

### **The very life of God lives in His Church, and in His Christians**

The Church of Christ finds herself between two great feasts these days; two feasts as closely related as they are close in time. Last Sunday was Pentecost, the feast for the coming of the Holy Spirit. This coming Sunday is the Feast for the mystery of the Holy Trinity, that the one true God is Father and Son and Holy Spirit, united in that love which is from eternity and unto eternity.

And what Holy Scripture teaches about this great mystery also brings clarity to exactly what the coming of the Holy Spirit means.

"If anyone loves me, he will keep my Word," says our Lord Jesus, with regards to the coming of the Spirit, "and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, that is: the very life and breath of God; in both the original Biblical languages, the words for "breath" are the same as the words for "spirit". He is the innermost self of God. "For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him?" writes the holy Apostle Paul, and continues "So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."

So the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal power at the disposition of particularly "spiritual" Christians; He is God Himself, the very innermost self of God. With Him God dwells in His Church in His fullness, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Nor is the Holy Spirit for Christians to earn - or rather: take for themselves - by means of particularly intense goodness and godliness. "It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified", the holy Apostle Paul writes, and continues: "Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" The question is, of course, rhetorical, as the answer is obvious. The Holy Spirit is given to sinners with the Word of God of His salvation, given to sinners freely and for nothing, on account of the sufferings of Christ!

The gift of the Holy Spirit is so much more than what is often thought of. It is salvation itself, the very life of God given already now to those who hear the Word of God of His salvation, and embrace His promise in faith.

Or, again, as our Lord Jesus says it: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my Word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

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