PATRISTIC THEOLOGY
(at Reformed Theological Seminary Dallas)

SYLLABUS & READER

Prof. Michael A.G. Haykin
mhaykin@sbps.edu
July 24–27, 2017
I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course traces the major doctrinal and ecclesiological developments in the Ancient Church within the context of her times—from the Letter to Diognetus through to the Trinitarian and Christological debates of the 4th and 5th centuries and the Irish Mission of Patrick. Special attention is given to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, the theology of culture and mission, and the interface of Patristic theology and piety.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES
The objective of the course is basically threefold. First, to provide the student with a basic understanding of Patristic theology. Second, to foster within the student an awareness of and appreciation for the theological achievements of the Ancient Church. Third and final, to furnish the student with models for imitation in his/her Christian life (see Hebrews 11:1–12:3; 13:7).

III. COURSE TEXTS


IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. This course will meet at the following times during the week of July 24-27, 2017, with appropriate breaks: Monday through Thursday, 9am–5:30pm.

2. 20% of the final mark is based on a critical book review of Haykin, *Rediscovering the Church Fathers*. This book review should be no more than 2,000 words and is due August 15, 2017. It should include a summary of the book (about 1200 words) as well as a critical evaluation of the book’s achievement of its goals (about 800 words). The student should also consult published book reviews of Haykin. References to these critical book reviews need to be made by way of footnotes. Marks will be deducted for numerous grammar and spelling errors. This assignment should be mailed as a hard copy to the professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Avenue, Louisville, KY 40280, and be postmarked August 15, 2017.

3. There will be written post-course assignments for many of the lectures. These assignments will usually consist of brief answers to questions based on primary and secondary sources. Assignments must be in sentence form and a type-written format. Marks will be deducted for numerous grammar and spelling errors. These written assignments constitute 80% of the final mark. A number of these assignments require texts not found in the textbooks. These texts are assembled in the Reader at the back of this Syllabus or can be found online. All of these assignments are due August 31, 2017 and should be mailed as a hard copy to the professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Avenue, Louisville, KY 40280, and be postmarked August 31, 2017.

4. Papers submitted late without advance permission will receive at best a grade of D. Extensions will be granted in the case of such things as family or personal illness.
V. COURSE OUTLINE AND HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Monday, July 24, 2017

Lecture 1: Introduction to the course & the significance of Patristic theology

Lectures 2–3: Roman Hellenism: the context of Patristic theology

Lectures 4–5: Patristic apologetic thought: The Letter to Diognetus

1. The author of The Letter to Diognetus (Reader, text 4) is unknown. Why has the author specifically written this letter according to The Letter to Diognetus 1?

2. What opinion is expressed in The Letter to Diognetus 2 about the Greek and Roman religions? Why? What do you think of the author’s evangelistic strategy at this point and why?

3. The Letter to Diognetus 2: Why are Christians hated?


5. According to The Letter to Diognetus 5–6:
   a. What distinguished Christians from the society in which they lived? Give some specific examples.
   b. How does the author describe the reaction of the Greeks and Romans to the Christian community?
   c. How do Christians in turn respond to the way that they are treated by Graeco-Roman society?

6. According to The Letter to Diognetus 7–8:
   a. How does one come to obtain true knowledge about the nature of God?
   b. How is Christ described in this passage?
   c. Who are the “philosophers” that the author is referring to in The Epistle to Diognetus 8?
d. *The Letter to Diognetus* 7: What does the author see as “the evidences of his [i.e. God’s] presence”?

7. What answer does the author of *The Letter to Diognetus* give to the question raised in chapter 1 about why Christianity has entered into our world now and not formerly? Read *The Letter to Diognetus* 8–9.


9. *The Letter to Diognetus* 10: What answer does the author give to the question raised in chapter 1 about the affection that Christians have for one another?

10. *The Letter to Diognetus* 11–12: After reading the final two chapters of this work, what would you say is its relationship to the first ten chapters?

11. Would *The Letter to Diognetus* have been a convincing apology for Christianity in the second century A.D.? Why or why not? Be specific in your answer.

**Lecture 6: Gnostic thought**


2. Read the selections from *The Gospel of Thomas* (Reader, text 5a) and answer the following questions:
   a. What similarities do you see to the four canonical gospels? What differences?
   b. *The Gospel of Thomas*, Saying 14: What is the meaning of this saying?
   c. *The Gospel of Thomas*, Saying 50: Any ideas as to the meaning of this saying?
   e. *The Gospel of Thomas*, Saying 114: What is being said in this saying? What does it mean?

3. Read the selections from *The Gospel of Philip* (Reader, text 5b) and answer the following questions:

b. *The Gospel of Philip*, Saying 23: Summarize in a sentence or so the worldview that informs this saying.


e. *The Gospel of Philip*, Sayings 63, 98, and 101: Why is chrismation superior to baptism? What is being implied about the baptism given in orthodox churches?

f. *The Gospel of Philip*, Sayings 76 and 86: Why did Christ come into the world?
Lectures 7–8: Irenaeus and his theology

Note: Unless otherwise specified, all of the texts can be found on “Irenaeus, Against heresies” at http://www.textexcavation.com/irenaeush.html.

   
   a. What does the Church believe regarding God the Father?
   b. God the Son?
   c. And the Holy Spirit?

2. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 1.22.1, trans. Roberts and Rambaut in Coxe, arr., Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, 347:
   
   a. What roles are assigned to the Holy Spirit?
   b. What biblical proof does Irenaeus give to support his view in this regard?

3. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 2.28.2–3; 3.1.1, trans. Roberts and Rambaut in Coxe, arr., Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, 399, 414:
   
   a. What role is assigned to the Spirit in these two texts?
   b. What is the significance of this fact with regard to the nature of Scripture?
   c. If Scripture is perfect, what does this say about its author?

4. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.2.1–2, trans. Roberts and Rambaut in Coxe, arr., Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, 415:
   
   a. How do the Gnostics respond to the use of the Scriptures by orthodox believers? Why?
   b. How do they view apostolic traditions? Why?

5. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.3.1–4, trans. Roberts and Rambaut in Coxe, arr., Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, 415–416:
   
   a. How does Irenaeus respond to the Gnostic rejection of apostolic tradition?
   b. How does Irenaeus view the Church at Rome? What part does this view of the church at Rome play in his response to the Gnostic rejection of tradition?
   c. What is the significance of the fact that Irenaeus sat under Polycarp’s instruction?
   a. What is the significance of the description of the Son and the Holy Spirit as the “hands” of God?
   b. How do you personally react to this description?

   a. How does Irenaeus interpret the assertion of Paul that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50)?
   b. What are some of the implications of being indwelt by the Spirit?

   a. What is the significance of the earnest of the Spirit according to this passage?
   b. Judging from the tone of this text, what do you suppose were Irenaeus’ feeling when he wrote it?

9. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.12.4, trans. Rambaut in Coxe, *Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, 538: What does Irenaeus mean when he says “the final result of the work of the Spirit is the salvation of the flesh”?

    a. What are the differences between “the breath of life” and “the vivifying Spirit”?
    b. What is the ontological significance of describing the Spirit as “eternal”?
Lectures 9–10: Christian thought in North Africa: 1. Tertullian

Note: Unless otherwise specified, all of the texts can be found on “The Tertullian Project” at www.tertullian.org.

1. Read The Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs (Reader, text 3). What do you learn about North African Christianity from this text?


3. Tertullian, To His Wife 2.8 (Reader, text 6): What is Christian marriage?

4. Tertullian, Apology 37–39, trans. Alexander Souter:

   a. How do Christian differ from their fellow Romans who are pagans?
   b. What happens when Christian meet together for worship?
   c. What mark of the church does Tertullian emphasize?

5. Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh 63.7–9, trans. Ernest Evans: According to this passage, why has the “New Prophecy” come into existence?

6. Tertullian, On the Soul 9.1–4, trans. Peter Holmes: For what is Tertullian arguing in this passage? How does he attempt to demonstrate the truth of his position?

7. Tertullian, On the Soul 55.5, trans. Holmes: According to this text, what does the Holy Spirit counsel believers to do?


   a. What does the Spirit lead believers to do?
   b. What proof does Tertullian offer for his position in Flight in Time of Persecution 9.4?

9. Tertullian, On Monogamy 1–2, trans. S. Thelwall:

   a. Who are the heretics that Tertullian is discussing in this text? Who do you suppose the “Sensualists” (psychichi) are?
   b. Of what does Tertullian accuse the “Sensualists” in On Monogamy 1?
   c. What, according to On Monogamy 2, is the view of the “Sensualists” about the Montanist position on marriage?
   d. How does Tertullian reply to this view of the “Sensualists” (On Monogamy 2)?
10. Tertullian, *On Monogamy* 14, trans. S. Thelwall: What does Tertullian argue was Paul’s view of remarriage?

11. Tertullian, *On Monogamy* 14, trans. S. Thelwall: What has the Paraclete, through the “New Prophecy,” done to Paul’s “indulgence” with regard to remarriage after the death of one’s spouse?

12. Tertullian, *On the Veiling of Virgins* 1, trans. S. Thelwall:
   
   a. Why was the Paraclete/Holy Spirit sent according to this passage?
   b. What are the various dispensations which Tertullian delineates and how are they distinguished?
   c. *On the Veiling of Virgins* 1: According to this passage, what does the Spirit require in this dispensation?

13. Tertullian, *On Purity* 1.20–21, trans. Gösta Claesson: What errors has Tertullian left behind when he became a Montanist?

   
   a. What does the Spirit teach?
   b. How do the non-Montanist Christians respond to this teaching about the forgiveness of “mortal sins”?
   c. What is Tertullian’s reply to the statement that “the Church has the power to forgive sins”?
   d. How does he seek to show that this prophetic word actually comes from the Holy Spirit?
   e. Why does Tertullian launch into a discussion of Matthew 16:18–19?
   f. How does Tertullian interpret this passage in Matthew, particularly with regard as to who has the power to forgive sins?
   g. What is the “Church of the Spirit”?


16. Suggest reasons as to why Tertullian embraced the “New Prophecy.”
Lectures 11–12: Christian thought in North Africa: 2. Cyprian of Carthage


2. Cyprian, *To Donatus* 2–8, 14–16 (Reader, text 8):
   
   a. Detail the theology of conversion in *To Donatus* 3–4.
   b. What is meant by the phrase “the laver of the saving water” and the “water of regeneration”? Are these biblical expressions?
   c. *To Donatus* 7–8: Why are gladiatorial fights and the Roman theatre not places to be frequented by Christians?
   d. What does the Spirit do according to *To Donatus* 4–5 and 14–15?

3. What does the physical structure and design of the baptistery of the Basilica of St. Vitalis in Tunisia (depicted in Dowley, ed., *History of Christianity*, 85) tell you about early Christian thinking about baptism?
Lecture 13: The Constantinian revolution


2. Eusebius of Caesarea was an eyewitness to the sufferings and martyrdoms of believers during the Diocletianic persecution. Read two excerpts from his Church History (Historia ecclesiastica) 8.8–9; 8.12.10–11 (http://www.churchhistory101.com/century4-p3.php). How would you explain the ferocity of the persecution and the malevolence behind it?

3. Read Richard A. Todd, “Constantine and the Christian Empire” in Dowley, ed., History of Christianity, 104–109 and answer the following questions:
   a. What were Constantine’s religious beliefs?
   b. How did Constantine treat the Christian Church? Why?
   c. What were the results of Constantine’s attitude to Christianity?
   d. Outline some of the specific instances in which Constantine intervened in the life of the Church.


“All must wonder if they consider and reflect, that it was not by mere human accident that the greater part of the nations of the world were never before under the one Empire of Rome, but only from the time of Jesus. For his wonderful sojourn among men synchronized with Rome’s attainment of the acme of power...Since that day the Jewish people have become subject to the Romans, the Syrians likewise, the Cappadocians and the Macedonians, the Bithynians and Greeks, and in a word all other nations who are under Roman rule. And no one could deny that the synchronizing of this with the beginning of the teaching about our Saviour is of God’s arrangement, if he considered the difficulty of the disciples’ taking their journey, had the nations been at variance one with another and not mixing together because of varieties of government. But when these were abolished they could accomplish their projects quite fearlessly and safely, since the supreme God had smoothed the way before them and subdued the spirit of the more superstitious citizens under the fear of a strong central government.”

6. Read the two statements by Constantine in the Reader, texts 9a & 9b. What is he saying about his relationship to God and his personal religious beliefs?

7. Read some of the laws passed by Constantine with regard to the Church: “Medieval Sourcebook: Constantine I: Laws for Christians” (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/const1-laws2.html). Do these documents tell you anything about Constantine’s religious convictions? If so, what?

8. Eusebius of Caesarea, Oration in Honour of Constantine 1–3 (online at http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/orat-constantine.asp):
   a. What is the major theme of these sections of Eusebius’ speech in honor of Constantine’s thirtieth anniversary?
   b. What examples does Eusebius give to illustrate this theme?


**Lecture 14: Early monastic thought**
Lectures 15–16: Arian theology, Athanasius’ thought, and Nicene Trinitarianism


2. Arius, Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, 318
   a. What has Alexander of Alexandria (d.328) taught regarding the Son?
   b. What does Arius believe about the Son?

3. Look at the map that locates the early support for Arius, “Arius Map”: which geographical regions most strongly supported Arianism in the 320s and 330s?

4. Read The Nicene Creed (Reader, text 10):
   a. How does this creedal statement affirm the full deity of Christ?
   b. Is the Christology of this Creed biblical? Explain.


7. Athanasius, Letter to Serapion 1.15.1–1.16.7 (trans. DelCogliano, Radde-Gallwitz, and Ayres, Works on the Spirit, 79): What further argument have the Tropikoi adduced to reject the deity of the Holy Spirit and how does Athanasius initially respond?


17. Athanasius, *Letter to Serapion* 2.15.6 (trans. DelCogliano, Radde-Gallwitz, and Ayres, *Works on the Spirit*, 126): What does Athanasius mean when he says, “there is one divinity of the Trinity, and it is manifested by the one Father”?


Church founded? Athanasius claims that this is a biblical affirmation (1.33.1). Is he correct? Why or why not?

Lectures 17–18: The pneumatology of Basil of Caesarea & the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed
Lecture 19: Ascetic thought in Gregory of Nyssa’s *The Life of Macrina*

**Lectures 20–21: Augustine of Hippo (354–430), his life, thought & piety**


2. Briefly outline the historical context in which Augustine wrote the *Confessions* and why he wrote the book.

3. What are the major themes of the book? Give references from the book to support your answer.

4. *Confessions* 1.1–4:
   a. How do the *Confessions* begin? Why?

   b. Why has God made humanity?

   c. What answer does Augustine give to his own question: “If he does not know you, how can he pray to you?” (1.1)

5. *Confessions* 2: Gary Wills observes that when people think of Augustine’s sinfulness they think of sexual sin. If so, they are sadly disappointed because Augustine’s most detailed discussion of his sinfulness does not relate to sexual sin at all. Why does he spend so much time talking about his sin of the theft of the pears (2.4–10)? In other words what is the purpose of this chapter in the book?

6. Briefly outline the roles that (a) Monnica (d.388) and (b) Ambrose of Milan (d.397) play in Augustine’s *Confessions* 1–8. Be sure to give references for your comments. With regard to Ambrose, draw up a brief outline of his life (no more than 300 words) from online research.

7. *Confessions* 8.1: What passions had been central in Augustine’s life? Why had they been displaced?

8. *Confessions* 8.2–5: Why does Augustine go to such length to narrate the story of the conversion and Christian witness of Marius Victorinus (d. after 363)? By the way, who was Marius Victorinus?
9. *Confessions* 8.5: What kept Augustine from committing himself to Christ? What biblical passages explain for Augustine what was going on in his life at this time?

10. According to *Confessions* 8.6, what was one key factor in leading Augustine to Christ?

11. *Confessions* 8.7: Why had Augustine hesitated to accept Christianity?

12. *Confessions* 8.7–11: Before Augustine embraced God’s salvific work in Christ, what did he learn about himself?

13. *Confessions* 8.12: What role did Scripture play in Augustine’s conversion?


15. “There is scarce reference to the Spirit in Books 7 and 8. It is only in Books 12 and 13 that the role of the Spirit in the transformation of the human will is brought to light.”¹ Discuss.

16. In the opening sentence of *Confessions* 8.4 Augustine prays to God, “stir us up and call us back, kindle and clasp us, be fragrant to us, draw us to your loveliness.” Similar prayers/statements can be found in 9.1 and 10.27. Discuss what they tell you about Augustinian piety and why this piety is vital for contemporary Evangelicalism.

**Lecture 22: Chalcedon and its Christology**

**Lecture 23: The ecclesiology of Leo the Great**


2. Read the extracts from Leo’s sermons in “Medieval Sourcebook: Leo I: The Petrine Doctrine [r.440–461]” ([http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/leo1a.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/leo1a.asp)). What is Leo arguing in these texts? In what biblical text does he find support? Is his interpretation of this text cogent? Why or why not?

---

Lecture 24: The missiology of Patrick of Ireland

2. Patrick, *Confession* 1–3, 14, 40 (Reader, text 11): According to these passages, what is the reason for evangelism?

3. Patrick, *Confession* 43: According to these texts, why did Patrick preach the gospel to the Irish? What is meant by “bound by the Spirit”?

4. Patrick, *Confession* 4: What did Patrick preach?

5. Patrick, *Confession* 33: What does this text indicate about Patrick’s view of the Spirit?

6. Patrick, *Confession* 3, 14, 34, 38: Where was the gospel to be preached?

7. Patrick, *Confession* 41–42: To whom did Patrick preach the gospel?

8. What do the following texts suggest may have been the ultimate reason behind the success of Patrick’s mission: *Confession* 16, 37–38?

9. Patrick, *Confession* 16, 20, 23–25, 46: How would you evaluate the spiritual experiences described in these texts?
Text 1: Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44

*On the Great Fire of Rome.*

So far, the precautions taken were suggested by human prudence: now means were sought for appeasing deity, and application was made to the Sibylline books; at the injunction of which public prayers were offered to Vulcan, Ceres, and Proserpine, while Juno was propitiated by the matrons, first in the Capitol, then at the nearest point of the seashore, where water was drawn for sprinkling the temple and image of the goddess. Ritual banquets and all-night vigils were celebrated by women in the married state. But neither human help, nor imperial munificence, nor all the modes of placating Heaven, could stifle scandal or dispel the belief that the fire had taken place by order. Therefore, to scotch the rumor, Nero substituted as culprits, and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men, loathed for their vices, whom the crowd styled Christians. Christus, the founder of the name, had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus, and the pernicious superstition was checked for a moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judaea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself, where all things horrible or shameful in
ureretur. Hortos suos ei spectaculo Nero obtulerat et circense ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigae permixtus plebi vel curriculo insistens. Unde quamquam adversus sontis et novissima exempla meritos miseratio oriebatur, tamquam non utilitate publica, sed in saevitiam unius absumerentur.

the world collect and find a vogue. First, then, the confessed members of the sect were arrested; next, on their disclosures, vast numbers were convicted, not so much on the count of arson as for hatred of the human race. And derision accompanied their end: they were covered with wild beasts' skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed were burned to serve as lamps by night. Nero had offered his Gardens for the spectacle, and gave an exhibition in his Circus, mixing with the crowd in the habit of a charioteer, or mounted on his car. Hence, in spite of a guilt which had earned the most exemplary punishment, there arose a sentiment of pity, due to the impression that they were being sacrificed not for the welfare of the state but to the ferocity of a single man.

Text 2: Pliny, Letter 10.96 to the Emperor Trajan

The Emperor Trajan sent Pliny the Younger to Bithynia about the year 111 to settle a troubled situation. They corresponded regularly during Pliny's mission.

C. Plinius Traiano Imperatori

Pliny is unsure how to handle the Christians

Sollemne est mihi, domine, omnia, de quibus dubito, ad te referre. Quis enim potest melius vel cunctationem meum regere vel ignorantiam instruere? Cognitionibus de Christianis interfui numquam: ideo nescio quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat aut quaeri. Nec mediocriter haesitavi, sitne aliquod discrimen aetatum, an quamilbet teneri nihil a robustioribus differant; detur paenitentiae venia, an ei, qui omnino Christianibus fuit, desisse non prosit; nomen ipsum, si flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini puniantur.

It is customary for me, sir, to refer to you in all matters wherein I have a doubt. Who truly is better able to rule my hesitancy, or to instruct my ignorance? I was never present at examinations of Christians, therefore I do not know what is customarily punished, nor to what extent, nor how far to take the investigation. I was quite undecided; should there be any consideration given to age; are those who are however delicate no different from the stronger? Should penitence obtain pardon; or, as has been the case particularly with Christians, to desist makes no difference? Should the name itself be punished (even if crimes are absent), or the crimes that go with the name?

How he conducted his examinations, and reaction to his policy

Interim in iis, qui ad me tamquam Christiani deferebantur, hunc sum secutus modum. Interrogavi ipsos, an essent Christiani. Confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogavi supplicium minatus: perseverantes duci

Meanwhile, this is the method I have followed with those who were brought before me as Christians. I asked them directly if they were Christians. The ones who answered affirmatively I questioned again with a
iussi. Neque enim dubitabam, quaecumque esset quod faterentur, pertinentiam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri. Fuerunt alii similis amertiae, quos quia cives Romani erant, adnotavi in urbem remittendos. Mox ipso tractatu, ut fieri solet, diffundente se crine, plures species inciderunt. Propositus est libellus sine auctore multorum nomina continens.

warning, and yet a third time: those who persisted I ordered led away. For I have no doubt, whatever else they confessed to, certainly [this] pertinacity and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others alike of madness, whom I noted down to be sent to the City, because they were Roman citizens. Soon in consequence of this policy itself, as it was made standard, many kinds of criminal charges occurred and spread themselves abroad. A pamphlet was published anonymously, containing the names of many.

The examinations turned up a number of lapsed Christians

Qui negabant esse se Christianos aut fuisse, cum praeuente me deos appellarent et imaginini tuae, quam propter hoc iusseram cum simulacris numinum adferri, ture ac vino supplicarent, praeterea male dicerent Christo, quorum nihil posses cogi dicuntur, qui sunt re vera Christiani, dimittendos esse putavi. Alii ab indice nominati esse se Christianos dixerunt et mox negaverunt; fuisse quidem, sed desisse, quidem ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos; non nemo etiam ante viginti. Hi quoque omnes et imaginem tuam deorumque simulacra venerati sunt et Christo maledixerunt.

Those who denied that they were or ever had been Christians, when they swore before me, called on the gods and offered incense and wine to your image (which I had ordered brought in for this [purpose], along with images of the gods), and also cursed Christ (which, it is said, it is impossible to force those who are real Christians to do) I thought worthy to be acquitted. Others named by an informer, said they had been Christians, but now denied [it]; certainly they had been, but had lapsed, some three years ago, some more; and more than one [lit. not nobody] over twenty years ago. These all worshiped both your image and the images of the gods and cursed Christ.

The former Christians told him about the group’s customs

Adfirmabant autem hanc fuisse summam vel culpae suae vel erroris, quod essent soliti statu die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem sequacem non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent; quibus peractis, morem sibi discedendi fuisse rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen et innoxium; quod ipsum facere desisse post edictum meum, quo secundum mandata tua hetaerias esse vetueram.

They stated that the sum of their guilt or error amounted to this, that they used to gather on a stated day before dawn and sing to Christ as if he were a god, and that they took an oath not to involve themselves in villainy, but rather to commit no theft, no fraud, no adultery; not to break faith, nor to deny money placed with them in trust. Once these things were done, it was their custom to part and return later to eat a meal together, innocently, although they stopped this after my edict, in which I, following your mandate, forbade all secret societies.

Pliny was unsatisfied, and sought further information by torture

Quo magis necessarium credidi ex duabus ancillis, quae ministrae dicebantur, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quaerere. Nihil aliud inveni quam superstitiorem pravam, immodicam.

All the more I believed it necessary to find out what was the truth from two servant maids, which were called deaconesses, by means of torture. Nothing more did I find than a disgusting, fanatical superstition.
Pliny hoped to squelch this dangerous superstition

Therefore I stopped the examination, and hastened to consult you. For it appears to me a proper matter for counsel, most greatly on account of the number of people endangered. For many of all ages, all classes, and both sexes already are brought into danger, and shall be [in future]. And not only the cities; the contagion of this superstition is spread throughout the villages and the countryside; but it appears to me possible to stop it and put it right. Certainly the temples which were once deserted are beginning to be crowded, and the long interrupted sacred rites are being revived, while food from the sacrifices is selling, for which up to now a buyer was hardly to be found. From which it may easily be supposed, that what disturbs men can be mended, if a place is allowed for repentance.

Epistulae, Vol X, No. 96
A publication of the School of Tyrannus
Translation copyright © 1998, The School of Tyrannus
All rights reserved

Text 3: Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs (180AD)

The Scillitan Martyrs were condemned and executed at Carthage on the July 17, 180.
The martyrs belonged to Scili, a place in that part of Numidia which belonged to proconsular Africa.

1. When Praesens, for the second time, and Claudianus were the consuls, on the seventeenth day of July, at Carthage, there were set in the judgment-hall Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Secunda and Vestia. Saturninus the proconsul said: You can win the indulgence of our lord the Emperor, if you return to a sound mind.

2. Speratus said: We have never done ill, we have not lent ourselves to wrong, we have never spoken ill, but when ill-treated we have given thanks; because we pay heed to our Emperor.

3. Saturninus the proconsul said: We too are religious, and our religion is simple, and we swear by the genius of our lord the Emperor, and pray for his welfare, as you also ought to do.

4. Speratus said: If you will peaceably lend me your ears, I can tell you the mystery of simplicity.

5. Saturninus said: I will not lend my ears to you, when you begin to speak evil things of our sacred rites; but rather swear by the genius of our lord the Emperor.

6. Speratus said: The empire of this world I know not; but rather I serve that God, whom no man has seen, nor with these eyes can see. I have committed no theft; but if I have bought anything I pay the tax; because I know my Lord, the King of kings and Emperor of all nations.

7. Saturninus the proconsul said to the rest: Cease to be of this persuasion.

8. Speratus said: It is an ill persuasion to do murder, to speak false witness.
9. Saturninus the proconsul said: Be not partakers of this folly.

10. Cittinus said: We have none other to fear, save only our Lord God, who is in heaven.

11. Donata said: Honour to Caesar as Caesar: but fear to God.


13. Secunda said: What I am, that I wish to be.

14. Saturninus the proconsul said to Speratus: Do you persist in being a Christian?

15. Speratus said: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

16. Saturninus the proconsul said: Will you have a space to consider?

17. Speratus said: In a matter so straightforward there is no considering.

18. Saturninus the proconsul said: What are the things in your chest?


20. Saturninus the proconsul said: Have a delay of thirty days and bethink yourselves.

21. Speratus said a second time: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

22. Saturninus the proconsul read out the decree from the tablet: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Vestia, Secunda and the rest having confessed that they live according to the Christian rite, since after opportunity offered them of returning to the custom of the Romans they have obstinately persisted, it is determined that they be put to the sword.

23. Speratus said: We give thanks to God.

24. Nartzalus said: To-day we are martyrs in heaven; thanks be to God.

25. Saturninus the proconsul ordered it to be declared by the herald: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Veturius, Felix, Aquilinus, Laetantius, Januaria, Generosa, Vestia, Donata and Secunda, I have ordered to be executed.

26. They all said: Thanks be to God.

27. And so they all together were crowned with martyrdom; and they reign with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

---

**Text 4: The Letter to Diognetus**


**Chapter 1**
I see, most excellent Diognetus, the exceptional desire you have to learn the method of worshipping God that prevails among the Christians. You inquire about them with great care and sincerity, seeking to determine what God they trust in and what type of religion they observe that allows them to look down upon the world and to despise death, all the while rejecting both those that are esteemed gods by the Greeks and the superstitions of the Jews. I hear you asking how they have the kind of affection that is cherished among them and why this new type or practice of religion has only now and so recently come into the world.

I welcome this desire of yours, and I implore God, who enables us both to speak and to hear, to let me speak in such a way that, more than anything, I may hear that you have been built up. And I ask him to enable you to hear in such a way that I, the one speaking, may have no reason to regret doing so.

Chapter 2
So come, after you have freed yourself from all the prejudices that possess your mind, laid aside what you’re accustomed to as something prone to deceive you, and been made a new man all over again. After all, by your own admission, you are going to be listening to a new teaching. Come and contemplate, not only with your eyes but also with your understanding, the substance and form of those whom you declare and deem to be gods.

Isn’t one a stone like the ones we walk on? isn’t a second brass, no better than containers which are made for everyday use? Isn’t a third wood and already rotting at that? Isn’t a fourth silver, which needs a man to watch it so that it’s not stolen? Isn’t a fifth iron, consumed by rust? Isn’t a sixth clay, no more valuable than what’s made for the humblest uses? Aren’t all of these corruptible matter? Aren’t they all made with fire and with iron tools? Didn’t the sculptor fashion one of them, the brazier a second, the silversmith a third, and the potter a fourth? Wasn’t every one of them, in its own way, subject to change before they were formed by the skills of these workmen into the shape they’re in? Wouldn’t those things which are now containers, formed from the same materials, become just like the gods if they had run into the artisans who made your gods? Couldn’t these, which are now worshipped by you, be made by men into containers similar to the others? Are they not all deaf? Are they not all blind? Are they not without life? Are they not destitute of feeling? Are they not incapable of motion? Are they not all liable to rot? Are they not all perishable?

You call these things gods! You serve them! You worship them! And you become exactly like them. It’s for this reason you hate the Christians, because they do not consider these to be gods. But don’t you, who think and suppose these articles to be gods, treat them with much greater contempt than the Christians? Don’t you mock and insult them ever more when you worship things that are made of stone and clay without appointing anyone to guard them, but the ones made of silver and gold you lock up at night and appoint guards for them during the day so that they won’t be stolen? And when you attempt to present gifts to them, then if they are possessed of sense, don’t you punish rather than honor them? On the other hand, if they have no sense, you prove it by worshipping them with blood and the smoke of sacrifices. Would any of you stand for such indignities? Let any one of you tolerate having that done to yourself!

Not a single human being will put up with that kind of treatment unless he’s forced to, and it’s because he’s endowed with sense and reason. A stone, however, readily endures it because it has no feeling. You certainly don’t indicate that they are possessed of feeling. So in regard to the fact that Christians are not used to serving gods like that, I could easily find many other things to say; however, if what has already been said is not enough for anyone, then I consider it a waste of time to say anything else.

Chapter 3
Next, I’d guess that you most want to hear something about why the Christians don’t observe the same forms of divine worship as the Jews. So then, if the Jews abstain from the kind of service described above [i.e., blood sacrifices and burnt offerings] and count it proper to worship one God as the Lord of all, [then we can agree with them]. However, if they offer him worship in the way we’ve described, they are in great error.

The Gentiles, when they offer [sacrifices] to things that are destitute of feeling and hearing, provide an example of madness. The Jews, on the other hand, when they think to offer these things to God as if he needed them, ought to consider their sacrifices an act of foolishness rather than divine worship. For the One that made heaven and earth and everything in them, and who gives us everything we need, certainly does not require any of those things which he himself bestows on the very ones who are thinking to provide them to him! Those who imagine that they are offering sacrifices to him with blood and the smoke of sacrifices and burnt offerings, and who think that by such “honors” they are showing him respect—well, these people who suppose that they can give
anything to the One who stands in need of nothing appear to me to be no different than those who studiously confer the same honor on things that are destitute of feeling and therefore incapable of enjoying such honors.

Chapter 4
As far as their meticulous attention to food, their superstition in regard to the Sabbaths, their boasting about circumcision, and their whims about fasting and the new moons—which are utterly ridiculous and unworthy of attention—I don’t think you need to learn anything from me. How can it be lawful to accept some of those things which have been formed by God for human use as properly made and to reject others as useless and unnecessary? And to speak falsely of God, as if he forbids us to do what is good on the Sabbath days, in what way is this not ungodly? To glory in the circumcision of the flesh as a proof of election—as though because of it they are especially loved by God—how can this not be a subject of ridicule? And as for observing months and day, who would deem it a part of divine worship to wait for the stars and moon to make appointments for God according to whatever tendencies they have? Isn’t it much rather a demonstration of foolishness to let the changing of the seasons determine whether you are festive or mourning? I’m going to suppose, then, that this is sufficient to convince you that Christians are correct in abstaining from the pride and error that is so common and from the nosiness and useless boasting of the Jews. But you must not hope to learn the mystery of their unique way of worshipping God from any mortal.

Chapter 5
Christians are not distinguished from other men by country, language, nor by the customs which they observe. They do not inhabit cities of their own, use a particular way of speaking, nor lead a life marked out by any curiosity. The course of conduct they follow has not been devised by the speculation and deliberation of inquisitive men. The do not, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of merely human doctrines. Instead, they inhabit both Greek and barbarian cities, however things have fallen to each of them. And it is while following the customs of the natives in clothing, food, and the rest of ordinary life that they display to us their wonderful and admittedly striking way of life. They live in their own countries, but they do so as those who are just passing through. As citizens they participate in everything with others, yet they endure everything as if they were foreigners. Every foreign land is like their homeland to them, and every land of their birth is like a land of strangers. They marry, like everyone else, and they have children, but they do not destroy their offspring. They share a common table, but not a common bed. They exist in the flesh, but they do not live by the flesh. They obey the prescribed laws, all the while surpassing the laws by their lives. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned. They are put to death and restored to life. They are poor, yet make many rich. They lack everything, yet they overflow in everything. They are dishonored, and yet in their dishonor they are glorified; they are spoken ill of and yet are justified; they are reviled but bless; they are insulted and repay the insult with honor; they do good, yet are punished as evildoers; when punished, they rejoice as if raised from the dead. They are assailed by the Jews as barbarians; they are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to give any reason for their hatred.

Chapter 6
To sum it all up in one word, what the soul is in the body, that is what Christians are in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the parts of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul lives in the body, yet is not of the body; Christians live in the world, yet are not of the world. The invisible soul is guarded by the visible body. So Christians are known to be in the world, but their godliness remains invisible. The flesh hates the soul and wars against it, even though it is not harmed, because it is prevented from enjoying pleasures. In the same way, the world hates the Christians, though not wounded in any way, because they renounce pleasures. The soul loves the flesh that hates it, as well as its parts. Christians, in the same way, love those that hate them. The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet preserves that very body. Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they are the preservers of the world. The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle, and Christians live as travelers in perishable bodies, looking for an imperishable home in the heavens. The soul becomes better when it is poorly provided with food and drink. Similarly, the Christians, although subjected to punishment on a daily basis, keep increasing in number.

Chapter 7
God has assigned them this illustrious position, and it is unlawful for them to forsake it because—as I said—this was no mere earthly fabrication which was delivered to them. Nor is it a merely human system of opinion that they judge it right to preserve so carefully. It is not an endowment of merely human mysteries that has been committed to them, but truly God himself, who is omnipotent, the Creator of everything, and invisible, has sent the Truth from heaven—the holy and unfathomable Word—placed him among men and firmly established him in their hearts.

He did not send to men, as one might have imagined, a servant, angel, ruler, or any of those who influence earthly things, or one of those to whom the government of heavenly things has been entrusted. Instead, he sent the very Creator and Fashioner of all things, the One by whom he made the heavens, by whom he enclosed the seas within its set boundaries, whose ordinances the stars faithfully observe, by whom the sun is told the distance of his daily course to run, whom the moon obeys, being commanded to shine in the night, and whom the stars also obey, following the moon on her route. He has arranged everything, placing everything within its proper limits. Everything is subject to him—the heavens and the things in it; the earth and the things in it; the sea and the things in it; fire, air, and the abyss; things in the heights, in the depths, and which lie in between. This is the One he sent to them! Was it, then, as one might guess, for the purpose of tyranny or of inspiring fear and terror? Never! It was mercy and meekness. As a king sends his son, who is also a king, so he sent him. As God he sent him. To men he sent him. As a Savior he sent him, and as an attempt to persuade and not compel us. For violence has no place in the character of God. As calling us he sent him, not as One pursuing us in vengeance. As loving us he sent him, not as judging us. In the future he will send him to judge us, and who shall endure his arrival?... Don't you see them exposed to wild beasts for the purpose of persuading them to deny the Lord, yet they are not overcome? Don't you see that the more of them that are punished, the greater the number of the rest becomes? This does not seem to be the work of man. This is the power of God. These are the evidences of his presence.

Chapter 8
Among men, was there anyone at all who understood what God is before this Messenger came? Do you accept the useless and silly doctrines of those who are considered trustworthy philosophers? Some of them said that fire was God. Thus, they were calling something God that they would eventually arrive at themselves. Others said water, and others some other element made by God. But if any of these theories were worthy of approval, then anything else that's been created could be called God. Such declarations are simply the startling and erroneous utterances of deceivers.

No man has seen him or made him known, but he has revealed himself. He has shown himself through faith, which is the only thing to which it has been granted to behold God. For God, the Lord and Fashioner of all things, who made all things, and who assigned them their various positions, has proven himself not only a Friend of mankind, but also patient. Yes, he always had that type of character, still does, and always will—kind and good, free from anger, true, and the only one who is good. He formed in his mind a great and unspeakable idea, which he communicated to his Son alone. As long as he held and preserved his wise counsel in concealment, he seemed to neglect us and have no care for us. Afterwards, though, when he revealed and laid open, through his beloved Son, the things which have been prepared from the beginning, he conferred every blessing on us at once! As a result, we partake of his benefits, we see, and we are active. Which of us could have ever expected these things? So, he was aware of all things in his own mind, along with his Son, according to the relation that subsisted between them.

Chapter 9
As long, then, as that previous era lasted, he allowed us to be carried along by unruly desires and to be dragged around by the longing for pleasure and by various lusts. This wasn’t because he delighted in our sins in any way, but he simply endured them. He didn’t approve of the time of working iniquity which existed then, but he tried to form a mind conscious of righteousness. The purpose was that once we were convinced that we are unworthy to attain life through our own works, it would now, by the kindness of God, be bestowed on us. Once it became obvious that in ourselves we were unable to enter the kingdom of God, the power of God could then make us able.

When our wickedness had reached its height, when it had been clearly shown that the its reward, punishment and death, was hanging over our heads, and when the time had come which had appointed for manifesting his own kindness and power, then the one love God, out of exceptional care for mankind, did not regard us with hatred, nor thrust us away, nor remember our iniquity against us. He showed great patience and bore with us. Then he took the burden of our iniquities on himself. He gave his own Son as a ransom for us—the Holy One for
transgressors; the Blameless One for the wicked; the Righteous One for the unrighteous; the Unfading One for the Fading; the Immortal One for those that are mortal. For what other thing was capable of covering our sins than his righteousness? By whom else was it possible that we, the wicked and ungodly, could be justified, other than by the only Son of God? O sweet exchange! O inconceivable accomplishment! O benefits beyond any expectation! That the wickedness of many should be hidden in a single Righteous One, and that the righteousness of One would justify many transgressors!

So, he convinced us in the previous era that our nature was unable to attain to life, and he has now revealed the Savior who is able to save even those that it was impossible to save. By both these facts he wanted to lead us to trust in his kindness, and to consider him our Nourisher, Father, Teacher, Counselor, Healer; our Wisdom, Light, Honor, Glory, Power, and Life so that we should not worry about clothing and food.

Chapter 10
If you want this faith, the first thing you must receive is the knowledge of the Father. God has loved mankind, and he made the world because of us. He caused everything in it to be subject to us. He gave us reason and understanding. On us alone he bestowed the privilege of looking up to him. He formed us in his own image. He sent his only-begotten Son to us. He promised us a kingdom in heaven, and he will give it to those who have loved him.

When you have attained this knowledge, can you imagine what kind of joy you will be filled with? Think how much you will love this One who has first loved you so much! If you love him, then you will imitate his kindness. Do not be surprised that a man can imitate God. He can, if he is willing. You see, happiness is not found by ruling over neighbors or by trying to hold onto a superiority over those that are weaker. It’s not found by being rich, nor by intimidating inferiors. No one can become an imitator of God through these things. None of those things constitute his majesty.

On the contrary, the imitator of God is the one who takes his neighbor’s burden on himself. It’s the one who, in whatever way he really is superior, is prepared to help anyone who might be deficient. It’s the one who takes what he has received from God, distributes it to the needy, and thus becomes a god to those who receive from him. In this way you will see, while you are still on earth, that God in the heavens rules. Then you will begin to speak the mysteries of God. Then you will love and admire those that suffer punishment because they will not deny God. You will condemn the deceit and error of the world when you know what it is like to truly live in heaven; when you despise that which is considered death here on earth; when you fear what is really death—that which is reserved for those who will be condemned to the eternal fire and afflict those that are committed to it all the way to the end. Then you will admire those who endure for righteousness sake the fire that is only for a moment. You will consider them happy when you know that fire. ...

Chapter 11
I am not talking about things that are unfamiliar to me. I do not aim at anything except what is consistent with sound reason. I have been a disciple of the apostles, and now I am a teacher of the Gentiles. I minister the things that were given to me by men who are disciples worthy of the truth. For who that is rightly taught and begotten by the loving Word would not seek to learn accurately the things which have been clearly shown by the Word to his disciples?

The Word appeared and revealed these things to them. He spoke plainly to them. True, he was not understood by the unbelieving, but he spoke with the disciples, the ones who were regarded as faithful by him. In this way they acquired a knowledge of the mysteries of the Father. This is why he sent the Word, so that he might be shown to the world. He was despised by the people [i.e., the Jews], but when he was preached by the apostles, the Gentiles believed in him. This is the One who was from the beginning, who appeared as if new, was found old, and who is always being born anew in the hearts of his saints. This is the One who, existing from eternity past, is today honored as the Son. He is the One through whom the Church is enriched and grace, widely spread, increases in the saints. He furnishes understanding, reveals mysteries, announces times, rejoices over the faithful, and gives to those that seek. By him the limits of the faith are not broken through, nor the boundaries set by the fathers passed over. When this happens the fear of the law is chanted; the grace of the prophets is known; the faith of the Gospels is established; the tradition of the Apostles is preserved; and the grace of the Church exults.
If you do not grieve this grace, you will know the things the Word teaches. He teaches through whom he wants and whenever he pleases. Whatever things we are moved to speak by the will of the Word that commands us, that we painstakingly communicate to you out of a love of the things which have been revealed to us.

Chapter 12
When you've read these things and listened carefully to them, then you will know what is bestowed on those who love him properly. They are made a paradise of delight. They produce a tree out of themselves that bears all sorts of produces, flourishes well, and is adorned with various fruits. In this place the tree of knowledge and the tree of life have been planted. But it is not the tree of knowledge that destroys; it is disobedience that proves destructive. Truly, the words which are written are not without significance. God planted the tree of life in the midst of paradise and through knowledge revealed the way to life. When those who were the first ones formed did not use it properly, they were stripped naked through the fraud of the snake. For life cannot exist without knowledge, nor is knowledge secure without life. That is why both were planted close together. The Apostle understood the significance of this, and he criticizes the knowledge which we let influence our lives without true doctrine. He declares, “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” For the one who thinks he knows anything without true knowledge—the kind that is witnessed to by life—knows nothing, but is deceived by the snake because he did not love life. But the one who combines knowledge with fear and searches for life—that one plants in hope, expecting fruit.

Let your heart be wisdom, and let your life be true knowledge, received inwardly. If you possess this tree and exhibit its fruit, then you will always reap those things which God desires, which the snake cannot reach, and to which deception does not come near. Then Eve will not be corrupted but trusted as a virgin. Salvation will be manifested; the apostles will be [seen as] filled with understanding; and the Passover of the Lord will advance. The choirs will be gathered together, arranged in proper order, and the Word will rejoice in teaching the saints. By him is the Father glorified; to him be glory forever. Amen.]
These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded.

1. And he said, “Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death.”

9. Jesus said, “Look, the sower went out, took a handful (of seeds), and scattered (them). Some fell on the road, and the birds came and gathered them. Others fell on rock, and they didn’t take root in the soil and didn’t produce heads of grain. Others fell on thorns, and they choked the seeds and worms ate them. And others fell on good soil, and it produced a good crop: it yielded sixty per measure and one hundred twenty per measure.”

12. The disciples said to Jesus, “We know that you are going to leave us. Who will be our leader?” Jesus said to them, “No matter where you are you are to go to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being.”

14. Jesus said to them, “If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned, and if you give to charity, you will harm your spirits. …

20. The disciples said to Jesus, “Tell us what Heaven’s kingdom is like.” He said to them, “It’s like a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, but when it falls on prepared soil, it produces a large plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.”

25. Jesus said, “Love your friends like your own soul, protect them like the pupil of your eye.”

44. Jesus said, “Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven.”

50. Jesus said, “If they say to you, ‘Where have you come from?’ say to them, ‘We have come from the light, from the place where the light came into being by itself, established itself, and appeared in their image.’ If they say to you, ‘Is it you?’ say, ‘We are its children, and we are the chosen of the living Father.’ If they ask you, ‘What is the evidence of your Father in you?’ say to them, ‘It is motion and rest.’”

52. His disciples said to him, “Twenty-four prophets have spoken in Israel, and they all spoke of you.” He said to them, “You have disregarded the living one who is in your presence, and have spoken of the dead.”

71. Jesus said, “I will destroy [this] house, and no one will be able to build it […].”

77. Jesus said, “I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.”

82. Jesus said, “Whoever is near me is near the fire, and whoever is far from me is far from the (Father’s) kingdom.”

96. Jesus [said], “The Father’s kingdom is like [a] woman. She took a little leaven, [hid] it in dough, and made it into large loaves of bread. Anyone here with two ears had better listen!”
97. Jesus said, “The [Father’s] kingdom is like a woman who was carrying a [jar] full of meal. While she was walking along [a] distant road, the handle of the jar broke and the meal spilled behind her [along] the road. She didn’t know it; she hadn’t noticed a problem. When she reached her house, she put the jar down and discovered that it was empty.”

98. Jesus said, “The Father’s kingdom is like a person who wanted to kill someone powerful. While still at home he drew his sword and thrust it into the wall to find out whether his hand would go in. Then he killed the powerful one.”

107. Jesus said, “The (Father’s) kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them, the largest, went astray. He left the ninety-nine and looked for the one until he found it. After he had toiled, he said to the sheep, ‘I love you more than the ninety-nine.’”

114. Simon Peter said to them, “Make Mary leave us, for females don’t deserve life.” Jesus said, “Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven.”

---

Text 5b: The Gospel of Philip
Translated by Wesley W. Isenberg

7. Those who sow in winter reap in summer. The winter is the world, the summer the other Aeon (eternal realm). Let us sow in the world that we may reap in the summer. Because of this, it is fitting for us not to pray in the winter. ...

23. No one will hide a large valuable object in something large, but many a time one has tossed countless thousands into a thing worth a penny. Compare the soul. It is a precious thing and it came to be in a contemptible body.

24–25. Some are afraid lest they rise naked. Because of this they wish to rise in the flesh, and they do not know that it is those who wear the flesh who are naked. ...Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Co 15:50). What is this which will not inherit? This which is on us. But what is this, too, which will inherit? It is that which belongs to Jesus and his blood. Because of this he said “He who shall not eat my flesh and drink my blood has not life in him” (Jn 6:53). What is it? His flesh is the word, and his blood is the Holy Spirit. He who has received these has food and he has drink and clothing. ...

35. ...For it is by a kiss that the perfect conceive and give birth. For this reason we also kiss one another. We receive conception from the grace which is in one another.

47. God is a dyer. As the good dyes, which are called “true”, dissolve with the things dyed in them, so it is with those whom God has dyed. Since his dyes are immortal, they become immortal by means of his colors. Now God dips what he dips in water.

55. Glass decanters and earthenware jugs are both made by means of fire. But if glass decanters break, they are done over, for they came into being through a breath. If earthenware jugs break, however, they are destroyed, for they came into being without breath.
58. The Lord went into the dye works of Levi. He took seventy-two different colors and threw them into the vat. He took them out all white. And he said, “Even so has the Son of Man come as a dyer.”

59. ...And the companion of the [Lord] Mary Magdalene. [The Lord] loved her more than all the disciples, and used to kiss her often on her mouth. The rest of the disciples...said to him “Why do you love her more than all of us?” The Savior answered and said to them, “Why do I not love you like her?”...

63. If one goes down into the water and comes up without having received anything, and says “I am a Christian,” he has borrowed the name at interest. But if he receives the Holy Spirit, he has the name as a gift. He who has received a gift does not have to give it back, but of him who has borrowed it at interest, payment is demanded. This is the way it happens to one when he experiences a mystery.

76. When Eve was still with Adam, death did not exist. When she was separated from him, death came into being. If he enters again and attains his former self, death will be no more.

86. If the woman had not separated from the man, she should not die with the man. His separation became the beginning of death. Because of this, Christ came to repair the separation, which was from the beginning, and again unite the two, and to give life to those who died as a result of the separation, and unite them. ...

98. Philip the apostle said, “Joseph the carpenter planted a garden because he needed wood for his trade. It was he who made the cross from the trees which he planted. His own offspring hung on that which he planted. His offspring was Jesus, and the planting was the cross.” But the Tree of Life is in the middle of the Garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we got the chrism, and from the chrism, the resurrection.

101. The chrism is superior to baptism, for it is from the word “Chrism” that we have been called “Christians,” certainly not because of the word “baptism”. And it is because of the chrism that “the Christ” has his name. For the Father anointed the Son, and the Son anointed the apostles, and the apostles anointed us. He who has been anointed possesses everything. He possesses the resurrection, the light, the cross, the Holy Spirit. ...

115. By perfecting the water of baptism, Jesus emptied it of death. Thus we do go down into the water, but we do not go down into death, in order that we may not be poured out into the spirit of the world. When that spirit blows, it brings the winter. When the Holy Spirit breathes, the summer comes.

131. No one can know when the husband and the wife have intercourse with one another, except the two of them. Indeed, marriage in the world is a mystery for those who have taken a wife. If there is a hidden quality to the marriage of defilement, how much more is the undefiled marriage a true mystery! It is not fleshly, but pure. It belongs not to desire, but to the will. It belongs not to the darkness or the night, but to the day and the light. ...
Text 6: The Odes of Solomon
Translated James Charlesworth

Ode 5
1. I praise You, O Lord, because I love You.
2. O Most High, forsake me not, for You are my hope.
3. Freely did I receive Your grace, may I live by it.
4. My persecutors will come but let them not see me.
5. Let a cloud of darkness fall upon their eyes; and let an air of thick darkness obscure them.
6. And let them have no light to see, so that they cannot seize me.
7. Let their designs become hardened, so that whatever they have conspired shall return upon their own heads.
8. For they have devised a plan, but it was not for them.
9. They prepared themselves maliciously, but they were found to be impotent.
10. Indeed my confidence is upon the Lord, and I will not fear.
11. And because the Lord is my salvation, I will not fear.
12. And He is as a woven crown upon my head, and I shall not be shaken.
13. Even if everything should be shaken, I shall stand firm.
14. And though all things visible should perish, I shall not die;
15. Because the Lord is with me, and I with Him. Hallelujah.

Ode 6
1. As the wind glides through the harp and the strings speak,
2. So the Spirit of the Lord speaks through my members, and I speak through His love.
3. For He destroys whatever is alien, and everything is of the Lord.
4. For thus it was from the beginning, and will be until the end.
5. So that nothing shall be contrary, and nothing shall rise up against Him.
6. The Lord has multiplied his knowledge, and He was zealous that those things should be known which through His grace have been given to us.
7. And His praise He gave us on account of His name, our spirits praise His Holy Spirit.
8. For there went forth a stream, and it became a river great and broad; indeed it carried away everything, and it shattered and brought it to the Temple.
9. And the barriers which were built by men were not able to restrain it, nor even the arts of them who habitually restrain water.
10. For it spread over the surface of all the earth, and it filled everything.
11. Then all the thirsty upon the earth drank, and thirst was relieved and quenched;
12. For from the Most High the drink was given.
13. Blessed, therefore, are the ministers of that drink, who have been entrusted with His water.
14. They have refreshed the parched lips, and have aroused the paralyzed will.
15. Even living persons who were about to expire, they have held back from death.
16. And limbs which have collapsed, they have restored and set up.
17. They gave strength for their coming, and light for their eyes.
18. Because everyone recognized them as the Lord’s, and lived by the living water of eternity. Hallelujah.

Ode 7
1. As is the course of anger over wickedness, so is the course of joy over the Beloved; and brings in of its fruits unhindered.
2. My joy is the Lord and my course is towards Him, this path of mine is beautiful.

2 From http://users.misericordia.edu/davies/thomas/odes.htm; accessed March 27, 2013.
3. For there is a Helper for me, the Lord. He has generously shown Himself to me in His simplicity, because His kindness has diminished His dreadfulness.
4. He became like me, that I might receive Him. In form He was considered like me, that I might put Him on.
5. And I trembled not when I saw Him, because He was gracious to me.
6. Like my nature He became, that I might understand Him. And like my form, that I might not turn away from Him.

**Ode 11**

1. My heart was pruned and its flower appeared, then grace sprang up in it, and my heart produced fruits for the Lord.
2. For the Most High circumcised me by His Holy Spirit, then He uncovered my inward being towards Him, and filled me with His love.
3. And His circumcising became my salvation, and I ran in the Way, in His peace, in the way of truth.
4. From the beginning until the end I received His knowledge.
5. And I was established upon the rock of truth, where He had set me.
6. And speaking waters touched my lips from the fountain of the Lord generously.
7. And so I drank and became intoxicated, from the living water that does not die.
8. And my intoxication did not cause ignorance, but I abandoned vanity,
9. And turned toward the Most High, my God, and was enriched by His favours.
10. And I rejected the folly cast upon the earth, and stripped it off and cast it from me.
11. And the Lord renewed me with His garment, and possessed me by His light.
12. And from above He gave me immortal rest, and I became like the land that blossoms and rejoices in its fruits.
13. And the Lord is like the sun upon the face of the land.
14. My eyes were enlightened, and my face received the dew;
15. And my breath was refreshed by the pleasant fragrance of the Lord.
16. And He took me to His Paradise, wherein is the wealth of the Lord's pleasure. I beheld blooming and fruit-bearing trees, and self-grown was their crown. Their branches were sprouting and their fruits were shining. From an immortal land were their roots. And a river of gladness was irrigating them, and round about them in the land of eternal life.
17. Then I worshipped the Lord because of His magnificence.
18. And I said, Blessed, O Lord, are they who are planted in Your land, and who have a place in Your Paradise;
19. And who grow in the growth of Your trees, and have passed from darkness into light.
20. Behold, all Your labourers are fair, they who work good works, and turn from wickedness to your pleasantness.
21. For the pungent odour of the trees is changed in Your land,
22. And everything becomes a remnant of Yourself. Blessed are the workers of Your waters, and eternal memorials of Your faithful servants.
23. Indeed, there is much room in Your Paradise. And there is nothing in it which is barren, but everything is filled with fruit.
24. Glory be to You, O God, the delight of Paradise for ever. Hallelujah.

**Ode 13**

1. Behold, the Lord is our mirror. Open your eyes and see them in Him.
2. And learn the manner of your face, then declare praises to His Spirit.
3. And wipe the paint from your face, and love His holiness and put it on.
4. Then you will be unblemished at all times with Him. Hallelujah.

**Ode 15**

1. As the sun is the joy of them who seek its daybreak, so is my joy the Lord;
2. Because He is my Sun, and His rays have lifted me up; and His light has dismissed all darkness from my face.
3. Eyes I have obtained in Him, and have seen His holy day.
4. Ears I have acquired, and have heard His truth.
5. The thought of knowledge I have acquired, and have enjoyed delight fully through Him.
6. I repudiated the way of error, and went towards Him and received salvation from Him abundantly.
7. And according to His generosity He gave to me, and according to His excellent beauty He made me.
8. I put on immortality before my face, and took off corruption by His grace.
9. Death has been destroyed before my face, and Sheol has been vanquished by my word.
10. And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land, and it has been declared to His faithful ones, and has been given without limit to all that trust in Him. Hallelujah.

Ode 16
1. As the occupation of the ploughman is the ploughshare, and the occupation of the helmsman is the steering of the ship, so also my occupation is the psalm of the Lord by His hymns.
2. My art and my service are in His hymns, because His love has nourished my heart, and His fruits He poured unto my lips.
3. For my love is the Lord; hence I will sing unto Him.
4. For I am strengthened by His praises, and I have faith in Him.
5. I will open my mouth, and His Spirit will speak through me the glory of the Lord and His beauty,
6. The work of His hands, and the labor of His fingers;
7. For the multitude of His mercies, and the strength of His Word.
8. For the Word of the Lord investigates that which is invisible, and reveals His thought.
9. For the eye sees His works, and the ear hears His thought.
10. It is He who made the earth broad, and placed the waters in the sea.
11. He expanded the heaven, and fixed the stars.
12. And He fixed the creation and set it up, then He rested from His works.
13. And created things run according to their courses, and work their works, for they can never cease nor fail.
14. And the hosts are subject to His Word.
15. The reservoir of light is the sun, and the reservoir of darkness is the night.
16. For He made the sun for the day so that it will be light; but night brings darkness over the face of the earth.
17. And by their portion one from another they complete the beauty of God.
18. And there is nothing outside of the Lord, because He was before anything came to be.
19. And the worlds are by His Word, and by the thought of His heart.
20. Praise and honour to His name. Hallelujah.

Ode 17
1. Then I was crowned by my God, and my crown was living.
2. And I was justified by my Lord, for my salvation is incorruptible.
3. I have been freed from vanities, and am not condemned.
4. My chains were cut off by His hands, I received the face and likeness of a new person, and I walked in Him and was saved.
5. And the thought of truth led me, and I went after it and wandered not.
6. And all who saw me were amazed, and I seemed to them like a stranger.
7. And He who knew and exalted me, is the Most High in all His perfection.
8. And He glorified me by His kindness, and raised my understanding to the height of truth.
9. And from there He gave me the way of His steps, and I opened the doors which were closed.
10. And I shattered the bars of iron, for my own shackles had grown hot and melted before me.
11. And nothing appeared closed to me, because I was the opening of everything.
12. And I went towards all my bound ones in order to loose them; that I might not leave anyone bound or binding.
13. And I gave my knowledge generously, and my resurrection through my love.
14. And I sowed my fruits in hearts, and transformed them through myself.
15. Then they received my blessing and lived, and they were gathered to me and were saved;
16. Because they became my members, and I was their Head.

**Ode 28**

1. As the wings of doves over their nestlings, and the mouths of their nestlings towards their mouths, so also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart.
2. My heart continually refreshes itself and leaps for joy, like the babe who leaps for joy in his mother's womb.
3. I trusted, consequently I was at rest; because trustful is He in whom I trusted.
4. He has greatly blessed me, and my head is with Him.
5. And the dagger shall not divide me from Him, nor the sword;
6. Because I am ready before destruction comes, and have been set on His immortal side.
7. And immortal life embraced me, and kissed me.
8. And from that life is the Spirit which is within me. And it cannot die because it is life.
9. Those who saw me were amazed, because I was persecuted.
10. And they thought that I had been swallowed up, because I seemed to them as one of the lost.
11. But my injustice became my salvation.
12. And I became their abomination, because there was no jealousy in me.
13. Because I continually did good to every man I was hated.
14. And they surrounded me like mad dogs, those who in stupidity attack their masters.
15. Because their thought is depraved, and their mind is perverted.
16. But I was carrying water in my right hand, and their bitterness I endured by my sweetness.
17. And I did not perish, because I was not their brother, nor was my birth like theirs.
18. And they sought my death but did not find it possible, because I was older than their memory; and in vain did they cast lots against me.
19. And those who were after me sought in vain to destroy the memorial of Him who was before them.
20. Because the thought of the Most High cannot be prepossessed; and His heart is superior to all wisdom. Hallelujah.

**Ode 29**

1. The Lord is my hope, I shall not be ashamed of Him.
2. For according to His praise He made me, and according to His grace even so He gave to me.
3. And according to His mercies He exalted me, and according to His great honour He lifted me up.
4. And he caused me to ascend from the depths of Sheol, and from the mouth of death He drew me.
5. And I humbled my enemies, and He justified me by His grace.
6. For I believed in the Lord's Messiah, and considered that He is the Lord.
7. And He revealed to me His sign, and He led me by His light.
8. And He gave me the sceptre of His power, that I might subdue the devices of the people, and humble the power of the mighty.
9. To make war by His Word, and to take victory by His power.
10. And the Lord overthrew my enemy by His Word, and he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.
11. And I gave praise to the Most High, because He has magnified His servant and the son of His maidservant. Hallelujah.

**Ode 30**

1. Fill for yourselves water from the living fountain of the Lord, because it has been opened for you.
2. And come all you thirsty and take a drink, and rest beside the fountain of the Lord.
3. Because it is pleasing and sparkling, and perpetually refreshes the self.
4. For much sweeter is its water than honey, and the honeycomb of bees is not to be compared with it;
5. Because it flowed from the lips of the Lord, and it named from the heart of the Lord.
6. And it came boundless and invisible, and until it was set in the middle they knew it not.
7. Blessed are they who have drunk from it, and have refreshed themselves by it. Hallelujah.
ODE 31
1. Chasms vanished before the Lord, and darkness dissipated before His appearance.
2. Error erred and perished on account of Him; and contempt received no path, for it was submerged by the truth of the Lord.
3. He opened His mouth and spoke grace and joy; and recited a new chant to His name.
4. Then He lifted his voice towards the Most High, and offered to Him those that had become sons through Him.
5. And His face was justified, because thus His Holy Father had given to Him.
6. Come forth, you who have been afflicted, and receive joy.
7. And possess yourselves through grace, and take unto you immortal life.
8. And they condemned me when I stood up, me who had not been condemned.
9. Then they divided my spoil, though nothing was owed them.
10. But I endured and held my peace and was silent, that I might not be disturbed by them.
11. But I stood undisturbed like a solid rock, which is continuously pounded by columns of waves and endures.
12. And I bore their bitterness because of humility; that I might redeem my nation and instruct it.
13. And that I might not nullify the promises to the patriarchs, to whom I was promised for the salvation of their offspring. Hallelujah.

Text 6: Tertullian, To His Wife 2.8

How beautiful, then, the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice. They are as brother and sister, both servants of the same Master. Nothing divides them, either in flesh or in spirit. They are, in very truth, two in one flesh; and where there is but one flesh there is also but one spirit. They pray together, they worship together, they fast together; instructing one another, encouraging one another, strengthening one another. Side by side they visit God’s church and partake of God’s banquet; side by side they face difficulties and persecution, share their consolations. They have no secrets from one another; they never shun each other’s company; they never bring sorrow to each other’s hearts. Unembarrassed they visit the sick and assist the needy. They give alms without anxiety; they attend the sacrifice without difficulty; they perform their daily exercises of piety without hindrance. They need not be furtive about making the sign of the cross, nor timorous in greeting the brethren, nor silent in asking a blessing of God. Psalms and hymns they sing to one another, striving to see which one of them will chant more beautifully the praises of their Lord. Hearing and seeing this, Christ rejoices. To such as these he gives his peace. Where there are two together, there also he is present; and where he is, there evil is not.

Text 7: Tertullian, an early Christian man of prayer

On Baptism 20
One thing I ask, that when you pray you may remember Tertullian, a sinner.

Apology 30.1, 4–5; 39.2
We offer prayer for the safety of our princes to the eternal, the true, the living God,… Looking up to him, we Christians—with hands outstretched, because free from sin; with head uncovered, because we have nothing to be ashamed of...

Offer prayer without ceasing for all our emperors. We pray for them long life, for security for the empire, for protection for the imperial house, for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest,
whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish. These things I cannot ask from any but the God from whom I know I shall obtain them,...because he alone bestows them...

We meet together as an assembly and congregation, that, offering up prayer to God as with united force, we may wrestle with him in our supplications. Such violence is pleasing to God. We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace...

On Prayer 29.1, 2-3, 4

What will God refuse to the prayer that comes to him from the spirit and in truth, since this is the prayer he has demanded? ...how much is wrought by Christian prayer?...

Righteous prayer of averts the wrath of God, keeps watch in the face of the enemy, and intercedes for persecutors. ...Prayer is the only thing that can prevail with God; but Christ has willed that it work no evil, upon it he has conferred all power for good. Therefore, it has no power except to recall the souls of the dead from the very path of death, to make the weak recover, to heal the sick, to exorcise demons, to open prison doors, to loosen the chains of the innocent. It likewise remits sins, repels temptations, stamps out persecution, consoles the fainthearted, delights the courageous, brings travelers safely home, calms the waves, stuns robbers, feeds the poor, directs the rich, raises up the fallen, sustains the falling, and supports those who are on their feet.

Prayer is the wall of faith, our shield and weapons against the foe who studies us from all sides. Hence, let us never set forth unarmed. Let us be mindful of our guard-duty by day and our vigil by night. Beneath the arms of prayer let us guard the standard of our general, and let us pray as we await the trumpet call of the angel.

...Even our Lord himself prayed, to whom be honour and power forever and ever.

---

Chapter 2

...In courts of justice, in public assembly before the rostrum let an opulent eloquence be displayed with unrestrained ambition, but when speech is concerned with the Lord God, the pure sincerity of speech depends not on the force of eloquence for the arguments in support of faith but on facts. Therefore, receive not eloquent words, but forceful ones, not decked out with cultivated rhetoric to entice a popular audience, but simple words of unvarnished truth for the proclaiming of God’s mercy. Receive what is felt before it is learned, and what is gathered not after a long study with much delay, but what is drawn in by a quickening act of divine grace.

Chapter 3

While I was lying in darkness and in the obscure night, and while, ignorant of my real life, I was tossing about on the sea of a restless world wavering and doubtful in my wandering steps, a stranger to the truth and the light, I thought it indeed difficult and hard (to believe) according to the character of mine at the time that divine mercy was promised for my salvation, so that anyone might be born again and quickened unto a new life by the laver of the saving water, he might put off what he had been before, and, although the structure of the body remained, he might change himself in soul and mind.

“How,” I said, “is such a conversion possible, that the innate which has grown hard in the corruption of natural material or when acquired has become inveterate by the affliction of old age should suddenly and swiftly be put aside? These things, deep and profound, have been thoroughly rooted within us. When does he learn thrift, who has become accustomed to lavish banquets and extravagant feasts? And when does he who, conspicuous in costly raiment, has shone in gold and purple, dispose himself to ordinary and simple clothing? He who has been delighted by the fasces and public honors cannot become a private and inglorious citizen. He who has been attended by crowds of clients or has been honored by a crowded assemblage of an officious throng thinks it a punishment to be

---

alone. Of necessity, as in the past, wine-bibbing ever entices with its tenacious allurements, pride puffs up, anger inflames, covetousness disturbs, cruelty stimulates, ambition delights, lust plunges into ruin.”

Chapter 4
This I often said to myself. For as I myself was held enlivened by the very many errors of my previous life, of which I believe that I could not divest myself, so I was disposed to give in to my clinging vices, and in my despair of better things I indulged my sins as if now proper and belonging to me. But afterwards, when the stain of my past life had been washed away by the aid of the water of regeneration, a light from above poured itself upon my chastened and pure heart; afterwards when I had drunk of the Spirit from heaven a second birth restored me into a new man; immediately in a marvelous manner doubtful matters clarified themselves, the closed opened, the shadowy shone with light, what seemed impossible was able to be accomplished, so that it was possible to acknowledge that what formerly was born of the flesh and lived submissive to sins was earthly, and what the Holy Spirit already was animating began to be of God.

Surely you know and recognize alike with myself what was taken from us and what was contributed by the death of sins and by that life of virtues. You yourself know; I do not proclaim it. Boasting to one’s own praise is odious, although that cannot be a matter of boasting but an expression of gratitude, which is not ascribed to the virtue of man but is proclaimed as of God’s munificence, so that now not to sin begins to be of faith, and what was done in sin before to be of human error. Our power is of God, I say, all of it is of God. From Him we have life; from Him we have prosperity; by the vigor received and conceived of Him, while still in this world, we have foreknowledge of what is to be. But let fear be the guardian of innocence, so that the Lord, who of His mercy has flowed into our hearts with the silent approach of celestial tenderness, may be kept in the guest-chamber of a heart that gives delight by its righteous action, lest the security we have received beget carelessness, and the old enemy creep upon us anew.

Chapter 5
But if you hold to the way of innocence, to the way of justice, with the firmness of your step unbroken, if depending upon God with all your strength and your whole heart you only be what you began to be, so much power is given you in the way of freedom to act as there is an increase in spiritual grace. For there is no measure or moderation in receiving of God’s munificence, as is the custom with earthly benefits. For the Spirit flowing forth bountifully is shut in by no boundaries, and is checked within the spaces of definite limits by no restraining barriers. It spreads out continually; it overflows abundantly, provided only our hearts are athirst and open for it. According as we bring to it a capacious faith, to this extent do we draw from it overflowing grace. From this source is the power given with modest chastity, with a sound mind, with a pure voice to extinguish the virus of poisons within the marrow of the grieving, to cleanse the stain of foolish souls by restoring health, to bind peace to the hostile, rest to the violent, gentleness to the unruly, by dire threats to force those unclean and vagrant spirits to confess, who have forced their way within men to destroy them, to force them with heavy blows to withdraw, to stretch them out struggling, wailing, groaning with an increase of expanding punishment, to beat them with scourges, and to roast them with fire. There the matter is carried on but is not seen; the blows are hidden but the punishment is manifest. Thus since we have already begun to be, the Spirit which we have received possesses its own freedom of action; since we have not yet changed our body and members, our still carnal view is obscured by the cloud of this world. How great is this domination of the mind, how great is its force, not only that it itself is withdrawn from pernicious contacts of the world, so that as one cleansed and pure it is seized by no stain of an attacking enemy, but that it becomes greater and stronger in its might, so that it rules with imperial right over every army of an attacking adversary.

Chapter 6
But in order that the characteristics of the divine munificence may shine forth when the truth has been revealed, I shall give you light to recognize it, by wiping away the cloud of evil I shall reveal the darkness of a hidden world. For a little consider that you are being transported to the loftiest peak of a high mountain, that from this you are viewing the appearance of things that lie below you and with your eyes directed in different directions you yourself free from earthly contacts gaze upon the turmoils of the world. Presently you also will have pity on the world, and taking account of yourself and with more gratitude to God you will rejoice with greater joy that you
have escaped from it. Observe the roads blocked by robbers, the seas beset by pirates, wars spread everywhere
with the bloody horrors of camps. The world is soaked with mutual blood, and when individuals commit homicide,
it is a crime; it is called a virtue when it is done in the name of the state. Impunity is acquired for crimes not by
reason of innocence but by the magnitude of the cruelty.

Chapter 7
Now if you turn your eyes and face toward the cities themselves, you will find a multitude sadder than any
solitude. A gladiatorial combat is being prepared that blood may delight the lust of cruel eyes. The body is filled up
with stronger foods, and the robust mass of flesh grows fat with bulging muscles, so that fattened for punishment
it may perish more dearly. Man is killed for the pleasure of man, and to be able to kill is a skill, is an employment, is
an art. Crime is not only committed but is taught. What can be called more inhuman, what more repulsive? It is a
training that one may be able to kill, and that he kills is a glory. What is this, I ask you, of what nature is it, where
those offer themselves to wild beasts, whom no one has condemned, in the prime of life, of a rather beautiful
appearance, in costly garments? While still alive they adorn themselves for a voluntary death, wretched they even
glory in their wicked deeds. They fight with beasts not because they are convicts but because they are mad.
Fathers look upon their own sons; a brother is in the arena and his sister near by, and, although the more
elaborate preparation of the exhibition increases the price of the spectacle, oh shame! the mother also pays this
price that she may be present at her own sorrows. And at such impious and terrible spectacles they do not realize
that with their eyes they are parricides.

Chapter 8
Turn your gaze away from this to the no less objectionable contaminations of a different kind of spectacle. In the
theaters also you will behold what will cause you both grief and shame. It is the tragic buskin to relate in verse the
crimes of former times. The ancient horror of parricide and incest is unfolded in acting expressed in the model of
the truth, lest, as time goes by, what was once committed disappear. Every age is reminded by what it hears that
what has been done can be done again. Transgressions never die from the passage of the ages; crime is never
erased by time; vice is never buried in oblivion. Then in the mimes by the teaching of infamies one delights either
to recall what he has done at home or to hear what he can do. Adultery is learned as it is seen, and, while evil with
public authority panders to vices, the matron who perchance had gone forth to the spectacle chaste returned from
the spectacle unchaste. Then further how great a collapse of morals, what a stimulus to base deeds, what a
nourishing of vices, to be polluted by the gestures of actors, to behold the elaborate endurance of incestuous
abominations contrary to the covenant and law of our birth. Men emasculate themselves; all the honor and vigor
of their sex are enfeebled by the disgrace of an enervated body, and he gives more pleasure there who best breaks
down the man into woman. He grows into praise from crime, and he is judged the more skillful, the more
degraded he is. Oh shame! Such a one is looked upon, and freely so. What cannot one in such a state suggest? He
roused the senses; he flatters the affections; he drives out the stronger conscience of a good heart; nor is there
lacking the authority of a seductive vice, that ruin may creep upon men with less notice. They depict Venus as
unchaste, Mars as an adulterer, and that famous Jupiter of theirs no more a chieftain in dominion than in vice,
burning with earthly love in the midst of his own thunderbolts, now shining white in the plumage of a swan, now
pouring down in a golden shower, now plunging forth with ministering birds for the raping of young boys. Ask now
whether he who looks upon this can be healthy minded or chaste. One imitates the gods whom he venerates. For
these poor wretches sins become even religious acts. …

Chapter 14
Therefore, there is one peaceful and trustworthy tranquility, one solid and firm security, if one withdraws from the
whirlpools of a disturbing world and takes anchor in the harbor of the port of salvation. He raises his eyes from
earth to heaven, and now admitted to the gift of God and being next to God in mind, whatever to others seems
sublime and great in human affairs, he boasts to lie beneath his consciousness. Nothing can he now seek from
the world, desire from the world, who is greater than the world. How stable, how unshaken is that protection, how
heavenly is that safeguard with its perennial blessings to be released from the snares of the entangling world, to
be purged of the dregs of earth for the light of immortality. He would see what a crafty destruction on the part of
an attacking enemy formerly proceeded against us. We are compelled to cherish more what we are to be, when it
is permitted us to know and to condemn what we were. Nor for this is there need of a price either in the way of
bribery or labor, that man’s highest dignity or power may be achieved with elaborate effort. It is both a free and easy gift from God. As the sun radiates of its own accord, the ray gives light, the spring waters, the shower moistens, so the heavenly Spirit infuses itself. When the soul gazing upon heaven recognizes its Author, higher than the sun and more sublime than all this earthly power, it begins to be that which it believes itself to be.

Chapter 15
Do you, whom already the heavenly warfare has designated for the spiritual camp, only keep uncorrupted and chastened in religious virtues. See that you observe either constant prayer or reading. Speak now with God; let God now speak with you. Let Him instruct in His precepts; let Him dispose you in them. Whom He shall make rich, no one will make poor. There can be no want, when once the celestial food has filled the breast. Now ceilings enriched with gold and houses decorated with slabs of precious marble will seem of no account when you realize that you are to be cherished more, that you rather are to be adorned, that this house is of more importance for you, where God dwells in a temple, in which the Holy Spirit begins to live. Let us embellish this house with the colors of innocence; let us illuminate it with the light of justice. This house will never fall into ruin by the decay of age, nor will it be disfigured by the tarnishing of the color and gold of its walls. Whatever has been falsely beautified is destined to perish, and what possesses no reality of possession offers no stable confidence to those who possess it. This abides in a beauty perpetually vivid, in complete honor, in everlasting splendor. It can neither be destroyed nor blotted out. It can only be fashioned for the better, when the body returns.

Text 9a: Constantine’s testimony

To acknowledge...in solemn terms the beneficence of the Supreme Being is by no means boasting. He searched for and chose my service to carry out his purpose. Starting...at the faraway Britannic sea and the regions where the sun...sets, by the help of the Supreme Power, I drove out and scattered all the prevailing evil things, in order that the human race, reared with my assistance, might call upon the service of the holy law... I am firmly convinced that I owe my life and every breath...to the Supreme God.”

Text 9b: Constantine, Letter to King Sapor of Persia

I profess the most holy religion. I confess that as a disciple of the Holy God I observe this worship. With the power of this God on my side to help me, beginning at the boundaries of the Ocean, I had gathered every nation, one after another, throughout the world, to the certain hope of salvation... This God I worship and my army is dedicated to him and wears his sign on their shoulders, marching directly wherever the cause of justice summons them. I confess that I honour this God with never-dying remembrance, this God in the height of his glory I delight to contemplate with a pure and simple heart.

Text 10: The Nicene Creed (325) & The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (381)

THE NICENE CREED (325)
We believe in one God, the Father, almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, who because of us men
and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, will come to judge the living and the dead;
And in the Holy Spirit.
But as for those who say, ‘There was when he was not,’ and, ‘Before being born he was not,’ and that ‘He came into existence out of nothing,’ or who assert that the Son of God is of a different hypostasis or substance, or is subject to alteration or change—these the Catholic and apostolic Church anathematizes.

THE NICENO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED (381)
We believe in one God the Father, almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, who because of us men and because of our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures and ascended to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and will come again with glory to judge living and dead, of whose kingdom there will be no end,
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and lifegiver, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is together worshipped and together glorified, who spoke through the prophets; in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We confess one baptism to the remission of sins; we look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Text 11: The Confession of St. Patrick

1. I am Patrick, a sinner, most unlearned, the least of all the faithful, and utterly despised by many. My father was Calpornius, a deacon, son of Potitus, a presbyter, of the village Bannavem Taburniae; he had a country seat nearby, and there I was taken captive.
   I was then about sixteen years of age. I did not know the true God. I was taken into captivity to Ireland with many thousands of people—and deservedly so, because we turned away from God, and did not keep His commandments, and did not obey our elders, who used to remind us of our salvation. And the Lord brought over us the wrath of His anger and scattered us among many nations, even unto the utmost part of the earth, where now my littleness is placed among strangers.
   2. And there the Lord opened the sense of my unbelief that I might at last remember my sins and be converted with all my heart to the Lord my God, who had regard for my abjection, and mercy on my youth and ignorance, and watched over me before I knew Him, and before I was able to distinguish between good and evil, and guarded me, and comforted me as would a father his son.
   3. Hence I cannot be silent—nor, indeed, is it expedient—about the great benefits and the great grace which the Lord has deigned to bestow upon me in the land of my captivity; for this we can give to God in return after having been chastened by Him, to exalt and praise His wonders before every nation that is anywhere under the heaven.
   4. Because there is no other God, nor ever was, nor will be, than God the Father unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all beginning, the Lord of the universe, as we have been taught; and His son Jesus Christ, whom we declare to have always been with the Father, spiritually and ineffably begotten by the Father before the beginning of the world, before all beginning; and by Him are made all things visible and invisible. He was made man, and, having defeated death, was received into heaven by the Father; and He hath given Him all power over all names in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess to Him that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, in whom we believe, and whose advent we expect soon to be, judge of the living and of the dead, who will render to every man according to his deeds; and He has poured forth upon us abundantly the Holy Spirit, the gift and pledge of immortality, who makes those who believe and obey sons of God and joint heirs with Christ; and Him do we confess and adore, one God in the Trinity of the Holy Name.
5. For He Himself has said through the Prophet: Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. And again He says: It is honourable to reveal and confess the works of God.

6. Although I am imperfect in many things, I nevertheless wish that my brethren and kinsmen should know what sort of person I am, so that they may understand my heart’s desire.

7. I know well the testimony of my Lord, who in the Psalm declares: Thou wilt destroy them that speak a lie. And again He says: The mouth that lies kills the soul. And the same Lord says in the Gospel: Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it on the day of judgment.

8. And so I should dread exceedingly, with fear and trembling, this sentence on that day when no one will be able to escape or hide, but we all, without exception, shall have to give an account even of our smallest sins before the judgment of the Lord Christ.

9. For this reason I had in mind to write, but hesitated until now; I was afraid of exposing myself to the talk of men, because I have not studied like the others, who thoroughly imbibed law and Sacred Scripture, and never had to change from the language of their childhood days, but were able to make it still more perfect. In our case, what I had to say had to be translated into a tongue foreign to me, as can be easily proved from the savour of my writing, which betrays how little instruction and training I have had in the art of words; for, so says Scripture, by the tongue will be discovered the wise man, and understanding, and knowledge, and the teaching of truth.

10. But of what help is an excuse, however true, especially if combined with presumption, since now, in my old age, I strive for something that I did not acquire in youth? It was my sins that prevented me from fixing in my mind what before I had barely read through. But who believes me, though I should repeat what I started out with? As a youth, nay, almost as a boy not able to speak, I was taken captive, before I knew what to pursue and what to avoid. Hence to-day I blush and fear exceedingly to reveal my lack of education; for I am unable to tell my story to those versed in the art of concise writing—in such a way, I mean, as my spirit and mind long to do, and so that the sense of my words expresses what I feel.

11. But if indeed it had been given to me as it was given to others, then I would not be silent because of my desire of thanksgiving; and if perhaps some people think me arrogant for doing so in spite of my lack of knowledge and my slow tongue, it is, after all, written: The stammering tongues shall quickly learn to speak peace. How much more should we earnestly strive to do this, we, who are, so Scripture says, a letter of Christ for salvation unto the utmost part of the earth, and, though not an eloquent one, yet...written in your hearts, not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God! And again the Spirit witnesses that even rusticity was created by the Highest.

12. Whence I, once rustic, exiled, unlearned, who does not know how to provide for the future, this at least I know most certainly that before I was humiliated I was like a stone Lying in the deep mire; and He that is mighty came and in His mercy lifted me up, and raised me aloft, and placed me on the top of the wall. And therefore I ought to cry out aloud and so also render something to the Lord for His great benefits here and in eternity—benefits which the mind of men is unable to appraise.

13. Wherefore, then, be astonished, you great and little that fear God, and you men of letters on your estates, listen and pore over this. Who was it that roused me, the fool that I am, from the midst of those who in the eyes of men are wise, and expert in law, and powerful in word and in everything? And He inspired me—me, the outcast of this world—before others, to be the man (if only I could!) who, with fear and reverence and without blame, should faithfully serve the people to whom the love of Christ conveyed and gave me for the duration of my life, if I should be worthy; yes indeed, to serve them humbly and sincerely.

14. In the light, therefore, of our faith in the Trinity I must make this choice, regardless of danger I must make known the gift of God and everlasting consolation, without fear and frankly I must spread everywhere the name of God so that after my decease I may leave a bequest to my brethren and sons whom I have baptized in the Lord—so many thousands of people.

15. And I was not worthy, nor was I such that the Lord should grant this to His servant; that after my misfortunes and so great difficulties, after my captivity, after the lapse of so many years, He should give me so great a grace in behalf of that nation—a thing which once, in my youth, I never expected nor thought of.

16. But after I came to Ireland—every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed—the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was moved so that in a single day I would say as many as a hundred prayers, and almost as many in the night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountains; and I used to get up for prayer before daylight, through snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm, and there was no sloth in me—as I now see, because the spirit within me was then fervent.
17. And there one night I heard in my sleep a voice saying to me: ‘It is well that you fast, soon you will go to your own country.’ And again, after a short while, I heard a voice saying to me: ‘See, your ship is ready.’ And it was not near, but at a distance of perhaps two hundred miles, and I had never been there, nor did I know a living soul there; and then I took to flight, and I left the man with whom I had stayed for six years. And I went in the strength of God who directed my way to my good, and I feared nothing until I came to that ship.

18. And the day that I arrived the ship was set afloat, and I said that I was able to pay for my passage with them. But the captain was not pleased, and with indignation he answered harshly: ‘It is of no use for you to ask us to go along with us.’ And when I heard this, I left them in order to return to the hut where I was staying. And as I went, I began to pray; and before I had ended my prayer, I heard one of them shouting behind me, ‘Come, hurry, we shall take you on in good faith; make friends with us in whatever way you like.’ And so on that day I refused to suck their breasts for fear of God, but rather hoped they would come to the faith of Jesus Christ, because they were pagans. And thus I had my way with them, and we set sail at once.

19. And after three days we reached land, and for twenty-eight days we travelled through deserted country. And they lacked food, and hunger overcame them; and the next day the captain said to me: ‘Tell me, Christian: you say that your God is great and all-powerful; why, then, do you not pray for us? As you can see, we are suffering from hunger; it is unlikely indeed that we shall ever see a human being again.’ I said to them full of confidence: ‘Be truly converted with all your heart to the Lord my God, because nothing is impossible for Him, that this day He may send you food on your way until you be satisfied; for He has abundance everywhere.’ And, with the help of God, so it came to pass: suddenly a herd of pigs appeared on the road before our eyes, and they killed many of them; and there they stopped for two nights and fully recovered their strength, and their hounds received their fill for many of them had grown weak and were half-dead along the way. And from that day they had plenty of food. They also found wild honey, and offered some of it to me, and one of them said: ‘This we offer in sacrifice.’ Thanks be to God, I tasted none of it.

20. That same night, when I was asleep, Satan assailed me violently, a thing I shall remember as long as I shall be in this body. And he fell upon me like a huge rock, and I could not stir a limb. But whence came it into my mind, ignorant as I am, to call upon Helias? And meanwhile I saw the sun rise in the sky, and while I was shouting ‘Helias! Helias!’ with all my might, suddenly the splendour of that sun fell on me and immediately freed me of all misery. And I believe that I was sustained by Christ my Lord, and that His Spirit was even then crying out in my behalf, and I hope it will be so on the day of my tribulation, as is written in the Gospel: On that day, the Lord declares, it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.

21. And once again, after many years, I fell into captivity. On that first night I stayed with them, I heard a divine message saying to me: ‘Two months will you be with them.’ And so it came to pass: on the sixtieth night thereafter the Lord delivered me out of their hands.

22. Also on our way God gave us food and fire and dry weather every day, until, on the tenth day, we met people. As I said above, we travelled twenty-eight days through deserted country, and the night that we met people we had no food left.

23. And again after a few years I was in Britain with my people, who received me as their son, and sincerely besought me that now at last, having suffered so many hardships, I should not leave them and go elsewhere.

And there I saw in the night the vision of a man, whose name was Victoricus, coming as it were from Ireland, with countless letters. And he gave me one of them, and I read the opening words of the letter, which were, ‘The voice of the Irish’; and as I read the beginning of the letter I thought that at the same moment I heard their voice—they were those beside the Wood of Voclut, which is near the Western Sea—and thus did they cry out as with one mouth: ‘We ask thee, boy, come and walk among us once more.’

And I was quite broken in heart, and could read no further, and so I woke up. Thanks be to God, after many years the Lord gave to them according to their cry.

24. And another night—whether within me, or beside me, I know not, God knows—they called me most unmistakably with words which I heard but could not understand, except that at the end of the prayer He spoke thus: ‘He that has laid down His life for thee, it is He that speaks in thee’; and so I awoke full of joy.

25. And again I saw Him praying in me, and I was as it were within my body, and I heard Him above me, that is, over the inward man, and there He prayed mightily with groanings. And all the time I was astonished, and wondered, and thought with myself who it could be that prayed in me. But at the end of the prayer He spoke, saying that He was the Spirit; and so I woke up, and remembered the Apostle saying: The Spirit helps the
infirmities of our prayer. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself asks for us with unspeakable groanings, which cannot be expressed in words; and again: The Lord our advocate asks for us.

26. And when I was attacked by a number of my seniors who came forth and brought up my sins against my laborious episcopate, on that day indeed was I struck so that I might have fallen now and for eternity; but the Lord graciously spared the stranger and sojourner for His name and came mightily to my help in this affliction. Verily, not slight was the shame and blame that fell upon me! I ask God that it may not be reckoned to them as sin.

27. As cause for proceeding against me they found—after thirty years!—a confession I had made before I was a deacon. In the anxiety of my troubled mind I confided to my dearest friend what I had done in my boyhood one day, nay, in one hour, because I was not yet strong. I know not, God knows—whether I was then fifteen years old: and I did not believe in the living God, nor did I so from my childhood, but lived in death and unbelief until I was severely chastised and really humiliated, by hunger and nakedness, and that daily.

28. On the other hand, I did not go to Ireland of my own accord, not until I had nearly perished; but this was rather for my good, for thus was I purged by the Lord; and He made me fit so that I might be now what was once far from me that I should care and labor for the salvation of others, whereas then I did not even care about myself.

29. On that day, then, when I was rejected by those referred to and mentioned above, in that night I saw a vision of the night. There was a writing without honor against my face, and at the same time I heard God's voice saying to me: 'We have seen with displeasure the face of Designatus' (thus revealing his name). He did not say, 'Thou hast seen,' but 'We have seen' as if He included Himself, as He says: 'He who touchs you touchs as it were the apple of my eye.'

30. Therefore I give Him thanks who hath strengthened me in everything, as He did not frustrate the journey upon which I had decided, and the work which I had learned from Christ my Lord; but I rather felt after this no little strength, and my trust was proved right before God and men.

31. And so I say boldly, my conscience does not blame me now or in the future: God is my witness that I have not lied in the account which I have given you.

32. But the more am I sorry for my dearest friend that we had to hear what he said. To him I had confided my very soul! And I was told by some of the brethren before that defence—at which I was not present, nor was I in Britain, nor was it suggested by me—that he would stand up for me in my absence. He had even said to me in person: 'Look, you should be raised to the rank of bishop!'—of which I was not worthy. But whence did it come to him afterwards that he let me down before all, good and evil, and publicly, in a matter in which he had favored me before spontaneously and gladly—and not he alone, but the Lord, who is greater than all?

33. Enough of this. I must not, however, hide God's gift which He bestowed upon me in the land of my captivity; because then I earnestly sought Him, and there I found Him, and He saved me from all evil because—so I believe—of His Spirit that dwells in me. Again, boldly said. But God knows it, had this been said to me by a man, I had perhaps remained silent for the love of Christ.

34. Hence, then, I give unwearied thanks to God, who kept me faithful in the day of my temptation, so that today I can confidently offer Him my soul as a living sacrifice—to Christ my Lord, who saved me out of all my troubles. Thus I can say: 'Who am I, O Lord, and to what hast Thou called me, Thou who didst assist me with such divine power that to-day I constantly exalt and magnify Thy name among the heathens wherever I may be, and not only in good days but also in tribulations?' So indeed I must accept with equanimity whatever befalls me, be it good or evil, and always give thanks to God, who taught me to trust in Him always without hesitation, and who must have heard my prayer so that I, however ignorant I was, in the last days dared to undertake such a holy and wonderful work—thus imitating somehow those who, as the Lord once foretold, would preach His Gospel for a testimony to all nations before the end of the world. So we have seen it, and so it has been fulfilled: indeed, we are witnesses that the Gospel has been preached unto those parts beyond which there lives nobody.

35. Now, it would be tedious to give a detailed account of all my labors or even a part of them. Let me tell you briefly how the merciful God often freed me from slavery and from twelve dangers in which my life was at stake—not to mention numerous plots, which I cannot express in words; for I do not want to bore my readers. But God is my witness, who knows all things even before they come to pass, as He used to forewarn even me, poor wretch that I am, of many things by a divine message.

36. How came I by this wisdom, which was not in me, who neither knew the number of my days nor knew what God was? Whence was given to me afterwards the gift so great, so salutary—to know God and to love Him, although at the price of leaving my country and my parents?
37. And many gifts were offered to me in sorrow and tears, and I offended the donors, much against the wishes of some of my seniors; but, guided by God, in no way did I agree with them or acquiesce. It was not grace of my own, but God, who is strong in me and resists them all—as He had done when I came to the people of Ireland to preach the Gospel, and to suffer insult from the unbelievers, hearing the reproach of my going abroad, and many persecutions even unto bonds, and to give my free birth for the benefit of others; and, should I be worthy, I am prepared to give even my life without hesitation and most gladly for His name, and it is there that I wish to spend it until I die, if the Lord would grant it to me.

38. For I am very much God’s debtor, who gave me such grace that many people were reborn in God through me and afterwards confirmed, and that clerics were ordained for them everywhere, for a people just coming to the faith, whom the Lord took from the utmost parts of the earth, as He once had promised through His prophets: To Thee the gentiles shall come from the ends of the earth and shall say: ‘How false are the idols that our fathers got for themselves, and there is no profit in them’; and again: ‘I have set Thee as a light among the gentiles, that Thou mayest be for salvation unto the utmost part of the earth.’

39. And there I wish to wait for His promise who surely never deceives, as He promises in the Gospel: They shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob—as we believe the faithful will come from all the world.

40. For that reason, therefore, we ought to fish well and diligently, as the Lord exhorts in advance and teaches, saying: Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men. And again He says through the prophets: Behold, I send many fishers and hunters, says God, and so on. Hence it was most necessary to spread our nets so that a great multitude and throng might be caught for God, and that there be clerics everywhere to baptize and exhort a people in need and want, as the Lord in the Gospel states, exhorts and teaches, saying: Going therefore now, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world. And again He says: Go ye therefore into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And again: This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall come the end. And so too the Lord announces through the prophet, and says: And it shall come to pass, in the last days, says the Lord, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And upon my servants indeed, and upon my handmaids will I pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And in Hosea, He says: ‘I will call that which was not my people, my people; ...and her that had not obtained mercy, one that hath obtained mercy. And it shall be in the place where it was said: “You are not my people,” there they shall be called the sons of the living God.’

41. Hence, how did it come to pass in Ireland that those who never had a knowledge of God, but until now always worshipped idols and things impure, have now been made a people of the Lord, and are called sons of God, that the sons and daughters of the kings of the Irish are seen to be monks and virgins of Christ?

42. Among others, a blessed Irishwoman of noble birth, beautiful, full-grown, whom I had baptized, came to us after some days for a particular reason: she told us that she had received a message from a messenger of God, and he admonished her to be a virgin of Christ and draw near to God. Thanks be to God, on the sixth day after this she most laudably and eagerly chose what all virgins of Christ do. Not that their fathers agree with them; no—they often ever suffer persecution and undeserved reproaches from their parents; and yet their number is ever increasing. How many have been reborn there so as to be of our kind, I do not know—not to mention widows and those who practice continence.

But greatest is the suffering of those women who live in slavery. All the time they have to endure terror and threats. But the Lord gave His grace to many of His maidens; for, though they are forbidden to do so, they follow Him bravely.

43. Wherefore, then, even if I wished to leave them and go to Britain—and how I would have loved to go to my country and my parents, and also to Gaul in order to visit the brethren and to see the face of the saints of my Lord! God knows it! that I much desired it; but I am bound by the Spirit, who gives evidence against me if I do this, telling me that I shall be guilty; and I am afraid of losing the labor which I have begun—nay, not I, but Christ the Lord who bade me come here and stay with them for the rest of my life, if the Lord will, and will guard me from every evil way that I may not sin before Him.
44. This, I presume, I ought to do, but I do not trust myself as long as I am in this body of death, for strong is he who daily strives to turn me away from the faith and the purity of true religion to which I have devoted myself to the end of my life to Christ my Lord. But the hostile flesh is ever dragging us unto death, that I strive, towards the forbidden satisfaction of one's desires; and I know that in part I did not lead a perfect life as did the other faithful; but I acknowledge it to my Lord, and do not blush before Him, because I lie not: from the time I came to know Him in my youth, the love of God and the fear of Him have grown in me, and up to now, thanks to the grace of God, I have kept the faith.

45. And let those who will, laugh and scorn—I shall not be silent; nor shall I hide the signs and wonders which the Lord has shown me many years before they came to pass, as He knows everything even before the times of the world.

46. Hence I ought unceasingly to give thanks to God who often pardoned my folly and my carelessness, and on more than one occasion spared His great wrath on me, who was chosen to be His helper and who was slow to do as was shown me and as the Spirit suggested. And the Lord had mercy on me thousands and thousands of times because He saw that I was ready, but that I did not know what to do in the circumstances. For many tried to prevent this my mission; they would even talk to each other behind my back and say: 'Why does this fellow throw himself into danger among enemies who have no knowledge of God?' It was not malice, but it did not appeal to them because—and to this I own myself—of my rusticity. And I did not realize at once the grace that was then in me; now I understand that I should have done so before.

47. Now I have given a simple account to my brethren and fellow servants who have believed me because of what I said and still say in order to strengthen and confirm your faith. Would that you, too, would strive for greater things and do better! This will be my glory, for a wise son is the glory of his father.

48. You know, and so does God, how I have lived among you from my youth in the true faith and in sincerity of heart. Likewise, as regards the heathen among whom I live, I have been faithful to them, and so I shall be. God knows it, I have overreached none of them, nor would I think of doing so, for the sake of God and His Church, for fear of raising persecution against them and all of us, and for fear that through me the name of the Lord be blasphemed; for it is written: Woe to the man through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed.

49. For although I be rude in all things, nevertheless I have tried somehow to keep myself safe, and that, too, for my Christian brethren, and the virgins of Christ, and the pious women who of their own accord made me gifts and laid on the altar some of their ornaments and I gave them back to them, and they were offended that I did so. But I did it for the hope of lasting success—in order to preserve myself cautiously in everything so that they might not seize upon me or the ministry of my service, under the pretext of dishonesty, and that I would not even in the smallest manner give the infidels an opportunity to defame or defile.

50. When I baptized so many thousands of people, did I perhaps expect from any of them as much as half a scruple? Tell me, and I will restore it to you. Or when the Lord ordained clerics everywhere through my unworthy person and I conferred the ministry upon them free, if I asked any of them as much as the price of my shoes, speak against me and I will return it to you.

51. On the contrary, I spent money for you that they might receive me; and I went to you and everywhere for your sake in many dangers, even to the farthest districts, beyond which there lived nobody and where nobody had ever come to baptize, or to ordain clergy, or to confirm the people. With the grace of the Lord, I did everything lovingly and gladly for your salvation.

52. All the while I used to give presents to the kings, besides the fees I paid to their sons who travel with me. Even so they laid hands on me and my companions, and on that day they eagerly wished to kill me; but my time had not yet come. And everything they found with us they took away, and me they put in irons; and on the fourteenth day the Lord delivered me from their power, and our belongings were returned to us because of God and our dear friends whom we had seen before.

53. You know how much I paid to those who administered justice in all those districts to which I came frequently. I think I distributed among them not less than the price of fifteen men, so that you might enjoy me, and I might always enjoy you in God. I am not sorry for it—indeed it is not enough for me; I still spend and shall spend more. God has power to grant me afterwards that I myself may be spent for your souls.

54. Indeed, I call God to witness upon my soul that I lie not; neither, I hope, am I writing to you in order to make this an occasion of flattery or covetousness, nor because I look for honor from any of you. Sufficient is the honor that is not yet seen but is anticipated in the heart. Faithful is He that promised; He never lies.
55. But I see myself exalted even in the present world beyond measure by the Lord, and I was not worthy nor such that He should grant me this. I know perfectly well, though not by my own judgment, that poverty and misfortune becomes me better than riches and pleasures. For Christ the Lord, too, was poor for our sakes; and I, unhappy wretch that I am, have no wealth even if I wished for it. Daily I expect murder, fraud, or captivity, or whatever it may be; but I fear none of these things because of the promises of heaven. I have cast myself into the hands of God Almighty, who rules everywhere, as the prophet says: Cast thy thought upon God, and He shall sustain thee.

56. So, now I commend my soul to my faithful God, for whom I am an ambassador in all my wretchedness; but God accepts no person, and chose me for this office—to be, although among His least, one of His ministers.

57. Hence let me render unto Him for all He has done to me. But what can I say or what can I promise to my Lord, as I can do nothing that He has not given me? May He search the hearts and deepest feelings; for greatly and exceedingly do I wish, and ready I was, that He should give me His chalice to drink, as He gave it also to the others who loved Him.

58. Wherefore may God never permit it to happen to me that I should lose His people which He purchased in the utmost parts of the world. I pray to God to give me perseverance and to deign that I be a faithful witness to Him to the end of my life for my God.

59. And if ever I have done any good for my God whom I love, I beg Him to grant me that I may shed my blood with those exiles and captives for His name, even though I should be denied a grave, or my body be woefully torn to pieces limb by limb by hounds or wild beasts, or the fowls of the air devour it. I am firmly convinced that if this should happen to me, I would have gained my soul together with my body, because on that day without doubt we shall rise in the brightness of the sun, that is, in the glory of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, as sons of the living God and joint heirs with Christ, to be made conformable to His image; for of Him, and by Him, and in Him we shall reign.

60. For this sun which we see rises daily for us because He commands so, but it will never reign, nor will its splendor last; what is more, those wretches who adore it will be miserably punished. Not so we, who believe in, and worship, the true sun—Christ—who will never perish, nor will he who doeth His will; but he will abide for ever as Christ abides for ever, who reigns with God the Father Almighty and the Holy Spirit before time, and now, and in all eternity. Amen.

61. Behold, again and again would I set forth the words of my confession. I testify in truth and in joy of heart before God and His holy angels that I never had any reason except the Gospel and its promises why I should ever return to the people from whom once before I barely escaped.

62. I pray those who believe and fear God, whosoever deigns to look at or receive this writing which Patrick, a sinner, unlearned, has composed in Ireland, that no one should ever say that it was my ignorance if I did or showed forth anything however small according to God’s good pleasure; but let this be your conclusion and let it so be thought, that—as is the perfect truth—it was the gift of God. This is my confession before I die.