

23. April 2020

“Jesus comes from above”

Jn 3, 31-36

He who comes from above is above all others; he who is of the earth is earthly himself and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven bears witness to the things he has seen and heard, but his testimony is not accepted by anybody; though anyone who does accept his testimony is attesting that God is true, since he whom God has sent speaks God's own words, for God gives him the Spirit without reserve. The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything to his hands. Anyone who believes in the Son has eternal life, but anyone who refuses to believe in the Son will never see life: God's retribution hangs over him.'

The Holy Scripture, and especially the apostle John, wants to show the difference between a life in the Spirit of the Lord and a life - as it says here - according to earthly points of view.

This is indeed a great difference. The apostle Paul even says: *“The natural person has no room for the gifts of God's Spirit; to him they are folly; he cannot recognise them, because their value can be assessed only in the Spirit.”* (1Cor 2,14)

The key to a deeper understanding of the words of Jesus and His testimony lies in the action of the Holy Spirit, who *without reserve*. It is He who gives us the light to understand Him who comes from above and is above all. Without the Holy Spirit we do not understand the words of the Lord in their full dimension. It would be as if we were merely gathering historical data, ethnological information and cultural-historical aspects in the Holy Scriptures, and not getting to the core of the message. In this way, we might even lose sight of the salutary teaching that wants to proclaim to us in particular the love of God and His action and how we should live so that we walk in the light of God.

With many words John wants to make it clear to us that Jesus is the beloved Son of God, that He was sent by the Father, that everything Jesus says is the word of the Father.

Perhaps this is more accessible to us today as believing Christians, who know a path of faith through many centuries, than to those Jews whom John wanted to convince.

But the question is how deeply we absorb His word, how far it can penetrate us so that it transforms our thinking. Does the Holy Spirit go so deep that we can leave earthly thinking and become people who gain a view of things and circumstances from above? This is crucial in order to find the right criteria for judgment.

In order to be able to distinguish where things have their origin, the so-called discernment of spirits helps us. Do things come from God, do they spring from our own thinking, or are they even inspired by demons? Sometimes there are even mixtures.

Let us apply this distinction to a very simple example:

Is Jesus the Son of God?

The Holy Spirit testifies to this with a clear “yes”. If we can make the confession, it is because of the Spirit of God, because without this Spirit we cannot recognize Jesus as the Son of God.

The human spirit, on the other hand, would at best present Jesus to us as a wise man.

The demonic spirit would deny him!

Here we can now see the differences.

The Holy Spirit glorifies God, He leads things and knowledge to their origin, He comes from above and communicates His light.

The human spirit tries to classify things into its own experience or world of thought, but does not come to the light-filled knowledge of the Son of God, so it remains within its earthly limitations and can possibly gain philosophical knowledge.

The demonic spirit, on the other hand, tries to counteract the light and glory of God, as he is in enmity with the Holy Spirit!

While the Holy Spirit can judge the human spirit and the demonic spirit, the reverse is not possible.

The human spirit - earthly thinking - does not possess any supernatural cognition in itself!

The demonic spirit flees the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit exposes him!

The message of the Son of God remains fought over, often its testimony is not accepted.

The Spirit of God leads us to accept obedience to Jesus. God extends this invitation to all people who hear about Jesus. Whoever does not accept the invitation, although he has the opportunity to do so, “*will never see life: God's retribution hangs over him*”, as the text expresses it. This means that he does not see the light and thus does not receive the grace that God has prepared for the believer!