe, must obtain what he wishes; so that he may not be able to receive faith any longer, and be saved. Therefore, the aforementioned examples of the prophets contain a double meaning; for they were given and written in two ways. For here two types of people are contained. One is that which is blinded forever for the sake of their malice, so that they may not be saved; for they are of the worst will, to the extent that they claim not to know what they hear. Finally, they said about the Savior: What is he saying? We do not know what he is talking about. What do you hear of him? He has a demon, and he is insane (John 10:20). But the other part of Israel, which is truly Israel, contradicted them: These words are not from one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind? Therefore, while they envied the Savior, they did not want to seem to understand what they heard; so that, while he seemed not to be understood by the scribes and Pharisees, he might be thought to speak absurd and unlawful things: which thing can also turn others away from the faith. From where they heard from the Savior: 'You have the key of knowledge, and neither do you enter, nor do you allow others to enter' (Luke 11:52). For who would not follow the advice and judgment of the petty, but somewhat weighty, lawmakers and Pharisees, who seemed to be defenders of the Law? In the end, they said to those who truly were Israelites: 'Has any of the rulers believed in him?' so that it would seem justly that they did not believe, if they had made many of their fellow conspirators; for what is defended by a few is usually seen as not proven. Therefore they were blinded, so that they could no longer believe and be saved. They assisted themselves by their own will, so that since they knew the truth, they claimed it to be false and henceforth did not understand what is true. They wanted to have false as true. Another kind is that which, while pursuing the righteousness of the Law, does not accept the righteousness of Christ. From this, they now act not out of envy of evil will, but in error, imitating the tradition of the Fathers, they are blinded for a time; because they

should have learned from the great acts of Christ that he cannot deceive, whose magnificent power is evident in his deeds, and to compare his preaching, promised in the new testament through the prophets, and to then profess that he is the one who was promised; neglecting God and consenting to men. Therefore, they are blinded, so that, being provoked by their own emulation, while they envy the nations, they may return to the faith of God.

(Vers. 11.) (Verse 11.) Therefore, I say: Did they stumble in order to fall? Certainly not! This means, as I mentioned earlier, that they did not stumble to the extent of never believing again, that is, they were not so blinded by their wickedness that they could not be healed, just as we read about the devil falling, as the prophet Isaiah says: How you have fallen from heaven, Lucifer! (Isaiah 14:12), indicating a fall and apostasy. Therefore, he does not say that they stumbled in order to fall, but rather they were temporarily hardened because of their stumbling. But the salvation of the nations is due to their offense, so that they may emulate them. This is what he said, because salvation has been given to the nations because of their sin. For since the Jews rejected the gift of God, this has been transferred to the Gentiles; so that, inflamed by zeal, the Jews may be converted to Christ, zealous for the promise of the Fathers.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) But if their offense is the wealth of the world, and their loss is the wealth of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! It is clear that if their offense benefited the world, while their loss brought benefit to the Gentiles, then the world must have gained more from their loss. This is because there are many more Gentiles than Jews. And if their loss, which is the loss of the promised wealth of the Gentiles, has brought them eternal life, how much more their fullness! It is clear that the world will be richer for good people if even those who are blind are converted; for the world will be saved in great part by human beings. The word 'world' signifies human beings, as it is said of the Savior: 'Behold, the whole world goes after him.' (John 12:19).

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verse 13, 14.) For I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I may provoke to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) For if their loss means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? And if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. So if the Gentiles are blessed because of the Jews, then the Jews will also be blessed because of the Gentiles. For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) But if the offering is holy, so is the mass. It is clear that what is of one substance is one: and therefore the holy offering cannot be impure, and the mass is impure; for the offering comes from the mass. Therefore, it is shown that those who have already obtained faith cannot be called unworthy; for if a portion of the Jews believed, why should it not be said that another portion

can believe?

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) And if the root is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and became a partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. Therefore he calls it inserted olive tree, so that it may bring forth the fruit of a grafted shoot from its root, becoming its partner.

(Vers. 18.) (Verse 18.) Do not boast against the branches, that is, do not rejoice in their unbelief; for it displeases God if anyone exults in the misfortunes of another, as Solomon says (Prov. XXIV). For they have not been rejected without cause, that they should rejoice; but because they did not believe, they have given occasion for the preaching to the Gentiles. But if you boast, you do not bear the root, but the root bears you. That is, if you raise yourself above those in whose root you are inserted; you insult the race that accepted you, so that you might be good out of evil: and you will not stand, if you destroy that by which you stand.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) You say, therefore, the branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in. It is spoken from the perspective of a Gentile believer; because they think there is reason to rejoice in the downfall of the unbelieving Jews, saying: Their rejection has made room for the Gentiles. But they have not been rejected by God for the purpose of allowing the Gentiles to enter, but rather they have made themselves rejected by despising the gift of God; hence they have also given an opportunity to the Gentiles for salvation. He wants to restrain this boasting, so that there can be more joy in salvation and not insult in their affliction; for it is easy to be deceived by finding joy in the misfortune of others.

(Vers. 20.) (Vers. 20.) Well, that is to say, you are correct, because you were grafted in among the broken branches, but they were broken off due to their unbelief. That is to say, not because of you, but because of their own fault. Because of their lack of faith, you were called to salvation in order to provoke them to jealousy. Therefore, you should give thanks to God through Christ and not boast against them. But also pray that if their rejection resulted in blessings for you, they may too return to the source. Then you will please God, who had mercy on you, for he called you in order to bring them back through your example and lead them to grace. But you stand by faith. For the Jews, who have fallen through disbelief, he says they stand by faith; for when they previously lay down because of their unfaithfulness, they began to stand by believing. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. That is, do not be proud, but be cautious, so that you do not stumble.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21) For if God did not spare the natural branches, fear that he may not spare you either. It is true, because if he blinded those who were worthy of the privilege of the fathers, to whom the promise of being adopted as sons of God was also made, because of their unbelief, what will he do to these if they doubt or exalt themselves, who were not elevated by any commendation? Indeed, when they had no dignity, they were honored.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) Therefore, observe the goodness and severity of God: indeed, severity towards those who have fallen; but towards you, goodness, if you continue in goodness; otherwise, you too will be cut off. It is evident that God is good to the Gentiles; for although they followed idols, deserving of death, He patiently waited for them, and even called them willingly, without them even seeking Him, and forgave their sins. However, He is severe towards the Jews; for He has blinded them, as they rejected the gift of God. However, now he signifies the Jews, who because of their malice have been blinded forever; from whence he also says that they have fallen: but those whom he mentioned above, he says, have stumbled, but not fallen; because he shows that they were blinded for a time: and by this it is understood that God was severe towards them, so that they would be blinded forever as apostates.

(Vers. 23.)

(Verse 23.) But even they, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For God shows not only justice in dealing with those whom He has blinded for a time, but also mercy, for He has the power to graft them in again if they turn back, as He said through the prophet: 'If they return to me, I will replant them' (Jeremiah 24:6); so that Christian Gentiles, knowing this, should not insult the Jews, but be certain that God's mercy is also reserved for those who have stumbled.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24) For if you were cut off from the wild olive tree by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are according to nature be grafted into their own olive tree! Let us accept the faith of the olive tree by which Abraham was justified, but let the wild olive tree, because it is of a rustic and unfruitful nature, signify unfaithfulness. And thus if those who have always been enemies of God are converted and grafted into the faith of Abraham, from whose origin they are not; how much more should the Jews, if they believe after their distrust, be returned to their paternal nature, being grafted again into their own promise!

(Vers. 25, 26.) (Verse 25, 26.) For I do not want you, brothers, to be ignorant of this mystery, so that you may not be wise in your own estimation; that a certain hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in; and so all Israel will be saved. It is not hidden that a temporary hardening has been given to those Jews who are jealous of the Law, who did not see the promised gift from God that was proclaimed by Christ. For they were blinded by zeal, thinking that the law of works should never cease; hence they were zealous for the Sabbath. By the offense of being obstinate, they were tortured for their unbelief, seeing the nations professing with joy that they had obtained the promise of Abraham. However, with the admission of the Gentiles, the darkness is wiped away from their minds, so that they may believe; as the spirit of compunction prevents them from their hearts, who grants them blindness, restores to them the free choice of the will; for unbelief was not out of malice, but out of error, so that they may be corrected and then saved. As it is written, in order to prove the gift reserved for them by God, he sets forth the example of the prophet Isaiah in the following words: that he may teach that by this grace through which the believing Jews were freed, we also may be freed; because it was not emptied, but always abounds. Therefore, he says:

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) He shall come from Zion, who shall deliver, and turn away wickedness from Jacob: and this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins. (Isaiah 59:28) The example of this remains always, as long as there are those who believe. For here the Lord Jesus, who is promised to come from heaven for the redemption of humanity, himself daily forgives the sins of those who turn to him: and he does not immediately condemn those who do not believe, but waits, knowing that they can come to the knowledge of God.

(Vers. 28.) (Verse 28) Indeed, according to the Gospel, the enemies are because of you. The cause of their disbelief is the Gospel, so that their error and sin would reveal the way for the Gentiles to enter the faith before the appointed time, as I mentioned earlier. For it was necessary to preach first to all the Jews everywhere, and then finally the word of God had to be believed by the Gentiles. But because they did not believe, the kingdom was taken away from them and given to the Gentiles. Therefore, it warns not to insult those whose sin benefited the Gentiles; for they should be insulted whose sin caused harm to some. For there is no reason to rejoice in the treachery of those people, but rather to mourn if they delay in converting; just as the nations rejoiced in their sin because they were saved, so may they rejoice in their conversion, for it was through them that God's grace was more quickly received. But according to the election of the beloved, on account of the fathers. Although the Jews have sinned gravely by rejecting the gift of God, and are worthy of death; nevertheless, because they are the sons of the good, who have received many benefits from God by virtue of their prerogative and merit, they will be received back into faith with joy; for in these, the love of God is awakened by the memory of the fathers.

(Vers. 29.)

(Verse 29.) For without repentance there are the gifts and calling of God. It is true, because the grace of God in baptism does not seek lamentation, or mourning, or any work; but only a heartfelt profession. For it is not because they had sinned gravely that they did not receive the promise of God, and because sins committed gravely do not lead to forgiveness except through weeping and lamentation; nor did they think that they were unable to receive mercy because they did not see them grieving; it shows that this is not required in the beginnings of faith; for the gift of God freely forgives sins in baptism.

(Vers. 30, 31.)

(Verse 30, 31.) For just as you at one time did not believe in God, but now have received mercy because of their disbelief, so these also have now not believed in your mercy, in order that they too may receive mercy. He recalls the unbelief of the Gentiles, so that they may not boast insolently against the Jews who did not believe, but rather delight in recognizing the promise of God. For just as you Gentiles once disobeyed God's word, but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they too have now disobeyed in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

(Vers. 32.)

(Ver. 32.) For God has concluded all in unbelief, that he may have mercy on all. For the Gentiles that were of old did not know God, and by their own understanding served the creature, without the Creator. For this cause God delivered them up to shameful affections. For their women have changed the natural use into that use which is against nature. And, in like manner, the men also, leaving the natural use of the women, have burned in their lusts one towards another, men with men working that which is filthy, and receiving in themselves the recompense which was due to their error. And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are not convenient. Being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy. This is all to have ended in disbelief, so that the decree of the gift would come from God when everyone was struggling with doubt; so that the grace of the gift would be most welcome. Therefore, let no one boast; for it is wretched to be proud for one to whom it is unknown.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33) Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his ways beyond tracing out! He testifies to the surpassing greatness of God's wisdom and knowledge through all the praise of gratitude; for his counsel and judgment are unfathomable. For he knows from the beginning the thoughts and deeds of men; because neither the severity of justice alone can save the human race, nor can mercy alone lead to the advancement of merits, at each time he decided what should be preached: yet allowing each one his own judgment beforehand; for by the guidance of nature itself, justice is known. And because the natural authority of justice had become dulled by the habit of wrongdoing, the Law was given; so that the human race, terrified by the manifest terror of the Law, would be restrained. But because they did not restrain themselves, they were held captive by the Law; mercy was proclaimed, which would save those who took refuge in it, but would blind those who rejected it for a time, inviting the nations to the promise of those who had previously refused to follow the justice of God given through Moses; so that while they envy the salvation of these, they might reform themselves to the origin of the Savior promised in the Law by that very zeal for the root. This is the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, who has acquired many things for both Jews and Gentiles for life through providence.

(Vers. 34, 35.)

(Verse 34, 35.) For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be repaid to him (Isaiah 40:13)? This is written in Isaiah. It is clear that only God knows all things and that he alone is in need of nothing, because all things are from Him. And because of this, His counsel is not comprehended or measured by anyone, because those on a lower level cannot know the mind of the one above. Finally, it seemed impossible to the believing Jews that it was God's plan and will for the redemption of the Gentiles: similarly, it seemed difficult and unbelievable to the Gentiles that the Jews, who did not believe, could be converted; or that believing Jews could be accepted, in order to be saved. Among other things, this is the hidden plan of God, which could not be understood.

(Vers. 36.) (Verse 36) For from Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things: to Him be glory. By this reason, the sense and counsel of God cannot be investigated, He declared: For from Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things: to Him be glory. With this statement, He revealed the hidden meaning, which was hidden from the world; for since God is the creator of all things (for He made those things which were not, that they might exist), therefore all things are from Him. And since they are from Him, through His Son, who is of the same substance, they have come into being, and His work is the work of the Father. Therefore, because he himself operates through the Son, all things are through him. And because those things which are from God are through God, they are born again in the Holy Spirit, and all things are in him, because the Holy Spirit is also from God the Father; therefore, he knows those things which are in God. Therefore, the Father is also in the Holy Spirit; because what is from the Father to God cannot be anything other than God the Father. And through this, to him be glory, because from him and through him and in him are all things. Therefore, those things that began to exist in order to be from him and through him and in him, cannot know his essence and purpose. But he knows all things, because all things are in him. He has revealed the mystery of God, which he said earlier should not be ignored by them.

Chapter XII.

(Vers. 1-3.) (Vers. 1-3.) Therefore, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, your rational service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Through the mercy of God, he exhorts them by which the human race is saved. For after the discussion of the Law and the faith of the people, he urges the nature of both Jews and Gentiles to live a good life; for through this hope of faith is obtained. So the reminder is this, that they should remember that they have received mercy: and they should be vigilant about fulfilling their duty to the one who has given it to them, through whom they have been justified as a free gift, knowing that this is a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice to God, if we keep our bodies undefiled, unlike those who pursue worldly pleasures. This is the will of God, your sanctification (I Thess. IV, 3). For bodies subject to sins are not alive, but dead; for they are bound by the despair of the promised life. For by the gift of God, we are washed clean from sins; so that from then on, living a pure life, we may provoke God's love in us, not rendering his work of grace in vain. For among the ancients, the offered sacrifice was killed for this reason, to signify that men subject to death for the sake of sin. But now, since men have been purified by the gift of God and freed from the second death, they should offer a living sacrifice; so that it may be a sign of eternal life. For not as then, bodies were sacrificed for bodies: but now, it is not the bodies, but the vices of the body that must be destroyed. But in order to achieve the effect of our obedience, let us preserve justice and guard against shame; for shame is of no avail and cannot be considered reasonable when justice is neglected. This will lead to conformity with spiritual things, renewed in spirit and faith, knowing that it pleases God and that there is no other good and perfect thing. For I say, through the grace that has been given to me, to everyone among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. God has shown me that we should have this kind of thinking, so that we do not go beyond the limits of justice, and so that it is not only beneficial to us, but also does not harm anyone. This is true wisdom, to do more good than harm to others, and to be content with the lot that God has assigned to us, and to

deserve the faith of each individual. We must not defend what we do not have the right to claim for ourselves, that is, we must not think too highly of ourselves, because one person cannot have everything. For even if someone is of good character, they must also defend for themselves the knowledge of wisdom: either because they possess the skill of the Law, they should claim the respect due to them. Therefore, they encourage and teach through the grace given to them. This grace is understood as the expertise of Christian discipline, through which they are instructed to strive for humility and justice.

(Vers. 4, 5.)

(Verse 4, 5) For as in one body we have many members, but all the members do not have the same function; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. By the example of the body, it teaches that we cannot all be everything; for we are members of one another, so that no one may lack what they need; therefore, we ought to care for one another and not hinder one another; for we rely on each other's functions. This is how to love Christ, if the members exhort each other, so that they may fulfill the manner in which the body is perfect in Christ.

(Vers. 6.) (Ver. 6.) But having divers distributions, according to the grace that is given to us. Whether prophecy, according to the rule of faith; or ministry, in ministering; or he that teacheth, in doctrine; Or prophecy according to the rule of faith. Prophecy begins, which is the first proof that our faith is reasonable. Finally, believers, having received the Spirit, prophesied. Therefore, this is given according to the measure of the recipient, that is, as much as the cause requires for which it is given.

(Vers. 7.) (Verse 7.) Whether ministry in serving. The minister is strengthened to offer service to the brotherhood to the extent that he believes he owes obedience; lest he tire fruitlessly by working beyond what faith requires in obedience; for each one receives in return what he strives for from the heart. Or he who teaches in doctrine. Similarly, it is said that the teacher is helped in doctrine; so much as his faith is for teaching, in that measure he is inspired to transmit heavenly discipline.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) Whether he who exhorts must be prepared with the help of the Spirit in the same way that he aims to provoke, so that he may have grace. For he challenges the brothers to do good or the unbelievers to have faith.

He who gives generously in simplicity. It says to him, who with a good spirit gives help always, with the Spirit arranging, so that there is no lack for the one giving simply, as Solomon says: He who gives to the poor will not be in need (Prov. 28:27). Therefore, he gives simply, who does not do this in pretense, so that praise may be given to him by men; but so that he may obtain merit from God for this very act. The one who is in charge of solicitude. He who takes on the responsibility of taking care of his brothers, receives vigilance and authority according to his faith, in order to make progress in what he is worried about, having fruit in those whom he presides over.

Whoever shows mercy in joy, let this person, according to their own understanding, who shows mercy with a cheerful heart, not be compelled as if unwilling, to be founded and strengthened by

God; so that in this matter they may suffer no weakness, knowing the saying of Solomon: While you have the opportunity, do good (Prov. III, 27). But this must be understood in many ways; for mercy is manifold under one word. For if above it was said: Whoever gives in simplicity; what need was there to repeat, unless because under the name of mercy, many good deeds were signified? For it is merciful to forgive those who sin; and it is merciful to provide aid to those in need or oppressed; and to clothe the naked, and to break bread for the hungry, and to gather the exposed child, and to bury the dead, and to perform other acts of mercy. Therefore, if one has diligently and without weariness carried out these works, they will have the reward of this work both in the present and in the future. Therefore, all acts of mercy should be done sincerely and with joy; so that sincerity excludes hypocrisy, and joy testifies to the hope of future reward.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) Love without deceit. To this mind, which meditates on this, let it love the brother for this reason, because it knows that this pleases God the author; so that it does not do this in flattery of present life, the Spirit assists; so that because it seeks this with a devoted mind, it may be able to fulfill it with acts of obedience. For they have heard the saying from the Lord: A new commandment I give you, that you love one another (John XIII, 34).

(Vers. 10, 11.) (Verses 10, 11.) Hating evil, cleaving to good, showing mutual affection and honor, surpassing one another in zeal. It is not enough to avoid evil; one must also embrace good. The former is born out of fear, the latter out of love. One cannot be considered kind or maintain brotherly love unless they have gone before each other in reciprocal acts of kindness. Do not be lazy in your solicitude. This is what the prophet Jeremiah says (Jerem. XLVIII, 10), because cursed is he who performs the works of the Lord negligently. For the lazy person in divine conversation is without hope; therefore he adds:

Burning with the Spirit. This means that in the practice of divine work or the Law, one should not be lukewarm, as it is said in the Apocalypse of John: 'Because you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth' (Rev. III, 16); for daily meditation removes drowsiness and makes one vigilant. Indeed, the works of the Lord are those which He commands to be done for the benefit of the Church, that is, the brothers.

Those serving time. In Greek it is said this way: serving God; which is not fitting for them in place. For what need was there to place this highest devotion, when it mentions each individual part that pertains to the worship and service of God? For in all those things that it enumerates, a complete service to the Lord is shown. For what it means to serve time, he explains elsewhere, when he says: Redeeming the time, for the days are evil; that you may know how you should reply to each one (Ephesians 5:16). But since he had said: fervent in spirit; lest they understand this in such a way that they indiscriminately and importunately cast the words of religion in an enemy time, by which they might perhaps stir up a scandal, he immediately added: serving the time, so that they could speak the faith of religion with modesty and propriety in suitable places and to suitable people and at a suitable time. For there are even at this time of peace some who abhor the words of God in such a way that, when they hear them, they blaspheme the way of Christ with great anger. For he himself also subjected to time, when he did what he did not want; for he reluctantly circumcised Timothy, and after shaving his head, he entered the temple purified according to the Law, in order to appease the madness of the Jews.

(Vers. 12.) (V. 12) Rejoicing in hope. After he said, 'serving the time', he added, 'rejoicing in hope'; so that if, by chance, it is not permissible to speak publicly about faith due to the wickedness of the time, but to be in fear, let him rejoice in hope; because this sadness brings forth joy. In difficult times, be patient. This means finding joy in hope, being patient in difficult times, for the joy of hope withstands tribulation, knowing that greater things are promised for them.

Pressing on with prayer. Prayer is highly necessary; because in order for tribulation to be tolerated, insistence on prayers is necessary.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) In communion with the memorials of the saints. It is evident that one who desires his prayers to be heard should be an imitator of the lives of the saints; for by imitating them, he communicates with them, so that he may be mindful and a sharer in their actions. And if they are in need of financial assistance, it should be shared with them, as it is said elsewhere: Concerning the collections that are made for the saints (I Cor. XVI, 1); and to the Galatians: That we should be mindful of the poor (Galat. II, 10).

(Vers. 14.)

(Ver. 14.) Following hospitality. He imitates and loves the hospitality of the saints, following the examples of the holy Abraham and Lot, the righteous man.

Bless those who persecute you, bless them, and do not curse. In order to make Christians new in all things, it also wants to remove from them this habit which is common to everyone, so that they do not easily want to curse with an angry mind provoked first: but rather, after anger has been conquered, they may bless, and let the teaching of the Lord be praised.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15) Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. This is what is said in another place: If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it (1 Corinthians 12:26). For when someone finds comfort in a faithful person in times of need, it uplifts their spirit and they place merit with God, because they love a member of the body of Christ. And if they sympathize with an unbeliever, they further encourage them towards the progress of the Lord's teachings.

(Vers. 16.) (Verse 16) Feeling the same way towards one another. This means that, as it has been said, we must sympathize with our brother's tribulation, as it is also written in another letter: Considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:1, 2). Not to know high things is wisdom. To think oneself wise in high things is pride; for the devil fell by his pride in thinking himself wise. Let there be no arrogance in your mind, and in presuming proudly about the success of your own actions, do not feel sorry for your brother but reproach him as if he were a sinner. This is the pride that offends when it sets itself above others. The Lord also points this out when he says: Remove the beam from your own eye first, and then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye (Luke 6:42). For pride itself is a sin: and if one is not a sinner, which is impossible, one becomes a sinner by being proud. Finally, Solomon says: God resists the proud (Prov. III, 34). But agreeing with the humble. This means that, by setting aside pride, one makes someone else's cause their own, and their own as if it were someone else's; so

that they may find favor with God, because whoever exalts themselves will be humbled (Luke XIV, 11). Do not be wise in your own eyes (Isaiah 5:21). This is written in the prophet Isaiah, who presents it as if it were his own; so that common justice is considered and not that one may be just in one's own eyes while being unjust to others.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17.) Repaying no one evil for evil. This is what the Lord says: Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of God (Matthew 5:20). For the commandment in the Law was: You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy (Leviticus 19:18). This, it seems, is righteousness: but for the righteousness of Christians to abound, they are taught not to repay evil for evil; so that they may be perfect, and for this they will receive their reward in the judgment of God. For it seems to surpass justice itself, when someone, being able to do better, does not imitate the justice of heaven. Therefore, the justice bestowed by God on the world makes someone innocent, while the celestial justice makes them perfect, so that they may have merit before God.

Providing good things not only before God, but also before all people. To provide is to have future goods before your eyes; so that they may be done, which are able, after they have been done, not to come into reproach, but rather to be for praise, whether before God or before people. Let no one think that because things permitted by God are not displeasing, therefore it is not to be cared for if they are a stumbling block to a brother; this warns that what should be done is that which is not displeasing to both God and the brother's stumble. Although it may be lawful, if it causes scandal to a brother, it is not pleasing to God; for God advises us to prioritize our salvation. Therefore, good things should be done in the presence of God and men, so that they are not a cause of scandal.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18) If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Everyone desires to be peaceful, those who uphold divine justice. Let it be known that if anyone rejects this peace, they become an enemy to such a person. This may happen if they do not wish to be corrected by them or if they envy their good deeds. However, regarding the one who rejects peace, they do not conflict with those who do good deeds. For it is the one who goes against the will of the Law and seeks their own rights who is the cause of discord. Although David said: 'I was peaceable with those who hate peace'" (Psalm 119:7). But this was necessary because of the power of the persons, so that the one whom pride elevates to such an extent that he despises the commands of the Law may be bound even by the obligations of humility. It is possible for someone to present themselves as peaceful out of fear of God, even if they hate peace. For when they do not want to repay evil with evil, they are peaceful, that is, they overcome evil with good, so that the one whom the commands of the Law do not overcome may be bound even by obligations. Therefore, if it is possible, let us strive, he says, for what is good from you, so that we may appear to have peace while doing good. Now, even if someone is not a lover of peace, you should still desire to be peaceful as much as it concerns you. However, if someone is irreverent and blasphemous, and you cannot have peace with them, it should not be attributed to you; because the apostle John did not allow those who deny that Christ came in the flesh to receive a greeting (2 John 7). Therefore, we are prepared, if possible, to have peace with everyone; but if others resist, it will be impossible,

not because of us; nevertheless, let the complaint be laid aside concerning us. For he who harms no one, appears to be peaceful.

(Vers. 19.) (Verse 19) Beloved ones, do not defend yourselves, but give way to anger. In order for the peace treaties to be preserved, it is advised to conceal anger, especially because sins are often committed through anger, when someone, moved by fury, demands more than the cause of the offense requires. This results in harm to oneself if one wishes to exact a more severe punishment on someone who is not deserving, for it weakens the one who could have been corrected and made well. And Solomon says: Do not, he says, be overly just; there is, he says, one who perishes in his own justice (Eccles. VII, 17). For wanting to respond to each sin, one can find death as vengeance for both oneself and the one whom he afflicts with blows; for they often fall into punishment for their transgressions. But not only does he prohibit appropriate vengeance against subjects, but also against equals and the great, meaning that we should not seek to be avenged against a brother who perhaps sins against us, but rather forgive, reserving judgment to God; lest, while we are held back by anger, the enemy find an opportunity in which he suggests and persuades what is against us. For it is written. In order to persuade more strongly, he confirms this with an example from the Law, saying: For it is written, in the Proverbs, Vengeance belongs to me, and I will repay, says the Lord (Deuteronomy 32:35). In order to show that if what he teaches is not done by us, it shows contempt for God. Therefore, it is beneficial in two ways if vengeance is forgiven by God; because both by overcoming anger, one becomes perfect, and by God's judgment, he will be avenged.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for by doing so you will heap burning coals on his head. (Prov. 25:21) This passage shows that we should not reserve vengeance for God alone, but also give benefits to our enemies. In doing so, we truly show that we do not have enemies based on our own merits, but we strive to overcome their hostility with acts of kindness. However, if they persist in their enmity due to their wickedness, our acts of kindness will serve as a punishment for them. Or perhaps, through the diligence of our acts of kindness, they will be moved with remorse and their cold hearts will come back to life, like dead coals rekindled. Therefore, in order to make us perfect to such an extent that we not only acquire life for ourselves, but also for others, the Lord not only forbids us to repay our enemies in kind through Solomon, but also encourages us to provoke friendship through kindness.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. This interpretation is an exhortation by the Apostle, urging us not to repay evil for evil, as it has been said. For it will greatly benefit us if we yield to wickedness; for he who seems to be conquered by it for a time actually overcomes it. Indeed, the Savior conquered evil in this way by not resisting it; for malice acts against itself, and while it is being vanquished, it thinks it is victorious. The enemy works this way in order to divert us from our purpose, seeking an opportunity for us to sin. Therefore, if we are provoked by him, let us not pay him back in return, but let us overcome him with kindness; for we do not resist in order to preserve the good, neglecting justice; because justice impels us to repay.

Chapter XIII.

(Vers. 1.) (Verse 1.) Be subject to all higher powers; for there is no authority except from God. Since He has commanded that the law of heavenly justice must be followed, so as not to seem to disregard it in the present, He commends it: because unless this is observed, that cannot be kept; for this is like a tutor, which instructs little ones, so that they may be able to follow the way of greater justice. For no one can be credited with mercy unless they have justice. So in order to confirm the right and fear of natural law, He testifies to God as its author; and that those who administer it have God's ordination. Therefore, He added: But those things which are ordered by God are not to be considered as contemptible human opinions; for they see divine law entrusted to human authorities. Therefore, the one who refrains from those things which he prohibits is subject to this power.

(Vers. 2.)

(Verse 2.) Therefore, whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed. Those who resist will incur judgment. This is applicable to those who rely on their own strength or who believe they cannot be caught and therefore consider themselves above the law. It is clear that they are rejecting God's law and will not escape his judgment, though they may temporarily elude it through some pact. However, those who resist bring condemnation upon themselves. It is evident that each person will be justified or condemned by their own actions. For indeed those who hear the Law, sin, and are without excuse.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For those who are in positions of power are not for the sake of good works, but for evil. These rulers are called kings, who are created to correct life and prevent adversity, having the image of God, so that others may be under one. But do you not want to fear authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from it. Praise from authority arises when someone is found innocent.

(Vers. 4.)

(Verse 4) For the minister of God is for your good. It is evident, therefore, that rulers are appointed so that evil may not be done. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword for nothing. This is why he threatens, so that if there is contempt, he may take vengeance. For the minister of God is a avenger, bringing wrath on those who do evil. Since God has established a future judgment and does not want anyone to perish, he has ordained rulers in this world; with the fear of punishment, they serve as teachers to everyone, instructing them in what to keep in order to avoid the punishment of the coming judgment.

(Vers. 5.)

(Verse 5) Therefore be subject, not only because of wrath, but also because of conscience. It is right to say that subjects must be obedient not only because of wrath, that is, immediate punishment; for wrath begets vengeance. But also because of future judgment; because if they escape punishment here, there awaits them punishment there, where their own conscience, accusing them, will punish them.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) For this reason, you pay taxes; for the ministers of God are serving in this way. Therefore, taxes are said to be paid, or what are called fiscal duties, in order to demonstrate submission, by which they know that they are not free, but acting under authority, which comes from God. For they are subject to their ruler, who acts in place of God, just as they are subject to God, as the prophet Daniel says: For the kingdom, he says, belongs to God, and He will give it to whomever He wishes (Daniel 4:14). Therefore, even the Lord says: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's (Matthew 22:21). Therefore, they must be subjected to him as to God, the proof of this subjection being that they pay him tribute.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7.) Therefore, render to all their due. He wants all debts to be paid back; for even the powerful are debtors to the lesser, to respond to their merits. To whom tribute is due, tribute; to whom custom, custom. First, he orders that those things which are owed to the royal authority be paid back; for there is either greater cause or necessity in these matters. To whom fear is due, fear. Fear must be shown to authority, for fear prevents sin: then either to a parent or an earthly master; so that thanks are given to a Christian son or servant. To whom honor, honor. This honor can also be around those who seem exalted in the world; that seeing the humility of the servants of Christ, they praise rather than criticize the evangelical discipline.

(Vers. 8, 9.) (Vers. 8, 9.) You should owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another. He wants us to have peace, if possible, with everyone, and love with brothers, and this, however, with honor preserved. Therefore, he says you are debtors; because to a man who is worthy of honor, whether present or future, it is worthy and necessary to bow. For one who receives honor is indebted to the one from whom he received honor: therefore he is called a debtor. For if you do not do this to your prince, you are arrogant; for someone is either worthy of honor by merit or by age. For whoever loves their neighbor, fulfills the Law. The Law given by Moses is fulfilled by those who love their neighbor; for the command of the new law is to love even one's enemies. For you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet (Matt. 5:43). Moses received this writing from God for the reform of natural law. And if there is any other commandment, it is fulfilled in this word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself; this is written in Leviticus (Lev. 19:5). Therefore, with the aforesaid commands remaining, to be filled in love signifies the Law, as it was said: even if there are other commands that he now has not mentioned; nevertheless, love satisfies for all commands. For if the human race had loved itself from the beginning, there would be no injustice on the earth; for the beginning of injustice is discord. Therefore, the love of injustice is injustice; because what is evil is evil by its own evil, and what is good is good by its own good.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10.) Love does no evil to one's neighbor; for love is the fulfillment of the Law. It does no evil, for love is good, and that which is the perfection of the Law cannot sin. It aims to reach the evangelical meaning through the words of the Law. Therefore, it mentions what is the highest in the Law, so that it may be joined to the Gospel, showing that there is one meaning from the same author. But because it was necessary to add something in the time of Christ, he commanded not only to love one's neighbors, but also one's enemies. Where it is said: The fulness of the Law is love (Matth. V, 43) : that justice may consist in loving one's neighbor, but true and perfect justice consists also in loving one's enemies. To love one's enemy, then, is nothing else than to wish that

he may cease to be an enemy, and to seek nothing adverse against him. This is to love him, to desire for him those things by which he may obtain the favor of God: this is celestial justice, this makes men like unto God the Father, who gives his annual gifts to those who worship Him. For even the Lord, when placed on the cross, prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:35), in order to demonstrate the fullness of the justice that he had taught.

(Vers. 11.) (Verse 11) And knowing the time, that it is already the hour for us to awake from sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is nearly over, and the day is near. So let us discard the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. For our salvation is closer now than when we believed. It is clear that, after a good life and in the pursuit of charity, one is not far from the reward of the promised resurrection. For a good life is a sign of future salvation for Christians.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) The night has passed, and the day has drawn near. The old night signified the old man, who has been renewed through baptism. It says that this night has passed as if it were a night, but the day has drawn near, whose light the truth appeared to us, so that we may know what we ought to do. For before, being ignorant of Christ, we were in darkness: but when we learned, the light arose in us; for we passed from falsehood to truth.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. The works of darkness are the life of the flesh, which is carried out with worldly allurements. This is worthy of darkness, as the Lord says: Cast him out; and with his hands and feet bound, cast him into outer darkness (Matthew 22:13). But putting on the armor of light is a good deed; for just as evil deeds are attributed to darkness, because they are done secretly by those who do evil, so too those who do good, do so openly; for they have no fear, but rejoice. Therefore, good deeds are the weapons of light, attacking the darkness which are the vices of the flesh.

(Vers. 13.) (Verse 13.) As we walk honestly in the day. It is true; let us act as is done publicly, for nothing is so public as truth. Not in revelry and drunkenness. Revelries are luxurious banquets, which are celebrated either by the gathering of everyone or are customarily served in turn by tentmates; so that no one is ashamed there to say or do anything dishonorable; because each person presumes that the banquet is their own. For they are accustomed to being restrained by modesty at another's table; but here it is agreed upon for this purpose, that shameful things may be done there with an abundance of wine, and different desires of lust may be aroused. Therefore, such banquets must be avoided. Not in bedrooms and indecencies. After a luxurious feast and drunkenness, this is added, that is, shameful intercourse; for this is the result of such debauchery. Not in contention and rivalry. He rightly warns against being restrained by these, because every contention and zeal begets enmity, which he calls darkness; because they cannot reach the reward of light. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. It prohibits the care of the flesh, that is, pleasure; so that everything that is prohibited by the Law may not be desired, or certainly desired may be overcome. For they themselves are the works of the flesh; in order that, being stripped of these, they may put on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, being renewed through Christ, they may be separated from these evils. For he puts on

Christ, who has separated himself from every error and wickedness; lest he be found in the feast of the wedding without a new garment, and disgracefully handed over to the darkness (Matthew 22:11): if not, they are not clothed with Jesus Christ the Lord, upon whose new garment they put on old rags; for having put off the old man, it is necessary to abide in the newness of life.

Chapter XIV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Version 1.) But those who are weak in faith, receive them, not for the purpose of arguing about opinions. For there were some who were from Jewish background and had accepted the name of Christ, but were still following the Law, as I mentioned at the beginning of this letter. Therefore, it seemed to some that they should not eat meat that had been offered to idols; but to others who were not bound by the Law, it seemed that they were free to eat anything. And because of this disagreement, there were disputes among them. The Apostle, however, in his desire for unity and salvation, removes these disputes by offering divine reasoning, showing that neither those who eat nor those who abstain gain favor with God. He says that it is weak, who, because the Jews have prohibited it, is afraid to eat. Therefore, he wishes this person to be remitted to his own judgment, so that he does not suffer scandal and depart from charity, which is like the mother of souls, with disturbance of mind; since Christians should be peaceful and calm.

(Vers. 2.)

(Version 2.) Another person believes in eating everything. This person does not doubt in the certainty of reading and believes that everything should be eaten, which has been given for human use. They read in Genesis that everything that God created is very good (Gen. 1:31); therefore, nothing should be rejected, since neither Enoch, who pleased God first, nor Noah, who alone was found righteous in the flood, nor Abraham, the friend of God, or Isaac, or Jacob, the righteous and friends of God, among whom was also Lot, nor the other righteous are reported to have abstained from these things.

Indeed, the one who is weak should eat vegetables. Therefore, because he thinks this, that he should eat vegetables: it is not advisable, therefore, that he should eat meat, lest he eat with hesitation and seem to sin; because he does not keep his purpose.

(Vers. 3.) (Verse 3.) Therefore, let the one who eats not despise the one who does not eat, and let the one who does not eat not judge the one who eats. For it is a matter of choice to eat or not to eat, and thus this question should not arise. All things have been made for this purpose, to be subject to our will, for they are subject to human dominion. For God indeed assumed him. He was assumed by God when he was called to grace.

(Vers. 4.) (Verse 4.) Who are you to judge someone else's servant? He stands or falls to his own master. It is clear that a servant should not judge the will of his fellow servant, to whom the law in this regard has not been given; for whether he is conscious of it or not, God is the judge of whom he is a servant. But it will stand, for God has the power to establish it. It will stand, he says, before his master, because neither if he gives it, will he be guilty; nor if he does not give it, will he be culpable; if, however, he does this out of devotion, not avoiding it as contrary.

(Vers. 5.) (Verse 5.) For some people indeed judge day between day; that is, it pleases them to fast on certain days. For there are some who have decreed not to eat meat on Wednesdays; there are those who do it on Saturdays, and there are again those who fast from Easter until Pentecost. But another judges every day. He judges every day, who never eats. Let each one abound in his own sense: this is, let each one be referred to his own judgment.

(Vers. 6.)

(Verse 6.) He who knows the day, knows the Lord. It is true, because he who is always abstaining, thinks himself pleasing to God. And he who eats, eats to the Lord. He eats to the Lord; because he gives thanks to the Creator. And he who does not eat, does not eat to the Lord, and gives thanks to God. He gives thanks, while confessing that he is a creature of God, and a good creature; but he does not condemn himself for hiding from it.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) For no one lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. Someone would live for oneself, if they did not act under the Law: but whoever is governed by the restraint of the Law, does not truly live for oneself, but for God who gave the Law, in order that they may live according to His will. And whoever dies, dies in a similar way to God, under whose judgment they will be either crowned or condemned.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8) For whether we live, we live for the Lord; and whether we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. It is true that we all are the Lord's as if servants in our condition and under the authority of the Redeemer, and each one is treated according to their merits.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) For in this way Christ died and rose again, so that He might rule over the dead and the living. Through Christ the Lord, a creature was made, which was alienated from its creator through sin, made captive: whom God the Father, so that His work would not perish, sent His Son from heaven to earth, teaching by His own hands how to escape the clutches of pirates. Therefore, He allowed Himself to be killed by His enemies, so that descending into hell, being innocent, He would make sin guilty; so that those whom He held captive in hell, He would release. Therefore, since you are alive, he has shown the way of salvation and offered himself for them, but he has freed the dead from Hell, and he rules over both the living and the dead; for he has restored them to himself as servants from the lost.

(Vers. 10.)

(Verse 10) But you, why do you judge your brother for not eating? Or why do you despise your brother for eating? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. He teaches that it is not necessary to judge in this matter; both because it is not included in the Law, and also because we are waiting for God, the Judge.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11) For it is written: As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God (Isaiah 45:24). This is written in Isaiah, because every tongue shall confess to God in the faith of Christ. For because he who was killed will rise again to be the future judge, he rightly says: As I live, says the Lord; and not only do I live, but I am also the one who will judge, and my enemies will be astonished, and they will bow their knees, acknowledging me as God from God.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Therefore, each one of us will give an account to God for ourselves. For, as it is said, we will each give an account for ourselves, not condemning one another in this matter that is written above.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Therefore, let us no longer judge one another, that is, knowing this, let us cease from discord. But judge this instead, not to put a stumbling block or scandal in the way of a brother. In judging this, it is advised that what is profitable and can be defended by the authority of the law should be considered: but let no offense be given to a brother who eats or does not eat meat.

(Vers. 14.) (Verse 14) I know and trust in the Lord, for nothing is common through him. It is clear that by the grace of the Savior, all things are clean, who, by freeing men from the yoke of the Law and justifying them, has restored the state of former freedom, so that they may be worthy to use the whole creation, as the ancient saints did. But those who are still under the Law are not allowed to use or eat what the Law prohibits, because they despise the granted indulgence. For they are not clean according to their own nature, but when they are eaten against the decree, they are unclean. Finally, in the Law it says: They shall be unclean to you, etc. (Leviticus 11:4). And surely whoever considers something to be common, that thing is common. Whether someone is a Judeo-Christian or a faithful Gentile, if they think there is something to be avoided, they themselves are the weak ones mentioned above; for by doubting, they are weak. In the case of such a person, what they think should not be eaten is considered unclean; and because they do not do this out of superstition but out of fear, their judgement should be respected.

(Vers. 15.) (Verse 15) For if your brother is grieved because of food, you are no longer walking according to love. In another letter it says: Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy both it and them (1 Corinthians 6:13). Because neither eating nor abstaining from certain foods pleases or displeases God, he advises us to follow love, which God has deemed us worthy to be liberated by. For he says: But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us (Ephesians 2:4). Therefore, whoever is mindful of this benefit cultivates it and does not prefer anything to it, but disregards the greatest things, which he knows do not earn him favor with God. Do not destroy him with your food, for whom Christ died. The value of the salvation of the brother is known from the death of Christ. Therefore, the one who knows how much it costs should support him, not scandalize him; so that he does not make him scrupulous from a trivial matter: and he begins to hesitate whether flesh should be eaten or not, who perhaps simply ate, confident in his conscience. But when controversies arise, he will begin to sin against God's creature in a disturbance, and it will be an injustice to the Creator, which will lead to the destruction of the doubter.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Therefore, let our good not be blasphemed. This means that the Lord's teaching, since it is good and beneficial, should not be blasphemed through a frivolous matter; it is blasphemed, however, when there is doubt about God's creation. Our good can also be understood as being blasphemed, because someone who has good works, if they are criticized for a minor matter, tarnishes their own good and their good will begin to be blasphemed because of their evil, as it is written in Ezekiel: The righteousness of the righteous will not save them if they go astray (Ezek. 33:12). Such is the case if someone has a defect by chance in their appearance, such as a misshapen forehead or a flattened nose; from which their beauty is deformed. Therefore, those things should be avoided that do not win favor from others.

(Vers. 17.)

(Verse 17) For the kingdom of God is not food and drink. It is evident that no one pleases or displeases God by means of food. But righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. These are the ones whom he says will enter the kingdom of God, those who pursue righteousness and have the Christian peace which the Lord gave, saying, 'My peace I give to you, my peace I leave you' (John 14:27); from which joy arises in the Holy Spirit. However, argumentation does not have joy, but anger. Therefore, the Holy Spirit does not look upon it, because He delights in peace alone. For just as he is saddened by us, so he also rejoices in us.

(Vers. 18.)

(Verse 18.) For whoever serves Christ in this way pleases God and is approved by men. Because Christ has redeemed us, He says: Whoever serves Christ in this way, is pleasing to God, as to a Redeemer. Why? Because He Himself sent Christ to redeem the human race, as the Lord Himself says: Whoever does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent Him (John 5:23). Therefore, whoever pleases God, is approved by men. How? For he accepted the gift, by which it appears he is worthy of God.

(Vers. 19.)

(Verse 19.) So let us pursue those things that lead to peace and build each other up. Because arguments create discord, it teaches us to hide our intent to eat or not eat, so that we may be peaceful. But it encourages us to follow the path of building up, so that we may contribute to each other's growth, avoiding things that are unfruitful and contrary. For discussion can be beneficial, as it stimulates the mind, as long as the desire to win is not despised, for that is what causes strife.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20.) Do not, because of food, neglect the work of God. Man is the work of God by creation, and again man is the work of God, as he is reformed by regeneration. And food is the work of God, but man is not for the sake of food, but food is for the sake of man. Therefore, there is a great difference; therefore, do not, he says, neglect this work of God, which is noble, for the sake of that which is lowly. This is to strive for the salvation of a brother, not to focus on the care of food, so as not to cause distress to a brother. For the favor of God makes void the one who, through argument, again prompts the brother who has been freed from sin to sin, undoing in him the works of Christ that he has accomplished, in order to liberate man from sin.

Indeed, all things are clean. But it is also true and evident that all things are clean, since it is written in Genesis that everything God made is very good. But it is evil for a person to eat with offense (Gen. I, 31). Therefore, although all things are good and clean by nature, they become unclean to those who doubt, and it will be a stumbling block to them if, despite their doubts, they eat with an unclean conscience, because they do what they consider useless. Therefore, no one should contradict what follows in this matter.

(Vers. 21.) (Verse 21.) It is good not to eat meat, and not to drink wine. When the discussion was only about meat, he added drink as well; so that those who abstain from these might be comforted by what is lawful, both to eat meat and to drink wine. In order not to sadden those who use these, he gave them solace in breathing; so that they might rest in their own will, and the dispute through which discord arises would cease. For since it is not hidden that it is good to eat meat and drink wine, and on the other hand not to eat meat and not to drink wine, they learn that it is good, and no one argues. A creature has been given for the use of those who wish; however, neither necessity is imposed on the willing nor the unwilling. For indeed in that in which your brother offends, or is scandalized, or is weakened. The same thing he says ought not to be done to a brother, who has established a weak mind for himself in order to eat, so that he may not offend in confusion, not knowing what he holds.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) You have faith in yourself: have it in the presence of God. This means that you who sit secure, because the creation of God is good, do not need to judge another; for it is better to have peace with your brother; for this is useful before God. For in food, the utility is the flesh, but in peace, both of the flesh and the soul: and for this reason, there should be a cessation of such disputes; so that each person can remain in the purpose of their own heart.

Blessed is he who does not judge himself, in which he proves himself. Each one considers himself worthy of condemnation by his own judgement, who does what he says he should not do: and he considers blessed the one who does nothing other than what he proves to be beneficial to himself.

(Vers. 23.) (Verse 23.) But whoever eats without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But everything that is not from faith is sin. He rightly calls sin that which is done differently than it is approved. For the Romans were instructed in the law, as I mentioned at the beginning of the letter: but as those who believe rightly came, questions were raised about abstaining from meat and not abstaining; and the part of those who said that it should be eaten and not condemned seemed better; for all things are very clean: he calls weak those who denied eating whether they were from the Jews or from the Gentiles, and he pardoned them in the intention of their heart. For neither is it harmful not to eat, nor does it benefit to eat with respect to God; they are not bound by any reason, through which, however, they would sin by eating with scruple.

Chapter XV.

(Vers. 1.)

(Vers. 1.) Nevertheless, we, the stronger, ought to bear the weaknesses of the weaker ones. It is rightly said, we ought to; because it is necessary for teachers to strengthen the weak and to instruct the ignorant with gentleness; lest, when they are provoked and eager to argue, they seem lowly and make progress for the worse.

(Vers. 2.)

(Vers. 2.) And it is not to please ourselves, that is, not to vindicate something that is beneficial and pleasing to us, but also to our brother; because we must take care of one another. Let each one please his neighbor for his good, for edification. Now he has distinguished his own person; for he admonishes these, that they should be devoted to charity and please their neighbors in that which is useful. This is edification, as he says elsewhere: I, he says, please everyone in everything (I Cor. X, 13).

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3.) For Christ also did not please Himself, but as it is written: "The insults of those who reproach you have fallen upon me." The Savior does not say that He pleased Himself, but rather God the Father; for He says: "For I have not come down from heaven to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me, the Father" (John 6:38). And because He said these things, the Jews who were contradicting Him treated Him as a sinner, so the Psalmist speaks on His behalf to God the Father, saying: "The insults of those who reproach you have fallen upon me" (Psalm 69:10); that is to say, when I was doing your will, they accused me of sinning against you. By not receiving me, whom you sent, they insulted you. Because the Jews sinned against God, and not receiving Christ whom He sent, they even killed Him as if He were sinning against God. So the sins of sinners fell upon God Himself; for the innocent is killed by sinners as if He were a blasphemer, as it is written in the Gospel (Mark XV, 28).

(Vers. 4-6.) (Verses 4-6.) For whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope. Now, it is evident that whatever was written in the past was written for our discipline, so that through the encouragement it provides, we might grow in hope, not doubting the promises, even if they are delayed. But may the God of patience and consolation grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Jesus Christ, that with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the Apostle is sent with a good wish to the people for their salvation, wishing that God may grant them one sense of wisdom according to Jesus Christ, that they may understand according to the doctrine of Christ. For then they will be able to keep love by following the example of the Lord who says: 'Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends and brothers' (John 15:13); and thus with one mouth, with one confession, to praise God the Father in Christ, if they have exhorted one another according to the mind of Christ; so that they may ceaselessly praise God for all that he has done through Christ, and, having fallen through error, he has deigned to raise and reform them again through the same, giving a double benefit, mercy and knowledge.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted you to the glory of God (Isaiah 56:4). Thus, we were accepted by Christ, as he took on our weaknesses and carried our

sorrows. Let us therefore strengthen one another through patience, following this example, so that the honor of God's name may not be emptied in us. For we are called children of God through the grace of Christ.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) For I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of circumcision for the sake of God's truth, in order to confirm the promises made to the Fathers. He commends the origin of the Jews; for in circumcision he signifies the sons of Abraham, to whom Christ was sent to minister the grace promised to the Fathers. Hence the Savior says: 'For I am among you,' not to be served, but to serve; in order that the truth of the promise made to the Fathers might be proven. For circumcision of the flesh was given to Abraham as a representation of the circumcision of the heart, which the prophet later signified would come, saying: Circumcise the hardness of your heart (Jeremiah 4:4). By these words, Christ is the servant of the promised circumcision, that is, the preacher. Then to the apostles, so that they may minister the circumcision of the heart to those circumcised in the flesh, he said: As the Father has sent me into this world, so I also sent them into this world (John 6:58). But the circumcision of the heart is, the cloud of error being dispelled, to acknowledge the Creator God the Father, and his Son Christ, through whom He created all things, so that the truth of God may be fulfilled. For He had promised that He would give mercy, and He had promised to the fathers of the Jews; for He had said to Abraham: In your seed all the nations will be blessed (Gen. 22:18). And to David He said: I will set upon your throne the fruit of your womb (Psalm 131:11), and: A star will rise out of Jacob (Num. 24:17).

(Vers. 9.) (Verse 9) But the nations, on the other hand, honored God because of His mercy. For since they had no promise, they were chosen for salvation solely by His mercy, in order to glorify God through confession; because the unbelievers dishonor Him. As it is written: Therefore, I will confess to you among the nations, and I will sing to your name. He proves this by a prophetic example; for it is written in the seventeenth Psalm that the nations are to be admitted to the grace of God in order to receive salvation (Psalm 17:50). For it is the voice of Christ, by which he foretold that his preaching would bear fruit of the confession of the sacrament of God among the nations; therefore, the Son gives thanks to the Father for the obedience of the nations. Where in the Gospel it says: I will praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, and have revealed them to the little ones; for it was pleasing to you (Matthew 11:25). Therefore, this confession belongs to the triune God, from which joy arises; so that after confessing the truth, one may joyfully sing of God's mercy and gift.

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Ver. 10, 11.) And again he says: Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people, in this song of Deuteronomy (Deut. XXXII, 43). And again: Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and magnify him, all you peoples. This shows that God had decreed long ago in Psalm 116 to bring the Jews and Gentiles together through his mercy, so that the Gentiles, having obtained grace, would become partners with the Jews, who themselves were once called his people by the gift of God. But now the noble Jews, indeed, are made ignoble through mercy, so that together all may be joyful in the knowledge of the truth, and with the nations praising, all peoples magnify God, the one God of the twelve tribes, who increased the number of his people, having added nations. Finally, when the Jews were disputing against the apostle Peter on the account of Cornelius, having been presented

with the reason, they agreed, magnifying the Lord and saying: Perhaps God has also granted repentance to the nations in order to obtain life (Acts 11:18).

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) And again Isaiah says: There will be a root from Jesse; and he who rises to rule the nations, in him the nations will hope (Isaiah 11:10). In order to give greater confidence to the nations and certain hope, he confirms with many testimonies that it was God's decree for all nations to be blessed in Christ; lest the arrogance of the unbelieving Jews sadden and make the souls of the believing Gentiles doubtful, as if in vain they promise themselves hope, because faith is attributed to the Jews from God's covenant with Abraham, so that they may increase in joy and security. But why did Christ come from the root of Jesse, and not from the root of Boaz, a righteous man, or from the root of Obed? But because he is called the Son of David because of the kingdom; just as he was born from God as king, so he would have his origin from David the king according to the flesh; therefore the root of Jesse is the tree of David, which bore fruit through the branch, who is the Virgin Mary, who gave birth to Christ.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Verses 13, 14.) But may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope and in the power of the Holy Spirit. And I am convinced, brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another. These are words of encouragement; for through praise, he urges them to a better understanding and life. For when someone sees themselves being praised, they work diligently to ensure that what is said is true. Therefore, he did not say that they should teach each other, but that they should admonish each other; for what is known sometimes escapes the mind once it is understood. The rest is not obscure, as it needs no explanation.

(Vers. 15, 16.)

(Verse 15, 16.) But I have written to you, brothers, more boldly in some parts, as if reminding you, because of the grace that has been given to me by God; so that I may be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, sanctifying the Gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable and sanctified in the Holy Spirit. For he does not indicate that he has written without purpose, for he speaks of the authority given to him by the grace of God, so that he may dare to write to all nations, admonishing and confirming their purpose in Christ; so that he may show his concern in the ministry of the Gospel, as a teacher of the Gentiles, and their sacrifice may become acceptable for the sake of sanctification in the Holy Spirit. For whatever is offered with faith intact and a clear mind, is purified by the Holy Spirit.

(Vers. 17-19.)

(Verses 17-19.) Therefore, I have glory in Christ towards God; for I dare not speak of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient, by the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit. He says that he has glory before God through Jesus Christ. For by believing and serving Christ Jesus with a pure conscience, he has obtained merit before God the Father, to the extent that he says nothing is lacking that Christ has not accomplished through him for the encouragement of the Gentiles, by

giving signs and wonders through his hands, so that the power of his preaching may be commended. From here it is where he shows that he has glory in Christ towards God; for serving Christ he has glory towards God, to such an extent that he does not lack any divine power, which has not been given to him by God: but he claims that he has achieved everything, because he has been found worthy, which would be effective for the conversion of the gentiles through the power of miracles. He proves by this that he was no less able than the other apostles, who were with the Lord: nor did God perform any less miracles among the gentiles; so that by this they may increase, seeing that they have obtained this grace, which the Jews, who claim the prerogative of the Fathers, had obtained.

(Vers. 20.)

(Verse 20) So as to fulfill the Gospel of God and His Son Christ, I have traveled from Jerusalem throughout the surrounding area to Illyricum. However, I preach the Gospel not where Christ has already been named, so as not to build on someone else's foundation. It is not without reason that I strive to preach where Christ has not been named, for I know that false apostles try to teach things about Christ that are not true (this was their purpose, to deceive the people with doctrines that were not aligned with Christ, and it was a great challenge to correct afterwards). Therefore, I wanted to preempt them and deliver the message of the Gospel to those who have not heard it, so that the words of the Gospel would be preserved and the foundation of the message would remain unaltered. And because a teacher was given to the nations, it was necessary for him to take care of this diligently, so that he would teach there, where Christ had not been announced; and so that he would establish his authority, and have the full fruit of his labor from those things which he had planted. Hence it is from where the Church has occupied all places; for heresies afterwards, with malicious subtlety, were attempting to corrupt the sense of the Law and faith under the name of Christ. Which he warned about by the testimony of the Law, saying:

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21.) But as it is written: Those to whom it has not been announced about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand: it is found in Isaiah (Isaiah 52:15). So, in order for this true and inviolable understanding of the true Son of God to be, he always says that he hastened to imbue the nations with the truth of the Gospel.

(Vers. 22-24.)

(Vers. 22-24.) Therefore, I was greatly hindered from coming to you. But now, having no further place in these regions, and desiring to come to you for many years now, when I begin to travel to Spain, I will see you and be escorted there by you, if I have first enjoyed your company in part. As he mentions at the beginning of the letter, saying: For I have often intended to come to you, but have been prevented until now (Romans 1:13). Now he finishes, showing the reason for his delay; that wanting to come he was engaged in something else, which was imminent, to exclude the false teachings of the pseudo-apostles: and finally, after preaching to everyone in the vicinity, he says that he is ready to come to Rome, which he had long desired. Therefore, because the Romans had been introduced to the Law, he corrects them for the time being through a letter. However, those who had not yet heard his preaching would benefit more from being taught in person by him: so that, having a firm foundation in the correct faith, they would find it difficult to receive anything

else. However, he promised himself that he would come at a time when he was going to Hispania, because Christ had not been preached there in order to occupy their minds, and because it was difficult for the false apostles to travel to them; therefore, it would not be a trouble if he went later.

(Vers. 25, 26.)

(Vers. 25, 26.) Now indeed I will journey to Jerusalem to minister to the saints; for Macedonia and Achaia have approved to make some contribution for the poor saints who are in Jerusalem. But first, he says, I will go to minister to the saints in Jerusalem: by which he wants the Romans to know that such works should be supported. For those who live by mercy and have been justified by God, they should serve this person.

(Vers. 27.)

(Verse 27) For they are debtors. Because if the Gentiles have become partakers of their spiritual things, they ought also to minister to them in carnal things. Indeed, the Gentiles are debtors to the Jews who believe, as just as the Gentiles have become partakers of their spiritual things, they also ought to share in their material needs; so that, rejoicing and celebrating, the believing Gentiles may praise God's providence for the salvation of the Jews through their ministry. For truly, by devoting themselves completely to divine worship and caring nothing for worldly matters, they provided an example of good conduct to believers. The Apostle wants us to be so inclined towards mercy that he says we should consider ourselves debtors when it comes to giving alms and performing good works with a joyful heart. For anyone who hopes for mercy from God must be merciful themselves, in order to prove that they have a true hope. For if humans show mercy, how much more will God! For this is the retribution or reward, that those who receive mercy, show mercy. Hence the Lord says: Blessed are the merciful (Matthew 5:7); for God will show mercy to them.

(Vers. 28, 29.)

(Verses 28, 29) Therefore, when I have completed this and have delivered to them this fruit, I will set out by way of you to Spain. And I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. So I am sure that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

(Vers. 30, 31.)

(Vers. 30, 31.) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Holy Spirit, that you join me in earnest prayers to the Lord, so that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea. Then he prays to be helped in prayer, so that he may escape the hands of the unbelieving Jews: not because he is less deserving, but he follows the order that prayer for their leader should be made by the Church. For when many who are least gather together with one accord, they become great; and it is impossible for the prayers of many not to obtain the desired result. Therefore, if they themselves also are eager to see the Apostle, let them pray more fervently, so that they may be able to receive him with joy and love upon his liberation.

(Vers. 32.)

(Verse 32.) That my service of offering may be acceptable to the saints in Jerusalem; and that I may come to you with joy, by the will of God, and be refreshed together with you. He also says this in prayer, that his service of offerings may be accepted by the saints in Jerusalem, and that he may show that he does everything according to the will of God; so that because his heart is devoted to the giving of gifts, he also desires to have their hearts respond to him in judgment of God; so that having understood his love for them, they may with one accord thank God with him. For great is the progress of him, by whose ministry they are made joyful, and they give God thanks.

(Vers. 33.)

(Verse 33). But may the God of peace be with you all. Amen. The God of peace is Christ, who says: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John 14:17), He desires to be with those who, knowing that the Lord has said, Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world (Matthew 28:20), wish to be such that the Lord Christ Jesus may be with them, who, having removed all discord of human error, has dedicated and shown what is true; so that they may remain in peacefulness in the very truth.

Chapter XVI.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Verse 1, 2.) But I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is a minister of the church in Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever matter she may require your help, for she has been a helper of many, including myself. He commends to them the coming sister Phoebe, that is, one from the Law, saying that she is a minister of the church in Cenchreae; and because she has been helpful to many, he says that she should be assisted in a worthy manner for the sake of her journey. But in order to persuade himself to keep receiving her without interruption and to assist her in her time of need, if she were to arrive, he testifies that he himself had also been present; in order to show that the more exalted her person is than the others, the more obligated he is to show this service to her out of charity.

(Vers. 3-6.)

(Verses 3-6.) Greet Aquila and Priscilla, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you. The eagle is a man named Aquila, and it is evident that he and Priscilla did not come to Rome

in vain; for they were more inclined towards devotion to God. For all of them, whom he greets, are understood to have been from among these. Hence he says that he not only thanks God Himself, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles, touching upon the Romans as well, so that they may obey those whom they hear are working for the advancement of the Gentiles and for the exhortation of faith in Christ. He praises them so greatly that they would not refuse to suffer dangers for his sake; they did not scorn to undergo hostilities from both the Jews and false brothers, as long as they helped the Apostle with obedience and charity. They were false brothers who believed in Christ; However, they said that it was not enough to observe the Law in order to fully achieve the effect of salvation, thinking that Christ destroyed this. Therefore, they endured persecutions from them. He also greets their domestic and native servants, whom he calls the Church; because they were disciples of holy men in relation to faith.

Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia. Even Epaenetus himself does not remain silent about his present dignity, in order to show that even men of dignity believe, and to invite the first among the Romans to faith, or at least to grow in humility.

Greetings to Mary, who has worked hard among you. Commend them in the name of Mary, whom we understand to have labored more diligently for their encouragement, so that they may give thanks to her.

(Vers. 7.)

(Verse 7) Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and fellow prisoners, who are noteworthy among the apostles and who were in Christ before me. They are my relatives both by blood and by spirit, just as the angel said to Mary: 'Behold, Elizabeth, your relative, etc.' (Luke 1:36). He also attests that they served the earlier apostles and endured captivity for the sake of the faith. Therefore, they should be honored even more.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in Christ. He is greeted as a friend, but in the Lord as a friend; not, however, one who has shared in his labor or imprisonment.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9) Greet Urbanus, my helper in Christ. It is not only he who is called his helper, but also a fellow worker for the encouragement of faith among the others. Greet Stachys, my beloved as well. Although he is called beloved, he is also subordinated to Urbanus as a fellow participant in the work of the gospel.

(Vers. 10.)

(Ver. 10.) Greet Appellem, who is approved in Christ. He is not just a friend or fellow worker, but because he has been tested by trials and found faithful in Christ.

(Vers. 11.)

(Verse 11.) Greet those who are from the household of Aristobulus. It is understood that this Aristobulus was a fellow believer in Christ, whose conduct is commended in such a way that he designates those he gathers as worthy of his greeting.

Greetings to our relative Herodion. He who is called only a relative, shows himself devoted in the love of rebirth; however, he did not designate his vigilance.

Greetings to those who are from the house of Narcissus, who are in the Lord. Narcissus is said to have been a presbyter at that time, as it is read in other manuscripts. And because he was not present, you see the reason why he greets them in the Lord as saints, who were from his house. Now, Narcissus the presbyter was performing the duty of a foreigner, strengthening the believers with his exhortations; and since the Apostle did not know the merits of those who were with him, he said this: Greet those who are from the house of Narcissus in the Lord; that is, greet those whom you know to be worthy of my greeting, those who have placed their hope in the Lord, greet them in my name.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12) Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who are laboring in the Lord. They are worthy of commendation in Christ.

Greet Persida, who has worked hard in the Lord and is very dear to me. She has surpassed others in her efforts because she has worked hard in the Lord. Her labor is in exhortation, in ministering to the saints, in hardship, and in poverty for the sake of Christ. For they were forced to flee their homes and were treated with contempt by the unfaithful.

(Vers. 13.)

(Verse 13.) Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Therefore, Rufus was appointed to his mother due to the election of the administration of God's grace, in which a woman does not have a place; for he was chosen, that is, promoted by the Lord to carry out his tasks. However, he had such a holy mother that the Apostle also called her his own mother.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) Greet Asyncletus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers with them. Greet all of them, as they were known to be united in Christ, that is, joined in Christian friendship. Also greet the brothers who were with them, whose names are not mentioned.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Greet Philologus, and Julia, and Nereus, and his sister Olympias, and all those who are with them, the saints. All of these are understood to have been united, whom he greets together for this reason, and their worth is recognized from those who were with them together; for he calls them saints, so that it may appear fitting to greet them with respect.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16) Greet one another with a holy kiss. He commands all to whom he writes, and those he mentions, to greet one another with a holy kiss, that is, in the peace of Christ, not in the desire of the flesh, but in the Holy Spirit; so that the kisses may be religious, not carnal.

Greetings to all the Churches of Christ. By this it is understood to be called the Church, which is not of Christ. Hence David calls the conspiracy of the wicked the Church of the malignants (Psalm

XXV, 5). Therefore he says that he greets all those Churches of those places, so that they may grow in faith. Therefore he referred this to a higher sense; to show that Christ is the one in whom salvation is, and that he is the one whose faithful people are, and by whose will all creatures live. For here is the author of life, as Peter the apostle says (Acts 3:15), not the law in which some of them thought they ought to hope.

(Vers. 17-19)

(Vers. 17-19) . I pray, however, that you observe those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the innocent. For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore, I rejoice over you; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil. But I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil. And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. For they were compelling the believing ones to Judaize, so that they might make void the grace of God around themselves, as I mentioned above; for, by arranging genealogical words, they were adapting treatises to commend their tradition, through which they would deceive the hearts of the simple.

For, he says, your obedience has been made known to all. This is what he says at the beginning of the letter (Rom. 1:8), because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world, which signifies that he is confident in their obedience. For it was incredible that they would submit themselves after having known the truth of foolish things as if they were wise.

Therefore, I rejoice in you. And this is the meaning of the upper part of the letter; for he rejoices that the Romans, who seemed to have a kingdom, have subjected themselves to the Christian faith.

I want you to make progress, so that you may be educated for good, but ignorant for evil. A person is educated for good here, who does good works; but those who are ignorant for evil are those who do not know evil deeds, that is, they do not know the use of wickedness.

(Vers. 20.) (Verse 20) But the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. This is to say, quickly. He says this about his coming, because his coming would crush the devil, due to the fact that these were going to receive spiritual grace; which Satan envies, because he wants people to remain in error; the rest, although they are of the same profession, may differ. By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you. He desires the grace that he promised to be with them in his coming; if they are deserving to receive, it is already with them in hope.

(Vers. 21.)

(Verse 21) Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, as well as Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives. Timothy, who is a fellow worker, is like a co-bishop, and he diligently governs the Church, being subject to the envy of the Jews to such an extent that he was circumcised at the beginning because of the Jews' scandal. Since his mother was Jewish, he could not be a teacher without being circumcised. He calls them relatives, partly because of their lineage and partly because of their faith.

(Vers. 22.)

(Verse 22.) I, Tertius, greet you, who wrote this letter in the Lord. Tertius by name, not by number: here is the scribe of the letter, to whom it was granted to greet the Roman people in his own name, to whom he writes; so that they may greet others whom he names. For there were still only a few leaders in the churches at that time.

(Vers. 23)

(Verse 23) Gaius, my host, greets you; as well as the whole Church. This is Gaius, I believe, to whom John the Apostle writes (3 John 1), rejoicing in his love, which he shows to the brethren by providing necessary support for them. And although earlier he says, 'All the Churches of Christ greet you,' now he repeats it, saying, 'The whole Church greets you,' which I do not think was repeated in vain; for such a great and accommodating man did not do anything superfluous. But because all the Churches of Christ, that is, all the saints, salute you, as He says elsewhere: But they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh (Gal. V, 24); now He adds also these, who are the followers, to signify the blessed people of the Church, because in every Church there are two classes of people. He may also designate the Churches of two provinces, as if He had said: all the Churches of one place and then of another; or certainly of Jews and Gentiles.

(Vers. 24.)

(Verse 24.) Erastus, the city treasurer, greets you, as does Quartus, the brother. A city treasurer is like a curator who, guided by justice, governed the city, especially in regulating prices. He specifically names these individuals in the greeting to the Romans, so they would know who and how important those rejoicing in their good undertaking were.

(Vers. 25-27.)

(Verse 25-27.) But to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen. To the God and Father from whom all things come, be glory forever and ever. Amen. For the sacrament that was always hidden in God, was revealed in the times of Christ; for God is not singular, for the Holy Spirit is with Him from eternity, and in that truth, He decreed that all creatures should be saved through knowledge. The truth of this sacrament had indeed been indicated by certain figures through the prophets, known only to God the wise; and He desired the nations to be sharers in His grace, a hidden thing for the human race. Therefore, he alone is wise; because all wisdom is from him, as Solomon says: All wisdom is from the Lord God, and it was always with him (Ecclesiastes 1:1). This wisdom is Christ, because it is from him, and it was always with him, through whom glory is to him forever and ever. Amen. Therefore, nothing is complete without Christ; because through him, all things: when he is recognized, praise is given to God the Father through him; because he is understood through Christ, as through his wisdom, in which he has made believers whole. Glory therefore to the Father through the Son, that is, glory to both in the Holy Spirit; because each is in one glory.

(Vers. 28.)

(Verse 28) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. In conclusion, he places Christ, through whom we have been made and again reformed by his grace, so that he may remain in our minds; for if we remember his benefits, he will always protect us, as he said: And behold, he said (Matthew 28:20), I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. Amen.

Commentary on Titus

On the Letter of the Apostle Paul to Titus

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

Table of Contents

• Prologus.

• Caput I.

• (Vers. 1-4.)

• (Vers. 5-11.) • (Vers. 12, 13.)

• (Vers. 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

• (Vers. 16.)

• Caput II.

• (Vers. 1)

• (Vers. 2.) • (Vers. 3, 4, 5.) • (Vers. 6, 7, 8.) • (Vers. 9, 10,) • (Vers. 11, 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

• Caput III.

• (Vers. 1, 2.)

• (Vers. 2.)

• (Vers. 3.)

• (Vers. 4-7.)

• (Vers. 8.)

• (Vers. 9.) • (Vers. 10, 11.)

• (Vers. 12.) • (Vers. 13, 14.)

• (Vers. 15.)

Prologus.

The Apostle Paul appointed Titus as bishop; and therefore he advises him to be diligent in the ecclesiastical ordination: that is, to discern those who present themselves as worthy with a certain

pretense in order to obtain a higher position; and also to rebuke the heretics who promote circumcision.

Caput I.

(Vers. 1-4.)

(Vers. 1-4.) Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; To Titus, my true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. The decree declares the gift from God, which He had promised before the ages and has now been revealed at the time of the Savior in the preaching of the Apostles; for thus He had promised. He also says that it has been entrusted to him, in order to make known to the Gentiles the predestined mercy of God; so that even Titus, his true son, that is, according to the Gospel (for this is true, which is eternal), diligently preaches the grace of God and peace, so that they may become at peace with God and the Father by receiving the gift; for all things are from Him, and through Christ Jesus our Savior, for He Himself has delivered us from death.

(Vers. 5-11.)

(Vers. 5-11.) For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might put in order what remained, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you: if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. For there are indeed many who are disobedient, empty talkers and deceivers, particularly those of the circumcision party. They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach for the sake of dishonest gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. For indeed, those who were Christians in name only were not pure; for they wanted to both honor the Law and honor Christ. He says these things about those who were destroying households with their corrupt teaching. For they were eager for shameful gains in two ways; namely, they did these things in order to please the Jews, from whom they hoped to receive expenses, so that they could profit financially and physically. These were their profits, just as the Lord says to the Jews: You travel over land and sea to make a single proselyte (Matthew 23:15). He calls these two shameful gains; because he who teaches under the name of God, not for the sake of devotion, but for profit, is a shameful seeker of gain: likewise also he who wants to acquire something through circumcision. Therefore, elsewhere it says: And their glory is in their shame (Philippians 3:19).

(Vers. 12, 13.)

(Verse 12, 13.) A certain one among them, who was their own prophet, said: 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. A certain one from the Cretans, who was improved through the teaching of the Lord, expressed what should be thought about the uneducated Cretans, that they were both evil and lazy, wanting to eat. For they desired to be nourished by wickedness, who, although they are of no benefit, are eager to harm. Therefore, it is a twofold evil. These were the Cretans; hence he calls him a prophet, but in the case of the Cretans. For he asserts that he spoke truly to them as a prophet; for it is impossible for a prophet to lie.

(Vers. 14.)

(Verse 14.) For this reason, argue with them harshly, that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish fables and the commandments of men who turn away from the truth. Instruct them to rebuke those people, that they may be converted and follow what is just and worthy of God's law, turning away from Jewish fables. For in the Law, they find justification before God, even more so in the commandments of men! For whatever is opposed to the truth is a human invention; for they are ignorant of the power of the Scriptures and the inner meaning of the words of the Law, they follow the appearance, not the taste. Therefore, myths are said to tell stories, not truth; for they think that one should never deviate from what Moses handed down, such as concerning foods, or unions, or new moons, or the blood of a weasel, or a house unclean for seven days; whereas their leaders, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were justified and called friends of God without these things; and the prophet Ezekiel testifies that they received precepts and commands that were not good because they profaned the law of God and his justifications, in which they could not be justified. And so the Lord says to the Jews: Because of the hardness of your heart Moses wrote these things (Mark 10:5). Hence it is that Peter the apostle also says: Why do you impose a yoke upon the necks of the brethren, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear (Acts 15:10)? For if they had been useful, they would have been given when the Law was given on the tablets; but because after so many signs and wonders, and the Law being given, they were found disrespectful, distrustful, and stiff-necked, they received such great and burdensome commandments in which they could not breathe. From this it happened that both the good labored with the wicked, to receive their reward. Therefore these things were given for vengeance, so that at the time when the promise of God arrived, the mercy of God would relax everything that He had previously forbidden. The Jews, not understanding this, remain under the yoke, and willingly bind themselves with these chains; and therefore he warns them to turn away from these things and be admonished.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) Indeed, all things are clean to the pure: but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is clean; but both their mind and conscience are defiled. These people signify those who know and understand the reasons why certain things are prohibited and later allowed. For if it is written in Genesis that everything God created is good (Genesis 1:31), there is no doubt that they are also clean. But those who do not understand are unclean; for they are accusers of Scripture. For if good deeds are read, why are they forbidden as if they were accursed? If they are not accursed, because they are good; they are known to be forbidden because of the hardness of the

heart, because they are considered unworthy to benefit from all of God's creation. For those who are seen to be prohibited from better things, their mind and conscience are corrupted; because they accuse the creature of God in order to excuse themselves.

(Vers. 16.)

(Verse 16.) They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their deeds; since they are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good work. Although this statement applies to all heretics, it is specifically referring to the Jews who claim to know only the God of Abraham, but deny Him by their actions, as the Lord says: 'If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham' (John 8:39). Therefore, how can they claim to know the God of Abraham when they are ignorant of His mystery and faith, not following the works of the Gospel, but disturbing others with their observance of the law, circumcision, and other practices, behaving impiously and without reverence? These are the works that do not know God.

Caput II.

(Vers. 1)

(Version 1) But you, speak the things that befit sound doctrine. This is the knowledge of God, which is called sound doctrine; for the doctrine of God is saving.

(Vers. 2.)

(V. 2.) The elders should be sober, serious, prudent, sound in faith, love, and patience. He shows who they should be of sound doctrine, in order to indicate that those who are less sober, less serious, unbelieving, lacking in charity, impatient, and disciples of unsound doctrine. By their works, God is not known, nor is his righteousness.

(Vers. 3, 4, 5.)

(Verses 3, 4, 5.) An old woman likewise, in a dignified manner, not slanderous, not enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be wise, pure, homemakers, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be blasphemed. The elders are to be such that they are an example of good conduct to the younger ones, so that if they have unbelieving husbands, they may be won over by their behavior without a word, as they observe the purity and reverence of their lives.

(Vers. 6, 7, 8.)

(Verses 6, 7, 8.) Likewise, exhort the younger to be self-controlled, presenting yourself as a model of good works in all things, in teaching, in integrity, in seriousness, sound speech that is beyond reproach, so that those who oppose us may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say about us. Because young people tend to exceed the bounds, or rather, are more prone to stumble, they are therefore commanded to be contained by wholesome restraints, so that they may be governed by the unrestrained divine laws. He insists that in order for something not to be difficult or challenging, there should be a teacher; that the teacher should demonstrate how the things he teaches are done; that those who are ignorant and enemies of the faith may be ashamed, seeing that he proves with actions that what he teaches with words is true.

(Vers. 9, 10,)

(Verse 9, 10,) Servants to be obedient to their masters in all things, well-pleasing, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, that they may adorn the doctrine of our Savior God in all things. For the doctrine of the Lord is to be adorned with good works and faith; for then is the doctrine pleasing, if he who professes it does not make it hateful by denying it in his actions, but lovely and true; for what is true cannot be unseemly. When, therefore, the words are fulfilled by subsequent actions, they are shown to be true, and by this means, honorable. Then masters can not only not prohibit their servants from faith, but also rejoice; because they see that their faith also benefits themselves. For no one who keeps the faith of God can be unfaithful to men.

(Vers. 11, 12.)

(Vers. 11, 12.) For the grace of God our Savior has appeared to all people, teaching us to renounce impiety and worldly desires, and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age. He says that the gift of God has appeared to people through Christ, that is, the truth of the one God manifested in Christ, so that we may profess the Creator in the unity of the Trinity: something that was previously hidden from the human race, but now has been revealed through God's mercy. By avoiding the darkness of error, which is ignorance and impiety of the world, let us be found as pious ones who acknowledge God as the Father of all, confessing Him in the truth that the Gospel of His Son teaches. And in order to receive the reward of this, let us do good works. For how can those who only proclaim the Father have any hope if they do not also profess the Son in the same truth? Similarly, the hope of this person is in vain who only has a profession of faith without good works.

(Vers. 13, 14, 15.)

(Verses 13, 14, 15.) We await the blessed hope and the coming of the glory of our blessed God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good works. This is said to be the blessed hope of believers, because they await the coming of the glory of the great God, which will be revealed by Christ, the judge, in whom the power and glory of God the Father will be seen, so that they may obtain the reward of their faith. For Christ indeed redeemed us in order that, following a pure life, filled with good works, we may be heirs of the kingdom of God. Speak these things and exhort and rebuke with full authority. Let no one despise you.

Caput III.

(Vers. 1, 2.)

(Ver. 1, 2.) Admonish them to be subject to the principalities and powers, to obey their commands, to be prepared for every good work. He warns of the salvation of believers, so that when they are accused, they may know for whose benefit they are being attacked: so that they may not take it harshly, being certain that they are being corrected for their own well-being: and so that they may be slow to do evil, but ready for good, not ignorant of what each one must repay.

(Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) Do not blaspheme anyone, be non-argumentative; but be modest, showing all meekness to all people. Christians want to appear humble to all people; for in this way they can be called faithful to the hope of the future.

(Vers. 3.)

(Verse 3) Once we were foolish and disobedient, wandering, serving various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another. These blessings that unbelief does not have, it recalls them as given to Christians; so that shining in all righteousness, they may be made manifest as worshippers of God. For while once foolish, now they seem to be of sound judgment in all things, and God is praised in them.

(Vers. 4-7.)

(Verses 4-7.) But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This good that seems to flourish among Christians originates from the root of divine piety; for God, through his mercy, saved us by Christ, by whose grace we are born again and receive the Holy Spirit abundantly, so that we may rely on good works, with his help in all things, in order to attain the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven through them. Therefore, we should serve Him with all devotion and obey His commandments, because whatever is beautiful in us, He paints with spiritual features.

(Vers. 8.)

(Verse 8.) Faithful saying: and I want you to affirm these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are good and beneficial for people. There is nothing so evident, because mercy and kindness are good for the present and useful for the future; and here in this, there is praise, and on the day of judgment, a crown. For everyone who believes in God must strive for mercy, by which they live. So, in order to be concerned for these things, the leader of the people is admonished.

(Vers. 9.)

(Verse 9.) But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. He calls these foolish questions, which have no effect on salvation, nor contribute any expertise to usefulness. By these words, he denotes the doctrines of many heretics. Although all things that are not true are to be called foolish, yet there is one who introduces fabulous things, and another who cunningly presents a matter full of poison, as Arius and Photinus do. However, fabulous is not a law, but a heresy, as it pertains to the time of the Jews when some of them claimed a prerogative of the origins of the patriarchs, which arose from marriages, although there is no merit in this before God. Indeed, some considered the baptism of pitchers and other vessels, and the blood of a weasel to be greatly purged (Leviticus 11:29). And because Moses' burial was hidden, so as not to be disturbed by the magicians, if it were true, the burial of other saints should also have been hidden. And because Solomon built the temple with the help of demons, in which a vast multitude labored, what is more fabulous than that?

(Vers. 10, 11.)

(Verses 10, 11.) Avoid the heretical man after the first correction, knowing that he is perverse in this way, and condemned by his own self. These are the heretics who attack the Law of the Law through words; for they establish their own meaning to the words of the Law, so that they may commend the wickedness of their own mind by the authority of the Law. For they know that impiety carries great weight under the authority of the Law, they create deception under its name; so that because an evil thing cannot be acceptable in itself, it may be commended by the goodness of its name. Therefore, he says that men of this kind should be admonished once, so that, being admonished more frequently, they may become more practiced in evil. However, he seems to compel those whom he often admonishes, so that they may become more eager for the destruction of many: therefore, they are to be dismissed, so that they may become more negligent and perhaps perish alone.

(Vers. 12.)

(Verse 12.) When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make haste to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. After I have sent this letter, I also want to see you for personal reasons, and to strengthen you further in the ecclesiastical discipline.

(Vers. 13, 14.)

(Vers. 13, 14.) Send ahead Zenas the lawyer and Apollo diligently, so that nothing is lacking to them; but let them also learn to excel in good works for necessary uses, so that they may not be unfruitful. Both of these men are distinguished in wisdom and deeds; and therefore, he commands that necessary expenses be given to them by those who have believed, so that they may be refreshed; for it was fitting that those who imparted spiritual things should not lack material things for themselves. Although he calls Zenas the lawyer, Apollo was also proficient in the Scriptures: But because Zenas had belonged to this profession in the Synagogue, he is called by that name.

(Vers. 15.)

(Verse 15.) All those who are with me greet you. By way of abbreviation, they all signify their greeting together. Greet those who love us in the faith. He desires that they should seem worthy of his greeting who love him faithfully with the affection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The grace of God be with all of you. Now he greets all the brothers and the household of Titus in general.

Exorcism

Exorcism

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Exorcismus.

Almighty Lord, Word of God the Father, Christ Jesus, God and Lord of all creatures, who gave your holy apostles the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions: who among other marvelous things commanded, 'Cast out the devils' (cf. Matthew 10:8); by whose power Satan fell like lightning from heaven: I humbly pray to your name with fear and trembling, that you, with unworthy me, having been granted forgiveness of all sins, may deign to give me confidence and opportunity; that, fortified by the power of your arm, I may faithfully and securely approach this cruel dragon. I adjure you, therefore, every unclean spirit, every phantom, every attack of Satan, in the power of the name of Christ, who, after the baptism in the Jordan, was led into the desert, and there conquered you; so that you, whom He formed from the clay of the earth for the glory of His name, may cease your assault, and tremble not at the frailty of a wretched human being, but at the image of the almighty God. Yield, therefore, to God, who reduced you to servitude in His humiliated servant Job; yield to God, who plunged you and your host into the abyss in Pharaoh, and his army, through His servant Moses; yield to God, who destroyed you in Beel through His servant Daniel, and prostrated you in the dragon; yield to God, who expelled you with spiritual songs through His most faithful servant David from Saul the king; yield to God, who condemned you in Judas the traitor. For he now torments you with divine lashes, in whose presence you trembled and cried out with your legions: What have we to do with you, Jesus son of David? Have you come to torment us before the time? (Matthew 8:29) He presses you with eternal flames, who at the end of time will say to the wicked: Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41) For you and your angels, the never-ending worm awaits, for you and your angels the unquenchable fire is prepared; for you, cursed one, are the prince of murder, the author of incest, the head of sacrilege, the master of the worst arts, the teacher of heretics, the inventor of all obscenities. Go forth, therefore, impious one, go forth, wicked one, go forth with all your deception; for God desired man to be His temple. But why do you delay any longer? Give honor to God the Father almighty, before whom every knee bows: give place to Christ Jesus, who shed His blood for man; give place to the Holy Spirit, who made you known through His blessed apostle Peter in Simon, who condemned your deception in Ananias and Sapphira, who struck you in King Herod for not giving honor to God, who poured out the darkness of blindness upon you through His apostle Paul in the wicked magician, and through the same commanded you to depart from the Pythoness by His word. Depart now, depart deceiver; for the desert is your dwelling, the serpent is your habitation. Humble yourself, prostrate yourself: now is not the time for delay. Behold, the Lord and master approaches, swiftly the fire will blaze before him, and he will ignite his enemies all around. If you deceive man, you cannot mock the Lord. He casts you out, to whose

eyes nothing is hidden; he expels you, to whose power all things are subject; he excludes you, who has prepared eternal Gehenna for you and your angels, from whose mouth will come a two-edged sword, who is coming in the Holy Spirit to judge the world by fire, amen.

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