

Saint_Thomas_on_the_Gospel_for_the_Sunday_after_the_Ascension.

But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me. And you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalized. They will put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you; because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things I have told you, that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them.

CHRYC. The disciples might say, If they have heard words from Thee, such as none other has spoken, if they have seen works of Him, such as none other has done, and yet have not been convinced, but have hated your Father, and you with Him, why do you send us to preach? How shall we be believed? Such thoughts as these He now answers: But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of Me.

AUG. As if He said, Seeing Me, they hated and killed Me; but the Comforter shall give such testimony concerning Me as shall make them believe, though they see Me not. And because He shall testify, you shall testify also:

And you also shall bear witness; He will inspire your hearts, and you shall proclaim with your voices. And you will preach what you know, because you have been with Me from the beginning; which now you do not do, because you have not yet the fullness of the Spirit. But the love of God shall then be shed abroad in your hearts by the Spirit which shall be given you, and shall make you confident witnesses to Me. The Holy Spirit by His testimony made others testify, taking away fear from the friends of Christ's, and converting the hatred of His enemies into love.

DIDYMUS. The Holy Spirit He calls the Comforter, a name taken from His office, which is not only to relieve the sorrows of the faithful, but to fill them with unspeakable joy. Everlasting gladness is in those hearts, in which the Spirit dwells. The Spirit, the Comforter, is sent by the Son, not as Angels, or Prophets, or Apostles, are sent, but as the Spirit must be sent which is of one nature with the Divine wisdom and power that sends Him. The Son when sent by the Father, is not separated from Him, but abides in the Father, and the Father in Him. In the same way the Holy Spirit is not sent by the Son, and proceeds from the Father, in the sense of change of place. For as the Father's nature, being incorporeal, is not local, so neither has the Spirit of truth, Who is incorporeal also, and superior to all created things, a local nature.

CHRYC. He calls Him not the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit of truth, to show the perfect faith that was due to Him. He knew that He proceeds from the Father, for He knew all things; He knew where He Himself came from, as He says of Himself above, I know whence I came, and whither I go (John 8:14).

DIDYMUS. He does not say, from God, or, from the Almighty, but, from the Father, because though the Father and God Almighty are the same, yet the Spirit of truth properly proceeds from God, as the Father, the Begetter. The Father and the Son together send the Spirit of truth: He comes by the will both of the Father and the Son.

THEOPHYL. Elsewhere He says that the Father sends the Spirit; now He says He does: Whom I will send to you, thus declaring the equality of the Father and the Son. That He might not be thought however to be opposed to the Father, and to be another and rival source, as it were, of the Spirit, He adds, From the Father, i.e., the Father agreeing, and taking an equal part in sending Him. When it is said that He proceeds, do not understand His procession to be an external mission, such as is given to ministering spirits, but a certain peculiar, and distinct procession, such as is true of the Holy Spirit alone. To proceed is not the same as being sent, but is the essential nature of the Holy Ghost, as coming from the Father.

AUG. If it be asked here whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son also, we may answer thus: The Son is the Son of the Father alone, and the Father is the Father of the Son only; but the Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of one, but of both; since Christ Himself said, The Spirit of your Father which speaks in you (Mat 10:20). And the Apostle says, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts (Gal 4:6). This indeed, I think, is the reason why He is called peculiarly the Spirit. For both of the Father and the Son separately we may pronounce, that each is a Spirit. But what each is separately in a general sense, He who is not either one separately, but the union of both, is spiritually. But if the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, why should we not believe that He proceeds from the Son? Indeed if He did not proceed from the Son, Christ would not after the resurrection have breathed on His disciples, and said, Receive you the Holy Ghost. This too is what is meant by the virtue which went out of Him, and healed all. If the Holy Ghost then proceeds both from the Father and the Son, why does Christ say, Who proceeds from the Father? He says it in accordance with His general way of referring all that He has to Him from whom He is; as where He says, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If the doctrine was His, which He says was not His own, but the Father's, much more does the Holy Spirit proceed from Him, consistently with His proceeding from the Father. From whom the Son has His Godhead, from Him He has it that the Holy Ghost proceeds from Him. And this explains why the Holy Ghost is not said to be born, but to proceed. For if He were born, He would be the Son of both Father and Son, an absurd supposition; for if two together have a Son, those two must be father and mother. But to imagine any such relation as this between God the Father, and God the Son, is monstrous. Even the human offspring does not proceed from father or mother at the same time; when it proceeds from the father, it does not proceed from the mother. Whereas the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Father into the Son, and from the Son into the creature to be sanctified; but proceeds from Father and Son at once. And if the Father is life, and the Son is life, so the Holy Ghost is life also. Just then as the Father when He had life in Himself, gave also to the Son to have life in

Himself; so He gave to the Son also that life should proceed from Him, even as it proceeded from Himself.

AUG. After the promise of the Holy Spirit, to inspire them with strength to give witness; He well adds, These things have I spoken to you, that you should not be offended. For when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us (Romans 5:5), then great peace have they that love God's law, and they are not offended at it (Psalms 118).

What they were about to suffer follows next: They shall put you out of the synagogues.

CHRYS. For the Jews had already agreed, if any confessed that He was Christ, that he should be put out of the synagogue.

AUG. But what evil was it to the Apostles to be put out of the Jewish synagogues, which they would have gone out of, even if none had put them out? Our Lord wished to make known to them, that the Jews were about not to receive Him, while they on the other hand were not going to desert Him. There was no other people of God beside the seed of Abraham; if they acknowledged Christ, the Churches of Christ would be none other than the synagogues of the Jews. But inasmuch as they refused to acknowledge Him, nothing remained but that they should put out of the synagogue those who would not forsake Christ.

He adds: But the time comes that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. Is this intended for a consolation, as if they would so take to heart their expulsion from the synagogues, that death would be a positive relief to them after it? God forbid that they who sought God's glory, not men's, should be so disturbed. The meaning of the words is this: They shall put you out of the synagogue, but do not be afraid of being left alone. Separated from their assemblies, you shall assemble so many in my name, that they, fearing that the temple and rites of the old law will be deserted, will kill you and think to do God service thereby, having a zeal for God but not according to knowledge.

These who kill are the same with those who put out of the synagogues, viz. the Jews. For Gentiles would not have thought that they were doing God service, by killing Christ's witnesses, but their own false gods; whereas every one of the Jews, who killed the preacher of Christ, thought he was doing God service, believing that whoever was converted to Christ, deserted the God of Israel.

CHRYS. Then He consoles them: And all these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father nor Me. As if He said, Let this consolation content you.

AUG. And He mentions these things beforehand, because trials, however soon to pass away, when they come upon men unprepared for them, are very overwhelming: But these things have I told you, that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them: the hour, the hour of darkness, the hour of night. But the night of the Jews was not allowed to mix with or darken the day of the Christians.

CHRYS. And He predicted these trials for another reason, viz. that they might not say that He had not foreseen them; That you may remember that I told you of them, or that He had only spoken to please them, and given false hopes. And the reason is added why He

did not reveal these things sooner: And these things I said not to you at the beginning, because I was with you; because, that is, you were in My keeping, and might ask when you pleased, and the whole battle rested upon Me. There was no need then to tell you these things at the first, though I myself knew them.

AUG. In the other three Evangelists these predictions occur before the supper; John gives them after. Still if they relate them as given very near His Passion, that is enough to explain His saying, These things I said not to you at the beginning. Matthew however relates these prophecies as given long before His Passion, on the occasion of His choosing the twelve. How do we reconcile this with our Lord's words? By supposing them to apply to the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the testimony He would give amidst their suffering. This was what He had not told them at the beginning, and that because He was with them, and His presence was a sufficient consolation. But as He was about to depart, it was meet that He should tell them of His coming, by whom the love of God would be shed abroad in their hearts, to preach the word of God with boldness.

CHRYS. Or, He had foretold that they should suffer scourgings, but not that their death could be thought doing God service; which was the strangest thing of all. Or, He there told them what they would suffer from the Gentiles, here what from the Jews.

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