

BEING KIND TO THE UNGRATEFUL APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

September 29, 2013
2nd Sunday of Luke, 14th Sunday after Pentecost
Revision F

Gospel: Luke 6:27-36, (Matthew 5:33-48)
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4

Today's Gospel lesson is used for a number of different occasions both in the Eastern and Western Churches. In the East, today's Gospel lesson taken from Matthew 5:33-48 is also used for the Friday and Saturday preceding the Sunday of All Saints (which is the First Sunday after Pentecost). In the West, today's Gospel lesson from Luke is used either for All Saints Day (November 1st) or Ash Wednesday, and from Matthew, either for the Eighth Sunday after Epiphany or the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

Showing Kindness toward the Ungrateful and the Evil

The Gospel lesson took place in early 28 AD, or early in Jesus' ministry (where the crucifixion took place in the spring of 30 AD). In Matthew 5:1, the "Sermon on the Mount" is called such because Jesus taught from the side of a mountain. Shortly afterward, Jesus also taught from a "level place" (Luke 6:17) after He had come down from a mountain and He used the same illustrations about the same subjects. Luke 6 is sometimes called "The Sermon on the Plain."

The subject of the Gospel lesson is what has come to be called "the golden rule" of loving one's enemies. It is a subject that is easy to talk about and easy to pay lip service to, but very difficult to do. But as we will see, there are some very good reasons for doing so, for He is instructing us to become like Himself as much as men are able to do.

There are several "golden rules" that exist in our culture. Among them are:

- The golden rule in business: He who has the gold makes the rules
- The golden rule of competition: Do unto others before they do unto you
- God's golden rule from Luke 6:31, "Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them"

The words of God's golden rule are spoken of as summarizing the entire Law and the Prophets, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). In this regard, God's golden rule is equivalent to the Greatest Commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and your neighbor

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as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39). On the Greatest Commandment also hang all the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 22:40); its words were part of the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18) and it summarizes the Ten Commandments. The Jewish Rabbi Hillel (the grandfather of Gamaliel, Acts 5:34-40, 22:3) also taught this, saying that the golden rule, “contains the whole Law and that all the rest is simply commentary.” In the First Century Synagogue worship, the words of the Greatest Commandment were part of a Creed that was recited every Sabbath (Edersheim, Sketches of Jewish Social Life, pp. 245, 101-104). By this Creed, the synagogue worship pointed to the work of Christ. By following this ourselves, we become like Christ as much as is humanly possible.

From Luke 6 and Matthew 5, there are some very specific aspects of God’s golden rule; some need clarification in terms of today’s culture. All of these are very difficult to do. Both Luke 6:27-36 and Matthew 5:38-48 contain a list of positives (things we should do) followed by a list of negatives (things we shouldn’t).

The Positives

- Love our enemies; do good to those who hate us (Luke 6:27, Matthew 5:44)
- Bless those who curse us; pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us (Luke 6:28, Matthew 5:44)
- Do not resist an evil person; turn the other cheek (Luke 6:29, Matthew 5:39)
- Give to everyone who asks to borrow. If someone takes your things, don’t ask for them back (Luke 6:30, Matthew 5:42)
- If someone sues you for your cloak, give him your tunic also (Luke 6:29, Matthew 5:40)
- Go out of your way to help; if someone compels you to go one mile, go two (Matthew 5:41)

The Orthodox Study Bible has a good footnote in this regard, “Jesus warned His disciples not to resist violence with more violence (as opposed to strict Old Testament justice standards such as Exodus 21:24). Evil, and the evil person, can be overcome only by good. This keeps us free from anger – from being poisoned by the evil directed against us and its destructive forces – and instructs others through Christian forbearance. It brings both us and our enemy under the yoke of God’s love” (Footnote to Matthew 5:39).

The Old Testament has some things to say about the above 6 items also: regarding the first three, loving one’s neighbors was commanded and having a grudge against anyone was forbidden (Leviticus 19:18). However, there was an exception concerning the Ammonites and Moabites because of how they opposed Israel in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 23:3-6). As a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6), Israel was expected to pray for the rest of the world and a third tithe was set aside every third year, in part, for strangers and aliens (Deuteronomy 14:29, 16:11-14, 24:19-21, 26:12). During Israel’s apostasy, this wasn’t followed very well (Isaiah 1:15-17).

Loans and Borrowing: Loans were treated much differently in the Mosaic Law than they were after the captivity and during the time of Christ. At the time of Moses, commercial loans were unknown and loans were solely for the purpose of helping a poor brother through a time of

difficulty (due to bad crops, etc.). From this point of view, any charging of interest was forbidden (Exodus 22:25, Leviticus 25:35-37), although interest could be charged to a foreigner (Deuteronomy 23:19-20). During the time of Christ, commercial business ventures were common and a reasonable interest rate for business investment was an allowable practice (Matthew 25:27, Luke 19:23). In this context, the implication is that someone is refusing to pay back a loan. According to Roman Law, the creditor could have the debtor put in prison (Matthew 18:28-30). According to Hebrew law, debtors could be made slaves (Leviticus 25:39, Exodus 22:3). However, debts older than seven years were automatically forgiven under Hebrew Law (Exodus 21:2, Leviticus 25:39-42, Deuteronomy 15:9) as also in the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25). However, the Lord said, 'Don't put someone in prison and don't make someone a slave; forgive the loan instead' (Compare Matthew 18:32-35). This certainly runs against the grain of modern capitalism, but its emphasis is on spiritual rather than material values.

Should we allow ourselves to be taken advantage of? Our enemy will certainly use this against us. John Chrysostom stated it as follows: "What then? It might be said, 'Ought we not to resist the evil one?' Indeed we ought, but not in this way, but as He has commanded, by giving one's self to suffer wrongfully. For thus you shall prevail over him. For one fire is not quenched by another fire, but fire by water."

"For nothing so restrains wrong doers as when the injured bear what is done with gentleness. And it not only restrains them from rushing onward, but works upon them also to repent for what has gone on before, and, in wonder at such forbearance, to draw back" (Homily XVIII on Matthew 5).

Lawsuits: Old Testament lawsuits were much different than modern lawsuits; the closest modern equivalent is a small claims court from where each plaintiff represents his case personally. In the wilderness, Moses heard each case personally until his father-in-law, Jethro, suggested he appoint lower courts to hear minor disputes (Exodus 18:12-27). This Moses did. If these lower courts could not decide a particularly difficult case, it was brought to Jerusalem to the Levitical priest or judge in office then (Deuteronomy 17:8-12). If he had difficulty deciding, he could always inquire of the Lord in the Temple using the Urim and Thummim. Anyone not accepting this decision of the Lord in the Temple was executed (Deuteronomy 17:12).

A lawsuit over a cloak or a tunic (as in our Gospel lesson) was definitely not a major matter to be heard in Jerusalem; but it was a big deal for a poor farmer whose only clothes were the ones he wore. His cloak was also his bed roll and Hebrew Law did not allow one's cloak to be held overnight even if it was given as a security pledge (Deuteronomy 24:10-13). Most poor people wore only three articles of clothing: a loincloth (or under-tunic), a tunic and a cloak. The cloak was usually a thick, rough, blanket-like material and was carried over the shoulders in hot weather. Clothing was expensive, so most poor people owned only what they wore.

In the Gospel lesson, if someone took your cloak (this is illegal according to Hebrew Law), to then give up your tunic also (Luke 6:29) left one very poorly clad. On the other hand, if someone sued you for your tunic, (this is legal and was often done since the cloak couldn't be taken) giving up your cloak as well left you very poorly clad also. Yet this is what the Apostle

Paul tolerated on his various missionary journeys (1 Corinthians 4:11, 2 Timothy 4:13) where he was often very poorly clad.

A good summary of all this is that we are commanded to love our neighbor as our self in an active manner and not just as a theological concept. Regarding the six positive things we should do, from the previous page, John Chrysostom delineated nine steps:

1. Do not begin with injustice (i.e. becoming an evil person yourself)
2. After beginning, do not vindicate yourself with equal retaliation (i.e. turn the other cheek)
3. Be quiet (don't go to court)
4. Give yourself up to suffer wrongfully
5. Give up yet more than the other who did the wrong wishes (let him have the cloak also)
6. Don't hate him
7. Even love him
8. Do him good
9. Entreat God Himself on his behalf

Chrysostom continues: "He also sets up a reward unlike as in the Beatitudes. For He makes no mention of earth (as with respect to the meek) nor of comfort or mercy...nor of the kingdom of Heaven, but of that which was more thrilling than all: our becoming like God in such a way as men might become so. For He said, 'That you may become like your Father which is in Heaven'" (Ibid.).

As an example of this, Chrysostom spoke of the way physicians treat the mentally ill: "For so too the physicians, when they are kicked and shamefully handled by the insane, then most of all they pity them, and take measures for their perfect cure, knowing that the insult comes from the extremity of their disease. Now I bid you also to have the same mind touching them that are plotting against you, and do you so treat them that are injuring you. For it is they above all that are diseased; it is they who are undergoing all the violence. Deliver him then from this grievous insult and grant him to let go his anger, and set him free from that grievous demon of wrath" (Ibid.).

The Negatives

On the negative side, we get no credit for reciprocal love. For example, if we only:

- Love those who love us (Luke 6:32, Matthew 5:46)
- Do good to those who do good to us (Luke 6:33)
- Lend to those from whom we hope to receive back (Luke 6:34)
- Speak to or greet only our brethren (Matthew 5:47)

What credit is that to us? Even sinners and publicans do that (Luke 6:32-34, Matthew 5:46-47). Earlier, Jesus had said, "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:20). Both Jesus and John the Baptist referred to the Scribes and Pharisees as a "brood of vipers" (Matthew 12:34, Matthew 3:7); surpassing their righteousness shouldn't be too difficult. To their credit, they did try to

obey the Mosaic Law and the Ten Commandments for the most part or at least gave outward pretense of doing so. Today many people don't even pretend to obey the Ten Commandments. By way of contrast, our society prizes disobedience, and being cunning is considered good.

John Chrysostom categorized people's righteousness in terms of three levels: that of the Scribes and Pharisees (the lowest); that of the publicans and heathen (who love those who love them); and finally that of the Gospel lesson where we are to emulate God and be kind to the unthankful and the evil (Luke 6:35). Chrysostom states: "What then can we deserve, who are commanded to emulate God, and are perhaps in a manner of life, hardly even equal to publicans? For if 'to love those who love us' is the part of publicans and heathen; when we do not even do this (and we do not do it as long as we envy our brothers who are in honor), what penalty will we not incur? We are commanded to surpass the Scribes, but we take our place below the heathen! How then will we behold the Kingdom, pray tell? How will we set foot on that holy threshold, who do not surpass even the publicans? ...Bearing in mind all the things that have been said, let us then show forth great love even towards our enemies..." (Homily XVIII on Matthew 5).

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

The Guarantee of the Holy Spirit

September 29, 2013
14th Sunday after Pentecost
Revision D

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4

Today's Epistle reading is used in the West for the 5th Sunday in Lent. There are two themes contained in today's Epistle Reading: (1) the Gift of the Holy Spirit in us as a guarantee of more that is to come, and (2) the Apostolic authority of the Apostle Paul in dealing with the problems in Corinth, and why he had to do it the way he did.

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Background for the Church in Corinth

Paul founded the Church in Corinth about 51 AD toward the end of his Second Missionary Journey and stayed there a year and a half (Acts 18:11). Silas was traveling with Paul at the time along with Luke, Timothy and Andronicus, where all but Paul were of the original Seventy. Luke was left behind¹ to oversee the Macedonian Churches. Silas was left behind² in Corinth and was later Bishop of Corinth.

Before Paul arrived in Corinth for an extended stay again in late 55 AD, he wrote four letters to Corinth (two of which are lost) and paid the Church one brief visit. (Details of this will be covered on the next page.) In the interval from 52 to 55 AD, the Apostles Apollos and Peter visited Corinth. Apollos was one of the original Seventy, but must have been back home in Alexandria at the time of Pentecost. He knew only the baptism of John in 53 AD when he came to Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28). Aquila and Priscilla, the overseers Paul left in Ephesus (Acts 18:18-19), straightened Apollos out and also wrote to the Churches in Achaia (Athens and Corinth) to

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¹ Note the switch in tenses from "we" to "they" and back to "we" in Acts 16:16, 17:1, 20:6.

² Note that we never hear from Silas again traveling with Paul after he arrived in Corinth, Acts 18:5.

receive Apollos when he arrived (Acts 18:27). Apollos proceeded to help out by vigorously refuting the Jews publicly; showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 18:28). In his earlier letter, (1 Corinthians 3:8), Paul said that he and Apollos are one; that is, of one mind in the work of establishing the Churches.

The same can be said for the relationship between Paul and Peter. Peter visited Corinth in the early 50's AD on his way to Rome. He obviously made a big impression in Corinth since there were factions that had developed by 55 AD (1 Corinthians 1:12) centered on Paul, Apollos, Peter and Christ! On Peter's way to Corinth, Paul met him in Macedonia and together they ordained four bishops:

Olympas	Philippi
Jason	Thessalonica
Silas	Corinth
Herodion	Patras (SW Greece)

Paul worked with at least 60 of the members of the 70 at some point. Many of them like Luke, Timothy, and Titus traveled with him a lot. In addition, Paul had some contact with Peter, John, Andrew and Philip.

Apostolic Discipline

To understand the Epistle lesson, one needs to understand the sequence of Paul's four letters to Corinth, since the Epistle lesson refers to the latter part of this sequence. In addition to the four letters³ Paul wrote to Corinth, he made one brief visit that isn't mentioned in Acts. This information can be gleaned by carefully reading the two letters we have. The sequence went like this:

1. From Ephesus on his 3rd Missionary Journey, Paul wrote a letter to Corinth regarding morality and church discipline. Paul refers to this letter in 1 Corinthians 5:9-11. This letter has been lost over the centuries.
2. While still in Ephesus, Paul wrote a 2nd letter (which we know as 1 Corinthians) to address negative reports such as a man having his father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1), schisms (1 Corinthians 1:12), heresy (1 Corinthians 15:12), etc.
3. Learning of further immorality in Corinth, Paul traveled there (from Ephesus). Timothy had been sent ahead and may have carried the 2nd letter. This visit is referred to as the "sorrowful visit" in our Epistle reading (2 Corinthians 2:1). Later, Paul stated that his up coming visit would be his 3rd visit (2 Corinthians 13:1). From Acts, his up coming visit would be only the 2nd visit to Corinth, thus demanding another brief visit.
4. Returning to Ephesus, probably with Timothy, Paul wrote a 3rd letter. This is the "sorrowful letter" referred to in our Epistle reading (2 Corinthians 2:4ff; also 2 Corinthians 7:8). This 3rd letter was delivered by Titus and received by the Corinthians with fear and trembling (2 Corinthians 7:13-15). This letter has also been lost.

³ Only two of Paul's letters to Corinth are extant today; the other two have been lost. We know of the existence of the other two letters from Paul's reference to them in the two letters that we have.

5. Before Titus returned, Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia en route to Corinth. In Macedonia, Paul met Titus who was returning from Corinth. Paul was greatly encouraged by Titus to hear that Corinth had obeyed Paul's instructions. From Macedonia, Paul then wrote a 4th letter (which we know as 2 Corinthians) defending his apostleship and aiming for reconciliation of all the factions. The man who had his father's wife had by then repented and Paul urged them to forgive him and receive him back (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

We get a glimpse of how Paul first came to Corinth: "Not in persuasive words but in demonstration of power" (1 Corinthians 2:4-5). These demonstrations of power are described as, "God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out from them" (Acts 19:11-12)

Paul's demonstrations of power were so prevalent that a cottage industry developed among some itinerant Jewish exorcists. They began exorcising evil spirits by "the Jesus whom Paul preaches". This worked for a while; eventually they ran into one demon that answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" The demon-possessed man then "leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded". When word of this got out, "fear fell on them all, and the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified" (Acts 19:13-17).

The above two accounts occurred in Ephesus on Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey; we can assume something similar occurred in Corinth a few years earlier when he started the Church there.

Thus, when Paul wrote concerning the man who had his father's wife, and Paul instructed them to deliver the man over to Satan (1 Corinthians 5:5) for the destruction of his flesh (in order that his spirit might be saved on Judgment Day), this was not taken lightly. This was apostolic discipline and was taken seriously. Our Epistle lesson, then, is a snapshot taken toward the end of this time of apostolic discipline.

About 40 years later, Clement, the 3rd Bishop of Rome, wrote a letter to the Corinthians, where similar problems had resurfaced. The Corinthians had evidently corrected their problems after Paul wrote to them, but the next generation in Corinth had forgotten where they had been. Clement wrote⁴:

"Every kind of honor and happiness was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which is written, 'My beloved did eat and drink, and was enlarged and became fat, and kicked' (Deuteronomy 32:15). From this flowed ambition and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. So the worthless rose up against the honored, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as everyone has abandoned the fear of God, and has become blind in His faith. Everyone neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice

⁴ Clement of Rome, First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 3.

of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world”.

The Need for Discipline

The Epistle lesson begins (2 Corinthians 1:21,22) with the words: “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and gives us the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment”. John Chrysostom comments⁵ as follows:

“From the past, He establishes the future. For it is He that establishes us in Christ (i.e. who does not allow us to be shaken from the faith which is in Christ); and He that anointed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts; how shall He not give us the future things?”

“For if He gave the principles and the foundations, and the root and the fount, (i.e. the true knowledge of Him, the partaking of the Spirit), how shall He not give the things that come of these: if for the sake of these, those are given, much more will He supply those. And if to such as were enemies He gave these, much more when now made friends will He ‘freely give’ to them those. Wherefore He said not simply ‘the Spirit’, but named ‘earnest’, (or down payment) that from this you might have a good hope of the whole as well. For if He did not purpose to give the whole, He would never have chosen to give ‘the earnest’ and to waste it without object or result.”

“And what is, anointed, and sealed? He gave the Spirit by Whom He did both these things, making at once prophets and priests and kings; for in old times these three sorts were anointed. But we have now not one of these dignities, but all three preeminently. For we are both to enjoy a kingdom and are made priests by offering our bodies for a sacrifice, (for, said He, ‘present your members a living sacrifice unto God’ - Romans 12:1) and together with this we are constituted prophets too: for what things ‘eye has not seen, nor ear heard,’ (1 Corinthians 2:9) these have been revealed unto us”.

With all this given to us, it would be truly tragic if it were all wasted because we fell into sin and decadence. Consider Judas Iscariot: He was sent out with the rest of the Twelve to heal the sick, cast out demons, and raise the dead (Matthew 10:1-23). But yet he was also incorrigible as a thief (John 12:6) and wasted his gifts and was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:16-26). Paul knew all about this firsthand, being a Pharisee, and was involved in the decision to use Judas’ 30 pieces of silver to buy the potter’s field after Judas hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-10).

Paul knew he couldn’t let the situation continue downhill in Corinth. He knew that the “Judases” in Corinth would create another truly tragic situation if he didn’t act quickly and strongly. Therefore he tried to get them to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking to their hearts. In the Epistle reading, note how Paul didn’t lord it over the Corinthians but tried to encourage them as much as possible to work things out themselves by hearing the Lord speak to them. Paul could have marched in there and really kicked some butt; but he didn’t. That would make Paul the head of the Church, not Christ. Note also Paul’s love for Corinth and his agony over having to correct them.

⁵ John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Corinthians, III, 4.

We note the words Paul used to describe the Church in Corinth: God has

- Established us (2 Corinthians 1:21)
- Anointed us (2 Corinthians 1:21)
- Sealed us (2 Corinthians 1:22)
- Given us the Spirit as a down payment (2 Corinthians 1:22)

One can think of this as a first installment on eternal life. The best is yet to come, but there is an urgent need of getting ourselves ready.

Paul's Love and Concern for Corinth

Paul wrote, "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you" (2 Corinthians 2:4). He wanted so much for the Corinthians to know and understand what the Lord's ways were for them, but he also knew that he couldn't force it upon them. They had to take ownership of this or it wouldn't work.

John Chrysostom stated⁶ that we, as Christians, cannot make men better by force, only by persuasion. If we attempt to do so by force, we only make men worse. This is what we see Paul doing in Corinth: persuading them to move toward godliness, and refraining from the use of force.

"But in the case of human infirmities, it is not easy in the first place for a man to discern them, for no man 'knows the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him' (1 Corinthians 2:11). How then can any one apply the remedy for the disease when he does not know the character, often being unable to understand it even when he should be sickened with it himself? And even when it becomes clear, it causes him yet more trouble; for it is not possible to doctor all men with the same authority with which the shepherd treats his sheep. For in this case it is necessary to bind and to restrain from food, and to use the knife; but the reception of the treatment depends on the will of the patient, not of him who applies the remedy. For this was perceived by Paul 'Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy' (2 Corinthians 1:24). For Christians above all men are not permitted to correct by force the failings of those who sin. Secular judges indeed, when they have captured malefactors under the law, show their authority to be great, and prevent them even against their will from following their own devices. But in our case the wrongdoer must be made better, not by force, but by persuasion. Authority of this kind for the restraint of sinners has not been given us by law, nor, if it had been given, should we have any desire for the exercise of our power, since God rewards those who abstain from evil by their own choice, not of necessity. Consequently much skill is required that our patients may be induced to submit willingly to the treatment prescribed by the physicians; and not only this, but that they may be grateful for the cure. For if anyone, when he is bound, becomes restless, he makes the problem worse; if he should pay no attention to the words

⁶ John Chrysostom, Treatise Concerning the Christian Priesthood, II, 3.

which cut like steel, he inflicts another wound by means of this contempt, and the intention to heal only becomes the occasion of a worse wound. For it is not possible for anyone to cure a man by compulsion against his will”.

Paul cared for Corinth so much that he kept checking in on them, and sent his best worker (Timothy) to look in on them. Timothy also cared for Corinth a great deal. The Corinthians went about their lives expecting that Paul wouldn't find out what they were doing; they didn't realize that a number of people kept informing him. John Chrysostom stated⁷

“Paul did not learn all things by revelation of the Spirit, and for this we can see some reason. If the disciples in Corinth had believed that it were so, they would have lost all sense of shame, but now from expectation of concealment, they were more easily corrected. When Timothy came he found their normal state of things, and reported it to Paul. Paul seems to have acted in like sort in his own person, when he delayed his coming to the Corinthians, that they might repent; therefore he wrote, ‘to spare you I delayed to come to Corinth’ (2 Corinthians 1:23). For his love was shown not simply in reporting his own state, but in his desire to learn of theirs; for this is the part of a soul, which has a care of others, which takes thought for them, and is always wrestling for them. At the same time too, he honored them by sending Timothy. ‘For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state’ (Philippians 2:20); that is, none of those whose care is like mine, none who ‘will care truly for you’. Had he no one of those who were with him? No one likeminded, that is, who has yearnings and takes thought for you as I do. No one would lightly choose, he means, to make so long a journey for this purpose. Timothy is the one with me who loves you? For I might have sent others, but there was none like him. This then is that like-mindedness, to love the disciples as the master loves them. ‘Who will truly care for you’, that is, as a father. ‘For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ’ (Philippians 2:21), their own comfort, their own safety”.

John Chrysostom also noted⁸ that godly sorrow produces repentance. Paul had considerable sorrow over the events in Corinth, and Chrysostom admired Paul more for his love for Corinth in the face of this than for his holding together under persecution.

“Saul was the first king, and you know how he perished, after experiencing numberless ills. After him, David, Solomon, Abijah, Hezekiah, and Josiah likewise! It is not possible, without affliction and toil, without dejection of mind, to pass through the present life. But let us be receptive, not for such things as these, for which kings grieve, but for those things that give us great gain. ‘For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, a repentance which brings no regret’ (2 Corinthians 7:10). On account of these things we should be grieved; thus was Paul grieved for sinners, thus did he weep. ‘For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you in many tears’ (2 Corinthians 2:4). For when he had no cause of grief on his own account, he did so on account of others. Or rather he accounted those things to be his own, at least as far as grief went. Others were offended, and he burned; others were weak, and he was weak. Such

⁷ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Philippians, IX, vv 19-21.

⁸ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Philippians, XV, Moral.

grief as this is good, and is superior to all worldly joy. He who so grieves I prefer to all men, or rather the Lord Himself pronounces them blessed, who so grieve, who are sympathizing. I admire Paul for the dangers by which he died daily, yet this still more captivates me. For it came of a soul devoted to God, and full of affection, from the love which Christ Himself seeks, from a brotherly and a fatherly sympathy, or rather, of one greater than both these. Thus we should be affected, thus weep; such tears as these are full of great delight; such grief as this is the ground of joy”.

Jerome stated⁹ that good men have always sorrowed for the sins of others, and this is what Paul did with the Corinthians.

“Lot of old desired to rescue his wife as well as his two daughters, and refused to leave blazing Sodom and Gomorrah until he was himself half-on-fire; he tried to lead forth one who was bound by her past sins. But in her despair she lost her composure, and looking back, became a monument of an unbelieving soul. Yet, as if to make up for the loss of a single woman, Lot’s glowing faith set free the whole city of Zoar. In fact when he left the dark valleys in which Sodom lay and came to the mountains the sun rose upon him as he entered Zoar, or the little City; so-called because the little faith that Lot possessed. Though unable to save greater places, he was at least able to preserve smaller ones. For one who had gone so far astray as to live in Gomorrah could not, all at once, reach the high ground where Abraham, the friend of God, entertained God and His angels. For it was in Egypt that Joseph fed his brothers (Genesis 42:1-8), and when the bride speaks to the Bridegroom her cry is, ‘Tell me where you feed, where you make your flock to rest at noon’ (Song of Solomon 1:7). Good men have always sorrowed for the sins of others. Samuel lamented for Saul because he neglected to treat the ulcers of pride with the balm of penitence (1 Samuel 15:35). And Paul wept for the Corinthians who refused to wash out with their tears the stains of fornication” (2 Corinthians 2:4).

The Holy Spirit as a Guarantee

Paul stated, “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22). What does it mean, we might ask, to have the Holy Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee? Tertullian addressed¹⁰ this by contrasting our flesh with our soul.

“The flesh, even now in this life, has the Holy Spirit by faith. The question remains to be asked how it is that the animate (or natural) body is sown? (1 Corinthians 15:43) The flesh has received the Spirit, but only its ‘guarantee’ (2 Corinthians 1:22), whereas the soul has received, not the guarantee, but the full possession. Therefore the soul has the name of *animate* (or natural) body, expressly because of the higher substance of the soul in which it is sown. The flesh is destined afterward to become, through the full possession of the spirit, the

⁹ Jerome, Letter to Rusticus, CXXII, 1.

¹⁰ Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, II, vi, 53.

spiritual body, in which it is raised again. The body is more commonly called after the substance with which it is fully furnished, than after that of which it has yet but a sprinkling?”

John Chrysostom gave¹¹ a very flowery description of the Lord’s work in remaking man and giving him the Holy Spirit. It gives us a good perspective on His kindness, His purpose and His goal. He describes the guarantee of the Holy Spirit, both the part we have now and the part that we shall receive later.

“When Christ came, He found the harlot, i.e. human nature, full of sores, brutalized, and oppressed by devils; how did He act? He drew near to her. She saw Him and ran away. He called the Magi saying, ‘Why are you afraid? I am not a judge, but a physician. I came not to judge the world but to save the world’. The immediate first fruits of His coming were wise men (Matthew 2:1-2). The publican came and was turned into an evangelist (Matthew 9:9); the Canaanite woman came and partook of his loving kindness (Matthew 15:21-28). This is the mark of one who loves, not demanding an account of sins, but forgiving transgressions and offenses. He took the sinner and espouses her to Himself. He gave her a signet ring: the Holy Spirit. Paul said, ‘Now He who establishes us with you is God, who has also sealed us, and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee’ (1 Corinthians 1:21-22). Next He said, ‘Did I not plant you in a garden?’ She said, ‘yes, but the devil came and cast me out of the garden’. Now I am planting you in Myself, and I will uphold you. And so the Lord carried our nature: and the devil approached and was beaten. ‘I am the root, you are the branches’ (John 15:5); so He planted her in Himself. ‘But’, she said, ‘I am a sinner and unclean’. ‘Let this not trouble you; I am a physician. For observe: He took dust from the earth and made man (Genesis 2:7); but the devil came, and perverted him. Then the Lord came, took him again, and remolded, and recast him in baptism, no longer to be of clay, but of a harder material. He subjected the soft clay to the fire of the Holy Spirit. ‘He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire’ (Matthew 3:11). He was baptized with water that he might be remodeled, with fire that he might be hardened”.

“The kings of the earth and rulers, when they have treasures, prepare large houses, having strong walls, bars, doors, guards, and bolts in order that the treasure may be preserved. But Christ did the contrary; He placed the treasure not in a stone vessel but in an earthen one. The vessel is weak but the treasure is great; the vessel does not preserve the treasure, but the treasure preserves the vessel. The devil has come, the world has come, multitudes have come, and yet they have not stolen the treasure. The vessel has been scourged, yet the treasure was not betrayed; it has been drowned in the sea, yet the treasure was not shipwrecked; it has died, yet the treasure survives. You all know that the guarantee is a small part of the whole; let me tell you how. Someone goes to buy a house at a great price, and he says ‘give me a guarantee that I may have confidence’. Or one takes a wife for himself; he arranges about dowry and property, and he says ‘give me a guarantee’. Observe: in all covenants there is a guarantee. Since Christ made a covenant with us (for He was about to take us as a

¹¹ John Chrysostom, Two Homilies on Eutropius, II, 11-13, 16.

bride), he also assigned a dowry to us not of money, but of blood. But this dowry, which He assigns, is the giving of good things 'such as eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man' (1 Corinthians 2:9). He assigned these for the dowry: immortality, praise with the angels, release from death, freedom from sin, the inheritance of a kingdom, etc. Great was my dowry! He came to take the harlot (i.e. human nature), for so I call her, unclean as she was, that you might understand the love of the bridegroom. 'Have you lost paradise? Take it back! Have you lost your beauty? Take it back; take all these things. But yet the dowry was not given to me here'.

"Why does He not give us the dowry here? 'It will be given when you have come to My Father, when you have entered the royal palace. I came to you not that you should stay here but that I might take you and return. Don't seek the dowry here; all depends on hope and faith'. Does He give us anything in this world? We receive a guarantee that we may trust Him concerning that, which is to come; that is, we receive pledges and betrothal gifts. Therefore Paul said, 'I have espoused you' (2 Corinthians 11:2). As gifts of betrothal, God has given us present blessings; they are a guarantee of the future, but the full dowry stays in the other world. The full dowry includes immortality; no sorrow; no poverty; no darkness, only light; liberty; complete health; righteousness, without sin or envy. We must wait for these in order that our fellow servants also may be saved. Our guarantee is the Holy Spirit, the supply of the Spirit. He gave the signet ring to the Apostles, saying 'take this and give it to all' (Matthew 28:19). The ring is portioned out, and yet is not divided".

"The dowry of the bride was divided into two portions consisting of things present and things to come. The things present are those seen, given, experienced and belonging to this present life. The things to come are things heard, things taken on trust, and things to come after the resurrection. The former things you see, the latter you hear. The former things are great and surpassing all understanding. 'Listen daughter and behold; hear the latter things and see the former that you may not think that you are to depend only on hope, faith and the future'. I give some things, and I promise others; the latter depend on hope, but receive the others as pledges, as a guarantee, as a proof of the remainder. I promised you a kingdom, and let present things be the ground of your trust in Me. He promised us a kingdom, and He has given us the greater part: the Lord of the kingdom. He promised us the resurrection of the body and He has given us the greater part: release from sins. Since sin brought forth death, by destroying the parent (i.e. sin), He shall also destroy the offspring. He has dried up the root, and shall also destroy the produce. What do I see? Dead men raised to life, lepers cleansed, the sea restrained, the paralytic braced up into vigor, paradise opened, loaves poured forth in abundance, sins remitted, the lame man leaping, the robber made a citizen of Paradise, the publican turned into an evangelist. Hear and see. Accept from present things a proof of the others".

Basil, on the other hand, describes¹² the lot of those who reject the “Guarantee” and grieved the Holy Spirit by the wickedness of their ways. They will be deprived of their “dowry”, and it will be given to others.

“Anyone who carefully uses his reason will find that the Holy Spirit will have a function to discharge, even at the moment of the expected appearance of the Lord from heaven; in the day of His revelation, the Holy Spirit will be present with Him. For who is so ignorant as not to know that the crown of the righteous is the grace of the Spirit, bestowed in more abundant and perfect measure in that day, when spiritual glory shall be distributed to each in proportion, as he shall have nobly played the man? For among the glories of the saints are ‘many mansions’ (John 14:2) in the Father’s house, that is, differences of dignities; for as ‘star differs from star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead’ (1 Corinthians 15:41-42). Those that were sealed by the Spirit for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30), and purely preserve the first fruits, which they received of the Spirit, are they that shall hear the words ‘well done you good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things’ (Matthew 25:21-23). In like manner they, which have grieved the Holy Spirit by the wickedness of their ways, shall be deprived of what they have received, their grace being transferred to others. They shall even be wholly cut in half (Matthew 24:51), the cutting in half meaning complete separation from the Spirit. The body is not divided, part being delivered to chastisement, and part let off; nor is the soul cut in two. The cutting in half is the separation forever of the soul from the Spirit. For now, although the Spirit does not allow mixture with the unworthy, He nevertheless does seem in a manner to be present with them that have once been sealed, awaiting the salvation which follows on their conversion. But then He will be wholly cut off from the soul that has defiled His grace. For this reason ‘In Hell there is none that makes confession; in death none that remembered God’ (Psalm 6:5 LXX), because the aid of the Spirit is no longer present. Thus, the judgment cannot be accomplished without the Holy Spirit. The Word points out that He is Himself the prize of the righteous, when instead of the guarantee is given that which is perfect. The first condemnation of sinners is when they are deprived of that which they seem to have”.

¹² Basil, On the Spirit, XVI, 40.