CLEMENT'S ANSWER
TO THE CORINTHIAN CONFLICT IN AD 96

DAVORIN PETERLIN[*]

Toward the end of the first century, probably around AD 96,[1] Clement, a leader of the church in Rome ("de facto der führende Mann der Gemeinde"[2] or "a leading—perhaps *the* leading—presbyter-bishop"[3]), wrote to the church in Corinth. He explained that he was writing concerning the "abominable and unholy schism" (1:1) that occurred among the Corinthians and was instigated by some "impetuous and headstrong fellows." These rebellious members of the congregation were "young" (3:3), and although few in number they apparently succeeded in securing at least tacit support of the rest (47:6).

Exactly what the insurgents' qualifications or platform for action were is not clear. They have frequently been seen as ascetics (38:2), elitists in pursuit of higher gnosis (48:2), or ecstatics who spoke in tongues (21:5; 57:2), "although the references are actually open to the interpretation that they were persuasive and powerful speakers."[4] Many commentators see in them charismatics,[5] neo-charismatics[6] or pneumatics.[7] W. Wrede represents the opposite view: "Had Clement wanted to say that they were 'pneumatics,' he would have done so."[8] In chaps. 1–7 the author depicts the dissenters primarily as people driven by jealousy and envy, pursuing their own selfish desires.

Polarization occurred over regular church prayer meetings and, in particular, over the ministry performed by presbyters[9] whose position the

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* Davorin Peterlin is graduate studies director at Evangelical Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 370, 54103 Osijek, Croatia.

[1] D. A. Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testament in Clement of Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1973) 6.

[2] A. Stuiber, "Clemens Romanus I," *RAC* 3.190.

[3] C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953) 37.

[4] Ibid. 34.

[5] Ibid.

[6] J. Rohde, "Häresie und Schisma im ersten Clemensbrief und in den Ignatius-Briefen," *NovT* 10/2–3 (1968) 226.

[7] K. Bihlmeyer, *Die Apostolischen Väter* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1956) xxvi; see also Stuiber, "Clemens" 190.

[8] W. Wrede, *Untersuchungen zum Ersten Klemensbriefe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1891).

[9] If the examples of OT worship in chaps. 41–42 are understood typologically and only as an illustration of order, which is how I explain them, that prevents us from determining the precise nature of this ministry.

young laics (40:5) coveted. The strife reached its peak in the action of the more numerous party. They removed some of the duly appointed presbyters from their positions, although apparently not all of them. what made the action inexcusable to Clement is that the presbyters gave no occasion for it: They had fulfilled their ministry blamelessly (44:6).

Because of the scantiness of information it is difficult to define the nature of the conflict. Did the pneumatics think that their particular gifts were not receiving adequate recognition? Did they wish annual elections for the offices held by "conservative elders"[10] chosen for life?[11] Were personal matters rather than doctrinal matters at the core of the problem? An affirmative answer to the latter question seems most correct.[12] A. Stuiber calls the incident *Cliquenzank*,[13] and C. Breytenbach maintains that "human failure [was] at the root of the discord in the Corinthian church."[14]

The news of the conflict traveled fast. It can be safely assumed that the Roman visitors brought it to Rome. The close political and commercial ties between the two cities necessitated fairly intense relations, and it is conceivable that Christians from Rome had witnessed the disorder in the church of Corinth. It is also possible that two envoys, formal or informal, traveled frequently between Rome and Corinth.[15] Still another proposal is that one of the deposed presbyters turned to Rome for help,[16] but this is pure conjecture since nothing in the epistle indicates that the church of Corinth appealed to the church of Rome and asked for her intervention.

The members of the Corinthian church, at least some of them, failed to show hospitality to visiting brethren.[17] If, which is possible, these were earlier peacemakers from the church in Rome, in this way these Corinthian Christians manifested their unwillingness to settle the issue. This inference accounts for most unusual references to hospitality in the epistle (1:2; 10:7; 11:1; 12:1; 35:5).

The Corinthian disruption had catastrophic consequences. The name of the Corinthian church, which had become widely known because of its leading position in Achaia, had been brought into disrepute (1:1). Even worse, the name of the Lord was being blasphemed (47:7). The writer described the effects of the strife: "Your schism has led many astray; it has made many despair; it has made many doubt; and it has distressed us all" (46:9).

The sole purpose of *1 Clement* is to restore order and harmony in the church of Corinth. In order to achieve his goal he quotes from the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians of four decades earlier, written in a

[10] E. T. Merrill, "On Clement of Rome," *AJT* 22 (1918) 437.

[11] Stuiber, "Clemens" 190.

[12] Hagner, *Use* 6; see also C. Breytenbach, "The Corinthian Church in the First Century AD—a Living Church?", *Missionalia* 14/1 (April 1970) 10.

[13] Stuiber, "Clemens" 191.

[14] Breytenbach, "Corinthian" 10.

[15] D. W. O'Connor, *Peter in Rome: The Literary, Liturgical and Archeological Evidence* (New York/London: Columbia University, 1969) 71.

[16] L. Hertling, "I. Kor. 16,15 und I. Clem. 42," *Bib* 20 (1939) 276–283.

[17] See the treatment of the subject in H. Chadwick, "Justification by Faith and Hospitality," TU 79 (1978) 281–285.

situation somewhat parallel to his. He also gives his own reflection and directions. This essay will first discuss the relevance and appropriateness of the quotation from 1 Corinthians for Clement's purpose. Then it will devote attention to Clement's own practical exhortations.

I. *1 CLEMENT* 47:1–4

The passage reads as follows: "Pick up the letter of the blessed apostle Paul. What was the primary thing he wrote to you 'when he started preaching the gospel'? To be sure, under the Spirit's guidance, he wrote to you about himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then you had formed cliques. Factiousness, however, at that time was a less serious sin, since you were partisans of notable apostles and of a man they endorsed."

The text opens with an exhortation directed to the readers. They are to "pick up" the epistle of the apostle Paul. It is probable that the church still possessed the epistle, or a copy of it, since it had been, and presumably still was, important to them. Clearly Clement also possessed a copy. The singular form of the noun "letter" may refer to both 1 and 2 Corinthians,[18] but the quotation that follows is unmistakably only from 1 Corinthians. The authority of Paul's letter is strongly upheld by the phrase "under the Spirit's guidance," which probably means that the Holy Spirit was working through Paul as he works through all who minister to God in a general sense.[19]

The readers are exhorted to remind themselves what Paul wrote to them "when he started preaching the gospel" (more literally, "in the beginning of the gospel"). Although both "at the beginning of 1 Corinthians" and "in the earliest days of the Corinthian church" are possible translations, D. Hagner[20] sees in the phrase an allusion to the similar phrase in Phil 4:15 and consequently opts for the latter rather than the former sense.

As in Clement's time, so also in Paul's there were parties in the church of Corinth. Clement here mentions three names: Paul, Cephas and Apollos. The text in Clement differs from 1 Cor 1:12 in two respects: (1) Clement reverses Paul's order in 1 Corinthians from Paul, Apollos, Cephas to Paul, Cephas, Apollos in *1 Clement*. (2) Christ's name is left out. The first alteration can be explained as an accommodation to the order in *1 Clem*. 47:4b, but not much should be read into the second alteration as Christ is not mentioned in 1 Cor 3:4, 22 either.

What is the reality behind these references in 1 Corinthians? What is the nature of the strife among the parties and the forms of disunity in the Corinthian church around AD 54? That Paul considers it a grave problem is seen in the fact that in 1 Corinthians he tackles this problem first and devotes the first four chapters to it. Another indication is the term *eris* (1 Cor 1:11), which Paul used here for "quarreling" or "disputes."

[18] J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers* (London: Macmillan) 5.1.2.143.
[19] Hagner, *Use* 341.
[20] Ibid. 273.

He used it also in Gal 5:20 where he stated that those who practice it would not inherit the kingdom. Another key term is *schisma* (1:10), which means division or cleft. The verb *ginomai* seems to point to the actual existence of divisions,[21] although the church had not yet disintegrated.

The Corinthian church of Paul's time seems to have been split into groups. Most of the people sided with one of the groups, although some conceivably did not. It might be that Paul was chosen by the "old-timers" because he founded the church, Apollos for his brilliance of thought and excellence of expression, Cephas by the more Jewish oriented (ex-Hellenistic Jews and/or God-fearers), while the rest, appalled by divisiveness, cried that they belonged only to Christ.

In spite of the above identification of the groups with the four names some scholars have contested the reality of such an interpretation. First, the actual existence of distinctly formed and organized contending groups cannot be derived from the term for divisions. It only implies that there were differences of opinion (cf. John 7:40–43; 9:16).[22] Thus the injunction to being of one mind and thought in 1 Cor 1:10.

Second, although both Cephas and Apollos are mentioned, Paul constantly throughout the epistle attacks only one opinion differing from his in various points. Even the section 1:1–4:21 that deals with divisions is an apology of Paul in which he attempts to reestablish his authority in face of a unified challenge. Also, Paul's questions in 1:13 and his immediate response to different slogans reflect only two groups: pro- and anti-Pauline. References to Cephas and Apollos are missing.[23]

If we were to look for some characteristic of this anti-Pauline sentiment we would find strong emphasis on "wisdom" (mentioned 26 times in 1 Corinthians 1–3; altogether 42 times in the entire Pauline corpus). In this respect it would fit best Apollos' Christianity, as far as we know about it. But the fact that Paul invokes Apollos in support of his argument in 3:6 and mentions him favorably in chap. 16 suggests that neither Apollos himself nor the others were personally responsible for the emergence of those contentions.

Therefore Paul is either combatting all of them (in which case their opposition to him must be their common denominator) or only one of them (whereby the mention of the others must be for some other reason).

The existence and the identification of the party of Christ has come under the most severe scholarly attack: It may not have existed as a separate group at all[24] since Christ did not baptize any of the Corinthians. "I am of Christ" may have been the slogan of some individual Christians or, what seems more likely to G. Theissen,[25] belonged (originally) to itin-

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[21] W. Baird, *The Corinthian Church: A Biblical Approach to Urban Culture* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1964) 30; for the contrary view see C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (2d ed.; London: Adam and Charles Black, reprint 1978) 42.

[22] G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 54.

[23] J. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) 276–277.

[24] Fee, *First Epistle* 58.

[25] G. Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) 66 n. 59.

erant missionaries who visited Corinth. In turn, the Corinthian groups thought themselves to be Christ's only secondarily, through the founders of their separate groups. The expression might also have been a cry of all the groups claiming exclusive right for themselves, or even Paul's own response to their slogans: Whoever you belong to, I belong to Christ.

The entire discussion points to the conclusion that in spite of its factiousness and internal strife the Corinthian church was truly united in opposition to Paul. N. A. Dahl accurately assesses that the other three declarations are the declarations of independence of Paul.[26] This is not to undermine the reality of their dividedness: Although they were united *vis-à-vis* Paul, there did exist differences of opinion among various groupings. The appeal to the famous Christian authorities probably indicates that.

The reference to baptism implies that the baptizands identified with the person who performed the baptism. That was one of the roots of division since the Corinthian Christians gathered in the private houses of richer believers. Since they met in relative isolation they developed somewhat different theological outlooks,[27] which were the cause of subsequent bickering. The members of these small gatherings identified with the founders of their groups.[28] The founders, whether Paul, Peter, Apollos, or other itinerant charismatics and evangelists, would baptize whole households or the heads of the households, whose example would be followed by the rest of the household. These households were the core of home congregations. This may account for the identification of the whole house groups with their baptizer. Since the house groups were likely to be called by the place of gathering—that is, by the name of the head of the household—Paul in effect implies that three house congregations were "on his side" (1 Cor 1:15–16). On the other hand Paul argues that the agents of baptism are not important. They are only God's servants. Paul explains in 1:12–17 that the unity of the whole Church is based upon the unity of Christ. As he is one, so is the Church one if it is one with Christ.[29] Also, every Christian is given the same Spirit (12:13).

II. CRITICAL HERMENEUTICAL PROBLEMS

This is the background of the text that Clement deems so important as to single it out. That he used it as supporting material for his argument is evident, but the question of his understanding of it poses itself with great urgency.

There are several possibilities. First, Clement understood the reference to the three groups of Paul's time quite literally as three distinct dissenting groups. Since he himself was trying to bring back unity, he was

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[26] Dunn, *Unity* 275.

[27] J. Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth and Archeology* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1983) 158.

[28] Theissen, *Social* 54.

[29] S. Hanson, *The Unity of the Church in the New Testament* (*Colossians and Ephesians*) (Uppsala: Almqvist and Viksells, 1964) 75.

against sectarianism as such and used the text in a general sense and only as a motif.

Second, Clement accepted the distinct groups as historical but needed the fact of their existence only in order to be able to emphasize the excellence of the old-time champions and consequently the insignificance of the troublemakers in the Corinth of his time. This option says nothing about Clement's understanding of the relation among the groups.

Third, Clement's overall intention was to stress order. According to Clement, there is a divinely approved succession—God, Christ, apostles—which implies some sort of subordination. The next level after the apostles according to *1 Clement* 42 consists of "the men they had approved." As is implied in 47:5, the leaders of the rebellion in the Corinth of AD 96 are at least one level further down from the people approved by the apostles. Therefore although each division is evil the siding with the instigators of this particular division of Clement's time is even worse because of their lower status in the order of things.

Fourth, if Clement knew that the names used by Paul did not correspond to separate groups within the church but were only related to a common denial of Paul's authority and theology, we must assume that Clement used the example only as a rhetorical device.

Fifth, Clement only possessed a text of 1 Corinthians without ever having had firsthand knowledge about the Corinthian church and its exact circumstances in Paul's time. The frequent exchange of visitors between Corinth and Rome, however, guarantees the accuracy of his portrayal.

The comparison between the situation of AD 54 and that of AD 96 reveals a major difference. Contrary to 1 Corinthians, Clement knows of no subgroups. There are only two groups: the rebels who deposed some presbyters with the silent consent of the majority in the church, and the deposed presbyters and their few supporters. The wider context of chaps. 45–47 seems to confirm the existence of only two groups. If a similar major polarization existed also in earlier times, why did Clement not use a more suitable and less ambiguous text, the one that would unambiguously talk about two groups? Since it is not possible to draw a direct parallel between the Corinth of AD 54 and of AD 96, the most obvious reason for the incorporation of this text in this place is the one that combines the second and third options above.

Another difference is that whereas 1 Corinthians gives solid evidence for matters that were disputed at the time, Clement is focused solely on the phenomenon of dissension. He does not deal with the ingredients or the mechanics of dissension. The celebration of the Lord's supper, an area of disunity and disorder from forty years prior to Clement, does not appear in *1 Clement* at all. Although Clement treats extensively the topic of resurrection, which also surfaces in 1 Corinthians, it is questionable whether it was a component in the dispute of his time.

Thus a secondary reason for the use of the quotation from 1 Corinthians may have been to remind the Corinthians in quite general terms of the turbulent times of forty years before so as to point to their appar-

ently chronic disease. As there had been quarrels (1:11) in the old times, so in Clement's time there were quarrels, "the questions disputed among you" (*1 Clem.* 1:1).

III. RATIONALE FOR THE SOLUTION

Like Paul four decades earlier, in AD 96 Clement is faced with the problem of disunity. He feels an irresistible urge to address it and help the Corinthian church get back on the right track from which they had wandered through their contentions.

Unity is not something that comes naturally. Clement does not take it for granted. Becoming a Christian and joining other Christians does not automatically produce unity. Although endowed with many of God's gifts—"life in immortality, splendor with righteousness, truth with confidence, faith with assurance, self-control with holiness" (35:1)—the group of believers in Corinth found it possible not to live in unity.

Yet living in unity seems to be implied in the reference to the future gifts prepared for those who patiently wait for God (34:8). Two considerations can be invoked in favor of this assertion. First, immediately preceding the latter citation the harmonious worshiping of thousands of angels is set forth before the Corinthians ("We should note") and the exhortation follows the example: The readers are to imitate the angels (34:5–7). There is no reference here to any liturgy or cultus of the early Church. If this reference implies any correspondence with the state in the Corinthian church, then the most that can be said is that it seems likely that the Corinthian contentions and divisions disrupted the smooth unfolding of prayer meetings. The quality of being and staying in harmony is underlined also in 9:4 where it is stated that the animals entered Noah's ark in concord, and in 9:2 negatively where Lot's wife did not remain in harmony with him.

Second, the whole cluster of examples starting in 37:1 extols orderliness as the functional principle of any human association, and even more of a group of believers. These examples will be treated more fully later, but here it should be observed that both harmony and orderliness have one basic justification and reason for being: God wills them. Angels minister to "God's will" (35:5)[30]—that is, they obey his will by their harmonious worshiping.[31] The OT cultic regulations and order reflect God's will too (40:3). Nature obeys God's will (chaps. 20, 33), though it cannot choose not to obey it. Soldiers obey their superiors according to God's will.

But humans can choose to disobey, and that is what the Corinthians have done. Therefore Clement uses imperatives that speak about subjection to God's will (34:5). Only such a positive, active stance can secure the reception of God's gift of unity.

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[30] Richardson, *Early*, incorrectly renders "him."
[31] W. van Unnik, "1 Clement 34 and the 'Sanctus,'" *VC* 5 (1951) 340–341.

But it is not a matter of one person producing unity. Although a single person can destroy it, all must be involved in reconstructing and maintaining it. Again it must be stressed that Clement addresses the whole church concerning this issue for the above reasons.

IV. PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE SOLUTION

In order to be able to conform to God's will, the Corinthian Christians are advised about the basic presuppositions for doing so. The major source of instruction is "the glorious and holy rule of our tradition" (7:2).[32] Jesus brought in salvation (7:4). The OT furnishes numerous examples of believers' responses through repentance (chaps. 7–8), obedience (chaps. 9–12) and humility (chaps. 13–18).

Clement's examples of repentance are Noah, Jonah and the Ninevites. Other prophetic texts dealing with repentance round out the theme. The Haggadah on obedience includes Enoch, Noah, a detailed account of Abraham, Lot and his wife (in whose case disobedience is equated with double-mindedness and doubt in God's power) and Rahab. In her case the motifs of faith and hospitality embrace the motif of obedience. That all of the examples of this group have a "prophetic" significance is attested in 12:8. This conclusion, although referring in the strict sense only to Rahab, points by extension to all of them.

For Clement the inescapable consequence of repentance before God and obedience to his will is humility (13:1), although it can also be said to precede them. Those who are humble are also peaceable (14:5), and seeking the company of such is beneficial. The supreme example is Christ himself (16:1–17), but a number of OT persons are also noted: Elijah and Elisha, Ezekiel, the prophets, the heroes of old, Abraham, Job, Moses, David. Again Clement bolsters up his insistence on imitating the spiritual heroes by stating that all of these qualities are a part of God's will (repentance [8:2, 5], obedience [9:1], humility [56:1–2]). They are mandatory for Christians.

V. EXAMPLES OF ORDER

After explaining that it is God's will that his people live in unity, and that the presuppositions for unity within the local congregation of believers are obedience to God's will, repentance for sins and humility toward both God and fellow believers, Clement goes to great pains to stress one aspect of unity that he deems crucial to the problem in Corinth: order. According to him there is no unity without order. Whether he maintained this view unconditionally—that is, whether this view was the cornerstone of his Christianity—is an open question. Various accusations directed against his alleged legalism and excessive love for orderliness are nevertheless by and large misplaced. The situation demanded an emphasis on

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[32] Not in a technical or legalistic sense of something dead; see Richardson, *Early* 47 n. 31.

this element, and he responded accordingly. Had the problem been of a different nature he would have arranged his argument differently and incorporated and emphasized other Biblical truths.

The first and most discussed example of order is the example of nature (chaps. 20, 33). It is a perfect illustration of order and was widely used by both Greek philosophers and Jewish writers. While older commentators of *1 Clement* used to stress the Stoic elements and called chap. 20 the departure from Biblical teaching toward natural theology,[33] W. van Unnik has shown that although similarity in vocabulary does exist, Stoic philosophy is absent:

> There is a marked difference: among the Stoics the order seems more or less established in itself and makes men think that there must be behind it an organizing power, and that it is from the order of nature that this divine power can be known; in 1 Clement the order is established by the command of the Creator and reveals the *will* of God, the keynote of the passage being not so much the order in nature as the command of God.[34]

If closer parallels to Clement's text are to be sought, they are to be found in Palestinian Jewish sources, not Hellenistic Jewish ones where there would be some chance of Stoic influence.[35] A. Hall has shown that even the phraseology consists of secondary Stoic elements,[36] but he also allows that the two traditions, Stoic and Jewish, had converged in *1 Clement*.[37]

Clement uses the illustration for rhetorical purposes.[38] Later Church fathers employed nature as a convenient source of simile and metaphor but also as an example of an ordered system pointing beyond itself.[39]

What is the goal of this piece of "Jewish catechetical instruction which Clement updates by clothing it in *Stoic dress* in view of the (then) prevailing philosophy in Rome"?[40] It is to show the Corinthian Christians that "nature is submitted to the divine will and from this proceeds peace and order."[41] Nature is a perfect example: In it there is no sedition. In this sense Clement may be emphasizing the submission of nature to God[42] more than order. And herein lies the message to the church: They are to "emulate the ideal pattern of God's perfect rule. Every deviation from appointed order of course is a violation of God's command and constitutes an act of disobedience to his will."[43]

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[33] Ibid. 38.

[34] W. van Unnik, "Is 1 Clement 20 Purely Stoic?", *VC* 4/3 (1950) 53–54.

[35] Ibid. 56.

[36] A. Hall, "1 Clement as a Document of Transition," *Miscellanea Patristica: A. C. Vega* (1968) 270.

[37] Ibid. 274.

[38] D. W. F. Wong, "Natural and Divine Order in 1 Clement," *VC* 31/2 (1977) 82.

[39] See D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Greek View of Nature* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1968) 202.

[40] Wong, "Natural" 83.

[41] Hall, "1 Clement" 272.

[42] Ibid. 270.

[43] Wong, "Natural" 82.

The harmonious ministering of the angels in 34:5–7 has already been mentioned. Other examples of order are found in chap. 37. The first one depicts subordination within an army. Military discipline was a popular theme in Hellenistic-Roman literary tradition since the time of Paul, and Clement naturally follows the literary customs. But A. Jaubert[44] has shown that the illustration is a combination of ranks from both Roman and Jewish armies, and the glorification of the Roman army[45] is not intended.

The next example points to mutual reliance and dependence (37:4) rather than to subordination. The mixture of great and small is advantageous to the whole. The metaphor was probably taken over by Clement from the Greek philosophical tradition, possibly through a Stoic source.[46] It had also become associated with a healthy blend of different social elements in the *polis*. D. W. F. Wong[47] observes that the term for mixture, *synpnei* (denoting mixture with interdependence), was probably used deliberately instead of *mixis* (implying no interdependence). As such the illustration of the mixture provides a good balance to the first one.

Clement's flow of thought brings him to another illustration, that of a body, which was also commonly a part of the general culture.[48] It had been used by Greek, Roman and Jewish authors. Paul must have thought it important because he used it twice (1 Cor 12:21–23; Rom 12:4–5). R. Grant remarks that

> the metaphor is primarily and essentially political. It becomes Christian only because Paul mentions Christ, explains that membership in the body comes through baptism, states that position in the body is due to God's choice, and calls Christians the "body of Christ."[49]

J. Murphy-O'Connor looks at the metaphor from another angle.[50] He mentions that during Paul's stay in Corinth he might have seen the famous sanctuary of Asclepius, the Greek god of health and medicine. Sick people seeking healing would bring to it terra-cotta models representing hurting parts of the body—heads, hands, feet, arms, legs, breasts, genitals, eyes, ears—and leave them there. Archeological excavations have recovered great numbers of such pieces. Seeing all this, says Murphy-O'Connor, Paul might have thought that this phenomenon, so familiar to the Corinthians, would make a good illustration.

However that may be, Clement took it over as an illustration. Diversity is stressed, but—even more—harmonious cooperation. The term *synpnei*, which is critical for this passage, has been translated differently by trans-

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[44] A. Jaubert, "Les Sources de las Conception Militaire de l'Eglise en 1 Clement 37," *VC* 18 (1964) 74–84.

[45] W. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge: Oxford University, 1962) 15; cf. also H. T. Mayer, "Clement of Rome and His Use of Scripture," *Concordia* 42 (1971) 539.

[46] Jaeger, *Early* 116.

[47] Wong, "Natural" 84.

[48] R. M. Grant, *Early Christianity and Society* (San Francisco: Harper, 1977) 36–37.

[49] Ibid. 36.

[50] Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth* 165.

lators: The limbs are said to "act in concord,"[51] "work together,"[52] "coalesce,"[53] "conspire together."[54] The notion that the one spirit permeates the universe was present in Stoicism, and W. Jaeger[55] concludes that it was readily assimilated into the Christian belief in the Holy Spirit.

It seems that Clement follows more closely earlier Greek usage than Paul's Christianized version.[56] H. T. Mayer's observation that "Paul's idea of the church as the body of Christ is filled by Clement with wisdom of Greek political experience and speculation"[57] is thus misleading, for it assumes conscious and detrimental activity on Clement's part. Yet it must be admitted that Clement's rendering leaves out the specific Christian understanding of the congregation of believers: He omits to mention that they are united in the body because they are in Christ. His picture only suggests a harmonious mechanism in which the differences and distinctivenesses are synchronized.[58]

Among the examples of order in *1 Clement* Wong lists the prayer for the rulers in 60:4–61:2.[59] Just as nature follows God's arrangement, so man should in the political sphere (61:1) as well as in the religious and military spheres. Clement's appeal to obedience and loyalty to the authorities is colored by the special circumstances and the aim of his letter, just as John's opposite attitude toward Rome is in the book of Revelation. He wants to avert possible persecution of Christians by the authorities. Orderly conduct prevents sedition. Prayer for the state, its rulers and the *pax Romana* is another aspect of faithfulness to order that the Creator himself had sanctified. The benefit of such conduct is twofold: (1) The Christians fulfill obedience to God's will,[60] and (2) they are seen by the state as *religiosi* rather than *superstitioi*,[61] which diminishes the danger of persecution.

VI. MEANS TO THE SOLUTION

The parenetic material concerning obedience, repentance and humility, as well as the emphasis on order as the constitutive part of any divinely appointed association of people, especially of believers, is not all that Clement offers as the solution to the problem. He does not leave it up to

[51] Richardson, *Early*.

[52] K. Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1949).

[53] R. M. Grant and G. H. Holt, *First and Second Clement* (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1965).

[54] *The Apostolic Fathers* (ed. F. X. Glimm *et al.*; Washington: Catholic University of America, 1969).

[55] Jaeger, *Early* 23.

[56] See Hagner, *Use* 198–199.

[57] Mayer, "Clement" 539.

[58] See E. Schweizer, *The Church as the Body of Christ* (Richmond: John Knox, 1964) 60–62.

[59] Wong, "Natural" 86–87.

[60] Grant, *Early* 23.

[61] P. Mikat, *Die Bedeutung der Begriffe Stasis und Aponoia für der Verständnis des 1. Clemensbriefs* (Köln: Westdeutscher, 1969) 40.

the Corinthian Christians to work out the practical implications. Certainly there can be no doubt that the reinstatement of the deposed presbyters is the first and most obvious step (54:2; 57:1–2). Their ousting was a sin. In order that the church may function properly and that the faithful transmission of the apostolic teaching be secured, the presbyters must fulfill their ministry. The next step, perhaps even preceding the reinstatement of the presbyters, is prescribed by Clement. This reveals an interesting practical insight. He prays that the rebels in obedience to God's will (56:1) bend the knees of their hearts (57:1) in humility and leave the congregation. As long as they stay, Clement seems to be saying, there is a possibility of further trouble. They may lapse into the same sin, but the possibility of retaliation may also have to be reckoned with.

There are two sides to Clement's solution.[62] First, the rebels are free to decide to leave and choose to go into exile. They must become convinced that they should sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the congregation. They should realize that the community is above the individual. This is the thrust of the invocation of Moses and the episode from the wilderness related in 53:1 ff. Other "heathen," Christian and Jewish examples in 55:1 ff. point in the same direction. A comforting note is added. Those who do seek voluntary exile will receive a warm welcome wherever they go, and any other church will accept them because they have done what the Lord wills.

Second, the step is not altogether up to the dissenters. Even if they are not convinced about the necessity of the measure, the injunction should still be fulfilled. The church is to exercise discipline. Mayer comments: "This suggestion reminds the reader of the common practice of Greek city-states whose political assemblies regularly exiled their leaders who had grown too powerful or popular."[63] P. Mikat in this connection notes that next to capital punishment the exclusion from the association was in Greece the severest internal punishment.[64] Although this practice was probably known to Clement, and although he might have used it in a Biblicized way, its Christian roots can be seen in the NT instances of *correctio fraterna* such as Matt 18:16.

VII. AFTERMATH

How exactly the exhortations were put into practice is unknown. Some light, however, is thrown on the later history of the Corinthian congregation thanks to Eusebius.[65] He quotes Dionysius, the bishop of Corinth from c. 170–180, who wrote that in his time Clement's letter was still being read publicly in the Corinthian church during Sunday meetings. Just as 1 Corinthians was profitable for the Corinthians of Clement's

[62] Ibid. 35.
[63] Mayer, "Clement" 539.
[64] Mikat, *Bedeutung* 33.
[65] Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.11.

time, so *1 Clement* was profitable for the Corinthians of Dionysius' time. This can only mean that it was held in such high regard because of its insights and directives that had been successfully applied in the church's not-so-distant past. We can assume that unity had been reestablished and that the members of the church lived in concord of love (50:5). The good times of chaps. 1–2 returned. Peace in the community was achieved because the Holy Spirit was allowed to work out the orientation within each member's soul. Peace and concord are the result of man's submission to God.[66] The danger of persecution had been averted, and the church was powerful in its witness to the surrounding world.[67]

The NT does not mention by name any church in Achaia other than Corinth and Cenchrea (Rom 16:1), but it is possible that other congregations existed. One indication can be found in 2 Cor 1:1. The person of Dionysius is also helpful in this respect. Backed up by the "authority of the old church of Corinth,"[68] he kept profuse correspondence with neighboring churches. Among the seven letters known to us, three were sent to Athens, Lacedaemon and Sparta respectively. This fact again emphasizes how the life of each church was embraced within the life of neighboring Christian churches. Just as eighty years prior to Dionysius the Roman church took it as its duty to intervene in Corinthian affairs, so now the Corinthian leadership does the same. In conclusion, it may be conjectured that the Corinthian church had overcome its disunity and had become a leading church among the Achaian churches,[69] possibly due to its "energetic Christianity."[70]

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[66] Hall, "1 Clement" 260.
[67] Breytenbach, "Corinthian" 11.
[68] J. Weiss, *Earliest Christianity* (New York: Harper, 1959) 2.828.
[69] Ibid. 2.829.
[70] A. von Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity* (New York: Harper, 1962) 469.