

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, February 5, 2017*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Greetings brethren and peace. Saint Paul is often seen to be down-playing the significance of knowledge, wisdom, and intellect. Because of this he has sometimes been depicted as an enemy of gnosis, and the greatest proponent of blind faith. Now, we've discussed Paul enough to demonstrate that this is simply not the case. But let us consider this again in light of today's Epistle reading.

Paul tells the Corinthians, "my speech and my proclamation were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstrations of Spirit and power, that your faith may not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." This statement really sums up Paul's philosophy on the matter. Words can be twisted; clever arguments using faulty logic or playing to fears or desire of the people may corrupt minds, or make them distrustful of any supposed "prophets" coming in the name of the Lord. But works of power are another thing entirely. A healing, or a vision, or some other sensible manifestation of power is not as easy to brush aside as an ingenious argument. Of course, a manifestation of power does not guarantee that it is divine. The prophets of the demiurge often preferred displays of raw power over carefully worded syllogisms.

The power of the word, it is true, is significant; but it is not accessible to everybody equally. Manifestations of power, however, may be appreciated by scholar and layman alike. This was very much the approach of our venerated master of the past, Martinès de Pasqually. Pasqually did not try to convince his disciples through reasoned arguments, nor through any scare tactics of hellfire. He simply showed them the power that he was able to evoke. Many who have attended our masses, and even more so among the initiates of our inner ranks have experienced first-hand phenomena very similar to the "passes" of Pasqually. Indeed, there are faithful all over the world that have been witness to manifestations much greater still.

But Paul, too, acknowledges the importance of wisdom. He says that, "we speak wisdom among the initiated, yet not a wisdom of this aeon, nor of the archons of this aeon...but we speak God's wisdom in a hidden Mystery..." In other words, it is only the initiate who may discern between true wisdom and the false so-called wisdom of the archons and man. But his claim to "speak God's wisdom in a hidden Mystery" is the very essence of the mystery religion. That is, wisdom is communicated to the initiate through myth, symbol, and ritual.

The Mystery Tradition, as represented by Paul, and by Pasqually, and by all those in-between them, and before them, and after them, up to the present day, have followed this pattern. All of the discourses of instruction, including this very homily, is not intended to convince anyone of anything, but rather to help explain to the minds of the initiates what they have already objectively and subjectively experienced.