

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, September 27, 2015*

YEAR B - PROPER 21

Greetings Brethren! There is so much that we could talk about in today's readings, but of course we are limited to only a couple of those points. Our reading from James is very brief but contains some interesting & mysterious points. In addition to illustrating the practice of Holy Unction which, as made obvious in this passage, is not in any way restricted to the dying - that is, last rites, we find an intriguing allusion to Elijah and the mysterious number 3 1/2 that appears so often throughout scripture, sometimes in hidden or disguised ways. But we shall leave that topic for another time & place, for its exploration and proper treatment would require us to penetrate the scriptures far beyond our present readings or our limited time.

Let us look, then, at our Gospel reading from Mark and some of its lessons. Here we see Jesus telling John not to stop anyone who does great works in Jesus' name. He says, "whoever is not against us, is for us." Now, we're so accustomed to hearing, "if they're not with us, they're against us," but Jesus tells us the exact opposite. Do not let this subtly be lost on you, for it is not insignificant, in fact it makes all the difference in the world. I am reminded of the Star Wars saga, when a newly-turned Darth Vader tells Obi Wan that if he is not with him, he is against him. Obi Wan replies something to the effect that only a Sith sees things in black & white, in absolutes. And yet so many of our so-called Christian brothers & sisters apply exactly this principle, ready to denounce anyone & everyone who does not share their peculiar interpretation of scriptures, denouncing other Christians as false, misled, deceitful, & outright evil. I do not mean to partray ourselves as victims, but really now, just look at how we Gnostics are treated by the orthodoxy. We are lucky if we can escape as being dismissed & ignored. This flies right in the face of the very words of Jesus.

Now, that is not to say that we should accept or turn a blind eye to those who do evil works & claim to do the work of Jesus. But this is not a difficult distinction to make. If one is speaking hatefully toward others, or committing acts of violence, then they are doing the works of the demiurge - or worse. But if they are healing the sick, feeding & clothing the poor, praising God in all things - that is the work of Jesus, that one may wear the name "Christian" unhyprocritically.

Lastly, I want to touch just briefly upon the end of this Gospel reading: "For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the Salt loses its Saltiness, with what will you season it? Have Salt in yourselves, & be at peace with one another." This statement is elucidated somewhat by the alchemist Von Welling, who tells us that Christ is, "himself the divine eternal Salt...eternally begotten & born from the divine fire of love for our eternal salvation. Unless we really & truly partake of this salt, we can never withstand either in this world or the next, the cleansing fire of his majesty." So, if Salt is Christ himself, then "saltiness" is the influence of the power of Christ upon something. So, in order to see Christ in all things, in order to see His influence spread throughout the cosmos, we must have Christ within ourselves, that through us His Power may be made manifested at all times & towards all things.