The Dialogue Against the Luciferians

Jerome (c. AD 347–420)

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Introduction.
This Dialogue was written about 379, seven years after the death of Lucifer, and very soon after Jerome's return from his hermit life in the desert of Chalcis. Though he received ordination from Paulinus, who had been consecrated by Lucifer, he had no sympathy with Lucifer's narrower views, as he shows plainly in this Dialogue. Lucifer, who was bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia, first came into prominent notice about a.d. 354, when great efforts were being made to procure a condemnation of S. Athanasius by the Western bishops. He energetically took up the cause of the saint, and at his own request was sent by Liberius, bishop of Rome, in company with the priest Pancratius and the deacon Hilarius, on a mission to the Emperor Constantius. The emperor granted a Council, which met at Milan in a.d. 354. Lucifer distinguished himself by resisting a proposition to condemn Athanasius, and did not hesitate to oppose the emperor with much violence. In consequence of this he was sent into exile from a.d. 355 to a.d. 361, the greater portion of which time was spent at Eleutheropolis in Palestine, though he afterwards removed to the Thebaid. It was at this time that his polemical writings appeared, the tone and temper of which is indicated by the mere titles De Regibus Apostaticis (of Apostate Kings), De non Conveniendo cum Haereticis, etc. (of not holding communion with heretics). On the death of Constantius in 361, Julian permitted the exiled bishops to return;

but Lucifer instead of going to Alexandria where a Council was to be held under the presidency of Athanasius for the healing of a schism in the Catholic party at Antioch (some of which held to Meletius, while others followed Eustathius), preferred to go straight to Antioch. There he ordained Paulinus, the leader of the latter section, as bishop of the Church. Eusebius of Vercellae soon arrived with the synodal letters of the Council of Alexandria, but, finding himself thus anticipated, and shrinking from a collision with his friend, he retired immediately. Lucifer stayed, and "declared that he would not hold communion with Eusebius or any who adopted the moderate policy of the Alexandrian Council. By this Council it had been determined that actual Arians, if they renounced their heresy, should be pardoned, but not invested with ecclesiastical functions; and that those bishops who had merely consented to Arianism should remain undisturbed. It was this latter concession which of-

fended Lucifer, and he became henceforth the champion of the principle that no one who had yielded to any compromise whatever with Arianism should be allowed to hold an ecclesiastical office. He was thus brought into antagonism with Athanasius himself, who, it has been seen, presided at Alexandria. Eventually he returned to his see in Sardinia where, according to Jerome's Chronicle, he died in 371. Luciferianism became extinct in the beginning of the following century, if not earlier.

It hardly appears to have been formed into a separate organization, though an appeal was made to the emperor by some Luciferian presbyters about the year 384, and both Ambrose and Augustine speak of him as having fallen into the schism.

The argument of the Dialogue may be thus stated. It has been pointed out above that Lucifer of Cagliari, who had been banished from his see in the reign of Constantius because of his adherence to the cause of Athanasius, had, on the announcement of toleration at the accession of Julian (361), gone to Antioch and consecrated Paulinus a bishop. There were then three bishops of Antioch, Dorotheus the Arian (who had succeeded Euzoius in 376), Meletius who, though an Athanasian in opinion, had been consecrated by Arians or Semi-Arians, and Paulinus; besides Vitalis, bishop of a congregation of Apollinarians. Lucifer, in the earnestness of his anti-Arian opinion, refused to acknowledge as bishops those who had come over from Arianism, though he accepted the laymen who had been baptized by Arian bishops. This opinion led to the Luciferian schism, and forms the subject of the Dialogue.

The point urged by Orthodoxus throughout is that, since the Luciferian accepts as valid the baptism conferred by Arian bishops, it is inconsistent in him not to acknowledge the bishops who have repented of their Arian opinions. The Luciferian at first (2) in his eagerness, declares the Arians to be no better than heathen; but he sees that he has gone too far, and retracts this opinion. Still it is one thing, he says, (3) to admit a penitent neophyte, another to admit a man to be bishop and celebrate the Eucharist. We do not wish, he says (4) to preclude individuals who have fallen from repentance. And we, replies Orthodoxus, by admitting the bishops save not them only but their flocks also. "The salt," says the Luciferian (5), "which has lost its savour cannot be salted," and, "What communion has Christ with Belial?" But this, it is answered (6), would prove that Arians could not confer baptism at all. Yes, says the objector, they are like John the Baptist, whose baptism needed to be followed by that of Christ. But, it is replied, the bishop gives Christ's baptism and confers the Holy Spirit. The confirmation which follows (9) is rather a custom of the churches than the necessary means of grace.

The argument is felt to be approaching to a philosophical logomachy(10, 11), but it is resumed by the Luciferian. There is a real difference, he says (12), between the man who in his simplicity accepts baptism from an Arian bishop, and the bishop himself who understands the heresy. Yet both, it is replied (13), when they are penitent, should be received. At this point (14) the Luciferian yields. But he wishes to be assured that what Orthodoxus recommends has been really the practice of the Church. This leads to a valuable chapter of Church history. Orthodoxus recalls the victories of the Church, which the Luciferians

speak of as corrupt (15). The shame is that, though they have the true creed, they have too little faith. He then describes(17, 18) how the orthodox bishops were beguiled into accepting the creed of Ariminum, but afterwards saw their error (19). "The world groaned to find itself Arian." They did all that was possible to set things right. Why should they not be received, as all but the authors of heresy had been received at Nicaea? (20) Lucifer who was a good shepherd, and Hilary the Deacon, in separating their own small body into a sect have left the rest a prey to the wolf(20, 21). The wheat and tares must grow together (22). This has been the principle of the Church (23). as shown by Scripture (24) and Apostolic custom, and even Cyprian, when he wished penitent heretics to be re-baptized (25), could not prevail. Even Hilary by receiving baptism from the Church which always has re-admitted heretics in repentance(26, 27) acknowledges this principle. In that Church and its divisions and practice it is our duty to abide.

1. It happened not long ago that a follower of Lucifer had a dispute with a son of the Church. His loquacity was odious and the language he employed most abusive. For he declared that the world belonged to the devil, and, as is commonly said by them at the present day, that the Church was turned into a brothel. His opponent on the other hand, with reason indeed, but without due regard to time and place, urged that Christ did not die in vain, and that it was for something more than a Sardinian cloak of skins that the Son of God came down from heaven. To be brief, the dispute was not settled when night interrupted the debate, and the lighting of the street-lamps gave the signal for the assembly to disperse. The combatants therefore withdrew, almost spitting in each other's faces, an arrangement having been previously made by the audience for a meeting in a quiet porch at daybreak. Thither, accordingly, they all came, and it was resolved that the words of both speakers should be taken down by reporters.

2. When all were seated, Helladius the Luciferian said, I want an answer first to my question. Are the Arians Christians or not? Orthodoxus. I answer with another question, Are all heretics Christians? L. If you call a man a heretic you deny that he is a Christian. O. No heretics, then, are Christians. L. I told you so before. O. If they are not Christ's, they belong to the devil. L. No one doubts that. O. But if they belong to the devil, it makes no difference whether they are heretics or heathen. L. I do not dispute the point. O. We are then agreed that we must speak of a heretic as we would of a heathen. L. Just so. O. Now it is decided that heretics are heathen, put any question you please. L. What I wanted to elicit by my question has been expressly stated, namely, that heretics are not Christians. Now comes the inference. If the Arians are heretics, and all heretics are heathen, the Arians are heathen too. But if the Arians are heathen and it is beyond dispute that the church has no communion with the Arians, that is with the heathen, it is clear that your church which welcomes bishops from the Arians, that is from the heathen, receives priests of the Capitol rather than bishops, and accordingly it ought more correctly to be called the synagogue of AntiChrist than the Church of Christ.

O. Lo! what the prophet said is fulfilled: "They have digged a pit before me, they have fallen into the midst thereof themselves." L. How so? O. If the Arians are, as you say, heathen, and the assemblies of the Arians are the devil's camp, how is it that you receive a person who has been baptized in the devil's camp? L. I do receive him, but as a penitent. O. The fact is you don't know what you are saying. Does any one receive a penitent heathen? L. In my simplicity I replied when we began that all heretics are heathen. But the question was a captious one, and you shall have the full credit of victory in the first point. I will now proceed to the second and maintain that a layman coming from the Arians ought to be received if penitent, but not a cleric. O. And yet, if you concede me the first point, the second is mine too.

L. Show me how it comes to be yours. O. Don't you know that the clergy and laity have only one Christ, and that there is not one God of converts and another of bishops? Why then should not he who receives laymen receive clerics also? L. There is a difference between shedding tears for sin, and handling the body of Christ; there is a difference between lying prostrate at the feet of the brethren, and from the high altar administering the Eucharist to the people. It is one thing to lament over the past, another to abandon sin and live the glorified life in the Church. You who yesterday im-piously declared the Son of God to be a creature, you who every day, worse than a Jew, were wont to cast the stones of blasphemy at Christ, you whose hands are full of blood, whose pen was a soldier's spear, do you, the convert of a single hour, come into the Church as an adulterer might come to a virgin? If you repent of your sin, abandon your priestly functions: if you are shameless in your sin, remain what you were.

O. You are quite a rhetorician, and fly from the thicket of controversy to the open fields of declamation. But, I entreat you, refrain from common-places, and return to the ground and the lines marked out; afterwards, if you like, we will take a wider range. L. There is no declamation in the case; my indignation is more than I can bear. Make what statements you please, argue as you please, you will never convince me that a penitent bishop should be treated like a penitent layman. O. Since you put the whole thing in a nutshell and obstinately cling to your position, that the case of the bishop is different from that of the layman, I will do what you wish, and I shall not be sorry to avail myself of the opportunity you offer and come to close quarters. Explain why you receive a layman coming from the Arians, but do not receive a bishop.

L. I receive a layman who confesses that he has erred; and the Lord willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent. O. Receive then also a bishop who, as well as the layman, confesses that he has erred, and it still holds good that the Lord willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent. L. If he confesses his error why does he continue a bishop? Let him lay aside his episcopal functions, and I grant pardon to the penitent. O. I will answer you in your own words. If a layman confesses his error, how is it he continues a layman? Let him lay aside his lay-priesthood, that is, his baptism, and I grant pardon to the penitent. For it is written "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests

unto his God and Father." And again, "A holy nation, a royal priesthood, an elect race." Everything which is forbidden to a Christian, is forbidden to both bishop and layman. He who does penance condemns his former life. If a penitent bishop may not continue what he was, neither may a penitent layman remain in that state on account of which he confesses himself a penitent.

L. We receive the laity, because no one will be induced to change, if he knows he must be baptized again. And then, if they are rejected, we become the cause of their destruction. O. By receiving a layman you save a single soul: and I in receiving a bishop unite to the Church, I will not say the people of one city, but the whole province of which he is the head; if I drive him away, he will drag down many with him to ruin. Wherefore I beseech you to apply the same reason which you think you have for receiving the few to the salvation of the whole world. But if you are not satisfied with this, if you are so hard, or rather so unreasonably unmerciful as to think him who gave baptism an enemy of Christ, though you account him who received it a son, we do not so contradict ourselves: we either receive a bishop as well as the people which is constituted as a Christian people by him, or if we do not receive a bishop, we know that we must also reject his people.

5. L. Pray, have you not read what is said concerning the bishops, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of man. And then there is the fact that the priest intercedes with God for the sinful people, while there is no one to entreat for the priest. Now these two passages of Scripture tend to the same conclusion. For as salt seasons all food and nothing is so pleasant as to please the palate without it: so the bishop is the seasoning of the whole world and of his own Church, and if he lose his savour through the denial of truth, or through heresy, or lust, or, to comprehend all in one word, through sin of any kind, by what other can he be seasoned, when he was the seasoning of all? The priest, we know, offers his oblation for the layman, lays his hand upon him when submissive, invokes the return of the Holy Spirit, and thus, after inviting the prayers of the people, reconciles to the altar him who had been delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit might he saved; nor does the restore one member to health until all the members have wept together with him. For a father easily pardons his son, when the mother entreats for her offspring.

If then it is by the priestly order that a penitent layman is restored to the Church, and pardon follows where sorrow has gone before, it is clear that a priest who has been removed from his order cannot be restored to the place he has forfeited, because either he will be a penitent and then he cannot be a priest, or if he continues to hold office he cannot be brought back to the Church by penitential discipline. Will you dare to spoil the savour of the Church with the salt which has lost its savour? Will you replace at the altar the man who having been cast out ought to lie in the mire and be trodden under foot by all men? What then will become of the Apostle's command, "The bishop must be blameless as God's steward"? And again, "But let a man prove himself, and so let him come. What becomes of our Lord's

intimation, ”Neither cast your pearls before the swine”? But if you understand the words as a general admonition, how much mere must care be exercised in the case of priests when so much precaution is taken where the laity are concerned? ”Depart, I pray you,” says the Lord by Moses, ”from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. And again in the Minor Prophets, ”Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted.

And in the Gospel the Lord says, ”The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. For when the bishop preaches the true faith the darkness is scattered from the hearts of all. And he gives the reason, ”Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. That is, God’s motive for lighting the fire of His knowledge in the bishop is that he may not shine for himself only, but for the common benefit. And in the next sentence ”If,” says he, ”thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness! And rightly; for since the bishop is appointed in the Church that he may restrain the people from error, how great will the error of the people be when he himself who teaches errs. How can he remit sins, who is himself a sinner? How can an impious man make a man holy? How shall the light enter into me, when my eye is blind? O misery! Antichrist’s disciple governs the Church of Christ. And what are we to think of the words, ”No man can serve two masters”? And that too ”What communion hath light and darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?

In the old testament we read, ”No man that hath a blemish shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord. And again, ”Let the priests who come nigh to the Lord their God be clean, lest haply the Lord forsake them. And in the same place, ”And when they draw nigh to minister in holy things, let them not bring sin upon themselves, lest they die. And there are many other passages which it would be an endless task to detail, and which I omit for the sake of brevity. For it is not the number of proofs that avails, but their weight. And all this proves that you with a little leaven have corrupted the whole lump of the Church, and receive the Eucharist to-day from the hand of one whom yesterday you loathed like an idol.

6. O. Your memory has served you, and you have certainly given us at great length many quotations from the sacred books: but after going all round the wood, you are caught in my hunting-nets. Let the case be as you would have it, that an Arian bishop is the enemy of Christ, let him be the salt that has lost its savour, let him be a lamp without flame, let him be an eye without a pupil: no doubt your argument will take you thus far-that he cannot salt another who himself has no salt: a blind man cannot enlighten others, nor set them on fire when his own light has gone out. But why, when you swallow food which he has seasoned, do you reproach the seasoned with being saltless? Your Church is bright with his flame, and do you accuse his lamp of being extinguished? He gives you eyes, and are you blind? Wherefore, I pray you, either give him the power of sacrificing since you approve his baptism, or reject his baptism if you do not think him a priest. For it is impossible that he who is holy in baptism should be a sinner at the altar.

L. But when I receive a lay penitent, it is with laying on of hands, and invocation of the Holy Spirit, for I know that the Holy Spirit cannot be given by heretics.

O. All the paths of your propositions lead to the same meeting-point, and it is with you as with the frightened deer-while you fly from the feathers fluttering in the wind, you become entangled in the strongest of nets. For seeing that a man, baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, becomes a temple of the Lord, and that while the old abode is destroyed a new shrine is built for the Trinity, how can you say that sins can be remitted among the Arians without the coming of the Holy Ghost? How is a soul purged from its former stains which has not the Holy Ghost? For it is not mere water which washes the soul, but it is itself first purified by the Spirit that it may be able to spiritually wash the souls of men. "The Spirit of the Lord," says Moses, "moved upon the face of the waters," from which it appears that there is no baptism without the Holy Ghost. Bethesda, the pool in Judea, could not cure the limbs of those who suffered from bodily weakness without the advent of an angel, and do you venture to bring me a soul washed with simple water, as though it had just come from the bath?

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, of whom it is less correct to say that He was cleansed by washing than that by the washing of Himself He cleansed all waters, no sooner raised His head from the stream than He received the Holy Ghost. Not that He ever was without the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as He was born in the flesh through the Holy Ghost; but in order to prove that to be the true baptism by which the Holy Ghost comes. So then if an Arian cannot give the Holy Spirit, he cannot even baptize, because there is no baptism of the Church without the Holy Spirit. And you, when you receive a person baptized by an Arian and afterwards invoke the Holy Ghost, ought either to baptize him, because without the Holy Ghost he could not be baptized, or, if he was baptized in the Spirit, you must not invoke the Holy Ghost for your convert who received Him at the time of baptism.

7. L. Pray tell me, have you not read in the Acts of the Apostles that those who had already been baptized by John, on their saying in reply to the Apostles question that they had not even heard what the Holy Ghost was, afterwards obtained the Holy Ghost? Whence it is clear that it is possible to be baptized, and yet not to have the Holy Ghost.

O. I do not think that those who form our audience are so ignorant of the sacred books that many words are needed to settle this little question. But before I say anything in support of my assertion, listen while I point out what confusion, upon your view, is introduced into Scripture. What do we mean by saying that John in his baptism could not give the Holy Spirit to others, yet gave him to Christ? And who is that John? "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. He who used to say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world": I say too little, he who from his mother's womb cried out, "And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come unto me," did he not give the Holy Ghost? And did Ananias give him to Paul? It perhaps looks like boldness in me to prefer him to all other men. Hear then the words of our Lord, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater

than John the Baptist. For no prophet had the good fortune both to announce the coming of Christ, and to point Him out with the finger. And what necessity is there for me to dwell upon the praises of so illustrious a man when God the Father even calls him an angel?

"Behold, I send my messenger (angel) before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. He must have been an angel who after lodging in his mother's womb at once began to frequent the desert wilds, and while still an infant played with serpents; who, when his eyes had once gazed on Christ thought nothing else worth looking at; who exercised his voice, worthy of a messenger of God, in the words of the Lord, which are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. And, to delay my question no further, thus it behooved the Forerunner f of the Lord to grow up. Now is it possible f that a man of such character and renown did not give the Holy Ghost, while Cornelius the centurion received Him before baptism? Tell me, pray, why could he not give Him? You don't know? Then listen to the teaching of Scripture: the baptism of John did not so much consist in the forgiveness of sins as in being a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, that is, for a future remission, which was to follow through the sanctification of Christ. For it is written, "John came, who baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And soon after, "And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. For as he himself preceded Christ as His forerunner, so also his baptism was the prelude to the Lord's baptism. "He that is of the earth," he said, "speaketh of the earth;

he that cometh from heaven is above all. And again, "I indeed baptize you with water, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. But if John, as he himself confessed, did not baptize with the Spirit, it follows that he did not forgive sins either, for no man has his sins remitted without the Holy Ghost. Or if you contentiously argue that, because the baptism of John was from heaven, therefore sins were forgiven by it, show me what more there is for us to get in Christ's baptism. Because it forgives sins, it releases from Gehenna. Because it releases from Gehenna, it is perfect. But no baptism can be called perfect except that which depends on the cross and resurrection of Christ. Thus, although John himself said, "He must increase, but I must decrease," in your perverse scrupulosity you give more than is due to the baptism of the servant, and destroy that of the master to which you leave no more than to the other. What is the drift of your assertion? Just this-it does not strike you as strange that those who had been baptized by John, should afterwards by the laying on of hands receive the Holy Ghost, although it is evident that they did not obtain even remission of sins apart from the faith which was to follow.

But you who receive a person baptized by the Arians and allow him to have perfect baptism, after that admission do you invoke the Holy Ghost as if this were still some slight defect, whereas there is no baptism of Christ without the Holy Ghost? But I have wandered too far, and when I might have met my opponent face to face and repelled his attack, I have only thrown a few light darts rom a distance. The baptism of John was so ar imperfect that it is plain they who had been baptized by him were afterwards baptized with the baptism of Christ. For thus the history relates "And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth,

Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus: And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, immediately the Holy Ghost fell on them.

If then they were baptized with the true and lawful baptism of the Church, and thus received the Holy Ghost: do you follow the apostles and baptize those who have not had Christian baptism, and you will be able to invoke the Holy Ghost.

8. L. Thirsty men in their dreams eagerly gulp down the water of the stream, and the more they drink the thirstier they are. In the same way you appear to me to have searched everywhere for arguments against the point I raised, and yet to be as far as ever from being satisfied. Don't you know that the laying on of hands after baptism and then the invocation of the Holy Spirit is a custom of the Churches? Do you demand Scripture proof? You may find it in the Acts of the Apostles. And even if it did not rest on the authority of Scripture the consensus of the whole world in this respect would have the force of a command. For many other observances of the Churches, which are due to tradition, have acquired the authority of the written law, as for instance the practice of dipping the head three times in the layer, and then, after leaving the water, of tasting mingled milk and honey in representation of infancy; and, again, the practices of standing up in worship on the Lord's day, and ceasing from fasting every Pentecost; and there are many other unwritten practices which have won their place through reason and custom. So you see we follow the practice of the Church, although it may be clear that a person was baptized before the Spirit was invoked.

9. O. I do not deny that it is the practice of the Churches in the case of those who living far from the greater towns have been baptized by presbyters and deacons, for the bishop to visit them, and by the laying on of hands to invoke the Holy Ghost upon them. But how shall I describe your habit of applying the laws of the Church to heretics, and of exposing the virgin entrusted to you in the brothels of harlots? If a bishop lays his hands on men he lays them on those who have been baptized in the right faith, and who have believed that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three persons, but one essence. But an Arian has no faith but this (close your ears, my hearers, that you may not be defiled by words so grossly impious), that the Father alone is very God, and that Jesus Christ our Saviour is a creature, and the Holy Ghost the Servant of both. How can he then receive the Holy Ghost from the Church, who has not yet obtained remission of sins? For the Holy Ghost must have a clean abode: nor will He become a dweller in that temple which has not for its chief priest the true faith.

But if you now ask how it is that a person baptized in the Church does not receive the Holy Ghost, Whom we declare to be given in true baptism, except by the hands of the bishop, let

me tell you that our authority for the rule is the fact that after our Lord's ascension the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles. And in many places we find it the practice, more by way of honouring the episcopate than from any compulsory law. Otherwise, if the Holy Ghost descends only at the bishop's prayer, they are greatly to be pitied who in isolated houses, or in forts, or retired places, after being baptized by the presbyters and deacons have fallen asleep before the bishop's visitation. The well-being of a Church depends upon the dignity of its chief-priest, and unless some extraordinary and unique functions be assigned to him, we shall have as many schisms in the Churches as there are priests. Hence it is that without ordination and the bishop's license neither presbyter nor deacon has the power to baptize. And yet, if necessity so be, we know that even laymen may, and frequently do, baptize. For as a man receives, so too he can give; for it will hardly be said that we must believe that the eunuch whom Philip baptized lacked the Holy Spirit. The Scripture thus speaks concerning him, "And they both went down into the water; and Philip baptized him. And on leaving the water, "The Holy Spirit fell upon the eunuch.

You may perhaps think that we ought to set against this the passage in which we read, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet he was fallen upon none of them. But why this was, the context tells us,-"Only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And if you here say that you do the same, because the heretics have not baptized into the Holy Spirit, I must remind you that Philip was not separated from the Apostles, but belonged to the same Church and preached the same Lord Jesus Christ: that he was without question a deacon of those who afterwards laid their hands on his converts. But when you say that the Arians have not a Church, but a synagogue, and that their clergy do not worship God but creatures and idols, how can you maintain that you ought to act upon the same principle in cases so totally different?

L. You repel my attack in front with vigour and firmness: but you are smitten in the rear and leave your back exposed to the darts. Let us even grant that the Arians have no baptism, and therefore that the Holy Ghost cannot be given by them, because they themselves have not yet received remission of sins; this altogether makes for victory on my side, and all your argumentative wrestling is but laborious toil to give me the conqueror's palm. An Arian has no baptism; how is it then that he has the episcopate? There is not even a layman among them, how can there be a bishop? I may not receive a beggar, do you receive a king? You surrender your camp to the enemy, and are we to reject one of their deserters?

11. O. If you remember what has been said you would know that you have been already answered; but in yielding to the love of contradiction you have wandered from the subject, like those persons who are talkative rather than eloquent, and who, when they cannot argue, still continue to wrangle. On the present occasion it is not my aim to either accuse or defend the Arians, but rather to get safely past the turning-post of the race, and to main-lain that

we receive a bishop for the same reason that you receive a layman. If you grant forgiveness to the erring, I too pardon the penitent. If he that baptizes a person into our belief has had no injurious effect upon the person baptized, it follows that he who consecrates a bishop in the same faith causes no defilement to the person consecrated. Heresy is subtle, and therefore the simple-minded are easily deceived. To be deceived is the common lot of both layman and bishop. But you say, a bishop could not have been mistaken. The truth is, men are elected to the episcopate who come from the bosom of Plato and Aristophanes. How many can you find among them who are not fully instructed in these writers? Indeed all, whoever they may be, that are ordained at the present day from among the literate class make it their study not how to seek out the marrow of Scripture, but how to tickle the ears of the people with the flowers of rhetoric.

We must further add that the Arian heresy goes hand in hand with the wisdom of the world, and borrows its streams of argument from the fountains of Aristotle. And so we will act like children when they try to outdo one another-whatever you say I will say: what you assert, I will assert: whatever you deny, I will deny. We allow that an Arian may baptize; then he must be a bishop. If we agree that Arian baptism is invalid, you must reject the layman, and I must not accept the bishop. I will follow you wherever you go; we shall either stick in the mud together, or shall get out together.

12. L. We pardon a layman because, when he was baptized, he had a sincere impression that he was joining the Church. He believed and was baptized in accordance with his faith.

O. That is something new for a man to be made a Christian by one who is not a Christian. When he joined the Arians into what faith was he baptized? Of course into that which the Arians held. If on the other hand we are to suppose that his own faith was correct, but that he was knowingly baptized by heretics, he does not deserve the indulgence we grant to the erring. But it is quite absurd to imagine that, going as a pupil to the master, he understands his art before he has been taught. Can you suppose that a man who has just turned from worshipping idols knows Christ better than his teacher does? If you say, he sincerely believed in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and therefore obtained baptism, what, let me ask, is the meaning of being sincerely ignorant of what one believes? He sincerely believed. What did he believe? Surely when he heard the three names, he believed in three Gods, and was an idolater; or by the three titles he was led to believe in a God with three names, and so fell into the Sabellian heresy. Or he was perhaps trained by the Arians to believe that there is one true God, the Father, but that the Son and the Holy Spirit are creatures. What else he may have believed, I know not: for we can hardly think that a man brought up in the Capitol would have learnt the doctrine of the co-essential Trinity.

He would have known in that case that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not divided in nature, but in person. He would have known also that the name of Son was implied in that of Father and the name of Father in that of Son. It is ridiculous to assert that any one can dispute concerning the faith before he believes it; that he understands a mystery before he

has been initiated; that the baptizer and the baptized hold different views respecting God. Besides, it is the custom at baptism to ask, after the confession of faith in the Trinity, do you believe in Holy Church? Do you believe in the remission of sins? What Church do you say he believed in? The Church of the Arians? But they have no Church. In ours? But the man was not baptized into it: he could not believe in that whereof he was ignorant.

L. I see that you can prattle cleverly about each point that I raise; and when we let fly a dart you elude it by a harangue which serves you for a shield; I will therefore hurl a single spear which will be strong enough to pierce your defences and the hail-storm of your words. I won't allow strength any longer to be overcome by artifice. Even a layman baptized without the Church, if he be baptized according to the faith, is received only as a penitent: but a bishop either does no penance and remains a bishop, or, if he does penance he ceases to be a bishop. Wherefore we do right both in welcoming the penitent layman, and in rejecting the bishop, if he wishes to continue in his office. O. An arrow which is discharged from the tight-drawn bow is not easy to avoid, for it reaches him at whom it was aimed before the shield can be raised to stop it. On the other hand your propositions are pointless and therefore cannot pierce an opponent. The spear then which you have hurled with all your might and about which you speak such threatening words, I turn aside, as the saying is, with my little finger. The point in dispute is not merely whether a bishop is incapable of penitence and a layman capable, but whether a heretic has received valid baptism. If he has not (and this follows from your position), how can he be a penitent, before he is a Christian? Show me that a layman coming from the Arians has valid baptism, and then I will not deny him penitence. But if he is not a Christian, if he had no priest to make him a Christian, how can he do penance when he is not yet a believer?

14. L. I beseech you lay aside the methods of the philosophers and let us talk with Christian simplicity; that is, if you are willing to follow not the logicians, but the Galilean fishermen. Does it seem right to you that an Arian should be a bishop? O. You prove him a bishop because you receive those he has baptized. And it is here that you are to blame:-Why are there walls of separation between us when we are at one in faith and in receiving Arians? L. I asked you before not to talk like a philosopher, but like a Christian. O. Do you wish to learn, or to argue? L. Of course I argue because I want to know the reason for what you do. O. If you argue, you have already had an answer. I receive an Arian bishop for the same reason that you receive a person who is only baptized. If you wish to learn, come over to my. side: for an opponent must be overcome, it is only a disciple who can be taught.

L. Before I can be a disciple, I must hear one preach whom I feel to be my master. O. You are not dealing quite fairly: you wish me to be your teacher on the terms that you may treat me as an opponent whenever you please. I will teach you therefore in the same spirit. We agree in faith, we agree in receiving heretics, let us also be at one in our terms of communion. L. That is not teaching, but arguing. O. As you ask for peace with a shield in your hand, I also must carry my olive branch with a sword grafted in it. L. I drop my hands in token of

submission. You are conqueror. But in laying down my arms, I ask the meaning of the oath you force me to take.

O. Certainly, but first I congratulate you, and thank Christ my God for your good dispositions which have made you turn from the unsavoury teaching of the Sardinians to that which the whole world approves as true; and no longer say as some do, "Help, Lord; for the godly man teaseth." By their impious words they make of none effect the cross of Christ, subject the Son of God to the devil, and would have us now understand the Lord's lamentation over sinners to apply to all men, "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?" But God forbid that our Lord should have died in vain. The strong man is bound, and his goods are spoiled. What the Father says is fulfilled, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "Then the channels of water appeared, and the foundations of the world were laid bare." "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." The Psalmist fully possessed by God sings, "The swords of the enemy are come to an end, and the cities which thou hast overthrown."

15. And what is the position, I should like to know, of those excessively scrupulous, or rather excessively profane persons, who assert that there are more synagogues than Churches? How is it that the devil's kingdoms have been destroyed, and now at last in the consummation of the ages, the idols have fallen? If Christ has no Church, or if he has one only, in Sardinia, be has grown very poor. And if Satan owns Britain, Gaul, the East, the races of India, barbarous nations, and the whole world at the same time, how is it that the trophies of the cross have been collected in a mere corner of the earth? Christ's powerful opponent, forsooth, gave over to him the serpent of Spain: he disdained to own a poor province and its half-starved inhabitants. If they flatter themselves that they have on their side that verse of the gospel, "Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? let me remind them that the faith in question is that of which the Lord himself said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole. And elsewhere, of the centurion, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And again, to the Apostles, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? In another place also, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove.

For neither the centurion nor that poor woman who for twelve years was wasting away with a bloody flux, had believed in the mysteries of the Trinity, for these were revealed to the Apostles after the resurrection of Christ; so that the faith of such as believe in the mystery of the Trinity might have its due preeminence: but it was her singleness of mind and her devotion to her God that met with our Lord's approval: "For she said within herself, If I do but touch his garment, I shall be made whole. This is the faith which our Lord said was seldom found. This is the faith which even in the case of those who believe aright is hard to find in perfection. "According to your faith, be it done unto you," says God. I do not, indeed, like the sound of those words. For if it be done unto me according to my faith, I shall perish. And yet I certainly believe in God the Father, I believe in God the Son, and I believe in

God the Holy Ghost. I believe in one God; nevertheless, I would not have it done unto me according to my faith. For the enemy often comes, and sows tares in the Lord's harvest. I do not mean to imply that anything is greater than the purity of heart which believes that mystery; but undoubted faith towards God it is hard indeed to find. To make my meaning plain, let us suppose a case:-I stand to pray;

I could not pray, if I did not believe; but if I really believed, I should cleanse that heart of mine with which God is seen, I should beat my hands upon my breast, the tears would stream down my cheeks, my body would shudder, my face grow pale, I should lie at my Lord's feet, weep over them, and wipe them with my hair, I should cling to the cross and not let go my hold until I obtained mercy. But, as it is, frequently in my prayers I am either walking in the arcades, or calculating my interest, or am carried away by base thoughts, so as to be occupied with things the mere mention of which makes me blush. Where is our faith? Are we to suppose that it was thus that Jonah prayed? or the three youths? or Daniel in the lion's den? or the robber on the cross? I have given these illustrations that you may understand my meaning. But let every one commune with his own heart, and he will find throughout the whole of life how rare a thing it is to find a soul so faithful that it does nothing through the love of glory, nothing on account of the petty gossip of men. For he who fasts does not as an immediate consequence fast unto God, nor he who holds out his hand to a poor man, lend to the Lord. Vice is next-door neighbour to virtue. It is hard to rest content with God alone for judge.

16. L. I was reserving that passage until last, and you have anticipated my question about it. Almost all our party, or rather not mine any more, use it as a sort of controversial battering ram: as such I am exceedingly glad to see it broken to pieces and pulverized. But will you be so good as to fully explain to me, not in the character of an opponent but of a disciple, why it is that the Church receives those who come from the Arians? The truth is I am unable to answer you a word, but I do not yet give a hearty assent to what you say.

17. O. When Constantius was on the throne and Eusebius and Hypatius were Consuls, there was composed, under the pretext of unity and faith, an unfaithful creed, as it is now acknowledged to have been. For at that time, nothing seemed so characteristic of piety, nothing so befitting a servant of God, as to follow after unity, and to shun separation from communion with the rest of the world. And all the more because the current profession of faith no longer exhibited on the face of it anything profane. "We believe," said they, "in one true God, the Father Almighty. This we also confess: We believe in the only begotten Son of God, who, before all worlds, and before all their origins, was born of God. The only-begotten Son, moreover, we believe to be born alone of the Father alone, God of God, like to his Father who begot Him, according to the Scriptures; whose birth no one knows, but the Father alone who begot Him." Do we find any such words inserted here as "There was a time, when he was not?" Or, "The Son of God is a creature though not made of things which exist." No. This is surely the perfection of faith to say we believe Him to be God of God. Moreover, they called Him the only begotten, "born alone of the Father." What is the meaning of born? Surely, not

made. His birth removed all suspicion of His being a creature. They added further, "Who came down from heaven, was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified by Pontius Pilate, rose again the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, who will come to judge the quick and the dead." There was the ring of piety in the words, and no one thought that poison was mingled with the honey of such a proclamation.

18. As regards the term Usia, it was not rejected without a show of reason for so doing. "Because it is not found in the Scriptures," they said, "and its novelty is a stumbling-block to many, we have thought it best to dispense with it. The bishops were not anxious about the name, so long as that which it implied was secured. Lastly, at the very time when rumour was rife that there had been some insincerity in the statement of the faith, Valens, bishop of Mursa, who had drawn it up, in the presence of Taurus the pretorian prefect who attended the Synod by imperial command, declared that he was not an Arian, and that he utterly abhorred their blasphemies. However, the thing had been done in secret, and it had not extinguished the general feeling. So on another day, when crowds of bishops and laymen came together in the Church at Ariminum, Muzonius, bishop of the province of Byzacena, to whom by reason of seniority the first rank was assigned by all, spoke as follows: "One of our number has been authorized to read to you, reverend fathers, what reports are being spread and have reached us, so that the evil opinions which ought to grate upon our ears and be banished from our hearts may be condemned with one voice by us all. The whole body of bishops replied, Agreed.

And so when Claudius, bishop of the province of Picenum, at the request of all present, began to read the blasphemies attributed to Valens, Valens denied they were his and cried aloud, "If anyone denies Christ our Lord, the Son of God, begotten of the Father before the worlds, let him be anathema. There was a general chorus of approval, "Let him be anathema. "If anyone denies that the Son is like the Father according to the Scriptures, let him be anathema. All replied, "Let him be anathema. "If anyone does not say that the Son of God is co-eternal with the Father, let him be anathema. There was again a chorus of approval, "Let him be anathema. "If anyone says that the Son of God is a creature, like other creatures, let him be anathema. The answer was the same, "Let him be anathema. "If anyone says that the Son was of no existing things, yet not of God the Father, let him be anathema. All shouted together, "Let him be anathema. "If anyone says, There was a time when the Son was not, let him be anathema. At this point all the bishops and the whole Church together received the words of Valens with clapping of hands and stamping of feet. And if anyone thinks we have invented the story let him examine the public records. At all events the muniment-boxes of the Churches are full of it, and the circumstance is fresh in men's memory.

Some of those who took part in the Synod are still alive, and the Arians themselves (a fact which may put the truth beyond dispute) do not deny the accuracy of our account. When, therefore, all extolled Valens to the sky and penitently condemned themselves for having

suspected him, the same Claudius who before had begun to read, said "There are still a few points which have escaped the notice of my lord and brother Valens; if it seem good to you, let us, in order to remove all scruples, pass a general vote of censure upon them. If anyone says that the Son of God was indeed before all worlds but was by no means before all time, so that he puts some thing before Him, let him be anathema. And many other things which had a suspicious look were condemned by Valens when Claudius recited them. If anyone wishes to learn more about them he will find the account in the acts of the Synod of Ariminum, the source from which I have myself drawn them.

19. After these proceedings the Council was dissolved. All returned in gladness to their own provinces. For the Emperor and all good men had one and the same aim, that the East and West should be knit together by the bond of fellowship. But wickedness does not long lie hid, and the sore that is healed superficially before the bad humour has been worked off breaks out again. Valens and Ursacius and others associated with them in their wickedness, eminent Christian bishops of course, began to wave their palms, and to saythey had not denied that He was a creature, but that He was like other creatures. At that moment the term Usia was abolished: the Nicene Faith stood condemned by acclamation. The whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian. Some, therefore, remained in their own communion, others began to send letters to those Confessors who as adherents of Athanasius were in exile; several despairingly bewailed the better relations into which they had entered. But a few, true to human nature, defended their mistake as an exhibition of wisdom. The ship of the Apostles was in peril, she was driven by the wind, her sides beaten with the waves: no hope was now left. But the Lord awoke and bade the tempest cease; the beast died, and there was a calm once again. To speak more plainly, all the bishops who had been banished from their sees, by the clemency of the new emperor returned to their Churches. Then Egypt welcomed the triumphant Athanasius;

then Hilary returned from the battle to the embrace of the Church of Gaul; then Eusebius returned and Italy laid aside her mourning weeds. The bishops who had been caught in the snare at Ariminum and had unwittingly come to be reported of as heretics, began to assemble, while they called the Body of our Lord and all that is holy in the Church to witness that they had not a suspicion of anything faulty in their own faith. We thought, said they, the words were to be taken in their natural meaning, and we had no suspicion that in the Church of God, the very home of simplicity and sincerity in the confession of truth, one thing could be kept secret in the heart, another uttered by the lips. We thought too well of bad men and were deceived. We did not suppose that the bishops of Christ were fighting against Christ. There was much besides which they said with tears, but I pass it over for brevity's sake. They were ready to condemn their former subscription as well as all the blasphemies of the Arians. Here I ask our excessively scrupulous friends what they think ought to have been done with those who made this Confession? Deprive the old bishops, they will say, and ordain new ones. The plan was tried. But how many whose conscience does not condemn them will allow themselves to be deprived. Particularly when all the people who loved their bishops flocked together, ready to stone and slay those who attempted to deprive them.

The bishops should, it may be said, have kept to themselves within their own communion. That is to say, with senseless cruelty they would have surrendered the whole world to the devil. Why condemn those who were not Arians? Why rend the Church when it was continuing in the harmony of the faith? Lastly, were they by obstinacy to make Arians of orthodox believers? We know that at the Council of Nica, which was assembled on account of the Arian perfidy, eight Arian bishops were welcomed, and there is not a bishop in the world at the present day whose ordination is not dependent on that Council. This being so, how could they act in opposition to it, when their loyalty to it had cost them the pain of exile?

20. L. Were Arians really then received after all? Pray tell me who they were. O. Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, Theognis, bishop of Nica, Saras, at the time presbyter of Libya, Eusebius, bishop of Csarea in Palestine, and others whom it would be tedious to enumerate; Arius also the presbyter, the original source of all the trouble; Euzoius the deacon, who succeeded Eudoxius as bishop of Antioch, and Achillas, the reader. These three who were clerics of the Church of Alexandria were the originators of the heresy. L. Suppose a person were to deny that they were welcomed back, how is he to be refuted? O. There are men still living who took part in that Council. And if that is not enough, because owing to the time that has elapsed they are but few, and it is impossible for witnesses to be everywhere, if we read the acts and names of the bishops of the Council of Nica, we find that those who we saw just now were welcomed back, did subscribe the homoousion along with the rest.

L. Will you point out how, after the Council of Nica, they relapsed into their unfaithfulness?

O. A good suggestion, for unbelievers are in the habit of shutting their eyes and denying that things which they dislike ever happened. But how could they afterwards do anything but relapse, when it was owing to them that the Council was convened, and their letters and impious treatises which were published before the Council, remain even to the present day? Seeing, therefore, that at that time three hundred bishops or more welcomed a few men whom they might have rejected without injury to the Church, I am surprised that certain persons, who are certainly upholders of the faith of Nicaea, are so harsh as to think that three Confessors returning from exile were not bound in the interests of the world's salvation to do what so many illustrious men did of their own accord. But, to go back to our starting point, on the return of the Confessors it was determined, in a synod afterwards held at Alexandria, that, the authors of the heresy excepted (who could not be excused on the ground of error), penitents should be admitted to communion with the Church: not that they who had been heretics could be bishops, but because it was clear that those who were received had not been heretics. The West assented to this decision, and it was through this conclusion, which the necessities of the times demanded, that the world was snatched from the jaws of Satan.

I have reached a very difficult subject, where I am compelled against my wishes and my purpose, to think somewhat otherwise of that saintly man Lucifer than his merits demand, and my own courtesy requires. But what am I to do? Truth opens my mouth and urges my reluctant tongue to utter the thoughts of my heart. At such a crisis of the Church, when

the wolves were wildly raging, he separated off a few sheep and abandoned the remnant of the flock. He himself was a good shepherd, but he was leaving a vast spoil to the beasts of prey. I take no notice of reports originating with certain evil speakers, though maintained by them to be authenticated facts; such as that he acted thus through the love of glory, and the desire of handing down his name to posterity; or again that he was influenced by the grudge he bore against Eusebius on account of the quarrel at Antioch. I believe none of these reports in the case of such a man; and this I will constantly affirm even now-that the difference between us and him is one of words, not of things, if he really does receive those who have been baptized by the Arians.

21. L. The account I used before to hear given of these things was widely different, and, as I now think, better calculated to promote error than hope. But I thank Christ my God for pouring into my heart the light of truth, that I might no longer profanely call the Church, which is His Virgin, the harlot of the devil. There is one other point I should like you to explain. What are we to say about Hilary who does not receive even those who have been baptized by the Arians? O. Since Hilary when he left the Church wasonly a deacon, and since the Church is to him, though to him alone, a mere worldly multitude, he can neither duly celebrate the Eucharist, for he has no bishops or priests, nor can he give baptism without the Eucharist. And since the man is now dead, inasmuch as he was a deacon and could ordain no one to follow him, his sect died with him. For there is no such thing as a Church without bishops. But passing over a few very insignificant persons who are in their own esteem both laymen and bishops, let me point out to you what views we should hold respecting the Church at large.

L. You have settled a great question in three words, as the saying is, and indeed while you speak, I feel that I am on your side. But when you stop, some old misgivings arise as to why we receive those who have been baptized by heretics. O. That is just what I had in mind when I said I would point out what views we ought to hold concerning the Church at large. For many are exercised by the misgivings you speak of. I shall perhaps be tedious in my explanation, but it is worth while if the truth gains.

22. Noah's ark was a type of the Church, as the Apostle Peter says- "In Noah's ark few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save us, even baptism. As in the ark there were all kinds of animals, so also in the Church there are men of all races and characters. As in the one there was the leopard with the kids, the wolf with the lambs, so in the other there are found the righteous and sinners, that is, vessels of gold and silver with those of wood and of earth. The ark had its rooms: the Church has many mansions. Eight souls were saved in Noah's ark. And Ecclesiastes bids us "give a portion to seven yea, even unto eight," that is to believe both Testaments. This is why some psalms bear the inscription for the octave, and why the one hundred and nineteenth psalm is divided into portions of eight verses each beginning with its own letter for the instruction of the righteous. The beatitudes which our Lord spoke to his disciples on the mountain, thereby delineating the Church, are eight. And Ezekiel for the building of

the temple employs the number eight. And you will find many other things expressed in the same way in the Scriptures. The raven also is sent forth from the ark but does not return, and afterwards the dove announces peace to the earth.

So also in the Church's baptism, that most unclean bird the devil is expelled, and the dove of the Holy Spirit announces peace to our earth. The construction of the ark was such that it began with being thirty cubits broad and gradually narrowed to one. Similarly the Church, consisting of many grades, ends in deacons, presbyters, and bishops. The ark was in peril in the flood, the Church is in peril in the world. When Noah left the ark he planted a vineyard, drank thereof, and was drunken. Christ also, born in the flesh, planted the Church and suffered. The elder son made sport of his father's nakedness, the younger covered it: and the Jews mocked God crucified, the Gentiles honoured Him. The daylight would fail me if I were to explain all the mysteries of the ark and compare them with the Church. Who are the eagles amongst us? Who the doves and lions, who the stags, who the worms and serpents? So far as our subject requires I will briefly show you. It is not the sheep only who abide in the Church, nor do clean birds only fly to and fro there; but amid the grain other seed is sown, "amidst the neat corn-fields burrs and caltrops and barren oats lord it in the land. What is the husbandman to do? Root up the darnel? In that case the whole harvest is destroyed along with it. Every day the farmer diligently drives the birds away with strange noises, or frightens them with scarecrows:

here he cracks a whip, there he spreadsout some other object to terrify them. Nevertheless he suffers from the raids of nimble roes or the wantonness of the wild asses; here the mice convey the corn to their garners underground, there the ants crowd thickly in and ravage the corn-field. Thus the case stands. No one who has land is free from care. While the householder slept the enemy sowed tares among the wheat, and when the servants proposed to go and root them up the master forbade them, reserving for himself the separation of the chaff and the grain. There are vessels of wrath and of mercy which the Apostle speaks of in the house of God. The day then will come when the storehouses of the Church shall be opened and the Lord will bring forth the vessels of wrath; and, as they depart, the saints will say, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. No one can take to himself the prerogative of Christ, no one before the day of judgment can pass judgment upon men. If the Church is already cleansed, what shall we reserve for the Lord? "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. When our judgment is so prone to error, upon whose opinion can we rely?

23. Cyprian of blessed memory tried to avoid broken cisterns and not to drink of strange waters: and therefore, rejecting heretical baptism, he summoned his African synod in opposition to Stephen, who was the blessed Peter's twenty-second successor in the see of Rome. They met to discuss this matter; but the attempt failed. At last those very bishops who had together with him determined that heretics must be re-baptized, reverted to the old custom and published a fresh decree. Do you ask what course we must pursue? What we do our fore-

fathers handed down to us as their forefathers to them. But why speak of later times? When the blood of Christ was but lately shed and the apostles were still in Judaea, the Lord's body was asserted to be a phantom; the Galatians had been led away to the observance of the law, and the Apostle was a second time in travail with them; the Corinthians did not believe the resurrection of the flesh, and he endeavoured by many arguments to bring them back to the right path. Then came Simon Magus and his disciple Menander. They asserted themselves to be powers of God. Then Basilides invented the most high god Abraxas and the three hundred and sixty-five manifestations of him. Then Nicolas, one of the seven Deacons, and one whose lechery knew no rest by night or day, indulged in his filthy dreams. I say nothing of the Jewish heretics who before the coming of Christ destroyed the law delivered to them:

of Dositheus, the leader of the Samaritans who rejected the prophets: of the Sadducees who sprang from his root and denied even the resurrection of the flesh: of the Pharisees who separated themselves from the Jews on account of certain superfluous observances, and took their name from the fact of their dissent: of the Herodians who accepted Herod as the Christ. I come to those heretics who have mangled the Gospels, Saturninus, and the Ophites, the Cainites and Sethites, and Carpocrates, and Cerinthus, and his successor Ebion, and the other pests, the most of which broke out while the apostle John was still alive, and yet we do not read that any of these men were re-baptized.

24. As we have made mention of that distinguished saint, let us show also from his Apocalypse that repentance unaccompanied by baptism ought to be allowed valid in the case of heretics. It is imputed (Rev. ii. 4) to the angel of Ephesus that he has forsaken his first love. In the angel of the Church of Pergamum the eating of idol-sacrifices is censured (Rev. ii. 14), and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (ib. 15). Likewise the angel of Thyatira is rebuked (ib. 20) on account of Jezebel the prophetess, and the idol meats, and fornication. And yet the Lord encourages all these to repent, and adds a threat, moreover, of future punishment if they do not turn. Now he would not urge them to repent unless he intended to grant pardon to the penitents. Is there any indication of his having said, Let them be re-baptized who have been baptized in the faith of the Nicolaitans? or let hands be laid upon those of the people of Pergamum who at that time believed, having held the doctrine of Balaam? Nay, rather, "Repent therefore," he says, "or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth."

25. If, however, those men who were ordained by Hilary, and who have lately become sheep without a shepherd, are disposed to allege Scripture in support of what the blessed Cyprian left in his letters advocating the re-baptization of heretics, I beg them to remember that he did not anathematize those who refused to follow him. At all events, he remained in communion with such as opposed his views. He was content with exhorting them, on account of Novatus and the numerous other heretics then springing up, to receive no one who did not condemn his previous error. In fact, he thus concludes the discussion of the subject with Stephen, the Roman Pontiff: "These things, dearest brother, I have brought to your knowledge on account of our mutual respect and love unfeigned, believing, as I do, that from the

sincerity of your piety and your faith you will approve such things as are alike consonant with piety and true in themselves. But I know that some persons are unwilling to abandon views which they have once entertained, and are averse to a change of purpose; they would rather, without breaking the bond of peace and concord between colleagues, adhere to their own plans, when once they have been adopted. This is a matter in which we do not force anyone, or lay down a law for anyone; let each follow his own free choice in the administration of the Church: let each be ruler in his own sphere since he must give account of his action to the Lord.

In the letter also to Jubaianus on the re-baptization of heretics, towards the end, he says this: "I have written these few remarks, my dearest brother, to the best of my poor ability, without dictating to anyone, or prejudicing the case of anyone: I would not hinder a single bishop from doing what he thinks right with the full exercise of his own judgment. So far as is possible, we avoid disputes with colleagues and fellow-bishops about the heretics, and maintain with them a divine harmony and the Lord's peace, particularly since the Apostle says: 'But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.' With patience and gentleness we preserve charity at heart, the honour of our order, the bond of faith, the harmony of the episcopate."

26. There is another argument which I shall adduce, and against that not even Hilary, the modern Deucalion, will venture to mutter a syllable. If heretics are not baptized and must be re-baptized because they were not in the Church, Hilary himself also is not a Christian. For he was baptized in that Church which always allowed heretical baptism. Before the Synod of Ariminum was held, before Lucifer went into exile, Hilary when a deacon of the Roman Church welcomed those who came over from the heretics on account of the baptism which they had previously received. It can hardly be that Arians are the only heretics, and that we are to accept all but those whom they have baptized. You were a deacon, Hilary (the Church may say), and received those whom the Manichaeans had baptized. You were a deacon, and acknowledged Ebion's baptism. All at once after Arius arose you began to be quite out of conceit with yourself. You and your household separated from us, and opened a new layer of your own. If some angel or apostle has re-baptized you, I will not disparage your procedure. But since you who raise your sword against me are the son of my womb, and nourished on the milk of my breasts, return to me what I gave you, and be, if you can, a Christian in some other way. Suppose I am a harlot, still I am your mother. You say, I do not keep the marriage bed undefiled: still what I am now I was when you were conceived. If I commit adultery with Arius, I did the same before with Praxias, with Ebion, with Cerinthus, and Novatus. You think much of them and welcome them, adulterers as they are, to your mother's home. I don't know why one adulterer more than others should offend you.

27. But if anyone thinks it open to question whether heretics were always welcomed by our ancestors, let him read the letters of the blessed Cyprian in which he applies the lash to Stephen, bishop of Rome, and his errors which had grown inveterate by usage. Let him also

read the pamphlets of Hilary on the re-baptization of heretics which he published against us, and he will there find Hilary himself confessing that Julius, Marcus, Sylvester, and the other bishops of old alike welcomed all heretics to repentance; and, further, to shew that he could not justly claim possession of the true custom; the Council of Nicaea also, to which we referred not long ago, welcomed all heretics with the exception of the disciples of Paul of Samosata. And, what is more, it allows a Novatian bishop on conversion to have the rank of presbyter, a decision which condemns both Lucifer and Hilary, since the same person who is ordained is also baptized.

28. I might spend the day in speaking to the same effect, and dry up all the streams of argument with the single Sun of the Church. But as we have already had a long discussion and the protracted controversy has wearied out the attention of our audience, I will tell you my opinion briefly and without reserve. We ought to remain in that Church which was rounded by the Apostles and continues to this day. If ever you hear of any that are called Christians taking their name not from the Lord Jesus Christ, but from some other, for instance, Marcionites, Valentinians, Men of the mountain or the plain, you may be sure that you have there not the Church of Christ, but the synagogue of Antichrist. For the fact that they took their rise after the foundation of the Church is proof that they are those whose coming the Apostle foretold. And let them not flatter themselves if they think they have Scripture authority for their assertions, since the devil himself quoted Scripture, and the essence of the Scriptures is not the letter, but the meaning. Otherwise, if we follow the letter, we too can concoct a new dogma and assert that such persons as wear shoes and have two coats must not be received into the Church.

L. You must not suppose that victory rests with you only. We are both conquerors, and each of us carries off the palm,-you are victorious over me, and I over my error. May I always when I argue be so fortunate as to exchange wrong opinions for better ones. I must, however, make a confession, because I best know the character of my party, and own that they are more easily conquered than convinced.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.