

Justification in Christ as eternal life

This truth the Apostle Paul presents as a real experience saying this: "While it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me". That he believed in Christ and was crucified together with Him, both in the mystery of holy Baptism as also in his personal life, submitting his will to the will of God, granted him to live in the grace of the Lord's justification and for his whole life to be identified by grace with the life of Christ. For the life of Christ to also be becoming his own life.

This experience is lived "in the Holy Spirit", because in the Son of God the grace of the Comforter rests. And whoever lives in the grace of the Comforter participates in the eternity and blessedness of God. The life which the Apostle lives with his body, he no longer lives according to the vanity of the fleshly desires and of the passions, but according to the enlightenment and the power of faith in the Son of God, Christ. Because He showed his true love to him and handed himself over to the Cross for the sake of his salvation and justification, as also of all those who believed in Christ.

Whatever the Ap. Paul lived as experience also is the experience of every Christian in the body of the Church. Because there the bloodless sacrifice of Christ is performed which saves and justifies the believers before God.

Archim. Ch. N.

SUNDAY November 17 9th Sunday of Luke Gregory the Wonderworker & Bishop of Neo-Caesarea, Gennadios I, Patriarch of Constantinople.

Tone Four, Tenth Eothinon, -Epistle St.Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20, Gospel Luke 12:16-21

NEXT SUNDAY November 24 13th Sunday of Luke, Epistle Galatians 6:11-18 Gospel Luke 18:18-27



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"OUR JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD"

Man's justification before God differs from justification in relationships between people. Neither human laws, which are necessary for the proper functioning of society, but neither can human virtues, which cultivate the character and formulate man's personality, are able to justify us before God. The Apostle Paul stresses this, referring to the standard regulations of the Mosaic Law, "that man is not justified by the works of the law". In other words, man is not justified before God by the keeping of the regulations of the law, who were misinterpreting these commandments of God also which were given to Moses.

Faith in Christ justifies man

Because the justice of God differs very much from the justice of men, the Apostle Paul tells us that man is justified before God "through faith in Jesus Christ". In other words, he refers our justification to the person of Christ. Our attitude, our position before Christ is that which defines our relationship with God. The Lord's phrase "who do people say that I am",

SUNDAY'S EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-30

BRETHREN, you know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

is definitive for our justification. If Jesus is perceived as a spiritual teacher, a teacher of morality or a prophet or as a social reformer this doesn't grant justification to the conscience and to the whole existence of man.

We must believe that Christ is God, the Son of God, as is confessed through the mouth of the Apostle Peter and the Apostle Phillip in the Gospel. This is what Paul also means saying that "we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we can be justified". As the faith of Abraham in the true God was considered righteousness, in other words, it justified the Patriarch before God, in a similar manner our faith in Christ justifies us before God.

The cross of Christ as a seal of righteousness

To the question of why only Christ justifies each person before God the Apostle answers: "I am crucified to Christ". And as Saint Dionysios the Aeropagite interprets, "as Christ was crucified for me, thus I also mutually am crucified to Christ"

". In other words, the epicenter of man's justification is the Cross of the Lord, his crucifictional sacrifice. There the injustice of sin was judged and in its place divine righteousness shone. Upon the Cross new "measures" were created which define the meaning of righteousness.

The thief's confession "remember me o Lord" abolished the up till then perception concerning justice. Because neither the morality of the thief counted, nor of course his condemnation. That which counted and covered the iniquitous lifestyle of the thief in the course of his life was the recognition of Christ as Son of God and the value of his crucifactory sacrifice. Which, even though unjust, became however an action of righteousness and a mystery of salvation on the part of God. And the faith in Christ not only justified the thief, but also made him an inhabitant of the kingdom of God: "Today you shall be with me in paradise".

So for this reason also, the Apostle justifies why he was crucified together with Christ. "To live God". The recognition of Christ as God and his participation in his sacrifice upon the Cross justifies and enlivens man "in Christ". It covers every thirst for justification, every hope of life, it extends forward the temporality of life into the eternity of the grace of God. It literally changes the whole existential hypostasis of man.