

life of men, Christ, who trampled upon death and granted eternal life to men. So for this reason also, the Apostle Paul writes: "We are constantly exposing ourselves to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal body" (2 Cor. 4:10).

Human self confidence and trust in Christ

We live in an age where the self confidence of man is one-sidedly cultivated, without the contribution of God. However, in the course of life man sees that for all the things that he was previously certain, he is not certain now. Unexpected difficulties, insurmountable failures, illnesses, or deaths. Such experiences teach that man is not "superman", he is a creation and not God. Consequently, he needs divine help to surpass the difficulties which come unexpectedly in life, and also to endure the vanity of human efforts without losing his hope in the future.

Who therefore can preserve such hope, who can secure certainty in the future? An unanswered question there where faith illumines, there where the ignorance of the power of God exists. The Church which so doubted by many people, strangely for them, has the answer in her. And the answer lies in the words of the Apostle: "I believed therefore I also spoke", because, in other words, I believed, I have the courage both to speak, to hope, to live the truth of God, to expect that "Jesus who resurrected will also resurrect us".

Archim. Ch. N.



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"HUMAN WEAKNESS AND THE POWER OF GOD"

Undoubtedly man without the power of faith is spiritually vulnerable and weak. Because beneath the weight of the temptations he cannot endure and yields. When however he accepts from God, who shone in our heart, the light of faith, he is strengthened spiritually and his strength of soul and endurance increases.

The illuminating power of faith

Christ is the spiritual sun "the true light which shines forth" (Gregory of Nyssa), he, in other words, who sends the true light of faith. And "he no longer hides in the settings", in other words he never sets, but constantly shines in the souls of the believers. Simultaneously he imparts his divine strength, which never lessens, never weakens. And the believer's soul is strengthened, grows huge spiritually and endures together with the body more than what a natural person can endure. The Apostle Paul brings as an example of this ascertainment the struggle which he put forth in his apostolic work, so as to impart under the various adversities and insurmountable difficulties the faith in Christ and his Gospel.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2013 3RD SUNDAY OF LUKE,

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas, Eroteis the Martyr of Cappadocia, Makarios the Righteous of Chios

Plagal of the Second Tone, Fourth Eothinon, -**Epistle** Second

Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15, **Gospel** Luke 7:11-16

NEXT SUNDAY October 13 Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council 4th Sunday of Luke

Epistle St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15, **Gospel** Luke 8:5-15

SUNDAY'S EPISTLE **St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15**

Brethren, it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believed, and so we speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Whereas he and his colleagues were receiving pressures which caused them grief, they were truly "grieved", however, despite these things these afflictions did not put them down, did not lead them to weakness and impasses, they were "not distressed". Whereas they were undergoing persecutions for the confession of faith, they were "being persecuted", God was together with them and did not abandon them, "they were not abandoned". And whereas from the reaction of the idolaters, the unbelievers and the impious, they reached a point of feeling fallen, lost, in other words, "put down," nevertheless the power of God rejuvenated them, they felt "not lost".

From the above ascertainments "the excess of the power of God" shows clearly, and strengthens the apostles in their work so that they do not give up, do not get frustrated, do not yield from the difficulties. It alters the weakness into strength, the obstacle into a safe outlet, and abandonment into divine support. And it enlightens them and strengthens them so that they bring their ministry to fruition.

The cross and the resurrection of Christ a source of strength

In the light of faith is contained both the strength of the cross as well as the power of the resurrection. The cross is the invincible trophy against sin and the devil, while the Resurrection is the triumph against corruption and death. In both events the unique protagonist is Jesus Christ.

Whoever, thanks to faith in the Son of God, forbears trials, he partakes in his crucifactory death, because he is cocrucified with him, the train of thought of the world and of sin is deadened in him. So for this reason also the Apostle says that "we constantly are suffering physically because we are partaking in the death of Jesus". This participation gives the capability for the believer to participate also in the Resurrection of the Lord. Because after the crucifactory sacrifice the glory of the Resurrection followed. Whoever, in other words, lived the grace of the cross, he will also live the grace of the Resurrection.

Being crucified is not a weakness, but a confession of faith and drawing of inexhaustible divine strength. Because the strength of the godhead of Jesus appeared on the one hand on the cross where he endured and washed away the sins of people, on the other hand in the Resurrection when hades did not endure the presence of the godhead. It was defeated by the