

~Other Speakers M-R: Clement of Rome:

When he said this, they all, as in concert, set up a shout of laughter, trying to silence him and put him out, as a barbarous madman. But I, seeing this, and seized, I know not how, with enthusiasm, could no longer keep silence with righteous indignation, but boldly cried out, saying, Well has God ordained that His counsel should be incapable of being received by you, foreseeing you to be unworthy, as appears manifestly to such of those who are now present as have minds capable of judging. For whereas now heralds of His counsel have been sent forth, not making a show of grammatical art, but setting forth His will in simple and in artificial words, so that whosoever hear can understand what is spoken, and not with any invidious feeling, as though unwilling to offer it to all; you come here, and besides your not understanding what is for your advantage, to your own injury you laugh at the truth, which, to your condemnation, consorts with the barbarians, and which you will not entertain when it visits you, by reason of your wickedness and the plainness of its words, lest you be convicted of being merely lovers of words, and not lovers of truth and lovers of wisdom. How long will you be learning to speak, who have not the power of speech? For many sayings of yours are not worth one word. What, then, will your Grecian multitude say, being of one mind, if, as he says, there shall be a judgment?

Why, O God, did You not proclaim to us Your counsel? Shall you not, if you be thought worthy of an answer at all, be told this? I, knowing before the foundation of the world all characters that were to be, acted towards each one by anticipation according to his deserts without making it known; but wishing to give full assurance to those who have fled to me that this is so, and to explain why from the beginning, and in the first ages, I did not suffer my counsel to be publicly proclaimed; I now, in the end of the world, have sent heralds to proclaim my will, and they are insulted and flouted by those who will not be benefited, and who wilfully reject my friendship. Oh, great wrong! The preachers are exposed to danger even to the loss of life, and that by the men who are called to salvation.