

## 5 - Early Church Fathers: Clement of Rome

And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.  
~ Philippians 4:3 ~

“All these, therefore, were highly honoured, and made great, not for their own sake, or for their own works, or for the righteousness which they wrought, but through the operation of His will. And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”  
~ Clement, Letter to the Corinthians, 32 ~

**Question: Early Church Fathers:** Is the term acceptable?

- A. **Matthew 23:9-10** - “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.
- B. **Other Scriptures**
  - 1. Father: 1Cor 4:15, 1Tim 1:2, Titus 1:4, Heb 1:1
  - 2. Teacher: Eph 4:11, 1Tmi 2:7
- C. **Conclusion**

**Calvin** “The true meaning therefore is, that the honor of a father is falsely ascribed to men, when it obscures the glory of God. Now this is done, whenever a mortal man, viewed apart from God, is accounted a father, since all the degrees of relationship depend on God alone through Christ, and are held together in such a manner that, strictly speaking, God alone is the Father of all.”

### I. Introductory Comments about Clement's Letter

- A. **Uncertainty**
- B. **Antiquity**
- C. **Problems**
- D. **Insight**
  - 1. **Paul:** [5] “After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.”
  - 2. **Early Church Relationships**
  - 3. **Doctrine**

### II. The Occasion

- A. **Sedition in the Church**
- B. **Overthrow of Apostolic Established Ministry**

### III. Scripture

- A. **Saturated in Scripture**
- B. **Distinct from Scripture**

### IV. Election

- A. **From the Letter**

[29] Let us then draw near to Him with holiness of spirit, lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto Him, loving our gracious and merciful Father, who has made us partakers in the blessings of His elect.

[50] For it is written, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not impute to him, and in whose mouth there is no guile." This blessedness cometh upon those who have been chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## **B. Significance**

## **V. Christology**

### **A. Deity**

[16] For Christ is of those who are humble-minded, and not of those who exalt themselves over His flock. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the majesty of God, did not come in the pomp of pride or arrogance, although He might have done so, but in a lowly condition, as the Holy Spirit had declared regarding Him.

### **B. Humility**

### **C. Gratuitous Salvation**

[7] Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who formed us. Let us look stedfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world.

## **VI. Ecclesiology**

### **A. Importance**

### **B. Apostolic Government** (different from succession)

### **C. Plurality of Eldership**

[1] For ye did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the command-merits of God, being obedient to those who had the rule over you, and giving all fitting honour to the presbyters among you.

### **D. Necessity of Humility**

[57] Ye therefore, who laid the foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves to the presbyters, and receive correction so as to repent, bending the knees of your hearts. Learn to be subject, laying aside the proud and arrogant self-confidence of your tongue. For it is better for you that ye should occupy<sup>141</sup> a humble but honourable place in the flock of Christ, than that, being highly exalted, ye should be cast out from the hope of His people.

### **E. Communion of Churches**

[59] Send back speedily to us in peace and with joy these our messengers to you: Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus: that they may the sooner announce to us the peace and harmony we so earnestly desire and long for [among you], and that we may the more quickly rejoice over the good order re-established among you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all everywhere that are the called of God through Him, by whom be to Him glory, honour, power, majesty, and eternal dominion, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.