

Various Thoughts on Different Subjects

by Clement of Rome

The sermon emphasizes the importance of fearing God, living a holy life, and showing love and compassion to others in order to restore the church to its former state.

Scripture: Proverbs 10:12, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 12:6, James 2:24, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 Peter 5:5, 1 John 4:7

Topics: "Christian Living", "Humility"

Description

Clement of Rome delivers a sermon urging believers to forsake wicked works and evil desires, seeking holiness and humility to receive God's grace. He emphasizes that righteousness and truth through faith bring blessings, not self-justification or works. Clement highlights the danger of knowledge without humility and unity in Christ, calling for obedience to God's commandments and love for one another. He encourages sacrificial love, bearing blame to maintain harmony and protect the concord passed down to believers.

Transcript

Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which is written, "My beloved did eat and drink, and was enlarged and became fat, and kicked." Hence flowed emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as everyone abandons the fear of God, and is become blind in His faith, neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world. (Chapter 3) Since then all things are seen and heard [by God], let us fear Him, and forsake those wicked works which proceed from evil desires; so that, through His mercy, we may be protected from the judgments to come. (Chapter 28) Seeing, therefore, that we are the portion of the Holy One, let us do all those things which pertain to holiness, avoiding all evil-speaking, all abominable and impure embraces, together with all drunkenness, seeking after change, all abominable lusts, detestable adultery, and execrable pride.

"For God," saith [the Scripture], "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Let us cleave, then, to those to whom grace has been given by God. Let us clothe ourselves with concord and humility, ever

exercising self-control, standing far off from all whispering and evil-speaking, being justified by our works, and not our words. For [the Scripture] saith, "He that speaketh much, shall also hear much in answer. (Chapter 30) For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? was it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith? (Chapter 31) And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men. (Chapter 32) By Him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards His marvellous light. (Chapter 36) And again He saith to Him, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."

But who are His enemies? All the wicked, and those who set themselves to oppose the will of God. (Chapter 36) Let us then, men and brethren, with all energy act the part of soldiers, in accordance with His holy commandments. Let us consider those who serve under our generals, with what order, obedience, and submissiveness they perform the things which are commanded them. All are not prefects, nor commanders of a thousand, nor of a hundred, nor of fifty, nor the like, but each one in his own rank performs the things commanded by the king and the generals.

The great cannot subsist without the small, nor the small without the great. (Chapter 37) Ye see, brethren, that the greater the knowledge that has been vouchsafed to us, the greater also is the danger to which we are exposed. (Chapter 41) Why are there strifes, and tumults, and divisions, and schisms, and wars among you? Have we not [all] one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? (Chapter 46) Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ.

Who can describe the [blessed] bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love beareth all things, is long-suffering in all things. (Chapter 49) For such as live in fear and love would rather that they themselves than their neighbours should be involved in suffering. And they prefer to bear blame themselves, rather than that the concord which has been well and piously handed down to us should suffer. (Chapter 51) Ye understand, beloved, ye understand well the Sacred Scriptures, and ye have looked very earnestly into the oracles of God.

Call then these things to your remembrance. When Moses went up into the mount, and abode there, with fasting and humiliation, forty days and forty nights, the Lord said unto him, "Moses, Moses, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people whom thou didst bring out of the land of Egypt have committed iniquity. They have speedily departed from the way in which I commanded them to walk, and have made to themselves molten images." And the Lord said unto him, "I have spoken to thee once and again, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: let Me destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make thee a great and wonderful nation, and one much more numerous than this."

But Moses said, "Far be it from Thee, Lord: pardon the sin of this people; else blot me also out of the book of the living." O marvelous love! O insuperable perfection! The servant speaks freely to his Lord, and asks forgiveness for the people, or begs that he himself might perish along with them. (Chapter 53) We know many among ourselves who have given themselves up to bonds, in order that they might ransom others. Many, too, have surrendered themselves to slavery, that with the price which they received for themselves, they might provide food for others.

Many women also, being strengthened by the grace of God, have performed numerous manly exploits. (Chapter 55) Ye see, beloved, that protection is afforded to those that are chastened of the Lord; for since God is good, He corrects us, that we may be admonished by His holy chastisement. (Chapter 56) May God, who seeth all things, and who is the Ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh--who chose our Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him to be a peculiar people--grant to every soul that calleth upon His glorious and holy Name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of His Name. (Chapter 58)

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/clement-of-rome/various-thoughts-on-different-subjects/>

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