

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, June 28, 2015*

YEAR B - PROPER 8

Hello, & good day to you all. Let's continue our examination of 2nd Corinthians. In our Epistle reading today, Paul says, "you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that through you he became poor though he was rich, that by his poverty you may become rich." This is referring to the Kenosis of Jesus Christ; that is, the pouring out, or emptying of himself of divine prerogative. This is a very interesting & profound concept when we stop to think about it, because it so mirrors our own condition - that of being an essentially divine entity, a pure spirit, clothed in body & soul. It implies that the very act of incarnating necessarily obscures the divine nature. But through Christ we also see that the divine can be roused from slumber to wakefulness & activity.

Since the Logos became fully human in the person of Jesus, putting away, suppressing his birthright as the embodiment of the fullness of God, we must look at his manifold acts & miracles not as miracles & supernatural acts of wonder, but as an example of the natural state of the fully awakened human. Jesus himself tells us as much, instructing us to do the things he has done, & more. This hints at the immense reservoir of divine power residing within each of us.

Now, there is the willing & there is the doing. Paul tells the Corinthians, & us, "just as there was the eagerness of willingness, there is also the completing of what you have." The will to do, without the act of doing, is as nothing - a seed that falls upon the rocks. If we receive every grace of Faith, Hope, Love, & Gnosis, but do nothing to express that grace in the world, then we have failed, for we have not done what Jesus has instructed us to do. If we reach the pinnacle of learning & insight, but are unable to teach others, or to somehow put those gifts to use for the betterment of our community, our neighbor, or society at large, then we prove ourselves utterly unworthy of those graces, & they will, in all likelihood, be stripped from us, leaving behind a shadowy image to serve as a reminder of our failure.

But don't despair! We are never commanded or expected to do that which is beyond our means. Paul continues, "For if the eagerness is already there, it is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have." In other words, no matter how large or small our share of grace, we must make the best use of what we have. We will not be judged according to what is beyond our means. But we are held accountable for how we utilize the resources available to us.

A lack of physical resources can sometimes be especially frustrating. And it is true that a wealth of material resources can be put to great use for the betterment of our fellow humans. But all of these things are as nothing without the divine power which makes them good. And it is this divine power, the Holy Spirit, which is available equally to all who would seek. We all have the ability to draw from this limitless source of Light & Love in order to do the Work of God. Even the smallest actions have wide-ranging effects when they are powered by the Holy Spirit. Whether it be our prayers, giving wise counsel, or just treating one another humanely & with respect, we are all able to accomplish the divine mission laid out for us by Jesus. And our judgment shall be according to how we have made use of what we're given.