

### First Sunday of Luke & 2 Cor. 6:16-18, 7:1

201. If Peter had not failed to catch anything during the night's fishing (cf. **Luke 5:5**), he would not have caught anything during the day. And if Paul had not suffered physical blindness (cf. Acts 9:8), he would not have been given spiritual sight. And if Stephen had not been slandered as a blasphemer, he would not have seen the heavens opened and have looked on God (cf. Acts 6:15; 7:56).

*[V1] 143 St. Mark the Ascetic On Those who Think that They are Made Righteous by Works Two Hundred and Twenty-Six Texts*

Such persistence is obviously impossible without great faith. Anyone who looks into the matter will see that humility is always united with faith in Christ, and the two increase together. When in the beginning Peter caught a great multitude of fish in his nets at Christ's command, and believed completely, he said to Him, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:4-8). ...So only believers have humility, and only those who are humble have faith.

St. Gregory Palamas Homily 43

What does the Lord do? Since Peter has shown that he has not lost his love for Him and has now acquired humility as well, He openly fulfills the promise made long before and tells him, "feed my lambs" (John 21:15). When He was referring to the company of believers as a building, He promised to make Peter the foundation stone, saying "thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). On the other hand, when He was talking in terms of fishing, He made a fisher of men with the words, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:10). ... It is clear from this that the Lord's desire for us to be saved is so great, that He asks of those who love Him only one thing: to lead us to the pasture and fold of salvation. St. Gregory Palamas Homily 28

69. 'God does not want us to be lying idly on our backs; therefore He does not effect everything Himself. Nor does He want us to be boastful; therefore He did not give us everything. But having taken away from each of the two alternatives what is harmful, He has left us what is for our good.' Truly does the psalmist say: 'Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain' (Ps. 127:1). For it is impossible to tread on the asp and basilisk and trample on the lion and dragon' (Ps. 91:13. LXX), unless you have first cleansed yourself as far as you can, and have

been strengthened by Him who said to the apostles: 'See, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the enemy's power' (Luke 10:19). It is on this account that we have been commanded to entreat the Master not to 'lead us into temptation, but to deliver us from the evil one' (Matt. 6:13). For if we are not delivered from 'the fiery arrows of the evil one' (Eph. 6:16) through the power and help of Christ, and found worthy of attaining dispassion, we are laboring in vain, thinking that through our own powers or efforts we shall accomplish something. Therefore, he who wishes 'to stand against the wiles of the devil' (Eph. 6:11) and render them ineffectual, and to share in the divine glory, ought day and night to seek God's help and divine succor with tears and sighs, with insatiable longing and fire in his soul. He who wishes to share in this glory purges his soul of all worldly pleasures and of hostile passions and desires. It is of such souls that God Speaks when He says: 'I will dwell in them' (**2 Cor. 6:16**). And the Lord said to His disciples: 'if a man loves Me, he will keep My commandments; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and take up Our abode with him' (John 14:23).

*[V2] 29 St Theodoros the Great Ascetic A Century of Spiritual Texts*

To speak of love is to dare to speak of God; for, according to St John the Theologian, 'God is love; and he who dwells in love dwells in God' (1 John 4:16). And the astonishing thing is that this chief of all the virtues is a natural virtue. Thus, in the Law, it is given pride of place: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might' (Deut. 6:5). When I heard the words 'with all your soul' I was astounded, and no longer needed to hear the rest. For 'with all your soul' means with the intelligent, incensive and desiring powers of the soul, because it is of these three powers that the soul is composed. Thus the intellect should think at all times about divine matters, while desire should long constantly and entirely, as the Law says, for God alone and never for anything else; and the incensive power should actively oppose only what obstructs this longing, and nothing else. St John, consequently, was right in saying that God is love. If God sees that, as He commanded, these three powers of the soul aspire to Him alone, then, since He is good. He will necessarily not only love that soul, but through the inspiration of the Spirit will dwell and move within it (**cf. 2 Cor. 6:16**; Lev. 26:12); and the body, though reluctant and unwilling - for it lacks intelligence - will end by submitting to the intelligence, while the flesh will no longer rise in protest against the Spirit, as St Paul puts it (cf. Gal. 5:17). Just as the sun and moon, at the command of God, travel through the heavens in order to light the world, even though they are soul-less, so the body, at the behest of the soul, will perform works of light.

*[V3] 254 St Peter of Damaskos Book II Twenty-Four Discourses XV Love*

120. Let everyone call his own soul to account, examining it and testing it to see to what it is attached; and should he find that his heart does not conform to God's laws, let him try with all his strength to keep not only the body but also the intellect free from corruption and involvement with evil thoughts - if, that is to say, he wishes God in His purity to take up His dwelling within him according to His promise. For God has promised to dwell within souls that are pure and devoted to what is beautiful and good (cf. **2 Cor. 6:16**).

*[V3] 338 St Symeon Metaphrastis Paraphrase of the Homilies of St Makarios of Egypt VI The Freedom of the Intellect*

74. Through holy baptism we are granted remission of our sins, are freed from the ancient curse, and are sanctified by the presence of the Holy Spirit. But we do not as yet receive the perfection of grace, as described in the words of Scripture, 'I will dwell in them, and move in them' (**2 Cor. 6:16**); for that is true only of those who are steadfast in faith and have demonstrated this through what they do. If after we have been baptized we gravitate towards evil and foul actions, we lose the sanctification of baptism completely. But through repentance, confession and tears we receive a corresponding remission of our former sins and, in this way, sanctification accompanied by the grace of God.

*[V4] 40 St Symeon the New Theologian One Hundred and Fifty-Three Practical and Theological Texts*

1. Brother, do you not recall St Paul's statements, 'Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within us' (cf. 1 Cor. 6:19), and, 'We are the house of God' (cf. Heb. 3:6), as God Himself confirms when He says, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God' (Lev. 26:12; **2 Cor. 6:16**)? Since, then, the body is God's dwelling-place, what sane person would object to his intellect dwelling in it? And how was it that God established the intellect in the body to start with? Did He do so wrongly? These are the things we should say to the heretics, to those who declare that the body is evil and created by the devil. But we regard it as evil for the intellect to be caught up in material thoughts, not for it to be in the body, for the body is not evil.

*[V4] 332 St Gregory Palamas In Defense of Those who Devoutly Practice a Life of Stillness*

