



61st Year

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THE FREEDOM OF THE HUMAN AND DIVINE WORD

God with his creative word said “let us make man in our image...” and man was created free, with free will and word, as Saint John Damascene also interprets the “in the image denotes the noetic and free will”. In other words, God the Word gave the word to man so that man can communicate with God and God with man. For man to know God who made him with his final goal being to unite with Him.

The freedom of the human word

Man’s right to think and express himself freely, is associated with his being itself, with his life, but also with his divine destination. As Saint Nicholas Cabasilas also mentions, if a man loses his freedom he also loses his own self. Because force and violence prevent a natural way of life but also the exercise of virtue and approaching God (Gregory Palamas).

Such force unfortunately the young slave girl who was mentioned in the text of the Acts was also undergoing. The cause was the submission of the soothsaying spirit but also its use by wicked people. Her mind had been overcome by the delusion of the devil and had become an obedient instrument of his and offered much profit to her masters.

The human mind, in order to have the ease of free thought and word, must be delivered from the influence of wicked spirits, from passions and from force and violence. And for this reason it has great need of the enlightenment and grace of the word of God, so that it enjoys the air of spiritual freedom.

The freedom of the divine word

From the moment when God became man, the Son and Word of God “became flesh”, the divine word was revealed with the teaching of the Gospel of the Lord. A teaching which the Apostles spread with their preaching. The divine word is stronger than the human word because it enlightens, engraces, works miracles, teaches the knowledge of God and leads to spiritual freedom in Christ, which is the divine destination of man.

This word which God inspired to the ministers of the Gospel, the enemies of the truth tried many times to prevent it, like the Jewish establishment of the time, the people of the idols, the secular authority of the Roman emperors. But they toiled in vain.

The Apostles many times were imprisoned, were deprived of their freedom by force so that they would stop preaching the word of God, and to reveal with living miracles the majesty of His glory. However God showed that no one is able to defeat His divine will.

As the text of the Acts mentions, a young girl was being deceived by a diabolical spirit of soothsaying, she was shouting for everyone to hear that the Apostles are messengers from God in order to teach the way of salvation to people (Acts 16:17). Obviously so that the delusion of the devil could be hidden behind the truth.

The Apostle Paul scolded the wicked spirit in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:18). And the wicked spirit immediately left from within the young girl. In other words, he gave again to the unfortunate slave girl her freedom to think and to speak without being forced by the devil. And the power of the divine word was revealed.

The word of God is not bound

Despite this, those who were taking advantage of the soothsaying of the young woman, managed to convince the authorities with false accusations, that with their teaching the Apostles were trying to overturn the established Roman customs of the inhabitants of the area.

The authorities ordered them to be punished with whipping and they imprisoned them in the inner cells of the prison, binding their feet so that they could not escape in any case. Such was the rage of the devil, whose deception the Apostles revealed, so that he inspired the people of darkness to do everything in order to deprive them of the freedom of preaching.

However the word of God cannot be bound by any power, since “the word of God is not bound” (2 Tim. 2:9). And a wondrous and strange thing occurred. While the Apostles were hymning the Lord in the prison, a big earthquake occurred and the foundations of the prison were shaken and all the doors of the cells opened and whoever was bound was freed. This event became cause for even the prison guard to believe and be baptized together with his whole family.

This point shows openly that no one can resist or overturn the spreading of the word of the Gospel. At times atheistic estates, tyrannical authorities or even fanatic religions tried to be placed as an obstacle to the teaching of the Lord. However the Lord showed forth martyrs, confessors, missionaries and fervent preachers. He even enlightened rulers but also persecutors with the power and the wisdom of the divine word and made the Church firm. The believers became more, and the true knowledge was spread to the whole world.

Because the Lord assured us. “Know ye the truth and the truth shall set you free” (Jn. 8:32). Learn the truth of God and that has the power to grant you spiritual freedom.

Spiritual freedom in our age

The freedom of the spirit in our age is understood as the free movement of ideas and the freedom of expression. However in this type of spiritual freedom ideas, thoughts, and deceptions pervert the truth, which darken the light of faith, are projected, and transferred. They become cause for many naïve people to be swayed into collective impasses and false hopes of nonexistent paradises.

The Church, on the contrary, utilizes the freedom of the human word, and thought to enlighten man in the truth of Christ. The Word of God is He who enlightens the mind and heart and leads man to understand God and his own existence.