

## Who is Clement

- The Shepherd of Hermas is commanded to send a copy of his visions to Clement.
- Clement is mentioned in Philippians 4:3 as a worker with Paul.
- He was likely a disciple of Peter and the bishop of the church in Rome.
- It was likely written in the late 90s, after the deaths of Peter and Paul.
- This letter is sent to rebuke the church for their current church conflict.

## Bible in 1 Clement

- He has a high view of the Scriptures and holds Christ's words in the same light.
- Acts, 1 Peter, Titus, Matthew, Luke, 1 Corinthians are quoted or alluded to.
- He encourages them to read 1 Corinthians again especially the warnings against factions. He also calls it the gospel (47).
- The letter is filled with Christ centered exposition of the Old Testament.
- There is extensive use of the book of Hebrews. So much so that some believe Clement may have authored the book.
- 1 Clement shows helps prove the church received the Bible as Scripture and as genuine apostolic writings.

## Primary Argument or use of Scripture

- They are backsliding as a church by following sinful examples in the OT (1-5).
- They need to repent of their jealousy and follow the positive examples (6-12).
- They need to humble themselves instead of following rebellious leaders (13-23).
- The resurrection of Christ is their only hope and they need to live like it (24-36).
- They must accept Christ's appointing of divine leaders and avoid schism (37-50)
- They must repent as a church to avoid death and return to peace (51-65).

## The Danger of Schism

- They have improperly removed leaders from their office.
- They were not removed because of any sin or moral failing.
- Clement calls for them to repent and restore these leaders.
- Schism, or church division, is seen as a terribly deadly sin.
- It is better to be small than excluded (57.2)

## Clement's Ecclesiology

- The church in Rome is involved in the church in Corinth's working.
- Clement does not appear to have authority to force them do anything.
- The line appears to be murky.
- The words for Bishop and elder appear to be used interchangeably.
- Jesus warned the apostles there would be conflict over bishops.
- The office of bishop/elder and deacon was meant to be permanent.

- The church has a vote on including and removing church elders.
- But this should be handled carefully and based on holiness alone.
- Bishops/deacons continue the ministry of the apostles.
- The appointment of bishops and deacons was not new but fulfilling Scripture (42).

#### Clement's View of Christ

- There is high Christology throughout the letter.
- Christ is always presented as God and worthy of worship.
- The OT is interpreted in light of Jesus.
- The Trinity is assumed throughout the letter, "one God and one Christ and one Spirit" (46:6).
- Jesus calls us to faith in God through the Holy Spirit (22).

#### Clement's Soteriology

- The blood of Christ purchases salvation for the whole world. (7.4)
- Jesus takes our sins and suffering in our place (13).
- His blood was given for us (21.6).
- We are justified by faith in Christ not works (32).
- The apostolic father's use lots of different images for the salvation of Christ.

#### The Problem of the Phoenix

- Clement fervently defends the resurrection of Christ as the hope of our salvation.
- He uses the illustration of the Phoenix as a sign and example of resurrection.
- He appears to believe this mythical bird truly lives in Arabia.
- This reminds us that Clement is not infallible and the apostolic fathers are not canonical.
- However, it would be overstating to say they provide no spiritual value.

#### Concluding Thoughts

- 1 Clement shows us the authority of bishop and elder was taken seriously from the very beginning not a later invention.
- Churches might not have authority over each other but they are not completely independent either.
- Schism, or church splits, is an incredibly serious sin to be avoided.