



61st Year

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THE WORD OF GOD AND MAN'S JUSTIFICATION

Man's justification is a chief spiritual event which nevertheless does not show to physical eyes, nor is it defined with human logic. It is an event which surpasses natural laws. It is a gift of God through Jesus Christ and a bath of regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5 – 6). It is a second birth, a new creation according to Saint Nicodemos, the spiritual rebirth of man without crushing, without death. He who was sacrificed for us is Christ. Our justification from sin and our salvation is based on His own divine mercy, so that "justified by his grace" we become inheritors of eternal life.

The trustworthiness of the word of faith

This great truth of the Church about our justification in Christ cannot be certified except only with the power of faith. And the power of faith is based on the trustworthiness of the preaching of the Apostles. "The word is faithful" as St. Paul characteristically writes to his disciple Titus. In other words, his apostolic teaching about our salvation from Christ is true mainly for two reasons:

1) Because the apostles had direct experience of the presence and the grace of Christ. They did not say their own words, but words inspired by God the Father and by his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and enlightened by the grace of the Holy Spirit. They are divine meanings which interpret the justification of the human race from the captivity of sin. They express the promise which the "infallible God" gave to people after the fall of the first-created humans, in other words, the mission of Christ in the world.

2) The good works of the apostles are one more infallible witness of the genuineness of their preaching. If they were not from God they would not have convinced the impious people to be led to the piety of faith. Miracles and signs which caused wonder would not have followed: healing the sick, expelling the demons, salvation from the dangers of persecutions, imprisonments and death. But also their apostolic conduct was an example to be imitated, blameless and selfless. They were distinguished by chastity, humility, meekness, asceticalness, kindness and love for neighbor.

So for this reason, the Apostle Paul advises the apostle Titus to certify the preaching of salvation with works of Christian virtue: “preside in good works” (Tit. 3:8). Because these strengthen faith in God and make the oral teaching convincing. The word of the Gospel is not a cause for irresponsible and foolish conversations without result. It is a serious word and aims at the spiritual restoration of man, at the revelation of the true God and of His love for people. Whoever does not approach the word of God with the knowledge of truth and does not have the disposition to accept it in their soul, is weaving the condemnation of their own self on their own. And no matter how much time has been given them in the effort to convince them it is vain, as they are not utilizing the opportunities which God is giving them.

The acceptance of the divine word in our age

In the age we are living, nothing is a given anymore. Everything is being reconsidered and reexamined. This is not necessarily negative for the preaching of the Gospel, for the event of justification and salvation in Christ. Although it is not easy for a theological truth to become believed, no matter how great it is, nevertheless the personal experience of those who are preaching it and confessing it draws the interest of whoever is listening to it. Today more so applies what you are living and believing than what you are saying. Our personal, experiential relationship with the truth which Christ revealed and the Church teaches convinces more than the oral presentation of the divine truths. The phrase is very correct “we believe and therefore we also speak” (2 Cor. 4:13). First we believe and live the truth and subsequently we confess it in order to convince everyone who has a good disposition.

Archim. Ch. N.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the divine Scripture the kingdom of the heavens is called the kingdom of God. The angel, when he brings the heavenly message to the Virgin Mary, associates this kingdom with the divine person of Jesus Christ and says that it is unending. “And of his kingdom there shall be no end”. Jesus Christ, beginning his work, preaches the coming of the kingdom of the heavens. “The kingdom of the heavens has arrived”.

So what is it and what is the kingdom of God? It is the unconfused unity and communion of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, and by extension the communion of humans, and of these as persons. Only persons, as free beings, are able to make communion, because what we call communion is not a crafted gathering of individuals, but a free relationship and unity of persons. These persons are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the one God in heaven and humans on earth. Here we must also add the angels, because the angels also are spiritual personal beings. So the communion of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, of God, of humans and of the angels is the kingdom of God. Not a whatsoever political state of a worldly ruling type, but a free communion of persons. This is the Church. The eucharistic gathering of the Church is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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