Pharisee.

The Pharisee in the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, was extraordinary in his devotional practices, going far beyond the requirements of the Torah. His greatest error was in assessing his own holiness, assessing the holiness of the Publican, and concluding he was the more holy of the two.

One approach to countering the spiritual global warming and pollution is to attempt to demonstrate the benefits of following God’s instructions. Each of us should be demonstrating this in our own lives, which gives us the opportunity to demonstrate God’s mercy because we constantly fail in our attempts to be holy. When the opportunity arises we should be prepared to and should actually engage in discussions which support this position. But we quickly discover not only are those who promote acceptance of their own favorite sins not willing to discuss anything other than that others accept their engagement in their favorite sins, they also are unwilling to acknowledge their favorite sins cause harm, or that following God’s way is beneficial.

Just as we do not abandon prayer even though we acknowledge the effectiveness of prayer often depends on the free will of those who are the subject of the prayers, so too should we not abandon this approach, for God has
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The sole purpose of this publication is to comply with the teachings and instructions of Jesus Christ, second person of the Trinity God, and to further His kingdom; or, in plain language, to get as many of our sorry selves to heaven as is possible.

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Telephone / electronic addresses:
Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
25401 Lorin Wall Rd.
Holden, Louisiana 70744 USA
(504) 298-3867
frlee@reu.org
http://www.reu.org
BBS ftp telnet://reu.org

Father Lee S. Mc Colloster,
Publisher

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(Continued ATONEMENT 1 from page 1)

But God - Jesus Christ - used and uses another approach to which we often give lip service, and in which we usually only occasionally engage, but which actually will clean up the spiritual pollution which effects those who engage in this approach.

By our desire we may be of the opinion the repairs are not our responsibility - that those who are responsible for the filth should clean it up.

But that is not the example we receive from Jesus Christ. Though He was not responsible for the filth and corruption caused by sin, He took on the responsibility of cleaning up the filth, and correcting the spiritual environment, by becoming the supreme sacrificial victim and offering, thereby making reparation and atonement for our sins and the spiritual filth and pollution we created.

If we are to be true followers of Christ we also must make reparation and atonement for the sins of others, as well as for our own sins. Those who declare it is impossible for a human to make meaningful atonement and reparation for sins, or that it is not necessary because Jesus already accomplished that, are in error.

It is because Jesus offered Himself as the supreme sacrificial victim, that we are able to join our efforts for atonement and reparation to the offering of Jesus, and thereby participate in the making of that reparation and atonement.

Ref: 1 Cor. 12:2-11; Luke 18:9-14

But God - Jesus Christ - used and uses another approach to which we often give lip service, and in which we usually only occasionally engage, but which actually will clean up the spiritual pollution which effects those who engage in this approach.

We will gradually introduce this approach, and so do indirectly at first, with a simple example, leaving more complete development for the future.

If you were to discover trash spread across your front yard, or, if you live in apartment, the hall by your front door, that trash would be pollution. You probably would attempt to determine how the trash got there, and perhaps even attempt to have the persons responsible clean it up. But if it seemed that would be a lengthy process you probably would clean it up yourself and then attempt to go after the ones responsible.

Cleaning up the physical mess in your front yard is repairing the environment of your front yard. It is a form of reparation. It does not correct the problem of someone spreading trash around, and may not prevent someone again spreading trash around your front yard. But you clean it up because it is your front yard, and you attempt to prevent someone from trashing your yard again. Of course, if you are the one who trashed your own front yard, then you have a different problem, but the clean-up situation remains the same.

This is the beginning of cleaning up the spiritual pollution which is making mankind spiritually ill even unto spiritual death. That we clean our own spiritual front yard of spiritual filth.

We may have placed that filth there ourselves, or it may have been spread around by others, or a combination of both. If it was brought in by others, and against our desires, we may be of the opinion the repairs are not our responsibility - that those who are responsible for the filth should clean it up.

REPAIRS ARE PART OF NORMAL MAINTENANCE Atonement and Reparation [2]

People mentally and sometimes even physically moan and groan whenever the words reparation and atonement for sins are spoken. When instructed and advised to pray, or to pray for sinners, or that sin will be overcome, or that people will turn to God, or attempt to follow Christ’s teachings, or to be holy, there usually is no moaning or groaning. Those admonitions have been made so often they just pass in one ear and out the other, or bounce off the skull of the one who should be listening; but apparently they are, occasionally at least, heard . . . And sometimes acted upon.

But reparation and atonement for sins seem to elicit groans and moans.

Those moans and groans are produced under demonic influence; in response to Satan’s influence. This is because what Jesus Christ our God and Brother did in making Himself the Supreme Sacrificial Offering and offering Himself as this Sacrifice in His passion and death on the Cross, what He did was to make reparation and atonement for our sins. In so doing He made it again possible for humans to establish a harmonious relationship with God, and to attain eternal salvation in eternal union with God in Heaven.

The Devil does not want us to access what Jesus Christ made available to us. Rather, the Devil wants us to go to Hell for all eternity.

When we engage in reparation and atonement for sins, we participate in the act of eternal salvation which Jesus Christ did. In so doing we also repair, even if it just a little, some of the damage caused by sin. When we make those
Some people experience aggravation at just the thought of having to make atonement and reparation for the sins of others. Their attitude is, “Why should I have to do that. They committed the sins, so why should I have to make up for them.”

If that had been Our Lord’s attitude there would be noticeably fewer people in Heaven.

Sin, according to Saint Basil, is the misuse of powers given us by God for doing good, a use contrary to God’s commandments.
(Continued ATONEMENT 3 from page 4) The allowed major aspects of Our Lord’s making reparation and atonement for the sins of humankind, and the reestablishment of Divine - human relationships, as well as providing the ability for humankind and each individual human to attain eternal salvation.

From this we are taught the important lesson that forced reparations are fruitless. We are further taught that voluntary reparations made by the injured party - who has no obligation to make reparations for the injured party committed no wrong - voluntary reparations made by the injured party on behalf of the party which caused the injury, when graciously accepted by the party which caused the injury, bears substantial fruit.

General Marshall must have been Orthodox, or at least influenced by the True Church [ :) smiley face], because the plan he devised follows and parallels much of what Our Lord established in overcoming Evil and making eternal salvation available to every human being.

Only the God - Man Jesus Christ could make reparation and atonement for the sins of mankind and open the doors to eternal salvation. In participating in the life Jesus made available to each of us, we are able to participate in the spiritual reconstruction of the world.

If we fail, totally fail, to participate in the spiritual and moral reconstruction of the world, then we will not be fully participating in the eternal salvation which Jesus has made available to us. Intentional failure to so participate when able so to do could easily be iminical to one’s own attainment of eternal salvation. It may be that because of this failure one would not participate in eternal salvation at all!

If anyone requires being hit over the head with Biblical instructions in this, consider Psalm 68:5, “... My enemies are grown strong who have wrongfully persecuted me: then did I pay that which I took not away.” What does that mean, what does it tell us... The, “I pay that which I took not away.” Christ in his passion made restitution of what he had not taken away, by suffering the punishment due to our sins, and so repairing the injury we had done to God. And we, as instructed by Jesus Christ, must do likewise, even though our attempts to repair are woefully inadequate. But in the Sacred Eucharist, our efforts actually do attain some level of adequacy.

We know that prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, are standard practices in working to attain holiness. But Our Lord’s example indicates suffering should be an aspect of reparation and atonement.

Almsgiving could meet this requirement, but we will only mention it at this time because the complexities are too intricate.

In the West, prayer has traditionally been given as penance in Sacramental Confession, which has given prayer an aura of something disagreeable, something through which one must suffer. This is a shame for it has effected many of the laity, clergy, and religious, to the extent they are inclined to avoid prayer, including Divine Liturgy, whenever possible. At this time, so as to avoid compounding this perverse perception of prayer, we will merely confirm that prayer is a means of joyfully contributing to making atonement and reparation for sins.

Fasting: Fasting includes elements of suffering, may be accomplished in a manner which is not detrimental to one’s health, may be accomplished spontaneously or in a planned manner, need not be complicated, and has been given to us in example by Jesus Christ Himself. It is an excellent means of making atonement and reparation for sins.

But regular fasting, such as during Great Lent, become a habit, and the intention may become clouded. Try somewhat spontaneous, “little” fasts. By way of example, if the grocery store has Little Sizzler sausage links on sale, five boxes for one dollar each, do not buy them this time. Fast from them instead, offering the fasting in atonement and reparation for sins.

Watching TV and desire a snack. Put off the snack for an hour, or skip it entirely, offering the delay or abstinence from the snack for an hour, or skip it entirely, offering the delay or abstinence from the snack for an hour, or skip it entirely, offering the delay or abstinence from the snack for an hour, or skip it entirely, offering the delay or abstinence from the snack - a fast from the snack - in atonement and reparation for sins.

One need not bleed in order to have something worth while to offer in atonement and reparation for sins. But one must do something. And in this instance, a little is much better than nothing.

Ref: 2 Cor. 3:4-9; Luke 10:23-37

(Continued ATONEMENT 4 on page 6)
course not. Jesus accepted His Passion and Crucifixion as the means by which He offered Himself as the Supreme Sacrificial Victim in reparation and atonement for our sins. If Trooper Vincent had been able to use his service firearm to stop Daigle, even if Daigle died as a result, not only would Vincent have committed no wrong, he also would have been engaged in a good act for he would have been seeking to preserve the life God has given him. He thereby would have been able to continue as living husband and father.

When we fail to forgive, including failure to desire the attainment of eternal salvation by one who has harmed us, we carry the emotional and actual physical burden of our failure to forgive. It is a heavy burden. Desiring vengeance churns within a person, and colors their perception of everything, and adversely affects all of their relationships. Hatred is a necessary aspect of seeking vengeance, which changes a person in to an evil entity, forging chains to differing forms of evil with which the one injured or offended burdens himself unless he forgives. If only for one’s general well being it is necessary to forgive those who have harmed us. And if God honors our prayer to be forgiven as we forgive, and we fail to forgive, our eternity is bleak.

Some may deem this is too much to ask of those adversely effected in this situation. It is not. Consider those who fought in World War II and their current attitude towards their former enemies. One will not only rarely find hatred, but also will be more likely to find forgiveness, and the potential for friendships between and amongst former enemies. This is because the burden of the horrors of war are almost impossible to bear, and become impossible to bear if vengeance and hatred exist. But forgiveness lifts the burden of the horrors experienced. Unless one has been there and done that, or something similar, it may be difficult for one to understand this.

Forgiveness finds its beginning in God in one’s intellect as an act of one’s will. It may have to drag the emotions into submission, abandoning the desire for vengeance. And it may have to drag the emotions into submission wherein it is possi-

ble to emotionally desire the eternal salvation of the one being forgiven. But that is the duty of the intellect, of the mind, of the spirit, of the soul: to rule the person into harmony with God.

The day after Steven Vincent died, on his own initiative, a Priest prayed a special Requiem Divine Liturgy for him. Included in that Divine Liturgy, after each prayer specific to the repose of the soul of Steven Vincent and for his eternal salvation, was another prayer for the eternal salvation of his murderer.

It must begin somewhere.

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BAPTISM

Atonement and Reparation [5]

We are aware of three types of persons: Divine, Angelic, and Human.

The Divine is God, of Which there is but One, that One being three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost - The Blessed Trinity. From our perspective, God always was, is now, and forever shall be. From God’s perspective, God is. While grammatically incorrect when applied to anyone or anything else, it is proper to state God Bees. This is because time is irrelevant to God, God eternally being self existing, eternal, and omnipotent.

It is proper to think of time as beginning with the creation of the Angels because it is our understanding Angels were the first of creation, and therefore time began. All of the Angels were given free will. It is our understanding that all of the Angels were created at the same time. But apparently time did not “run” with the creation of the Angels because the Angels were all created with perfect creature intellect, knowledge, understanding, being, nature, and everything else pertinent to being an Angel. Angels are not eternal, but they are immortal, and therefore none of them will ever cease to exist. Angels were created to glorify God, worship Him, do His bidding, and gen-

(Continued ATONEMENT 5 on page 7)
erally be in total and perfect harmony with God while remaining distinct individuals with differing characters and personalities. Some decided to be what they were created to be and some decided to be otherwise. The ones who decided to be otherwise were cast into Hell which was created for them. They did not get a second chance because having perfect creature knowledge and understanding, when an Angel makes a decision the Angel does not change its decision. 

Somewhere along the line God created the physical universe in which we live, and created us Humans to live in that physical universe. Part of the plan was that eventually we would be instrumental in bringing ourselves and all of creation into perfect union with God. He made us immortal like the Angels, but unlike the Angels we were not created as pure spirits but as a combination of spirit, soul, and physical body - often shortened in reference to simply body and soul. And while God also gave each of us free will, God did not endow us with perfect creature intellect, knowledge, understanding, and the other qualities He gave in perfection to the Angels. He made us in a manner which allowed each of us to grow, learn, develop, change, make decisions and change them, and so time began to run.

Of course the first Humans messed up their special relationship with God, and almost every Human since then has done likewise to some extent. If the Human - God relationship were to be corrected a God - Human Person was required: a Human because it is Humans who messed up things, and God because God was the One offended. Hence, Jesus Christ, both totally Divine and totally Human, Who offered Himself as the Supreme Sacrificial Offering, in atonement and reparation for the sins of Mankind. In that process He taught us The Way, and gave us numerous aids. Chief amongst these aids are the Seven Sacraments, the entry into union with God Sacrament being that of Baptism.

Can a person make it to Heaven without being Baptized. Sure, but it might be easier to swim across the Atlantic Ocean from North America to Europe. Why swim when you can take a boat, or an airplane?

If a person dies immediately after being Baptized that person goes directly to Heaven because they have been made perfectly Holy through the Sacrament of Baptism.

Why does the Holiness not last? Does it wear off? No, it does not wear off. It does not last because we shake it off. Remember, Humans are designed to develop. In the course of developing we sometimes decided to be in harmony with God’s desires and instructions, and sometimes decided to be otherwise, like the fallen Angels decided to be otherwise. But our decisions are not made with the benefit of creature perfect knowledge and understanding. Human decisions are made with developing knowledge and understanding, formed in an intellect easily distracted by both spiritual and material influences. The rest of the Sacraments, especially Confession and Absolution, The Sacred Eucharist, and Holy Anointing, are there to assist us.

But we were not created to simply get our own sorry individual selves into Heaven. We were also created to unite all of creation into union and harmony with God.

How do we do that? How are we supposed to do that? By doing what Jesus did. By living in harmony with God’s instructions and will, which includes not just doing some things and not doing other things, but also making reparation and atonement for sins, not just ours but those of all others as well.

Think of the world as being an house. The person who writes an obscenity with Roundup on your front lawn is like someone tossing coffee grounds around the kitchen of the house - world. Your sins are like tossing tennis balls down the toilet of the house - world. Both create a mess. You can not have God visit that house with that mess, so each of us has to try to clean up the mess. Not fair, you say! You think you should only have to clean up the toilet mess?

Jesus did not make any of the mess. Yet He died to clean up the mess.

So, if you are Baptized, get out the cleaning supplies so you can make reparation and atonement; and also learn what God wishes us to do and to avoid, and try to comply.

If you entertain the thought that this Baptism stuff just is not worth all the baggage which accompanies it, just remember, it is easier to cross the Atlantic by boat or airplane, than it is to try to swim.

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THE SEINFELD CULTURE  

of nothing and emptiness

Atonement and Reparation [6]

Love is sorely missing universally in today’s human culture. Oh, it can be found in isolated instances and examples: some spouses will occasionally give their spouse a hug, a parent will occasionally place a protective arm around their child, donations continue to be made to Saint Vincent de Paul Societies and other charities, prayers continue to be offered for those perceived as being in need, kindness and gentleness continue to be expressed. But in today’s culture they are noticed because they are uncommon, while within the memories of the middle aged they were common.

The perception of being loved also is not as prevalent as it once was, and the perception of love as existing also is generally missing, both perceptions being accurate. A perceptive individual is able to confirm this, for they will readily recognize the desperate desire just to be liked on the faces of many of the contestants in the dancing, singing, and other televised contests which are common. And also in the faces of those people in the grocery store.

With what has love been replaced? Nothing. Love has been replaced with nothing. And this is the predominant culture of today. Not the exclusive or sole culture, but the predominant cul-

(Continued ATONEMENT 6 on page 8)
The predominant culture of today should be named The Seinfeld Culture. Seinfeld is a TV sitcom, now in syndication, which originally was broadcast from 1989 through 1998. The episodes generally were loosely based on everyday events in the lives of Jerry Seinfeld and his friends. Basically it was about nothing. The characters really did nothing; each was concerned mainly about and for his or her own self; selfishness, meanness, and nastiness were the foundation character traits; and since there was no driving force ever exhibited by any character, selfishness, meanness, and nastiness were the basis for what ever it was that passed for or replaced driving force in all of the entire show. Love rarely or never made an appearance, and rarely or never was a factor, not even self love. In several episodes the characters boldly proclaimed the show,  

That love would be replaced with nothing is a major accomplishment of Satan - probably an accomplishment far beyond his most extreme expectations and hopes. The selfishness, meanness, and nastiness are mere garnishments to the major entrée of nothing.

This Seinfeld Culture is empty. Its practitioners and members are empty. They also are bored. Selfishness, meanness, and nastiness are inadequate fillers of the Seinfeld Culture emptiness. The members of this culture attempt to fill the emptiness by pursuing every form of self satisfaction and self indulgence, and every form harm first to others and eventually, in many instances, to themselves.

If you wish to kick the devil in the tender parts with a blow so severe it will cause him to vomit in painful loss of all he has gained in his Seinfeld Culture nothing campaign of emptiness, then, simply, Love.

Those TV show contestants whose faces cry out that you just like them, let your heart go out to them and love them. Let your mind and thoughts dwell on them for a little while, and tuck in a quick prayer for them.

Be nice to people. Being nice is the aspect of love which requires the least exertion and virtually no preparation or thought. The same for being courteous.

Give good example. Good example is one of the most important things that love does. And it is accomplished simply by doing and avoiding what God has instructed us to do and to avoid.

These simple things can totally destroy the Seinfeld Culture, and repair the damage it has caused. And that is a form of reparation and atonement to which no one, other than those who are evil, should have objection.

Ref: Eph. 4:1-6, Mat. 22:35-46

DO YOU THANK GOD? DO YOU TELL HIM “THANK YOU”? [7]

A question we should ask ourselves is, “Do I thank God?” Not the thank you contained in various prayers in various liturgies. Not the thank you which accompanies profound thoughts and realities, such as our own having been created, and the opportunity God gives each of us to attain eternal happiness in union with God.

Not these, but, rather, the simple thank you one may use in everyday encounters. And do we actually, vocally, say, “Thank You,” or at the very least think, “Thank You”?

The writers of profound theological thoughts correctly advise us to thank God before every Divine Liturgy: to thank Him for our praying and participating in that Divine Liturgy and the holiness, strengthening, and benefits it bestows upon and makes available to us. But those writers of profound theological advice often neglect the secondary effects of thanking God. One of those secondary effects, when we thank God before Divine Liturgy, is the prompting which God gives to us, to ask God to help us pray and participate in that Divine Liturgy and the holiness, strengthening, and benefits it bestows upon and makes available to us. But those writers of profound theological advice often neglect the secondary effects of thanking God.

A question we should ask ourselves is, “Do I thank God?” Not the thank you contained in various prayers in various liturgies. Not the thank you which accompanies profound thoughts and realities, such as our own having been created, and the opportunity God gives each of us to attain eternal happiness in union with God.

During the course of a normal day we will experience numerous occasions which should be accompanied by a, “Thank You,” to God. But, being generally unappreciative and thoughtless creatures, we may not be aware of or appreciate that a “Thank You” is appropriate at the time. After all, when one is faced with an unexpected financial expense, it is not likely one will be in the mood to express thanks. But even if one is not financially able to have a repair made, at least one had use of what ever it is that needs repair. And one should
(Continued Atonement 7 from page 8) be thankful for that. And if one is able to have the repair made, one should also be thankful for that ability, and that what ever it is which was in need of repair is or will be repaired.

We can twist our tongue in knots attempting to explore the various possibilities and probabilities wherein a thank you is appropriate.

We do have an alternate method which is much simpler, although it begins as an after the fact method. That method is to tell God, “Thank You,” at bedtime, as part of our before sleep prayers - even after going to bed.

Just verbally tell God, “Thank you”. If you have had a particularly bad day, or week, month, year, or several years, you may initially wonder for what do you have to be thankful. You may actually think, “Yeah, thanks for the lost job, the bills, the eviction notice, the children throwing up, that idiot in the White House, all the crooks in Congress, the demons that pass for Judges, and the leaky roof. At least I will not have to try to fix the roof after the Sheriff evicts us.”

But the initial verbalization of, “Thank You”, will prompt your subconscious to bring forth a multitude of things which occurred just that day for which you actually are thankful.

Perhaps you are in jail, and that day was the day you had your one hour a week outside in the prison yard; and it was nice. Or there was toilet paper for you to use.

If you are a raggedy, smelly, unkempt, stinky, bum, did someone smile to you today, or tell you, “Hello”; give you a sandwich, or a dollar? Certainly any one of these is disserving of a, “Thank You, God.”

In all probability: most of your bodily functions worked properly throughout most of the day; most or all of the mechanical devices which you use operated within reasonable limits; each of these being disserving of its own individual, “Thank You”. The thoughts for thinking of those things which worked requires a nanosecond, and is covered within the time required to voice, “Thank You”, once or twice.

From the initial, “Thank You, God,” to this point perhaps less than one or two seconds have passed. If you thank God consistently every day at bedtime you will soon be visited by thoughts of the instances where you were not as good or as holy as you could have been, and perhaps thoughts about some sins you committed during that day.

Perhaps you fuzzed at someone, when you could have as easily, or even more easily, forgiven them, even forgiven them without their knowing you forgave them. You can thank God for that knowledge and attempt to use the guidance He has provided to you in that encounter. Or maybe you did not fuss at someone who had a good fussing coming to them; then you have something for which to thank God, for somewhere along the line you began the forgiveness of them, of the miscreant.

When these things begin you have begun a sustainable and easy form of examination of conscience, without realizing it, and without having to go through all the procedures the writers of profound theological thoughts correctly recommend. It is a simple alternative geared to the everyday person. And it requires less than a minute, all begun by thanking God.

Then, something amazing often happens.

When you thank God every evening you soon realize there are occasions wherein you often commit sin of some sort. But you will realize there are many of those situations wherein you did not sin. You will begin to thank God for your not having sinned on that occasion. One who does this will quickly begin to like being able to thank God, and like not having sinned. Of course, one must give God the credit, otherwise one will commit one of the sins of pride. But one can properly be happy for having worked with the Grace God made available to them at that time, and, again, thank God for helping them to accept and work with the Grace God gave them.

All these and more phenomenal, good, and holy benefits are born in a simple, “Thank You God.” Plus one which may not be readily apparent. The simple, “Thank You God”, and every improvement in holiness, also makes some reparation and atonement for the one who tells God, “Thank You”, and for all other sins and sinners.

A simple “Thank You” can go a long, long, way.

Ref: 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Mat. 9:1-8

OUR ACCEPTING THE LOVE CHRIST HAS FOR US HEALS HIS HEART WHICH WE HAVE BROKEN
For that Divine to Human, Human to Divine and Human to other Human, love, is perfection in forgiveness, reparation, and atonement.

Atonement and Reparation [8]

The two thieves who were executed with Christ were going to be executed by crucifixion because of their crimes. Jesus was added to the execution process by His own arrangements. Realizing Jesus was added by His own arrangement is very important. It was the linchpin of atonement and reparation, which were validated in His resurrection.

The enormity of this event is too immense for creatures to contemplate even in small segments. There is, however, a reality which encompasses all of the events which made salvation available, and all of the human life of Christ. That reality is the singularity simplicity of the complete, total, unreserved, and yes reckless Love which is God’s Love for us.

God acts on His love for us without reservation, without regard as to whether or not we will accept His love, act on His
BIBLE HISTORY FOR CHILDREN

(Continued)


WHEN Jesus was twelve years old, He went with His parents to Jerusalem. The holy days of Passover (the feast that celebrates the Angel of Death passing over the Jews in Egypt and their freedom from Egypt and Pharaoh) being over, Mary and Joseph returned home. But Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not. They made a day's journey, and sought Jesus among their relatives and neighbors. As they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem. They were in great sorrow and affliction.

2. After seeking for three days they found Him in the temple. He was sitting in the midst of the doctors, listening to them and asking them questions. And all, that heard Him, were astonished at His wisdom and His questions.

3. His mother said to Him: "Son, why hast Thou done this to us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." Jesus answered: "Why did ye seek Me? Did ye not know that I must be about the things of My Father?"

4. He arose and returned home with His parents to Nazareth, and was subject to them. He grew in wisdom and grace before God and men. He stayed with His parents at Nazareth till the beginning of His public life.

QUESTIONS

1. What happened when Jesus was twelve years old?

2. Where did Mary and Joseph find Him?

3. What did His mother say to Him?

4. Whither did He go with them?

10. John the Baptist, Precursor (The Forerunner) of Jesus, Preaches and Baptizes

THE time was now drawing near when Jesus should manifest Himself to the world. Then John began to preach and baptize in the country about the river Jordan. He said: "Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

2. John was clothed in a garment of...
camel's hair, and wore a leather girdle round his loins. His food was wild honey and locusts. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the whole land of Judea, came to the river to John. They were baptized, and confessed their sins.

3. Now, many people thought that he was the promised Redeemer. John said, therefore: "I am not Christ, but after me there will come He, who is more powerful than I. I baptize in water, but He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit."

QUESTIONS

1. When did John begin to preach?

2. How was John clothed?

3. What did the inhabitants of Jerusalem do?

11. Jesus is Baptized by John

AT that time Jesus came from Nazareth to the river Jordan, in order to be baptized by John. At first John would not baptize Him, but said: "I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me?" But Jesus said to him: "Suffer it now; God so willeth it." Then John did as he was commanded.

2. When Jesus was baptized, He came out of the water and prayed.

And, behold! the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost came down upon Him in the shape of a dove. Moreover, a voice from heaven was heard, saying: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."

QUESTIONS

1. What did John say when Jesus wished to be baptized?

2. What occurred after Christ was baptized?

(To be continued)
love, or, even seek to harm Him using His love as a weapon or an avenue by which we attack Him. In God, love and acting on that love, are inseparably the same.

The divine dynamic of love was totally evident in a compressed manner during the Crucifixion. Jesus poured out His love upon the two thieves who were being crucified with Him, Gestas, the thief on His left, rejected that love with mockery. Saint Dismas accepted that love, expressing it first in his response to Gestas, when he said, “Neither dost thou fear God, seeing; thou art under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly: for we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this man hath done no evil,” Saint Dismas was in effect telling Gestas: “You know what Jesus has done and taught. You know He is goodness incarnate. Do not be foolish and hard of heart. Accept Jesus, His works, His teachings, and His love. This is our last chance.” And then Saint Dismas acts on his own advice, and accepting Jesus’ works, teachings, and love says, “Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom.”

In accepting the love Jesus extended to him, Saint Dismas extended love to Gestas. This extending of love received from Christ, to others, is a divinely natural result of accepting love from and reciprocating love to God. The reciprocation extends to all others.

The effects are bewilderingly magnificent. Saint Dismas, in effect, asked Jesus to let him live in a small hut outside the walls of His palace. Jesus, instead, brought Saint Dismas into His palace - into His mansion.

God’s heart, which is broken by those who reject His love, is healed when one of us receives and accepts His love. One who receives and accepts God’s love, in the immolation of the person in God’s love, not only reciprocates in love to and for God, but also, like Christ, extends love to everyone. When the love they extend is rejected, their hearts are broken, but when the love they extend is received and accepted, their heart is healed.

God’s Love is so powerful that purification is made perfect in love and can or may occur in this life without the necessity of purification in the hereafter - though purification in the hereafter seems to be the norm according to Saint Paul and Saint Peter.

However it may be from individual to individual, it is obvious that atonement and reparation find their perfection in love . . . And you should be able to determine (figure out) what that means.


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HUMOR
dead duck
(Thanks Mike)

A woman brought a very limp duck to a veterinary surgeon. As she laid her pet on the table, the vet pulled out his stethoscope and listened to the bird's chest. After a moment or two, the vet shook his head sadly and said, "I'm sorry, your duck, Cuddles, has passed away."

The distressed woman wailed, "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am sure. Your duck is dead," replied the vet.

"How can you be so sure?" she protested. "I mean you haven't done any testing on him or anything. He might just be in a coma or something."

The vet sighed, turned around and left the room. He returned a few minutes later with a black Labrador Retriever. As the duck's owner looked on in amazement, the dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the duck from top to bottom. He then looked up at the vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet patted the dog on the head and took it out of the room. A few minutes later he returned with a cat. The cat jumped on the table and also delicately sniffed the bird from head to foot. The cat sat back on its haunches, shook its head, meowed softly and strolled out of the room.

The vet looked at the woman and said, "I'm sorry, but as I said, this is most definitely, 100% certifiably, a dead duck."

He turned to his computer terminal, hit a few keys and produced a bill, which he handed to the woman. The duck's owner looked on in amazement, the dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the duck from top to bottom. He then looked up at the vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet shrugged. "I'm sorry. If you had just taken my word for it, the bill would have been $20, but with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now $550."

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SEQUENCE

Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Next the cross in tears unceasing,
Worn by sorrow aye increasing,
Stood the Mother 'neath her Son

Though her soul already riven,
Simeon's sword divinely driven,
Edged with anguish, lo! Hath run.

Sad, afflicted as no other,
Was that chosen blessed Mother,
Having none but Christ begot.

Faithful Mother! Upward gazing,
Heart and hands to Son upraising,
Mourns and grieves His cruel lot.

Hard the man his tears refraining,
Watching Mary uncomplaining,
Bear a sorrow like to none.

Hard the man that shares no sorrow,
With a Mother fain to borrow
Every pang that writhes her Son.

Tortured, scourged in expiation
Of the sins that marred His Nation,
Mary watched His every pang.

She beheld her dear Begotten,
Stretched in death by all forgotten,
As on hoisted rod He hang.

Mother, fount of love, the purest,
Floods of sorrow thou endurest,
Turn them toward this heart of mine.

With these waters purge its guileness,
Burn with love its innate vileness,
With the flame of love divine.

Hallowed Mother, do this favor,
Those five wounds that gored my Saviour
Deeply on my heart engrave.

Pains thou gladly with Him sharest,
Anguish that thou bravely bearest,
Fully share with me, I crave.

Blend thy tears with mine in wailing,
Sorrow for my sins prevailing,
Till the break of endless dawn.

Next the cross to take my station,
By thy side in desolation,
Thus, I long with thee to mourn.

Maiden of all maidens fairest,
Sate me with the grief thou bearest:
Spurn me not, be thou kind.

Mine it be Christ's throes in sharing,
Mine it be His anguish bearing,
These His wounds to keep in mind.

May His scars my body carry.
May His cross and blood not tarry
Soul of mine to satiate!

Thus inflamed with love consuming,
Shall I not thy aid presuming
Safe the reck'ning day await?

When in death my eyes are losing,
Ope them, Lord, to see reposing
Victory's crown in Mary's hand.

When my frame by death is broken,
And my doom by Thee is spoken,
Be it, Lord, the better land.

Amen.

TRYING TO BE HOLY MAKES MORE SENSE THAN BEING EVIL

For some reason very many apparently otherwise intelligent people seem simply to not comprehend the reality that God is in total control of everything, and to not even begin to comprehend the implications, reality, and fruits which result from God’s being in total control of everything. As a consequence, these people also seem to neither comprehend nor appreciate what it means for the Incarnate Word Jesus Christ to be King sitting at the right hand of the Father.

The free will which each person exercises to either glorify or insult God is provided by God, and its exercise enabled and “powered” by God.

Perhaps it is not that these people do not comprehend. Perhaps it is that these people intentionally ignore God, His instructions, and His desires.

Or, perhaps it is a combination, or some other factor or factors or personal decisions these people have made which is at the root of their disregarding God, His instructions, and His desires.

To a religiously rational person those who do not treat and approach Jesus Christ as both the best friend mankind has - and since there is but one God it is implicit that the Father and the Holy Ghost are included as being the best friend mankind has - and also as the eternal Judge before whom no arguments will be made, anyone who does not even attempt to live in a manner which includes consideration of these factors, these realities, simply does not make sense.

It does not even require the gift of the Divine Virtue of Faith for a person to realize that if you really get God angry with you because you not only do not glorify Him but also disregard and intentionally transgress His instructions, desires, and will, that you will be totally deprived of any happiness for all eternity and also will endure every form
of unhappiness possible for all eternity. Not just every form of unhappiness imaginable but every form of unhappiness possible which when God is involved includes much more than what is imaginable.

If only to avoid such a disagreeable eternity it seems prudence would dictate that the very least that one not get God angry with them.

When one considers how nice God has been to us, and especially what Jesus Christ God has endured for our benefit, that the Holy Ghost continues to actively be with us assisting each of us every instant of our individual lives, it seems there should be some positive response triggered in each of us so that each individual would desire to establish and maintain a good relationship with God, with each Person of the Blessed Trinity.

But that is not reality and the fact that it is not reality actually does not make sense unless it also is reality that there are numerous individuals who think God is bluffing, or that God will reconsider, or who have convinced themselves that there is no God, or that that there is no hereafter, or that the hereafter is a nebulous semi-dream state . . . or perhaps they are willing to fill their appetites here and forego any happiness in the hereafter, or perhaps they simply do not care.

The Devil is said to have declared he would rather rule in Hell than serve in Heaven. But he does not rule in Hell. Christ destroyed the gates of Hell, kicked Satan off Satan’s throne, and in effect told the Devil, “Tough cookie”. “Tough cookie” is not the best of theological or dogmatic terms, but in American slang its meaning is very clear.

The refusal to acknowledge Jesus Christ is King, or to live in accordance with His instructions, desires, and will, leads to and results in adverse consequences not only in the hereafter, but also in the here and now. The immoral and without honor may be successful in the here and now, but as a society or nation increasingly abandons God and embraces immorality and dishonor, that society or nation falls into a state of ever increasing unhappiness.

God has given mankind a wonderfully interesting universe to explore and to develop or influence in the here and now. Technological advances and knowledge gained every day reveal the wonder of creation and in that revelation intellectual honesty demands acknowledgment of God and all that is associated with the reality of there being a God.

It simply makes more sense to acknowledge God and attempt to follow His desires, that it does to ignore God, or to intentionally live a life of moral transgressions.

Ref: Col. 1:12-20; John 18:33-37

EVERY DAY BENEFITS FROM THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

The birth of Jesus Christ is an unique event of unimaginable proportions and consequences. While the world continues to be populated by people who are evil, people who are good, those who attempt to be or to become and who do become holy, as well as those who do not care, and every other classification imaginable, the birth of Our Lord has had and continues to have an effect on this world and on everything.

We know that the main effect is spiritual: to make eternal salvation and union with God in Heaven possible.

Since the Kingdom of Heaven, of God, and the Body of Christ are established, why does evil remain in this world? Why do people continue to experience evil in this life, to have evil done to them in this life?

The expectations and desires of the Israelis, the Jews, of the time of Christ, in their anticipation of the Messiah, give us an insight as to why evil remains in this world.

The Jews knew the Messiah was to establish a means of more full and complete human relationship with God. Their culture acknowledged spiritual life but it also associated God’s favor as often being associated with material world success. Because of this, when Job suffered his trials, his friends were inclined to associate Job’s problems with some sin on his part. The Jews of the time of Christ, including even many of the Apostles, were inclined to include this world or material world re-establishment of the glories of Israel under Kings David and Solomon as a mission of the Messiah.

Our Saviour made it clear during His teaching life, that He was establishing a means of spiritual salvation. But not all of His followers realized the full implications until He was before the judgment seat of Pontius Pilate. When Pilate asked Jesus if He were a king, and Jesus answered that His kingdom was not of this world, that if it were of this world Legions of angels would have intervened, then the spiritual and spiritual salvation focus of His teachings, instructions, and life became very clear.

Does this mean there is little or no “this world” effect associated with the birth, life, Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ; that evil runs this world and the only realistic anticipation of better times should be reserved for life in the world to come?

Of course not.

Remove from consideration those events which occur because of the imperfections of this world, and natural events, particularly those attributable to Original Sin and the world’s resulting loss of harmony with God. Consider only those events attributable to humans and to human conduct, thoughts, and deeds.

Before the birth of Jesus Christ the main measure of a successful life was the material world status of the
individual. Basically, the more people someone controlled and the more things or “stuff” a person had, the more successful the person was considered to be.

With Christ we now know that true success is measured by how harmonious one’s life is with God, and one’s place in eternity. Mankind also has very clear, easy to comprehend and to follow standards by which eternal salvation is attainable. These same standards have the added benefit of being the true and only path to a harmonious society, culture, life and “this world” for everyone. These standards have been named “The Way” - meaning the way taught by Christ. The greater the number of people who participate in following these standards the more delightful is life in this world for everyone.

Some consider “The Way” taught by Christ to be one of many possible systems of living all of which have the potential of providing a harmonious and “nice” this world life. That concept is, quite simply, false. Only “The Way” taught by Christ originated from God - the Creator of everything. Picking and choosing those aspects of “The Way” taught by Christ which one will follow also is ineffective. There are no universal standards in “picking and choosing” and therefore no universal positive effects.

In the most simple of terms, the more people who practice the Golden Rule, who not only do unto others as they would have others do unto them, but also do not do unto others as they would not have others do unto them, the more harmonious the society.

If these standards are taught, then, perhaps, there will be fewer people who follow the numerous rules to hell and the resulting “this world” chaos.

The birth of Jesus Christ, God, is of the most wondrously happy events in the history of mankind. It heralds the opening of Heaven to humankind, and the only system under which humankind is able to have the potential of a harmonious and happy life in this world, and the assurance of being happy in the life to come.

Ref: Philipp 4:4-7; John 1:19-28

WHILE FAITH IS A GIFT, SURELY BELIEF IS WITHIN OUR GRASP AND APPRECIATION OF THE REALITY OF GOD’S EXISTENCE AS WELL?

Faith that Jesus Christ is God, and in the Blessed Trinity, obviously is a gift from God. The woman who was cured of a twelve year issue of blood was made whole by her Faith. The ruler who knew Jesus apparently only by reputation and asked Jesus to bring back to life his daughter who had just died, adored Christ - as God - before he made his request, which was granted because of his Faith

But those who witnessed these things did not necessarily have Faith that Jesus is God, or even belief that Jesus is God - only that they had witnessed some extraordinary events. Even though what they had witnessed was beyond the possibility of human effort they did not necessarily either receive or accept the gift of Faith, or even of belief.

We who have received and accepted the gift of Faith find it difficult to comprehend the lack of Faith in those who have not accepted that gift. We find it just as difficult to comprehend the numerous instances where someone has belief that Jesus is God but does little or nothing about that belief, and does not even attempt to live in accordance with what that belief necessitates.

But what is totally beyond our comprehension is those who are of normal mental competence, and reasonably observant, who do not believe there is a God, or do not know whether or not there is a God, or do not care whether or not there is a God, or who do believe there is a God but for whom that belief and the fact that there is a God is not of any significance or importance.

Perhaps our Faith blinds us to some important factor or consideration such as the comparatively likely it does not. It also seems likely that those who profess to not believe in God or to not know whether or not there is a God are being dishonest in either one of two ways. Either they are simply lying, which is the more likely, or they have not truthfully and fairly considered the question and the empirical evidence provided in each instance by the universe, the world, all within it, and the science which governs everything. The existence of the universe proclaims the existence of God and His continual involvement in the world. Every thing, every rock, sea, plant, and animal, proclaims the existence of God and His continual involvement in them and in their continued existence. The science and the principals of that science which govern the world and the universe within which we live, and the complexities of that science, from the intricacies of cholesterol to the reality that gravity effects the physical world of our size in one manner, the physics of the world at the atomic level in a different manner, and the astrophysics of the the galactic world in yet a different manner, proclaim the existence of God and His continual involvement.

One who does believe in God but for whom that belief has no significance is little different from one who refuses to be honest in assessing the reality or the existence of God.

Neither is likely to attempt to live in accordance with the instructions of God. Neither is likely to accept the gift of Faith.

Belief in God and living within the dictates of that belief are within the grasp of those who are honest or attempt to be honest. But even a little
dishonesty, in a crucial area, will stymie that belief, or will stymie living in accordance with that belief.

This crucial lack of honesty is an obstacle to development from belief in God to request for or acceptance of the gift of Faith.

If there is something which one knows they should not do but which they wish to do, or if there is something which one does not want to do but knows they should do, then there are created additional obstacles to belief, Faith, and ultimately, to eternal salvation.

But for those who at least attempt to be honest, to practice honesty, there is the potential for viable belief, true Faith, and with Faith, Hope and Charity - Divine Love.

In truth, the person who gives of their wealth to assist those in need because it seems to be the proper thing to do receives the reward of one who does what seems to be the proper thing to do. But the person who gives only of their time to those in need, and gives it because it is the only wealth they possess, and perhaps only spends that time in a brief prayer for that is the only asset which they have to offer, and does so in Faith out of Love for God, receives the reward of one who Loves God.

This is within our grasp if we but be honest.

Ref: Phil. 3:17-24; 4:1-3; Mat. 9:18-26

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HUMOR
(Thanks Johnny)

SOME OF THE BEST WRITING IS DONE ON TOMBSTONES!

Harry Edsel Smith of Albany, New York:
Born 1903--Died 1942.
Looked up the elevator shaft to see if the car was on the way down. It was.

In a Thurmont, Maryland, cemetery:
Here lies an Atheist, all dressed up and no place to go.

On the grave of Ezekial Aikle in East Dalhousie Cemetery, Nova Scotia:
Here lies Ezekial Aikle, Age 102.
Only the good die young.

In a London, England cemetery:
Here lies Ann Mann, who lived an old maid but died an old Mann. Dec. 8, 1767

In a Ribbesford, England, cemetery:
Anna Wallace
The children of Israel wanted bread,
And the Lord sent them manna.
Clark Wallace wanted a wife,
And the Devil sent him Anna.

In a Ruidoso, New Mexico, cemetery:
Here lies Johnny Yeast.
Pardon him for not rising.

In a Uniontown, Pennsylvania, cemetery:
Here lies the body of Jonathan Blake,
Stepped on the gas instead of the brake.

In a Silver City, Nevada, cemetery:
Here lays The Kid,
We planted him raw.
He was quick on the trigger,
But slow on the draw.

A lawyer's epitaph in England:
Sir John Strange.
Here lies an honest lawyer,
and that is Strange.

John Penny's epitaph in the Wimborne, England, cemetery:
Reader, if cash thou art in want of any,
Dig 6 feet deep and thou wilt find a Penny.

In a cemetery in Hartscombe, England:
On the 22nd of June, Jonathan Fiddle went out of tune.

Anna Hopewell's grave in Enosburg Falls, Vermont:
Here lies the body of our Anna,
Done to death by a banana.
It wasn't the fruit that laid her low,
But the skin of the thing that made her go.

On a grave from the 1880s in Nantucket, Massachusetts:
Under the sod and under the trees,
Lies the body of Jonathan Pease.
He is not here, there's only the pod,
Pease shelled out and went to God.

In a cemetery in England:
Remember man, as you walk by,
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so shall you be,
Remember this and follow me.
To which someone replied by writing on the tombstone:
To follow you I'll not consent,
Until I know which way you went.

+
The Shepherd of Hermas, often simply named or cited as The Shepherd, and sometimes referred to as The Good Shepherd, is a Christian work of the First or Second Century. While usually not considered as part of the New Testament, it was considered by some of the Early Church Fathers to be canonical. It was often bound with the New Testament. In the Codex Sinaiticus (one of the best ancient Greek texts of the New Testament, existing copies include a portion of The Shepherd, and of the Old Testament) it is between The Acts of the Apostles, and The Acts of Paul.

Even those who did not consider it to be canonical recommended it as a teaching work, especially to catechumens; something to be read even aloud in Church, but not to be used as an authority as to the Faith.

Origen believed the author was the Hermas mentioned by St. Paul, at Romans 16:14.

After the Middle Ages it fell into disuse, but continued to be published in some editions of The Bible, often being found in the Douay - Rheims English Translation as late as the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries (those really big Bibles).

The Shepherd, relates five visions, containing several mandates, and several parables. It uses allegory, and calls attention to the sins of the faithful which have harmed the Church, calling on the faithful to repent of their sins thereby healing the Church (and themselves).

The general theme is the holy are a part of the Church. All who have been baptized are included, though they may be cast out for grave sins, and can be readmitted only after penance.

The whole book is concerned with the Christian virtues and their exercise. It is a moral (some would say, ethical), but not a theological, work. The intention is above all to preach repentance. The opportunity for restoration to holiness after fall in sin is given to Christians. This opportunity is presented as something new, which had never been clearly published before. The writer is pained by the sins of the faithful and is sincerely anxious for their conversion and return to good works. Other than the state of holiness achieved in baptism, its loss by grievous sin, the availability to be restored to holiness through repentance, and the harm sin does to the Church, the work intentionally avoids presenting or commenting on dogma.

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Vision 1

Against Filthy and Proud Thoughts, and the Carelessness of Hermas in Chastising His Sons.

1:1 The master, who reared me, had sold me to one Rhoda in Rome. After many years, I met her again, and began to love her as a sister.

1:2 After a certain time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber; and I gave her my hand, and led her out of the river. So, seeing her beauty, I reasoned in my heart, saying, "Happy were I, if I had such an one to wife both in beauty and in character." I merely reflected on this and nothing more.

1:3 After a certain time, as I was journeying to Cumae, and glorifying God's creatures for their greatness and splendor and power, as I walked I fell asleep. And a Spirit took me, and bore me away through a pathless tract, through which no man could pass: for the place was precipitous, and broken into clefts by reason of the waters. When then I had crossed the river, I came into the level country, and knelt down, and began to pray to the Lord and to confess my sins.

1:4 Now, while I prayed, the heaven was opened, and I saw the lady whom I had desired, greeting me from heaven, saying, "Good morrow, Hermas."

1:5 And, looking at her, I said to her, "Lady, what dost thou here?" Then she answered me, "I was taken up, that I might convict thee of thy sins before the Lord."

1:6 I said to her, "Dost thou now convict me?" "Nay, not so," said she, "but hear the words, that I shall say to thee. God, Who dwelleth in the heavens, and created out of nothing the things which are, and increased and multiplied them for His holy Church's sake, is wroth with thee, for that thou didst sin against me."

1:7 I answered her and said, "Sin against thee? In what way? Did I ever speak an unseemly word unto thee? Did I not always regard thee as a goddess? Did I not always respect thee as a sister? How couldst thou falsely charge me, lady, with such villainy and uncleanness?"

1:8 "Laughing she saith unto me, "The desire after evil entered into thine heart. Nay, thinkest thou not that it is an evil deed for a righteous man, if the evil desire should enter into his heart? It is indeed a sin and a great one too," saith she; "for the righteous man entertaineth righteous purposes. While then his purposes are righteous, his repute stands steadfast in the heavens, and he finds the Lord easily propitiated in all that he does. But they that entertain evil purposes in their hearts, bring upon themselves death and captivity, especially they that claim for themselves this present work and boast in its riches, and cleave not to the good things that are to come."

1:9 “Their souls shall rue it, seeing that they have no hope, but have abandoned themselves and their life. But do thou pray unto God and He shall heal thine own sins, and those of thy whole house, and of all the saints.”

2:1 As soon as she had spoken these words the heavens were shut and I was given over to horror and grief. Then I said within myself "If this sin is recorded against me, how can I be saved? Or how shall I propitiate God for my sins which are full-blowed? Or with which words shall I entreat the Lord that He may be propitious unto me?"

2:2 While I was advising and discussing these matters in my heart, I saw before me a great white chair of snow-white wool; and there came an aged lady in glistening raiment, having a book in her hands, and she sat down alone, and she saluted me, "Good morrow, Hermas." Then I grieved and weeping, said, "Good morrow, lady."
2:3 And she said to me "Why so gloomy, Hermas, thou that art patient and good-tempered and art always smiling? Why so downcast in thy looks, and far from cheerful?" And I said to her, "Because of an excellent lady's saying that I had sinned against her."

2:4 Then she said, "Far be this thing from the servant of God! Nevertheless the thought did enter into thy heart concerning her. Now to the servants of God such a purpose bringeth sin. For it is an evil and mad purpose to overtake a devout spirit that hath been already approved, that it should desire an evil deed, and especially if it be Hermas the temperate, who abstaineth from every evil desire, and is full of all simplicity and of great guilelessness.

3:1 "Yet it is not for this that God is wroth with thee, but that thou mayest convert thy family, that hath done wrong against the Lord and against you their parents. But out of fondness for thy children thou didst not admonish thy family, but didst suffer it to become fearfully corrupt. Therefore the Lord is wroth with thee. But He will heal all thy past sins, which have been committed in thy family; for by reason of their sins and iniquities thou hast been corrupted by the affairs of this world.

3:2 But the great mercy of the Lord had pity on thee and thy family, and will strengthen thee, and establish thee in His glory. Only be not thou careless, but take courage, and strengthen thy family. For as the smith hammering his work conquers the task which he wills, so also doth righteous discourse repeated daily conquer all evil. Cease not therefore to reprove thy children; for I know that if they shall repent with all their heart, they shall be written in the books of life with the saints."

3:3 After these words of hers had ceased, she saith unto me, "Wilt thou listen to me as I read?" Then say I, "Yes, lady." She saith to me, "Be attentive, and hear the glories of God" I listened with attention and with wonder to that which I had no power to remember; for all the words were terrible, such as man cannot bear. The last words however I remembered, for they were suitable for us and gentle.

3:4 "Behold, the God of Hosts, Who by His invisible and mighty power and by His great wisdom created the world, and by His glorious purpose clothed His creation with comeliness, and by His strong word fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters, and by His own wisdom and providence formed His holy Church, which also He blessed-behold, He removeth the heavens and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are made level for His elect, that He may fulfill to them the promise which He promised with great glory and rejoicing, if so be that they shall keep the ordinances of God, which they received, with great faith."

4:1 When then she finished reading and arose from her chair, there came four young men, and they took away the chair, and departed towards the East.

4:2 Then she calleth me unto her, and she touched my breast, and saith to me, "Did my reading please thee?" And I said unto her, "Lady, these last words please me, but the former were difficult and hard." Then she spake to me, saying, "These last words are for the righteous, but the former are for the heathen and the rebellious."

4:3 While she yet spake with me, two men appeared, and took her by the arms, and they departed, whither the chair also had gone, towards the East. And she smiled as she departed and, as she was going, she saith to me, "Play the man, Hermas."

Vision 2

Again, of His Neglect in Chastising His Talkative Wife and His Lustful Sons, and of His Character.

1[5]:1 I was on the way to Cumae, at the same season as last year, and called to mind my last year's vision as I walked; and again a Spirit taketh me, and carrieth me away to the same place as last year.

1[5]:2 When then I arrived at the place, I fell upon my knees, and began to pray to the Lord, and to glorify His name, for that he counted me worthy, and made known unto me my former sins.

1[5]:3 But after I had risen up from prayer, I behold before me the aged lady, whom also I had seen last year, walking and reading a little book. And she saith to me, "Canst thou report these things to the elect of God?" I say unto her, "Lady, I cannot recollect so much; but give me the little book, that I may copy it." "Take it," saith she, "and be sure and return it to me."

1[5]:4 I took it, and retiring to a certain spot in the country I copied it letter for letter: for I could not make out the syllables. When then I had finished the letters of the book, suddenly the book was snatched out of my hand; but by whom I did not see.

2[6]:1 Now after fifteen days, when I had fasted and entreated the Lord earnestly, the knowledge of the writing was revealed to me. And this is what was written:--

2[6]:2 "Thy seed, Hermas, have sinned against God, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have betrayed their parents through great wickedness, yea, they have got the name of betrayers of parents, and yet they did not profit by their betrayal; and they still further added to their sins wanton deeds and reckless wickedness; and so the measure of their transgressions was filled up.

2[6]:3 But make these words known to all thy children, and to thy wife who shall be as thy sister; for she too refraineth not from using her tongue, wherewith she doeth evil. But, when she hears these words, she will refrain, and will find mercy.

2[6]:4 After that thou hast made known unto them all these words, which the Master commanded me that they should be revealed unto thee, then all their sins which they sinned aforetime are forgiven to them; yea, and to all the saints that have sinned unto this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and re-
move double-mindedness from their heart.

2[6]:5 For the Master sware by His own glory, as concerning His elect; that if, now that this day has been set as a limit, sin shall hereafter be committed, they shall not find salvation; for repentance for the righteous hath an end; the days of repentance are accomplished for all the saints; whereas for the Gentiles there is repentance until the last day.

2[6]:6 Thou shalt therefore say unto the elders of the Church, that they direct their paths in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with abundant glory.

2[6]:7 Ye therefore that work righteousness be steadfast, and be not double-minded, that ye may have admission with the holy angels. Blessed are ye, as many as endure patiently the great tribulation that cometh, and as many as shall not deny their life.

2[6]:8 For the Lord swear concerning His Son, that those who denied their Lord should be rejected from their life, even they that are now about to deny Him in the coming days; but to those who denied Him aforetime, to them mercy was given of His great loving kindness.

3[7]:1 "But do thou, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against thy children, neither suffer thy sister to have her way, so that they may be purified from their former sins. For they shall be chastised with a righteous chastisement, unless thou bear a grudge against them thyself. The bearing of a grudge worketh death. But thou, Hermas, hast had great tribulations of thine own, by reason of the transgressions of thy family, because thou hadst no care for them. For thou wast neglectful of them, and wast mixed up with thine evil transactions.

3[7]:2 But herein is thy salvation, in that thou didst not depart from the living God, and in thy simplicity and thy great continence. These have saved thee, if thou abidest therein; and they save all who do such things, and walk in guilelessness and simplicity. These men prevail over all wickedness, and continue unto life eternal.

3[7]:3 Blessed are all they that work righteousness. They shall never be destroyed.

3[7]:4 But thou shalt say to Maximus, "Behold tribulation cometh (upon thee), if thou think fit to deny a second time. The Lord is nigh unto them that turn unto him, as it is written in Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness."

4[8]:1 Now, brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, "Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?" I say, "The Sibyl! "Thou art wrong," saith he, "she is not." "Who then is she?" I say. "The Church," saith he. I said unto him, "Wherefore then is she aged?" "Because," saith he, "she was created before all things; therefore is she aged; and for her sake the world was framed."

4[8]:2 And afterwards I saw a vision in my house. The aged woman came, and asked me, if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. "Thou hast done well," she said, "for I have words to add. When then I shall have finished all the words, it shall be made known by thy means to all the elect.

4[8]:3 Thou shalt therefore write two little books, and shalt send one to Clement, and one to Grapte. So Clement shall send to the foreign cities, for this is his duty; while Grapte shall instruct the widows and the orphans. But thou shalt read (the book) to this city along with the elders that preside over the Church.

Vision 3

Concerning the Building of the Triumphant Church, and the Various Classes of Reprobate Men.

4[9]:1 The third vision, which I saw, brethren, was as follows.

I[9]:2 After fasting often, and entreat- ing the Lord to declare unto me the revelation which He promised to show me by the mouth of the aged woman, that very night the aged woman was seen of me, and she said to me, "Seeing that thou art so importunate and eager to know all things, come into the country where thou abidest, and about the fifth hour I will appear, and will show thee what thou oughtest to see."

I[9]:3 I asked her, saying, "Lady, to what part of the country?" "Where thou wilt," saith she. I selected a beautiful spot and retired; but before I spoke to her and named the spot, she saith to me, "I will come, whither thou wilt." I[9]:4 I went then, brethren, into the country, and I counted up the hours, and came to the place where I appointed her to come, and I saw an ivory couch placed there, and on the couch there lay a linen cushion, and on the cushion was spread a coverlet of fine linen of flax.

I[9]:5 When I saw these things so or- dered, and no one in the place, I was amazed, and a fit of trembling seized me, and my hair stood on end; and a fit of shuddering came upon me, because I was alone. When then I recovered myself, and remembered the glory of God, and took courage, I knelt down and confessed my sins to the Lord once more, as I had done on the former occasion.

I[9]:6 Then she came with six young men, the same whom I had seen before, and she stood by me, and listened attentively to me, as I prayed and confessed my sins to the Lord. And she touched me, and said: "Hermas, make an end of constantly entreating for thy sins; entreat also for righteousness, that thou mayest take some part forthwith to thy family."

I[9]:7 Then she raised me by the hand, and lead me to the couch, and saideth to the young men, "Go ye, and build."

I[9]:8 And after the young men had retired and we were left alone, she saideth to me, "Sit down here." I said to
1[9]:9 When then I wanted to sit down on the right side, she would not allow me, but beckoned me with her hand that I should sit on the left side. As then I was musing thereon, and was sad because she would not permit me to sit on the right side, she saith to me, "Art thou sad, Hermas? The place on the right side is for others, even for those who have already been well-pleasing to God, and have suffered for the Name's sake. But thou lackest much that thou should-est sit with them; but as thou abidest in thy simplicity, even so, and thou shalt sit with them, thou and as many as shall have done their deeds, and have suffered what they suffered."

2[10]:1 "What did they suffer?" said I. "Listen," saith she. "Stripes, imprisonments, great tribulations, crosses, wild beasts, for the Name's sake. Therefore to them belongs the right side of the Holiness—to them, and to all who shall suffer for the Name. But for the rest is the left side. Howbeit, to both, to them that sit on the right, and to them that sit on the left, are the same gifts, and the same promises, only they sit on the right and have a certain glory.

2[10]:2 "Thou indeed art very desirous to sit on the right with them, but thy shortcomings are many; yet thou shalt be purified from thy shortcomings; yea, and all that are not double-minded shall be purified from all their sins unto this day."

2[10]:3 When she had said this, she wished to depart; but, falling at her feet, I entreated her by the Lord that she would show me the vision which she promised.

2[10]:4 Then she again took me by the hand, and raised me, and seated me on the couch at the left hand, while she herself sat on the right. And lifting up a certain glistening rod, she saith to me, "Seest thou a great thing?" I say to her, "Lady, I see nothing." She saith to me, "Look thou; dost thou not see in front of thee a great tower being builded upon the waters, of glistening square stones?"

2[10]:5 Now the tower was being builded foursquare by the six young men that came with her. And countless other men were bringing stones, some of them from the deep, and others from the land, and were handing them to the six young men. And they took them and builded.

2[10]:6 The stones that were dragged from the deep they placed in every case, just as they were, into the building, for they had been shaped, and they fitted in their joining with the other stones; and they adhered so closely one with another that their joining could not possibly be detected; and the building of the tower appeared as if it were built of one stone.

2[10]:7 But of the other stones which were brought from the dry land, some they threw away, and some they put into the building; and others they broke in pieces, and threw to a distance from the tower.

2[10]:8 Now many other stones were lying round the tower, and they did not use them for the building; for some of them were mildewed, and others had cracks in them, and others were too short, and others were white and round, and did not fit into the building.

2[10]:9 And I saw other stones thrown to a distance from the tower, and coming to the way, and yet not staying in the way, but rolling to where there was no way; and others falling into the fire and burning there; and others falling near the waters, and yet not able to roll into the water, although they desired to roll and to come to the water.

3[11]:1 When she had shown me these things, she wished to hurry away. I said to her, "Lady, what advantage is it to me to have seen these things, and yet not to know what the things mean?" "She answered and said unto me, "Thou art an over-curious fellow, in desiring to know all that concerns the tower." "Yea, lady," I said, "that I may announce it to my brethren, and that they [may be the more gladdened and] when they hear [these things] they may know the Lord in great glory." Then said she, "Many shall hear; but when they hear, some of them shall be glad, and others shall weep. Yet even these latter, if they hear and repent, shall likewise be glad. Hear thou therefore the parables of the tower; for I will reveal all things unto thee. And trouble me no more about revelation; for these revelations have an end, seeing that they have been completed. Nevertheless thou wilt not cease asking for revelations; for thou art shameless."

3[11]:3 The tower, which thou seest building, is myself, the Church, which was seen of thee both now and aforesight. Ask, therefore, what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice with the saints."

3[11]:4 I said unto her, "Lady, since thou didst hold me worthy once for all, that thou shouldest reveal all things to me, reveal them." Then she saith to me, "Whatsoever is possible to be revealed to thee, shall be revealed. Only let thy heart be with God, and doubt not in thy mind about that which thou seest."

3[11]:5 I asked her, "Wherefore is the tower builded upon waters, lady?" "I told thee so before," said she, "and indeed thou dost enquire diligently. So by thy enquiry thou discoverest the truth. Hear then why the tower is builded upon waters; it is because your life is saved and shall be saved by water. But the tower has been founded by the word of the Almighty and Glorious Name, and is strengthened by the unseen power of the Master."

4[12]:1 I answered and said unto her, "Lady, this thing is great and marvelous. But the six young men that build, who are they, lady?" "These are the holy angels of God, that were created first of all, unto whom the Lord delivered all His creation to increase and to build it, and to be masters of all creation. By their hands therefore the building of the tower will be accomplished."

4[12]:2 "And who are the others who are bringing the stones in?" "They also are holy angels of God; but these six are..."
5[13]:4 "But they that are brought and placed in the building, who are they?" "They are young in the faith, and faithful; but they are warned by the angels to do good, because wickedness was found in them."

5[13]:5 "But those whom they rejected and threw away, who are they?" "These have sinned, and desire to repent, therefore they were not cast to a great distance from the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they repent. They then that shall repent, if they repent, will be strong in the faith, if they repent now while the tower is building. But if the building shall be finished, they have no more any place, but shall be castaways. This privilege only have they, that they lie near the tower."

5[13]:1 "But wouldst thou know about them that are broken in pieces, and cast away far from the tower? These are the sons of lawlessness. They received the faith in hypocrisy, and no wickedness was absent from them. Therefore they have not salvation, for they are not useful for building by reason of their wickednesses. Therefore they were broken up and thrown far away by reason of the wrath of the Lord, for they excited Him to wrath."

5[13]:2 "But the rest whom thou hast seen lying in great numbers, not going to the building, of these they that are mildewed are they that knew the truth, but did not abide in it, nor cleave to the saints. Therefore they are useless."

5[13]:3 "But they that have the cracks, who are they?" "These are they that have discord in their hearts against one another, and are not at peace among themselves; who have an appearance of peace, but when they depart from one another, their wickednesses abide in their hearts. These are the cracks which the stones have."

5[13]:4 "But they that are broken off short, these have believed, and have their greater part in righteousness, but have some parts of lawlessness; therefore they are too short, and are not perfect."

5[13]:5 "But the white and round stones, which did not fit into the building, who are they, lady?" She answered and said to me, "How long art thou foolish and stupid, and enquirest everything, and understandest nothing? These are they that have faith, but have also riches of this world. When tribulation cometh, they deny their Lord by reason of their riches and their business affairs."

5[13]:6 And I answered and said unto her, "When then, lady, will they be useful for the building?" "When," she replied, "their wealth, which leadeth their souls astray, shall be cut away, then will they be useful for God. For just as the round stone, unless it be cut away, and lose some portion of itself, cannot become square, so also they that are rich in this world, unless their riches be cut away, cannot become useful to the Lord."

5[13]:7 "Learn first from thyself When thou hastd riches, thou wast useless; but now thou art useful and profitable unto life. Be ye useful unto God, for thou thyself also art taken from the same stones."

7[15]:1 "But the other stones which thou sawest cast far away from the tower and falling into the way and rolling out of the way into the regions where there is no way, these are they that have believed, but by reason of their double heart they abandon their true way. Thus thinking that they can find a better way, they go astray and are sore distressed, as they walk about in the regions where there is no way."

7[15]:2 "But they that fall into the fire and are burned, these are they that finally rebelled from the living God, and it no more entered into their hearts to repent by reason of the lusts of their wantonness and of the wickednesses which they wrought."

7[15]:3 "But the others, which are near the waters and yet cannot roll into the water, wouldest thou know who are
they? These are they that heard the word, and would be baptized unto the name of the Lord. Then, when they call to their remembrance the purity of the truth, they change their minds, and go back again after their evil desires.”

7[15]:4 So she finished the explanation of the tower.

7[15]:5 Still importunate, I asked her further, whether for all these stones that were rejected and would not fit into the building of the tower that was repentence, and they had a place in this tower. "They can repent," she said, "but they cannot be fitted into this tower.

7[15]:6 “Yet they shall be fitted into another place much more humble, but not until they have undergone torments, and have fulfilled the days of their sins. And they shall be changed for this reason, because they participated in the Righteous Word; and then shall it befall them to be relieved from their torments, if the evil deeds, that they have done, come into their heart; but if these come not into their heart, they are not saved by reason of the hardness of their hearts."

8[16]:1 When then I ceased asking her concerning all these things, she saith to me; "Wouldest thou see something else?" Being very desirous of beholding, I was greatly rejoiced that I should see it.

8[16]:2 She looked upon me, and smiled, and she saith to me, "Seest thou seven women round the tower?" "I see them, lady," say I. "This tower is supported by them by commandment of the Lord.

8[16]:3 “Hear now their employments. The first of them, the woman with the strong hands, is called Faith; through her are saved the elect of God.

8[16]:4 And the second, that is girded about and looketh like a man, is called Continence; she is the daughter of Faith. Whosoever she shall follow her, becometh happy in his life, for he shall refrain from all evil deeds, believing that, if he refrain from every evil desire, he shall inherit eternal life.”

8[16]:5 "And the others, lady, who be they?" "They are daughters one of the other. The name of the one is Simplicity, of the next, Knowledge, of the next, Guilelessness, of the next, Reverence, of the next, Love. When then thou shalt do all the works of their mother, thou canst live."

8[16]:6 "I would fain know, lady," I say, "what power each of them possesses." "Listen then," saith she, "to the powers which they have.

8[16]:7 “Their powers are mastered each by the other, and they follow each other, in the order in which they were born. From Faith is born Continence, from Continence Simplicity, from Simplicity Guilelessness, from Guilelessness Reverence, from Reverence Knowledge, from Knowledge Love. Their works then are pure and reverent and divine.

8[16]:8 Whosoever therefore shall serve these women, and shall have strength to master their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God."

8[16]:9 Then I asked her concerning the seasons, whether the consummation is even now. But she cried aloud, saying, "Foolish man, seest thou not that the tower is still a-building? Whencever therefore the tower shall be finished building, the end cometh; but it shall be built up quickly. Ask me no more questions: this reminder is sufficient for you and for the saints, and is the renewal of your spirits.

8[16]:10 “But it was not revealed to thyself alone, but in order that thou mightest show these things unto all. After three days—

8[16]:11 “for thou must understand first, and I charge thee, Hermas, first with these words, which I am about to speak to thee—(I charge thee to) tell all these things into the ears of the saints, that hearing them and doing them they may be purified from their wickednesses, and thyself also with them.”

9[17]:1 "Hear me, my children. I brought you up in much simplicity and guilelessness and reverence, through the mercy of the Lord, Who instilled righteousness into you, that ye might be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and all crookedness. But ye will not to cease from your wickedness.

9[17]:2 “Now then hear me and be at peace among yourselves, and have regard one to another, and assist one another, and do not partake of the creatures of God alone in abundance, but share them also with those that are in want.

9[17]:3 “For some men through their much eating bring weakness on the flesh, and injure their flesh: whereas the flesh of those who have nought to eat is injured by their not having sufficient nourishment, and their body is ruined.

9[17]:4 “This exclusiveness therefore is hurtful to you that have and do not share with them that are in want.

9[17]:5 “Look ye to the judgment that cometh. Ye then that have more than enough, seek out them that are hungry, while the tower is still unfinished; for after the tower is finished, ye will desire to do good, and will find no place for it.

9[17]:6 “Look ye therefore, ye that excel in your wealth, lest they that are in want shall moan, and their moaning shall go up unto the Lord, and ye with your abundance of good things be shut outside the door of the tower.

9[17]:7 “Now therefore I say unto you that are rulers of the Church, and that occupy the chief seats; be not ye like unto the sorcerers. The sorcerers indeed carry their drugs in boxes, but ye carry your drug and your poison in your heart.

9[17]:8 “Ye are case-hardened, and ye will not cleanse your hearts and mix your wisdom together in a clean heart, that ye may obtain mercy from the Great King.

9[17]:9 “Look ye therefore, children, lest these divisions of yours deprive you..."
10[18]:1 When then she ceased speaking with me, the six young men, who were building, came, and took her away to the tower, and other four lifted the couch, and took it also away to the tower. I saw not the face of these, for they were turned away.

10[18]:2 And, as she went, I asked her to reveal to me concerning the three forms, in which she had appeared to me. She answered and said to me; "As concerning these things thou must ask another, that they may be revealed to thee."

10[18]:3 Now she was seen of me, brethren, in my first vision of last year, as a very aged woman and seated on a chair.

10[18]:4 In the second vision her face was youthful, but her flesh and her hair were aged, and she spake to me standing; and she was more gladsome than before.

10[18]:5 But in the third vision she was altogether youthful and of exceeding great beauty, and her hair alone was aged; and she was gladsome exceedingly and seated on a couch. Touching these things I was very greatly anxious to learn this revelation.

10[18]:6 And I saw the aged woman in a vision of the night, saying to me, "Every enquiry needs humility. Fast therefore, and thou shalt receive what thou askest from the Lord."

10[18]:7 So I fasted one day; and that very night there appeared unto me a young man, and he saith to me, "Seeing that thou askest me revelations offhand with entreaty, take heed lest by thy much asking thou injure thy flesh.

10[18]:8 "Sufficient for thee are these revelations. Canst thou see mightier revelations than those thou hast seen?"

10[18]:9 I said unto him in reply, "Sir, this one thing alone I ask, concerning the three forms of the aged woman, that a complete revelation may be vouchsafed me." He saith to me in answer, How long are ye without understanding? It is your double-mindedness that maketh you of no understanding, and because your heart is not set towards the Lord."

10[18]:10 I answered and said unto him again, "From thee, Sir, we shall learn the matters more accurately."

11[19]:1 Listen," saith he, "concerning the three forms, of which thou enquirest.

11[19]:2 "In the first vision wherefore did she appear to thee an aged woman and seated on a chair? Because your spirit was aged, and already decayed, and had no power by reason of your infirmities and acts of double-mindedness.

11[19]:3 "For as aged people, having no longer hope of renewing their youth, expect nothing else but to fall asleep, so ye also, being weakened with the affairs of this world gave yourselves over to repining, and cast not your cares on the Lord; but your spirit was broken, and ye were aged by your sorrows."

11[19]:4 Wherefore then she was seated on a chair, I would fain know, Sir." "Because every weak person sits on a chair by reason of his weakness, that the weakness of his body may be supported. So thou hast the symbolism of the first vision."

12[20]:1 "But in the second vision thou sawest her standing, and with her countenance more youthful and more gladsome than before; but her flesh and her hair aged. Listen to this parable also," saith he.

12[20]:2 "Imagine an old man, who has now lost all hope of himself by reason of his weakness and his poverty, and expecteth nothing else save the last day of his life. Suddenly an inheritance is left him. He heareth the news, riseth up and full of joy clothes himself with strength, and no longer lieth down, but standeth up, and his spirit, which was now broken by reason of his former circumstances, is renewed again, and he no longer sitteth, but taketh courage; so also was it with you, when you heard the revelation which the Lord revealed unto you.

12[20]:3 "For He had compassion on you, and renewed your spirits, and ye laid aside your maladies, and strength came to you, and ye were made powerful in the faith, and the Lord rejoiced to see you put on your strength. And therefore He showed you the building of the tower; yea, and other things also shall He show you, if with your whole heart ye be at peace among yourselves.

13[21]:1 "But in the third vision ye saw her younger and fair and gladsome, and her form fair.

13[21]:2 "For just as when to some mourner cometh some piece of good tidings, immediately he forgetteth his former sorrows, and admittest nothing but the tidings which he hath heard, and is strengthened thenceforth unto that which is good, and his spirit is renewed by reason of the joy which he hath received; so also ye have received a renewal of your spirits by seeing these good things.

13[21]:3 "And whereas thou sawest her seated on a couch, the position is a firm one; for the couch has four feet and standeth firmly; for the world too is upheld by means of four elements.

13[21]:4 "They then that have fully repented shall be young again, and founded firmly, seeing that they have repented with their whole heart. There thou hast the revelation entire and complete. Thou shalt ask nothing more as touching revelation-- but if anything be lacking still, it shall be revealed unto thee."

(To be continued)
THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS

BOOK VII.

(Continued)

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Statue which the Woman with an Issue of Blood erected.

SINCE I have mentioned this city I do not think it proper to omit an account which is worthy of record for posterity. For they say that the woman with an issue of blood, who, as we learn from the sacred Gospel, received from our Saviour deliverance from her affliction, came from this place, and that her house is shown in the city, and that remarkable memorials of the kindness of the Saviour to her remain there. For there stands upon an elevated stone, by the gates of her house, a brazen image of a woman kneeling, with her hands stretched out, as if she were praying. Opposite this is another upright image of a man, made of the same material, clothed decently in a double cloak, and extending his hand toward the woman. At his feet, beside the statue itself, is a certain strange plant, which climbs up to the hem of the brazen cloak, and is a remedy for all kinds of diseases. They say that this statue is an image of Jesus. It has remained to our day, so that we ourselves also saw it when we were staying in the city. Nor is it strange that those of the Gentiles who, of old, were benefited by our Saviour, should have done such things, since we have learned also that the likenesses of his apostles Paul and Peter, and of Christ himself, are preserved in paintings, the ancients being accustomed, as it is likely, according to a habit of the Gentiles, to pay this kind of honor indiscriminately to those regarded by them as deliverers.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Episcopal Chair of James.

THE chair of James, who first received the episcopate of the church at Jerusalem from the Saviour himself and the apostles, and who, as the divine records show, was called a brother of Christ, has been preserved until now, the brethren who have followed him in succession there exhibiting clearly to all the reverence which both those of old times and those of our own day maintained and do maintain for holy men on account of their piety. So much as to this matter.

CHAPTER XX.

The Festal Epistles of Dionysius, in which he also gives a Paschal Canon.

DIONYSIUS, besides his epistles already mentioned, wrote at that time also his extant Festal Epistles, in which he uses words of panegyric respecting the passover feast. He addressed one of these to Flavius, and another to Domitius and Didymus, in which he sets forth a canon of eight years, maintaining that it is not proper to observe the paschal feast until after the vernal equinox. Besides these he sent another epistle to his fellow-presbyters in Alexandria, as well as various others to different persons while the persecution was still prevailing.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Occurrences at Alexandria.

PEACE had but just been restored when he returned to Alexandria; but as sedition and war broke out again, rendering it impossible if or him to oversee all the brethren, separated in different places by the insurrection, at the feast of the passover, as if he were still an exile from Alexandria, he addressed them again by letter. And in another festal epistle written later to Hierax, a bishop in Egypt, he mentions the sedition then prevailing in Alexandria, as follows:

"What wonder is it that it is difficult for me to communicate by letters with those who live far away, when it is beyond my power even to reason with myself, or to take counsel for my own life? Truly I need to send letters to those who are as my own bowels, dwelling in one home, and brethren of one soul, and citizens of the same church; but how to send them I cannot tell. For it would be easier for one to go, not only beyond the limits of the province, but even from the East to the West, than from Alexandria to Alexandria itself.

For the very heart of the city is more intricate and impassable than that great and trackless desert which Israel traversed for two generations. And our smooth and waveless harbors have become like the sea, divided and walled up, through which Israel drove and in whose highway the Egyptians were overwhelmed. For often from the slaughters there committed they appear like the Red Sea. And the river which flows by the city has sometimes seemed drier than the waterless desert, and more parched than that in which Israel, as they passed through it, so suffered for thirst, that they cried out against Moses, and the water flowed for them from the steep rock, through him who alone doth wonders. Again it has overflowed so greatly as to flood all the surrounding country, and the roads and the fields; threatening to bring back the deluge of water that occurred in the days of Noah. And it flows along, polluted always with blood and slaughter and drownings, as it became for Pharaoh through the agency of Moses, when he changed it into blood, and it stank. And what other water could purify the water which purifies everything? How could the ocean, so great and impassable for men, if poured into it, cleanse this bitter sea? Or how could the great river which flowed out of Eden, if it poured the four heads into which it is divided into the one of Geon, wash away this pollution? Or when can the air poisoned by these noxious exhalations become pure? For such vapors arise from the earth, and winds from the sea, and breezes from the river, and mists from the harbors, that the dews are, as it were, discharges from dead bodies putrefying in all the elements around us. Yet men wonder and cannot understand whence these continuous pestilences; whence these severe sicknesses; whence these deadly diseases of all kinds; whence this various and vast human destruction; why this great city no longer contains as many inhabitants, from tender infants to those most advanced in life, as it for...
merely contained of those whom it called hearty old men. But the men from forty to seventy years of age were then so much more numerous that their number cannot now be filled out, even when those from fourteen to eighty years are enrolled and registered for the public allowance of food. And the youngest in appearance have become, as it were, of equal age with those who formerly were the oldest. But though they see the race of men thus constantly diminishing and wasting away, and though their complete destruction is increasing and advancing, they do not tremble."

CHAPTER XXII.

The Pestilence which came upon them.

AFTER these events a pestilential disease followed the war, and at the approach of the feast he wrote again to the brethren, describing the sufferings consequent upon this calamity.

"To other men the present might not seem to be a suitable time for a festival. Nor indeed is this or any other time suitable for them; neither sorrowful times, nor even such as might be thought especially cheerful. Now, indeed, everything is tears and every one is mourning, and wailings resound daily through the city because of the multitude of the dead and dying. For as it was written of the firstborn of the Egyptians, so now 'there has arisen a great cry, for there is not a house where there is not one dead.' And would that this were all! For many terrible things have happened already. First, they drove us out; and when alone, and persecuted, and put to death by all, even then we kept the feast. And every place of affliction was to us a place of festival: field, desert, ship, inn, prison; but the perfected martyrs kept the most joyous festival of all, feasting in heaven. After these things war and famine followed, which we endured in common with the heathen. But we bore alone those things with which they afflicted us, and at the same time we experienced also the effects of what they inflicted upon and suffered from one another; and again, we rejoiced in the peace of Christ, which he gave to us alone. "But after both we and they had enjoyed a very brief season of rest this pestilence assailed us; to them more dreadful than any dread, and more intolerable than any other calamity; and, as one of their own writers has said, the only thing which prevails over all hope.

But to us this was not so, but no less than the other things was it an exercise and probation. For it did not keep aloof even from us, but the heathen it assailed more severely." Farther on he adds:

"The most of our brethren were unsparing in their exceeding love and brotherly kindness. They held fast to each other and visited the sick fearlessly, and ministered to them continually, serving them in Christ. And they died with them most joyfully, taking the affliction of others, and drawing the sickness from their neighbors to themselves and willingly receiving their pains. And many who cared for the sick and gave strength to others died themselves having transferred to themselves their death. And the popular saying which always seems a mere expression of courtesy, they then made real in action, taking their departure as the others' 'offscouring.'

"Truly the best of our brethren departed from life in this manner, including some presbyters and deacons and those of the people who had the highest reputation; so that this form of death, through the great piety and strong faith it exhibited, seemed to lack nothing of martyrdom. And they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred; and they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred; and they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred; and they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred; and they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred; and they took the bodies of the saints in their open hands and in their bosoms, and closed their eyes and breathed their last and martyred. The most of our brethren were unsparing in their exceeding love and brotherly kindness. They held fast to each other and visited the sick fearlessly, and ministered to them continually, serving them in Christ. And they died with them most joyfully, taking the affliction of others, and drawing the sickness from their neighbors to themselves and willingly receiving their pains. And many who cared for the sick and gave strength to others died themselves having transferred to themselves their death. And the popular saying which always seems a mere expression of courtesy, they then made real in action, taking their departure as the others' 'offscouring.'

"The Reign of Gallienus.

BUT there is nothing like hearing his own words, which are as follows:

"Then he, having betrayed one of the emperors that preceded him, and made war on the other, perished with his whole family speedily and utterly. But Gallienus was proclaimed and universally acknowledged at once as an old emperor and a new, being before them and continuing after them. For according to the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah, 'Behold the things from the beginning have come to pass, and new things shall now arise.' For as a cloud passing over the sun's rays and obscuring them for a little time hides it and appears in its place; but when the cloud has passed by or is dissipated, the sun which had risen before appears again; so Macrianus who put himself forward and approached the existing empire of Gallienus, is not, since he never was.

But the other is just as he was. And his kingdom, as if it had cast aside old age, and had been purified from the former wickedness, now blossoms out more vigorously, and is seen and heard farther, and extends in all directions."

He then indicates the time at which he wrote this in the following words: "It occurs to me again to review the days of the imperial years. For I perceive that those most impious men, though they have been famous, yet in a short time..."
have become nameless. But the holier and more godly prince, having passed the seventh year, is now completing the ninth, in which we shall keep the feast.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

Nepos and his Schism.

BESIDES all these the two books on the Promises were prepared by him. The occasion of these was Nepos, a bishop in Egypt, who taught that the promises to the holy men in the Divine Scriptures should be understood in a more Jewish manner, and that there would be a certain millennium of bodily luxury upon this earth. As he thought that he could establish his private opinion by the Revelation of John, he wrote a book on this subject, entitled Refutation of Allegorists. Dionysius opposes this in his books on the Promises. In the first he gives his own opinion of the dogma; and in the second he treats of the Revelation of John, and mentioning Nepos at the beginning, writes of him in this manner: “But since they bring forward a certain work of Nepos, on which they rely confidently, as if it proved beyond dispute that there will be a reign of Christ upon earth, I confess that in many other respects I approve and love Nepos, for his faith and industry and diligence in the Scriptures, and for his extensive psalmody, with which many of the brethren are still delighted; and I hold him in the more reverence because of the holier brethren are still delighted; and I hold him in the more reverence because he was fully convinced by the arguments and reasons which we had once held, unless they appeared to be correct. Nor did we evade objections, but we endeavored as far as possible to hold to and confirm the things which lay before us, and if the reason given satisfied us, we were not ashamed to change our opinions and agree with others; but on the contrary, conscientiously and sincerely, and with hearts laid open before God, we accepted whatever was established by the proofs and teachings of the Holy Scriptures. And finally the author and mover of this teaching, who was called Coracion, in the hearing of all the brethren that were present, acknowledged and testified to us that he would no longer hold this opinion, nor discuss it, nor mention nor teach it, as he was fully convinced by the arguments against it. And some of the other brethren expressed their gratification at the conference, and at the spirit of conciliation and harmony which all had manifested.”

CHAPTER XXV.

The Apocalypse of John.

Afterward he speaks in this manner of the Apocalypse of John. "Some before us have set aside and rejected the book altogether, criticizing it chapter by chapter, and pronouncing it without sense or argument, and maintaining that the title is fraudulent. For they say that it is not the work of John, nor is it a revelation, because it is covered thickly and densely by a veil of obscurity. And they affirm that none of the apostles, rend none of the saints, nor any one in the Church is its author, but that Cerinthus, who founded the sect which was called after him the Cerinthian, desiring reputable authority for his fiction, prefixed the name. For the doctrine which he taught was this: that the kingdom of Christ will be an earthly one. And as he was himself devoted to the pleasures of the body and altogether sensual in his nature, he dreamed that that kingdom would consist in those things which he desired, namely, in the delights of the belly and of sexual passion; that is to say, in eating and drinking and marrying, and in festivals and sacrifices and the slaying of victims, under the guise of which he thought he could indulge his appetites with a better grace. "But I could not venture to reject the book, as many brethren hold it in high esteem. But I suppose that it is beyond my comprehension, and that there is a certain concealed and more wonderful meaning in every part. For if I do not understand I suspect that a deeper sense lies beneath the words. I do not measure and judge them by my own reason, but leaving the more to faith I regard them as too high for me to grasp. And I do not reject what I cannot comprehend, but rather wonder because I do not understand it." After this he examines the entire Book of Revelation, and having proved that it is impossible to understand it according to the literal sense, proceeds as follows:

"Having finished all the prophecy, so to speak, the prophet pronounces those blessed who shall observe it, and also..."
that is called Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.' And toward the close he speaks thus: 'Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book, and I, John, who saw and heard these things.'

"But that he who wrote these things was called John must be believed, as he says it; but who he was does not appear. For he did not say, as often in the Gospel, that he was the beloved disciple of the Lord, or the one who lay on his breast, or the brother of James, or the eye-witness and hearer of the Lord. For he would have spoken of these things if he had wished to show himself plainly. But he says none of them; but speaks of himself as our brother and companion, and a witness of Jesus, and blessed because he had seen and heard the revelations. But I am of the opinion that there were many with the same name as the apostle John, who, on account of their love for him, and because they admired and emulated him, and desired to be loved by the Lord as he was, took to themselves the same surname, as many of the children of the faithful are called Paul or Peter. For example, there is also another John, surnamed Mark, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, whom Barnabas and Paul took with them; of whom also it is said, 'And they had also John as their attendant.' But that it is he who wrote this, I would not say. For it is not written that he went with them into Asia, but, 'Now when Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.' But I think that he was some other one of those in Asia; as they say that there are two monuments in Ephesus, each bearing the name of John.

"And from the ideas, and from the words and their arrangement, it may be reasonably conjectured that this one is different from that one. For the Gospel and Epistle agree with each other and begin in the same manner. The one says, 'In the beginning was the Word'; the other, 'That which was from the beginning.' The one: 'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father'; the other says the same things slightly altered: 'Which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes; which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life,--and the life was manifested.' For he introduces these things at the beginning, maintaining them, as is evident from what follows, in opposition to those who said that the Lord had not come in the flesh. Wherefore also he carefully adds, 'And we have seen and bear witness, and declare unto you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also.' He holds to this and does not digress from his subject, but discusses everything under the same heads and names some of which we will briefly mention. Any one who examines carefully will find the phrases, 'the life,' 'the light,' 'turning from darkness,' frequently occurring in both; also continually, 'truth,' 'grace,' 'joy,' 'the flesh and blood of the Lord,' 'the judgment,' 'the forgiveness of sins,' 'the love of God toward us,' the 'commandment that we love one another,' that we should keep all the commandments; the 'conviction of the world, of the Devil, of Anti Christ,' the 'promise of the Holy Spirit,' the 'adoption of God,' the 'faith continually required of us,' the 'Father and the Son,' occur everywhere. In fact, it is plainly to be seen that one and the same character marks the Gospel and the Epistle throughout. But the Apocalypse is different from these writings and foreign to them; not touching, nor in the least bordering upon them; almost, so to speak, without even a syllable in common with them. Nay more, the Epistle--for I pass by the Gospel -- does not mention nor does it contain any intimation of the Apocalypse, nor does the Apocalypse of the Epistle. But Paul, in his epistles, gives some indication of his revelations, though he has not written them out by themselves.

Moreover, it can also be shown that the, diction of the Gospel and Epistle differs from that of the Apocalypse. For they were written not only without error as regards the Greek language, but also with elegance in their expression, in their reasonings, and in their entire
structure. They are far indeed from betraying any barbarism or solecism, or any vulgarity whatever. For the writer had, as it seems, both the requisites of discourse,—that is, the gift of knowledge and the gift of expression,—as the Lord had bestowed them both upon him. I do not deny that the other writer saw a revelation and received knowledge and prophecy. I perceive, however, that his dialect and language are not accurate Greek, but that he uses barbarous idioms, and, in some places, solecisms. It is unnecessary to point these out here, for I would not have any one think that I have said these things in a spirit of ridicule, for I have said what I have only with the purpose of showing dearly the difference between the writings."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Epistles of Dionysius.

Besides these, many other epistles of Dionysius are extant, as those against Sabelius, addressed to Ammon, bishop of the church of Bernice, and one to Telesphorus, and one to Euphranor, and again another to Ammon and Euporus. He wrote also four other books on the same subject, which he addressed to his namesake Dionysius, in Rome. Besides these many of his epistles are with us, and large books written in epistolary form, as those on Nature, addressed to the young man Timothy, and one on Temptations, which he also dedicated to Euphranor. Moreover, in a letter to Basilides, bishop of the parishes in Pentapolis, he says that he had written an exposition of the beginning of Ecclesiastes. And he has left us also various letters addressed to this same person. Thus much Dionysius.

But our account of these matters being now completed, permit us to show to posterity the character of our own age.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Paul of Samosata, and the Heresy introduced by hint at Antioch.

After Xystus had presided over the church of Rome for eleven years, Dionysius, namesake of him of Alexandria, succeeded him. About the same time Demetrius died in Antioch, and Paul of Samosata received that episcopate. As he held, contrary to the teaching of the Church, low and degraded views of Christ, namely, that in his nature he was a common man, Dionysius of Alexandria was entreated to come to the synod. But being unable to come on account of age and physical weakness, he gave his opinion on the subject under consideration by letter. But all the other pastors of the churches from all directions, made haste to assemble at Antioch, as against a de-spoiler of the flock of Christ.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Illustrious Bishops of that Time.

Of these, the most eminent were Firmilianus, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; the brothers Gregory and Athenodorus, pastors of the churches in Pontus; Helenus of the parish of Tar-sus, and Nicomas of Iconium moreover, Hymenaeus, of the church of Jerusalem, and Theotecnus of the neighboring church of Caesarea; and besides these Maximus, who presided in a distinguished manner over the brethren in Bostra. If any should count them up he could not fail to note a great many others, besides presbyters and deacons, who were at that time assembled for the same cause in the above-mentioned city. But these were the most illustrious. When all of these assembled at different times and frequently to consider these matters, the arguments and questions were discussed at every meeting; the adherents of the Samosatian endeavoring to cover and conceal his heterodoxy, and the others striving zealously to lay bare and make manifest his heresy and blasphemy against Christ.

Meanwhile, Dionysius died in the twelfth year of the reign of Gallienus, having held the episcopate of Alexandria for seventeen years, and Maximus succeeded him. Gallienus after a reign of fifteen years was succeeded by Claudius, who in two years delivered the government to Aurelian.
cons, and the churches of God, greeting to the beloved brethren in the Lord." A little farther on they proceed thus: "We sent for and called many of the bishops from a distance to relieve us from this deadly doctrine; as Dionysius of Alexandria and Firmilianus of Cappadocia, those blessed men. The first of these not considering the author of this delusion worthy to be addressed, sent a letter to Antioch, not written to him, but to the entire parish, of which we give a copy below. But Firmilianus came twice and condemned his innovations, as we who were present know and testify, and many others understand. But as he promised to change his opinions, he believed him and hoped that without any reproach to the Word what was necessary would be done. So he delayed the matter, being deceived by him who denied even his own God and Lord, and had not kept the faith which he formerly held. And now Firmilianus was again on his way to Antioch, and had come as far as Tarsus because he had learned by experience his God-denying wickedness. But while we, having come together, were calling for him and awaiting his arrival, he died."

After other things they describe as follows the manner of life which he led: "Whereas he has departed from the rule of faith, and has turned aside after base lusts, and the churches of God, greeting to the beloved brethren in the Lord." A little farther on they proceed thus: "We sent for and called many of the bishops from a distance to relieve us from this deadly doctrine; as Dionysius of Alexandria and Firmilianus of Cappadocia, those blessed men. The first of these not considering the author of this delusion worthy to be addressed, sent a letter to Antioch, not written to him, but to the entire parish, of which we give a copy below. But Firmilianus came twice and condemned his innovations, as we who were present know and testify, and many others understand. But as he promised to change his opinions, he believed him and hoped that without any reproach to the Word what was necessary would be done. So he delayed the matter, being deceived by him who denied even his own God and Lord, and had not kept the faith which he formerly held. And now Firmilianus was again on his way to Antioch, and had come as far as Tarsus because he had learned by experience his God-denying wickedness. But while we, having come together, were calling for him and awaiting his arrival, he died."

Afterwards, at the close of the epistle, they add these words:

"Therefore we have been compelled to excommunicate him, since he sets himself against God, and refuses to obey, and to appoint in his place another bishop for the Catholic Church. By divine direction, as we believe, we have appointed Domnus, who is adorned with all the qualities becoming in a bishop, and who is a son of the blessed Demetrianus, who formerly presided in a distinguished manner over the same parish. We have informed you of this that you may write to him, and may receive letters of communion from him. But let this man write to Artemas; and let those who think as Artemas
As Paul had fallen from the episcopate, as well as from the orthodox faith, Domnus, as has been said, became bishop of the church at Antioch. But as Paul refused to surrender the church building, the Emperor Aurelian was petitioned; and he decided the matter most equitably, ordering the building to be given to those to whom the bishops of Italy and of the city of Rome should adjudge it. Thus this man was driven out of the church, with extreme disgrace, by the worldly power. Such was Aurelian's treatment of us at that time; but in the course of his reign he changed his mind in regard to us, and was moved by certain advisers to institute a persecution against us. And there was great talk about this on every side. But as he was about to do it, and was, so to speak, in the very act of signing the decrees against us, the divine judgment came upon him and restrained him at the very verge of his undertaking, showing in a manner that all could see clearly, that the rulers of this world can never find an opportunity against the churches of Christ, except the hand, that defends them permits it, in divine and heavenly judgment, for the sake of discipline and correction, at such times as it sees best.

After a reign of six years, Aurelian was succeeded by Probus. He reigned for the same number of years, and Carus, with his sons, Carinus and Numerianus, succeeded him. After they had reigned less than three years the government devolved on Diocletian, and those associated with him. Under them took place the persecution of our time, and the destruction of the churches connected with it. Shortly before this, Dionysius, bishop of Rome, after holding office for nine years, died, and was succeeded by Felix.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Pervasive Heresy of the Manicheans which began at this Time.

At this time, the madman, named from his demoniacal heresy, armed himself in the perversion of his reason, as the
ing with which the victim has been afflicted. Forgiveness does not expect or seek restoration, restitution, compensation, nor need these be sought or offered by the offender, nor is it required the offender make any response, nor is it even necessary the offender accept the forgiveness. The one offended or injured must also at the very least not wish ill upon the perpetrator. A true follower of Christ must go beyond this, and not only wish the offender attain eternal salvation but actually attempt to assist in the offender’s attainment of eternal salvation. . . If this seems to be too much to ask, too much to require, too much to consider as being appropriate or attainable, consider this . . . If Steven Vincent is in Heaven, or undergoing purification prior to entry into eternal union with God in Heaven, the foregoing is his attitude to and wishes for Kevin Daigle. He may realistically wish Daigle be incarcerated for life so-as-to protect humankind. But he also wants Daigle to do and to be that which is necessary for Daigle to attain eternal salvation. Page 5

THE SEINFELD CULTURE of nothing and emptiness Atonement and Reparation [6] Love is sorely missing universally in today’s human culture. . . With what has love been replaced? Nothing. Love has been replaced with nothing. And this is the predominant culture of today. Not the exclusive or sole culture, but the predominant culture. Page 7


OUR ACCEPTING THE LOVE CHRIST HAS FOR US HEALS HIS HEART WHICH WE HAVE BROKEN For that Divine to Human, Human to Divine and Human to other Human, love, is perfection in forgiveness, reparation, and atonement. Atonement and Reparation [8] The two thieves who were executed with Christ Page 9

HUMOR dead duck (Thanks Mike) A woman brought a very limp duck to a veterinary surgeon. Page 12

SEQUEENCE Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Page 13

TRYING TO BE HOLY MAKES

BAPTISM Atonement and Reparation [5] It is proper to think of time as beginning with the creation of the Angels because it is our understanding Angels were the first of creation, and therefore time began. All of the Angels were given free will. It is our understanding that all of the Angels were created at the same time. But apparently time did not “run” with the creation of the Angels because the Angels were all created with perfect creature intellect, knowledge, understanding, being, nature, and everything else pertinent to being an Angel. Angels are not eternal, but they are immortal, and therefore none of them will ever cease to exist. Angels were created to glorify God, worship Him, do His bidding, and generally be in total and perfect harmony with God while remaining distinct individuals with differing characters and personalities. Some decided to be what they were created to be and some decided to be otherwise. The ones who decided to be otherwise were cast into Hell which was created for them. They did not get a second chance because having perfect creature knowledge and understanding, when an Angel makes a decision the Angel does not change its decision. . . Somewhere along the line God created the physical universe in which we live, and created us Humans to live in that physical universe. Part of the plan was that eventually we would be instrumental in bringing ourselves and all of creation into perfect union with God. He made us immortal like the Angels, but unlike the Angels we were not created as pure spirits but as a combination of spirit, soul, and physical body - often shortened in reference to simply body and soul. And while God also gave each of us free will, God did not endow us with perfect creature intellect, knowledge, understanding, and the other qualities He gave in perfection to the Angels. He made us in a manner which allowed each of us to grow, learn, develop, change, make decisions and change them, and so time began to run. Page 6

HUMOR (Thanks Johnny) SOME OF THE BEST WRITING IS DONE ON TOMBSTONES! Page 16

THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EU-SEBIUS BOOK VII. (Continued) CHAPTER XVIII. The Statue which the Woman with an Issue of Blood erected. Page 24

IT does not even require the gift of the Divine Virtue of Faith for a person to realize that if you really get God angry with you Page 13

EVERY DAY BENEFITS FROM THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST Remove from consideration those events which occur because of the imperfections of this world, and natural events, particularly those attributable to Original Sin and the world’s resulting loss of harmony with God. Consider only those events attributable to humans and to human conduct, thoughts, and deeds. Page 14

WHILE FAITH IS A GIFT, SURELY BELIEF IS WITHIN OUR GRASP AND APPRECIATION OF THE REALITY OF GOD’S EXISTENCE AS WELL? Page 15

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS The Shepherd of Hermas, often simply named or cited as The Shepherd, and sometimes referred to as The Good Shepherd, is a Christian work of the First or Second Century. While usually not considered as part of the New Testament, it was considered by some of the Early Church Fathers to be canonical . . . canonical recommended it as a teaching work, especially to catechumens; something to be read even aloud in Church . . . relates five visions . . . Page 17
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FOR THE GODLESS AND SINNERS ON THE ROAD TO HELL

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GLOBAL SPIRITUAL WARMING
Atonement and Reparation [1] Our spiritual world actually is experiencing global warming. the Divine directive regarding all of creation is that we humans are to be husbandmen of all of creation. Not preservationists, but husbandmen. Page 1

FASTING IN “LITTLE BATCHES” CAN “MAKE A LOT OF CURE”
Atonement and Reparation [3] We obtain mental and spiritual enlightenment regarding different aspects of making reparation and the application of making reparations, not just from exploration of Our Lord’s making reparation and atonement for our sins through His Sacrifice of Himself, but also through examining human history. . . A prime, modern example is the aftermath of World War I and the different aftermath of World War II . . . General Marshall’s plan actually followed major aspects of Our Lord’s making reparation and atonement for the sins of humankind, and the reestablishment of Divine - human relationships, as well as providing the ability for humankind and each individual human to attain eternal salvation. Page 4

REPAIRS ARE PART OF NORMAL MAINTENANCE Atonement and Reparation [2] People mentally and sometimes even physically moan and groan whenever the words reparation and atonement for sins are spoken . . . Those moans and groans are produced under demonic influence . . . The Devil does not want us to access what Jesus Christ made available to us. Rather, the Devil wants us to go to Hell for all eternity. Some people experience aggravation at just the thought of having to make atonement and reparation for the sins of others. Their attitude is, “Why should I have to do that. They committed the sins, so why should I have to make up for them.” . . . If that had been Our Lord’s attitude there would be noticeably fewer people in Heaven. Page 3

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FORGIVENESS Atonement and Reparation [4] On Monday, August 23, 2015, Louisiana State Trooper Steven Vincent apparently stopped to render assistance to Kevin Daigle. Apparently Mr. Daigle was in the driver’s seat of a pick-up truck that had left the road and had the front and rear passenger side tires in the ditch alongside the road. Allegedly, Mr. Daigle pointed a sawed off shotgun at and shot the Trooper in the head, then stood over the Trooper and said something that indicated Daigle thought Vincent was lucky because Vincent was going to die. The Trooper died the next day. Daigle was restrained by passersby and taken into custody. . . One of the more traditional concepts of forgiveness is that it is an intentional and voluntary attitude and feeling by a victim regarding one who inflicts injury upon the victim, wherein the victim does not desire or seek vengeance. This is applied to the perpetrator, the offence, the infliction of the injury, and the injury itself. Forgiveness does not condone, excuse, pardon, or forget, nor does it accept the wrongdo- (Continued CONTENTS on page 31)

Please pray for the reformation and repentance of those in the pornography industry, and of those who promote acceptance of abortion and unnatural sexual relations; and make atonement and reparation for their sins, for their evil, and for the evil propagate.

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