

From the April 4, 2008, Issue

### ***Clement of Alexandria on the Gospel***

We're sometimes asked "Are you sure the adoption of humanity is the gospel? I've never heard it before." In that light we find it helpful to go back to the ancient Christians who saw the gospel in light of humanity's adoption into the Triune Life.

Around 200 A.D. Clement of Alexandria wrote about all humanity belonging to Jesus. Clement says that some know this and some do not, yet Christ is training and leading all of them. He points out that Jesus' providence can be found everywhere in our world and that he seeks to persuade people to believe in him but never compels them to do so. Here's what Clement wrote:

Wherefore also all people are His; some through knowledge, and others not yet so; and some as friends, some as faithful servants, some as servants merely. This is the Teacher, who trains the Gnostic by mysteries, and the believer by good hopes, and the hard of heart by corrective discipline through sensible operation. Thence His providence is in private, in public, and everywhere. And that He whom we call Saviour and Lord is the Son of God, the prophetic Scriptures explicitly prove. So the Lord of all, of Greeks and of Barbarians, persuades those who are willing. For He does not compel him who (through choosing and fulfilling, from Him, what pertains to laying hold of it the hope) is able to receive salvation from Him.

*Stromata*, Book 7, Chapter 2.