



61st Year

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DEADENING IN CHRIST AND LIFE IN CHRIST

Life in Christ is not given but is obtained with faith. And faith does not act without divine illumination. Both presuppose struggling and discretion. Discretion about how faith is illumined. And struggling which leads to the deadening of the secular way of life. The Apostle Paul is speaking to us about these truths today.

The way of divine illumination

The light of faith enlightens the soul in two ways: Initially, with the revelation of those divine and saving meanings which lead us to the knowledge of the true God. And second, with the illumination of the presence of Christ Himself, the hypostatic illumination. Symeon Metaphrastes discerns this in the words of the Ap. Paul: "God...who shone in our hearts and enlightened us to know His glory in the person of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). With the light of faith we don't only draw spiritual meanings about God, but we also accept the visitation of God Himself with the light of the person of Christ.

Christ, as the spiritual sun, writes Saint Gregory the Theologian, greatly shines with divine light and constantly and ceaselessly illuminates the soul with the principles of faith so that it makes them also spiritual suns lit up by another. And through this light it leads them to the light of the knowledge of God the Father. Because He who is enlightened and sees the godhead of Christ is enlightened and sees the godhead of the Father also, just as "he who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9) in other words, the light of the Gospel of Christ leads to the understanding of the glory of God the Father. And they are mirrored in the grace and light of the Holy Spirit which proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son of God. And we have the full enlightenment of the three divine persons of the Holy Trinity in the area of the Church. This enlightenment is the treasure of our faith.

The preservation of the treasure of faith

In order for this divine illumination of knowledge of the true God to be preserved in our vulnerable and mortal body and in our sensitive and easily irritable soul we need to live the experience of deadening in Christ. What does this mean?

The Apostle gives us the examples from his own apostolic life and conduct: 1. The afflictions of life, whereas according to our human train of thought embitter us, poison our soul's world, nevertheless if we preserve with the power of faith our hope in God intact, the afflictions do not overpower us. Godly patience prevails which looks to a favorable end in God, like the example of the patience of Job. 2. If we end up in conditions that are impassable that panic not overtake us so that with prayer God indicates to us safe outlets. 3. If we undergo persecutions because we wish to live with piety, God will not abandon us, but will become our champion and helper. 4. And if during the spiritual struggle we feel that we are yielding from the waves of temptations and difficulties of this life, God will extend "a helping divine hand" and will raise us up in an amazing manner, which we cannot conceive of.

In other words, whereas we have the choice to react like a natural person and in the afflictions to juxtapose anger and wrath, in the impasses, despairing reactions and in difficulties and hitches, defeatism and cowardice, we choose a way of reacting in Christ. Because we do not want to lose the light of Christ, deadening our passionate natural reactions for His sake. And He seeing our dedication and our sacrifices because we believe and hope in Him, rewards us with life in Christ. He reveals to us the wealth of His grace, of knowledge and of His wisdom and grants us to live the experience of life in Christ, which is in essence the life from the dead, Resurrection.

What we will choose

After these ascertainments we are called in the world where we are living to make the correct choices as faithful Christians and members of the Church.

Do we want to increase and to certify the eternal values which our faith in Christ contains? Then we ought to imitate the Apostle Paul but also all the saints of our Church who deadened the sinful passions, obeying the teaching of the Gospel and allowed the grace of God to cultivate Christ inside them. They came to know inside them the miracle of reformation, they felt the grace of Christ abounding so that the feeling of gratitude and thanksgiving might increase in them to the God of mercy and compassions, the God of wisdom and of knowledge, the God who enlightened in the darkness of the ignorance of their soul, the light of faith and led them to sanctification and to their theosis.

If again we choose the demands of the old man and allow our passionate nature to direct us, we face the inexorable laws of nature and the results of every sin. The afflictions of life, the temptations and the trials will put us down, will frustrate us and we will not have support. In other words, instead of deadening our passions in order for the grace of Christ to live inside us, we will deaden our soul and will taste the bitterness of spiritual death but also of natural death without the hope of Resurrection.

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