

do wrong; and we ourselves do wrong, not knowing whence and by whom and unto what place we were called, and how many things Jesus Christ endured to suffer for our sakes. What recompense then shall we give unto Him? or what fruit worthy of His own gift to us? And how many mercies do we owe to Him! For He bestowed the light upon us; He spake to us, as a father to his sons; He saved us, when we were perishing. What praise then shall we give to Him, or what payment of recompense for those things which we received? we who were maimed in our understanding, and worshiped stocks and stones, gold and silver and bronze, the works of men; and our whole life was nothing else but death. While then we were thus wrapped in darkness and oppressed with this thick mist in our vision, we recovered our sight, putting off by His will the cloud wherein we were wrapped. For He had mercy on us, and His compassion saved us, having beheld in us much error and perdition, even when we had no hope of salvation, save that which came from Him. For He called us, when we were not, and from not being He willed us to be.

2. Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not. Break out and cry, thou that travailest not; for more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband. In that he said, Rejoice thou barren that bearest not, He spake of us; for our Church was barren, before that children were given unto her. And in that He said, Cry aloud, thou that travailest not, He meaneth this: Let us not, like women in travail, grow weary of offering up our prayers with simplicity to God. Again, in that He said, For the children of the desolate are more than of her that hath the husband, He so spake, because our people seemed desolate and forsaken of God, whereas now, having believed, we have become more than those who seemed to have God. Again another Scripture saith, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. He meaneth this; that it is right to save them that are perishing. For this, indeed, is a great and marvellous work to establish, not those things which stand, but those which are falling. So, also, Christ willed to save the things which were perishing. And He saved many, coming and calling us when we were even now perishing.

3. Seeing then that He bestowed so great mercy on us; first of all, that we, who are living, do not sacrifice to these dead gods, neither worship them, but through Him have known the Father of truth. What else is this knowledge to Himward, but not to deny Him through whom we have known Him? Yea, He Himself saith, Who so confesseth Me, Him will I confess before the Father. This then is our reward, if verily we shall confess Him through whom we are saved. But wherein do we confess Him? When we do that which He saith and are not disobedient unto His commandments, and not only honor Him with our lips, but with our whole heart, and with our whole mind. Now He saith also in

Isaiah, This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. * * *

18. Therefore let us also be found among those that give thanks, among those that have served God, and not among the ungodly that are judged. For I myself too, being an utter sinner, and not yet escaped from temptation, but being still amidst the engines of the devil, do my diligence to follow after righteousness, that I may prevail so far at least as to come near unto it, while I fear the judgment to come.

19. Therefore, brothers and sisters, after the God of truth hath been heard, I read to you an exhortation to the end that ye may give heed to the things which are written, so that ye may save both yourselves and him that readeth in the midst of you. For I ask you as a reward that ye repent with your whole heart and give salvation and life to yourselves. For doing this we shall set a goal for all the young who desire to toil in the study of piety and the goodness of God. And let us not be displeased and vexed, fools that we are, whensoever any one admonisheth us and turneth us aside from unrighteousness unto righteousness. For sometimes while we do evil things, we perceive it not by reason of the double-mindedness and unbelief which is in our breasts, and we are darkened in our understanding by our vain lusts. Let us therefore practice righteousness that we may be saved unto the end. Blessed are they that obey these ordinances. Though they may endure affliction for a short time in the world, they will gather the immortal fruit of the resurrection. Therefore let not the godly be grieved, if he be miserable in the times that now are: a blessed time awaiteth him. He shall live again in heaven with the fathers, and shall have rejoicing throughout a sorrowless eternity.

20. Neither suffer ye this again to trouble your mind, that we see the unrighteous possessing wealth, and the servants of God straitened. Let us then have faith, brothers and sisters. We are contending in the lists of a living God; and we are trained by the present life that we may be crowned with the future. No righteous man hath reaped fruit quickly, but waiteth for it. For if God had paid the recompense of the righteous speedily, then straightway we should have been training ourselves in merchandise and not in godliness; for we should seem to be righteous, though we were pursuing not that which is godly, but that which is gainful. And for this cause divine judgment overtaketh a spirit that is not just, and loadeth it with chains.

To the only God invisible, the Father of truth, who sent forth unto us the Savior and Prince of immortality, through whom also He made manifest unto us the truth and the heavenly life, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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We must not take the faults of our youth into our old age, for old age brings with it its own faults.—
Goethe.