

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

The Word Penetrates Everything First Week in Ordinary Time Saturday,
January 17, 2015 8:15 AM **Heb 4:12-16;** Mk 2:13-17 St. Anthony, abbot (Jesus is
now the high priest of the eternal covenant and forever will be mediating our relationship
with God.)

This year we have the opportunity to read and ponder the very remarkable **Letter to the Hebrews**. It is a very profound letter. We are not sure who wrote it or to whom, but it is **certainly inspired by the Holy Spirit**. It seems to have been **written to Jewish Christians** or Christian Jews, however you want to put that, but **within the context of the world of the Greeks**, the world informed by the concepts of Greek culture and philosophy.

Here the author is talking about **the Word of God**. The Word of God is introduced in the prologue of John's Gospel as what we now call **the Second Person of the Trinity**. "The Word of God is God, the Word of God was with God, and is God." And this word is the very center, according to the prologue of John's Gospel, of creation. **Everything is created in and through this Word**. Now this author is talking about how **the Word penetrates everything**. Well, naturally if the Word is the basis for everything that exists, if everything is created in the Word and through the Word and is sustained in being, well, then **the Word is indeed conscious of everything, since the Word is the consciousness of God expressed**. So everything is open to this Word.

People think they have secrets. Well, they don't, not from the Word. In the story of the garden of Eden, after Eve and Adam had eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, whatever that means, they saw they were naked and they hid—from whom? You cannot hide from God; you cannot hide from the Word. **The Word is deeper in you than you are**. Your consciousness is nothing in contrast to the consciousness of the Word. **It penetrates everything**. Here it says **it divides "joint and marrow, spirit and soul."** Now spirit and soul refer to **the inner life**. Ordinarily people don't even think about the inner life too much, but that means the world of **our thoughts, actions, decisions, imaginations, desires, experiences, hopes, conflicts, troubles, etc.,etc**. The Word of God is right in the midst of all of that. **Nothing is apart from the Word**. So we have to keep this in mind at all times.

And furthermore, **the Word is nothing other than a faithful high priest.** What was a high priest for? **A mediator.** The high priest was an official, ritualized form of mediation in the Old Testament. The high priest went into the holy of holies representing the presence of God on earth, originally where they put the Ark of the Covenant, and came out again bringing—what? **The blessings of God.** Zechariah when he went into the holy of holiness actually had a vision, and so did many high priests. And then ordinarily they brought their vision out, although Zechariah was not able at first to say what he saw. And Jesus is now the high priest of the eternal covenant and **forever will be mediating our relationship with God.**

So the Word that penetrates everything is mediating our relation with God and **we have absolutely nothing to fear because this mediator has done everything to break down all walls dividing us from God, from one another, defeating evil in every form,** every form of pridefulness and rebellion and disobedience and hatred and discord and division and dislike and opposition and adversity—every form of every evil. **Jesus has come to reconcile, to put together, to harmonize, to make whole.**

So to be afraid of God, which is different from fearing God, which is against faith. Fearing God means respecting, reverencing, and loving God and being afraid to offend God. That's something we learn. It's not an instinct. But being afraid of God, trying, to get away from God, thinking that God is somehow watching for us to fail, that is really contra-faith. That kind of awareness is totally against the Word of God. That idea itself, that awareness itself is actually evil. It does not come from God. **It comes from the evil one to lead us away from God.**

The Word of God comes to bring us to God, already penetrates everything, but now wants us to become consciously united and connected to God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, so that the life of God is also our life, and we can live out in truth and in fact the name we have been given in Christ, that our lives will not only be the human life we inherited from our parents, but moreover **the eternal life given to us by God. That's what this Word of God is doing right now** and will be doing for the rest of the day and tomorrow and the next day **and forever into eternity.**