

6th Sunday of Luke, Galatians 2: 16-20

74. He who yokes the practice of the virtues to spiritual knowledge is a skillful farmer, watering the fields of his soul from two pure springs. For the spring of spiritual knowledge raises the immature soul to the contemplation of higher realities; while the spring of ascetic practice mortifies our earthly members: ‘unchastity, uncleanness, passion, evil desire’ (Col. 3:5). Once these are dead, the virtues come into flower and bear the fruits of the Spirit: ‘love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control’ (Gal. 5:22-23). And then this prudent farmer, having ‘crucified the flesh together with the passions and desires’ (Gal. 5:24), will say together with St Paul: ‘I no longer live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live ... I live through faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me’ (**Gal. 2:20**).

[V2] 30 St Theodoros the Great Ascetic A Century of Spiritual Texts

92. The kingdom of God the Father is present in all believers in potentiality; it is present in actuality in those who, after totally expelling all natural life of soul and body from their inner state, have attained the life of the Spirit alone and are able to say, ‘I no longer live, but Christ lives in me’ (**Gal. 2:20**).

[V2] 161 St. Maximus the Confessor Two Hundred Texts on Theology and the Incarnate Dispensation of the Son of God

59. The holy Gospel teaches men to reject life according to the flesh and to embrace life according to the Spirit. I am speaking of those who are always dying to what is human - I mean human life in the flesh according to this present age - and living for God in the Spirit alone, after the example of St Paul and his followers. They do not in any way live their own life but have Christ living in them in the soul alone (**cf. Gal. 2:20**). Those, then, who in this age are truly dead to the flesh can be distinguished in this way: even though they suffer much affliction, torment, distress and persecution, and experience innumerable forms of trial and temptation, nevertheless they bear everything with joy.

[V2] 177 St. Maximus the Confessor Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy and Virtue and Vice first Century

85. The divine erotic force also produces ecstasy, compelling those who love to belong not to themselves but to those whom they love. This is shown by superior beings through their care of inferiors, by those of equal dignity through their mutual union, and by lower beings

through their divine conversion towards those that are highest in rank. It was in consequence of this that St Paul, possessed as he was by this divine erotic force and partaking of its ecstatic power, was inspired to say: 'I no longer live, but Christ lives in me' (**Gal. 2:20**). He uttered these words as a true lover and, as he himself says, as one who has gone out from himself to God (cf. 2 Cor. 5:13), not living his own life but that of the beloved, because of his fervent love for Him.

[V2] 181 St. Maximus the Confessor Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy and Virtue and Vice Fifth Century

32. After fasting until late in the day, do not eat your fill, lest in so doing you build up again what you have pulled down (**cf. Gal. 2:18**).

[V2] 327 St Thalassios the Libyan On Love, Self-control and Life in Accordance with the Intellect Fourth Century

20. You who sacrifice God's flesh and share in it through holy communion should also be united to Him by dying the death that He died (cf. Rom. 6:5). As St Paul says (cf. **Gal. 2:20**), you should live, not for yourself, but for Him who was crucified and died on your behalf. If, dominated by passion, you live for the flesh and the world, prepare yourself for deathless punishment through death unless you resign of your own accord from your priesthood before you die. But many unworthy priests have been snatched away by sudden death and sent to the halls of judgment.

[V2] 363 St Theognostos On the Practice of the Virtues, Contemplation and the Priesthood

39. You will not be worthy of divine love unless you possess spiritual knowledge, or of spiritual knowledge unless you possess faith. I do not mean faith of a theoretical kind, but that which we acquire as a result of practicing the virtues. You will achieve true compunction only when through self-control and vigil, prayer and humility, you have withered the propensity to sensual pleasure congenital to the flesh and have been crucified with Christ (**cf. Gal. 2:19-20**), no longer living the life of the passions but living and walking in the Spirit, filled with the hope of heavenly glory.

[V2] 363 St Theognostos On the Practice of the Virtues, Contemplation and the Priesthood

16. A man still subject to physical impulses has not yet been crucified with Christ (cf. **Gal. 2:20**), and if he still drags natural thoughts along with him he has not yet been buried with Him. How then can he be raised up with Christ, to live in newness of life?

[V3] 49 Elias the Presbyter A Gnostic Anthology Part III

127. The energy of the passions-which is the worldly spirit of delusion, darkness and sin-fills the man in whom it dwells with concern for things of the flesh. The energy and power of the Spirit

of light, on the other hand, dwell in the saintly man, as St Paul indicates when he says: 'Do you seek a proof that Christ is speaking through me?' (2 Cor. 13:3); and: 'I no longer live, but Christ lives in me' (**Gal. 2:20**); and: 'Those of you who have been baptized in Christ have clothed yourselves in Christ' (Gal. 3:27). And Christ affirms the same when He says: 'I and My Father will come and make Our dwelling with him' (cf. John 14:23). To those who are found worthy of them these things happen, not unperceived or without manifesting their activity, but with power and truth. The Law with its implacable sentence first brought men to repentance, placing them under an unbearably heavy yoke without being able to hold out the least help. But what the Law cannot offer, the power of the Spirit can provide: 'For what the Law could not do because it was enfeebled through our fleshliness, God has done', says St Paul (Rom. 8:3). Since Christ's coming the door of grace has been opened to those who truly believe, and they have been given the power of God and the energy of the Holy Spirit.

[V3] 431 Symeon Metaphrastes Paraphrase of the Homilies of Makarios the Egyptian VI The Freedom of the Intellect

47. As you are a monk, such things may happen to you. If they do, you may still feel a great desire and eagerness for perfection, longing to fulfill all God's commandments and not wanting to err or sin even by uttering a single idle word (cf. Matt. 12:36), or to fall short of the saints of old in the practice of virtue, in spiritual knowledge and in contemplation. But then you may find yourself hampered by someone who sows tares of despondency. He tries to prevent you from climbing to such heights of holiness by discouraging you with various thoughts. For instance, he will tell you that it is impossible for you to be saved and to keep every single one of God's commandments while you live in this world. When this happens you should sit down in a solitary place by yourself, collect yourself, concentrate your thoughts and give good counsel to your soul, saying: 'Why, my soul, are you dejected, and why do you trouble me? Put your hope in God, for I will give thanks to Him; for my salvation lies not in my actions but in God (cf. Ps. 42:5). Who will be vindicated by actions done according to the law (**cf. Gal. 2:16**)? No living person will be vindicated before God (cf. Ps. 143:2). Yet by virtue of my faith in God I hope that in His ineffable mercy He will give me salvation. Get behind me, Satan (cf. Matt. 4:10; 16:23). I worship the Lord my God (cf. Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8) and serve Him from my youth; for He is able to save me simply through His mercy. Go away from me. The God who created me in His image and likeness will reduce you to impotence.

[V4] 34 St. Symeon the New Theologian One Hundred and Fifty-three Practical and Theological Texts

70. If carrying out the law does not make you pure in the sight of God (cf. **Gal. 2:16**), then neither will ascetic struggle and labor alone perfect you in God's sight. We do indeed receive our grounding in virtue and check the activity of the passions through ascetic practice; but we are not initiated into the fullness of Christ through that alone. What, then, brings us to perfection? An ingrained faith in God, the 'faith that makes real the things for which we hope' (Heb. 11:1), the faith whereby Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain and was commended as righteous (cf. Heb. 11:4), and whereby Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out and sojourn in the promised land (cf. Heb. 11:8). It is such faith that fills those assiduous in the search for truth with great aspiration for the exalted gifts of God, and leads them to the spiritual knowledge of created beings; and it pours into their hearts the inexhaustible treasures of the Spirit, enabling them to bring thence new and old mysteries of God (cf. Matt. 13:52) and to reveal them to the needy. He who is blessed with such faith is initiated by love into the knowledge of God, and has entered into God's rest, having ceased from all his labors as God did from His (cf. Heb. 4:10).

{V4} 162 Nikitas Stithatos On Spiritual Knowledge, Love and Perfection of Living – One Hundred Texts

3. Isaiah the Solitary is one of many who affirm that when praying you have to restrain your breath. Another author says that you have to control your uncontrollable intellect, impelled and dispersed as it is by the satanic power which seizes hold of your lax soul because of your negligence after baptism, bringing with it other spirits even more evil than itself and thus making your soul's state worse than it was originally (cf. Matt. 12:45). Another writer says that in a monk mindfulness of God ought to take the place of breathing, while another declares that the love of God acts as a brake on his out-breathing. St Symeon the New Theologian tells us, 'Restrain the drawing-in of breath through your nostrils, so as not to breathe easily'; St John Klimakos says, 'Let mindfulness of Jesus be united to your breathing, and then you will know the blessings of stillness.' St Paul affirms that it is not he who lives but Christ in him (cf. **Gal. 2:20**), activating him and inspiring him with divine life. And the Lord, taking as an example the blowing of the physical wind, says, 'The Spirit blows where He wishes' (John 3:8). For when we were cleansed through baptism we received in seed-like form the foretaste of the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 1:22) and what St James calls the 'implanted Logos' (Jas. 1:21), embedded and as it were consolidated in us through an unparticipable participation; and, while keeping Himself inviolate and undiminished. He deifies us in His superabundant bounty. But then we neglected the commandments, the guardians of grace, and through this negligence we again fell into the clutches of the passions, filled with the afflatus of the evil spirits instead of the breath of the Holy Spirit. That is why, as the holy fathers explain, we are subject to lassitude and continually

enervated. For had we laid hold of the Spirit and been purified by Him we would have been enkindled by Him and inspired with divine life, and would speak and think and act in the manner that the Lord indicates when He says, 'For it is not you that speak but the Spirit of My Father that speaks in you' (cf. Matt. 10:20). Conversely, if we embrace the devil and are mastered by him, we speak and act in the opposite manner.

[V4] St. Gregory of Sinai On Stillness, Fifteen Texts of the Beginning of Watchfulness

69. Pharaoh entreated, saying: 'May God take away from me this death' (Exod. 10: 17), and he was heard. Similarly, when the demons asked the Lord not to cast them into the abyss, their request was granted (**cf. Luke 8:31**). How much more, then, will a Christian be heard when he prays to be delivered from spiritual death?

[V1] 315 St. John of Karpathos For the Encouragement of the Monks in India One Hundred Texts

As most people are unable to comprehend the devil's maniacal fury against us from his attacks on our souls and the assistance he lends us when we sin, God permitted that there should be some people physically under the control of demons, that we might all learn from them how terrible is the affliction of a soul which intends to make itself the devil's dwelling through evil deeds. When, on account of the incomparable vastness of His love for mankind, the only-begotten Son of God bowed the heavens and came down to earth (cf. Ps. 144:5), to set us free from the devil's tyranny over our souls, He also cast out demons from those whose bodies were obviously possessed, and through this liberation and healing carried out openly, He gave proof and confirmation of the release and cure effected secretly in their souls. When He granted healing to the soul of the paralyzed man, not only did He not receive any praise from those who saw what happened with their own eyes, but He was also blasphemed. So He healed the man's physical paralysis as well, that they might know, as He said to those present, "that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Matt. 9:2-6).

The Lord make a special point of expelling demons from those possessed, so that we might be aware that He is the one who can drive them out of our souls and grant us eternal freedom.

St. Gregory Palamas Homily 50, on the Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac