

**OVIDIUS UNIVERSITY CONSTANTA
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
DOCTORAL FIELD THEOLOGY**

THESIS

Summary

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**The Person of the Logos and the Current
Awareness of the Importance of
Subjectivizing the Fruits of His Sacrifice in
the Church
through the Holy Sacraments**

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Man, a dichotomous being , created by God out of love, could not be left to sin and implicitly to death, for which reason, God forever decides his salvation, promising him as Redeemer. Of course, man, over time, felt the need to obtain divine forgiveness, as evidenced by the existence of sacrifices in all world religions, but they did not have the ability to free man from the bondage of sin, because they did not ontologically change human nature.

Through the incarnate Logos, the Father manifests his absolute love for the crown of creation, through the absolute love that is intertwined with the Son. He being the Father of the Logos, through the incarnation he becomes the Father of the whole human race, for by the human nature assumed by Christ, we can all become sons of God, not by being, but by grace.

The fact that Orthodox theology, unlike other theologies, speaks of a Personal God , denotes that only in Christianity is man by creation a person capable of dialogue and love. If philosophy and psychology define the person as a simple individual, marked by his own egocentrism, theology starting from the personal character of the Father highlights the Son as a deity with the Father and the Spirit and especially as a Person through his own works, and the Holy Spirit as a deity with the Father and with the Son, as special as the Hypostasis by work. By this is meant the existential unity of God, Who defines Himself triune in Persons.

Without this personal character of God, He would be limited in Himself. The fact that God is the Trinity of Persons is the foundation for the theology according to which man is eternal, for being "in the image of God," he naturally tends to eternity.

The whole creation is the work of the Holy Trinity, for the Father creates through the Son in the Holy Spirit. Hence the consubstantiality between the Triumphant Hypostases on the one hand, and the fact that the Logos is the Image of the Father "by whom all things were made" (John 1: 3). There is nothing created that is not common to the Hypostases of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, it is said that all of the Father is also of the Son, the latter being in a state of continuous creation. "My Father works, and I work" (John 5:17).

According to St. John, its purpose is revealed in the mystery of the incarnation of the Son, for all who understood the message of the prophets, and received Christ, "gave them power to become sons of God" (John 1:12). The assumption of our nature by the Son of God represents the beginning of the salvation of the human race, because in Him our nature becomes obedient to the Father. This power by which man can become a son

of God by grace, is offered by the Logos objectively to all through the grace of the Holy Sacraments. This grace from God gives man the objective possibility of actually reaching the state of "god by grace" (John 10:34).

For the work of redemption to be universal, it was imperative that the supreme Bishop be God and Man, for the redemption of the human race from the bondage of disobedience and sin was not accessible only to man. That is why the apostle emphasizes: "One is God, and one is the Mediator between God and men: the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2: 5).

A particularly important aspect to be emphasized is that Christ, assuming our nature, makes it fully obedient, and by His sacrifice obtains the forgiveness of all, for only He "the bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:49), can offer the deification of nature. That is why the Savior clearly states that "He who eats this bread will live forever" (John 6:50), and this bread of which he speaks is His very body, offered to all through the Eucharist. Moreover, Christ, the true God and full Man, gives us the absolute guarantee that "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him" (John 6:56).

Christ can give such a guarantee of the possibility of man's deification, for by recapitulating in His Person our nature and making it conform to the divine will, he offers him the gift of deification, but which every man can enjoy by acquiring the fruits of the High Priest's sacrifice.

The understanding of the threefold ministry performed by the Son of God, prophesied since Moses and fulfilled "in the fullness of time" (Gal. 4: 4), can have many positive values in today's society. If every man obeys Christ's exhortation to the love of neighbor proved in an absolute sense by Him through His sacrifice for us, to justice, freedom, society will know these values that cannot be negotiated.

It is the Church that fights today for the preservation and development of these values whose usefulness is demonstrated by Christ, giving the people through the Holy Sacraments the grace necessary for such a work. Through the grace offered to the world, the Spirit of Christ Himself is the One who works constantly, sharing with all who desire His rich gifts and implicitly prolongs the body of Christ in believers through the Eucharist, protecting them from all the devices of the devil.

The fall into the first sin, disobedience to God's only command to the forefathers, had severe consequences for man, one of which was the loss of grace. Human experience without the grace of God because of sin, so the removal of our nature willed

by God, he has had adverse consequences and today our nature, nature created to participate in eternal life through love of the Holy Trinity.

The personal powers of man, who through the absence of grace came to believe in himself God, would prove powerless in raising human nature to the first state. However, being created out of love, and being the crown of all creation, man was not allowed by God to perish, but decides from eternity, through His foreknowledge, the incarnation of His Son, precisely so that man may be alive. "For the love wherewith he loved us, God hath made us alive, even unto death, by our trespasses" (Eph. 2: 4-5).

It should be noted that by the kenotic act Christ, though God, did not come into the world to put us under His glory, but came "gentle and humble," precisely to teach us gentleness and humility, so that human nature may desire ascension to God by itself, of course aided by the fruits of Christ's righteousness and resurrection. As a result through His humility, the Son of God wants our exaltation, and the sacrifice and resurrection proves all that He assumed human nature may rise as a result of obedience to Heavenly Father.

One cannot speak of salvation, of the deification of human nature without sacrifice. The old law taught the people that a sacrifice of blood is necessary for forgiveness, for this alone is cleansing (Hebrews 9:22). The atoning sacrifice performed once a year was one of blood, but its exteriority to the ontological nature of man proved that it cannot bring about changes in human nature and thus cannot bring about God's forgiveness.

Sacrifice was imperative, and its objective fruits can be appropriated by every man who desires and works for his own deification. That is why St. Paul tells the Colossians, "If ye then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Colossians 3: 1).

The effect of Christ's death and resurrection has no end. He convinced everyone that it was the Son of God who overcame death, being Life itself. This confession will be made permanently until the end of the ages, and its fruits are conducive to salvation. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10: 9).

The effective relationship between death and resurrection is clearly explained by the Apostle Paul, who says: "What a foolish man you are! He that soweth to his soul shall not live, but he shall die" (I Cor. 15:36). In other words, life can only be reached through death, so it is imperative that today's society does not perceive this earthly death

as an end in the nihilistic sense, because according to the resurrection of Christ, a historically proven fact, we will be we live in the kingdom of God, if during our lives we have each acquired as much as possible the fruits of objective salvation.

The resurrection is therefore the most precious gift God has given to humanity. Through the resurrection of Christ, victory over death is offered to all believers. "But let us give thanks to God, who has given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15, 57) says the Apostle of the Corinthians. Victory over death, of course, refers to the spiritual death to which all of Adam's followers were condemned as a result of disobedience. This victory gives man true freedom, for by resurrecting Christ as He said before His passion, He has risen for our nature, so that fallen man may again strive for perfection, for deification .

Through the resurrection of Christ and implicitly through the ontological change of our nature towards the doing of good, Christianity manages to renew the world immersed in disobedience, sin and death. The body, which according to pagan philosophy would decompose as a corruptible thing, by the resurrection of the Son of God it becomes incorruptible, capable of resurrection. That is why the great Paul says, "But I say unto you, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit corruption " (I Cor. 15:50), then he points out that these corruptible bodies, of which everything speaks. faith and philosophy that do not know God will rise as incorruptible: "We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:51). .

Through the act of the resurrection of Christ, a new era actually begins, one that is no longer under the tyranny of death, all humanity being invited to the new eternal life in the love of the Holy Trinity. Through the resurrection, each person is called to deification, through the work of good works as a result of free co-operation with divine grace.

Man's rationality can in no way accept the idea that everything ends for him here, in this material. The dichotomy of the human being requires of itself a continuity based on the prerogatives of eternity. These can only be thought of in God, the absolute source of all creation. Without this relation of man to God, no real meaning of man can be conceived, and all his valences, such as dichotomy, reason, the ability to respond to the love of God and fellow men, would all be useless.

From the contemplation of the resurrection of Christ, and implicitly of the human nature assumed by Him, we realize the height to which our nature can rise by renouncing sin. Giving our nature permanently to God's will has the effect of elevating it beyond what the rationality of the world can explain.

According to Orthodox theology, the death and resurrection of Christ and implicitly of the human nature assumed by Him, represent one and the same mystery. This mystery, eternally known by God, ontologically changes the human nature, which shifts its egocentric attention from its own nature, to the ever deeper deepening of God, through death and resurrection.

Death was absolutely necessary. Only through it are the affections of sin removed from human nature, which is strengthened and developed in the grace of God, which makes human nature in accordance with the divine will, that is, free and not subject to corruption. Through the resurrection of Christ, human nature passes from the level of the creature to a transcendental, superhistorical level, the whole of humanity being called to the "table of the Master" in the kingdom of God. It follows that the resurrection is a reality that by its nature exceeds the possibility of understanding human experience. Through the resurrection Christ preserves the body before the resurrection, for his body is not left in the grave, but this body is now fully spiritualized.

The recapitulative ontological aspect underlies the understanding of objective and subjective salvation. It presents salvation as the second creation, through which man is restored to the first state, now being able to obey God and at the same time being able to work for his own salvation by accomplishing good deeds, according to the divine will. Objective salvation is accomplished by the Son of God, beginning with the act of the incarnation, and ends with the ascension to heaven, where our nature is raised in the Hypostasis of the Logos in the bosom of the Holy Trinity. So, objective salvation is accomplished by the Son of God, so that all may enjoy its fruits, and begins with the teaching activity of Christ (John 14: 6), continues with that of Hierarch of the whole human race (Matthew 26). , 26-28) and ends with the royal dignity (Rev. 12, 10; 11. 15).

Starting from the idea that the whole creation is the work of the Holy Trinity, we can say that the Father creates through the Son in the Holy Spirit. If the Father creates, He does everything through the Son, for the Scripture says, "All things were made by him, and without him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life ..." (John 1: 3-4). Also, the Holy Spirit is no stranger to the act of creation, for the Holy Scriptures actually highlight the action he exercises in this act: "And the earth was without form

and void. It was dark upon the deep, and the Spirit of God was upon the waters ”(Acts 1: 2).

Without relating the reasons created to Christ, they come and go nowhere. One cannot conceive of something created without the Logos being the cause and at the same time the goal to which it tends. Even if the created reasons have in themselves the desire to tend to the Supreme Reason, it must still be mentioned that there is a difference between the Uncreated and the created. If all creatures move, God remains motionless, being the center of all, drawing them all to Himself.

Having in the act of creation in himself the Image of God, man naturally tends towards the resemblance to Him, starting from the defining elements he proves, elements such as freedom and rationality. Communion and communication with God must be accomplished through their full exercise, for the Creator does not oblige the human being to participate in the love of the Holy Trinity by coercion.

The special element that man receives through the creative act is the dignity of a person, the only one that can be described as capable of dialogue, both with his fellows and with God. Moreover, man carrying in himself the Image of God, is able to receive fully consciously the divine love and to respond to this love in the full freedom of the will.

In the case of the ancestors, the free will with which man was endowed, chose to say yes to temptation, and this choice involves submission to temptation, consent to it. Through this obedience, man chooses to give up the state of grace in which he was, and the love relationship he lived with God, for an idea: that of knowing good and evil; that of being like God.

Likewise today, man has the wrong tendency to unite his heart and mind with the materiality of this world, being aware of the possibility of the final loss of God, as a result of accepting sin and implicitly the death of body and soul.

By the first disobedience, man did not know what could happen to him, in the sense that he had not experienced anything of what it means to lack grace and thus to turn away from God. Today, however, man is aware of the consequences of falling into sin, but for various reasons, often without foundation, he chooses not to rise above the materiality of the world, thus condemning his body and soul to suffering and death.

Therefore, the loss of grace has largely reduced the possibility of man attaining the likeness of God, hence not only the fall of man, but also of all creation. The world, as

creation for man, is one of the gifts of the Creator for the crown of creation. This is the environment created by God for the manifestation of interpersonal dialogue and love between human beings, and once realized, will be transposed into the divine plan.

According to the theology of the Holy Fathers, through the act of the incarnation, the human nature in the Hypostasis of the Logos potentially receives deification or salvation. Although the hypostatic union demonstrates that the human nature assumed by Christ is made according to the will of the Father, yet it does not change in essence, remaining just as human. In other words, in Christ, human nature rises to the height of the glory for which it was created by God through obedience to the Father, but this does not mean a change of nature.

Between the human nature and the divine nature of the Person of Christ there is a perfect co-operation demonstrated throughout the historical life of the Logos. Thus, each of the natures works in a single thought, but each retaining its properties. In other words, the human hand is the one that comes closest to man, because with the bodily hand Christ raises the daughter of Jairus, but the divine nature raises her. Although he cries like a man when he sees Lazarus in the tomb, God commands him to rise and go out.

The human nature assumed by Christ through hypostatic union is gradually penetrated by the power of the Spirit, rising to the state of deification. It follows that the deification of all humanity begins in potency through the act of the incarnation, it being fully realized through the unique sacrifice of the Bishop of all on Golgotha.

Therefore, the salvation of man and implicitly the renewal of the whole creation in Christ begins with the act of the incarnation of the Son of God. Through the saving work, man receives again the divine grace and implicitly the possibility that by working with him to grow spiritually through faith and the work of good works, so that the result is the deification according to grace.

Through the resurrection of Christ, His human nature reaches its maximum potential, over which, if it had passed, it would have ceased to be human. Therefore, ontological growth is perfect. The human nature of Christ is now deified and so rises to the right hand of the Father. This state of deification is possible for believers who participate in the body of Christ in the Church through the Holy Sacraments, because through them the Son of God remains in maximum closeness to man.

The deification of man by grace is possible with the sacrifice and resurrection of the Son of God, descended into the world, among men, so that man may rise to God, that is, to the state of salvation. Therefore, through the sacrifice of the Logos, objective

salvation is achieved which does not become subjective without the freely consented cooperation of man with divine grace.

Through the sacrifice of Christ the first disobedience is forgiven to man by God, so that the new man in Christ, strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is united with Christ through the Holy Sacraments.

Relating the deification of human nature to the act of justification performed on Golgotha, we can say that it is the state of glory of the righteous man, healed in Christ. Moreover, through divine grace, man experiences a gradual growth through which he becomes fully aware of the need for faith and good deeds as tools for acquiring the state of deification.

Today's Christians understand that through the Sacrament of Baptism the will of man is the first power which is strengthened by Christ, and being freed from the yoke of sin, he can work the necessities according to the divine will. It should be noted that this co-operation with grace is freely consented to by man, for God does not compel him to be forced to deify. The grace received by every man through Holy Baptism represents the first step that underlies the beginning of deification. Having this power of the will strengthened by Christ through divine grace, man begins the continuous path of formation of his own character, so that he works and wills in full freedom the will of God.

It is obvious that without the absolute penetration of human life by Christ through the Holy Spirit, one cannot speak of the perfection of the human person. As a result of sin, human powers have been limited, so we cannot say that we are fully aware of what human nature is capable of. What we know for sure is that all the evil deeds, which are based on pride and self-love, which leads to an exaggerated egocentrism, are those that cut off man's desire to ascend to God through perfection, turning man into a matter incapable of to feel and to love.

From the presented results that the first element, which places man on the road to deification, is the restoration of human nature by the effective removal of acts contrary to nature. This removal from sin can be accomplished not only by the simple will of man, but it is absolutely necessary to cooperate with divine grace. Once nourished by grace, the human person can keep himself in a state of dialogue and love with God.

The state of deification of man begins as I said with the stage of receiving divine grace in the Church through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. This first state represents the basis from which man starts on the path of spiritual growth, a path on which man

uses both his natural powers and the help of divine grace, which strengthens man's natural powers.

The important effect to remember of this collaboration for contemporary man is that the path of collaboration between human will and divine grace results in the acquisition of virtues and implicitly of enlightenment. In this process of deification, the natural powers of man are in a continuous development, to the state beyond which if they passed, they would transcend the boundaries of humanity.

This research topic is very important in today's society, which, marked by secularization and consumerism, wants to transform the human being by defining him as an individual. This modern definition of man isolates him in egocentrism, man gradually losing his dignity as a person capable of communion and love that the Creator Himself gave him as a gift.

Only by understanding God's love for man, love manifested until death on the cross, as the Holy Apostle Paul says, does man realize that his purpose is not a material one, and that life cannot end in this materiality. The spiritual part of man demands the ascension to the spiritual experience that man can experience and understand, only by understanding the sacrifice of the Son of God, whose objective fruits can subjectivize them through personal effort and grace, so in the Church through the Holy Sacraments, thus reaching the state of deification by grace.

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