

Jim's Notes
June 27, 2007
The Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

Baptism in the Scriptures:

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.' (Acts 22:16)

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3:27)

. . . he (God) saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)

. . . let us draw near (to the true Temple of God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:22)

Baptism, which corresponds to this (the ark of Noah), now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (I Peter 3:21)

Baptism in the Fathers:

The Didache or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (c. AD 80)

Now about baptism, baptize this way: after first uttering all of these things, baptize "into the name of the Father and of the son and of the holy Spirit" in running water. But if you do not have running water, baptize in other water. Now if you are not able to *do* so in cold *water*, *do it* in warm water. Now if you don't have either, pour water three times on the head, "into the name of the Father, and of the son, and of the holy Spirit." Now before the ritual cleansing, the baptizer and the one being baptized should fast, and any others who are able. Now you will give word for the one who is being baptized to fast for one or two *days* beforehand. (*Didache* 7:1-4)

Now no one should either eat or drink from your Eucharist, but those who have been baptized into the Lord's name. For about this also the Lord said, " Do not give what is holy to the dogs" (Matthew 7:6). (*Didache* 9:5)

Letter of Barnabas (c. AD 70 – 130)

Blessed are they who, placing their trust in the cross, have gone down into the water. . . . We indeed descend into the water full of sins and defilement. However, we come up, bearing fruit in our heart, having the fear [of God] and the trust in Jesus in our spirit. (*Barnabas* 11:8, 11)

St. Justin Martyr (c. AD 150)

At our birth, we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together. . . . in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe. . . . And in the name of Jesus Christ . . . and in the name of the Holy Spirit. (*First Apology*, chap. 61)

And this washing is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings. (*First Apology* chap. 61)

St. Irenaeus (AD 180)

“For as we are lepers in sin we are made clean from our old transgressions by means of sacred water and the invocation of the Lord. We are spiritually regenerated as new born babes just as the Lord has declared: ‘Unless a man is born again through water and the Spirit, he will not enter into the Kingdom of God.’” (Fragment 34)

Tertullian (AD 203)

“[N]o one can attain salvation without baptism, especially in view of the declaration of the Lord, who says, ‘Unless a man shall be born of water, he shall not have life.’” (*On Baptism* 12:1)

St. Clement of Alexandria (AD 221)

“But you will perhaps say, ‘What does the baptism of water contribute toward the worship of God?’ In the first place, because that which has pleased God is fulfilled. In the second place, because when you are regenerated and born again of water and of God, the frailty of your former birth, which you have through men, is cut off, and so . . . you shall be able to attain salvation; but otherwise it is impossible. For thus has the true prophet [Jesus] testified to us with an oath: ‘Verily, I say to you, that unless a man is born again of water . . . he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’” (*The Recognitions of Clement* 6:9)

The Baptismal Liturgy of the Church in Rome c. AD 180

At the hour in which the cock crows, they shall first pray over the water. When they come to the water, the water shall be pure and flowing, that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. Then they shall take off all their clothes. The children

shall be baptized first. All of the children who can answer for themselves, let them answer. If there are any children who cannot answer for themselves, let their parents answer for them, or someone else from their family. After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water.

At the time determined for baptism, the bishop shall give thanks over some oil, which he puts in a vessel. It is called the Oil of Thanksgiving. He shall take some more oil and exorcise it. It is called the Oil of Exorcism. A deacon shall hold the Oil of Exorcism and stand on the left. Another deacon shall hold the Oil of Thanksgiving and stand on the right.

When the presbyter takes hold of each of them who are to receive baptism, he shall tell each of them to renounce, saying, "I renounce you Satan, all your service, and all your works." After he has said this, he shall anoint each with the Oil of Exorcism, saying, "Let every evil spirit depart from you."

Then, after these things, the bishop passes each of them on nude to the presbyter who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked. A deacon, likewise, will go down with them into the water. When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking,

"Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" And the one being baptized shall answer, "I believe." He shall then baptize each of them once, laying his hand upon each of their heads.

Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?" When each has answered, "I believe," he shall baptize a second time.

Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?" Then each being baptized shall answer, "I believe." And thus let him baptize the third time.

Afterward, when they have come up out of the water, they shall be anointed by the presbyter with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying, "I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ." Then, drying themselves, they shall dress and afterwards gather in the church. (St. Hippolytus: *Apostolic Tradition* 21)

Ephesians 1:5-10 in the Church Fathers

Ephesians 1:5a

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

God in his love has predestined us to adoption through Christ. How could God possibly have Christ for his Son by adoption? . . . We speak of ourselves as heirs of God the Father and heirs through Christ, being sons through adoption. Christ is his Son, through whom it is brought about that we become sons and fellow heirs in Christ. (Against the Arians 1.2)

St. Jerome (AD 347 – 420):

The former [verse] refers to those saints who did not previously exist and who before they came into being were thought of and subsequently acquired existence. This [verse] speaks of God, who was preceded by no thought or willing but always existed and never had a beginning for his existence. Therefore he rightly used the term destined for those who, having once not existed, subsequently acquired existence. But of the Son, that is, of our Lord Jesus Christ, he wrote ordained in another place also. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.5)

St. Jerome (AD 347 – 420):

Christ, as we have often said already, is wisdom, justice, peace joy, temperance and the rest. Note that the names of all these virtues are loved even by those who do not pursue them! No one is such a brazen criminal that he does not claim to love wisdom and justice. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.6)

St. Fulgentius (AD 468 – 533):

The reason for saying he destined us in love is that he empowered us with his gracious love in order to predestine us. (On the Truth of Predestination 3.5)

Ephesians 1:5b

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

Everywhere the purpose or good pleasure means God's antecedent will. Yet there is another will. For God's first [or antecedent] will is that sinners should not perish. His second or consequent will is that those who become evil should perish. Hence he does not chastise them from necessity but due to their own willing. (Homily on Ephesians 1.5)

St. Fulgentius (AD 468 – 533):

The eternal firmness and firm eternity of God's predestinating will consist not only in the ordaining of works. God also knows in advance the number of the elect. No one of that full number may lose his eternal grace, nor may any outside that total attain the gift of eternal salvation. For God, who knows all things before they come to Pass, is not

confused about the number of the predestined, any more than he doubts the effectiveness of the works he has ordained. (On the Truth of Predestination 3.6)

Ephesians 1:6

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

We, being such as we are, are surrounded and held fast by vice and libidinous sin. When we are set free by him, acquitted of sin and pardoned for our sins, we are also adopted as his sons. All this is therefore to the praise of his glory and grace, his glory because he can do so much, and his grace because he offers this to us freely. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.(4) 5-6)

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

So that our love for him may become more fervent, he desires nothing from us except our salvation. He does not need our service or anything else but does everything for this end. One who openly expresses praise and wonder at God's grace will be more eager and zealous. (Homily on Ephesians 1.1.6)

Ephesians 1:7a

St. Jerome (AD 347 – 420):

The one who is yet to be redeemed is a captive. He has ceased to be free by coming under the power of the enemy. So we are captives in this world and bound by the yoke of slavery to the principalities and powers, unable to release our hands from our chains. So we raise our eyes upward until the Redeemer arrives. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.7)

Theodoret (AD 392 – 457):

The death of the Lord has made us worthy of love. In shedding through him the toils of sin and being freed from slavery to the tyrant, we have been drawn toward the characteristics of God's image. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.7)

Ephesians 1:7b

Origen (AD 185 – 251):

Forgiveness of sins follows redemption, for there would be no forgiveness of sin for anyone before redemption occurs. First then we need to be redeemed, to be no longer subject to our captor and oppressor, so that having been freed and taken out of his hands we may be able to receive the benefit of remission of sins. Once our wounds have been healed we are called to live in accord with piety and the other virtues, (Epistle to the Ephesians)

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

The wonder is not only that he gave his Son but that he did so in this way, by sacrificing the one he loved. It is astonishing that he gave the Beloved for those who hated him. See how highly he honors us. If even when we hated him and were enemies he gave the Beloved, what will he not do for us now? (Homily on Ephesians 1.1.8)

Ephesians 1:8

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

The riches of God are heaped upon us in that he makes us something better than we were at the beginning of our existence. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.8)

Ephesians 1:9a

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

The whole of this wisdom and prudence consists in knowing Christ and through Christ understanding and seeing God. For whatever remaining wisdom there is in the world and whatever other wisdom of this kind there may be outside it, all wisdom and prudence is nonetheless empty, worthless and wretched without Christ. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.8)

Ambrosiaster [pseudo-Ambrose] (about A.D. 370):

The pleasure of God, whose counsel cannot be changed, was to show in Christ the mystery of his will. This happened at the time when he chose that he should be revealed. Now his will was this, that he should then draw close to all who were in sin, either in heaven or in earth. God gave Christ to bring believers the gift of forgiveness of their sins through faith in Christ. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.9.1)

St. Jerome (AD 347 – 420):

The Stoics also hold that there is a distinction between wisdom and insight. They say, "Wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human, insight only of that which is mortal." According to this distinction we might apply Paul's term wisdom to the invisible and visible and insight only to the visible. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.9)

St. Jerome (AD 347 – 420):

Some attentive reader might object: "If Paul knows in part and prophesies in part and now sees as through a mirror dimly" (I Corinthians 13:12) how is the mystery of God revealed either to him or to the Ephesians in all wisdom and insight?". . . It is not that they by themselves have learned this mystery in all wisdom and insight, but God in all wisdom and insight has revealed the mystery to us, so far as we are able to grasp it. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.9)

Ephesians 1:9b

Origen (AD 185 – 251):

We must examine the possibility that predestination and purpose differ so that purpose is presupposed in predestination. Thus, as it were, the predestination is in the thought of God and the purpose unfolds in accordance with things predestined, so that then they become realities and actualize the predestination. (Epistle to the Ephesians)

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

Not only has God a will, but the intention of his will is expressed in Christ. Hence all things are done through him. There is nothing in the mystery that is not done through Jesus Christ. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.9)

Ephesians 1:10a

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

The fullness of time was the Son's appearing. When, then, God had done all through angels, through prophets and through the law, yet nothing had improved, there was a danger that humanity had come into being for nothing. It was not going merely nowhere but to the bad. All were perishing together, just like in the days of the flood but more so. Just then he offered this gracious dispensation-to ensure that creation should not have come into being for nothing or in vain. The fullness of time is that divine wisdom by which, at the moment when all were most likely to perish, they were saved. (Homily on Ephesians 1.1.10)

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

See how precisely he speaks. The origin is from the Father, the design, the resolution, the first initiative. The embodied fulfillment of the design came through the Son, who is never called servant but always Son. ... What the Father has willed in the Son is not external to his will. What the Son has done has not deprived the Father of his willing action. All is common in the relation of Father and Son. (Homily on Ephesians 1.1.10)

Ephesians 1:10b

St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. AD 120 – c. 200):

Thus Christ unites . . . in himself all that is earthly and all that is spiritual. He unites humanity to Spirit and places the Spirit in humanity. Being himself made the fountainhead of the Spirit, Christ gives the Spirit to be the head of humanity. Thus through the Son by the Spirit we ourselves now see and hear and speak. (Against Heresies 5.20.2)

Caius Marius Victorinus (AD 300 – aft. 362):

It is not all things indifferently that are restored but all things that are in Christ, both those that are in heaven and those that are on the earth but only those that arc in

Christ. Others are strange to him. Whatever things then are in Christ, it is these that are revitalized and rise again, whether in heaven or in earth. For he is salvation, he is renewal, he is eternity. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.1.10)

St. John Chrysostom (AD 349 – 407):

To "recapitulate" is to join together, But let us press on closer to the fuller truth. In our customary usage a recapitulation is a brief summary of what has been said at great length. It is a concise expression of everything that has been detailed. That is what it is here as well. The providential ordering that has occurred over a long time, the Son has once for all recapitulated. Everything is summed up in him. . . . There is also another meaning: In Christ's incarnation God has given a single head to all creation, both angels and humans. (Homily on Ephesians 1.1.10)

Theodoret (AD 392 – 457):

Only God's nature needs nothing. The whole creation stood in need of his healing order of gifts. For, since the elements came into being to serve human needs, he made them subject to corruption, for he could foresee that transgression was going to make humanity mortal also. As for the unseen powers, they were naturally aggrieved when they saw human beings living in wickedness. . . .By recapitulation he means the complete transformation of things. For through the gift given through Christ the Lord the human nature is raised anew and puts on incorruptibility. Ultimately the visible creation, delivered from corruption, will receive incorruption. The hosts of unseen powers will rejoice continually, because sorrow and grief and sighing have fled away. This is what the divine apostle teaches through these words; for he said not simply "heaven and earth" but those in heaven and those on earth. (Epistle to the Ephesians 1.10)