

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

YEAR B - SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on January 18, 2015

Let us look, my brethren, at the opening of our passage from 1st Corinthians: "All things are lawful to me, but not all things are beneficial." If there were ever any question as to whether or not we are subject to the old Law, this statement tells us clearly that we are not. There is, however, something of a caveat, which is: "Not all things are beneficial." So, what does our freedom benefit us? we might ask. But this is the wrong question. We should be asking ourselves, "What benefit can our liberty bring to our brothers and sisters in spiritual darkness?"

The Light of Gnosis that we have received, and continue to receive, is not something to be lorded over the less fortunate who remain in ignorance. In a couple of weeks we will be revisiting this concept in greater detail. But for now, let us look at our First Reading from the Apocryphon of James - that is, the Secret Book of James - which tells us: "Do not be proud because of the light that enlightens. Rather, act toward yourselves as I myself have toward you. I have put myself under a curse for you to save you."

You see, Christ had freedom from the beginning. He is the very source of the liberty we enjoy. By right, his place is with the Father. He tells us, "A father does not need a son, but it is the son who needs the father." Likewise, the Son has no need for us - there is nothing we can offer Him "in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." But we are in need of him. So if Christ, who is perfect and lacks nothing - for the Father has filled him with all - and who is further above us than we are above the tiniest mote of dust, has put away the awesome power of his divinity that we might have the opportunity of co-heirship to the Kingdom of Heaven, how much more should we put away our spiritual superiority for the sake of our brothers and sisters lost in the Forest of Errors?

We are not to hate our gnosis or the liberty of conscience it brings. But we are to wield our spiritual weapons with prudence and discernment. If our attainments are put on display, we are apt to appear haughty and condescending. These are characteristics that tear down. But our law is the Law of Agape, that charitable law that only lifts up. It is creative and life-affirming; nurturing and supportive. No action that tears down is Love. Neither is an action that only superficially builds up, an expression of Agape. Flattery is only self-serving and is really no different than insult. Similarly, we may seek to help others, but if all we are doing is performing a task for someone, when we could be instructing them in how to accomplish it for themselves, then we have really done nothing but to inflate our own ego. This is not to say that we should never help those who are in immediate need, but we must be aware that often seeming acts of charity may come from a place of selfishness and condescension rather than from the Heart. Let us pray, then, for spiritual discernment that we may be rightly guided and in turn help to rightly guide our fellow brethren.