

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Bruno II
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
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YEAR B - PROPER 13

Brethren, many today accuse Christians of being arrogant, pretentious, as well as elitists. They claim we have a holier-than-thou attitude which causes us to look down our noses at others outside of our tradition, and they use these criticisms to cause people to denounce and avoid our teachings, places of worship, and symbols.

In our first reading it says, "He gave them thought and understanding and mercy and salvation and the spirit of strength from the Father's infinity and sweetness." It goes on to say, "He became a way for those who strayed, gnosis for those who were ignorant, discovery for those who sought, support for those who tremble, purity for those who were defiled." No where here does it mention contempt, disdain, arrogance, or elitism.

As Christians, we aspire to be Christ-like. This means we model ourselves after Christ, and thus aspire to succor our brothers and sisters, not just fellow Christians but all men and women of the world. We do this by bringing gnosis, mercy, patience, strength of will, love, and understanding to the world.

In our second reading it says, "The gifts he gave were that some are apostled, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers for the equipping of saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ until we arrive at the unity of Faith and the Gnosis of the Son of God, at the initiated man, at the measure of the stature of the Pleroma of Christ." The confusion occurs when our opponents pay more attention to our titles than to our substance. We have saints, apostles, initiates, and the enlightened. While occasionally someone may forget the humility, meekness, & patience Christ showed, for the most part Christians around the world try to show that their faith, hope, and love is what sets our tradition separate from others.

Now is it arrogant to believe that your God is the One True God? Your Faith the One True Faith? If your belief is true, and your Spirit pure, then the answer is "of course not." Why call ourselves Christians, why follow the ways of Christ if we do not truly believe in God and His divine Word? However, knowing we follow the right Way does not give us the right to be disdainful or disrespectful of others and their traditions. We must understand that they too believe wholly in their faith. This is why it is important that we not only evangelize and spread the Word, but that we walk in the ways. Just as Christ was a living example of God, we too are charged with being living examples of Christ. Many will resist acknowledging the truth inherent in our scripture and ritual. They will devise counter-arguments and excuses, refusing to open their eyes to the Light of Christ. But if you walk the world as Christ did, becoming the living embodiment of the divine Christos, then they cannot but see the Truth inherent in you.

The way we live our lives should draw people to the Christian tradition, not push them away. You may not agree with someone's religion, politics, or personal philosophy, but you must be able to see past those disagreements and perceive the frail, fearful, fellow soul of a weary traveller of the world. Remember that they are searching, some consciously, some not, for the Truth, just as you once searched. Don't give them a reason to outright reject the Christian path, do as Christ did. Awaken their hunger, then show them the Bread of Life.