

Holy Trinity and justification in the patristic interpretation of Paul

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I. Paul's theology

A) A definition of justification by faith

Paul's doctrine of justification finds its representative formulations in the *loci classici* of his Epistles to the *Galatians* and to the *Romans* (Gal. 2:15–21 Rom. 1:16–17; 3:21–31; 9:30–10:4 see also Philip. 3:1–11). In these texts Paul associates the concept of *justification* (δικαι* words) with that of *faith in Christ* (πίστις Χριστοῦ) and opposes it to the concepts of *sin* (ἁμαρτία), *boast* (καύχησις) and the *deeds of the law* (ἔργα νόμου). In these epistles Paul argues with those Judaizers who criticized him for accepting Gentiles in the church without performing the *deeds of the law* (ἔργα νόμου, i.e. without having been circumcised, respecting the Sabbath or fasting, etc.) that the crucial point of the relationship between God and humanity is not the *deeds of the law*, but rather faith in Christ.

B) The misunderstanding

Paul's specific teaching was not new, because its most important elements are already present in the Old Testament. Paul emphasized these elements in order to describe the gifts that were procured by the redemptive death of Jesus and thus to solve several ecclesiological problems. There are still many theologians, however, already from the early patristic era until today, who have misunderstood the character of this doctrine. The main point of this misunderstanding has to do with the so-called forensic character of justification. It was especially through Augustine and the Augustinian monk Luther, that justification was understood only as a change of the human status before God. The human being can never be righteous. Even after one's baptism, one remains a sinner, while God's Grace reckons one as righteous because of his redemption from his sins, which he received through the saving sacrifice of Jesus. This understanding is expressed through Luther's famous formula: *simul justus et peccator*. This interpretation presents human justification not as a transformation of human existence by the grace of the Spirit, but only as a mere decision of a Divine Judge whereby, i.e. through an act of grace, he determines that an unrighteous individual may be reckoned as righteous because of the work of Jesus. Justification, then, has nothing to do with the work of the Spirit in the human existence, but it rather presupposes a strict differentiation between the Spirit and the Grace of God.

C) Justification in other terms

Paul's perception of justification, however, does not only have a forensic meaning and is not only combined with the eschatological redemption from our sins through Jesus' redemptive sacrifice. Justification according to faith is not only a change of status whereby righteousness remains something alien to human existence. It belongs to an effective and dynamic process, which Paul describes as *new creation* (2 Cor. 5:17 and Gal. 6:15) or as *transformation* (Rom. 12:2 2 Cor. 3:18) and moreover it happens through the relation of the

Baptized both with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Through Baptism the human being receives the Gift of the renewal of the Holy Spirit, which transforms him into a *new human being* (2 Cor. 3:18 the opposite: *παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος* Rom. 6:6). This transformation has to do precisely with justification, which happens through the holy baptism. In 1 Cor. 6:11, Paul describes such a concept of effective justification in the name of the Son and in the Spirit of God: ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιασθήτε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν [= you were baptized, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God]. What Paul says in 1 Cor. was exactly what the Christians in Corinth¹ had heard and experienced through their baptism ceremony as the Trinitarian blessing².

D) Justification and the Spirit

That common belief and experience of the early Church was to be the starting point of Paul's developed formulations in his later letters to the Romans and the Galatians about justification. Actually, the Spirit does not appear in the *loci classici* on justification in these Epistles, because Paul formulated his theology in a different context than that of 1 Cor. He wants to give an answer to his adversaries about the admission of Gentiles to the church without circumcision (Galatians) and also to look back on his missionary work amongst the Gentiles (Romans). However, in several other cases the Spirit appears to be directly connected with the concept of justification through faith³.

Here are some relevant texts:

(The first one has already been mentioned.)

1 Cor. 6:11 Καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε· ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιασθήτε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν [=And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God].

In the second text, Paul uses δικαιοσύνη as a synonym for the Spirit and in the other three cases, the word δικαιοσύνη is again connected with the Spirit (πνεῦμα).

2 Cor. 3:7–9 Εἰ δὲ ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν γράμμασιν ἐντετυπωμένη λίθοις ἐγενήθη ἐν δόξῃ, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι ἀτενίσαι τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον Μωϋσέως διὰ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ τὴν καταργουμένην, πῶς οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἡ διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος ἔσται ἐν δόξῃ; εἰ γὰρ τῇ διακονίᾳ

¹ See also U. Mauser, Trinitarische Sprachformen in den Korintherbriefen des Paulus, in: J. Adna (Hg.), Evangelium. Schriftauslegung. Kirche, Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher zum 65. Geburtstag, Göttingen 1997, S. 288–295 and U. Mauser, One God and Trinitarian Language in the Letters of Paul, *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 20 (1998) 99–108.

² See also Didache 7:1–5. There are several other 'triadic' formulations in Paul's letters: 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 1:21–22; 2 Cor. 3:3; Gal. 3:11–14; Rom. 8:11; 14:17–18; 15:16; 15:30 (see also in the so called Deutero-pauline 2 Thess. 2:13–14; Col. 1:6–8). See Katherine Grieb, People of God, Body of Christ, Koinonia of Spirit: The Role of Ethical Ecclesiology in Paul's »Trinitarian« Language, *ATR* 87 (2005) 232.

³ Paul also tries to solve the ecclesiological problem which is caused because of committing the Gentiles to the Church by emphasizing the communion of the one Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13): «καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν, εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες εἴτε δούλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἑποτίσθημεν» [=By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit]. About the unity of Jews and Gentiles through the power of the Spirit and the unity of Christ and his church in the power of the Spirit see Rom. 15:1–13 and 1 Cor. 6:12–20.

τῆς κατακρίσεως δόξα, πολλῶ μᾶλλον περισσεύει ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης δόξη. [=But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory.]

Rom. 8:10 *Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην.* [=And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.]

Rom. 14:17 *Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ βρώσις καὶ πόσις ἀλλὰ δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ χαρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.* [= for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.]

Gal. 5:5 *Ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα* [= For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.]

The same connection can also be found in the so called deutero-pauline literature:

1 Tim. 3:16 *Καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον. ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι, ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις, ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν, ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ, ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ* [= And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was justified (or resurrected) in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.]

In two cases we cannot be sure if by using the term πνεῦμα Paul means Holy Spirit or the human inner being. However, all the above cases indicate that it would be a great mistake to forget Paul's Pneumatology when we analyze his formulations about justification by faith. Not only in 1 Cor. 6:11, but also elsewhere, Paul uses ritual formulas of the primitive church which have to do with an explicit Trinitarian teaching. He ends his second letter to the Corinthians with the following prayer: Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν. *Ἀμήν* = *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the koinonia of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.* This epilogue presupposes that such Trinitarian formulas and Theology belong to the basic knowledge and faith of the primitive Church⁴, where the Holy Spirit participates in an active way not only in the process of justification, but also in the life of the Church and in the regeneration of the whole creation (Rom. 8:21).

I have already cited the position of many modern theologians who argue that Spirit does not have anything to do with the Pauline concept of justification by Faith in Christ, where actually the crucial point is the combination between the concepts of justification and faith. But, how could such an argument be real when Paul himself describes not only *justification* but also *faith* and *confession* as a Gift of the Spirit? The faith, which leads to justification, is also given by the same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:9); nobody can proclaim Christ to be Lord without the enabling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3) and faith again leads to the promise of the Spirit: Gal. 3:14 *ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ γένηται ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως* [= *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* See also

⁴ In this context we can as well understand what Paul writes in Rom. 1:4 about Jesus *who was declared as the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord* (=τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει, κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης, ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). This Pauline text could also help us understanding the formulation we have mentioned from the deutero-pauline literature: ἐδικαιώθη ἐν Πνεύματι.

Gal 3:2; 5:5]. All significant concepts which Paul combines with justification are also joined with the Spirit: the *Gospel* (1 Thes. 1:5), the *circumcision of the heart* (Rom. 2:29), *Freedom* (2 Cor. 3:17), *adoption* (Gal. 4:6) and *Grace* (2 Cor. 13:13) appear together with or come from the same Spirit. Therefore we can understand justification only in the context of the Pauline teaching concerning the work of the Spirit in the transformation of the baptized to a new being in Christ.

II. Paul's reception and the apostolic authors

It is not only Paul who understands justification in a pneumatological context. In Paul's reception by the so-called deuteropauline literature we have texts, which underline the work of the Spirit in our redemption. In the epistles to the *Ephesians* and the *Colossians*⁵ as well as in the *Pastoral letters*, we have relevant references to the theology of the early church on the role of the Spirit in human salvation. In several relevant passages of deuteropauline literature, appear all three persons of the Trinity:

Eph. 2:18 ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ [i.e. Χριστοῦ] ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα [=for through Him (i.e. Christ) we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father]. Naturally, the authors did not use the terms of the later dogmatic doctrine on the Holy Trinity [e.g. τριάς, πρόσωπον], but the understanding, at this point, is Trinitarian.

The Letter to the Hebrews connects Jesus' blood, the Holy Spirit and God's Grace in an interesting way (Hebr. 10:29): Πόσω δοκεῖτε χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας ὁ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καταπατήσας καὶ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης κοινὸν ἡγησάμενος, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθῇ, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας; [= *How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve, who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of Grace?*] Grace and justification are not only connected with Jesus' sacrifice, but also with the Spirit.

The Apostolic Fathers continue in the same direction, combining the new era of justification with the presence of the Spirit: The author of the 1st Letter of Clement of Rome asks (46:6): Οὐχὶ ἓνα θεὸν ἔχομεν, καὶ ἓνα Χριστὸν, καὶ ἐν πνεύμα τῆς χάριτος, τὸ ἐκχυθὲν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς; [= *Have we not all one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us?*]⁶ Once more in the theology of the early church the Spirit is combined with God's Grace. But the Spirit is not a gift that remains in the human existence without the human free will and response. Hermas requests his addressees to avoid *chagrining the Holy Spirit which dwells in us, lest He withdraws from us* (Mandate 10 2:5–6 μὴ θλίβε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τὸ ἐν σοὶ κατοικοῦν μήποτε ἐντεύξηται κατὰ σοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἀποστῇ ἀπὸ σοῦ)⁷. In another point Hermas exhorts (Similitude 5 7:1): Τὴν σάρκα σου ταύτην φύλασσε καθαρὰν καὶ ἀμίαντον ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ κατοικῇσιν ἐν αὐτῇ μαρτυρήσῃ αὐτῇ καὶ δικαιωθῇ σου ἡ σὰρξ=Keep your flesh pure and stainless,

⁵ Eph. 1:13–14: «ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ,¹⁴ ὃς ἐστὶν ἀρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας ὑμῶν, εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως, εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ». Tit. 3:4–7 «Ὅτε δὲ ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλάνθρωπία ἐπεφάνη τοῦ σωτῆρος ὑμῶν θεοῦ, οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὧν ἐποίησαμεν ἡμεῖς, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸν αὐτοῦ ἔλεον ἔσωσεν ἡμᾶς, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου, οὗ ἐξέχεεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς πλουσίως, διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ὑμῶν, ἵνα δικαιωθέντες τῇ ἐκείνου χάριτι, κληρονόμοι γενώμεθα κατ' ἐλπίδα ζωῆς αἰωνίου».

⁶ Justin the martyr names it »spiritual genre« (Dialogue with Trypho 11:5). More relevant mentions see in 1 Clem. 58:2 and Martyrdom of Polycarp 22:1.

⁷ See also Mandate 5 1:1–4 and 10 3:1f.

that the Spirit that inhabits it may bear witness to it, and your flesh may be justified. The similarity to Paul's expressions in 1 Cor. 6 is amazing⁸. While Paul explains to the first Christians that the Spirit lives in them and their body is the Spirit's temple, he also means that this Spirit makes them righteous and by sinning they dismiss the Spirit among his gifts. For the apostolic Church the Spirit is and makes us righteous. It is called by the apostolic fathers *πνεῦμα δίκαιον* and the first community is named together as *συναγωγή δικαίων ἐχόντων πίστιν θεοῦ Πνεύματος*. It is exactly that which Paul calls *koinonia* of the Spirit (2 Cor. 13,13)⁹.

III. The first four centuries

After the apostolic era, no important development in the Christian authors on the point we examine is observed up until the fourth century. The church fathers repeat the biblical formulations, or the teaching of the apostolic fathers¹⁰. Both the concept of effective justification and that of the work of the Spirit in the process of justification appear in their writings¹¹.

A) Against Pneumatomachians

In the fourth century, however, the question of the role of the Holy Spirit in human justification becomes a subject of primary importance. The reason is obvious: the Greek fathers were confronted with pneumatomachians who denied the full divinity of the Spirit, and they, i.e. the Fathers, were engaged to prove that the Spirit was the third person of the Trinity and had exactly the same divine nature as the Father and the Son. By arguing that human beings are justified not only through the will of the Father because of the death of his Son, but also through the work of the Spirit, they proved the divinity of the Spirit.

Epiphanius of Cyprus is the first one to emphasize this thesis. In his interpretation of Rom. 8:4, he argues that both the Son and the Spirit appear to be present in the righteous: (Adv. Haer. 7²⁷–318⁸ » Ἀλλ' οἶμαι ἀμφοτέρα κατοικεῖν ἐν τῷ δικαίῳ ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ«). Epiphanius mentions that the best argument for proving that the Spirit is God in the fullest sense, is the biblical verse we have already cited 1 Tim. 3:16. Exegetically, we cannot be sure about what »Spirit« means here. However, many Fathers use this verse in their polemic against the Pneumatomachians¹². If the Spirit can justify the Son, then, he is truly God, God

⁸ See also U. Mauser, Trinitarische Sprachformen in den Korintherbriefen des Paulus, in: J. Adna (Hg.), Evangelium. Schriftauslegung. Kirche, Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher zum 65. Geburtstag, Göttingen 1997, S. 294–295.

⁹ See also Phil. 3,3: »Ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἐσμὲν ἡ περιτομή, οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες«.

¹⁰ Clemens, Stromata 7, 14,87: »Διόπερ ἐδικαιώθητε φησὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου· ἐποιήθητε ὡς εἶπεν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δίκαιοι [εἶναι] ὡς αὐτός, καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ ὡς ἐνὶ μάλιστα κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνεκράθητε«.

¹¹ Hippolyt makes a parable and mentions that saints are justified through the Spirit as if it has been affected on them like wine (M. Briere–L. Maries–B.-C. Mercier, De benedictionibus Isaaci et Jacobi, Sur les benedictions d'Isaac, de Jacob: PO 27 (1954) 26, 12–13: »Τοὺς ἁγίους διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὡς οἶνω δικαιουμένους«.

¹² Theodoret, De incarnatione domini: PG 75, 1469D: »Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκὶ, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν Πνεύματι, ὥφθη ἀγγέλοις, ἐκηρύχθη ἔθνεσιν, ἐπιστώθη ἐν κόσμῳ, ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ. Καὶ τὴν μὲν φανέρωσιν συνέζευξε τῇ σαρκί, τὴν δὲ δικαίωσιν κατὰ τὴν τῶν αἰρετικῶν ἀβελτηρίαν· ἐδικαιώθη δὲ τῇ συνεργείᾳ τοῦ Πνεύματος. Ἀρα τὸ δικαιώσαν Πνεῦμα, κρείττον τοῦ δικαιωθέντος Υἱοῦ; Ἀλλ' οὐκέτι ταῦτα οὐκ ἔστι· τὸ γὰρ ἡμέτερον ἐδικαιώθη διὰ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ φανερωθέντος Θεοῦ, δς ἀχωρίστως αὐτῷ συνημμένος, τὴν τε ἄκραν ἐπαίδευσεν ἀρετὴν, καὶ τῶν βελῶν τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἐφύλαξεν ἄγευστον, καὶ ἀμύνητον, καὶ τῆς διαβολικῆς ἀπάτης ὑπέρτερον· καὶ θανάτου πρὸς βραχὺ γεύσασθαι συγχωρήσας, παραυτίκα τῆς ἐκείνου τυραννίδος ἀπῆλλαξε, καὶ τῆς

from God! (Ibid. 3,322¹⁵⁻¹⁹ »Ἀρα θεὸς ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον...θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι. Τούτου μείζον οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν«.) *I have not any better argument than this verse*, says Epiphanius.

The other great fathers of the 4th century continue to argue that the Spirit is God. They also use the other Pauline formulations that were mentioned at the beginning of this presentation.¹³ They also keep joining the concept of Grace not only with Father's will but also with the presence of the Spirit, as the apostolic fathers do. Gregory of Nyssa, one of the most important theologians, who were involved in the controversy on the divinity of the Spirit, identifies the Spirit with Grace,¹⁴. So, we may say that for the fathers when Paul mentioned justification by Grace, he meant not only by God's will but also by God's Spirit.

B) A great variety of opinion

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that in patristic interpretation, we also have a wider variety of views concerning justification. Although patristic opinion emphasizes the role of the Spirit, there are many more formulations in their writings where justification is not linked to the Spirit, but to faith. This does not mean that the Spirit cannot justify; nor that justification is only a forensic process. In some circumstances, they argue that justification is a gift of the Spirit but in many other contexts they present justification as a gift of the faith to Christ. Their reason for doing this is again obvious: When they want to approve that the Spirit is God, they mention that the Spirit justifies us.

In such a context, Cyrill of Alexandria asks: »Ἀρ' οὖν ὡς Θεὸς δικαιοῖ τὸ Πνεῦμα τοὺς ἡμαρτηκότας; Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ὧ ἐταίρε. Θεῷ γὰρ ἂν πρέπτοι καὶ μόνῳ παραβάσεων τε καὶ γραφῆς ἀπολύειν δύνασθαι τοὺς ἐνισχημένους, ἐτέρῳ γε μὴν τῶν ὄντων οὐδενί. Θεὸς δὲ καὶ ἐκ Θεοῦ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ Πνεῦμα δέδεικται...«¹⁵ [= Is it possible for the Spirit to justify as God does? Of course

οικείας αὐτῷ ζωῆς μεταδέδωκε, καὶ εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀνήγαγε, καὶ ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐκάθισεν, καὶ ὄνομα αὐτῷ ἐχαρίσατο τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὄνομα, τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτῷ ἀξίαν δωρησάμενος· καὶ τὴν τῆς φύσεως αὐτοῦ προσηγορίαν λαβὼν, ὧς ἀνθρώπου ὁ προαιώνιος τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος ἡδύοκκην ὀνομάζεσθαι».

¹³ Chrysostom, In epistolam ii ad Corinthios: PG 61, 443D: »Καὶ σκόπει τί ποιεῖ· ἀντέστησε λίθον καρδιά, καὶ γράμμα πνεύματι. Εἴτα δεῖξαι τὰ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων, οὐκέτι τίθησι τὰ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων· ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ γράμματος θεῖς, τὸν θάνατον καὶ τὴν κατακρίσιν, τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος οὐκέτι τίθησι, τὴν ζωὴν καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα· ὅπερ μείζονα ἐποίει τὸν λόγον. Ἡ γὰρ καινὴ Διαθήκη οὐ ζωὴν ἐδίδου μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πνεῦμα ἐχορήγει τὸ τὴν ζωὴν παρέχον«. *Cyrill from Alexandria*, Commentarii in Joannem (ed. P. Pusey, Oxford 1872) Bd. 3, 159–160: »Διὰ Χριστοῦ νοεῖται παιδεύσεις, ἐπεὶ καὶ τῶν τύπων προκρίσεται πάντως ἡ ἀλήθεια, καὶ οἰκέτου Δεσπότης, καὶ τοῦ κατακρίνοντος γράμματος ἡ δικαιοῦσα τοῦ Πνεύματος χάρις«. *Cyrill from Alexandria*, De Sancta Trinitate dialogii: SC 231, 643¹⁻¹⁷: »Ὅς καὶ ἰκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους Καινῆς Διαθήκης, οὐ γράμματος, ἀλλὰ Πνεύματος· τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτεννεῖ, τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ. Ἀρ' οὐ παντὶ τὸ καταφανὲς κἀντεῦθεν ἂν γένοιτο, καὶ λίαν ἀκονίτι, ὡς οἱ μὲν ἀνωθέν τε καὶ παρὰ Θεοῦ λόγοι κατέκρινον τοὺς ἀρχαιότερους, καὶ εἰς αὐτό που τὸ λοίσθον κατεκόμιζον τῶν κακῶν, δικαιοῦσι δὲ νυνὶ καὶ ζωοποιούσιν οἱ Πνεύματος».

¹⁴ Gregory of Nyssa: De Institutio Christiano, in: W. Jaeger (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni opera ascetica*, Leiden, 1952, S. 8, 1.46²²–47¹¹ »Τὴν μὲν γὰρ αἰδίον ζωὴν καὶ τὴν ἄρρητον ἐν οὐρανοῖς εὐφροσύνην ἢ τοῦ πνεύματος δωρεῖται χάρις, τὴν δὲ ἀξίαν τοῦ δέξασθαι τὰ δῶρα καὶ ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς χάριτος ὁ διὰ τῆς πίστεως περὶ τοὺς πόνους ἔρως παρέχει. Συνελθούσαι δὲ εἰς ταῦτόν δικαιοσύνης ἔργον καὶ πνεύματος χάρις, εἰς ἣν συνῆλθον ψυχὴν, ταύτην ζωῆς μακαρίας μετ' ἀλλήλων ἐνέπλησαν».

¹⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, De Sancta Trinitate Dialogi i–vii, (ed. G. Durand): SC 246, Aubert page 647¹²⁻¹⁹. See also Athanasios from Alexandria, Epistola Quator ad Serapionem: PG 26, 529–648, *Cyrill from Alexandria*, Thesaurus: PG 75, 604D: »Καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε, ἀλλ' ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιάσθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν. Οὐκοῦν εἰ

he does, my friends. Because it is the prerogative of God alone to free those entangled in transgressions and the breaking of the law, and not to anybody else. It has been shown, therefore, that the Spirit is both God and from God by nature...] In other contexts where the fathers urge their addressees to remain faithful in order to retain the great gifts of the Son and the Spirit, i.e. justification and sanctification, they emphasize that justification is not only a gift of the Grace of the Spirit, but also the response of human faith.

The greatest interpreter of Holy Scripture in the Orthodox Church, St. John Chrysostom, argues that justification is not only a divine gift: it is a combination of the grace of the Spirit

μόνῳ Θεῷ τὸ ἐξείναι συγχωρεῖν ἁμαρτίας δώσομεν, ἀφήσι δὲ καὶ δικαιοὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα, ἁγίους ἀποδεικνύον τοὺς ἐν οἷς ἂν γένοιτο, Θεὸς ἄρα τὸ τὴν θεῖαν ἐνέργειαν ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ φυσικῶς». *Gregory from Nyssa*, *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii*, in: *W. Jaeger (ed.)*, *Contra Eunomium libri II*, Leiden 1960, p. 10–51.11

»Ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα ἐπίσης ἐνορᾷ ὁ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ὀφθαλμὸς ἐπὶ πατρός καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος. Εἰ δὴ μόνον ἐνὶ τινὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ πίστει παραδοθέντων προσώπων ὁ Εὐνόμιος ταῦτα νέμει, τολμησάτω μὴ ἀληθινὸν εἰπεῖν ἐν λόγοις τὸν εἰπόντα ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀλήθεια, ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ἢ ἀληθινὸν ἐν ἔργοις μὴ συνθέσθω τὸν ποιοῦντα κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐνεργοῦν πάντα ἐν πᾶσι καθὼς βούλεται. Ταῦτα γὰρ εἰ μὴ προσμαρτυροῖ τοῖς παραδοθεῖσιν ἐν τῇ πίστει προσώποις, καθόλου τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν παραγράφεται πίστιν. Πῶς γάρ τις πίστει ἄξιον οἰήσεται τὸν ψευδῆ μὲν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, μὴ ἀληθινὸν δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ;«. See also an identification of Son's and Spirit's nature by *Cyrill from Alexandria*, *Catena in epistulam ad Romanos*, [ed. *J. Cramer*, *Catena Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, vol. 4., Oxford, 1844 (repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1967)], 228²⁴–229¹⁷ »Κυρίλλου. Δυσσεβοῦσι τοιγαροῦν λίαν. Οἱ κτιστὸν εἶναι καὶ γενητόν, ἢ φρονεῖν, ἢ λέγειν ἀποτολμῶντες τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον. Ὡς περ γὰρ οὐχ ἕτερόν τι ἐστὶ παρὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ, οὕτως οὐχ ἕτερόν τι παρὰ τὸν φύσει καὶ ἀληθῶς Θεόν, τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἐν ὑπάρξει νοῆται τῇ καθ' ἑαυτό. καθάπερ ἀμέλει καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Πατήρ, καὶ μέντοι καὶ ὁ Υἱός. Ὅτι γὰρ ἐν ἡμῖν ὄντος τοῦ Πνεύματος, ὁ Υἱὸς ἐν ἡμῖν ἐστί, διὰ τὴν ταυτότητα τῆς οὐσίας· καὶ ὅτι κατὰ φύσιν ἴδιον αὐτοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ, πιστῶσεται γράφων ὁ θεσπέσιος Παῦλος, ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκί, ἀλλ' ἐν Πνεύματι. Εἴπερ Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. Εἰ δέ τις Πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει, οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ. Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, τὸ μὲν σώμα, νεκρὸν διὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν· τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα, ζωὴ διὰ τὴν δικαιοσύνην. Σύνεες οὖν ὅπως Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ λέγων αὐτό, καὶ Χριστὸν ὀνομάζει διὰ τὴν ταυτότητα τῆς οὐσίας. Ὅτε τοίνυν ὡς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ, πῶς ἂν εἴη γενητόν, Θεοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ὄντος τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ὁμοουσίου τῷ Πατρί; Τοῦ αὐτοῦ. Δέχου οὖν μοι καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ὀρθὰς περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος τὰς ἐννοίας. Ἰνα δὴ καὶ ἐκμάθοις αὐτὸ τῆς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ὑπάρχον οὐσίας, καὶ τῆς μιάς θεότητος, οὐκ ἄλλότριον. Πνεῦμα γὰρ ἀποκαλέσας αὐτὸ Θεοῦ, εὐθὺς αὐτὸ καὶ Πνεῦμα λέγει Χριστοῦ. Δεικνύων μὲν ὅτι πάντα τὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἴδια, διαβαίνει φυσικῶς καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεννηθέντα Υἱόν. Χριστὸν δὲ πάλιν εὐθὺς τὸ Πνεῦμα καλεῖ, λέγων, εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν δεικνὺς οὐκ ἄλλότριον αὐτὸ τῆς τοῦ Λόγου φύσεως. Ἀλλ' οὕτως ἡνωμένον, εἰ καὶ ἔστιν ἰδιοσύστατον, ὡς αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον ἐν Νῶ, καὶ τὸν Νὺν ἐν αὐτῷ...«.

and of the human will.¹⁶ In other contexts, Chrysostom will again emphasize the role of the Spirit.¹⁷¹⁸

IV. The later patristic interpretation

What must now be stressed is that no one of the 4th–5th century fathers explicitly conjoined the Trinitarian dogma with the concept of justification. Such an interpretation of Paul's theology appears in the later patristic interpretation of Paul.

The interpretation of Rom. 8 by Photius (820–891) is the first example, since he explicitly stated: »Ὁ πατὴρ ἐδικαίωσε καὶ ἐδόξασε, τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται, ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν καὶ ἀνέστη καὶ ἐντυγχάνει· τίς λοιπὸν ὁ κατακρίνων ἢ ἐγκαλῶν, οὕτως τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος ὑπερασπιζούσης καὶ δικαιούσης ἡμᾶς;« [= *The Father has justified and glorified us, the Spirit helps our weakness, Christ died for us and rose again and also intercedes for us. Who can condemn or accuse us if the holy Trinity defends and justifies us in this way?*]. Photius then, is the first of the later fathers to stress so explicitly that justification is the gift of the Holy Trinity.

Nevertheless, several other theologians before him had prepared this Trinitarian formulation with their theology, which is admittedly rooted in the Pauline Epistles. Many centuries

¹⁶ *John Chrysostom*, In Habendes eundem Spiritum: PG 51, 276B–D: »Εἰ τοίνυν καὶ ἡ πίστις τοιοῦτόν ἐστι, καὶ οὐδὲν ἡμεῖς εἰσηνέγκαμεν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πᾶν τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐστὶ χάριτος, καὶ ἐκείνη ταῖς ἡμετέραις αὐτὴν ἐγκατέβαλε ψυχαῖς, καὶ οὐδένα ἀντὶ τούτων ληψόμεθα μισθόν, πῶς οὖν ἔλεγε, Καρδιά γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογείται εἰς σωτηρίαν; Ὅτι καὶ τῆς τοῦ πεπιστευκότος ἀρετῆς ἐστὶ κατόρθωμα ἡ πίστις. Πῶς δὲ ἀλλαχού τοῦτο αὐτὸ πάλιν αἰνίττεται λέγων, Τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ, πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιούντα τὸν ἁσεβῆ, λογίζεται ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην, εἰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος χάριτος τὸ πᾶν ἐστι; πῶς δὲ καὶ τὸν πατριάρχην Ἀβραάμ δι' αὐτῆς μυρίους ἀνέδρυσεν ἐγκωμίων στεφάνους, ὅτι τὰ παρόντα πάντα παραδραμών, παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσε; Τίνος οὖν ἔνεκα Πνεῦμα πίστεως αὐτὴν καλεῖ; Ἐκεῖνο δεῖξαι βουλόμενος, ὅτι τὸ μὲν παρὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν πιστεύσαι, τῆς ἡμετέρας εὐγνωμοσύνης ἐστὶ, καὶ τὸ ὑπακούσαι κληθέντας· μετὰ δὲ τὸ καταβληθῆναι τὴν πίστιν, τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος δεόμεθα βοηθείας, ὥστε μένειν αὐτὴν διηνεκῶς ἄσειστον καὶ ἀπερίτρεπτον. Οὕτε γὰρ ὁ Θεός, οὔτε ἡ τοῦ Πνεύματος χάρις τὴν ἡμετέραν προφθάνει προαίρεσιν· ἀλλὰ καλεῖ μὲν, ἀναμένει δὲ ὥστε ἐκόντας καὶ βουληθέντας οἰκοθεν προσελθεῖν· εἴτα, ἐπειδὴν προσέλθωμεν, τότε τὴν παρ' αὐτοῦ παρέχει συμμαχίαν ἅπασαν«.

¹⁷ *John Chrysostom*, In Joannem: PG 59, 424B–C: »Καὶ Κορινθίους δὲ γράφων ἔλεγε Παῦλος· Ἄλλ' ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλ' ἡγιασθήτε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν. Ἐπεὶ οὖν περὶ μὲν Πατρός πολλὰ ἤκουσαν, καὶ τὸν Υἱὸν δὲ εἶδον πολλὰ ἐργαζόμενον, περὶ δὲ τοῦ Πνεύματος οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε σαφῶς ᾔδεσαν, θαυματουργεῖ, καὶ τὴν τελείαν εἰσάγει γνῶσιν«.

¹⁸ However the Greek fathers describe the concept of justification on behalf of Pauline formulations where the faith to Christ seems to be the first stage of our salvation's process. In this stage the human being is being cleaned from his sins and with it prepared to accept the Grace of the Spirit. See *John Chrysostom*, In epistulam ad Galatas: PG 61, 653B: »Ἡ δὲ πίστις τὴν δικαιοσύνην εἰσῆγαγεν· ἡ δὲ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Πνεύματος τὴν χάριν ἐπεσπάσατο... cf. 657B ὁ βίος τῶν ἐν Χριστῷ δεδικαιωμένων καὶ ἡγιασμένων ἐν Πνεύματι«. Faith is also a presupposition for the Spirit's presence in the believer. *Ammonios*, Catena in Acta, [ed. J. Cramer, Catenae Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum, vol. 3., Oxford, 1838 (repr. Hildesheim, 1967)], 190^{22–28}: »Ἀμμωνίου. Σημειωτέον ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλως ἐπέπεσε τὸ Πνεῦμα τῷ Ἁγίῳ ἐπὶ τὸν Κορινθίον καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ, καίτοι μαρτυρηθέντας εἶναι θεοσεβεῖς καὶ δικαίους, εἰ μὴ προκατηχηθέντας τὸν τῆς πίστεως λόγον, ἤκουσαν καὶ ἐπίστευσαν· ὥς καὶ ἐνθεν δῆλον εἶναι, ὅτι ὁ ἐθνικός, κἂν πᾶν δίκαιος ᾖ, οὐδέποτε μεταλαμβάνει τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος δωρεᾶς, ἀμέτοχος ὢν καὶ ἄγνωστος τῆς ἀληθινῆς πίστεως...«. *John Damascenus* continues later the tradition of the 4th Century (*Commentarii in epistulas Pauli*): PG 95, 796D: »Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οὐκ ἦν τὴν χάριν τοῦ Πνεύματος εἰς ἀκάθαρτον καὶ προσκεκρουκότα ἔλθειν, εὐλογοῦνται πρῶτον, τῆς κατάρως ἀφαιρεθείσης· εἴτα διὰ τῆς πίστεως δικαιωθέντες ἐπισπῶνται τοῦ Πνεύματος τὴν χάριν. Ὡστε ὁ μὲν σταυρὸς τὴν κατάραν ἔλυσεν, ἡ δὲ πίστις τὴν δικαιοσύνην εἰσῆγαγεν, ἡ δὲ δικαιοσύνη τὴν χάριν τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐπεσπάσατο«.

before, Didymus of Alexandria argued that our salvation through faith in Christ is a gift of the Trinity: «Τῆς σωτηρίας βεβαιουμένης μετουσίᾳ Τριάδος, ὁ Χριστὸν τὸν ἐπιδημήσαντα προσηκόμενος, πιστεύσας δὲ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι, σώζεται· δοθέντος ἐν τῇ ὑπ' οὐρανὸν τῆς Υἱοῦ προσηγορίας, ἀπὸ τοῦ τῆς ἐπιδημίας χρόνου, ἐν ᾧ ὁ πιστεύων μετέξει διὰ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἀποσταλέντος Παρακλήτου· ὅθεν ὁ σωζόμενος ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἐκ τῆς Τριάδος ἔχει τὴν σωτηρίαν»¹⁹. [=Since salvation is confirmed through participation in the holy Trinity, anyone who approaches the Christ who has sojourned with us and believes in the name, is saved; given that the designation of the Son was delivered to those under heaven from the time of the sojourning, so that whoever believes in it will partake through the Son of the Father and of the Holy Spirit who was sent as the Paraclete. Therefore, he who is saved in the name of the Savior has his salvation from the Trinity].

Didymus, then, teaches the same as Photius, although he does not use the term *δικαιοῦν*: to justify. The term 'to justify' is used by Photius, who summarizes a long theological tradition before him. According to this tradition, as we have argued, justification is not just only a consequence of Christ's redemptive death whereby the *status* of the believer is changed, i.e. an 'alien righteousness'. Justification is rather a transformation of the *believer* as such; a new creation caused through the enabling of the Spirit.

A younger contemporary²⁰ of Photius stresses this pneumatological view both with reference to the regeneration of humanity and to the entire creation (Theodor the Studite 759–826): «Ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις καινουργεῖται» [=All creation is regenerated by the Holy Spirit] «Ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι, ἀναβλύζει τὰ τῆς χάριτος ρεῖθρα, ἀρδεύοντα, ἅπασαν τὴν κτίσιν πρὸς ζωογονίαν». [=The streams of grace overflow with the Holy Spirit who waters all creation with refreshing life].

V. Conclusion

The final expression of the patristic understanding of justification was produced by Nikolas Cabasilas, who in the 14th Century joined the concept of justification not only with the Spirit and the Trinity but also with that concept which Paul and early Church called *koinonia* (participation, partnership, communion), i.e. the eucharistic communion. This great theologian of the 14th Century argues that we receive the divine gift of justification not only through the baptism, but also through the sacrament of the Eucharist. The saints have become righteous because through these sacraments they were conjoined with the only One

¹⁹ Ammonios, Catena in Acta, [ed. J. Cramer, Catenae Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum, vol. 3., Oxford, 1838 (repr. Hildesheim, 1967)], 74¹⁸⁻²⁴. See also Athanasius from Alexandria, In illud qui dixerit verbum in filium: PG 26, 653A: «Καὶ τὸ ἅγιον δὲ λουτρὸν εἰ μὲν εἰς τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα μόνον ἐδίδοτο, εἰκότως ἂν ἐλέγετο τοὺς βαπτιζομένους εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα μόνον ἁμαρτάνειν· ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἰς Πατέρα, καὶ Υἱόν, καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα δίδοται, καὶ οὕτω τελειοῦται τῶν βαπτιζομένων ἕκαστος, ἀνάγκη πάλιν τοὺς μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα παραβαίνοντας εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ ἀδιαίρετον Τριάδα τὴν βλασφημίαν ποιεῖσθαι.»

²⁰ See also a pneumatological and ascetic perspective in the authors of 6th and 7th Cts. Maximos, Quaestiones ad Thalassium: CCSG 7, 18²⁻¹⁴: «Εἰ οἱ ποιεῖται τοῦ νόμου δικαιοθήσονται, κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον, πῶς πάλιν λέγει ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε τῆς χάριτος ἐξεπέσατε; Ἀπόκρισις. Οὐχ ἀπλῶς οἱ ποιεῖται τοῦ νόμου δικαιοθήσονται, ἀλλ' οἱ τοῦ πνευματικοῦ νόμου καὶ νοουμένου πνευματικῶς καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον ἐν πνεύματι ποιοῦντες τὸν κατὰ πνεῦμα νόμον δικαιοθήσονται, μὴ ἐκπίπτοντες τῆς χάριτος διὰ τὴν εἰς τὸ βάθος τῆς ψυχῆς κατὰ τὴν κάθαρσιν τοῦ λόγου διάβασιν». John Damascenus, Commentarii in epistulas Pauli: PG 95, 445B: «Χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Πόσον ἰσχυρεν ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀγάπη δείκνυσιν, ὅτι οἱ ἐχθροὶ καὶ ἡττημένοι, ἅγιοι καὶ δίκαιοι γεγόνασιν ἐξαίφνης. Ὅταν γὰρ Πνεῦμα καλέσῃ, υἱοὺς ἀπέδειξεν· ὅταν δὲ υἱὸς εἴπῃ, ἀπάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν τὸν θησαυρὸν ἀπεκάλυψεν.»

who is and can rightly be called Holy and Righteous, i.e. the incarnate God (1 Cor. 1:30)²¹. The Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians of this truth by speaking at the same time about the role of the Spirit in their Baptism: *You were justified through the Baptism in the name of the Son and in the Spirit of our God*. Paul's aim, however, is to keep his addressees in the situation initiated by the presence of the Son and the Spirit. He could not find a better way to do it apart from inviting the believers to the *koinonia of Christ* and the *koinonia of the Spirit*. He does it at the end of his 2nd Letter to the Corinthians as he invites the believers to proceed to the Eucharist after the hearing of his Preaching: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the koinonia of the Holy Spirit, be with you all*.

²¹ Nikolaos Kabasilas, De vita in Cristo IV, 76–78: SC 355, 328¹–330²³ »Τὰ τῆς ἱερᾶς δῶρα τραπέζης οἶδε μὲν καθαίρειν τοὺς μήπω τοῦτο δεξαμένους, δύναται δὲ φωτίζειν τοὺς ἤδη κεκαθαρμένους... τὴν παντελῆ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ὅπερ ἐργάζεται κοινωνίαν, εἴτε λατρείαν χρὴ τὸ πρᾶγμα καλεῖν, εἴτε νίοθεσίαν εἴτε καὶ ἄμφω ταῦτα, τὸ ἱερόν ἐστι δεῖπνον, ὃ συγγενεῖς ἡμᾶς τῷ Χριστῷ ποιεῖ μᾶλλον. ...Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἁγίους τοὺς αὐτῷ προσκειμένους ἀπεργάζεται καὶ δικαίους, οὐ μόνον παιδεύων καὶ διδάσκων ἃ δεῖ, καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἀσκῶν τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ ἦν ἐκείνη πρὸς τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον δύναμιν ἔχει πρὸς ἐνέργειαν ἁγίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς γινόμενος αὐτοῖς δικαιοσύνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ καὶ ἁγιασμός. Τοῦτον γὰρ μάλιστα τὸν τρόπον τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῦτ' αὐτὸ τὸ μακαρίσι καὶ ἁγίοις εἶναι συμβαίνει, τοῦ συνόντος ἔνεκα μακαρίου, δι' ὃν ἀπὸ μὲν νεκρῶν ζῶσι, σοφοὶ δὲ ἀπὸ ἀνοήτων, ἅγιοι δὲ καὶ δίκαιοι καὶ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ ἀπὸ μιαρῶν καὶ πονηρῶν κατέστησαν δούλων. Οἰκοθεν γὰρ αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπείας φύσεως καὶ σπουδῆς, ἐξ ὧν ἂν κυρίως ταῦτα καλοῖντο, γέγονεν οὐδὲ ἓν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἅγιοι διὰ τὸν ἅγιον, καὶ δίκαιοι καὶ σοφοὶ διὰ τὸν συνόντα δίκαιον καὶ σοφόν. καὶ ὅπως εἰ τις ἀληθῶς ἐν ἀνθρώποις τὰ μεγάλα καὶ σεμνὰ ταῦτα δικαίος ἐστὶν ἀκούειν, τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν ἐκείθεν ἔχει«.