

Or
The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles
(50 A.D.)

The teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles by the twelve apostles.

1. There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways. [2] Now this is the way of life: first, “you shall love God who made you”; second, “your neighbor as yourself”; and “whatever you do not wish to happen to you do not do to another.” [3] The teaching of these words is this: “Bless those who curse you,” and “pray for your enemies,” and “fast for those who persecute you.” “For what credit is it, if you love those who love you? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?” But “you must love those who hate you,” and you will not have an enemy. [4] Abstain from physical and bodily cravings. “If someone gives you a blow on your right cheek, turn to him the other as well,” and you will be perfect. If someone “forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles”; “if someone takes your cloak, give him your tunic also”; “if someone takes from you what belongs to you, do not demand it back,” for you cannot do so. [5] “Give to everyone who asks you, and do not demand it back,” for the Father wants something from his own gifts to be given to everyone. Blessed is the one who gives according to the command, for such a person is innocent. Woe to the one who receives: if, on the one hand, someone who is in need receives, this person is innocent, but the one who does not have need will have to explain why and for what purpose he received, and upon being imprisoned will be interrogated about what he has done, and will not be released from there until he has repaid every last cent. [6] But it has also been said concerning this: “Let your gift sweat in your hands until you know to whom to give it.”
2. The second commandment of the teaching is: [2] “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery”; you shall not corrupt boys; you shall not be sexually promiscuous; “you shall not steal”; you shall not practice magic; you shall not engage in sorcery; you shall not abort a child or commit infanticide. “You shall not covet your neighbor’s possessions; [3] you shall not commit perjury; you shall not give false testimony” you shall not speak evil; you shall not hold a grudge. [4] You shall not be double-minded, or double-tongued, for the “double-tongue” is a deadly snare. [5] Your word must not be false or meaningless, but confirmed by action. [6] You shall not be greedy or avaricious, or a hypocrite or malicious or arrogant. You shall not hatch evil plots against your neighbor. [7] You shall not hate anyone; instead you shall reprove some, and pray for some, and some you shall love more than your own life.
3. My child, flee from evil of every kind, and from everything resembling it. [2] Do not become angry, for anger leads to murder. Do not be jealous or quarrelsome or hot-tempered, for all these things breed murders. [3] My child, do not be lustful, for lust leads to fornication. Do not be foul-mouthed or let your eyes roam, for all these things lead to adultery. [4] My child, do not be an augur (note:

this is a person who attempts to foretell the future by examining the behavior or entrails of birds or animals.), since it leads to idolatry. Do not be an enchanter or an astrologer or a magician, or even desire to see them, for all these things breed idolatry. [5] My child, do not be a liar, since lying leads to theft. Do not be avaricious or conceited, for all these things breed thefts. [6] My child, do not be a grumbler, since it leads to blasphemy. Do not be arrogant or evil-minded, for all these things breed blasphemies.

[7] Instead, be humble, for “the humble shall inherit the earth.” [8] Be patient and merciful and innocent and quiet and good, and revere always the words which you have heard. [9] Do not exalt yourself or permit your soul to become arrogant. Your soul shall not associate with the lofty, but live with the righteous and humble. [10] Accept as good the things that happen to you, knowing that nothing transpires apart from God.

4. My child, night and day remember the one who preaches God’s word to you, and honor him as though he were the lord. For wherever the Lord’s nature is preached, there the Lord is. [2] Moreover, you shall seek out daily the presence of the saints, that you may find support in their words. [3] You shall not cause division, but shall make peace between those who quarrel. You shall judge righteously; you shall not show partiality when reproving transgressions. [4] You shall not waiver with regard to your decisions.

[5] Do not be someone who stretches out his hands to receive, but withdraws them when it comes to giving. [6] If you earned something by working with your hands, you shall give a ransom for your sins. [7] You shall not hesitate to give, nor shall you grumble when giving, for you shall

yet come to know who is the good paymaster of the reward. [8] You shall not turn away from someone in need, but shall share everything with your brother, and not claim that anything is your own. For if you are sharers in what is imperishable, how much more so in perishable things!

[9] You shall not withhold your hand from your son or your daughter, but from their youth you shall teach them the fear of God. [10] You shall not give orders to your slave or servant girl (who hope in the same God as you) when you are angry, lest they cease to fear the God who is over you both. For he comes to call not with regard to reputation but upon those whom the Spirit has prepared. [11] And you slaves shall be submissive to your masters in respect and fear, as to a symbol of God.

[12] You shall hate all hypocrisy, and everything that is not pleasing to the Lord. [13] You must not forsake the Lord’s commandments, but must guard what you have received, neither adding nor subtracting anything. [14] In church you shall confess your transgressions, and you shall not approach our prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of life.

5. But the way of death is this: first of all, it is evil and completely cursed; murders, adulteries, lusts, fornications, thefts, idolatries, magic arts, sorceries, robberies, false testimonies, hypocrisy, duplicity, deceit, arrogance, malice, stubbornness, greed, foul speech, jealousy, audacity, pride, boastfulness. [2] It is the way of persecutors of good people, of those hating truth, loving a lie, not knowing the reward of righteousness, not adhering to what is good or to righteous judgment, being on the alert not for what is good but for what is evil, from whom gentleness and patience are far away, loving worthless things, pursuing reward, having no mercy for the poor, not working on behalf of the oppressed, not knowing him who made them, murderers of children, corrupters of God’s creation,

turning away from someone in need, oppressing the afflicted, advocates of the wealthy, lawless judges of the poor, utterly sinful. May you be delivered, children from all these things!

6. See that no one leads you astray from this way of the teaching, for such a person teaches you without regard for God. [2] For if you are able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect. But if you are not able, then do what you can. [3] Now concerning food, bear what you are able, but in any case keep strictly away from meat sacrificed to idols, for it involves the worship of dead gods.

7. Now concerning baptism, baptize as follows: after you have reviewed all these things, baptize “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” in running water (note: in Greek the word “running” also means “living”). [2] But if you have no running water, then baptize in some other water; and if you are not able to baptize in cold water, then do so in warm. [3] But if you have neither, then pour water on the head three times “in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit.” 4[And before the baptism, let the one baptizing and the one who is to be baptized fast, as well as any others who are able. Also, you must instruct the one who is to be baptized to fast for one or two days beforehand.

8. But do not let your fasts coincide with those of hypocrites. They fast on Monday and Thursday, so you must fast on Wednesday and Friday. [2] nor should you pray like the hypocrites. Instead, “pray just like this,” just as the Lord commanded in his Gospel:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our debt,

As we forgive our debtors;

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one;

For yours is the power and the glory forever.

[3] Pray like this three times a day.

9. Now concerning the Eucharist, give thanks as follows. [2] First, concerning the cup:

We give you thanks, our Father,

For the holy vine of David your servant,

Which you have made known to us

Through Jesus, your servant;

To you be the glory forever.

[3] And concerning the broken bread:

We give you thanks, our Father,

For the life and knowledge

Which you have made known to us

Through Jesus, your servant;

To you be glory forever.

[4] Just as this broken bread was scattered

upon the mountains and then was

gathered together and became one,

so may your church be gathered together

from the ends of the earth into your

kingdom;
for yours is the glory and the power
through Jesus Christ forever.

[5] But let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptized into the name of the Lord, for the Lord has also spoken concerning this: "Do not give what is holy to dogs."

10. And after you have had enough, give thanks as follows:

[2] We give you thanks, Holy Father,
for your holy name which you
have caused to dwell in our
hearts

and for the knowledge and faith and
immortality

which you have made known
to us

through Jesus your servant;
to you be the glory forever.

[3] you, almighty Master, created all
things for your

name's sake,

and gave food and drink to men to
enjoy,

that they might give you
thanks;

but to us you have graciously given
spiritual food and drink,
and eternal life through your servant.

[4] Above all we give thanks because you
are mighty;

to you be the glory forever.

[5] Remember you church, Lord,
to deliver it from all evil
and to make it perfect in your love;
and gather it, the one that has been

sanctified,
from the four winds into your
kingdom,

which you have prepared for it;

for yours is the power and the glory
forever.

[6] May grace come, and may this world
pass away.

Hosanna to the God of David.

If anyone is holy, let him come;

If anyone is not, let him repent.

Maranatha! Amen.

[7] But permit the prophets to give thanks
however they wish.

11. So, if anyone should come and teach
you all these things that have just been
mentioned above, welcome him. [2] But if
the teacher himself goes astray and
teaches a different teaching that
undermines all this, do not listen to him.
However, if his teaching contributes to
righteousness and knowledge of the Lord,
welcome him as you would the Lord.

[3] Now concerning the apostles and
prophets, deal with them as follows in
accordance with the rule of the gospel. [4]
Let every apostle who comes to you be
welcomed as if he were the Lord. [5] But
he is not to stay for more than one day,
unless there is need, in which case he may
stay another. But if he stays three days, he
is a false prophet. [6] And when the
apostle leaves, he is to take nothing
except bread until he finds his next
night's lodging. But if he asks for money,
he is a false prophet.

[7] Also, do not test or evaluate any
prophet who speaks in the spirit, for every
sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not
be forgiven. [8] However, not everyone
who speaks in the spirit is a prophet, but
only if he exhibits the lord's ways. By his

conduct, therefore, will the false prophet and the prophet be recognized. [9] Furthermore, any prophet who orders a meal in the spirit shall not partake of it; if he does, he is a false prophet. [10] If any prophet teaches the truth, yet does not practice what he teaches, he is a false prophet. [11] But any prophet proven to be genuine who does something with a view to portraying in a worldly manner the symbolic meaning of the church (provided that he does not teach you to do all that he himself does) is not to be judged by you, for his judgment is with God. Besides, the ancient prophets also acted in a similar manner. [12] But if anyone should say in the spirit, "Give me money," or anything else, do not listen to him. But if he tells you to give on behalf of others who are in need, let no one judge him.

12. Everyone "who comes in the name of the Lord" is to be welcomed. But then examine him, and you will find out—for you will have insight—what is true and what is false. [2] If the one who comes is merely passing through, assist him as much as you can. But he must not stay with you for more than two or, if necessary, three days. [3] However, if he wishes to settle among you and is a craftsman, let him work for his living. [4] But if he is not a craftsman, decide according to your own judgment how he shall live among you as a Christian, yet without being idle. [5] But if he does not wish to cooperate in this way, then he is trading on Christ. Beware of such people.

13. But every genuine prophet who wishes to settle among you "is worthy of his food." {2} Likewise, every genuine teacher is like "the worker, worthy of his food." [3] Take, therefore, all the firstfruits of the produce of the wine press and threshing floor, and of the cattle and sheep, and give these firstfruits to the prophets, for they are your high priests.

[4] But if you have no prophet, give them to the poor. [5] If you make bread, take the firstfruit and give in accordance with the commandment. [6] Similarly, when you open a jar of wine or oil, take the firstfruit and give it to the prophets. [7] As for money and clothes and any other possessions, take the "firstfruit" that seems right to you and give in accordance with the commandment.

14. On the Lord's own day gather together and break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure. [2] But let no one who has a quarrel with a companion join you until they have been reconciled, so that your sacrifice may not be defiled. [3] For this is the sacrifice concerning which the Lord said, "In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is marvelous among the nations." (see Malachi 1:11, 14)

15. Therefore appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men who are humble and not avaricious and true and approved, for they too carry out for you the ministry of the prophets and teachers. [2] You must not, therefore, despise them, for they are your honored men, along with the prophets and teachers.

[3] Furthermore, correct one another, not in anger but in peace, as you find in the Gospel; and if anyone wrongs his neighbor, let no one speak to him, nor let him hear a word from you, until he repents. [4] As for your prayers and acts of charity and all your actions, do them all just as you find it in the Gospel of our Lord.

16. "Watch" over your life: "do not let your lamps go out, and do not be unprepared, but be ready, for you do not

know the hour when our Lord is coming.” [2] Gather together frequently, seeking the things that benefit your souls, for all the time you have believed will be of no use to you if you are not found perfect in the last time. [3] For in the last days the false prophets and corrupters will abound, and the sheep will be turned into wolves, and love will be turned into hate. [4] For as lawlessness increases, they will hate and persecute and betray one another. And then the deceiver of the world will appear as a son of God and “will perform signs and wonders,” and the earth will be delivered into his hands, and he will commit abominations the likes of which have never happened before. [5] Then all humankind will come to the fiery test, and “many will fall away” and perish; but “those who endure” in their faith “will be saved” by the accursed one himself (*Jesus Christ, Galatians 3:13*). [6] And “then there will appear these signs” of the truth: first the sign of an opening in heaven, then the sign of the sound of a trumpet, and third, the resurrection of the dead – [7] but not of all; rather, as it has been said, “The Lord will come, and all his saints with him.” [8] Then the world “will see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven.”