

*Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who is against us?

He who did not withhold his own Son,

but gave him up for all of us,

will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will bring any charge against God's elect?

It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn?

It is Christ Jesus, who died,

yes, who was raised,

who is at the right hand of God,

who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will hardship, or distress, or persecution,

or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors

through him who loved us.

The word of the Lord.

*Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.*

*A shorter version (1-2, 9-13) concludes as the asterisk.*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,  
by the mercies of God,  
to present your bodies as a living sacrifice,  
holy and acceptable to God,  
which is your spiritual worship.  
Do not be conformed to this world,  
but be transformed by the renewing of your minds,  
so that you may discern what is the will of God-  
what is good and acceptable and perfect.  
Let love be genuine;  
hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;  
love one another with mutual affection;  
outdo one another in showing honour.  
Do not lag in zeal,  
be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.  
Rejoice in hope,  
be patient in suffering,  
persevere in prayer.  
Contribute to the needs of the saints;  
extend hospitality to strangers.\*  
Bless those who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse them.  
Rejoice with those who rejoice,  
weep with those who weep.  
Live in harmony with one another;  
do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;  
do not claim to be wiser than you are.  
Do not repay anyone evil for evil,  
but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.  
If it is possible, so far as it depends on you,  
live peaceably with all.

The word of the Lord.

*Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you.*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:

We ought not to please ourselves.

Each of us must please our neighbor

for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.

For Christ did not please himself.

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement

grant you to live in harmony with one another,

in accordance with Christ Jesus,

so that together you may with one voice

glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you,

for the glory of God.

May the God of hope

fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

so that you may abound in hope

by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

*Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:

The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord,  
and the Lord for the body.

And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Shun fornication!

Every sin that a person commits is outside the body;  
but the fornicator sins against the body itself.

Or do you not know

that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,  
which you have from God,

and that you are not your own?

For you were bought with a price;  
therefore glorify God in your body.

The word of the Lord.

*Faith, hope and love abide; the greatest of these is love.*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters,  
strive for the greater gifts.  
And I will show you a still more excellent way.  
If I speak in the tongues of human beings and of Angels,  
but do not have love,  
I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.  
If I have prophetic powers,  
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,  
and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains,  
but do not have love, I am nothing.  
If I give away all my possessions,  
and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,  
but do not have love, I gain nothing.  
Love is patient; love is kind;  
love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.  
It does not insist on its own way;  
it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing,  
but rejoices in the truth.  
It bears all things, believes all things,  
hopes all things, endures all things.  
Love never ends.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters:

I, the prisoner in the Lord,  
beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling  
to which you have been called,  
with all humility and gentleness, with patience,  
bearing with one another in love,  
making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit  
in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit,  
just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,  
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,  
one God and Father of all,  
who is above all and through all and in all.

The word of the Lord.

*This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the Church.*

*A shorter version (2a, 25-32) follows.*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us  
and gave himself up for us.

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife  
just as Christ is the head of the Church,  
the body of which he is the Saviour.

Just as the Church is subject to Christ,  
so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives,  
just as Christ loved the Church  
and gave himself up for her,  
in order to make her holy  
by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word,  
so as to present the Church to himself in splendour,  
without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind-  
yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish.  
In the same way, husbands should love their wives  
as they do their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one ever hates his own body,  
but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it,  
just as Christ does for the Church,  
because we are members of his body.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother  
and be joined to his wife,  
and the two will become one flesh.”

This is a great mystery,  
and I am applying it to Christ and the Church.      The word of the Lord.

OR:

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us  
and gave himself up for us.

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and be joined to his wife,  
and the two will become one flesh.”

This is a great mystery,  
and I am applying it to Christ and the Church.

The word of the Lord.

*The God of peace will be with you.*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

Brothers and sisters:

Rejoice in the Lord always;

again I will say, Rejoice.

Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

The Lord is near.

Do not worry about anything,

but in everything

by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving

let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God,

which surpasses all understanding,

will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters,

whatever is true, whatever is honourable,

whatever is just, whatever is pure,

whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable,

if there is any excellence

and if there is anything worthy of praise,

think about these things.

Keep on doing the things that you have learned

and received and heard and seen in me,

and the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord.

*Above all, love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters:

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,  
clothe yourselves with compassion,  
kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another and,  
if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other;  
just as the Lord has forgiven you,  
so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love,  
which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,  
to which indeed you were called in the one body.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;  
teach and admonish one another in all wisdom;  
and with gratitude in your hearts  
sing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

*Let marriage be held in honour by all.*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Let mutual love continue.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,  
for by doing that some have entertained Angels without knowing it.

Remember those who are in prison,  
as though you were in prison with them;  
those who are being tortured,  
as though you yourselves were being tortured.

Let marriage be held in honour by all,  
and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled.

Keep your lives free from the love of money,  
and be content with what you have;  
for he has said,

“I will never leave you or forsake you.”

So we can say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper,  
I will not be afraid.”

The word of the Lord.

*All of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, and love for one another.*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter.

Beloved:

Wives, accept the authority of your husbands,  
so that, even if some of them do not obey the word,  
they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct,  
when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair,  
and by wearing gold ornaments of fine clothing;  
rather, let your adornment be the inner self  
with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit,  
which is very precious in God's sight.

It was in this way long ago  
that the holy women who hoped in God  
used to adorn themselves  
by accepting the authority of their husbands.  
Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord.  
You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good  
and never let fears alarm you.

Husbands, in the same way,  
show consideration for your wives in your life together,  
paying honour to the woman as the weaker sex,  
since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life-  
so that nothing may hinder your prayers.

Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit,  
sympathy, love for one another,  
a tender heart, and a humble mind.

Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse;  
but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing.

It is for this that you were called-  
that you might inherit a blessing.

The word of the Lord.

*Let us love in truth and action.*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John.

Little children, let us love,  
not in word or speech, but in truth and action.  
And by this we will know that we are from the truth  
and will reassure our hearts before him  
whenever our hearts condemn us;  
for God is greater than our hearts,  
and God knows everything.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us,  
we have boldness before God;  
and we receive from him whatever we ask,  
because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment,  
that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ  
and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

Whoever obeys his commandments abides in him,  
and he abides in them.

And by this we know that he abides in us,  
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of Saint John.

Beloved,  
let us love one another,  
because love is from God;  
everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.  
Whoever does not love does not know God,  
for God is love.

God's love was revealed among us in this way:  
God sent his only-begotten Son into the world  
so that we might live through him.

In this is love,  
not that we loved God but that he loved us  
and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Beloved, since God loves us so much,  
we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God;  
if we love one another, God lives in us,  
and his love is perfected in us.

The word of the Lord.

*Blessed are those invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

A reading from the book of Revelation.

After this I, John, heard what seemed to be the loud voice  
of a great multitude in heaven, saying,

“Hallelujah!

Salvation and glory and power to our God.”

And from the throne came a voice saying,

“Praise our God, all you his servants,  
and all who fear him, small and great.”

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude,  
like the sound of many waters

and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

“Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready;

to her it has been granted to be clothed

with fine linen, bright and pure”-

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And the Angel said to me,

“Write this:

Blessed are those

who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The word of the Lord.