



THE HOLY SPIRIT

“And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who, together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke with the prophets.”

And now, in the eighth article of the Symbol of the Faith, we will speak about the Holy Spirit. But how can we tell or understand the teaching about the Holy Spirit?

Unfortunately, we live in a time when material things absorb the attention of everyone, everyone speaks about worldly things and is only interested in these things. People have become materialistic – matter oriented, like moles, who always live underground and cannot understand that on the surface of the earth there are so many beautiful things. Modern people are moles. They live and work in the endless tunnels of worldly existence and have extinguished the idea that above the material world there is a spiritual one, that above matter there exists spirit; and for this reason, when people hear that there is a Holy Spirit, they react like one hearing a foreign language. Even we, the preachers of the Gospel, are not on the lofty level of the Church Fathers who spoke for hours about the Holy Spirit. A general spiritual collapse has occurred today, both of preachers and listeners.

O Holy Spirit, who enlightened the fishermen of Galilee, come again into our midst. Sit in our hearts, open the hidden ears of our souls to hear Your sounds, and give us Gospel preachers of the twentieth century strength to preach Your wonders!

Holy Spirit! As heretics appeared in ancient times rejecting the divinity of Christ, so heretics appeared who did not accept the divinity of the Holy Spirit, saying that the Holy Spirit was not God. These heretics were called the pneumatomachs or Macedonianists after their leader, Macedonios. The modern, so-called Jehovah’s Witnesses are also horrible Pneumatomachs.

The person who rejects the Holy Spirit rejects Christ, the Holy Trinity, and will come to a point where he will believe in some vague superpower. And moving from rejection, he will end in complete atheism and unbelief.

The Holy Spirit is not an attribute or energy of God, but is a Being, and Person, an

Hypostasis, as are the Father and the Son. As the Symbol of the Faith declares, “the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified; Who spoke through the Prophets”.

Many passages from Holy Scripture testify that the Holy Spirit is a Person, equal to the Father and the Son, that is to say, He is God. We will not mention all of them, only three passages.

The first quotation about the Holy Spirit is found in our Lord’s farewell speech, which He gave to His disciples on Great Thursday after the Last Supper. He said: “if ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, the he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:15-18). He said: Dear disciples, don’t be sad that I am now leaving this earthly life. You will not be like orphans, you will not be deprived of a person to give you comfort and courage in the struggle. You will have the Holy Spirit; the Father will give Him to you...”

In this passage, the Holy Spirit is clearly defined. Christ is a Comforter, and so is the Holy Spirit; Christ is God, the Holy Spirit is God.

The second quotation comes from the message of Christ before His ascension into heaven: “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt.28:19). In this quotation we see that the Holy Spirit is on the same level with the Father and Son, because like the Father and Son, the Holy Spirit is God. The three are of the same essence and have the same honor. None of them is superior or inferior to the others.

The third quotation is the last verse of the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (II. Cor. 13:13). This passage is said during the Divine Liturgy, as an apostolic blessing, after the reading of the Creed. And in this quotation, it appears clear that the Holy Spirit is equal with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, one of the three Persons of the Deity.

How are the three persons one God? We answered this question previously and said that the teaching of the Holy Trinity is Christianity’s greatest mystery. It is not possible for our little minds to comprehend it, but our hearts believe it and our lips confess it. St. Athanasios the Great, who theologized much on this great mystery, said: “The Father is the source, the Son is the river, and the Holy Spirit is the water which we drink.”

The grace of the Holy Spirit, like rich and fresh waters, is in the Church, and whoever wants this water, approaches and takes this immortal water, some more, some less. A small vessel holds little water; a large one, much. It is like this with the grace of the Holy Spirit. There have been Saints in the Church, who, by faith, good intention, and purity of life became precious, selected vessels of the holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is present in the Church. Whatever a chosen and holy person of the Church has to offer is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. When prophets and apostles prophesied and taught, when priests celebrate the holy Mysteries, when zealot preachers teach the word of God and draw souls to God, when souls repent and kneel before the Crucifix and ask forgiveness from their father Confessor, when there are gatherings of hierarchs or laymen to discuss the Kingdom of God, when a tear of repentance is shed or a sigh is heard, when a pure thought, wish, or act takes place, there the Holy Spirit is.

Therefore, let us sinners of the earth glorify the Holy Spirit, and let us proclaim our faith by saying: “I believe... in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the

Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified; Who spoke through the Prophets.”

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