

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, May 31, 2015*

YEAR B - TRINITY SUNDAY

Greetings! Today, being the Sunday after Pentecost, is Trinity Sunday. But, being the 31st of May, it is also the celebration of the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. For the sake of continuity, & so that we could finish our study of the Trimorphic Protennoia, we have used the readings for Trinity Sunday. But you should read on your own the scriptures for the Feast of the Visitation, which begin on page 415 of the Lectionary.

We see in our readings today the themes of spiritual rebirth & heirship to the Kingdom of God. The Scripture is clear that this rebirth is necessary in order to be reckoned to the Kingdom of God. We are told in the Gospel that, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, & that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And it is through this birth in the Spirit that we are made Children of God; or rather, that we are restored to our birthright, having, in the words of the Trimorphic Protennoia, "stripped of garments of ignorance & put on shining light."

So what does it mean, that "by the Spirit" we "put to death the practices of the body" that we may live? It is easy to see how such statements could lead one into a practice of extreme asceticism & loathing of all things material. But the law of Christ is not to loathe, but to love. But how are we to love the body, while at the same time putting to death the practices of the body? This enigma is more easily understood when we can better define our meaning of "love."

As we have discussed often, the "love" that Jesus instructs us in is Agape; not a mere fondness, nor a selfish attachment, nor a physiological craving, but a purifying & sanctifying love that is the perfect ideal or archetype for all lesser forms of love. In fact, it is listed by Valentinus as one of the Aeons emanated by Anthropos & Ekklesia, that last syzygy of the Ogdoad.

Anthropos, of course, means Man - or more appropriately, Humanity. And Ekklesia, of course, is the preexistent Church. Following the teachings of our ancient Father of the Gnosis, therefore, we learn the importance of the ecclesiastical life; that it is only in our perfect union with the Church that we may express the highest ideals to which man may attain.

Going back to our text from Romans, then, the "practices of the body" are not referring so much to just anything having to do with the body, but specifically those actions which are performed unconsciously or habitually by the body, without the guiding influence of the Will - that is, the higher Will which, like Agape, is given by Valentinus as one of the Aeons emanating from Anthropos & Ekklesia. So, we see here again how it is our participation with the Church that leads to right guidance.

Now, the opposite is also true. That is, by aligning ourselves & attuning ourselves with Faith, Hope, Love, Will, & all the other holy attributes of the Pleroma, we can align ourselves more closely with the Church - the one builds off of & feeds the other. In this we may work toward our eventual reintegration into the Kingdom of God.