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TEXTS FOR STUDENTS, No. 10A

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
OF THE EPISTLES OF  
ST. IGNATIUS

LONDON  
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE  
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## INTRODUCTION

### § 1. AUTHOR.

IGNATIUS, the famous Bishop of Antioch, and traditionally said to have been the pupil of St. John, was one of the earliest leaders of the Church in the second century to suffer persecution at the hands of the Roman Government. He was condemned in his own city to be sent to Rome and thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre. The date assigned by Eusebius is A.D. 108, and there is no reason why he should not be right, though a later writer, Johannes Malalas (c. A.D. 600), gives it as A.D. 115, at the time of the visit of the Emperor Trajan to Antioch. An account of Ignatius' death is found in the "Acts of Martyrdom of St. Ignatius," and there is no doubt that the sequel to his long journey from Antioch to Rome, during which he wrote his epistles, was that he was thrown to the lions.

### § 2. THE EPISTLES ASCRIBED TO HIM.

The long journey from Syria to Rome, on which Ignatius was closely guarded by soldiers, took him through districts of Asia Minor where there were many Christian Churches. In the province of Asia, at the head of the valley of the Mæander, the road forked. He might have gone by the southern route through Tralles,

Magnesia, and Ephesus. But his guards chose the northern route through Philadelphia to Smyrna, and thence by sea to Troas. His journey seems to have been well known to the Christian communities beforehand, and those on the southern route, disappointed of a visit, sent delegates to give him greetings of love and sympathy. While still at Smyrna, he wrote three letters to express his thanks, addressed to the Ephesian, Magnesian, and Trallian Churches. At the same time, he found opportunity to send on a letter to the Romans, begging them not to try to obtain a reprieve for him, as he was ready for a martyr's death.

After leaving Smyrna, he seems to have made another stay at the seaport of Troas, whence he wrote the remaining three letters to the places he had lately left.

One letter is addressed to Philadelphia, a second to Smyrna, where he had made his stay, while the third is a personal letter to Polycarp, the famous Bishop of Smyrna, who long afterwards himself won a martyr's crown. In these later letters, as in the earlier, his first thought is of gratitude for the kindness he had received. The above order is that given by Eusebius, and used in the editions, but in the MSS. it is quite different, and begins with the epistles to the Smyrnæans and Polycarp. The MSS. may therefore derive their sequence from the collection of the epistles which was made by Polycarp himself, who says in his Epistle to the Philippians that he is subjoining to his own letter the epistles "which were sent to us by him, and others which we had by us."

## § 3. CONTENTS.

The two chief themes of the epistles, which make them so important in the history of the Church, are: (1) Their insistence upon Episcopacy, and obedience to the bishop as the one centre of authority; and (2) their warnings against Docetic heresy, together with other doctrinal tendencies of Jewish origin.

It is interesting to note that Ignatius is the first to speak of the "Catholic Church"; and that the word "Christianity," like the word "Christian," comes first from Antioch (see *Magn.* x.).

The present translation is reprinted from the edition by J. H. Srawley, D.D. (S.P.C.K., 1920, 4s.), which contains full introduction and notes, in which the many difficulties of the text are discussed. It is intended as a companion to No. 10 of this series, which contains the Greek text.

The sources of Biblical quotations have been added; also, introduced by "Cf.," some of the many Biblical echoes and allusions.

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# AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE EPISTLES OF ST. IGNATIUS

## I. THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

*Written from Smyrna.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to her that is blessed with greatness through the fulness of God the Father, foreordained before the ages to be continually for abiding and unchangeable glory; united and chosen out by a passion truly suffered, through the will of the Father and Jesus Christ our God; to the Church which is at Ephesus in Asia, worthy of congratulation, heartiest greeting in Jesus Christ and in joy that is without reproach.

I. 1. I welcomed in God your dearly loved name, which is yours by nature in an upright and just mind by faith and love towards Christ Jesus our Saviour. Being imitators of God, you were kindled into action by the blood of God,<sup>1</sup> and perfectly fulfilled a task which accorded with your nature. 2. For when you heard that I was come from Syria in bonds for the Name and hope common to us all, and that I was hoping by your prayer to attain my purpose of fighting with wild beasts<sup>2</sup> at Rome, that through my attaining I may be enabled to be a disciple, you were anxious to visit me. 3. I received therefore your numerous body in the name of God in the person of Onesimus, whose love surpasses words, who is, besides, in the flesh your bishop. I pray that you may love him with a love according to Jesus Christ, and that you may

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Acts xx. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 32.

all be like him. For blessed is He who granted unto you, worthy as you are, to possess such a bishop.

II. 1. Concerning my fellow-servant Burrhus, who by God's appointment is your deacon and is blessed in all things, I pray that he may remain here unto the honour of yourselves and the bishop. And Crocus, who is worthy of God and of you, whom I received as a pattern of the love borne by you, has relieved me in all things—may the Father of Jesus Christ in like manner refresh him—along with Onesimus and Burrhus and Euplus and Fronto, in whose presence my love saw you all. 2. May I have joy of you all continually, if I be worthy. So then it is fitting in every way to glorify Jesus Christ who has glorified you, that in one obedience you may be perfectly joined together, submitting yourselves to the bishop and to the presbytery, and may in all things be found sanctified.

III. 1. I do not command you, as though I were somewhat. For even though I be bound in the Name, I have not yet become perfected in Jesus Christ. For now I am making a beginning of discipleship, and I address you as my fellow-disciples. For it were meet for me to be anointed by you for the contest with faith, admonition, patience, long-suffering. 2. But since love does not suffer me to be silent concerning you, I have therefore hastened to exhort you to set yourselves in harmony with the mind of God. For even Jesus Christ, our inseparable Life, is the Mind of the Father, as also the bishops, established in the furthest quarters, are in the mind of Jesus Christ.

IV. 1. Hence it is fitting for you to set yourselves in harmony with the mind of the bishop, as indeed you



do. For your noble presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted to the bishop, as the strings to a harp. And thus by means of your accord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is sung. 2. Form yourselves one and all into a choir, that blending in concord, taking the key-note of God, you may sing in unison with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father, that He may hear you and recognize by means of your well-doing that you are members of His Son. Therefore it is profitable for you to live in unblameable unity, that you may be also partakers of God continually.

V. 1. For if I in a short space of time had such intercourse with your bishop, not after the common way of men, but after the spirit, how much more do I congratulate you, who are knit to him as closely as is the Church to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ to the Father, that all things may accord in unity. 2. Let no man be deceived. If any one be not within the enclosure of the altar, he lacks the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two hath so great efficacy, how much more has the prayer of the bishop and of the whole Church. 3. So then he who comes not to the congregation thereby shows his pride and straightway cuts himself off. For it is written, "God resisteth the proud."<sup>1</sup> So then let us take heed not to resist the bishop, that by our submission we may give ourselves to God.

VI. 1. And so far as a man sees a bishop keeping silence, let him hold him all the more in reverence. For every one, whom the Master of the household sends to administer His own household, we ought to receive even as the Sender's very self. The bishop then we

<sup>1</sup> Prov. iii. 34 (1 Pet. v. 5; James iv. 6).

ought plainly to regard as the Lord Himself. 2. Now Onesimus of his own accord praises highly your orderly manner of life in God, how that you all live in accordance with truth and that in your midst no heresy has its dwelling. Nay, you do not even listen to any one if he speak of aught beyond Jesus Christ in truth.

VII. 1. For some are wont, out of malicious cunning, to bear about with them the Name, while they practise certain other deeds unworthy of God. These you must needs avoid as wild beasts. For they are mad dogs, biting stealthily, against whom you must be on your guard, for their bite is hard to heal. 2. There is one Physician, of flesh and of spirit, originate and unoriginate, God in man, true Life in death, Son of Mary and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord.

VIII. 1. Let no man then deceive you, as indeed you are not deceived, for you are wholly given to God. For when no evil desire is implanted in you, which can torment you, then are you living after a godly manner. I devote myself to abasement for your sakes, I surrender myself as an offering for the Church of you Ephesians, which is renowned unto the ages. 2. They that are of the flesh cannot do the works of the Spirit, neither can they that are spiritual do the works of the flesh, even as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith. But even the things which you do after the flesh are spiritual. For you do all things in Jesus Christ.

IX. 1. I have learned that certain persons from yonder have passed through your city, bringing with them false teaching. These you did not suffer to sow

seeds among you, for you closed your ears that they might not receive the seeds sown by them, since you were stones of the temple, prepared beforehand for a building of God the Father, being raised to the heights by the engine of Jesus Christ, which is the Cross, using as your rope the Holy Spirit. Your faith is the windlass, and love is the way which leads up to God. 2. So then you are all companions in festal procession along the way, bearing your God and shrine, bearing Christ and your holy treasures, fully arrayed in the commandments of Jesus Christ. And in your rejoicings I too have part, and am suffered to associate with you by letter, and to rejoice with you that you love nothing pertaining to man's outward life, but God only.

X. 1. And for the rest of men pray unceasingly—for there is in them hope of repentance—that they may attain unto God. Suffer them therefore to learn discipleship at least from your works. 2. In face of their outbursts of wrath be meek; in face of their boastful words be humble; meet their revilings with prayers; where they are in error, “be steadfast in the faith”;<sup>1</sup> in face of their fury be gentle. Be not eager to retaliate upon them. 3. Let our forbearance prove us their brethren. Let us endeavour to be imitators of the Lord, striving who can suffer the greater wrong, who can be defrauded, who be set at naught, that no rank weed of the Devil be found in you. But in all purity and sobriety abide in Christ Jesus in flesh and in spirit.

XI. 1. These are the last times.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth let us feel shame, let us stand in awe of the long-suffering of God, lest it turn to our judgment. For either let us

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 23; 1 Pet. v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1 John ii. 18.

fear the wrath to come, or let us love the grace which is present—either this or that; only be it ours to be found in Christ Jesus unto life which is life indeed. 2. Apart from Him, let nothing dazzle you. For in Him I wear my bonds, my spiritual pearls, in which I pray that I may rise again by the help of your prayer—may it ever be mine to have a share in that—that I may be found among the band of those Ephesian Christians, who were, besides, continually of one accord with the Apostles in the power of Jesus Christ.

XII. 1. I know who I am and to whom I write. I am a condemned man, you have obtained mercy. I am subject to peril, you are established secure. 2. You are the highway of those who are being conducted by death unto God. You are initiated into the mysteries along with Paul, who was sanctified and well approved, who is worthy of congratulation; in whose footsteps may I be found closely following, when I attain unto God; who makes mention of you in every letter in Christ Jesus.

XIII. 1. Be diligent therefore to come together more often to render thanks to God and to give glory. For when you frequently assemble together, the forces of Satan are overthrown and the destruction which he is planning is undone by the harmony of your faith. 2. Nothing is better than peace, by which all warfare of heavenly and earthly foes is brought to naught.

XIV. 1. None of these things escapes your notice, if you hold fast perfectly your faith and love in Jesus Christ, for these are the beginning and the end of life. The beginning is faith, the end is love. And the two blending in unity are God, and all else follows on these,

ending in perfect goodness. 2. No man who professes faith lives in sin, nor if he possesses love, does he live in hatred. "The tree is manifest by its fruit."<sup>1</sup> In like manner they who profess to be Christ's shall be apparent by their deeds. For at this time the work is no mere matter of profession, but is seen only when a man is found living in the power of faith unto the end.

XV. 1. It is better to keep silence and to be than to talk and not to be. It is good to teach, if the speaker act. Now there was One Teacher, who "spake and it came to pass."<sup>2</sup> And the deeds which He has done in silence are worthy of the Father. 2. He who is truly master of the spoken word of Jesus is able also to listen to His silence, that he may be perfect, and so may act by his speech, and be understood by his silence. 3. Nothing is hidden from the Lord, but even our secrets are brought nigh unto Him. Let us therefore do all things in the assurance that He dwells within us, that we may be His shrines<sup>3</sup> and He Himself may dwell in us as God. For this is indeed true and will be made manifest before our eyes by the services of love which as our bounden duty we render unto Him.

XVI. 1. Be not deceived, my brethren. They that corrupt houses "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup> 2. If then they who did such deeds after the flesh were put to death, how much more if a man by his evil teaching corrupt God's faith for which Jesus Christ was crucified. Such a man, becoming defiled, shall go into unquenchable fire, and in like manner he that heareth him.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 21.

XVII. 1. For this cause the Lord received the ointment upon His head,<sup>1</sup> that He might breathe the odour of incorruption upon the Church. Be not anointed with the foul odour of the teaching of the prince of this world,<sup>2</sup> lest he lead you captive and exclude you from the life set before you. 2. And why do we not all become prudent by receiving the knowledge of God, which is Jesus Christ? Why do we foolishly perish in ignorance of the gift which the Lord has truly sent?

XVIII. 1. My spirit abases itself for the sake of the Cross, which is an offence<sup>3</sup> to the unbelievers, but to us it is salvation and life eternal. "Where is the wise man? Where is he that disputeth?"<sup>4</sup> Where is the boasting of the so-called men of understanding? 2. For our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived by Mary according to a Divine purpose, of the seed of David, and yet of the Holy Spirit; who was born and baptized, that by His Passion He might purify water.

XIX. 1. And from the prince of this world<sup>5</sup> were hidden Mary's virginity and her child-bearing, in like manner too the death of the Lord. Three mysteries are these for open proclamation, wrought in God's silence. 2. How then were they manifested to the ages? A star shone forth in Heaven<sup>6</sup> more brightly than all the stars, and its light was greater than words can tell, and its strange appearing caused perplexity. And all the other stars, with the sun and moon, formed themselves into a band about the star. But the star itself surpassed them all in its brightness. And there was distress to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mark xiv. 3 and parr.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John xii. 31; 1 Cor. ii. 6, 8; 2 Cor. iv. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. i. 23.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. i. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. ii. 6-8.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Matt. ii. 1-12.

know whence came this strange sight so unlike the other stars. 3. From that time all sorcery and every spell began to lose their power; the ignorance of wickedness began to vanish away; the overthrow of the ancient dominion was being brought to pass, since God was appearing in human form "unto newness of life"<sup>1</sup> eternal. That which had been perfected in the mind of God was coming into being. Hence all things were disturbed, because the overthrow of death was being planned.

XX. 1. If Jesus Christ permit me through your prayer, and it be God's will, in my second treatise, which I am about to write unto you, I will go on to set forth the Divine plan, which I began to expound, with reference to the new man, Jesus Christ, consisting in faith in Him and love toward Him, in His Passion and Resurrection, especially if the Lord make any revelation to me. 2. Meet in common assembly in grace, every one of you, man by man, in one faith and in one Jesus Christ, who is according to the flesh of the stock of David,<sup>2</sup> the Son of man and Son of God, so that you may obey the bishop and the presbytery with a mind free from distraction; breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote preserving us that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ.

XXI. 1. I am devoted to you, and to those whom you sent to Smyrna for the honour of God. It is from thence, moreover, that I am writing to you with thanksgiving to the Lord, and with love for Polycarp as well as for yourselves. Remember me, even as Jesus Christ

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vi. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rom. i. 3.

remembers you. 2. Pray for the Church which is in Syria, whence I am being led in bonds to Rome, though I am the last among the faithful there; according as I was deemed worthy to be found destined for the honour of God. Farewell in God the Father and in Jesus Christ our common Hope.

## II. THE EPISTLE TO THE MAGNESIANS

*Written from Smyrna.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to her that has been blessed by the grace of God the Father in Christ Jesus our Saviour, in whom I salute the Church which is in Magnesia by the Mæander, and wish her in God the Father and in Jesus Christ heartiest greeting.

I. 1. When I learned that your godly love shows itself in a most orderly demeanour, I rejoiced and resolved to address myself to you in the faith of Jesus Christ. 2. For having been granted a title of the highest reverence, in my bonds which I wear I sing the praises of the Churches, and I pray that in them there may be union of flesh and spirit, which belong to Jesus Christ, our continual Life, an union in both faith and love—for there is nothing better than that—and, more than all, union with Jesus and the Father. 3. In Him we shall endure all the malicious attacks of the prince of this world, and, escaping from them, shall attain unto God.

II. Since therefore I have been permitted to see you in the person of Damas, your godly bishop, and the



worthy presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius, and my fellow-servant, the deacon Zotion, of whom may I have joy, because he is subject unto the bishop as unto the grace of God, and to the presbytery as unto the law of Jesus Christ—

III. 1. And for yourselves, it is fitting that you too should not treat lightly the youth of your bishop, but considering the power of God the Father, pay him all reverence. For in like manner I have perceived that the holy presbyters have not presumed upon his seemingly youthful state, but yield place to him as to one who is prudent in God, or rather not to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, even to Him who is Bishop of all men. 2. So then for the honour of Him, who desired you, it is fitting that you should obey without dissembling. For it is not that a man deceives this visible bishop, but rather that he tries to cheat Him who is invisible.<sup>1</sup> And in such case it is not with flesh that he has to do, but with God who knows the things that are in secret.

IV. So then it is fitting not only to be called, but also to be, Christians. Even as there are some who have the name "bishop" always on their lips, and yet in everything act apart from him. Now such seem to me to be not men of a good conscience, seeing that they gather not together in a valid way according to command.

V. 1. So then the things of this life have an end, and there are set together before us the two issues of life and death, and each man shall surely go to his own place.<sup>2</sup> 2. For just as there are two coinages, the one of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heb. xi. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Acts i. 25.

God, the other of the world, and each one of them has stamped upon it its own image, the unbelievers the stamp of this world, and they that in love believe, the image of God the Father through Jesus Christ, through whom unless we are ready of our own accord to die unto His Passion, His life is not in us.

VI. 1. Seeing therefore that in the persons already mentioned I beheld in faith your whole number, and have welcomed them, I urge you, be diligent to do all things in godly concord, the bishop presiding after the pattern of God, and the presbyters after the pattern of the council of the Apostles, with the deacons also who are most dear to me, seeing they are entrusted with a service under Jesus Christ, who before the ages was with the Father, and appeared at the end. 2. Therefore seeking to conform yourselves to the ways of God, reverence one another, and let no man look upon his neighbour after the flesh, but in Jesus Christ love one another continually. Let there be nothing among you which shall be able to divide you, but be united with the bishop, and with them that have the rule over you for a pattern and lesson of incorruption.

VII. 1. As therefore the Lord did nothing without the Father<sup>1</sup> being united with Him, neither of Himself nor by the Apostles, so neither do you act in anything apart from the bishop and presbyters. Neither attempt to persuade yourselves that anything is right which you do of yourselves apart. But in common let there be one prayer, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love, in joy that is without blame, which is Jesus Christ—for there is naught better than He. 2. Gather your-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John v. 19.

selves together, all of you, as unto one shrine, even God, as unto one altar, even One Jesus Christ, who proceeded from One Father, and is in One and returned to One.

VIII. 1. Be not deceived by strange doctrines or by ancient fables, seeing that they are profitless. For if, until now, we live after the rule of Judaism, we confess that we have not received grace. 2. For the Divine prophets lived a life in accordance with Christ Jesus. For this cause too they were persecuted, being inspired by His grace, so that unbelievers might be fully convinced that there is One God who manifested Himself through Jesus Christ His Son, who is His Word, coming forth from silence, who in all things did the good pleasure of Him that sent Him.<sup>1</sup>

IX. 1. If therefore those who lived in ancient observances attained unto newness of hope, no longer keeping the Sabbath, but living a life ruled by the Lord's day, whereon our life too had its rising through Him and His death—2. which some deny, a mystery through which we have received the power to believe, and therefore we endure, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ, our only Teacher—how shall we be able to live apart from Him? 3. For the prophets also became His disciples, and awaited in the Spirit His coming to teach them. And therefore He, for whom they rightly waited, came and raised them from the dead.<sup>2</sup>

X. 1. Let us not, therefore, be insensible to His kindness. For if He should follow us in acting according to our acts, we are indeed undone. Therefore, becoming His disciples, let us learn to live in a way befitting

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John viii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. I Pet. iii. 19.

Christianity. For he who is called by any other name besides this, is not of God. 2. Lay aside, then, the evil leaven which has become stale and bitter, and turn to the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> Be salted in Him, that no one among you wax corrupt, for by your savour you shall be proved. 3. It is outrageous to utter the name of Jesus Christ and live in Judaism. For Christianity believed not in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity, in which people of every tongue believed and were gathered unto God.<sup>2</sup>

XI. I write not this, my beloved, because I have learned that some of you are in such evil case, but as one who is less than you, I desire to put you on your guard that you fall not into the snares of vain teaching, but be fully convinced of the birth and passion and resurrection, which came to pass in the time of the government of Pontius Pilate<sup>3</sup>—events which truly and certainly were brought to pass by Jesus Christ, our Hope, from which Hope may none of you ever go astray.

XII. May I have joy of you in all things, if I be worthy. For even though I am a prisoner, I am nothing in comparison with one of you who are free. I know that you are not puffed up, for you have Jesus Christ within yourselves. And I know that when I praise you, you feel the greater shame, for it is written, "The righteous man is his own accuser."<sup>4</sup>

XIII. 1. Be diligent therefore to be confirmed in the decrees of the Lord and the Apostles, that in everything which you do, you may be prospered<sup>5</sup> in flesh and spirit, by faith and love, in the Son and Father and in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Isa. lxvi. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. vi. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Prov. xviii. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ps. i. 3.

the Spirit, in the beginning and in the end, along with your bishop who is worthy of all honour, and the fitly-woven spiritual coronal of your presbytery, and the deacons who are according to the mind of God. 2. Submit yourselves to the bishop and to one another, as Jesus Christ was subject to the Father after the flesh, and the Apostles to Christ and the Father, that there may be union both of flesh and spirit.

XIV. Knowing that you are full of God, I have exhorted you briefly. Remember me in your prayers, that I may attain unto God. Remember too the Church which is in Syria, whereof I am not worthy to be called a member. For I have need of your united prayer in God, and your love, that the Church in Syria may be granted the refreshing dew of your fervent supplication.

XV. The Ephesians from Smyrna salute you, whence also I am writing to you, for they have come hither for God's glory, even as yourselves. In every way they have refreshed me, with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. The rest of the Churches, too, salute you in the honour which is of Jesus Christ. Farewell in godly peace, keeping a steadfast spirit, which is Jesus Christ.

### III. THE EPISTLE TO THE TRALLIANS

*Written from Smyrna.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to her that is beloved by God, the Father of Jesus Christ, to the holy Church which is at Tralles in Asia, elect and worthy of God, having peace in flesh and spirit through the

passion of Jesus Christ, who is our hope through the resurrection unto Him; which Church I salute in the fulness of God, after the Apostolic manner, and bid her heartiest greeting.

I. 1. I have learned that you exhibit a mind which is blameless and unwavering in patient endurance, not from habit but naturally. For so your bishop, Polybius, has informed me, who by the will of God and Jesus Christ has been with me at Smyrna, and has so greatly shared my joy in my bonds in Christ Jesus, that in him I beheld your whole number. 2. So then I welcomed your godly kindness manifested through him, and gave glory to God, when I found you to be, as I had learned, followers of God.

II. 1. For whenever you are subject to the bishop as unto Jesus Christ, you appear to me to be living not the ordinary life of men, but after the manner of the life of Jesus Christ, who died for our sakes, that believing in His death you might escape death. 2. It is necessary therefore that you should act, as indeed you do, in nothing without the bishop. But be subject also to the presbytery, as unto the Apostles of Jesus Christ our Hope. For if we live in Him we shall be found in Him. 3. Those, too, who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must in every way be pleasing unto all. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks, but are servants of the Church of God. So then they must be on their guard against blame as against fire.

III. 1. In like manner let all reverence the deacons as Jesus Christ, as also the bishop, regarding him as a type of the Father, and the presbyters as the Council of God and the band of the Apostles. Without these there

is no Church deserving of the name. 2. Concerning these matters I am persuaded that you are thus disposed. For I have received, and still have with me, in the person of your bishop, the pattern of your love. His very demeanour is a striking lesson, and his gentleness is power—a man whom I think even those who are without God revere. 3. It is for love of you that I thus refrain, although I might have spoken of this with greater urgency. But I thought not myself sufficient for this task of enjoining you, condemned man that I am, as though I were an Apostle.

IV. 1. I have many thoughts in God. But I keep myself within bounds, that my boasting may not prove my ruin.<sup>1</sup> For now must I needs fear the more, and not give heed unto them that are puffing me up. For they who speak to me act as a scourge to me. 2. For I welcome suffering, yet I know not whether I am worthy. For the envy of Satan is not visible to the eyes of many, but it makes war on me the more. I desire therefore gentleness, by which the prince of this world is overthrown.

V. 1. Am I not able to write unto you heavenly things?<sup>2</sup> But I fear lest I may inflict harm upon you, since you are babes. Indeed bear with me, lest being unable to contain them, you be choked. 2. For even though I am in bonds and am able to understand heavenly things and the ordering of angels and the musterings of heavenly rulers, things visible and invisible, yet am I not thereby already a disciple. For we suffer lack of many things, that we may not come short of God.

VI. 1. I urge you therefore, yet not I, but the love

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. x. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John iii. 12.

of Jesus Christ, use only Christian food, and abstain from strange herbage, which is heresy. 2. For they even mingle poison with Jesus Christ, imposing on men by their false professions of honesty, giving as it were a deadly drug along with honeyed wine, and he that is ignorant of this fearlessly drinks in death with fatal pleasure.

VII. 1. Be on your guard then against such persons. And this will be, if you are not puffed up, and if you are inseparable from God, even Jesus Christ, and the bishop and the commandments of the Apostles. 2. He that is within the precincts of the altar is pure, he that is without the precincts of the altar is not pure. That is, he who acts in anything apart from the bishop and the presbytery and the deacons is not pure in conscience.

VIII. 1. I write not this, because I have learned that any such evil has happened among you, but I keep guard over you beforehand, since you are my beloved. and I foresee the snares of the devil. Take up then the armour of gentleness and renew yourselves in faith, which is the flesh of the Lord, and in love, which is the blood of Jesus Christ. 2. Let no one among you have aught against his neighbour. Give not occasion to the heathen, that the godly multitude be not evil spoken of on account of a few foolish men. For, "Woe unto him through whom My Name is idly blasphemed before some."<sup>1</sup>

IX. 1. Stop your ears then when any one speaks unto you apart from Jesus Christ, who is of the race of David, the child of Mary, who was truly born, and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lii. 5.



truly crucified and died, before the eyes of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth;<sup>1</sup> 2. who also was truly raised from the dead, since His Father raised Him up, who in like manner will also raise up us who believe on Him—even His Father will raise us in Christ Jesus, apart from whom we have not that life which is life indeed.

X. But if it be, as some godless men, that is, unbelievers, assert, that He suffered in semblance—it is they who are semblance—why am I in bonds? Why, moreover, do I pray that I may fight with the wild beasts?<sup>2</sup> Then I die for naught. Then I lie against the Lord.

XI. 1. Flee therefore those evil offshoots which bear deadly fruit, whereof if a man taste he straightway dies. For these are not a planting of the Father. 2. For if they were, they would have been seen to be branches of the Cross, and their fruit would have been incorruptible. For through His Cross by His Passion He calls us unto Him, being His members. It is not possible then that a head should be born without members, since God promises union, which union is Himself.

XII. 1. I salute you from Smyrna, together with the Churches of God now present with me, men who have refreshed me in every way both in flesh and spirit. 2. My bonds exhort you, which I wear for Jesus Christ's sake, asking that I may attain unto God. Abide in your concord and in your prayer with one another. For it is meet that you should severally, and especially the presbyters, refresh the bishop to the honour of the Father and to the honour of Jesus Christ and the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Phil. ii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 30-32.

Apostles. 3. I pray that you may give heed to me in love, lest by having written unto you I become a testimony against you. Moreover, pray for me too, for I have need of your love in the mercy of God, that I may be deemed worthy of the lot which I eagerly press on to attain, that I be not found reprobate.

XIII. 1. The love of the Smyrnæans and the Ephesians salutes you. Remember in your prayers the Church in Syria, whereof I am not worthy to be called a member, since I am the very last of them.<sup>1</sup> 2. Farewell in Jesus Christ, submitting to the bishop as unto the commandment, likewise also to the presbytery, and severally love one another with an undivided heart. 3. My spirit devotes itself for you, not only now but also whenever I attain unto God. For I am still in danger. But the Father is faithful in Jesus Christ to fulfil my petition and yours. In Him may we be found blameless.

#### IV. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

*Written from Smyrna.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to her that has found mercy in the bounteous power of the Father most high and Jesus Christ, His only Son, to the Church that is beloved and illuminated by the will of Him that willed all things which exist, in faith and love towards Jesus Christ our God; to her that has the chief place in the district of the region of the Romans, being worthy

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 8, 9.

of God, worthy of honour, worthy of congratulation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and holding the chief place in love, following the law of Christ, bearing the Father's name; which Church also I salute in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the Father; to them that are united in flesh and spirit with every one of His commandments, being wholly filled with the grace of God, without wavering, and strained clear from every foreign dye, warmest greeting in Jesus Christ our God without blame.

I. 1. My prayer to God has been heard, and I have been permitted to see your holy faces, so that I have gained even more than I was asking. For in bonds in Christ Jesus I hope to salute you, if it be God's will that I should be accounted worthy to reach the end. 2. For the beginning is well ordained if I may attain the end and so receive my inheritance without hindrance. For I fear lest your very love should do me wrong. For you may easily do what you will. But for me it is difficult to attain unto God, unless you spare me.

II. 1. For I would not that you should please men, but that you should please God, as indeed you do. For I shall never have such an opportunity of attaining unto God, nor can you, if you keep silent, be credited with a nobler deed. For if you keep silent and spare me, I am a word of God, but if you crave for my flesh, I shall again be a mere voice. 2. Nay, give me nothing more than that I may be poured out as a libation to God, while yet there is an altar ready, that forming a choir in love you may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, because God has granted that the bishop from Syria should be found in the West, having summoned

him from the East. Good it is for my sun to set from the world unto God, that it may rise unto Him.

III. 1. You have never grudged any man. Others you have instructed. But I would that those lessons, which you enjoin in your teaching, may endure. 2. Only ask that I may find power within and without, that I may not only say it, but may desire it, that I may not only be called but be found a Christian. For if I be found a Christian, then can I also receive the name; then too can I be faithful when I am not visible to the world. 3. Nothing that is visible is good. For our God, Jesus Christ, is the more clearly visible now that He is in the Father. The work is not of persuasive eloquence, but Christianity is a thing of might whenever it is hated by the world.

IV. 1. I write unto all the Churches, and charge them all to know that I die willingly for God, if you hinder not. I intreat you, do not unseasonably befriend me. Suffer me to belong to the wild beasts, through whom I may attain unto God. I am God's grain, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread. 2. Rather entice the wild beasts to become my tomb, and to leave naught of my body, that I may not, when I have fallen asleep, prove a burden to any man. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not see even my body. Intreat the Lord for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice unto God. 3. I do not enjoin you in the manner of Peter and Paul. They were Apostles, I am a condemned man. They were free, I, until this moment, am a slave. But if I suffer, I am Jesus Christ's freedman,

and in Him I shall arise free. Now in my bonds I am learning to give up all desires.

V. 1. From Syria unto Rome I am fighting with wild beasts by land and sea, by night and day, bound to ten leopards; that is, a company of soldiers, whose usage grows still harsher when they are liberally treated. Yet through their unjust doings I am more truly learning discipleship. "Yet am I not hereby justified?"<sup>1</sup>

2. May I have joy of the beasts that are prepared for me. I pray too that they may prove expeditious with me. I will even entice them to devour me expeditiously, and not to refrain, as they have refrained from some, through fear. And even though they are not willing without constraint, I will compel them. 3. Pardon me. I know what is expedient for me. Now I am beginning to be a disciple. May naught of things visible or invisible seek to allure me; that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Come fire and cross and conflicts with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, mangling of limbs, crushing of the whole body; come grievous torments of the devil upon me—only may they aid me in attaining unto Jesus Christ.

VI. 1. The furthest bounds of the universe and the kingdoms of this world shall profit me nothing.<sup>2</sup> It is better for me to die for the sake of Jesus Christ than to reign over the boundaries of the earth. Him I seek who died for us. Him I desire who rose for our sakes. My travail-pains are upon me. 2. Forgive me, brethren. Hinder me not from entering into life; desire not my death. Bestow not upon the world him who desires to be God's; nor tempt me with the things of this life.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matt. xvi. 26; 1 Cor. ix. 15.

Suffer me to receive pure light. When I come thither then shall I be a man indeed. 3. Suffer me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If any man has Him dwelling in him, let him understand what I desire, and have fellow-feeling with me, knowing what constrains me.

VII. 1. The prince of this world desires to make me his spoil and corrupt my purpose towards God. Let none of you then who are at hand assist him. Rather be on my side, that is, belong to God. Use not the words "Jesus Christ" and yet desire the world. 2. Let not envy make its dwelling within you. Even though I should come and intreat you, hearken not even to me, but rather trust these words which I write unto you. For I write unto you in the midst of life, enamoured of death. My Love<sup>1</sup> has been crucified, and there is not within me any fire of earthly desire, but only water that lives and speaks in me, and says from within me, "Come hither to the Father." 3. I have no pleasure in the food of corruption nor in the pleasures of this material life. I desire God's bread, which is the flesh of Christ, who is of the seed of David, and for drink I desire His blood, which is love incorruptible.

VIII. 1. I desire no longer to live the common life of men. And this will be granted, if it is your desire. Desire it, that you too may be desired. 2. In a short letter I entreat you. Believe me, Jesus Christ shall make this clear to you, that I speak truly—even He who is the Mouth which cannot speak falsely, whereby the Father spake truly. 3. Intreat for me, that I may attain in the Holy Spirit. I write not unto you after

<sup>1</sup> Or love.

the flesh, but after the mind of God. If I suffer, it is because you desired it. If I be rejected, it is because of your hatred.

IX. 1. Remember in your prayer the Church in Syria, since it hath God as its shepherd in my room. Jesus Christ alone shall be its bishop—together with your love. 2. But as for me, I am ashamed to be spoken of as one of them. Nor indeed am I worthy, since I am the last of them and one born out of due time; but I have received mercy that I should be some one, if haply I may attain unto God. 3. My spirit salutes you, as also does the love of the Churches which received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as one that merely passed by, for even the Churches which lay not naturally near to my route went before me from city to city.

X. 1. I write this unto you from Smyrna by the hand of the Ephesians who are worthy of congratulation. There is with me also, along with many others, Crocus, a name dear to me. 2. Concerning those who went before me from Syria to Rome unto the glory of God I believe that you have received full tidings. Inform them also of my approach. For they are all worthy of God and of you, and it is fitting that you should in every way refresh them. 3. I am writing this to you on the 9th day before the Kalends of September. Farewell unto the end in patient abiding for Jesus Christ.

## V. THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILADELPHIANS

*Written from Troas.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father and Jesus Christ which is at Philadelphia in Asia, to her who has received mercy and is established in godly concord and rejoices in the passion of our Lord and in His resurrection without wavering, being fully persuaded in all mercy; her I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ; seeing that it is eternal and enduring joy, especially if they be at one with the bishop and with the presbyters who are with him, and with the deacons appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ; whom of His own will He established, confirming them by His Holy Spirit.

I. 1. For I perceived that this bishop of yours did not owe to himself or to the agency of men his ministry,<sup>1</sup> which pertains to the common good, nor does he hold it with vain glory, but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. For I have been amazed at his forbearance; who by his silence effects more than those who speak. 2. For he is tuned in harmony with the commandments as 'a lyre with its strings. Therefore my soul blesses his godly purpose, perceiving that it is virtuous and perfect, even his unruffled and quiet spirit, since he lives in all godly forbearance.

II. 1. As children therefore of truth flee division and false doctrines, and where the shepherd is there follow as sheep. 2. For there are many wolves who by specious professions lead captive with fatal pleasures the runners

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gal. i. 1.



in God's course; but while you continue in unity these shall have no place.

III. 1. Abstain from evil herbs, whose husbandman is not Jesus Christ, because they are not the planting of the Father. I say not this because I found division among you but rather sifting. 2. For as many as are of God and Jesus Christ, these are with the bishop. And as many as repent and enter the unity of the Church, they also shall belong to God, that they may be living according to Jesus Christ. 3. Be not deceived, my brethren. If any one follow a man that causes schism, he does not inherit God's kingdom.<sup>1</sup> If any man walks in strange opinions, he has no part in the passion.

IV. Therefore give heed to keep one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto union with His blood. There is one altar, as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants; that whatsoever you do, you may do according unto God.

V. 1. My brethren, my soul is wholly poured out in love for you. And because I rejoice exceedingly, I put you on your guard, yet not I, but Jesus Christ, whose prisoner I am: and therefore I fear the more, since I am not yet perfected. But your prayer unto God shall perfect me, that I may attain unto that lot, in which I have obtained mercy, because I took refuge in the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus, and the Apostles as the presbytery of the Church. 2. And the prophets moreover we love, because they too looked forward to the Gospel in their preaching, and hoped in Him and waited for Him; in whom also they believed and were saved in the unity

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. vi. 9.

of Jesus Christ, for they were worthy of our love and admiration, being holy men, testified of by Jesus Christ and enrolled together in the Gospel of our common hope.

VI. 1. If any man in his interpretation set forth Judaism unto you, hear him not. For it is better to hear Christianity from one who is circumcised than to hear Judaism from an uncircumcised man. But if both speak not of Jesus Christ, I reckon them to be tombstones and graves of the dead, whereon are inscribed merely names of men. 2. Flee therefore the malicious arts and snares of the prince of this world, lest being worn out by his suggestions you grow weak in love. But meet together, all of you, with an undivided heart. 3. I thank my God that I have a good conscience in regard to you, and no man can boast that either in secret or openly I have been burdensome to anyone in things great or small.<sup>1</sup> Yea, and for all among whom I have spoken I pray that my words may not prove to be a witness against them.

VII. 1. For even if after the flesh some wished to lead me astray, yet the Spirit is not deceived, since it is from God. For it knoweth whence it cometh and whither it goeth,<sup>2</sup> and it convicts the things which are in secret. I cried aloud, when I was among you, I spake with a loud voice, with the voice of God, "Give heed unto the bishop and the presbytery and deacons." 2. But they suspected that I said this because I knew beforehand the division caused by some; yet He is my witness, whose prisoner I am, that I learned it not from human flesh. But it was the Spirit who kept preaching in these words: "Do nothing without the bishop. Keep

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 9; xii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John iii. 8.

your flesh as a shrine of God. Love union. Flee divisions. Become followers of Jesus Christ as He also was of the Father."

VIII. 1. I therefore have done my own part as a man perfectly established in union. But where there is division and wrath, God dwells not. Therefore the Lord forgives all that repent, if on their repentance they turn to the unity of God and the council of the bishop. I believe in the grace of Jesus Christ, who shall loose from off you every bond. 2. Moreover, I entreat you act not in any matter in the spirit of faction, but as disciples of Christ. For I have heard some saying, "Except I find it in the archives I believe it not in the Gospel." And when I said to them, "It is written," they answered me, "That is the question in dispute." But my archives are Jesus Christ; the inviolable archives are His Cross and Death and Resurrection, and the faith which is through Him. In these I desire to be justified through your prayer.

IX. 1. Good indeed are the priests, but better is the High-Priest, who has been entrusted with the Holy of Holies, for He alone has been entrusted with the secret things of God. He is Himself the Door of the Father, through which enter in Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the Prophets and the Apostles and the Church. All these combine in the unity of God. 2. But the Gospel has a surpassing gift—even the coming of the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, His Passion, His Resurrection. For the Prophets, who are dear to us, in their preaching looked forward to Him. But the Gospel is the crown of incorruption. All things alike are good, if you believe by love.

X. 1. Seeing that, in accordance with your prayer and the tender love which you have in Christ Jesus, it has been reported to me that the Church which is at Antioch in Syria is at peace, it is fitting that you, as a Church of God, should appoint a deacon to journey thither as an ambassador of God, to rejoice with them when they are met together, and to glorify the Name. 2. Blessed in Jesus Christ is he who shall be deemed worthy of such a ministry. You too shall be glorified. Moreover, if you desire it, it is not impossible for you to do this for God's Name; even as the Churches which lie nearest have sent bishops, and others presbyters and deacons.

XI. 1. Concerning Philo, the deacon from Cilicia, a man well reported of, who even now is ministering for me in the word of God, together with Rhaius Agathopus, an elect man, who accompanies me from Syria, having bidden farewell to the ordinary life of men; who also bear witness unto you—I too thank God for you, that you received them, as the Lord shall receive you. May they who treated them dishonourably be ransomed by the grace of Jesus Christ. 2. The love of the brethren who are at Troas salutes you, whence also I write unto you by the hand of Burrhus, who was sent with me by them of Ephesus and Smyrna to do me honour. They shall receive honour from the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they hope in flesh, soul, spirit, by faith, love, concord. Farewell in Jesus Christ, our common Hope.

## VI. THE EPISTLE TO THE SMYRNÆANS

*Written from Troas.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Beloved, to her that has been mercifully blessed with every gift, filled with faith and love, lacking in no gift, most highly revered, the bearer of sacred vessels, to the Church which is at Smyrna in Asia, in a blameless spirit and in the word of God heartiest greeting.

I. 1. I render glory to Jesus Christ the God who has given you such wisdom. For I have perceived that you are firmly settled in unwavering faith, being nailed, as it were, to the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, in flesh and spirit, and firmly planted in love in the blood of Christ, being fully convinced as touching our Lord that He is truly of the race of David after the flesh, and Son of God after the Divine will and power, 2. truly born of a virgin, baptized by John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him,<sup>1</sup> under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch truly nailed for us in the flesh (of whose fruit are we, even of His most blessed Passion); that He might raise up an ensign to the ages through His resurrection, for His saints and believers, whether among Jews or Gentiles, in one body of His Church.<sup>2</sup>

II. For all these sufferings He endured for our sakes that we might be saved. And He truly suffered, as also He truly raised Himself up. Nor is it the case, as some unbelievers affirm, that He suffered in semblance—it is they who are semblance. And according to their

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Matt. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Eph. ii. 16.

opinions, so shall it happen unto them, for they are unsubstantial and spirit-like.

III. 1. For I know and believe that He was in the flesh even after the resurrection. 2. And when He came to Peter and those who were with him, He said to them, "Take, handle Me and see that I am not a spirit without body." And straightway they touched Him and believed, being united with His flesh and spirit.<sup>1</sup> Therefore also they despised death, and were found to rise above death. 3. Moreover, after His resurrection He ate with them and drank with them, as living in the flesh, although spiritually united with the Father.<sup>2</sup>

IV. 1. Now these things I urge upon you, beloved, knowing that you also are thus minded. But I watch over you to guard you from wild beasts in the form of men, whom you must not only refuse to receive, but, if possible, not even meet them. Only pray for them, if haply they may repent. Though this is difficult, yet Jesus Christ, our true Life, has power to effect it. 2. For if these deeds were wrought by our Lord in mere semblance, then too are my bonds mere semblance. Why, moreover, have I surrendered myself to death, to face fire, sword, wild beasts? Yet he that is near to the sword is near to God, in the presence of wild beasts, in the presence of God—only may it be in the name of Jesus Christ, that we may suffer with Him. All things I endure, since He, the perfect Man, makes me strong.

V. 1. Yet Him certain persons ignorantly deny, or rather they have been denied by Him, for they are advocates of death rather than of the truth. They have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luke xxiv. 39; John xx. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luke xxiv. 30, 35, 41-43; John xxi. 12, 13; Acts i. 4.

not hearkened unto the prophecies, nor the law of Moses, nor even up till now to the Gospel, nor to the sufferings which we severally endure. 2. For they have the same thoughts also about us. For what profit is it to me, if a man praises me, but speaks evil of my Lord, refusing to confess that He has borne our flesh? But he that will not assert this, has completely denied Him, and himself bears about with him a corpse. 3. Now their names, since they are unbelievers, I have not thought good to write. May I not even remember them, until they have repented and turned to the Passion, which is our resurrection.

VI. 1. Let no man be deceived. Even the heavenly powers and the glory of the angels and the principalities, both visible and invisible, except they believe in the blood of Christ who is God, have a judgment awaiting them. "Let him that receiveth receive."<sup>1</sup> Let not office puff up any man. For faith and love are everything, and there is nothing better than these. 2. Mark those who hold strange doctrine with regard to the grace of Jesus Christ, which came unto us, how opposed they are to the mind of God. They have no thought for love, nor for the widow, the orphan, the afflicted, the prisoner, or him that has been released, the hungry nor the thirsty. They withhold themselves from Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which in His loving-kindness the Father raised up.

VII. 1. So then they who speak against the gift of God die by their disputing. It were better for them to

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 12.

exhibit love, that they may also rise again. 2. Therefore it is fitting to withhold yourselves from such, and to say nothing either in private or in public about them, but rather to give heed unto the prophets, and especially to the Gospel, wherein the passion is manifested to us and the resurrection is accomplished.

VIII. 1. Avoid divisions, as the beginning of evil. Follow, all of you, the bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father; and follow the presbytery as the Apostles. Moreover, reverence the deacons as the commandment of God. Let no man do aught pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that Eucharist be considered valid which is under the bishop or him to whom he commits it. 2. Wheresoever the bishop appears, there let the people be, even as wheresoever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast. But whatsoever he approves, that also is well-pleasing to God, that everything which you do may be secure and valid.

IX. 1. It is reasonable that henceforth we should awake and live soberly, while we have opportunity to repent and turn to God. It is good to acknowledge God and the bishop. He that honours the bishop is honoured of God. He that does anything without the knowledge of the bishop serves the Devil. 2. Let all things then abound unto you in grace, for you are worthy. In every way you have refreshed me, and Jesus Christ shall refresh you. Alike in my absence and presence you have cherished me. May God reward you, and as you endure for His sake, so shall you attain unto Him.

X. 1. You did well in receiving as ministers of Christ,



who is God, Philo and Rhaius Agathopus, who accompanied me for the sake of God; who also give thanks unto the Lord for you, because you refreshed them in every way. You shall surely lose nothing. 2. My spirit devotes itself for you, as also my bonds which you did not scorn, and of which you were not ashamed. Nor shall He be ashamed of you, who is perfect faithfulness, Jesus Christ.

XI. 1. Your prayer has gone forth unto the Church which is at Antioch in Syria. From thence I come, bound with the godly adornment of these chains, and I salute you, not as though I am worthy to belong to that Church, since I am the very last among them. In accordance with the will of God I have been deemed worthy, not of my own conscious act, but by God's grace, which I pray may be given to me completely, that by your prayer I may attain unto God. 2. In order then that your work may be made complete, on earth as well as in Heaven, it is fitting that your Church should appoint for the honour of God an ambassador of God, to visit Syria and congratulate them because they are at peace and have received again their proper stature, and have had restored to them the proper measure of their body. 3. It seemed then to me a worthy act for you to send some one of your number with a letter, to give glory with them for the calm which by God's appointment has set in for them, and because through your prayer they were now reaching the haven. Inasmuch as you are perfect, set your aims also on that which is perfect. For if you desire to act well, God is ready to aid you.

XII. 1. The love of the brethren who are at Troas

salutes you. Hence also I am writing to you by the hand of Burrhus, whom you sent in my company together with the Ephesians your brethren. In everything he has refreshed me. And I would that all imitated him, for he is a pattern of the ministry of God. The Divine grace shall wholly requite him. 2. I salute your godly bishop and revered presbytery, and my fellow-servants the deacons, and all of you both individually and in common, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in His flesh and blood, in His Passion and Resurrection which was both of the flesh and spirit, in the unity wherewith God binds you all. Grace, mercy, peace, patience be unto you always.

XIII. 1. I salute the households of my brethren with their wives and children, and the virgins who are called widows. I bid you farewell in the power of the Father. Philo, my companion, salutes you. 2. I salute the household of Gavia, and pray that she may be established in faith and love both in flesh and spirit. I salute Alce, a name dear to me, and the excellent Daphnus and Eutecnus and all by name. Farewell in the grace of God.

## VII. THE EPISTLE TO POLYCARP

*Written from Troas.*

IGNATIUS, who is also Theophorus, to Polycarp, who is bishop of the Church in Smyrna, or rather, who has God the Father and Jesus Christ for his bishop, abundant greeting.

I. 1. I welcome your godly purpose which is firmly

planted as on an immovable rock, and I render exceeding glory that I have been granted the sight of your blameless face—may I have joy of it in God. 2. I urge you in the grace wherewith you are clothed to press on in your race, and to urge all men to be saved. Assert your office with all diligence of flesh and spirit. Give heed unto union, for there is nothing better. Bear all men, as the Lord also bears you. Suffer all men in love, as indeed you do suffer them. 3. Devote yourself to unceasing prayers. Ask for greater understanding than you have. Be watchful, possessing a wakeful spirit. Speak to each man individually after God's way. Bear the infirmities of all men, as a perfect athlete. Where there is more toil there is greater gain.

II. 1. If you love good disciples, this does not win you favour. Rather subdue by meekness the more pestilent. Not every wound is cured by the same salve. Ease sharp pains by fomentations. 2. Become prudent as the serpent in all things, and harmless continually as the dove.<sup>1</sup> Therefore you are of flesh and spirit, that you may humour the things which are visibly present before your face. But ask that the things which are unseen may be manifested to you, that you may lack nothing and may abound in every gift. 3. The season demands you, as pilots demand winds and the tempest-tossed man demands the haven, so as to attain unto God. Be temperate, as God's athlete. The prize is incorruption and life eternal, concerning which also you have been persuaded. In all things I devote myself for you, even I and my bonds which you have cherished.

III. 1. Let not those who seem to be specious and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 16.

yet bring novel teaching dismay you. Stand firm as an anvil when it is smitten. It is the part of a great athlete to suffer blows and to conquer. And above all for God's sake we ought to endure all things, that He also may endure us. 2. Become more zealous than you are. Consider the seasons. Look for Him who is above all seasons, who is timeless, invisible, made visible for our sakes, who is beyond the touch of our hands, beyond suffering, who yet suffered for us, who in every way endured for us.

IV. 1. Let not widows be neglected. Next to the Lord be yourself their guardian. Let nothing be done without your approval, neither yourself do anything without God's approval, as indeed you do not. Be firm. 2. Let assemblies be held more often. Search out all men by name. 3. Treat not disdainfully bondmen or bondwomen, yet neither let them be puffed up, but let them serve the more to the glory of God, that they may obtain from God a better freedom. Let them not desire to gain their freedom out of the common fund, that they may not be found the slaves of lust.

V. 1. Flee evil arts, or rather discourse upon them. Charge my sisters to love the Lord and to be satisfied with their husbands in flesh and spirit. Likewise charge my brethren in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives, "even as the Lord loved the Church."<sup>1</sup> 2. If any one is able to abide in purity to the honour of the flesh, which is the Lord's, let him abide therein without boasting. If he boast, he has perished. And if it be known further than the bishop, he is corrupted. It is fitting that those who marry, both men and women,

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 29.

untiring love to the glory of God. 3. A Christian has not power over himself, but devotes his time to God. For this is God's work and yours, when you have completed it. For I trust in God's grace that you are prepared to do a good work which is meet for God. I have exhorted you in a brief letter, because I know how earnest is your sincerity.<sup>1</sup>

VIII. 1. Seeing that I could not write unto all the Churches, because I sail immediately from Troas to Neapolis, as God's will commands, you shall write to the Churches which lie in front, as yourself possessing the mind of God, to bid them also do the same thing. Let those who can send messengers, the rest letters by the hands of the messengers whom you send, that you may be glorified, as you are worthy to be, by a work that will live for ever.

2. I salute all by name, as also the wife of Epitropus, with all her household and her children's. I salute Attalus my beloved. I salute him who is to be commissioned to go to Syria. God's grace shall be with him continually, and with Polycarp who sends him. 3. I bid you farewell continually in our God, Jesus Christ, in whom abide in the unity and under the governance of God. I salute Alce, a name dear to me. Farewell in the Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heb. xiii. 22.