THE INTERRELATEDNESS OF DOCTRINE AND ASCETIC LIFE: ST BASIL OF CAESAREA'S PROOF OF THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

January 2018

Abstract

This thesis comprises the comprehensive study of St Basil of Caesarea's theology of the Holy Spirit. It is argued that St Basil believes in the divinity of the Spirit, even though he never calls him 'God' or 'of the same nature' (*homoousion*) with the Father and the Son. This silence can be explained by the fact that the nature of the Spirit is such that it cannot be revealed. The Spirit reveals the Son, but stays hidden himself. In the present age we can only judge about the nature of the Spirit from Scripture, his actions in the world, and in the lives of prominent ascetics. In this thesis we demonstrate that St Basil defends the divinity of the Spirit not only from traditional ideas of agency of the Spirit in inspiration of Scripture and in baptism, and not only in sanctification, but also from his role in creating the world, angels and humanity, his role in teaching true doctrines and guiding the Christians, in supporting humans in their ascetic struggles, and in providing knowledge of the Father and the Son. St Basil affirms the divine nature of the Spirit by describing his divine activities in all spheres of human life and in the history of humanity, by asserting his equal honour (*homotimia*) with the other two Persons and his sharing in communion (*koinonia*) of the Father and the Son. Moreover, it is argued that for St Basil the ascetic life is grounded in the right doctrines, especially doctrine on the Spirit, and that one can understand the true doctrines only by living an ascetic life, that is, the life in the Spirit. We show that St Basil's teaching on the divinity of the Spirit is evident in his ascetic works, but also that his dogmatic letters and treatises speak of the ascetic life. Finally, it is demonstrated that the theologian addresses his ascetic ideals to the whole of the Church and not just to monastics. He explains the truth of the doctrine of the Spirit to lay people, clergy, and ascetics. The Spirit is divine and communicates divine life through and in himself.

Acknowledgements

First, I am grateful to Nottingham University for the financial support throughout my programme of study without which I would not be able to carry out my research. I especially thank for support my dear relatives Konstantine and Yevgenia.

My deepest thanks goes to my supervisor, Prof Mary Cunningham, in whose debt I will remain forever. She spent many hours going through my writing, carefully correcting every minor mistake and giving critical feedback as well as constantly encouraging me along the way. She supported me in every possible way.

I would also like to thank my annual review examiners, Prof Alison Milbank, Prof Simeon Zahl, and academic advisors, Prof Tom O'Loughlin and Dr Tarah van de Wiele for their invaluable comments and advice.

I wish to thank all my family and friends without whom this would have been impossible. Thanks also go to my colleagues, Gabby, Lavinia and Giovanni, and friends Nina, Yegor, Qingyuan.

Abbreviations of the Works of St Basil of Caesarea

Adol. - *To Young Men on the Value of Greek Literature* (PG 31.564-89)

Ask. - *Asketikon*

Att. - *Homily on the Words 'Be Attentive to Yourself'*

Bapt. - *On Baptism*

Barl. - *On Barlaam the Martyr* (PG 31.484-89)

Chr. - *On the Holy Birth of Christ* (PG 31.1457-76)

De Fide - *Homily on Faith* (PG 31.464-72)

Dest. - *Homily on Luke 12:18 'I will tear down my barns'*

Div. - *On the Rich* (PG 31.277-304)

DSS - *On the Holy Spirit*

Ebr.1, 2 - *Against Drunkards 1, 2* (PG 31.444-64)

Ep. - *Letters*

Eun. - *Against Eunomius*

Exh. - *Exhortation to Holy Baptism* (PG 31.424-44)

Fam. - *Delivered in Time of Famine and Drought* (PG 31.304-28)

Fid. - *On Faith* (PG 31.676-92)

GA - *Great Asketikon* (PG 31.901-1305*)*

Gord. - *On Gordius the Martyr* (PG 31.489-508)

Grat. - *On Giving Thanks* (PG 31.217-37)

Hex. - *Homilies on the Six Days of Creation*

Hex. 10-11 - *On the Creation of Man, Orations 10-11*

Hom. - *Diverse Homilies*

Hom. in Ps. - *Homilies on Psalms* (PG29.209-494)

Hum. - *On Humility* (PG 31.525-40)

Iei. 1, 2 - *On Fasting 1, 2* (PG 31.164-84; 185-97)

Inv. - *On Envy* (PG 31.372-85)

Ira. - *Against Anger* (PG 31.353-72)

Iud. - *On the Judgment of God* (PG 31.653-76)

Iul. - *On Julitta the Martyr* (PG 31.237-61)

Is. - *on Isaiah* (PG 30.117-668)

Lak. - *Homily delivered in Lakizois* (PG 31.1437-57)

LR - *The Longer Responses*

Mal. - *That God is Not the Cause of Evil* (PG 31.329-53)

Mam. - *On Mamas the Martyr* (PG 31.589-600)

Mart. - *On the Forty Martyrs* (PG 31.508-25)

Mund. - *On Detachment from Worldly Things, and on the Fire that Occurred Outside the Church* (PG 31.540-64)

Prov. - *On the Beginning of Proverbs* (PG 31.385-424)

Reg. Mor. - *Moral Rules* (PG 31.691-869)

Renunc. - *On Renunciation of the World*

Sab. - *Against the Sabellians, Anomoeans, and the Pneumatomachians* (PG 31.600-17)

SA - *Small Asketikon*

SR - *The Shorter Responses*

Trin. - *Against Those Who Slanderously Say That We Say There Are Three Gods* (PG 31.1488-96)

Verb. - *Homily on the Words, 'In the beginning was the Word'* (PG 31.472-81)

Clement of Alexandria

Paed. - *The Instructor*

Strom. – The Stromata

Protr. – Exhortation to the Heathen

Origen

De Princ. – On First Principles

In Ioh. – Commentary on the Gospel of John

St Gregory of Nazianzus

Or. – Orations

St Gregory of Nyssa

Op. Hom. - On the Making of Man

Cant. - Homily on the Song of Songs

Vit. Moys. - Life of Moses

Eun. I - Against Eunomius

Other Abbreviations

CH - Church History

CLP - Christian Literature Publishing

CUP - Cambridge University Press

CUAP - Catholic University of America Press

DOP - Dumbarton Oaks Papers

EEC - Encyclopedia of the Early Church

FC - Fathers of the Church

GOTR - Greek Orthodox Theological Review

IJST - International Journal of Systematic Theology

JECS - Journal of Early Christian Studies

JTS - Journal of Theological Studies

NPNF - Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers

OUP - Oxford University Press

PPS - Popular Patristics Series

RSR - Recherches de Science Religieuse

SC - Sources Chrétiennes

SJT - Scottish Journal of Theology

SP - Studia Patristica

SVC - Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae

SVTQ - St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly

SVSP - St Vladimir's Seminary Press

HJ - The Heythrop Journal

THTR - The Harvard Theological Review

TS - Theological Studies

VC - Vigiliae Christianae

WS - Word and Spirit

WTJ - Westminster Theological Journal

Declaration

This work has been submitted to the University of Nottingham in accordance with the regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is my own work, and none of it has been previously submitted to the University of Nottingham or any other university for a degree.

Contents

Abstract..……3
Acknowledgements……4
Abbreviations……5
Declaration……8

Introduction……14
The Current State of Scholarship in the Field……...14
Contribution to the Field: The Approach and the Research Questions….25
The Dates, Contexts and Audiences of St Basil's Works……..31

Chapter 1. St Basil's Views on the Trinity and Exegesis……..50
1.1 Introduction……..50
1.2 St Athanasius and the Cappadocians on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity ……..……..50
1.3 St Basil's Views on the Trinity ……...54
1.3.1 Similarities and Distinctions of the Son and the Spirit……54
1.3.2 Communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son ……....61
1.4 Explanation of St Basil's Silence on the *homoousios* of the Spirit…..64
1.5 Development of His Thought and Terminology……..66
1.6 St Basil's Views on the Interpretation of Scripture……72
1.7 St Basil's Views on Scripture and Tradition……...80
1.8 Conclusion……...83

Chapter 2. The Role of the Spirit in the Inspiration of Prophets, the Interpretation of Scripture, and in the Creation of the World……....85
2.1 Introduction……..85
2.2 Inspirational Role of the Spirit……85
2.3 Cosmological Role of the Spirit…….……..99
2.4 Conclusion……109

Chapter 3. The Teaching, Guiding and Counselling Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Church as a Whole and in the Lives of Individuals……..111
3.1 Introduction……111
3.2 The Guiding and Counselling Role of the Spirit……...112
3.3 Teaching Role of the Spirit……....119
3.4 True Doctrines and the Teachings of Heretics……...120
3.5 Help of the Spirit in Fighting against Heresies……..122
3.6 Importance of True Dogmas for Ascetic Life and Influence of Ascetic Life on Understanding of True Doctrines……125
3.6.1 Simplicity of the Doctrine of the Spirit and Simplicity as a Virtue……..130
3.6.2 Christians as Exemplifying True Faith and Holiness……133
3.7 Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit…….....134
3.8 Conclusion……139

Chapter 4. The Relationship between Human Nature and the Spirit. The Place of the Spirit in the Life according to Passions and According to Reason…….141
4.1 Introduction……...141
4.2 Role of the Spirit in Relation to Human Nature……....142
4.2.1 Image and Likeness of God…….……..142
4.2.2 Relationship between the Soul and the Body……146
4.2.3 Human Spirit and the Holy Spirit…….....152
4.3 Conditions for the Presence of the Spirit in the Lives of Christians and for Acquiring the Knowledge of God…….....157
4.3.1 Life According to Reason and According to Passions……..157
4.3.2 Passionate State of a Person as a State of Drunkenness and Darkness of Mind …….....165
4.3.3 Purity of Heart ……..…166
4.3.4 Destruction or Control of Passions ……..170
4.3.5 Apatheia, Self-Control and Inner Calm ……...176
4.3.6 Conditions Necessary for the Contemplation, Illumination and Acquiring the Knowledge of God…….……179

4.4 Conclusion……184

Chapter 5. The Role of the Spirit in Salvation……187

5.1 Introduction……187

5.2 Baptism and Perfection in Virtues as the Means for Union with God……...187

5.3 Relationship between Divine Grace and Human Efforts……...191

5.4 The Indwelling of the Spirit or Virtue in the Soul…….197

5.5 Conclusion…….204

Chapter 6. The Role of the Spirit in Acquiring the Knowledge of God and Contemplation, and in Divine Illumination…….207

6.1 Introduction……...207

6.2 Overview of Key Terms……..…..208

6.3 Fathers of the Church on the Stages of Spiritual Life……...210

6.4 Role of the Spirit in Acquiring the Knowledge of God……....212

6.4.1 The Role of the Spirit in Baptism and Baptism as Enlightenment with Divine Knowledge……..212

6.4.2 Knowledge of God as Food for the Soul and the Mysteries of the Spirit ……...……....215

6.4.3 The Ways to Know God: Contemplation of Creation, Divine Providence and Judgments…….....….217

6.4.4 The Son and the Spirit as the Source of True Wisdom and Knowledge…….221

6.4.5 The Spirit as the ‘Place’ of Contemplation and as the One Who Enables Humans to Know the Son and the Father……...…….225

6.4.6 Means or Form of Divine Revelation and the Organ of Contemplation/Illumination……...228

6.5 The Role of the Spirit in Divine Illuminations……230

6.5.1 The Church Fathers on Spiritual Light……230

6.5.2 Different Kinds of Light……...231

6.5.3 The Son as the Agent of Illumination…….....234

6.5.4 The Spirit as the Source and Agent of Illumination…….....237

6.6 Conclusion……....240

Conclusion……...245

Bibliography……252

Introduction

The Current State of Scholarship in the Field

St Basil of Caesarea was a reformer of monastic movements in Pontus in Asia Minor. He was an admirer and student of Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste, who was an initiator of monasticism in this region. St Basil corrected encratistic tendencies[1] in the asceticism of Eustathius's followers and developed a communal form of monasticism that was different from St Pachomius's pattern.[2] St Basil was also one of the Cappadocian Fathers who defended the divinity of the Son against Neo-Arians (Anomoeans) and the divinity of the Spirit against Pneumatomachians (Spirit-fighters). He developed language explicating the Nicene Creed and extended the meaning of the concepts of 'hypostasis' (ὑπόστασις), 'person' (πρόσωπον), 'substance' (οὐσία), 'of one substance' (ὁμοούσιον), and others. He wrote works of various genres, starting from moral and ascetic texts, including expository and moral homilies and letters, to dogmatic polemical treatises. After some investigation, one will find that not much research has been done on the interaction between St Basil's ascetic and dogmatic theology – even though this distinction is superficial, since it is inappropriate to separate St Basil's views on the nature of God from those on the way of life according to God's directions. Whereas scholars have focused either on St Basil's

[1] Encratites (lit., 'abstainers' or 'persons who practised continency') were heretics who abstained from flesh, wine, and the marriage bed, believing them to be essentially impure. The name was given to an early Christian sect, or rather to a tendency common to several sects, chiefly Gnostic, whose asceticism was based on heretical views regarding the origin of matter ('Encratites' in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05412c.htm). As Burns demonstrates, St Basil cherished self-control and organised a radical encratic community *within* the church, whereas Eustathius developed an exclusive encratic community and refuted the validity of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. See S.K. Burns, 'Cappadocian Encratism and the Macarian Community', *SP* 37 (2001): 27-32, 29.

[2] St Pachomius does not write about the vows of virginity and renunciation of the world, about requirements for entering the monasteries, about spiritual disposition, vices and the means of correcting them. Most of his monastic rules deal with external discipline, whereas St Basil's rules concentrate on the ordering of the inner world. St Basil prefers agricultural work, instead of crafts, because it does not interfere with prayer; he dedicates more time to prayer than to physical work. See Primogenov N. *St Basil's Rules of Monastic Life in comparison with St Pachomius' Rules*, http://www.odinblago.ru/ustav_inocheskoi_zhizni, <accessed 14.05.2016>.

ascetic ideas or on his doctrinal teaching,[3] only a few recent studies have treated St Basil's life and ideas in a holistic manner.[4]

This thesis will focus on the interrelation between the theologian's ascetic and dogmatic thought, specifically on the nature of the Holy Spirit (hereafter 'Spirit'). It will engage with most of St Basil's works and with the secondary literature mainly in English and French dating from 1913, but focusing especially on the research done in the years since 1990. Among recent PhD theses on St Basil are works on the social and political aspects of his career, on the ideas of conversion and enlightenment in his life and works, on interaction between feminist theology and the theologian's view with regard to the Spirit, and on his ecclesiology.[5] Thus, we see that scholars have so far been interested mainly in the social, political, philosophical, and feminist aspects of St Basil's thought. These works are useful in creating a comprehensive picture of St Basil's personality, his life and his epoch. However, only one thesis, by Luckman, is closely related to my work.[6] The author looks at the role of asceticism in the formation of St Basil's theological writings and at the role of Stoicism in his understanding of the value of ascetic practice and the Spirit. I will re-consider the first question with attention to all of St Basil's works. Similarly to Luckman I will explore the role of the Spirit in St Basil's cosmology, anthropology and sanctification. However, my work will be based on a close reading of all of St Basil's works, including *Is*. and *Hex*. 10-11, and will examine more themes, such as the role of the Spirit in

[3] M.G. Murphy, *St Basil and Monasticism*, CUA Series on Patristic Studies 25 (New York: AMS Press, 1930); Amand de Mendieta, E. *L'ascèse monastique de Saint Basile* (Denee, Belgium: Editions de Maredsous, 1949); S.M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea. A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth* (Washington: CUAP, 2007); A. Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea: A Guide to His Life and Doctrine*, Cascade Companions 16 (Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2012), and others.

[4] P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994); S.M. Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), and others.

[5] P.M. Beagon, 'Social and Political Aspects of the Career of St Basil of Caesarea (Oxford University, PhD, 1990); G.G. Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment in the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea' (Durham University, PhD, 2004); A.C.A. Thomasson-Rosingh, 'Walls into Bridges: An Interplay between Feminist Theology and Basil of Caesarea's De Spiritu Sancto' (Manchester University, PhD, 2009); O.A. Druzhinina, 'The Ecclesiology of St Basil the Great: A Trinitarian Approach to the Life' (Manchester University, PhD, 2016).

[6] H.A. Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism in Basil of Caesarea: Roots and Influence to 381' (Marquette University, PhD, 2001).

Church, in relation to prophecy and in the illumination of humans. I will also demonstrate how the Spirit is a real Person for St Basil rather than a theological idea.

In the past decades scholars tended to separate 'theology' from 'philosophy', that is, theological thinking from the spiritual/practical life.[7] They used to focus more on 'heretical' groups and on the importance of the Spirit for these groups rather than on the orthodox theologians. However, in recent years this tendency has been corrected. As Luckman notes, there are three primary areas of research on St Basil: theological/philosophical, ascetical, and sociological/cultural.[8] The group that studied asceticism in the 1980s consisted of such scholars as Clark, Wimbush, Halperin, Burrus, Castelli, Torjesen, Valantasis, and Goehring. Their meetings ended up with the publication of an influential collection of articles.[9] Clark, Elm, and Cooper look at the cultural role of women's ascetic communities, made up of female imitators of Christ, in late antique society. Goehring, in his work *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert,* examines the social and political aspects of asceticism. As Luckman argues, and I support her view, all of these scholars miss the real intention of the ascetics, namely, the search for and belief in attaining a holy state of being, rather than following certain political or cultural goals. The primary driving force for them was living a moral, virtuous lifestyle, that is, a life of ascetic discipline, in communion with God. The Spirit played a central role in the work of sanctification.[10] Luckman focuses on St Basil, and I completely agree with singling this figure out, because in the fourth century the ascetic movement reached an unprecedented height thanks to his influence. The figure of an ascetic was considered as a type of prophet, a defender of true faith, but also as a genuine Christian, and a bearer of the Spirit. This was St Basil's view of the ascetic life. I will also demonstrate that St Basil addressed his ascetic ideals not just to monks in monastic

[7] Ibid., 2.
[8] Ibid., 6.
[9] V.L. Wimbush (ed.), *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).
[10] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 6-10.

communities, but to all Christians, who were practising ascetic life in the world.

Now we will trace the chronological development of the seminal philosophical discussions in scholarship on St Basil. Scholars of the late nineteenth century tended towards analysing St Basil's thought and ascetic practice against the background of the Platonist or Aristotelian traditions. This threatened to undermine the true Christian value of the Incarnation and respect for the human body inherent in the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body.[11] Starting with the early 1900s, the works of Holl and Jaeger represent the beginnings of philosophical discussions on St Basil. Holl, in his work on Amphilochius of Iconium, states that St Basil's views concerning three hypostases, in contrast to those of St Athanasius, rest on Origenist thought. He also writes that the Trinitarian thought of St Basil is grounded in the early Nicene formula, 'one nature, three hypostases', which he adopted and developed. He observes that St Basil's pneumatology is, contrary to that of St Athanasius, from the very beginning an integral component of his Trinitarian theology. Holl, however, does not discuss the topic of the Spirit, aside from his focus on the Platonizing influences on St Basil, which Mendieta later developed.[12] Jaeger, in his work on Nemesius of Emesa,[13] shows the influence of the Stoic thinker Posidonius on St Basil, along with the latter's influence on Nemesius.[14] In more recent scholarship, Henry and Dehnhard show Plotinus's direct influence on St Basil. In addition, Meredith states in his article on Cappadocian pneumatology that St Basil's views changed between 361 and 377, moving from influences of Plotinus and Origen to teaching a full divinity of the Spirit without explicitly calling the Spirit God. Meredith points to the Plotinian influence in St Basil's *Ep* 233 where the presence of the Spirit in the human soul is the condition for the human vision of the Father and the Son, and again in *DSS* 9.22-23 where St Basil appears to blur the distinction between the human spirit and the Spirit.

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[11] Ibid.,12.
[12] K. Holl, *Amphilochius von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zu den grossen Kappadoziern* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (P. Siebeck), 1904).
[13] W. Jaeger, *Nemesios von Emesa. Quellenforschung zum Neuplatonismus und seinen Anfaengen bei Poseidonios* (Berlin: Weidmenn, 1914).
[14] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 20-1.

Differently from philosophers, all three Cappadocians emphasize the fundamental difference between the Creator and creatures.[15]

Meanwhile, Balas, Daniélou, Ivanka, Armstrong, and Rist caution against overemphasis on the Neoplatonic influence.[16] Rist shows that there was only minimal influence of Porphyry on St Basil and no influence of Iamblichus.[17] There is agreement in contemporary scholarship in acknowledging that the Cappadocians were exposed to the same ideas that influenced Plotinus and Porphyry. Some scholars even argue that the Cappadocians developed a type of Neo-Platonism, which arose only from their own considerations and knowledge of Plato's works, Middle Platonism, and Origen.[18] Scholars of the late twentieth century state that Cappadocians only adopted Neo-Platonic notions of substance and categories in their theological explanations, borrowing the distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis* from Porphyry.[19] Thus, we see that the Cappadocians were grounded in the philosophical traditions of their time, though they did not simply copy philosophical ideas into their theological system, but developed and creatively used them.

Among the most recent articles and monographs on St Basil's dogmatic views are the works by Anastos, Sesboüé, Hildebrand, DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz. Anastos in his article outlines the main ideas of *Eun*. and shows the limits of St Basil's logic in rejecting the kind of Neo-Arianism professed by Eunomius of Cyzicus.[20] Sesboüé analyses Eunomius's theology of the Unoriginated and St Basil's refutation of this. He offers a philosophical, linguistic and theological analysis of Eunomius's *Apology*

[15] A. Meredith, 'The Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers and the Creed of Constantinople', *The Irish Theological Quarterly* 48 (1981): 196-212.
[16] D.L. Balas, *'Metousia Theou': Man's Participation in God's Perfections According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa* (Rome: Pont. Inst. St. Anselm, 1966); J. Daniélou, *L'Etre et le temps chez Gregoire de Nysse* (Leiden: Brill, 1970); E. von Ivanka, *Plato Christianus: la reception critique du platonisme chez les Peres de l'Église*, trans. E. Kessler, rev. R. Brague and J.- Y. Lacoste (Paris: Presses universitaires de Frances, 1990); A.H. Armstrong, 'St Augustine and Christian Platonism' in *Plotinian and Christian Studies* (London: Variorum, 1979): 24-40; J. Rist, '"Basil's 'Neoplatonism": Its Background and Nature' in P. Fedwick (ed.), *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, Part 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981): 190-220.
[17] Rist, '"Basil's Neoplatonism"': 190-220.
[18] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 30.
[19] Ibid., 32-6.
[20] M.V. Anastos, 'Basil's *Kata Eunomiou*, A Critical Analysis' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*: 67-136.

and St Basil's *Eun.* and shows the importance of this debate because it posed the question of translation of the Trinitarian mystery into the language of Greek thought.[21]

We particularly agree with the views of Hildebrand and will draw on his reconstruction of development of St Basil's thought.[22] He writes that in spite of St Basil's enduring insistence upon the transcendence and simplicity of God, he developed a precise Trinitarian vocabulary, which he thought effectively refuted two basic errors in thinking about God: the denial of the divinity of the Son and the Spirit; and the denial of their true and real distinction from the Father. He maintained that the right thinking about God is more than just the right use of words; it is also the right interpretation of the Word, that is, Scripture. Hildebrand sees 1 Corinthians 12:3 as the scriptural centre of St Basil's pneumatology. In addition, in a more recent book, Radde-Gallwitz surveys St Basil's life and analyses his views on the Trinity.[23] From these scholars we find out that in essence the debate between Eunomius and St Basil was a linguistic one.

Turning now to the ascetic side, although critical studies of St Basil's works started with Garnier's edition, published in Paris in 1720-1730,[24] scholars did not initially focus on St Basil's ascetic works. Clarke, Morison, Murphy, and Humbertclaude were among the pioneers of ascetic studies of St Basil. Clarke describes St Basil's ascetic ideals and impact on later thought.[25] Concerning the Spirit, Clarke followed Holl and Hormann, focusing on St Basil's interest in the gifts of the Spirit. He also explores the relationship between the ideas of the 'Spirit possessed' men and women and martyrdom. Clarke discusses the influence of Scripture, especially the Pauline corpus, on the notion of the monk as a 'receptacle of

[21] B. Sesboüé, *Saint Basile et la Trinité. Un acte théologique au IVe siècle. Le rôle de Basile de Césarée dans l'élaboration de la doctrine et du langage trinitaires* (Paris: Desclée, 1998).
[22] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*.
[23] A. Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea: A Guide to His Life and Doctrine*, Cascade Companions, 16 (Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2012).
[24] J. Garnier, P. Maran (eds, trans.), *Sancti Basilii Magni Opera omnia*, 3 vols (Paris: Coignard, 1721, 1722, 1730); rpt. in Migne, *Patrologiae graecae cursus completes* 29-32 (Paris, 1857, 1886), now also *PG* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1959-61), with intr. J. Gribomont, and to vol. 30 by the monks of Chevetogne.
[25] W.K.L. Clarke, *St Basil the Great: A Study in Monasticism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1913).

the Holy Spirit'; in this sense, such a person is a true confessor and 'spiritual doctor' without need of episcopal ordination.[26] However, I would not agree with Clarke since in St Basil we find no tension between the ascetics and bishops on the issue of spiritual power. Murphy, in her monograph corrects the conclusions of Clarke and discusses the practice of monasticism as a system of spirituality and not of external actions.[27]

We will also consider Humbertclaude's interpretation of St Basil's understanding of perfection and his teaching on asceticism, who was the first in the French academy to turn his attention to St Basil not just as a philosopher-moralist and speculative theologian, but also as organiser and legislator of Christian asceticism.[28] This thesis also relies on the chapters in the work of Giet which treat St Basil's social ideas on marriage, family, and his social actions in the community of monks.[29] Further, we will look at Mendieta's work where he describes St Basil's life and views on Christian morality, and examines sources of his monastic asceticism, his ideal of a saint, as well as the negative and positive aspects of asceticism.[30]

The collection of articles by Gribomont is particularly useful in shedding light on the situation in the church at the time of the Arian crisis and St Basil's position in this crisis, his relations with Pope Damasus, and also in exploring different aspects of asceticism.[31] Gribomont moved away from searching for Hellenistic ideas in St Basil, as previous scholars did, towards the latter's use of the New Testament, especially of St Paul's writings, in his moral and ascetic works. Gribomont explored the influence of Eustathius on the young St Basil and the effects of the Council of Gangra on asceticism in the fourth century.[32]

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[26] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 42-3.
[27] M.G. Murphy, *St Basil and Monasticism*, CUA Series on Patristic Studies 25 (New York: AMS Press, 1930).
[28] P. Humbertclaude, *La Doctrine ascétique de Saint Basile de Césarée* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1932).
[29] S. Giet, *Les idées et l'actions sociales de Saint Basile* (Paris: J. Gabalda et Éditeurs, 1941).
[30] Mendieta, *L'ascèse monastique*.
[31] J. Gribomont, *Saint Basile, l'Évangile et Église*, Spiritualité Orientale 36, vol. 2 (Paris: Bellefontaine, 1984).
[32] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 48.

Some modern scholars turned to exploring the socio-political aspects in the early ascetic movements.[33] Rousseau, under Brown's influence, views St Basil's ascetic writings within the framework of his ecclesiastical background, seeing them as reflecting the desire for the smooth running of the church and a humanitarian attitude, which would ensure the well-being of all.[34]

Thus, we see how scholars explored the practice and spirituality of St Basil's ascetic ideas. Some scholars emphasize philosophical influences on his thought, while others show his dependence on Scripture. St Basil drew support for his ideas from both of these sources. We also notice that there are very scarce mentions of the Spirit in the work of these scholars.

The first work which takes a comprehensive approach to St Basil's life, works, and thought can be found in two volumes of essays that were edited by Fedwick in 1981.[35] There is no one article which treats the doctrinal and ascetic aspects of St Basil's thought together. Nevertheless, three articles, when taken together, can lead one to an integral view of St Basil's thought. These are Anastos' analysis of *Eun*., Pelikan's paper on the 'spiritual sense' of Scripture as a basis for St Basil's doctrine of the Spirit, and Špidlík's essay on St Basil's monastic ideals.[36]

Further, Rousseau was second in English scholarship after the collection of essays edited by Fedwick and the first among French and English scholars to write a monograph on St Basil's life and thought, covering his views on ascetic life and the history of his engagement in doctrinal debates.[37] In his book he does not regard controversy as the central preoccupation of St Basil's life or his ascetic initiatives as separable from

[33] D.B. Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York, Oxford: OUP, 1993); P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, Columbia Classics in Religion (Columbia: CUP, 1st ed. 1988, 2nd ed., 2008); S. Rubenson, *Letters of St Antony: Monasticism and the Making of A Saint*, Studies in Antiquity & Christianity (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).
[34] Luckman, 'Pneumatology and Asceticism', 51-2.
[35] Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*.
[36] Anastos, 'Basil's *Kata Eunomiou*': 67-136; J. Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture: The Exegetical Basis for St. Basil's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*: 337-60; Špidlík, 'L'ideal du Monachisme Basilien' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*: 361-74.
[37] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*.

his pastoral concern for all Christians. He is careful to distinguish between the ascetic way of life of St Basil's sister Macrina, along with his mother and brother, and that led by St Basil. Rousseau connects St Basil's asceticism with the influence of Eustathius and the journey that the two shared to Syria, Palestine and Egypt rather than with the influence of Macrina. However, this position was lately challenged by Silvas.[38] Rousseau shows how *Eun.* foreshadows concerns that would continue to occupy St Basil, particularly the emphasis on the authority of Scripture and the conviction that action rather than cognition reflects true faith. Rousseau develops the idea that St Basil only gradually formulated his ascetic conceptions. This scholar contends that St Basil's distinction between ascetics and other church members is less firm than some have argued. Rousseau demonstrates that St Basil's ascetic audience differs from the broader church only in the intensity of its inner commitment and that his ascetic guidance was available to all. This thesis will build on Rousseau's argumentation and develop it further.

Next, there are works, which uncover St Basil's thought by examining his letters. This thesis will analyse those letters, which treat the nature of the Trinity and specifically of the Spirit. It will take into account the historical context of these letters; here the works of Courtonne, Gain and Pouchet will be of great use.[39]

The present study is also much indebted to more recent works by Haykin, Holmes, Hildebrand, and McConnell. Haykin examines the use of 1 and 2 Corinthians by St Athanasius and St Basil especially as it relates to the doctrine of the Spirit.[40] This work is especially useful since it looks in detail at the use of Scripture by the Fathers in expounding the doctrine of the Spirit. Further, Holmes explores St Basil's life against the background

[38] A.M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* (Oxford: OUP, 2005).
[39] Y. Courtonne, *Un témoin du IV Siècle. Saint Basile et son temps d'après sa correspondence* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1973); B. Gain, *L'Eglise de Cappadoce au IVe siècle d'après la correspondance de Basile de Césarée* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientale, 1985); J.R. Pouchet, *Basile le Grand et son univers d'amis d'après sa correspondence. Une stratégie de communion*, Studia Ephmeridis 'Augustinianum' 36 (Rome: Augustinian Patristic Institute, 1992).
[40] M.G.A. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, *SVC* 27 (Leiden, New York: Brill, 1994).

of the ascetic tradition in Asia Minor and Cappadocia in the fourth century, the development of St Basil's ascetical teaching, and the origins and nature of St Basil's *Ask*.[41] We will engage with his work in considering the historical contexts of St Basil's works and the development of organized asceticism.

Hildebrand followed Rousseau's lead in treating St Basil's ascetic and doctrinal ideas as a whole. In his monograph, after a brief account of St Basil's life, he discusses St Basil's views on theological anthropology, revelation, Trinitarian theology, Christian discipleship, monasticism, and tradition. He defines St Basil's theological method as 'weav[ing] together the dogmatic and the ascetic',[42] which is one of the main arguments of this thesis. While St Basil argued for the Spirit's full divinity, his many opponents utilized an argument of *sola scriptura*. St Basil, however, as Hildebrand notes, 'argues that the Scriptures cannot be rightly understood apart from apostolic and patristic tradition, and in this case the tradition is liturgical'.[43] First, as Hildebrand remarks, we owe the very doctrine of the full divinity of the Spirit to extra-biblical innovation (that is, to tradition, and not Scripture). We can add that even though St Basil was reverent of Scripture, he also held in high esteem traditions formed on the basis of Scripture. Second, this scholar draws our attention to the role of worship in the formulation of tradition.[44] Hildebrand considers the two different ways in which St Basil explains the Trinity, and seeks to show that they are designed differently because of the audience. One was intended to fight against heresy, and the other is a positive explanation of the Trinity. In both St Basil maintains and defends doctrinal orthodoxy on the Trinity. The major point of the struggle seems to have come down here: 'in the non-Nicene framework, the gap is between the Father and the Son, and in the Nicene framework, it is between the Trinity and everything else'.[45] We will show in this thesis that St Basil held a high view of the Spirit in his non-polemical works, where he expounded a more positive teaching on his

[41] A. Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God: The Spirituality of the Rules of St Basil* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000).
[42] Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, 166.
[43] Ibid., 93.
[44] Ibid., 4.
[45] Ibid., 106.

nature. Hildebrand notes that St Basil's interactions with Eunomius and Eustathius became the occasion for the development of a theory of names (how we talk about God), and a theory concerning church tradition.

Further, McConnell in his monograph[46] writes that St Basil refused to use philosophical terminology to call the Spirit God, preferring to show what the Spirit revealed through divine action and Scripture. Thus, he focuses on the 'economic'[47] role of the Spirit rather than on the ontological aspect. McConnell also suggests that the theologian, according to St Basil, cannot make such a claim because it can only be known by the illuminative activity of the Spirit himself. As the scholar argues, 'illumination' becomes the primary paradigm for St Basil, which later theologians would come to call revelation. The author shows how St Basil, by focusing on baptism, creation, and revelation in Scripture, made an original contribution to the doctrine of the Spirit. This scholar analyses in convincing detail St Basil's theological epistemology: how we come to know God through illumination and, in particular, by the divine light that comes with baptism and in the process of reading Scripture. McConnell looks at this issue in the context of St Basil's liturgical and exegetical use of the idea of 'illumination', particularly as it contrasts with the teaching of Eunomius and Eustathius. We will engage with this work especially when treating St Basil's views on the Spirit's role in creation and in illumination. We cannot agree that illumination is the principal characteristic of St Basil's description of the Spirit, but it plays an important role – as we will show in the final chapter of this thesis.

Thus, we see how scholarship has moved from analysing St Basil's doctrinal and polemical thought to consideration of his ascetic teaching and then to treatment of both together. The main point in the debate between St Basil and Eunomius was how to express the Trinitarian mystery in Greek vocabulary and, generally, in human words. Concerning St Basil's ascetic teaching, scholars have looked at his use of Hellenistic sources and the New Testament texts, his ascetic ideals and their practical

[46] T.P. McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Emerging Scholars (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2014).
[47] Economy (οἰκονομία) - divine plan for man's salvation.

implementation in the communities. This thesis will engage above all with the works of Hildebrand, Rousseau and McConnell.[48] We also see that there are few discussions on the Spirit in scholarship on St Basil's ascetic works. Thus, this gap should be addressed.

It also has to be noted that after focus on theoretical and philosophical thought of the Church Fathers in general in the 19th century's scholarship, came interest in seeing connections between theology and spirituality in the 20th and 21st century's scholarsip. Nouvelle Théologie represented by Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Yves Congar, Karl Rahner, Louis Bouyer, Jean Daniélou, and others looked at the Church Fathers in relation to modernity. Among other modern scholars who do comprehensive analysis of the Fathers are Williams and Ayres.

Contribution to the Field: The Approach and the Research Questions

In this thesis we will, first, argue that St Basil believes in the divinity of the Spirit, even though he never calls him 'God' or 'homoousion' with the Father and the Son. This can be explained, as Meyendorff suggested, by the fact that the nature of the Spirit is such that it cannot be revealed.[49] The Spirit reveals the Son, but stays hidden himself. The role of the Spirit in salvation is always *kenotic*, it is directed to the Others. The nature of the Spirit is a mystery which may be understood in the eschatological future. Now we can only judge about the nature of the Spirit from Scripture and his actions in the world. In addition, the Spirit partially reveals himself in the lives of prominent ascetics. We will demonstrate that St Basil defends the divinity of the Spirit not only from traditional ideas of agency of the Spirit in inspiration of Scripture and in baptism, and not only in sanctification, but also from his role in creating the world, angels and humanity, his role in teaching true doctrines and guiding the Christians, in supporting humans in their ascetic struggles, and in providing knowledge of the Father and the Son. St Basil affirms the divine nature of the Spirit

[48] Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*; ibid., *The Trinitarian Theology*; Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea;* McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea.*
[49] J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2nd ed., 1983), ch. 13.

by describing his divine activities (ἔργα) in all spheres of human life and in the history of humanity, by asserting his equal honour (ὁμότιμος) with the other two Persons and his sharing in communion (κοινωνία) of the Father and the Son. Second, it will be shown that for St Basil the ascetic life is grounded in the right doctrines (especially doctrine on the Spirit), and, conversely, that one can understand the true doctrines only by living an ascetic life or a life in the Spirit. Moreover, it will be demonstrated that St Basil addressed his ascetic ideals to the whole of the Church and not just to monastic communities which were in the process of formation.

First, despite the fact that St Basil never calls the Spirit *homoousion*, he consistently implies this meaning in his writings. Moreover, he applies the term *homotimos* to the Spirit, which some understand as synonymous to *homoousios.* This shows the Spirit's unity and communion (κοινωνία) in nature with the Father and the Son. As James remarks, the flow of St Basil's argument is as follows: action demonstrates essence, and on the basis of essence, honour is asserted.[50] St Basil assumes *homoousion,* equality, inseparability, and full divinity of the Spirit, but he only asserts *homotimon*. The honour rendered to someone shows the nature of this person. Andia interestingly defines the theology of St Athanasius as one of *homoousios,* whereas the theology of St Basil is one of *koinonia*. St Basil never writes that the Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son, but rather that he shares in the community of nature with the Father and the Son, that is, he shares in the Godhead.[51]

Second, St Basil does not call the Spirit *homoousion* or 'God'; rather, he proves and defends the divine nature of the Spirit by showing his divine works. St Basil is taking for the most part an 'economic' approach to the Trinity in his handling of the Spirit. St Basil's argument consists in the idea that we can tell who the Spirit is by examining what he does. We can mention here the explanation of St Basil's reservation offered by McGuckin as it relates to the works of the Spirit. He interestingly suggests

[50] J.L.W. James, 'An Examination of Homotimia in St Basil the Great's "On the Holy Spirit" and Contemporary Implications', *WTJ* 74:2 (2012): 257-76.
[51] Y. de Andia, 'L'illumination de l'Esprit chez saint Basile de Césarée', *Rencontre spirituel et théologique 'Viens Esprit Saint'* (Centre Notre Dame de Vie: Éd. du Carmel, 1987): 155-75, 161.

that St Basil does not call the Spirit God because 'the Scriptures apply the range of activities for the Spirit, which we confess as *theios*, to connote the movement in the Trinitarian relations. This is the proper account of the divine Energeia at the heart of what that confession of God means, whereas the importation of the non-scriptural referential noun (*theios*) tends to remove the confession into an abstraction'.[52] Thus, we see how this scholar stresses the idea of energy/power (ἐνέργεια/δύναμις). The works of the Spirit define his nature, more than do certain abstract terms. However, in the last resort, God is beyond philosophical categories; he is transcendent and unapproachable.

Third, it also important to emphasize St Basil's ascetic approach to pneumatology and theology. He argues that the need for a special contemplation (θεωρία) to understand the Mosaic law is paralleled by the need for a special contemplation to understand the nature of the Spirit. The contemplation of the Spirit is at the core of the Christian life and is enabled by the Spirit himself. All three Persons are 'seen' by Christians who have attained 'purity of heart', which can be regarded as the goal of asceticism. Just as understanding the 'depth' of the Mosaic law depends on the understanding of the essential dynamics of God's action in Christ, so too grasping the intention of the Church's teaching depends on grasping the inner dynamics of the contemplation of God which is the goal and ground of Christian life.[53] We see here how practice influences theory and how contemplation of God shapes the Church's teaching. Similarly, Torrance notes how St Basil approached the question of the divinity of the Spirit more from the side of 'ascetical theology' than from the side of Christology after the Athanasian manner. According to St Basil, the mind is filled through the Spirit with the form of the Logos and the Spirit imparts to the Church its true form in Christ as his Body. In these ways the Spirit is inseparable from the Logos in *koinonia* and *energeia*.[54]

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[52] J.A. McGuckin, 'St Basil the Great's Exposition of Nicene Orthodoxy' in D. Costache, P. Kariatlis (eds.), *Cappadocian Legacy: A Critical Appraisal* (Sydney: St Andrew's Orthodox Press, 2013): 49-62, 61.
[53] L. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy. An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 220.
[54] T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction* (London: SCM Press, 1965): 209-28, 219, 224-5.

These are the main arguments of the thesis. Now, we will look at the structure of this work. Chapter One examines the theological environment of the fourth century and at the contribution of St Athanasius and the Cappadocians to the doctrine of the Spirit. Then we demonstrate St Basil's views on the Spirit, his unity with two Persons and his individual properties. We attempt to explain his reticence with regard to *homoousios* and show development in his thought. Further, we discuss St Basil's approach to the interpretation of Scripture and his view on the role of the unwritten traditions in the formulation of the Church doctrines.

Chapter Two examines the role of the Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture and in the creation of the world. We will start from this theme since, for St Basil, Scripture is inspired by the Spirit and provides most of our knowledge about God. We show how St Basil uses the phrase 'sayings of the Spirit' and how he describes the process of the inspiration of prophets. We also demonstrate St Basil's conviction about the Spirit as a Creator who cooperated with the Father and the Son in creation, and explore his understanding of different senses of creation.

Chapter Three investigates how the Spirit guides the Church as a whole, as well as individuals, in determining what is true doctrine, and how one's life in the Spirit influences one's understanding of the doctrines. This chapter shows the Spirit as a Person who is alive, not one who is a mere theological construct. According to St Basil, he is someone who participates in the life not just of the Church in general, but also in the life of each individual. It is emphasized in this and other chapters that St Basil's works and ideas on asceticism have an impact on and are also influenced by his doctrinal teachings. One cannot understand the nature of the Spirit unless one makes ascetic effort, and vice versa, one cannot achieve perfection in spiritual life and simultaneously uphold heretical views on the nature of the Spirit. It is noteworthy that St Basil's Trinitarian teaching is based on the baptismal experience of communities employing doxologies that were rooted in liturgical practice.

Chapter Four looks at human nature as it was created, and on the relationship between the human spirit and the Spirit. Afterwards it looks at the fallen condition of humanity by exploring the place of the Spirit in two

types of life: the life according to reason and the life according to passions. It is also shown that St Basil addresses his spiritual advice to all Christians, not just to monastics.[55] At the time when St Basil started writing his *Ask.*, people were practising asceticism in the wider world; only over time did St Basil organise monastic communities and define specific kinds of renunciations for them. In relation to this, St Basil's expression, 'life according to the Gospel', relates not just to the monastic life, but to the lives of all baptised Christians. The Spirit helps in the ascetic struggles of all Christians. According to St Basil, one cannot become a dwelling place of the Spirit and Trinity if one does not prepare one's own soul by means of ascetic exercises. This chapter looks at the ways of managing the disordinate movements of passions.

Chapter Five examines St Basil's understanding of the way of salvation or deification as perfection in virtue and union with God and indwelling of the Spirit in the human soul. It is shown, in opposition to the views of Russell,[56] that St Basil upholds both views. Some of his works describe the first model, which can be explained as oriented at Christians at the beginning of their spiritual journey, whereas the model of deification describes the final stages of the ascetic life. First, one purifies his soul and body from passions, acquires virtues, and then the Spirit can come to indwell the human being. We also examine St Basil's views on human and divine parts in the process of salvation.

Chapter Six shows how the Spirit provides the way to the knowledge of God and how he leads the purified souls to divine illumination. We demonstrate how St Basil differs from other Fathers in ascribing the illuminative role mostly to the Spirit and not to the Son. St Basil also presents both the Son and the Spirit as the sources of wisdom.

The contribution of this work lies in the systematic and comprehensive overview of St Basil's pneumatology with attention to the historical context and potential audiences of each work. This thesis analyses St

[55] By 'monastics' I mean those individuals who practised ascetic life in the monastic community; by 'ascetics' I mean those who lived life of *ascesis* in the world.
[56] N. Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: OUP, 2006).

Basil's teachings and compares them where relevant with the teachings of Apostolic Fathers, and with Clement, Origen, St Athanasius, and other Cappadocians. The method can be described as that advocated by P. de Regnon, who writes, '…the only means to know the exact way of thinking of a Greek doctor/theologian is to cite him extensively, in order to become familiar with it'.[57] This thesis mainly relies on the methodology of Systematic Theology, however, also considering the historical circumstances of each of St Basil's works. It is also argued that we should look at St Basil's views on the nature of the Spirit considering not just his polemical treatises *Eun.* and *DSS*, but also all of his other works, including the ascetic ones.

Nobody can deny that there is development in St Basil's thought. He formed his ideas on the Son only gradually, coming from his acceptance of the term *homoiousios* (the Son being similar in nature with the Father) to affirmation of the more radical *homoousios* (the Son being of the same nature as the Father). Concerning the Spirit, he conceded in *Eun*. that the Spirit is third in rank and dignity, whereas later he affirmed that the Spirit is of equal dignity with the Father and the Son. It is interesting to note that already *Eun*. contains the seed of most of the ideas on the nature of the Spirit which St Basil developed in his later works. Despite this development, he always believed that the Spirit is above creation and that holiness belongs to his nature.

In his non-polemical works, St Basil writes about the Spirit showing his divine actions. If we look at individual works, we notice that the peculiar and recurring theme of the *Eps* is the guiding and teaching role of the Spirit and his unifying role in the Church; *Reg. Mor*., *Iud*., *Bapt*. and *Ask.* frequently warn that one should not grieve the Spirit, and describe how one acquires the gifts of the Spirit; *Hom. in Ps.* and miscellanous homilies often mention the inspirational role of the Spirit. However, we see that St Basil writes about different works of the Spirit in all of his treatises written throughout his lifetime - inspiration of prophets, guidance in interpretation of Scripture, giving life, leading to the illumination and

[57] T.A. Noble, *The Deity of the Holy Spirit According to Gregory of Nazianzus*, (Edinburgh University, PhD, 1989), v.

contemplation of God, advising the bishops, distributing the gifts, guiding to perfection and indwelling of God - which all show the divine status of the Spirit. St Basil mostly writes about the nature of the Spirit in relation to the Father and the Son in his polemical works such as *Eun.*, *DSS*, and *Eps*. We see his dependence on Origen in writing extensively on the role of the Spirit in sanctifying angels and humans, and on St Athanasius in showing unity and equality of the Spirit with the Son. However, contrary to Origen, he expands on other roles of the Spirit, especially in teaching the doctrines and creating the world. Differently from St Athanasius, he gives more independence to the activities of the Spirit.

The Dates, Contexts and Audiences

First, we will look at St Basil's life in brief. He was born in 329 or 330, in the province of Cappadocia, into the family of a sophist-rhetorician and a noble woman. He received his education in Caesarea of Cappadocia (where he met a friend who would remain close to him throughout his life, St Gregory of Nazianzus), then in Constantinople where he heard Libanius, and finally in Athens. In 355 he returned home and taught rhetoric in Caesarea. In 356 he went on tour of monastic settlements in Coele-Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Egypt following and trying to find Eustathius. In 357/8 he was baptised by bishop Dianius and retired to the family estate in Annisa, joining his family in the practice of asceticism. In 358 St Gregory joined St Basil. In 360 St Basil attended the Synod of Constantinople, where he was ordained as a reader and left to Annisa. In 362 he was ordained as a priest by bishop Eusebius of Caesarea. Because of a disagreement with the latter, he spent the years 363-5 in Annisa, where he answered the requests of ascetics and devout Christians on the right way of life. During this time he started his *Ask.*, wrote many homilies on Psalms and moral homilies. In 368-69 and 375-76 he visited the ascetics in Pontus continuing his teaching. He formed monastic communities in Pontus and in Caesarea, which was part of Basiliad, a

Christian 'new city'. In 370 he became bishop. He died on the first of January 379.[58]

Now we will look at the context of St Basil's works. We will first focus on the time and intended audiences of St Basil's ascetic writings among which are *Reg. Mor*., *Iud*., *Fid*., *SR,* and *LR.* Some scholars include *Ep* 22 'On the Perfection of the Life of the Solitaries', in this list[59] and even *Bapt*.[60] It is a complicated task to date St Basil's works, because he wrote them at different points in his life and edited them continuously. We can only achieve an approximate chronology of his works by considering different scholars' opinions on the chronologies of his life and writings.

First, concerning *Ep* 22, Clarke states that St Basil wrote it in reply to the request of the monks, during the years 362-65. St Basil mentions there that he will write a separate treatise for the monks responding to all questions. The letter shows numerous affinities with *Reg. Mor.* (the main principles of the Christian life and duty are expressed in the New Testament phrases, which recur in *Reg. Mor.* which Clarke dates to after 365).[61] According to Pouchet, St Basil wrote *Ep* 2 in 358, whereas *Ep* 22 belongs to 366. Between these two letters Pouchet sees a passage from a semi-anachoretic way of life to the defined and already institutionalised cenobitism.[62] Fedwick maintains that St Basil wrote *Ep* 22 in the years 368-69 to a Pontic community.[63] We can conclude that it was written in 366-69.

Now we will look at the dating of the two prefaces of *Reg. Mor*., known as *Fid*. and *Iud*. Starting from Lèbe, Fedwick, Sickle and other scholars support the late composition of *Reg. Mor.* and its prefaces. Lèbe argues that *Reg. Mor.* belongs to the period of St Basil's episcopacy and not to the years 358-59,[64] 360,[65] or alternatively, 361[66] or 364.[67] He assigns *Fid*.

[58] Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 5-19.
[59] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 193-8.
[60] Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 4.
[61] Ibid., 14
[62] Ibid., 181.
[63] P.J. Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1979), 150.
[64] Pouchet, *Basile le Grand et son univers d'amis*, 179.
[65] J. Gribomont, *Histoire du texte des ascétiques de S. Basile*, Bibliothèque de Muséon 32 (Louvain: Institute Orientaliste, 1953), 257-8.
[66] Giet, *Les idées et l'actions*, 13.
[67] Humbertclaude, *La Doctrine ascétique*, 34-5.

to the period of 376-78,[68] because no text makes allusion to *Reg. Mor.*, which was addressed to a vast audience, which in turn proves, according to Lèbe, St Basil's maturity and pastoral experience. In 361, the Anomoeans did not consider piety as important as precise doctrine. Eunomius did not view Christian asceticism positively. That is why St Basil emphasized in *Reg. Mor.* the indispensable character of the sacraments and the necessity of Christian virtues. Moreover, according to Lèbe, *Iud*. does not belong to 360-61 because neither St Basil, nor any companion of his, was engaged in a fight for the Church at that time. However, he became engaged in this fight from 364 and was accompanied at this time by Sts Eusebius of Samosata, Gregory of Nazianzus and Athanasius of Alexandria.[69]

Fedwick gives more precision for dating *Reg. Mor*. As he believes, St Basil wrote the first draft of *Reg. Mor.* and two prefaces with the help of St Gregory of Nazianzus in the early 360s. The second revision was included in *Ep* 22 in 368-69. He finished this work in 372-75 after his breach with Eustathius, pressed by ascetics from Pontus and Armenia to produce a statement of his faith. He wrote *Fid.* as a 'private creed' which avoided technical terms and distinctions, as Fedwick thinks, to please his conservative audience.[70] He also based his writing on Scripture, without excluding arguments and traditions that were consistent with it (*Reg. Mor*. 70.6). Fedwick argues that *Iud.* was a work not of St Basil's early years, but rather of his episcopate. It is a view of Mendieta that *Iud*. belongs to St Basil's retreat or beginning of priesthood, 360-65, because it refers to Anomoeans in its beginning and there is no mention of St Basil's episcopal obligations.[71] However, Fedwick argues that the main theme of St Basil's discourse was the bitter antagonism among church leaders and not the upstart Anomoeans. The time of Anomoean advance, referred to in the text, might have been in 357-61. According to Fedwick, St Basil was probably writing it in 375-76 for a number of reasons. Though he speaks of himself as a novice, a similar style is used in *Ep* 223, written in 375. Far

[68] L. Lèbe, 'Saint Basile. Les règles morales', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 182.1 (1972): 193-200, 193-5.
[69] Ibid., 196-9.
[70] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 150.
[71] Mendieta, *L'ascèse monastique*, 75-6.

from showing timidity and being apologetic, St Basil intends to dispel any misunderstanding concerning his orthodoxy (also *Eps* 204, 210). He is writing to a community of ascetics who are baffled by his falling out with Eustathius. Moreover, in none of his writings that can be placed before 370 does St Basil speak so openly of the evils of the church and the inability of its leaders to come to an agreement as in *Iud.* The *Reg. Mor.* demonstrates similar theological insight and maturity of thought to that displayed in *DSS*. The *Bapt.* is posterior to *Reg. Mor.*, having probably been written in 376-8. Fedwick also notes that St Basil turned more towards Scripture at the end of his life, though this can be contested, since St Basil used Scripture abundantly in his early homilies, *SR*, *LR*, and other.[72]

From the reference in *Bapt*. we know that *Iud*. enjoyed independent circulation before St Basil redacted it for the purpose of prefacing *Reg. Mor*. The *Fid*. also had a life of its own; it might have been used as a written confession of faith for those who requested it, which was not uncommon at that time. *Reg. Mor*. 1-69 and 70-80 were composed separately from one another. This division can be observed from the fact that *Reg. Mor*. 69 is a fitting conclusion to what comes before it. Whereas every rule to that point is a specific injunction, this rule is a list of commands and prohibitions from Scripture. In addition, both tone and subject change between the two parts. Everything said before 70 is applied to all Christians indiscriminately, while *Reg. Mor*. 70-79 are each addressed to a particular layer of society. Moreover, rules in the first part of *Reg. Mor*. are short, but long in the second part. There is also external evidence for dividing the work temporally. There are three manuscripts of *Reg. Mor*. in which chapters 70-80 are absent. It is possible that these manuscripts represent a circulation of the first 69 rules that continued alongside the fuller, later version, as happened in the case of the *Ask.*[73] Fedwick demonstrates that some of the seminal ideas of *Reg. Mor*., such as the equality of all sins and the distribution of spiritual gifts (*χαρίσματα*), do not surface in any of St Basil's other datable writings until after the

[72] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 150-2.
[73] J.N. van Sickle, 'Introduction' in St Basil the Great, *On Christian Ethics*, trans. id. (New York: SVSP, 2014): 13-37, 21-31.

mid-360s when he became a priest. *Reg. Mor*. 70-80 clearly reflect the time of St Basil's episcopate, when his pastoral responsibilities required him to reflect on the proper behaviour and activity of all the various persons entrusted to him. Moreover, it is unlikely that St Basil would instruct bishops on how to be a bishop if he were not already one himself. Thus, Fedwick dates the first release of *Iud*. to 365-72, and the publication of *Reg. Mor*. 1-69 to 371-75. *Reg. Mor*. 70-80 and two reworked prefaces were appended in 376 or 377.[74] Sickle similarly dates the composition of *Reg. Mor*. 1-69 to the years 365-75, widening the span in order to allow time for the manifest difference of mentality in *Reg. Mor*. 70-80.[75] Thus, we see that *Reg. Mor, Fid*. and *Iud*. were written during St Basil's episcopacy. *Bapt*. was composed in 376-78.[76] We agree with Fedwick and Sickle in dating *Fid., Iud*., and *Reg. Mor.* during St Basil's episcopacy.

Now we will look at the formation of *Ask*. Silvas describes the process of the composition of the *Ask.* in the following way. In July 362 St Basil was ordained a priest by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, but because of some misunderstanding with him he went to Pontus where he spent the years 363-65 preaching to the Christian ascetic communities. The ascetics (probably Eustathius' disciples) often asked him about the right way of life and his responses were sometimes taken down by tachygraphers. Similarly, Holmes writes that St Basil's travels in connection with the *homoiousion* question would have given many opportunities for meetings with ascetics when questions and answers might have been recorded. Additionally, his presence in Pontus, at the time when Eustathius was in exile in 360 and on journeys to the West, helped to meet the spiritual needs of the followers of Eustathius. The *Ask.* may first have taken form in Pontus before St Basil became bishop, as a sixth-century editor of the *Ask.* recorded in his scholia.[77] In 365 he returned to Caesarea, having been reconciled with bishop Eusebius by St Gregory of Nazianzus. This was the time for the first edition of the *Ask.* which was intended for the ascetics in Pontus. He wrote it either before going to Caesarea or right after coming

[74] Fedwick, 'A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 14, n. 80.
[75] Sickle, 'Introduction', 31.
[76] Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 14.
[77] Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God*, 37.

there, and sent it to Pontus. Thus, the *SA* can be dated to 365-66. The first edition of the expanded *Ask.* (or the 'Basiliad' recension) may be dated to St Basil's early years of episcopacy, that is, the early 370s. Another occasion for enlarging *Ask.* was St Basil's extended stay at Annisa in 375-76, which by that time has become a monastic community presided over by his sister Macrina and brother Peter. One of St Basil's purposes during this stay was to secure the Pontic community from the influence of Eustathius of Sebaste, who became a leader of the Pneumatomachians and with whom he ended relations in 373. St Basil revised the *Ask.* either on his own or with the help of his brother Peter, with the latter serving as chief editor under St Basil's direction. So the editor of the Pontic manuscript, as Silvas suggests, might have been Peter or St Basil himself. The latter might have reorganized the *SA* into thematic blocks himself. During his episcopate St Basil continued visiting and teaching the communities of the ascetics, revised and augmented the collections of his answers. Possibly in 376-377 he added *Reg. Mor.* and various prefaces to *Ask.* in order to form the collection which he called the *Ascetic Hypotyposis* which was the source of the scholiast's Pontus manuscript.[78] Additions to the *Ask.* on the nature of the Spirit were made in the year 376 or later (for example, additions to the *SR* 37 and refashioning of the preface to the *SR*). After his stay in Annisa, St Basil returned to Caesarea where he added several new questions and answers. Silvas argues that by the end of St Basil's life, in addition to the *SA* there were at least three recensions of the *GA*: the Pontic, the Caesarean, and the *Ask.* 2, which was a development of the former two.[79] Fedwick and Silvas agree in dating the *SA* to the time when St Basil was still a priest. So we can see that St Basil's *Ask.* went through a series of transformations even during St Basil's lifetime and had a long history of development. St Basil himself augmented and extended his answers and added new answers to the fresh questions.

Next, we will explore the potential audiences for St Basil's ascetic works. As Pidruchnyj and Clarke write, *Reg. Mor.*, which are a collection of texts

[78] Ibid., 38.
[79] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 2-4.

arranged thematically on the basis of the New Testament, were intended for a wide Christian audience and are concerned with the duties of Christians at large.[80] The *LR* looks like the responses to genuine questions, which were then written down, although some of them might be a part of the written correspondence between St Basil and ascetics in Pontus after he became bishop. While the division into 55 *LR* is the work of later editors, their existence as a separate group of answers goes back to St Basil.[81] The diversity of questions in the *Ask.* reflects the interests of St Basil's disciples. He retained the question and answer structure not wanting to stray from the original situation.

Concerning the intended audience of *Ask*., Silvas argues for monastic audiences of the ascetic works. She disagrees with Gribomont's and Fedwick's 'anti-monastic' readings of the *Ask*. She writes that while showing no distinction between Gospel 'precepts' and 'counsels', the *SA* addresses 'Christians' who are meant to embrace all the implications of baptism and the commandments of God. The following aspects of ascetic life, which became prescriptive norms, were in this work mentioned inductively: withdrawal from the worldly life, the necessity of the ordered community life, the wearing of a poor or common dress. We can see that *Ask*. at times addresses specific ascetic questions. Community consists of 'those dedicated to God' (*LR* 9), which implicitly means professing virginity or celibacy. Profession is considered as a lifelong commitment, and personal property is abdicated. Silvas points out that St Basil knew of the hyper-ascetic tendencies in general and of Gangra's censures of ascetic excesses, even at the earliest stages of the *SA*, in the mid-360s. She argues that in these years St Basil teaches from Scripture the necessity of the cenobitic, disciplined community life. The *GA*, in its turn, reflects new concerns of the questioners or practical situations not yet met in the previous years. More attention is given to the requirements for admission to the community (for example, in *LR* 15) in comparison with the *SA*: a commitment is now expressed through the public vow, and it involves

[80] Clarke, *St Basil the Great*, 68; P. Pidruchnyj, *The Historical Development of the Rule of St Basil the Great*, https://osbmcommission.wordpress.com/list-of-conferences/historical-development-of-the-rule-of-st-basil-the-great/, <accessed 17.11.2015>.
[81] Ibid., 39.

celibacy.[82] As Luckman notes, St Basil did not call his addressees 'monks' because he did not want his ascetics to consider themselves an elite or a special group in some way separate from the church community.[83]

Rousseau admits that it is impossible to deny that *Ask.* makes references to what can be described as an institutionalized form of the ascetic life. Letters also contain unambiguous assertions that ascetics formed a recognizable group in the Christian community, with an identity different from that of the clergy or laity (*Ep* 200, written in spring 375). However, Rousseau questions whether St Basil accepted these trends towards a visible distinction of person and dwelling and whether he did so gradually or suddenly. *Ep* 22 (366-69), full of ascetic exhortation, is addressed to 'the Christian'. St Basil associated any serious rejection of one's past with baptism and not with the monastic profession. However, later St Basil writes about renunciation of the world and adherence to the precepts of the Fathers (*Ep* 23). St Basil felt in the 360s-370s, that ascetic life was developing in such a way that its boundaries needed more careful definition. In *Ep* 199 to St Amphilochius of Iconium (375) St Basil insisted on a careful process of examination of those who wished to embrace ascetic life, which was made visible above all by the adoption of virginity. However, the very terms of St Basil's anxiety in this letter betray that men and women were already passing in and out of the ascetic profession. In this letter he seems to have implied that individuals could embrace a life of radical renunciation without necessarily thinking of themselves as monks. The word *μοναζόντης*, describing those who spent money for the needs of the poor and whose lives were consumed in fasting and prayer, was not to imply a high degree of organization (*Ep* 284). Renunciation of property became a real hallmark of the monastic vocation in a stricter sense.[84] However, as Clarke explains, renunciation of possession was not strict then, since St Basil himself enjoyed the income of part of his estate, and monks also had some money but spent them on the needs of the poor (proof of this we can find in *Ep* 284 where St Basil

[82] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 23-33.
[83] H. Luckman (ed.) *Purity of Heart in Early Ascetic and Monastic Literature: Essays in Honor of Juana Raasch*, (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1999), 91-9.
[84] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 196-201.

writes to the assessor of the taxes that monks should be exempted from taxation).[85] As Clarke notes, St Basil admitted the existence of 'spiritual men' outside his monasteries. When monks asked St Basil whether they should invite to prayer the laity who visited them, he answered positively that this should be done on condition that these visitors were 'friends of God'.[86] As Clarke interprets it, these lay visitors might be those living an ascetic life outside a monastery.[87] Similarly, Courtonne remarks that *Ep* 116 (372) to Firminos proves that it was possible for a person in the world, governor of the city to practice some kind of *ascesis* (training/struggle). St Basil reproached Firminos who left his position and entered the army. However, the latter replies in *Ep* 117 (372) that he will return to a position of a governor and practice ascetic exercises again.[88]

Holmes supports Rousseau's idea of the development of distinct monastic communities. As Holmes writes, 'Basil is not "monastic" but witnesses to the evolution of "monasticism"'.[89] St Basil understands monasticism as a communal life together, initiated by a permanent vow, characterized by chastity, obedience, work and mutual edification. He addresses his words to Christians in general but the Prologue to the *SA* shows that his listeners were a group of the more devout in the congregation. Like Rousseau, Holmes writes that it is reasonable not to define different types of Christians, but to see a progression, which is applicable for all Christians. We can observe the development of separate ascetic communities between formation of the *SA* and *GA*.[90]

Holmes states that the main difference between Christians as presented in the *Rules*, for example, in the *LR* 32, is between those who live according to God (κατὰ Θεόν) or the devout, and the worldly. St Basil's ascetic teaching was addressed to all Christians but in the context of later developments the *Ask.* came to be seen as a purely monastic document.[91] Rousseau also writes that we cannot assume that a document with an

[85] Clarke, *St Basil the Great*, 70-84.
[86] Clarke, 'SR' in Clarke, *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil*, 351.
[87] Clarke, 'Introduction', 46.
[88] Courtonne, *Un témoin*, 449-50.
[89] Ibid., 99.
[90] Ibid., 113.
[91] Ibid., 54.

ascetic element, even if it makes reference to an organization (institution) which looks 'monastic', was addressed only to a spiritual elite. St Basil does not even use the word 'monk' in his works.[92] Scholarship mostly agrees that only over time did St Basil adopt anything later generations would recognize as monastic institutions (monasteries). However, he himself was convinced that the ideals he defended were suited to all Christians, to be fulfilled within the Church in the broadest sense.[93] As Rousseau explains, in relation to the Prologue to *Ask.*, St Basil first presented principles, which he considered applicable to everyone, to communities in Caesarea and elsewhere, then he asked for anyone who would take the matter seriously and follow the monastic way of life, and, finally, he gave special advice, which eventually included advice on organization. A distinction was made not between the classes of people within the Church, but between the Christians at different stages of their spiritual development.[94]

Having examined the pro-monastic views of Silvas and ideas of development of monastic communities of Holmes and Rousseau, we can conclude that St Basil initially addressed his ascetic writings to all Christians. In some of his letters (*Eps* 116, 284, 297) he addresses those who practice asceticism in the world, which shows fluidity in ascetic life at that time. However, it seems that later he was writing specific recommendations for the newly formed separate communities. The main requirements for entering such communities were withdrawal from the world, abdication of property and a public irrevocable vow that implied celibacy. We will continue this discussion in Chapter Four. The fact that St Basil addressed *Ask*. to all Christians means that everyone is called to *ascesis*, and by means of it all can achieve illumination of the Spirit.

Now we will look at the dates and context of St Basil's letters and diverse homilies. St Basil's letters cover dogmatic, canonical, historical, liturgical, moral-ascetic, consolatory, commendatory, and personal themes. They can be divided into three groups depending on the dates when they were

[92] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 191.
[93] Ibid., 192.
[94] Ibid., 200.

composed: *Eps.* 1-43 were written in the years 357-70, *Eps.* 44-283 – in the years 370-78, *Eps.* 284-365 cannot be dated because of lack of evidence. Almost every class of people was a recipient of St Basil's letters: bishops, magistrates, officers, generals, soldiers, priests, ascetics, lay people, youngsters, pagans, and heretics. Some of these letters discuss the nature of the Trinity and the Spirit.

As Pouchet writes, among 366 letters, 34 are considered doubtful/inauthentic, in particular *Eps* 38-45 and 365. *Ep* 8 was written by Evagrius of Pontus, companion of St Gregory of Nazianzus, to his monks in Annesi near Neo-Caesarea. *Eps* 10, 16, 38, 124, 189, 342, and 348 belong to St Gregory of Nyssa, *Eps* 47, 166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 321 belong to St Gregory of Nazianzus. *Ep* 117 was written by Firminos, disciple of St Basil. *Ep* 50 belongs to St Amphilochius. It is difficult to date the genuine letters, but most scholars ascribe most of them to the years of St Basil's episcopacy (370-8). As Pouchet notes, St Basil's letters possessed the features of ancient epistolography: they were written with the help of one or several secretaries, transmitted by messengers, and they represented a means of communication that offered a Christian transferral of friendship and of brotherly love. Pouchet remarks that one sees less clearly in the letters of the two Gregories than in those of St Basil the character of a letter as a means of action. St Basil's letters combined friendship, rhetorical expressions, and the practical models of a spiritual strategist.[95]

Similarly to the *Rules*, we find in St Basil's *Eps* references to people who led an ascetic lifestyle in the world. Among such are *Eps* 4, 12, 13 written by St Basil to Olympius of Neo-Caesarea, a friend with whom he studied in Neo-Caesarea, and who was a rich land-owner. One finds in *Ep* 4 (c 359) one of the features of St Basil's cenobitic spirituality, namely, the profession of poverty. Olympius was one of the ascetics who lived in the world. This is proved by St Basil's naming him 'brother' in *Ep* 131. We also find him in *Ep* 211 under the name of a counsellor and mediator who was very much appreciated by St Basil. *Eps* 12, 13 belong to the time of St

[95] Pouchet, *Basile le Grand*, 29-32.

Basil's retreat in Pontus, and *Eps* 131, 211 belong to the time of debates with Eustathius and Atarbius in 375.[96]

St Basil also wrote a series of *Eps* to ascetics. Among those mentioned by name are Eustathius, St Gregory of Nazianzus, Macarius and John, Firminos, Heraclides, St Amphilochius and chorebishop[97] Timothy. Most of the letters are addressed to the ascetics of Pontus, since they were near, close in faith and attachment.[98] *Ep* 52 is not addressed to canonesses,[99] as Pouchet believes (this naming is an interpretation of a copyist) but to the clerical or ascetic community. *Ep* 207, similarly to *Hom. in Ps.* 44, mentions virgins who were involved in the scandal with Atarbios and his clergy. *Ep* 289 mentions a virgin who was inscribed in the order of virgins. Among other virgins are Ikelion, daughter of the count Magnenianos (*Ep* 325), and daughter of Eupaterios (*Ep* 159). *Ep* 284 (372) is a request of Hellenios to receive exemption from taxes in favour of the ascetics of Cappadocia. *Ep* 298 is written to a 'pious man'.[100]

Now we will look at the structure and addressees of *DSS*. St Amphilochius attributed great value to *DSS*: he ordered that it be copied from the original on papyrus onto a parchment, which was expensive at that time. He did this in order to have a luxurious copy and to be able to send it to his colleagues in Lycaonia and in provinces. A passage from the *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* in 451 states, 'St Basil the Great…left an exact doctrine of the Holy Spirit, after having asked for approbation of the signatures of his chorepiscopos'.[101] These *Acts* are based on the oldest manuscript of *DSS* with the signatures of the officials. As Pouchet interestingly notes, St Basil wanted to write this treatise not as an expression of private thoughts or as a work of a bishop of a local church, but he wanted to give it some kind of official authority. Chapters 1 and 30

[96] Ibid., 100, 102.
[97] A chorebishop/suffragan bishop was a rank of Christian clergy between bishops and priests; rural bishop. From the late third century, they were subject to metropolitan bishops and had no power of ordination.
[98] Ibid., 579-80.
[99] Canonesses were women who lived a life of piety following a definite rule of life. They differed from nuns in that they did not take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.
[100] Ibid., 580.
[101] Ibid., 431.

of *DSS* are letters to Amphilochius.[102] As Pouchet believes, based on the correspondence, that St Basil wrote it in one year starting from autumn 374. The first chapters are directed against subordinationists, Arians of the circle of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and disciples of Aetius, but not against Eustathians. Chapters 10 to 24 (not up to 27) are responses to St Basil's opponents, Eustathius and Poimenius (a priest of Sebaste). According to Pouchet, the second part of *DSS* starts with chapter 25, because it returns to the theme of prepositions, which was a matter of discussion in the first part of the book, and treats in particular the preposition 'with' (σύν). Chapters 25-30 are not an appendix of secondary importance, but rather an expansion on the meaning of Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition under its diverse forms.[103] It was written in order to be 'useful' in debate with Eustathians, Aetians, Eunomians, Eusebians, and also 'to arm those who listen to them' – that is, the baptised and ascetics of Caesarea and Pontus, along with St Amphilochius and his friends. Pouchet believes that *DSS* is addressed to all Christians, and not just to ascetics.[104] Dörries argues that it was addressed to a circle of monks among whom St Amphilochius was prominent. Pruche objects to the characterisation of this work as 'monastic'. However, he admits that St Basil never intended it for wide readership. Pruche states that it was written for all those who were baptized, and specifically for the bishops who were engaged in the struggle with Pneumatomachians. Similarly, Jaeger suggests that *DSS* was not addressed to monks. Since it employs distinctive philosophical concepts, it may have been composed by St Basil as a counter to the Pneumatomachian use of rationalistic arguments to deny the Spirit's oneness in being with the Father and the Son. Gribomont conciliates these positions by saying that 'the milieu in which his [St Basil's] theology was elaborated was typically episcopal but Basil, Eustathius and their friends behaved with an evangelical radicalism, which closely corresponds to what will later be called monachism'.[105]

[102] Ibid., 431.
[103] Ibid., 434-5.
[104] Ibid., 437.
[105] J. Gribomont, 'Intransigence and Irenicism in Saint Basil's "De Spiritu Sancto"', *WS I: A Monastic Review* (Still River, MA: St Bede's Publications, 1979): 109-36, 129.

As Haykin notes, an examination of the different prepositions that Scripture uses with regard to the members of the Godhead in *DSS* 2-8 seems to refute the Anomoeans rather than the Pneumatomachians. Chapters 6-8 provide a summary of the reasons why one should glorify the Son alongside the Father. Chapters 10-27 contain a debate between St Basil and Eustathius over the question of the Spirit's conglorification. Further, Dörries argues that St Basil composed chapter 9 at some other time than the rest of the treatise, probably for a monastic audience and then inserted it at the head of the pneumatological exposition. It differs from the rest of the work by its peculiar manuscript history and the total absence of any polemic against the Pneumatomachians. It was composed in 374-75 at about the same time as the rest of the treatise, though it was intended as a separate tract. The scholar argues that the basis of chapters 10-27 was the discussion that St Basil had with Eustathius at Sebaste in June 372. The scholar distinguishes twenty antitheses, which St Basil discusses in these chapters. The opponent's objections and St Basil's answers were recorded by tachygraphers at the time of the discussion. Later St Basil edited the material and substantially expanded his own contribution.[106]

Considering all these, we can conclude that *DSS* was addressed to all baptised Christians, and refuted both Neo-Arian arguments in chapters 6-8, and Pneumatomachians in chapters 10-24. Chapter 9 was composed as a separate tract.

Now we will look at the context of St Basil's homilies. St Basil wrote most of his homilies in the years 363-78. To the period of priesthood belong *Prov., Att., Div., Fam., Mal., Inv., and Hum.*; to the years of episcopate belong *Iei. 2* and *Ehx*. Homily *Verb.* belongs to the beginning of St Basil's ministry as bishop (before 7 September 372).[107] Fedwick gives more specific dates, writing that *Att., Inv., Prov., Hum., Adol.* belong to the year 364. He also dates *Dest., Div., Fam., Mal.* to 369-70 and *Iei. 1-2, Exh, Ebr.1, 2* to 371. According to the same scholar, *Grat., Ira., De*

[106] Haykin, *The Spirit of God*, 105-8.
[107] J. Bernardi, *La prédication des Pères Cappadociens. Le prédicateur et son auditoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 56-73.

Fid., Verb., Mund. belong to 372 and *Gord., Mart.,* and *Mam.* to 373. *Chr*. is likely to have been written in 376-7, and *Sab*. and *Lak.* in 378.[108]

As Bernardi notices, more than a half of St Basil's works consist in explaining the word of God to the faithful. This scholar notes that the only lacuna in St Basil's homilies is the absence of homilies dedicated to great liturgical feasts. It can be explained, according to Bernardi, by the fact that St Basil did not intend to create a separate collection of liturgical homilies.[109] It is also possible that those who edited, copied, and transmitted his works did not see fit to make such a collection. *De Fid.* and *Sab.* provide a public exposition of faith. *Dest., Div., Fam.,* and *Mal.* console people who are in trouble. *Sab.* witnesses that there were disguised heretics in the audience. Dörries has shown similarities between this homily and chapters 16 and 18 of *DSS*.[110] *Prov.* is addressed to beginners in spiritual life.[111] Whereas St Gregory of Nazianzus is demanding in tone in the sense that he talks to all of the faithful as candidates for the monastic life, St Basil is more realistic and deals only with the elimination of passions – especially for those who are engaged in the worldly lives. Bernardi writes that the homilies, contrary to ascetic writings, present a programme of thinking and living for lay people and have an essentially moral intention.[112]

St Basil also wrote exegetical homilies on Psalms 1, 7, 14, 28, 29, 32, 33, 44, 45, 48, 59, 61, 114, and 115. The homilies on Psalms 14, 28, 38, and 115 were considered dubious for some time. Now only the homilies on Psalms 38 and 132 remain uncertain in their attribution.[113] As Bernardi notes, the three Persons of the Trinity receive unequal attention in homilies on Psalms: in five lines St Basil talks about the Father, in 40 about the Son and in 80 about the Spirit. The scholar explains these extended references to the Spirit by the complaints expressed by one monk to St Gregory of Nazianzus (*Ep*. 58, written in 372/373) on reservedness of St Basil. On 7 September 372, on the feast of St Eupsychius, St Basil

[108] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 140-53.
[109] Bernardi, *La prédication*, 90.
[110] Ibid., 88.
[111] Ibid., 57.
[112] Ibid., 91.
[113] Ibid., 22.

preached in Caesarea about the Trinity in terms that scandalised some people with regard to the divinity of the Spirit, saying that the Spirit is worshipped together with the Father and the Son.[114]

According to Bernardi, the homilies on the Psalms belong to the first years of St Basil's episcopate or the end of his presbyterate.[115] Fedwick is more specific about the dates of some homilies. He assigns *Hom. in Ps.* 114 to 368 (when it was preached extempore[116]), *Hom. in Ps.* 28 to 374 and *Hom. in Ps.* 32, 33, and 45 to 375.[117] *Hom. in Ps.* 32 shows parentage with *DSS*; this is not surprising since it was written in 375.[118] St Basil wanted to show the role of the Spirit in all the spheres of creation, starting from the angels who were created first; he also mentions adversaries of the Spirit there. Bernardi believes that *Hom. in Ps.* 29 was not pronounced before a chosen audience of monks or pious faithful, but rather, before a group of unbaptised catechumens. However, *Hom. in Ps.* 14 mentions that not everyone is initiated into the divine mysteries, but only those who lead a life of perfection. According to *Hom. in Ps.* 44, there were even virgins among the heretics.[119] *Hom. in Ps.* 115 similarly mentions various heretical groups.[120]

As Oliphant Old writes, St Basil did not preach *Hex.* (378) every day, and although these homilies were not preached impromptu, they were prepared without being written down. This scholar believes that *Hex.* was not delivered during Lent, because it was not a usual practice to preach on this theme, and it was possibly not addressed to catechumens. He suggests that St Basil did not unite all the homilies on *Hex.* before publishing it because he 'realized that a sermon is an event rather than a document'.[121]

As we see, a number of homilies, including those on the Psalms, were addressed to the public at large, mostly catechumens. Some homilies

[114] Ibid., 86.
[115] Ibid., 25.
[116] H. Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church, Vol. 2: The Patristic Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 35-61.
[117] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 141-8.
[118] Ibid., 140-53.
[119] Bernardi, *La prédication*, 38-9.
[120] M. DelCogliano, 'Introduction to Homily on Psalm 115' in St Basil, *On Christian Doctrine and Practice*, ed., trans. id. (New York: SVSP, 2012), 218.
[121] Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching*, 35-61.

addressed the questions of the nature of God and the divinity of the Spirit. These homilies were written throughout the years 363-78, during St Basil's presbyterate and episcopate.

Now we will turn to the works which are not unanimously perceived as belonging to St Basil, namely *Hex.* 10-11 and *Is*. Some scholars consider that the former are written in a style that differs noticeably from St Basil's other nine homilies on *Hex*.; others think that he did compose them but did not have time to polish them for publication. A number of scholars hold that *Hex*. 10-11 is genuine.[122] Costache interestingly suggests that St Basil intentionally composed them in a simpler style of delivery for the sake of a less educated audience.[123] This seems a good explanation.

Smets and Esbroeck argue for the authenticity of *Hex.* 10-11. In both *Hex*. 1-9 and *Hex*. 10-11 we find four characteristic features: liturgical adaptation, literal and systematic exegesis, moral exhortation and a rejection of specialized topics, such as discussions about the origin of the world or about the symbolic value of numbers. *Hex*. 10-11 was addressed to those outside the mysteries of doctrine, that is, to the public at large. Contrary to St Gregory of Nyssa's *Op. Hom.,* St Basil does not engage in these homilies with pagan science and philosophy. We also find themes that belong specifically to St Basil: for example, he uses the term 'hypostasis' and makes allusion to certain liturgical matters, such as the bow of veneration. Already in *DSS*, as in these homilies, St Basil identifies the unique eighth day, which will be the Day of Judgment, whereas St Gregory omits this point. The theme 'pay attention to yourself' of *Att*. resembles 'understand your dignity', which dominates in two homilies. Whereas for St Gregory the image is included in the likeness, St Basil understands that one can acquire likeness by acting according to reason. Image is an effective cause of likeness.[124] Thus, we accept it as being a genuine work of St Basil.

[122] Daniélou, *L'etre et les temps*, 89-90; Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 152-3.
[123] J.A.L. Lee, 'Why Didn't St Basil Write in New Testament Greek ?' in Costache, Kariatlis, *Cappadocian Legacy*, 75.
[124] St Basile, *Sur L'origine de L'homme: Homilies X et XI de L'Hexaemeron*, ed., trans. A. Smets, M. von Esbroek, SC 160 (Paris: Cerf, 1970), 83-112.

Now we will explore the arguments for the authenticity of *Is*. Taking into account the evidence of the patristic and Byzantine ecclesiastical writers, Lipatov argues that *Is.* belongs to the hand of St Basil. This scholar presents a number of reasons for his argument: 1. The whole manuscript tradition has no discrepancies in the attribution of the work. 2. The alleged silence of contemporaries or successors (St Gregory of Nazianzus, St Gregory of Nyssa, Jerome) is either a normal incomplete cataloguing owing to literary genre of the work or a deliberate omission; however, close examination shows that they knew and used his work. 3. Greek commentaries on Isaiah do not mention *Is*. because at that time it was not common to discuss previous authors. 4. Church histories of the fourth and fifth centuries concentrate more on the ecclesiastical activities of St Basil than on his writings. 5. Other citations from *Is*. by theologians of the fifth and sixth centuries are parallel with their normal treatment of other sources, that is, not mentioning the author. St Basil's work *Is.* was first mentioned in the end of seventh or beginning of the eigth century. 6. The work was frequently used by the leading defenders of orthodoxy; it enjoyed a high reputation, whereas doubts about its authorship can be attributed to exponents of heretical views, whose writings disappeared over time. 7. Numerous quotations from *Is*. appear in catenae on biblical books other than Isaiah, which attest to its popularity and wide distribution. Moreover, the work mentions different events of St Basil's life. *Is.* is a draft for a series of sermons. It was intended for oral delivery.[125] As Lipatov argues, *Is.* is a genuine work and was composed in 362-63.[126] All of these arguments are persuasive. Many of St Basil's theological ideas, as expounded in *Is.*, can be found in his other works. St Basil mentions the Spirit in *Is*. in relation to inspiration of prophets, in discussing divine illumination etc.

Having looked at the present state of scholarship on St Basil's pneumatological and ascetic teaching, highlited the contribution of this work, and examined the historical circumstances of composition his

[125] N.A. Lipatov, 'The Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah According to St Basil the Great: Study and Translation' (Birmingham University, PhD, 1997), 360-1.
[126] Ibid., 85.

writings, in the next chapter we will explore St Basil's Trinitarian and exegetic thought.

Chapter 1. St Basil's Views on the Trinity and Exegesis

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will cover the fundamental themes without which one cannot fully understand the role of St Basil in defining the doctrine of the Spirit. We will look at the theological environment of the fourth century and at the contribution of St Athanasius and the Cappadocians to the doctrine of the Spirit. Then we will demonstrate St Basil's views on the Trinity. We will attempt to explain his reticence with regard to *homoousios* and show development in his thought. Further, we will discuss St Basil's approach to the interpretation of Scripture and his view on the role of tradition in the formulation of the Church teachings.

1.2 St Athanasius and the Cappadocians on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity

The fourth century was a time of fierce theological debates concerning the nature of Christian God. The doctrine of the Trinity was formed and the divinity of the Son and the Spirit was affirmed. Among the main figures who contributed to this task were St Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373) and the Cappadocian Fathers. All of them wrote polemical works against the Arians, while the Cappadocians addressed specifically Eunomius's version of Arianism, Sabellians, and the Spirit-fighters. The fact that these theologians wrote against different theological positions demonstrates how diverse the theological standpoints and problems at that time were, and how fast the new ideas and explanations of theological difficulties arose. At that time the Spirit had often been thought to be an impersonal power/activity or gift of God, or an angel. What moved these and other theologians to recognition of the Spirit as God was not philosophical pressure, but the evidence of the New Testament, the spiritual experience and the liturgical practice of the Church.[127]

Both St Athanasius and the Cappadocians defended the divinity of the Son and of the Spirit. We often find the same arguments in the works of these

[127] R. Hanson, 'The Achievement of Orthodoxy in the Fourth Century AD' in Williams R. (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989): 142-56, 150.

theologians and notice that they use similar proof texts from Scripture and similar analogies. Along with arguing for the divine nature of the Son and the Spirit, all of these theologians emphasize the incomprehensibility of the Godhead and the essential role of the Spirit in deification and salvation. These theologians agree on the divinity of the Son and the Spirit, but the arguments they use vary.

St Athanasius argues for the divinity of the Spirit by showing how intimately he is related to the Son. He states that in the same way as the Son is proper to the essence of the Father so also the Spirit is proper to the essence of the Son. Most of his arguments follow this scheme. In his unique way he states that we can see the Spirit in the Son and that the Spirit is an image of the Son. In contrast, the Cappadocians state that it is by the Spirit that we know the Son and not the other way round. St Athanasius also explains that the Spirit is always with the Son in the economic activities. So when the Spirit visited Mary, then also the Son visited her.[128] Further, the theologian states that there is one Godhead, one faith and one baptism (or one initiation in Jesus Christ), an idea which St Basil later expressed. Upon reading his works, we notice that St Athanasius never describes the Spirit on his own, but always shows his dependence on the Son. The theologian argues that the Spirit is not a creature; he shows different meanings of the word 'spirit' in Scripture, argues against the statement that the Spirit is an angel, stresses the renewal which the Spirit brings, argues against naming the Spirit as a brother, grandson, and, finally, calls the Spirit a seal of the divine kingdom and a sanctification.

St Gregory of Nazianzus (323-90) was the first and boldest among his contemporaries to state that the Spirit is God and consubstantial with the Father and the Son. He also introduced the idea of the development of the revelation of God and of the formulation of doctrines.[129] Furthermore, he

[128] Interestingly Meyendorff writes that if Logos became a Man through the Spirit, then humans can also achieve true life through the Spirit; see Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, ch. 13.

[129] God's self-revelation as Father, and then as Son, and then as the Spirit reflects an increase in the intensity of the revelation. Thus, the Son conveys God more powerfully than the Father does, and the Spirit reveals God even more powerfully than the Son. See C.A. Beeley, 'The Holy Spirit in Gregory Nazianzen: The Pneumatology of Oration 31' in

argued that we know that the Spirit is God if we grasp not the letter of Scripture but the spirit of it. In his *Or*. 31, in regards to the question where it is written that it is necessary to worship and pray to the Spirit, St Gregory answers that the Spirit himself brings prayer and worship to himself. Similarly to St Basil, St Gregory states that worship of one Person of the Trinity is worship of the Three, because they are of equal dignity and divinity. St Gregory develops St Basil's ideas that the order of names does not imply the order of essence, and that the prepositions 'from', 'through', and 'in' are told about each Person of the Trinity. St Gregory also argues that if the Spirit is not worshipped, he cannot make us gods in baptism. In fact, from the Spirit comes renewal, from renewal is recreation, and from recreation – the knowledge of the dignity of the One who recreates. If some low expressions are applied to the Spirit (for example 'is given', 'gift' and others) we should think of the First Cause so as to know the source of the Spirit, and not think of three sources. According to St Gregory, the characteristic and distinguishing feature of the Spirit lies not in his sanctity, but in his origin. The difference between the three Persons lies in the manner of manifestation and mutual relationships (*Or*. 32.9).[130] However, as Meesters rightly states, the characteristic properties serve to guarantee the existence of three separate hypostases, not their unity as the term 'relations of origin' implies. 'Sanctifying power' (with regard to the Spirit) can hardly indicate relation of origin.[131]

St Gregory of Nyssa (335-94) argues for the divine nature of the Spirit by demonstrating the unity of the Trinity in action, will, power, and glory. Commonality of the titles 'spirit' and 'holy' for all three Persons suggest a right doctrine of the Spirit. As St Gregory writes, both the Father, the Son and the Spirit sanctify, vivify, illumine, and console. This unity of

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McGowan A.B., Daley B.E., Gaden T.J. (eds), *God in Early Christian Thought: Essays in Memory of Lloyd G. Patterson*, *SVC* 94 (2009): 151-62, 157.

[130] I cannot agree with Galtier who writes that St Gregory and St Basil did not recognize any personal property in the Spirit other than his origin and that neither St Gregory nor St Basil claimed for him a virtue, which would allow attributing to him a strictly personal role in our sanctification or our union with God. The opposite will be shown in Chapters Five and Six.

[131] A.C. Meesters, 'The Cappadocians and their Trinitarian conceptions of God', *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 54.4 (2012): 396-413, 409-10.

operation proves their unity of essence. St Gregory refuses to accept the existence of any gift coming uniquely from the Spirit. He believes that the Spirit is not an intermediary between humans and God and that union with God is not a consequence of the union with the Spirit. Union with God does not happen outside and without the Spirit, but in the Spirit.[132] Just as the Father is never thought about without the Son, nor is the Son understood without the Spirit. St Gregory also states that the Spirit is not bereft of will, activity or anything that is good. Thus, the Spirit is not just a power or activity, but a Person. St Gregory writes that any height of human power is lower than greatness of the One who is worshipped; how foolish are those who think that they can define glory by dignity, as if their power can give more than the dignity of the Spirit can contain! He argues that if the Spirit is not equal in glory, then he does not participate in perfection. Further, St Gregory states that there is no difference in essence or activity in the Trinity, but rather in the mode of being: the cause and the two who are caused. We later find this idea developed in the writings of St Gregory of Nazianzus. St Gregory is also famous for his argument from the seal of the Spirit. Similarly to St Athanasius he brings this idea about the seal (Acts 10:38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power…"), but develops it in a different way. The Spirit as an ointment is not foreign to the Trinity. If the Son is by essence a King, and the seal is a symbol of kingdom, then sealing is not something foreign to the nature of King and the Spirit is not foreign to the Trinity. The Father is a King, and the Son is a King and the Spirit is an alive, essential, hypostatic kingdom. Thus, there is one notion of kingdom in the Trinity, and the thought about sealing shows that there is no difference between the Son and the Spirit. A sign of royal dignity is power over subjects, but the Spirit cannot belong to subjects since He is the seal of the kingdom of the Son. As Brugarolas notes, St Gregory finds in the pneumatology of anointing an appropriate way to argue not only for the divinity of the Spirit, but also for his hypostatic property. To the argument of the origin

[132] P. Galtier, *Le Saint-Esprit en nous d'après les Pères Grecs,* Analecta Gregoriana Theological Series 35, Section A, n. 4 (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1946), 176-92.

of the Spirit in the Father St Gregory adds the deep reasoning of the mutual inherence of the divine Persons.[133]

As we shall demonstrate in this thesis, St Basil focuses more on the use of the prepositions with the Persons of the Trinity; he shows that the titles and the works of the Spirit are equal to those of the Father and the Son. He describes the Spirit as holy, as the One who sanctifies, enlightens and brings to perfection. He extensively uses the argument from baptism and the baptismal formula, stating that the Spirit supports law and order for angels. The greatest proof for the divinity of the Spirit, according to him, is the analogy of relation between our spirit and ourselves and between the Spirit and the Godhead. St Basil also argues that the Spirit completes the Trinity, is Lord, intercedes for Christians, cannot be grasped, frees creation, is a gift of God and comes to dwell only in the pure souls.

1.3 St Basil's Views on the Trinity

1.3.1 Similarities and Distinctions of the Son and the Spirit

After considering the pneumatological developments in the fourth century, we will look specifically at St Basil's Trinitarian thought, at how he describes the characteristic features of the Spirit. The theologian writes about both the Son and the Spirit as giving life to humans and distributing grace. When discussing the use of prepositions St Basil writes about the Son as 'God the Word, the Maker of all creation. He arranged all things in order, and assigned each thing to its proper rank, he holds the earth… The cause of being comes *from* the Father'. He continues, '*Through* [the Son] structure and preservation are given to all things, for he created everything, and dispenses well-being to all things…all things… [look]…to the creator and sustainer of life'.[134] Here we see the Son sustaining life, similarly to the Spirit, who gives life. St Basil cites St Paul who says in Galatians 6:8, 'He who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life *from* the Spirit'. From this we see not only that the preposition *from* is used with

[133] M. Brugarolas, 'Anointing and Kingdom: Some Aspects of Gregory of Nyssa's Pneumatology', *SP* 67 (Leuven, Paris: Peeters, 2013), 119.
[134] St Basil, *DSS*, 23-4.

the Spirit, but also that the Spirit gives life. St Basil also writes that the Spirit is the 'Lord of life' whereas angels are just helpers and witnesses to truth.[135] When talking about baptism, St Basil writes that humans were separated from the household of God because of disobedience, but Christ took flesh and enabled salvation. St Basil writes, 'the Lord [Son] who gives life' gave the baptismal covenant, which contains an image of death in water and life in the Spirit, who 'gives us the pledge of life'. St Basil continues, '…we are made to live by the Spirit, and bear fruit in holiness'.[136] Thus, we see that both in creative process and in baptism the Son and the Spirit are the sources of life.

Further, St Basil states that together with the Father (Rom. 8:11) and the Son (Jn. 10:27-8) the Spirit gives life (Rom. 8:10, Jn. 6:63).[137] He also writes in *Eun*., 'God lavishes life upon us through Christ in the Holy Spirit' (1 Tim. 6:13, Jn. 10:27-8, Rom. 8:11).[138] St Basil frequently describes the Spirit as holy, life-giving, and good.

Furthermore, St Basil mentions the grace of the Son and of the Spirit. He writes that Christ admitted Christians into God's household, and the grace of Christ works for Christians through and in him.[139] He further writes that 'the work of the Father is not separate or distinct from the work of the Son'. He continues that the Son is 'full of his Father's grace… [he] accomplishes everything according to his Parent's plan. He is not different in essence, nor is he different in power from his Father, and if their power is equal, then their works are the same'.[140] So we see how St Basil states unity in essence, power, equality in power and works of the Father and the Son. The Son participates in his Father's grace.

St Basil writes about the grace of Christ being enabled through the Spirit. He writes that, 'Through the Holy Spirit comes our restoration to Paradise…our adoption as God's sons…our becoming partakers of the grace of Christ…' He continues, 'Even while we wait for full enjoyment

[135] Ibid., 51.
[136] Ibid., 58.
[137] Ibid., 88.
[138] St Basil, *Eun.*, FC 122, trans. Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (Washington: CUAP, 2011), 192.
[139] St Basil, *DSS*, 33; about the grace of the Son also in Ibid., 36.
[140] Ibid., 39.

of the good things in store for us, by the Holy Spirit we are able to rejoice through faith in the promise of the graces to come'. St Basil also mentions 'the grace that comes from the Spirit'.[141] St Basil writes that angels are called holy because they received their holiness from 'the grace of the Holy Spirit'.[142] He writes that the Spirit gives angels 'his own grace'. It might mean that the Son and the Spirit have their own kinds of grace, or that they distribute the same grace in different ways. He also writes that the plan of salvation accomplished by Christ would be impossible without 'the grace of the Spirit'.[143] Thus, we see that all three divine Persons send their grace to humans.

Further, St Basil writes that the Spirit will be present with the Son in his Second Coming and in accomplishing judgment. The crown of a righteous person is 'the grace of the Spirit'. He continues, 'Those who were sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption, and have preserved pure and undiminished the fruits of the Spirit', will achieve salvation. Whereas those who grieved the Spirit and did not increase the talents will be deprived of what they received and 'their share of grace will be given to others'. They will be separated from the Spirit forever.[144] From this we can see that those who are baptised and 'sealed by the Spirit' receive some share of grace, and during their lifetimes should increase it. Further, St Basil writes that on the Day of Judgment the Spirit will be 'completely cut off from the soul that has defiled his grace'. St Basil writes that 'he himself [the Spirit] is the reward of the righteous'.[145]

Concerning the presence of the Spirit or his grace in humans, St Basil writes, 'The Spirit is continually present with those who are worthy, but actively works as he is needed, whether in prophecy, or healings, or other wonderful works…He will not stay with those whose wills are unstable. Such people have no perseverance, and drive away the grace they have received'.[146] We see how St Basil parallels the grace of the Spirit and the Spirit himself. He writes, 'Those who are worthy receive his grace, and he

[141] Ibid., 59.
[142] Ibid., 62.
[143] Ibid., 65.
[144] Ibid., 66.
[145] Ibid., 67.
[146] Ibid., 93.

works within them'.[147] We can see that grace, as a power of the Spirit, comes to human help alongside the Spirit. Further, as St Basil explains, the preposition *with* is used to describe the union between things, which is intimate, natural, and inseparable. He continues, 'Therefore, when we consider the Spirit's rank, we think of him as being present *with* the Father and the Son, but when we consider the working of his grace on its recipients, we say that the Spirit is *in* us'.[148] We see how St Basil speaks here about the Spirit and the grace of the Spirit interchangeably. In addition, St Basil writes in *De Fide*, 'The Spirit fills angels, fills archangels, sanctifies the powers, gives life to all things…the Spirit bestows his own grace on all while remaining undiminished and undivided'.[149]

Moreover, St Basil mentions not just the grace of Christ or of the Spirit but also the grace of God the Father. In *Ep* 236 he writes, 'the grace of God works with you for the care of the oppressed'.[150] Thus, we see how St Basil mentions both the grace of the Son and of the Spirit. The Son created the world by his grace. However, most often, St Basil writes about the grace of the Spirit without which the whole plan of salvation would be impossible. The Spirit makes possible the partaking of the grace of Christ.

When reading St Basil's works and seeing these similarities between two Persons a question arises: 'How are the Son and the Spirit different? Or to put another way, what are their characteristic features?' We have found some quotations which emphasize the unique nature and function of the Spirit. We will look at St Basil's works in chronological order. First, he often mentions the holiness of the Spirit. In *Eun.* (364-5), he writes that the Spirit cannot be ranked among the sanctified because 'he is sanctity itself'.[151] In *De Fide* (372), St Basil writes about 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the uncreated nature, the lordly dignity, the natural goodness'.[152] He continues, '…just as heat is inseparable from fire and radiance from light, so too are holiness, giving life, goodness, and uprightness inseparable

[147] Ibid., 95.
[148] Ibid., 96.
[149] St Basil, 'De Fide', *On Christian Ethics*, 238.
[150] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 239. He also mentions the 'grace of God' in *Ep* 265, p. 245.
[151] St Basil, *Eun.*, 188.
[152] St Basil, 'De Fide', 235.

from the Spirit'.[153] We can see that in these works St Basil calls the Spirit holiness itself, and a giver of life.

Similarly, St Basil writes in *Ep* 105, 'To the Deaconesses, the Daughters of Count Terentius' (372). These deaconesses professed faith in the Father, the Son and the Spirit who has 'his subsistence from God, fount of holiness, life-giving power, perfecting grace, through which man is adopted and the mortal is made immortal, in all respects united with the Father and the Son in glory and eternity, in power and kingdom, in sovereignty and divinity, as the tradition of the saving baptism testifies'.[154] We can take the often repeated phrases 'fount of holiness, life-giving power, [and] perfecting grace' as the key characteristics of the Spirit. We also see here that the Spirit possesses these characteristics because he is united with the Father and the Son.

Moreover, St Basil writes in *Ep* 125 (373) that bishops should excommunicate those who say and think that the Spirit is a creature, and those who 'do not confess that he is holy by nature as the Father is holy by nature and the Son holy by nature, but exclude him from the divine and blessed nature'.[155] Similarly in *Ep* 159 (373), he states that the Spirit has a natural sanctity, not joined through grace, but joined essentially.[156]

We find the main discussion of the nature of the Spirit in *DSS* (374-5) where St Basil writes that he is the source of sanctification and is simple in being. When St Basil discusses the creation of angels, he writes, 'One cannot see the Father without the Spirit' and 'one cannot maintain a life of holiness without the Spirit'.[157] Further, when St Basil explains what it means that the Spirit is 'of God', he writes that the Spirit proceeds from the mouth of the Father, which means that the Spirit is 'the essence of life and divine sanctification'.[158] Further, St Basil writes that the knowledge of God ascends from the Spirit through the Son and to the Father. And 'natural goodness, inherent holiness and royal dignity reaches from the

[153] Ibid., 237.
[154] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 230.
[155] Ibid., 259.
[156] Ibid., 313-4.
[157] St Basil, *DSS*, 64.
[158] Ibid., 73.

Father through the Only-Begotten to the Spirit'.[159] Thus, we see that we can know the Father first from the Spirit and then the Son, whereas we receive grace from the Father, Son and Spirit. St Basil argues elsewhere that hierarchy does not imply subordination and distinction in nature.

Further, in *Ep* 236 (Jan. 376), St Basil mentions the characteristics of each Person as being 'paternity, and sonship, and holiness'. Later he writes, 'I believe in God the Father…I believe in God the Son…I believe also in divine Holy Spirit'.[160] By these later words he wanted to show the unity and individuality of each Person in the Trinity. On reading St Basil's works and looking closely at these quotations we can conclude that he states that the Spirit is just as good, righteous and holy as the Father and the Son when he argues for their indivisible unity. However, in other cases he considers holiness as a characteristic feature of the Spirit.

Moreover, St Basil describes other characteristic features of the Spirit. From the description of the Spirit in *DSS* 9 we can say that he is unique in comparison with the Son in bringing creatures to perfection and fulfilment, and being himself illumination – as well as in bringing joy ('Everything that partakes of his grace is filled with joy according to its capacity'[161]) and revealing mysteries.[162] We have encountered the perfecting feature in *Ep* 105. In regard to the last characteristic in the end of his discussion of creation of angels, St Basil writes that the Spirit's 'unique function…[is] to reveal mysteries, as it is written, "God has revealed (them) to us through the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:10)'.[163] He also frequently cites St Paul's words about the Spirit as searching even the depths of God (1 Cor. 2:10).[164]

Furthermore, as we read in *DSS* whereas the Son is truth, power and wisdom of God, the Spirit is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. Concerning the latter, St Basil writes that some can come to the vision of the image of the invisible God and to the source of this

[159] Ibid., 74.
[160] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 171.
[161] St Basil, *DSS*, 44.
[162] Ibid., 43.
[163] Ibid., 64.
[164] Ibid., 88.

image, if and when they are 'inseparably joined to the Spirit of knowledge'.[165] In addition, St Basil states that humans cannot glorify God on their own, that is, without the Spirit.[166] Thus, another specific role of the Spirit, besides perfecting and revealing mysteries, is enabling humans and angels to glorify God.

Moreover, one might think that the specific function of the Spirit is the distribution of the gifts or talents. However, St Basil writes that in a similar way as the Spirit distributes the gifts, the Son distributes the services (1 Cor. 12:4-6). The Son bestows help on every creature and distributes different kinds of bounties.[167] St Basil writes in *DSS* about the ways in which the Spirit works in humans, '…when we consider the distribution of gifts, we perceive that the Spirit is a whole divided into parts, since we are all members of one another, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us'.[168] Further, in *Eun*. St Basil mentions that besides distributing gifts and services the Son and the Spirit both give adoption of sonship and teach. St Basil comments on 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 saying how here 'the activity of the Holy Spirit is ranked with the activity of the Father and the Son'.[169] Thus, we can conclude that St Basil describes the Son and the Spirit as performing the same functions, in particular distributing the gifts, in order to show the unity and equal dignity of their activities.

To conclude, we have seen that in some works St Basil describes the Spirit as holiness itself, whereas in others he calls the Spirit the source of holiness. We can notice also that St Basil writes about the Spirit as being holy in the same way that the Father and the Son are when he is arguing for the divine nature of the Spirit and for the indivisible unity of the Persons in the Trinity. In other cases, he describes the characteristic feature of the Spirit as being a source of holiness, revealing mysteries, enabling glorification of God, and bringing joy.

[165] Ibid., 74.
[166] Ibid., 96.
[167] Ibid., 38.
[168] Ibid., 94.
[169] St Basil, *Eun.*, 190.

1.3.2 Communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son

Though St Basil never calls the Spirit 'God', he explicitly demonstrates his communion in divine nature. On many occasions, St Basil confirms unity in the Trinity. In *Eun*. he writes, 'The account of singleness will be preserved in the Trinity in this way, by confessing one Father and one Son and one Holy Spirit'.[170] When St Basil argues for the unity of the Trinity and against the subordination of the Spirit, he says, 'There is one God and Father, one Only-Begotten Son, and one Holy Spirit',[171] and 'God' refers to both Father, Son and the Spirit (whereas in *Ep* 236 [which was written later than *DSS,* in 376] he writes 'one divine Spirit'[172] which is hard to explain). Similarly, he writes that the Spirit is one and not one of many of creation, and this is 'sufficient evidence of his intimacy with the Father and the Son'. He continues, 'he is united to the Father and the Son as unit dwells with unit'.[173] When St Basil explains what it means that the Spirit is 'of God', he writes that the Spirit proceeds from the mouth of the Father, which means that the Spirit is 'the essence of life and divine sanctification. Their intimacy is made clear, while the ineffability of God's existence is safeguarded'.[174] Thus, we see how St Basil connects the singleness of each Person with the unity of the Spirit with the other two divine Persons, as well as with their intimacy. Additionally, St Basil writes that the preposition 'with' 'testifies to [their] eternal communion and unceasing cooperation'. He explains that if one says that the Father is with the Son it means that they are distinct Persons and at the same time that they are 'inseparably united in fellowship'.[175] We can say the same applies to the Spirit.

Moreover, in the end of his discussion in *DSS* of the relationship of the angels and the Spirit to the Trinity, St Basil states, 'But the Spirit is organically united with God, not because of the needs of each moment, but through communion in the divine nature. He is joined to the Lord; he is

[170] Ibid., 194.
[171] St Basil, *DSS*, 72.
[172] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 171.
[173] Ibid., 172-3.
[174] St Basil, *DSS*, 73.
[175] Ibid., 91.

not brought in by our efforts'.[176] Thus, St Basil writes about the unity of the Spirit with the Father and the Son and about their communion. In addition, the Spirit shares all characteristics with the Father and the Son because of their intimate relationship. St Basil calls the Spirit holy, good, and upright as are the Father and the Son because of 'his natural and intimate relationship with them'.[177] Further, St Basil writes that the Spirit is inseparably joined to the Father and the Son, and 'if God is recognized to be present among prophets because their prophesying is a gift of the Spirit', then the Spirit should be ranked in the Trinity.[178]

Further, St Basil combines unity in the Trinity with a variety of divine actions. He writes that the Spirit is indivisibly united to the Father and the Son and cannot be separated from them in any way. He writes, 'God works in various ways, and the Lord serves in various capacities, but the Holy Spirit is also present of his own will, dispensing gifts to everyone according to each man's worth'.[179] We see here that although the three Persons are united, they work in different ways. The peculiar work of the Spirit is described here as the distribution of gifts.

St Basil also speaks about the glory of the Spirit in relation to his communion with the Father and the Son. He explains that there are two types of glory, one offered by a creature to its superior and another is glory shared by intimates. It is the second that the Spirit enjoys: 'The Spirit is glorified by his communion with the Father and the Son'.[180] Similarly, St Basil writes that we 'obtain testimony of the Spirit's ineffable dignity…from his communion with the Father and the Son'.[181] Further, when St Basil argues that the Spirit should be glorified since many created things are glorified, he says that the Spirit is 'always described as united with the Godhead…He takes his abode in the saints; he bestows grace on the obedient. No gift can be bestowed on creation unless the Holy Spirit gives it'. St Basil asks, 'How could anyone who has partaken of the Holy Spirit be willing to forget or disregard that he is

[176] Ibid., 52.
[177] Ibid., 76.
[178] Ibid., 61.
[179] Ibid., 61.
[180] Ibid., 74.
[181] Ibid., 76.

united to the Father and the Son in every way…?'[182] Thus, that Spirit is glorified not as any creature but as the One who belongs to Godhead. St Basil also writes about correspondence between the nature and glory. He writes in *Ep* 159 as follows: 'for that which is different according to its nature would not share the same honours'. He states, 'for the creature is subject, but the Spirit sets free; the creature is in need of life, "it is the Spirit that gives life" (Jn. 6:64); the creature also needs teaching, the Spirit is a Teacher; the creature is sanctified, the Spirit is the Sanctifier (Rom. 15:16)'.[183]

St Basil never calls the Spirit 'God' but rather describes him as divine (θεῖον). In *Eun.*, he cites 1 Corinthians 12:11, writing, 'All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses', which demonstrates the 'divine status of the nature of the Holy Spirit'. This verse shows that the Spirit has 'the authoritative and sovereign power'.[184] St Basil also writes about the Spirit as being 'divine' in *Sab.* (378) on the basis of Job 33:4 and Exodus 35:21. St Basil asks rhetorically, 'If God is said to dwell in us through the Spirit, how is it not blatantly impious to say that the Spirit himself has no share in the divinity? And if we call those who are perfect in virtue "gods", and this perfection comes through the Spirit, how does he make others gods if he is himself bereft of divinity?'[185] St Basil enumerates the titles of the Spirit, calling him the 'Spirit of God, Spirit of truth sent from God and bestowed through the Son, not a servant, but a holy, good and guiding Spirit that gives life, Spirit of adopted sonship, the one who knows all that is God's'.[186] The latter characteristic is especially proper to the divine nature. Thus, we see that the unity and intimacy of the Spirit with the Father and the Son reveals his divine nature. Seeing that St Basil used such argumentation, it is hard to imagine that he did not believe that the Spirit was God. In what follows, we will attempt to explain St Basil's reservation in terminology on the Spirit.

[182] Ibid., 87.
[183] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 313-4.
[184] St Basil, *Eun.*, 191.
[185] Ibid., 192.
[186] Ibid., 194.

1.4 Explanation of St Basil's Silence on the *homoousios* of the Spirit

The difficulty in explaining St Basil's reservations on the nature of the Spirit is due to the fact that his works belong to different genres and are addressed to different groups of people when the theological environment was unsettled. There are numerous reasons why St Basil did not use the term *homoousios* in relation to the Spirit and simply called him 'divine'. First, this is because the term is not found in Scripture of which St Basil was very reverent. However, he used other non-Scriptural terms, such as unbegotten. Second, he was considerate of the audiences and addressees of his works. He wanted to keep simple people in the Church, thus, he used or avoided certain terms when arguing with Sabellians, Neo-Arians and Pneumatomachians. As Campenhausen writes, '… it was his very devotion to the needs of the hour, the necessity of adapting himself to the difficulties of his situation, which compelled him constantly to vary his tactics and made it impossible for him to develop his rich talents in peace or follow the bent of his spirit as he wished'.[187] As Karam notes, St Basil made himself weak through reticence in order to gain the weak in the Church.[188] Edwards adds that St Basil's flexibility comes not only from prudence and pastoral care for his audience, but also from his 'openness to the leading of the Spirit in the life of the church'.[189] Third, he wanted to affirm the divine monarchy as the root of the Trinitarian unity.[190]

I support McGuckin's view, who writes that St Basil might have been reluctant to apply *homoousios* to both the Son and the Spirit because of fear of being deposed from the see, which would lead to the damage of the defence of the Nicene movement in the East. However, many Eastern Nicene bishops were exiled; they included Sts Eusebius of Samosata, Meletius of Antioch, and Gregory of Nyssa. That is why, according to McGuckin, the view of his lifelong 'reservation' and 'holding back' is fallacious. St Basil mentions the term *homoousios* as applied to the Son

[187] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 61.
[188] C. Karam, 'Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit: Some Aspects of His Theology', *WS I* (Still River, Mass: St Bede's Publications, 1979): 137-64, 143.
[189] D.G. Edwards, *Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004), 22.
[190] J.A. McGuckin, 'St Basil the Great's Exposition of Nicene Orthodoxy' in Costache, Kariatlis, *Cappadocian Legacy*, 60.

only once in *Eun.*, where he insists that the Son, as divine, is necessarily eternal and is with the Father from all ages. In *Ep* 52, St Basil explains that this term was rejected at the Council of Antioch (269), which censored Paul of Samosata, because it suggested an essence parcelled up into sections and led to a reductionist Monarchianism. However, in the aftermath of Nicaea, it was used to oppose those who said that the Son was brought into being from nothing and to defend the fact that the Father and the Son are in union, which is beyond time and space. McGuckin writes, 'This is a technical way of affirming that the very first principle of the recognition of the Son's co-equal deity is doxological confession'.[191] *Homoousios* is correct because it conforms to the doxology of the church. Doxology is a power of Christian theology, whereas terms such as *homoousios* are secondary. St Basil uses doxology to express the orthodox tradition of the Trinity, even when, as in the case of his *Ep* 105, he does not explicitly apply the *homoousios* but rather affirms the Nicene faith.[192] Thus, we see how doxology is primary to theological language, while experience is primary to its expression in words.

Finally, and more importantly, the nature of the Spirit is such that he remains hidden while revealing the Son; he cooperates in all actions of the Trinity but stays unrevealed. A proponent of this explanation is Meyendorff, who states that the distinguishing feature of the Spirit is being hidden and providing access to the Son. He writes, 'all major acts of God are Trinitarian acts, and the particular role of the Spirit is to make the "first contact", which is then followed – as existentially, but not chronologically – by a revelation of the Son, and through him of the Father. The personal being of the Spirit remains hidden, even if he is active at every great step of divine activity: creation, redemption, ultimate fulfilment. His function is not to reveal himself, but to reveal the Son 'through whom all things were made' and who is also personally known in his humanity as Jesus Christ'.[193] Thus, we find in St Basil's works that the Spirit accompanies the Son in all the events of his incarnate life; however,

[191] Ibid., 58.
[192] Ibid., 50-60.
[193] J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 168.

he is never disclosed. However, if the Spirit is hidden in nature, what shall we say about the Father of whom we know much less? Thus, this explanation is not completely satisfactory.

St Basil himself explains the conciliar silence[194] on the nature of the Spirit in *Ep* 125 (373), when he states that in the Nicene Creed 'the doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit is laid down very briefly as requiring no discussion, because at that time this question had not yet been stirred up, but the concept of it remained unchallenged in the souls of the faithful'.[195] He also explains silence on the subject of the divinity of the Spirit in *Ep* 258 (377) by the need to keep uneducated people in church. Here he writes concerning the teaching of Apollinarius on the nature of Incarnation, saying, 'When we shall once disturb the simplicity of the Creed we shall find no limit to our words, since the arguments will always lead us on farther, and we shall confuse the souls of the simpler folks by the introduction of strange material'. We see how St Basil mentions people who are not well trained in theological matters and how he is concerned to keep his audience in church. Yet, St Basil admitted an addition to the Creed concerning the glorification of the Spirit *together with* the Father *and* the Son.

As for external/pastoral reason I think that St Basil as bishop cared a lot for his audience and edification of believers and was careful with terms. As for a theological reason, I find the argument of McGuckin concerning primacy of doxology, and about divine works as showing divine nature of the Spirit better than the abstract terms as the most compelling argument. Although the real reasonings behind St Basil's reticence will remain unclear.

[194] As Vischer notes, St Basil lauds the virtue of silence probably because he was a monk; he believes that silence helps to promote fellowship contrary to provocative terms that initiate conflicts. According to St Basil, if the faithful stand firm in the truth, then a certain flexibility in terms is allowed. See L. Vischer, 'The Holy Spirit-Source of Sanctification, Reflections on Basil the Great's Treatise on the Holy Spirit' in Torrance T.F. (ed.), *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol 2 (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1993): 87–106, 92.

[195] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 258-9. We find similar idea in *Ep* 159 (373) in ibid., 313.

1.5 Development of His Thought and Terminology

Now we will look at the development of St Basil's thought and his use of theological terms in relation to the Spirit. First, it is necessary to give voice to St Basil himself. He writes in *Ep* 223 (375),

> Yet of this one thing at least I dare to boast in the Lord, that never had I held false opinions concerning God, nor did I, thinking otherwise than now, learn differently later. But the conception of God which in childhood I received from my blessed mother and my grandmother Macrina, this unfolding more completely, have I held within me, for, on arriving at full reason I did not exchange one teaching for another, but confirmed those principles which they had handed over to me. Just as the growing seed, from a small size becomes larger, yet is the same one in itself, not changing in kind, but made perfect through growth, so I consider that in my case the same doctrine has grown through progressive stages, not that the one which I now hold was made in place of that which I held from the beginning.[196]

We can understand this justification, and its possible exaggeration, if we consider that this letter was written in a polemical context, against Eustathius. We agree that St Basil's views did not change dramatically, however, we do see progression in his thought.

We see some development in St Basil's thought on the Spirit. St Basil conceded in *Eun*. (363-65) that the Spirit is third in rank and dignity, a view which he has changed over time. As one reads in the two letters to Tarsus (*Eps* 113-4, written in 372-3), for the communion of faith it was necessary to accept the Nicene Creed and the confession that the Spirit is not a creature (which was an expansion on the Creed). The same idea was expressed in *Eun*. (364-65), *De Fid*. (372), and *Ep* 105 (372). In *Ep* 90 (372) and in *Ep* 159 (373) St Basil writes about the Spirit having the same honour as the Father and the Son.[197] The year of 373 marks the breakdown of relationship of St Basil with Eustathius, and we find bolder expressions concerning the nature of the Spirit in his writings. In *Ep* 125 (373), a document signed by Eustathius but later unrecognized by him, it is said

[196] Ibid., vol. 28, 130.
[197] B. Studer, 'The Formulation of Trinitarian Faith by the Cappadocians' in id., *Trinity and Incarnation. The Faith of the Early Church*, ed. A. Louth, trans. M. Westerhoff (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1993): 139-53, 149.

that the Spirit is holy by nature, inseparable from divine nature; however, *homotimia* (equal honour) is not expressly mentioned.

Hildebrand demonstrates that there are four distinct stages of linguistic development in St Basil's thought on the Trinity: 1. The *homoiousian* years (360-65); 2. The movement from *homoiousios* to *homoousios* (365-72); 3. The use of *prosopa* for what is three in God (372); 4. The emergence of *hypostaseis* for the same purpose of expressing that which is three in God (375-79).[198] As this scholar shows, St Basil's development of the use of *hypostasis* lies in the fact that though he uses *hypostasis* in conjunction with *ousia*, the former often functions to make the latter more concrete and particular.[199] Hildebrand notes that St Basil distinguishes *ousia* and *hypostasis* not under the influence of pagan philosophical conceptions of God but in reaction to the thought of Marcellus of Ancyra and Paulinus of Antioch.[200] Drecoll suggests that St Basil possibly got the idea of distinguishing *ousia* from *hypostasis* from Dionysius of Alexandria.[201] St Basil first used 'three hypostases' in *Eun.* 3.3; however, only in 376 did this become his preferred language for naming the three Persons (*Eps* 210, 236, 258).[202]

Now we can look at what terminology St Basil uses when talking about God. St Basil uses terms that are particularly important for the doctrine of the Trinity, such as *koinonia* and *oikeios.* He uses them to define the meaning of a biblical metaphor: the image of the Son and the Spirit as the ways to the knowledge of the Father. The Father is known through the Son and the Spirit; therefore, the Son and the Spirit share communion (*koinonia*) of nature with him. They, as three Persons, are akin or alike (*oikeios*). If the Father's generation of the Son is ineffable and incomprehensible (*Eun.* 2.22), then, as Hildebrand writes, the unity of substance that results from this generation will also remain ineffable and incomprehensible.[203] We can logically continue that if it is so concerning

[198] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 31.
[199] Ibid., 63.
[200] Ibid., 84.
[201] V.H. Drecoll, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basilius von Cäsarea. Sein Weg vom Homöusianer zum Neonizäner* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 40, n. 52.
[202] Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea*, 96-8.
[203] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 68-70.

the Son, it must be in the same way with the Spirit – the nature of their unity is a mystery. Concerning *koinonia* Eunomius argued that there could be no comparison or communion between the Father and the Son. St Basil, on the contrary, as we have demonstrated, cites many Scriptural texts that show the opposite. He writes that the Son is in the form of God, he is the image of God, and he bears the seal of the Father because in him the Father is seen and known. Thus, the Son should have communion with the Father because of his epistemic role.[204] Although St Basil does not speak about the Spirit as an image of the Father, he similarly writes about the Spirit as the way to the knowledge of the Son and the Father and about the communion in nature between the three Persons.[205]

Moreover, St Basil also writes about *koinonia* in the church. He refers to the church as the place of fellowship in the Spirit (*Ep* 90). There humans communicate with each other by sharing their material and spiritual goods and through the mutual exchange of services. The priest is the centre of ecclesiastical and Christian communion, which takes place through prayers and the Eucharist, through letters and visits.[206] In the Body of Christ everyone is united in 'communion of mutual sympathy', which means that the Spirit makes humans empathetic to others. As Edwards writes, 'the Spirit is the presence of God to creation… [he] is the *ekstasis* of God towards creatures'. He interestingly notes that communion is not only the mode of the Spirit's relationship with other divine Persons but also with creatures.[207]

St Basil also frequently writes that the Spirit is classified/counted[208] with the Father and the Son. As Radde-Gallwitz notes, St Basil does not explain why this is so. St Basil implies that the Spirit is to be worshipped with the divinity and that the Spirit is not to be classified with creation. As this scholar notes, with this emphasis on the Trinitarian order, we see a continuing influence of the anti-Sabellian *homoiousian* tradition on St Basil.[209] This happens alongside St Basil's commitment to the full divinity

[204] Ibid., 165.
[205] Edwards, *Breath of Life*, 23.
[206] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 31, 49.
[207] Edwards, *Breath of Life*, 29-30.
[208] See St Basil, *Eun.* 3.2, 7, 187, 195.
[209] Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea*, 96-8.

of the Spirit. In *Fid*., St Basil argues that the Spirit possesses divine attributes by nature, and that the language of 'participation' does not exhaust the Spirit. In his *Eun*. 3.4 St Basil draws on an idea from Origen that the Spirit's will in 1 Corinthians 12:11 and John 3:8 is not merely a facet or 'mode' of God; the Spirit is not a servant. The economic 'sending' of the Spirit does not deny his glory; he is sent but acts freely.[210]

Furthermore, St Basil uses the term *homotimos* and *monarchia* when he argues for the divinity of the Spirit in trying to win over those who denied the divinity of the Spirit. In *DSS* he uses none of the technical terms that would offend the Pneumatomachians, such as *homoousios* and *homoios* (similar). However, he applies *homotimos* and uses *monarchia* only twice in all of his works, both of which occur in *DSS*. St Basil does not consider *homotimos* as a technical term. Even so, in *Ep* 52 he clearly uses *homotimos* and *homoousios* as synonyms (also in *Eps* 90, 159).[211] Some scholars explain that *homotimos* is 'a concrete manner of confessing the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit' with the Father and the Son.[212] St Basil uses this term in *Ep* 90, *Eun*., and *Sab*. In *Ep* 90 he links *homotimos* with numbering of three Persons in particular order: the Father, the Son and the Spirit. In *DSS* 10 and *Ep* 175 he writes about the baptismal coordination of the divine Persons, about *homotimia*, connumeration and the equality of nature.[213]

Further, as James writes, whereas St Athanasius asserts *homoousios*, St Basil asserts *homotimos.* The Spirit is unfathomable and one can contemplate him in a right manner only in relation to his soteriological mission. Thus, St Basil asks, 'is there any limit to the honour he deserves?'[214] The form of this glorification lies in recounting his own wonders.[215] As St Basil argues, if the Spirit cannot be divided from the Father and the Son in his nature and work, then he 'cannot be divided

[210] Ibid., 103-6.
[211] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 95-6.
[212] E. Gilles, *Thomistic Ressourcement, Volume 1: The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God*, Thomistic Ressourcement, vol. 1 (Washington: CUAP, 2012): 51-82, 66.
[213] B. Pruche, 'Autour du traité sur le Saint-Esprit de saint Basile de Césarée', *RSR* 52.2 (1964): 204-32, 208-9.
[214] St Basil, *DSS*, ch. 9.22, 42.
[215] Ibid., ch. 9.23, 44.

from the Father and the Son in worship at all, and if you are in him you cannot separate him from God'.[216] As James remarks, though St Basil 'avoids applying the term *homoousios* to the Spirit this should not be seen as a failure to articulate the Spirit's equality with the Godhead, his inseparability from the Father and the Son, and his full divinity'. On the basis of asserting that one cannot know the Father and the Son without knowing the Spirit and that God is not God without the Spirit, St Athanasius asserts *homoousia*, and St Basil, assuming *homoousia*, asserts *homotimia*. James further writes that 'the Spirit's inseparable operation with the Father and the Son requires both relational subordination and ontological equality'.[217]

Interestingly, St Basil also wrote earlier, in *Is*. (363), about the Son as *homotimos*, 'According to his divinity…Christ…has in himself by nature purity, simplicity and unmixedness'. Correspondingly, the true worship of Christ requires the confession of his 'equality of honour with the one who has begotten him', his sharing of dignity and the existence of his nature from eternity. The divinity of Christ, as the Only-Begotten Son of God, was manifested through signs and miracles, which were performed by him directly and through the apostles.[218]

As Hildebrand summarizes, St Basil's theological vocabulary is more flexible than the formulae that developed from his thought. In his earliest works he hesitated to use *homoousios*; however, later he preferred this term to *homoios*. Yet, even in the 370s he used the term *homoiotes* for the Father and the Son. He did not believe that divinity can be expressed only by certain words: in *DSS* he teaches the divinity of three Persons without once using either *homoousios* or *homoios kat'ousian* (similar according to essence). He used the terms *hypostasis* and *prosopon* in a similar way. In polemic with the Sabellians and the Paulinians, St Basil insisted that *prosopon* must be used only with *hypostasis* in order to avoid an errant understanding of divine unity and plurality. However, in polemic with the Eunomians and the Paulinians, whom he did not suspect of Sabellianism,

[216] Ibid., ch. 10.26, 47.
[217] James, 'An Examination of Homotimia', 264-9.
[218] Lipatov, *The Commentary*, 207.

St Basil used *prosopon* without *hypostasis* to express the divine plurality.[219] Thus, St Basil often adjusted his use of vocabulary to the audience with which he was speaking or writing, and by this he showed that divinity is not restricted to a few terms.

Although St Basil did not refer to the term *homoousios* in relation to the Spirit, he asserted the communion of the Spirit in the divine nature of the Trinity, thus implying their intimate relationship one with another. However, we find such explicit phrases primarily in the works that were written after 370, that is, in his *DSS* and *Eps*. We can explain it by the fact that he was pushed to use these phrases in polemical contexts, in the works where he argued for the divinity of the Spirit against heretical teachings. We will argue that despite these late explicit phrases, he assumes the divinity of the Spirit by describing the divine actions of the Spirit in all of his earlier works, including *Is.*, *Eun.*, *Ask.*, miscellaneous homilies, and exegetical homilies.

1.6 St Basil's Views on the Interpretation of Scripture

Since St Basil ascribes high authority to Scripture and uses them to explain any aspect of Christian life and doctrine, in our case of the Spirit, it is important to look at his exegetical method. Grasping the way of his exegesis is determinative for the understanding of his views on the Spirit. Hall defines three fundamental aspects of St Basil's exegetical method: 1) Scripture is divinely inspired by the Spirit; 2) it must be approached reverently with a well-prepared mind and receptive heart; 3) and allegory is rejected as an appropriate hermeneutical strategy.[220] The last point is contested by scholars and will be discussed later. When approaching St Basil's and the Cappadocians' methods of interpretation, certain questions arise: who can interpret Scripture, how can one understand it, what are the conditions for interpreting Scripture, and what method one should use to interpret it. There is also a question of why Eunomius, Eustathius and others who relied on Scripture and used it in doctrinal debates were

[219] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 99.
[220] C.A. Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 1998), 88.

considered as heretics and misinterpreters. The short answer, according to St Basil, is that those who are outside the Church and are not illumined by the Spirit cannot perceive a true meaning of Scripture.

First, we will look at the conditions for the proper understanding of the meaning of Scripture. St Basil writes in his *Hex.* 1 that in order to understand the creation narrative and gain some concept of God from it, St Basil's audience has to be prepared to hear about the wonders of creation, 'Cleansed from the passions of the flesh, undarkened by the cares of life, devoted to labour, given to investigation, watchful on all sides to see if from some place or other it [the soul] may receive a worthy concept of God'.[221] In order to understand the sense of Scripture, one has to consecrate his/her life to meditation on the words of God as did Moses. The three complementary aspects of the life of Moses, including the study of profane sciences, solitary meditation and leading a 'mixed' life divided between action and contemplation, show the perfect life of an exegete, as well as of a bishop and monk.[222] Moreover, as St Gregory of Nazianzus argues, practising asceticism and participating in the sacraments enlightens one's mind to the understanding of the divinity of the Spirit.[223]

When writing about the conditions for the right interpretation of Scripture St Basil sounds like an allegorist. He states that the Scriptures are not written for all but only for those 'who have ears according to the inner man'.[224] He also writes, 'it is not a privilege of any chance person to gaze at the divine mysteries, but of him alone who is able to be a harmonious instrument of the promise, so that his soul is moved by the action of the Holy Spirit in it instead of by the psaltery'.[225] Even when St Basil takes a more literal reading of the text, he requires a reader to be free of passion, unburdened by life's cares, industrious, and inquisitive.[226] Among the

[221] St Basil, 'Hex. 1' in Basil of Caesarea, *Exegetic Homilies,* trans. A.C. Way (Washington: CUAP, 1963), 3.
[222] M. Harl, 'Les trois quarantaines de la vie de Moïse, schéma idéal de la vie du moine-évêque chez les Pères Cappadociens', *Revue des Études Grecques* 80.379 (1967): 407-12, 409-12.
[223] Beeley, 'The Holy Spirit in Gregory Nazianzen', 161.
[224] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44' in St Basil, *Exegetic Homilies,* 277.
[225] St Basil, 'Homily in Ps. 45', 298.
[226] St Basil, 'Hom. in Hex. 1', 3.

conditions for successful hearing and acceptance of sermons St Basil enumerates internal quiet, purity of heart, and personal meditation.[227] The understanding of obscure passages comes not only by means of a reader's labour but also by means of the Spirit who writes thoughts in humans 'in proportion to the size of the heart'.[228] We notice here a synergy of efforts. Therefore, we see that one has to train to listen to sermons and interpret Scripture in order to understand its truths along with their Inspirer, the Spirit. One has to live in the Spirit to understand Scripture.

As Martens argues, both Origen and St Basil locate scriptural exegesis within the ascetic life. Similarly to Origen, St Basil writes that the proper reading of Scripture informs the practice of the life of virtue,[229] and attentive reading of Scripture presupposes an ascetic formation.[230] Origen writes that the ideal reader of Scripture reads attentively for the purpose of discovering its deeper spiritual meaning.[231] According to Origen, the worthy life, exegetical virtues (inquisitiveness, open mindedness, watchfulness, and exertion), and the exercise of faith, and the practice of prayer all facilitate independent scriptural study and also render the interpreter worthy of divine aid when Scripture proves impenetrable. One of Origen's oft-repeated maxims was that only those who had made some moral progress on the itinerary of the Christian faith could interpret Scripture well.[232]

Next, we will look at Lipatov's very detailed and useful description of St Basil's exegetical method in his work *Is.* in comparison with Origen's principles. Origen's influence is directly traced to passages from Origen's texts, which St Basil and St Gregory selected for the *Philokalia*, with which *Is*. has numerous parallels.[233] As Lipatov notes, both St Basil and

[227] Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 167-8.
[228] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 282.
[229] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.' in *On Christian Doctrine*, Rule 9.1, 123.
[230] St Basil, 'Homily in Ps. 45', 308.
[231] P.W. Martens, 'Interpreting Attentively: The Ascetic Character of Biblical Exegesis according to Origen and Basil of Caesarea' in *Origeniana Octava*, ed. L. Perrone (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003): 1115–21.
[232] Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 162.
[233] Lipatov, *The Commentary*, 361.

Origen asserted that faith in divine inspiration and usefulness for edification should be the starting point for any attempt to discern the spiritual truth that is presented typologically in the text. Every word is inspired by the Spirit, and nothing is superfluous or accidental. According to both theologians, the universally received idea of God as absolute goodness, a transcendent and immutable spiritual being superior to everything, should guide correct understanding of Scripture and lead to rejection of unacceptable types of interpretation. This can be an answer to why Eunomius's or Eustathius's interpretative work was unorthodox. Both Origen and St Basil state that difficult or unclear passages are introduced by the Spirit deliberately as a means of exercising people's minds and attracting their attention to the underlying spiritual message. Obscurities in Scripture conceal the profound message of the Spirit, which can be found by scrutiny. St Basil follows Origen in his belief that spiritual or mystical meaning is present in every passage of Scripture. The main consideration in deciding about the presence or absence of literal sense in a given passage is whether it can be regarded as worthy of God (anthropomorphic expressions). Even when a literal sense is present, the higher, spiritual sense is more valuable for the readers of Scripture, and it is this sense that Scripture wants readers to find.

Some scholars point to the difference between the two authors in showing that Origen distinguishes three senses (not two) in Scripture: somatic (literal), psychic (moral) and pneumatic (spiritual),[234] not simply naming them, but also using them throughout his works. Origen allows each sense to reinforce the spiritual effects of the other on his hearer.[235] The somatic sense is a literal reading of the text that edifies the hearer by true history or moral instruction. The psychic sense is a figurative reading that implores the reader to live morally. Finally, the pneumatic sense centres on Christ, on his Incarnation, on the Church and on the Eschaton. All three senses

[234] Origen, *De Princ.*, trans. G.W. Butterworth (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), book 4, 275-6.
[235] E.A.D. Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 5, 36.

contribute to Scripture's salvation story; however, the pneumatic sense somehow completes and fulfils this story.[236]

Concerning St Basil's manner of interpreting Scripture, some scholars explain his oscillation between allegorical and literal exegetical methods by development in his thought; others explain this with reference to his audiences. Gribomont explains that St Basil in his early years used the exegetical methods of Origen, but later changed his views. Lim suggests that St Basil used allegory in view of more mature audiences. Sarisky notes that according to St Basil the purpose of Scripture was to further salvation and so he used different ways to lead his audiences to salvation.[237] The last position seems to be closer to the truth.

With regard to *Hex.* and *Hom. in Ps.*, Simonetti notes that St Basil combines literary exegesis with obvious exhortatory and ethical objectives. He discards allegorical interpretation which saw the waters above and below the firmament in Genesis 1:7 as symbols of angelic powers; he describes this as a fantasy and 'old men's tales', that is, the interpretation either of Origen or of his followers. Interestingly, St Gregory of Nyssa interpreted 'firmament' as angelic powers and was convinced that it was a literal meaning.[238] We see that St Basil and his brother understood the meaning of 'literal' differently. It is interesting to note that St Basil uses different translations of Scripture and does not always place them on equal footing.[239]

Traditional division into two exegetical schools, Alexandrian and Antiochene, and two ways of exegesis, is not so straightforward. Young explains that there were two treatments of allegory: reading texts symbolically and mystically had philosophical roots, whereas reading texts to tease out a moral was of rhetorical origin. She argues that the Origenist tradition adopted the allegorical techniques of the philosophical

[236] Ibid., 76.
[237] D. Sarisky, 'Who Can Listen to Sermons on Genesis? Theological Exegesis and Theological Anthropology in Basil of Caesarea's Hexaemeron Homilies', *SP* 67 (Leuven, Paris, Walpole, Mass: Peeters, 2013): 13-24, 13-5.
[238] M. Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans. J.A. Hughes, ed. A. Bergquist, M. Bockmuehl (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 64-6.
[239] See more on 106.

schools, and the Antiochene reaction was the protest of rhetoric. As Young shows, neither literalism nor an interest in history stimulated the Antiochene reaction against Origenist allegory; this rather reflected a different approach to finding meaning in literature, which had background in the rhetorical schools.[240] Thus, these were two different approaches, which came from two different intellectual or didactic sources. In most of his works, St Basil seems to be following the tradition of rhetorical schools.

However, Hildebrand follows traditional differentiation and believes that the real difference between the Antiochene and the Alexandrian schools is in the way they use or do not use allegory.[241] St Basil is commonly placed in the Antiochene school; however, considering his *Hom. in Ps*. one will see him closer to the Alexandrian way. Hildebrand suggests examining St Basil's use of and attitude toward spiritual interpretation and his position on the unity of two Testaments rather than asking whether he was for or against allegory as a literary method. As he notes, St Basil frequently turns to questions of history only when there is some problem, such as contradiction between a historical account and a psalmic inscription. While St Basil rarely provides a historical and literal interpretation of the Psalms, he often offers spiritual interpretations, most of which refer to Christ or to an event in his life; others refer to the Spirit, the Christian life, the soul, or the church.[242] St Basil recognizes two basic levels of meaning in the Psalms, as also in other works: a material, or literal meaning, and a spiritual one. As Hildebrand rightly notes, though St Basil does not say that some Scriptural texts have only a spiritual meaning, he gives a spiritual interpretation for many of the Psalms that he considers. In his *Hom. in Ps.* St Basil finds the spiritual meaning more interesting and more relevant: 'it is a meaning which is noble and fitted to the divine Scripture'.[243]

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[240] F. Young, 'The Rhetorical Schools and Their Influence on Patristic Exegesis' in R. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989): 182-99, 188, 193.
[241] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 124.
[242] Ibid., 127, 129.
[243] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 193.

Whereas St Basil formally rejects allegory, he practises it nevertheless. He writes in *Hex.* 9 that when he hears 'grass' he thinks of grass, but earlier, in *Hex*. 5 he admonished his congregation to think of human nature and its changeability whenever they see grass.[244] Again, in *Hex*. 9, St Basil writes that he understands 'plants' as plants. However, in *Hex.* 5 he interprets 'plants' as insidious and divisive heretics.[245] Hildebrand writes that the *Hom. in Ps*. precedes *Hex.* and wonders whether St Basil's correspondence with Diodore of Tarsus convinced him of the dangers of allegory; alternatively, the difference between two works can be explained by a difference in audience, or difference between the genres of books.[246]

With regard to the first hypothesis, Lim writes that Diodore did not reject allegory altogether, but in order to preserve the validity of the anagogical (or spiritual) value of scriptural writing he distinguished the higher sense of the meaning from allegory.[247] As Lim writes, St Basil differs from Diodore in showing little interest in etymologies or in the contextual interrelationship (ἀκολουθία) of the narrative. Lim believes that St Basil does not employ Diodore's method at all, and even suggests that etymological exegesis in the unsystematic sense was not peculiar to the Antiochene school.[248]

Concerning the criticism of allegory by St Basil in *Hex*. 3, Lim writes that we do not find in Origen the explanation of the 'sea' as referring to the incessant movement of the demons. This scholar suggests that St Basil refers here not to Origen but to the later allegorists who were elaborating on Origen's exegesis. This interpretation might also have been generally popular among Neoplatonic circles. While St Basil rejects the allegorical interpretation of this passage, he does not adopt in its place a specifically Antiochene understanding. He merely dismisses the mythological interpretations as nonsense. However, later St Basil concedes that the more spiritual sense has value when accepted as such by people with enlightened minds because then the glory of the Creator will be made

[244] St Basil, 'Hom. in Hex. 5', 69, 'Hom. in Hex. 9', 135.
[245] St Basil, 'Hom. in Hex. 5', 73.
[246] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 135.
[247] Lim R., 'The Politics of Interpretation in Basil of Caesarea's Hexaëmeron', *VC* 44 (1990): 351–70, 353.
[248] Ibid., 354-5.

complete.[249] Thus, we see that consideration of the audience influenced the method of interpretation. As Lim remarks, it is unlikely that St Basil would have seen Origen as an extremist in his use of allegory. Instead, he was protecting Origen's method from its later users and abusers. The preference shown by Diodore and Theodore of Mopsuestia for the literal interpretation can be explained by the fact that they both opposed people whom they considered Arians and Sabellians; they had to counter the claims of Jews and pagans, along with various heretical groups. In this respect, St Basil's situation was similar to that of the Antiochenes.[250] In polemic against heretics a literal interpretation was often used. Further, Lim argues that St Basil's anti-allegorical invective is better explained by his audience than by his conversion to the Antiochene method later in life. On this reading, allegorical interpretation is not for the unlearned and the simple, but for the advanced and mature. Allegory in the hands of the unlearned leads to heresy. St Basil does not reject allegory in itself, but allegory for his particular congregation.[251]

Lim's argumentation, however, as Hildebrand remarks, does not explain the difference in character between the *Hex*. and the *Hom. in Ps.* The audience of *Hom. in Ps.* did not consist of an advanced elite, as Bernardi has shown; rather, it was a general public. As Hildebrand writes, we should remember the difference between the books of Genesis and Psalms and their different handling by the Fathers. Genesis was subject to perverse allegorical interpretations, especially by Gnostics.[252] The Psalms were especially open to Christological readings. As Hildebrand notes, St Basil's method did not change when he wrote these commentaries, but he became more sensitive to the abuses of the allegorical method. The best evidence for St Basil's fundamental consistency is not in the character of the audiences that he addressed but in the use of spiritual interpretations in *Hex*. These spiritual interpretations, similar to those of the *Hom. in Ps.*, soften the force of the anti-allegorical position.[253] Considering all of these

[249] Ibid., 357.
[250] Ibid., 358.
[251] Ibid., 364.
[252] Oliphant Old similarly remarks that by using literal sense the Cappadocians defended the Christian faith from attacks of Arianism and different kinds of Gnosticism and other heresies; see Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching*, 35-61.
[253] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 137-9.

arguments we can conclude with Hildebrand that St Basil's use or avoidance of allegory can be explained by several factors: the peculiarities of previous interpretations (especially considering heretical misinterpretations), the genre of books that were interpreted, and the choice of particular spiritual interpretations.

Thus, we see that, according to St Basil, one has to purify one's mind from passions in order to approach Scripture. Reading Scripture is an ascetic exercise. St Basil was influenced by Origen in his method, but used this legacy creatively. St Basil used different methods of exegesis depending on the history of previous interpretations, the genre of the books and the use of particular spiritual interpretations.

1.7 Scripture and Tradition

Now we will look at St Basil's view of extra-scriptural arguments in theological debates. As Haykin notes, St Basil's exegesis was guided by evidence from Scripture, religious experience and tradition.[254] In the end of *DSS,* he asserts that he collected the conceptions commonly accepted in the church about the Spirit not only from Scripture but also from the unwritten tradition of the Fathers, which has the same strength, in his view, as Scripture. Unwritten tradition should be in harmony with the sense of Scripture.[255] In the key text, *DSS* 27.66, St Basil differentiates *kerygma* (public proclamation of the Church) and *dogma* (teaching reserved for the initiated). However, this distinction can be confusing. On the one hand, the *kerygmata* are 'the bare words' or public words, and the *dogmata* comprise the right understanding of these words. Unwritten tradition, then, contains both *kerygma* and *dogma*. On the other hand, there is almost no distinction between *dogma* and unwritten tradition. The difference is similar to that between Scripture and tradition. Scripture, then, would not contain *dogmata*, and tradition would not contain *kerygmata*. Though St Basil implies that there can be scriptural *dogma*, he

[254] Haykin, *The Spirit of God*, 116.
[255] Mendieta, 'The "Unwritten" and "Secret" Apostolic Traditions in the Theological Thought of St Basil of Caesarea', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Occasional Papers 13 (1965): 1-70, 26-7.

gives no examples. All of the examples of *dogmata* are tied to the liturgy.[256] As Karam notes, for St Basil 'unwritten' does not necessarily mean 'oral', because much of it is non-verbal, which also harmonizes with his vision of contemplation as non-verbal or trans-conceptual.[257] *Dogma* is the fullness of understanding 'which requires a heart enlightened by the Spirit; and this enlightenment is none other than faith, according to its various degrees'.[258] Similarly, Karam explains, 'Faith, produced by the light of the Spirit, brings about fullness of understanding, or *dogma*. *Dogma*, in turn, gives life to the profession of faith, to the *kerygma'*.[259]

While St Basil is unclear on whether *dogmata* are only non-scriptural or also scriptural, he clearly asserts that *dogmata* are communicated secretly or 'mystically' and are understood only by the initiated. Hanson thinks that St Basil's unwritten tradition is secret and esoteric; only the élite can possess it.[260] Florovsky, on the contrary, stresses the liturgical and mystical nature of its transmission rather than its secrecy. As he explains, ἐν μυστηρίῳ means 'by the way of mysteries', under the form of rites, especially, the rites of baptism and Eucharist, which are for him of apostolic origin. As Florovsky writes, the only difference between *dogma* and *kerygma* was in the manner of their transmission. However, their intent is the same; they convey the same faith.[261] Mendieta, in his turn, distinguishes three levels of *dogma*, each of which is understood by a particular group: the baptised know customs, some of them know what these customs mean, and monastics can understand the more profound *dogmata*.[262]

As Dörries and Mendieta believe, St Basil avoided calling the Spirit God or consubstantial with the Father because of his distinction between

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[256] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 143-4.
[257] Karam, 'Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit', 150.
[258] J. Gribomont, 'Esotérisme et tradition dans le traité du Saint-Esprit de saint Basile', *Oecumenica, An Annual Symposium of Ecumenical Research* 2 (Minn.: Augsburg, 1967): 22-58, 45.
[259] Karam, 'Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit', 149-50.
[260] R.P.C. Hanson, 'Basil's Doctrine of Tradition in Relation to the Holy Spirit', *VC* 22.4 (Dec., 1968): 241-55, 250.
[261] G. Florovsky, 'The Function of Tradition in the Ancient Church', 181-200, 194, 196, http://bulgarian-orthodox-church.org/rr/lode/florovsky1.pdf, <accessed 22.07.17>.
[262] Mendieta, 'The Pair "Kerygma" and "Dogma" in the Theological Thought of St. Basil of Caesarea', *JThS* 16 (1965): 129-42, 136-9.

kerygma and *dogma*. An example of *kerygma*, as Anastos writes, would be that the Spirit is not a product (κτίσμα) but holy by nature and not separated from the Father and the Son. According to *dogma*, which was kept secret, the Spirit was acknowledged to be God and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.[263]

As Hildebrand writes, Florovsky is right to emphasize the liturgical character of the tradition, and the fact that not all of the baptised understand all the *dogmata*. Mendieta is right to say that some *dogmata* are more profound than others, and some require more education and illumination.[264] Whereas Hanson writes that St Basil was motivated to make his innovations because he could not find scriptural evidence for his doctrine of the Spirit, Hildebrand argues that it is rather that Eustathius could not see the force and meaning or the *dogma* of many Scriptural proofs that St Basil offered precisely because Eustathius rejected the tradition in which the meaning of Scripture became patent.[265]

Moreover, St Basil maintains that his doxology is apostolic. It means, as Gribomont explains, that it is consistent with the practice of the apostles of accepting unwritten traditions and is preserved in the writings of the Fathers. St Basil is aware of the variety and flexibility of customs; he also stresses the continuity of tradition.[266] As Mendieta comments, 'apostolic' tradition is for St Basil the unwritten rule of faith, without which it is impossible to grasp the true intention and doctrine of the inspired Scriptures.[267] This scholar believes that St Basil overstated his case by asserting that the apostles themselves established the law of the *disciplina arcani*, that is, the transmission in silence and in secret of the liturgical and doctrinal traditions of the church. According to St Basil, these doctrines may be taught to initiated Christians, but with restraint and discretion. However, in practice, as Mendieta notes, St Basil seems to reserve this practice to a few pious people, that is, to a monastic élite.[268] The apostles and Fathers laid down laws and institutions for the churches

[263] Anastos, 'Basil's *Kata Eunomiou*', 131-2.
[264] Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology*, 146.
[265] Ibid., 147.
[266] Gribomont, 'Esotérisme et tradition', 54-5.
[267] Mendieta, 'The "Unwritten" and "Secret" Apostolic Traditions, 26-7.
[268] Ibid., 40-2.

and sought to preserve the sacred dignity of the mysteries of the church through a policy of secrecy and silence. This esoteric nature of the unwritten tradition applies to outsiders and silence has an educational purpose. According to St Basil, the doctrine of the perfect equality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in dignity, glory and nature comes from the Fathers.[269]

Thus, as we see, the fact that St Basil relied on the unwritten tradition had great impact on his argumentation on the divinity of the Spirit. He defined what ideas come from Scripture and which ones are created with the purpose of explaining Scripture. He maintained their equal status and explained that the latter are to be revealed to the baptized. He also asserted that the doxology which some of his opponents considered an innovation was of apostolic origin.

1.8 Conclusion

Thus, we have shown in this chapter the peculiar place of St Basil in the theological discussions of the fourth century. We demonstrated how he maintained both the unity of three Persons, their cooperation in divine economy, and, simultaneously, their distinguishing marks. The characteristic features of the Spirit are holiness, revealing mysteries, enabling glorification of God, bringing joy, and distribution of gifts. Because of his titles and activities, the Spirit is organically united with the Father and the Son and is divine in nature. We have demonstrated a variety of reasons for St Basil reservation in terminology and looked at development in his thought. We have seen that St Basil's exegetic methods differed depending on the genre of the biblical book he was commenting on, on the history of previous interpretations, use of spiritual interpretations, and context. St Basil established equal status of *dogmata* and *kerygmata*, defended their apostolic origins, and used them for the defence of the divinity of the Spirit. In the following chapter we will

[269] Ibid., 44-54.

examine the role of the Spirit in the inspiration and interpretation of Scripture, and in the creation of the world.

Chapter 2. Role of the Spirit in the Inspiration of Prophets, the Interpretation of Scripture, and the Creation of the World

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will see how St Basil defends the divinity of the Spirit by arguing that the Spirit inspired Scripture and spoke through the prophets,[270] and we will also explore how St Basil argues for the role of the Spirit in the creation of the visible and invisible worlds. We start from these themes since St Basil draws his arguments for the divinity of the Spirit in the first place from Scripture, which he holds to be inspired by the same Spirit. Besides, the first conceivable action of the Spirit that confirms his divine status was the creation of everything in conjunction with the Father and the Son. St Basil is not satisfied with simply asserting that the Spirit is not a creature, but states that he has the power of a Creator. He also introduces different senses of the word 'creation'. It is noteworthy that both the idea of the Spirit inspiring Scripture, that is, passing the divine message through the prophets, and the idea of the presence of the Spirit in baptism had been propounded by all thinkers starting from the first century. St Basil is going further than his predecessors in that he used these Scriptural ideas to defend the divinity of the Spirit. Thus, we will first look at Christian thought on this matter preceding St Basil, in order to see how St Basil either continued or departed from this tradition. Then, we will explore St Basil's position, his use of the phrase 'sayings of the Spirit' and the way in which he describes the process of inspiration of prophets. Finally, we will examine St Basil's understanding of the Spirit as a Creator.

2.2 Inspirational Role of the Spirit

As described in the *Shepherd of Hermas* (late first or mid-second century), among the characteristics of the true prophet are quietness, humility, and

[270] St Basil does not expand this argument in *DSS*. However, we can reconstruct his understanding of this question from considering all of his works.

abstention from all wickedness and vain desires. Such qualities reflect the fact that the prophet is filled with the Spirit. The author describes the process of prophesying as follows: 'Whensoever, then, a man who has the Divine Spirit comes into an assembly of righteous men who have faith in a Divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God, then the Angel of the Spirit of prophecy who is attached to him fills the man, and being thus filled by the Holy Spirit, he speaks to the concourse as the Lord wills'. This statement is unclear; it seems that the Divine Spirit and the Angel of the Spirit of Prophecy are distinct subjects. Hermas also speaks of the Spirit as the Teacher and Sanctifier.[271]

Justin Martyr (100-165), in his turn, fails to distinguish between the Spirit and the Word in the activity of inspiration even though he frequently uses the title 'prophetic Spirit' when referring to the Spirit. In applying this title, Justin attempts to say something distinct about the activity of the Spirit; however, much of the time he follows his binitarian logic.[272] Justin's innovation in comparison with other thinkers lay in his insistence that prophecy in the Jewish people has ceased and the gifts of the Spirit are now present only among the Christians.[273]

Athenagoras of Athens, an Apologist of the second century (133-190), develops the idea of mechanical inspiration. He believes that the Spirit breathed into the prophets of the Old Testament as a flute-player breathes into his instrument, making it vocal and tuneful. On the other hand, he does not write anything about the work of the Spirit in Christian prophecy, in the New Testament, or in the inspiration of thought and life.[274] He is arguing for the truth of Christian faith from the evidence of the Old Testament.

According to Theophilus of Antioch, another Apologist (d. 183), the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies proves that the prophets

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[271] H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: Macmillan, 1912), 25.
[272] A. Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons and the Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 21-2.
[273] G.N. Stanton, 'The Spirit in the writings of Justin Martyr' in id. et al. (eds.), *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Essays in Honour of James D.G. Dunn* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004): 321-34, 328, 334.
[274] Swete, *The Holy Spirit*, 45.

foretold the future through the light of the Spirit or that they were 'Spirit-bearing', a qualification which Theophilus, living after the formation of the canon of four Gospels, believes the Evangelists to have shared with them. He does not refer to the work of the Spirit in the Church, beyond the statement that Christians are guided by the Word and taught by Wisdom.[275]

We see that three authors consider the Spirit as inspiring prophets, except Justin who divides this role between the Word and the Spirit. Whereas Hermas writes about the Spirit as present and inspiring believers in his own time, Athenagoras mainly speaks about the Old Testament prophets whom he describes as passive instruments of the Spirit. Theophilus shows that the fulfilment of the prophecies proves inspiration by the Spirit; he also believes that New Testament authors were inspired by the same Spirit.

Let us turn now to St Basil's thought. First, we will look at the question of who inspires the prophets. When commenting on Isaiah 5:1, 'I will sing to the beloved, to my vineyard, song of my Well-beloved', St Basil interprets this song as proclaimed by the Spirit. However, it is the song of the Only-Begotten, and the Spirit received it from him.[276] Here we see both the Son and the Spirit as participating in the process of the inspiration of Scripture. However, this example is exceptional and most often St Basil ascribes an inspirational role to the Spirit, as in the following quote: 'Everything written by the prophets is spoken by the Holy Spirit'.[277] St Basil writes that some people who were initially taught by God have been able to receive 'the manifestations of the Spirit'; among these were Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and Jeremiah.[278] He also writes in *Ep* 197 (375), 'God having through the Spirit strengthened (gifted with power) Amos…elevated him…to the rank of prophet'.[279] We see that people who became prophets were first prepared by God and then strengthened by the Spirit. When St Basil argues in *DSS* (374-5) that the Spirit is indivisibly

[275] Ibid., 48.
[276] St Basil, *Is.*, 160.
[277] Ibid., 350.
[278] Ibid., 237-8.
[279] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 42.

joined to the Father and the Son in everything, he writes, 'If God is recognized to be present among prophets because their prophesying is a gift of the Spirit, let our opponents determine what place they will give to the Holy Spirit'.[280] Further, arguing for the communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in the creation of angels, St Basil writes, 'Not even Gabriel could have announced events to come, unless the Spirit gave him foreknowledge – since one of the gifts distributed by the Spirit is prophecy'. He continues, 'It is the unique function of the Spirit to reveal mysteries (1 Cor 2:10)'.[281] Thus, we see that it is the Spirit who inspires prophets and distributes the gift of prophecy, which proves his divine nature. It seems that inspiration of prophets is a specific work of the Spirit in which the Father and the Son are not directly involved.

Furthermore, St Basil states that the Scriptures were inspired by the Spirit in such a way that everyone could find a treatment for their own diseases in these texts. The Spirit knew that humans are inclined to pleasures and do not care about the righteous way. That is why 'he mingled the delight of melody with the doctrines'.[282] The prophet accommodated the Psalms to the psaltery (a musical instrument) to inform us that the grace of the Spirit gives its voice in it, because in this instrument the source of sounds is located on the top.[283] St Basil continues, 'Therefore, the common Director of our lives, the great Teacher, the Spirit of truth' offered us the rewards in advance so that we look over our present labours into the future and take pleasure in thought of the eternal blessings.[284] We see how St Basil explains that the Spirit, the Teacher, proclaims truth especially in the Psalms and mingles divine teachings with music so as to have a medical effect on the human soul. The economic wisdom of the divine Person is made clear through this.

In the same vein, we also see the salvific role of the teachings inspired by the Spirit. St Basil also calls Scripture 'the teachings of the Spirit'. In *Hex.* 1 (378), St Basil encourages the reader to listen to the words of truth

[280] St Basil, *DSS*, 61.
[281] Ibid., 64.
[282] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 1', 152.
[283] Ibid., 153.
[284] Ibid., 155.

which were written not with the help of man's enticing wisdom, but to 'the teachings of the Spirit, whose end is not praise from those hearing, but the salvation of those taught'.[285] Moreover, in *Hom. in Ps.* 45, St Basil states that the teachings given by the Spirit in this Psalm lead those obeying them to the good end. This Psalm was told to the sons of Core whom the Spirit did not divide because they were unified in the proclamation of prophetic words: 'the gift of prophecy is given to them equally because of the equality of their mutual affection for the good'. [286] In *Hex.* 3, St Basil encourages his audience to give heed to his words and not to regret time spent on listening. He says that to those who prefer spiritual welfare, God will give all kinds of material blessings, and even if their efforts will not realize their hopes at present, the teachings of the Spirit are a rich treasure for the ages to come.[287] Moreover, in the polemical *Eun*., St Basil asks Eunomius for the source of the latter's argument, 'Was it from the teaching of the Spirit? What teaching? Where found? What says great David, to whom God revealed the hidden secrets of his wisdom?'[288] Thus, the purpose of the teachings of the Spirit or Scripture is the salvation and good of humankind.

Further, we find numerous places where St Basil calls Scripture 'the words of the Spirit' or 'propositions' of the Spirit (τὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος λόγια). St Basil sees the Spirit and not the Logos, as was common in the second and third centuries (Spirit-Christology), as the source of inspiration of Scripture. In *Verb.* (370-8), commenting on John 1:1, St Basil states that utterances of the Gospels are greater than the other utterances of the Spirit, because in the latter the Spirit spoke through the prophets, whereas in the Gospel the Lord speaks with believers face-to-face. Here we see that 'utterances of the Spirit' mean Old Testament writings. Further, in *Hom. in Ps.* 48, St Basil says that the prophet praises his own words as the words taught by the Spirit, not as his own human inventions. The prophet is attentive to the 'propositions' of the Spirit, who uncovers the wisdom of

[285] St Basil, 'Hex.', 5.
[286] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 297-8.
[287] St Basil, 'Hex. 3', 37-8. We can see from this homily that St Basil preached to a varied audience, consisting of working people and not just monks.
[288] St Basil, *Eun.*, ch. 1.13, 57.

God in a mystery while he in his turn discloses it by means of the psaltery.[289] In addition, in the beginning of the *Verb.*, St Basil shows the magnificence of the words of John 1:1. He calls believers the 'disciples of the Spirit'. He also talks about the Spirit as the author of the Gospel of John: 'The Holy Spirit knew those who would cling to the glory of the Only-Begotten. He foreknew those who would utter sophistical arguments against us', and thus he used the right expressions. St Basil continues, 'the Holy Spirit takes the initiative through the gospel, saying…'[290] Moreover, in *Lak.* St Basil calls the Scriptures 'the oracles of the Spirit' and 'the Spirit'. He writes, 'In this way you can return home with some advantage gained from them all [different books of Scripture], each receiving something beneficial from the Spirit against that to which he is readily inclined'.[291]

Similarly, concerning a certain heretic, St Basil writes in *Ep* 261 (377), '…but rejecting the sayings of the Spirit makes his own teaching a greater authority than the evidence from the Gospels'.[292] Here, as St Basil explains, a person elevates his own teachings over the words of the Spirit, referring to the New Testament. Likewise in *Hex.* 9, St Basil opposes those who accepted the distorted meaning of allegory. He writes about them as follows: they 'have attempted by false arguments and allegorical interpretations to bestow on Scripture a dignity of their own imagining. But theirs is the attitude of one who considers himself wiser than the revelations of the Spirit and introduces his own ideas in pretence of an explanation'.[293] In these works, which belong to a later period of St Basil's life, we see a more polemical tone, defending the authority of the words inspired by Spirit as placed above merely human teachings and interpretations.

In addition, we find that 'the teaching of the Spirit' signifies not just the texts of Scripture but also liturgical prayers. In particular, in the *Hom. in Ps.* 28 concerning behaviour in church, St Basil notes that some people not

[289] Ibid., 314. We find a similar idea in 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 298.
[290] St Basil, 'Verb.', 250-1.
[291] St Basil, 'Lak.' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 195.
[292] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 235.
[293] St Basil, *'*Hex. 9*'*, 136.

only do not praise God, but distract others from 'the teaching of the Spirit', [294] meaning in this context the readings from Scripture or liturgical prayers. In another homily, St Basil writes that the 'oracles of God' (Rom. 3:2) are in the Church as gifts given by God; they are read at each gathering as spiritual food given by the Spirit to the soul.[295] Similarly, in *Hex.* 4, St Basil encourages his audience never to get tired of contemplating divine works in creation or to be slow in hearing the words of the Spirit instead of going to the horse races and theatres.[296] In *Ep* 207 (375), 'To Clergy of Neocaesarea', when explaining his litanies, St Basil says that in his church people appease God not with human words, but 'with the sayings of the Spirit'.[297] From this we gather that already at that time the liturgical prayers were largely woven together out of Scripture. St Basil sees the prayers in worship as sacred and as inspired by the Spirit.

St Basil also often sets the words of the Spirit off against the 'foolish wisdom of the world'. He writes in *Hex.* 3 that 'the inquisitive discussions of philosophers' should not be compared with 'the simple and unartificial character of the utterances of the Spirit'.[298] Precisely so St Basil sees his arguments as superior to those of his opponents, because they just seek to persuade with reasoning,[299] whereas he seeks the simplicity of the wisdom of the Spirit which would edify his audience. It is important to note that St Basil sees the edification and salvation of his listeners as the key to all his pastoral efforts. Further, St Basil writes that though some call the proclamation of the Gospel foolishness, Christians are proud of the cross of Christ, which is disclosed by the Spirit, and know that they have received the abundant grace of God expressed in the teachings of Christ.[300] Moreover, in *Hex.* 9, St Basil writes that since Moses passed in silence what is unimportant for us, for example, concerning the shape of the earth, it does not mean that 'the words of the Spirit are of less value than their [philosophers'] foolish wisdom'. The theologian asks, 'Shall I rather give glory to him who has not kept our mind occupied with vanities but has

[294] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 209-10.
[295] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 59', 336.
[296] St Basil, 'Hex. 3', 55.
[297] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 84.
[298] See Chapter Three on the simplicity of the nature of the Spirit and simplicity as a virtue.
[299] St Basil, 'Hex. 3', 51.
[300] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 283.

ordained that all things be written for the edification and guidance of our souls?'[301] St Basil encourages hearing Scripture as plainly as it has been written. Later in the homily he writes that the Spirit will help to investigate the truths that follow in Scripture, meaning that he will write about the creation of humans with the aid of the Spirit.[302] Therefore, we see that in *Hex*., St Basil associates the teachings of the Spirit with Scripture, and opposes the words of the Spirit to the wisdom of the world.

Further, in *Hex. 2,* St Basil writes that the Spirit helps us to grasp the right meaning of Scripture, and with the help of his grace prophets and priests can contribute to the edification of the church of God.[303] The Spirit not only inspires the prophets, but also guides right interpretation of Scripture. In *Ep* 204 (375), which was addressed to Neocaesarean clergy and specifically to bishop Atarbios who accused St Basil of semi-Arian views and spread them among clergy and people, St Basil writes, '… in regards to the words of the Spirit, also, not everyone should apply himself to an examination of what is said, but only he who has the Spirit of discernment (τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς διακρίσεως)'.[304] St Basil explains that those who do not have knowledge of agriculture cannot judge the works belonging to it. The same is true of spiritual matters. It seems that St Basil refers here to clergy who have deep knowledge of Scripture. In *Verb.* (371-2), concerning evil men of arts who use the force of the words, St Basil recommends Christians who are disciples of the Spirit to hold fast to the text. He writes that one should not rely on distinctions of phrase and worldly cleverness, in this way blaspheming the Spirit, but accept the definitive statement, that the Word was God.[305] He states this because of the polemical context. He

[301] St Basil, 'Hex. 9', 136.
[302] Ibid., 150.
[303] St Basil, 'Hex. 2', 21.
[304] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 75. St Basil does not describe how one can discern true doctrine from the false one; he describes this as a gift of the Spirit. However, he does discuss the concept 'discernment'. He writes that one needs this capacity in order to interpret Scripture, to extract wisdom from secular sciences, and to distinguish between what is harmful or useful for the soul. In addition, St Basil says that we should have full knowledge of education, of rhetoric and of the knowledge of God. He writes, 'Words of wisdom will be discerned by the attentive reader of the Proverbs, who thence patiently extracts what is for his good'; see St Basil, 'Prov.' in *On Christian Doctrine,* 61.
[305] St Basil, 'Verb.', 250. St Athanasius also explains that blasphemy against humanity is less than blasphemy against divinity, so there is difference in blasphemy against the Son and against the Spirit. The Son does everything through the Spirit, and when pharisees ascribed the works of the Spirit to devil, they blasphemed the Giver of the Spirit. This explanation of the blasphemy against the Spirit is unique to St Athanasius; see St

expands on the divine nature of the Son and argues against the impious use of Scripture which heretics used to back up their ideas which are not in the spirit of Scripture. Thus, in *Bapt.* (376-8), which was an explanatory treatise for the faithful, even though written late in his life, St Basil writes that we should examine the nouns, verbs and content of Scripture as regards God or holy prophets under the guidance of the Spirit and with a pious intention, not all together, but by parts, for the exposition of the sound doctrine.[306] Those who believe in the divinity of the Spirit should investigate all difficult passages with the help of the Spirit. Furthermore, in *Inv.*, St Basil writes about someone who is envious of a person who is mentally acute and eloquent in discoursing about God and interpreting Scripture. He writes that one should not be envious of such a person who 'by grace of the Holy Spirit wins some favour and praise thereby from his hearers'. On the contrary, one should accept this 'gift of doctrine'.[307] Thus, only the one who is guided by the Spirit can understand the right intent of Scripture.

Now we will look at how St Basil describes the prerequisites for becoming a prophet in *Is*.[308] He writes that a prophet is 'a worthy instrument for the operation of the Spirit'. A prophet should have the most harmonious soul, without any conflict between the passionate aspects of the soul and reason. Such a person is granted the gift of prophecy but only to a certain degree. The Spirit manifests himself not in all souls but only in the souls in which 'not even a slight motion of the passionate aspect (τὸ παθητικόν) of the soul discords with the reason', that is, in the souls of people with even and stable tempers, and not in those whose ruling aspect (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) is confused with the stains of sin. [309] Thus, only right-functioning souls are suitable for the operation of the Spirit. He states that prophets originate from common nature, 'but are raised on high through the purity of their

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Athanasius, 'The Fourth Letter to Serapion' in id., *The Letters Concerning the Holy Spiri*t, trans. C.R.B. Shapland (London: Epworth Press, 1951). St Gregory also writes that the one who neglects the Spirit, brings blasphemy also against the Father and the Son; see St Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Spirit, Against the Macedonians,* http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2903.htm, <accessed 03.04.2016>.

[306] St Basil, 'Bapt.' in St Basil, *Ascetical Works*, trans. M. Wagner (Washington: CUAP, 1962), 357.

[307] St Basil, 'Inv.' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 472.

[308] See Chapter Four on the preparation of any Christian for indwelling of the Spirit.

[309] St Basil, *Is.*, 1-3.

souls by the power of the Spirit' and pour 'the drops of their fertilising words into good and fruit-bearing souls'.[310] St Basil goes on to say that when a soul exercises all virtues, and through the love of God keeps constant memory of him, then the Spirit is as it were indwelling in it, and the soul becomes God-bearing and is made worthy of the gift of prophecy and worthy to see the spectacles which God wishes to show. It is interesting to see that first God himself comes to dwell in the soul and then he gives the prophetic gift to the soul. It is our responsibility to make our minds clear-sighted and it is a divine gift when the Spirit illuminates us for the contemplation of his mysteries.[311] Similarly, St Basil describes a prophet as the one who predicts the future by the revelation of the Spirit.[312] Thus, we see that a prophet should have a harmonious soul in which reason is dominant. It seems that anyone could become a prophet if prepared and brought the parts of his/her soul into right operation. As we see in *DSS,* when St Basil describes manifold ways in which the preposition 'in' can be used in reference to the Spirit, he writes, 'The Spirit is continuously present with those who are worthy, but actively works as he is needed, whether in prophecy, or healings, or other wonderful works'.[313] Everyone receives the Spirit in baptism, but he departs if a person leads a sinful life. The Spirit comes again into the souls of prophets, ascetics, and lay Christians, who have abandoned the way of sin and purified their souls. St Basil does not say explicitly whether the Old Testament prophets were predestined for their roles by God but it seems that a prophet is someone who possesses an especially pure soul.

While dwelling on the holiness of character required for the prophetic office, St Basil points out in *Is*. that sometimes it has pleased God to grant it to Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar for the sake of their great empires; to Caiaphas as the high priest; to Balaam, because of the exigencies of the crisis at which he appeared. He writes, 'Ahaz received the prophecy about future events in the same way as Laban, as Abimeleh, as Nebuchadnezzar, as Pharaoh, and as, at last, Caiaphas, not because of the merit of his life,

[310] Ibid., 171.
[311] Ibid., 5.
[312] St Basil, *Is.*, 116.
[313] St Basil, *DSS*, 93.

but simply because of the trustworthiness belonging to him because of his rank'.[314] There is also a possibility of misuse or false ascription of the gift by or to humans.[315]

Then there is the question of what happens to a prophet when he/she is inspired. St Basil emphasises many times that there is no ecstasy or mindlessness in prophesying,[316] but 'the Spirit raises the mind purified of the stains of sin to the contemplation of spiritual things'.[317] Here we do not see the Spirit descending into the soul, but rather the Spirit raising the soul to a heavenly realm. Later in *Is.* we read, 'The Lord granting a vision does not blind the mind which he himself set in order, but enlightening it, makes it more lucid by the presence of the Spirit. Prophets used to be called "seers" … through intensification of clear vision of their mind through the presence of the Spirit'.[318] Thus, we see that prophesying is not happening in the state of ecstasy; on the contrary, the mind is enlightened and sees things more clearly. St Basil demonstrates the same process in another place: 'And this happened to the prophets when a ray of the true light penetrated to the ruling aspect of their souls and served to illuminate them; this voice [the word of God] was received by those who were beyond corruptible sensual perceptions and were eager for coming out of their bodies. For when the soul is ready for the contemplation of divine things, detaching itself from entanglement with the body, it is said to "come out" (ἐξιέναι)'.[319] So we see that 'coming out' is not ecstasy or mindlessness, but rather a detachment from the body, by which St Basil possibly means the bodily passions. He further explains, 'Scripture demonstrates to all of us who by means of repentance want to "go out" (ἐξελθεῖν) of the passions of the flesh' that we can do so by following the prophets.[320] Thus, prophets present a model of purification.

[314] St Basil, *Is.*, 239.
[315] Ibid., 280.
[316] Some hold that Justin was an exception among the Fathers, for he speaks in *Dialogue with Trypho*, ch. 115 of Zechariah prophesying 'in trance'. However, it refers to his reporting what he saw in the vision; see D.A. Carson, *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 81.
[317] St Basil, *Is.*, 5.
[318] Ibid., 305.
[319] Ibid., 232.
[320] Ibid., 233.

Further, St Basil describes how God transmits his message to the prophets: '…with those to whom God wishes to make manifest his will, it is the ruling aspect of the soul that is impressed by God. For those who have their mind undisturbed and pure, perceive images in the mind through some ineffable power, as if they had heard the word of God resounding in themselves…God writes his own will in the soul of the prophet as if it were in a book,[321] and he who receives in his soul the divine messages is said to "hear"…ruling aspect is made an image of the word of God by an ineffable power'.[322] We see the divine message transmitted through images in the soul and through letters as if in a book. The prophet both sees the divine message and hears it. It is interesting to note that the soul/reason is made in the image of God and it is the soul/reason that receives and reflects the words of God. Further, when explaining the process of inspiration in *Hom. in Ps.* 44, St Basil comments on verse 7, 'Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness', saying that here we see that the one who is speaking is the prophet spreading the action of the Spirit who came upon him.[323] Furthermore, typologically explaining Psalm 44, St Basil comments on verse 9, 'The statement of the prophet, descending gradually and consistently and mentioning first all those things which pertain to the dispensation of the Incarnation, by a strong breath of the Spirit which reveals to him hidden things, came to the [Christ's] passion'.[324] Here inspiration is literally described as a breathing in of the Spirit. Thus, St Basil describes inspiration as an enlightening of the mind through the presence of the Spirit, as impressing the soul with divine images, as hearing by the 'ears' of the soul of the voice of God, and the breathing of the Spirit. It seems that all of the spiritual senses are involved in this process.

Concerning the freedom of a prophet, St Basil writes in one passage that God gives power for the prophetic mission and that the prophets have the free will to accept or reject this ministry.[325] However, most frequently St Basil writes, similarly to Athenagoras, that a prophet is a passive

[321] See discussion of the inscriptions of the Spirit on the soul on 145.
[322] St Basil, *Is.*, 218.
[323] Ibid., 280.
[324] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 290.
[325] St Basil, *Is.*, 217.

instrument (Ps. 29:7, 45:1) who produces a 'rhythmical sound because of the skill of him who masterfully plays [upon] it'.[326] In addition, when commenting in *Hom. in Ps.* 29 on what mourning is, St Basil writes, 'every holy prophet was called figuratively a flute because of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit…The prophetical words [of Lk. 7:32], indeed, urge us on to the rhythmic action of the holy prophecy, which is called dancing. But, the prophets make lamentation for us, summoning us to mourn'. [327] Here we see both an allegorical interpretation and a comparison of a prophet to a musical instrument, who is urging his listeners either to dance or to weep depending on the circumstances. Moreover, commenting on Psalm 44:2, St Basil describes in detail the process of inspiration by the Spirit and transmission of the divine words. He says that similarly to a pen moved by an experienced hand, the tongue of a saint is moved by the Spirit, and is dipped 'not in ink but in the Spirit of the living God' (2 Cor. 3:3). The Spirit writes the words of eternal life through the tongue of the prophet not on the stones but on the hearts of the believers. St Basil continues, 'The scrivener/scribe, therefore, is the Holy Spirit, because he is wise and an apt teacher of all; and swiftly writing, because the movement of his mind is swift (ὀξεῖα τῆς διανοίας ἡ κίνησις)'.[328] Similarly, St Basil writes about the Son, 'Thus, God's blessings reach us through the Son, who works in each case with greater speed than words can describe…Divine energy surpasses everything in speed'.[329] This shows a common feature of divine nature between the Son and the Spirit. Further, depending on the breadth of the heart, the Spirit writes more or less; depending on the purity, he writes either in a way that is clear to everyone or else in a hidden manner. All of these passages suggest that the prophet is not a free agent. We see how the Spirit is described as a teacher and swift in his divine action, similarly to the Son. It is also interesting to note that the Spirit writes not only on the reason of the prophet, but also through the prophet onto the hearts of the believers. St Basil associates the ruling aspect/mind with the heart and calls it a

[326] Ibid., 382.
[327] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 224.
[328] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 281-2.
[329] St Basil, *DSS*, 38.

discerning faculty of the soul.[330] Likewise, when commenting on Psalm 7:10, 'The searcher of hearts and reins is God', he explains, '…Scripture in many places accepts the heart for the principal part of the body (καρδίαν ἡ Γραφὴ πολλαχοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ παραλαμβάνει), and the reins for the affective part of the soul'.[331]

So far we have seen that St Basil equates 'teachings of the Spirit' or 'sayings of the Spirit' with the Scriptures. He also says metaphorically that the words of Scripture are the Spirit and the words of the Spirit are Scripture. Interestingly, this contrasts with the statements of some Fathers that the words of Scripture are the Logos, or Christ. St Basil opposes worldly wisdom to the wisdom of the words of the Spirit. He writes that in order to become a prophet besides practising virtues, one has to maintain harmony and purity of the soul. He emphasizes that prophesying does not lead a prophet out of the body and is not a mindless process, but instead clarifies the mind and reveals divine mysteries. St Basil sees this process above all as an intellectual transformation, rather than a form of spiritual ecstasy. The Spirit writes the divine message in the soul, that is, on its rational part, as if in a book. St Basil supersedes previous thought by describing in detail how the Spirit chooses and inspires prophets, how he guides interpretation of Scripture and doctrines. In all this we see the divine characteristics of the Spirit. St Basil follows Athenagoras in describing a prophet as a passive instrument. On the basis of detailed comparison of his various writings, we detect no significant development in St Basil's thought on this subject in the course of his life. This means that St Basil understood the Spirit to hold the divine function of inspiration throughout his lifetime. Morever, he uses this understanding as an argument for the divine nature of the Spirit in *DSS, Verb.* and *Ep* 204 when pushed to it in the polemical context. We notice that in order to understand the intention of Scripture, and all the teachings contained in it, including on the nature of the Spirit, one needs to purify his/her soul through ascetical exercise. It is a requirement addressed not just to a prophet but to all Christians. We also notice that St Basil discusses this

[330] St Basil mentions '"a wine which gladdens the heart of man" (Col. 2:4) (that it is, the mind and the ruling aspect of the soul)' in id., *Is.*, 62.
[331] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 7', 175.

theme throughout his works written in different periods of his life, in *Is*., *Hom. in Ps*., *Eps*, *Hex*., and *DSS*. We find a similarity of ideas on this question in *Is*. as well as in other works, which proves the authenticity of this work as authored by St Basil.[332] Now we will examine St Basil's argument concerning the nature of the Spirit as a Creator.

2.3 Cosmological Role of the Spirit

St Basil also defends the divinity of the Spirit by describing his role in the creation of the world. Whereas Meredith writes about St Basil's inability to include the Spirit in the Trinitarian act of creation,[333] we will attempt to show the opposite. First, we will cast a glance at the views of earlier theologians on the role of the Spirit in creation in order to see whether and how St Basil developed their views.

Athenagoras states that Christians believe in God who created all things by his Word and who holds them together by the Spirit who comes from God.[334] Theophilus of Antioch declares that God the Father created all things through his Word (Son) and Wisdom (Spirit) in accord with Psalm 33:6. He says that the Spirit moved on the waters with life-giving, effective, or anointing power.[335] He writes, 'The whole creation is contained by the Spirit of God, and the containing Spirit is along with the creation contained by the hand of God'.[336] In this last quotation we see a note of subordination of the Spirit to God.

Irenaeus describes the Spirit in creation as God's Creative Wisdom, through whom God made the world, who anointed Christ for his work of redemption, and who comes to believers as an earnest of their inheritance. [337] He also writes, 'by his own Word and Spirit he makes, orders, and

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[332] See Introduction, 48.
[333] A. Meredith, 'The Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers and the Creed of Constantinople' in *The Irish Theological Quarterly* 48 (1981): 196-212, 205.
[334] Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians*, ed. Roberts, A.J. Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, transl. B.P. Pratten, ANF 2 (New York: CLP, 1885), ch. 6, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0205.htm, <accessed 10.02.2017>.
[335] Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolycus*, trans. M. Dods, 2:13, http://www.logoslibrary.org/theophilus/autolycus/105.html, <accessed 10.02.2017>.
[336] Ibid., 1:5.
[337] A.C. Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit: In Biblical Teaching, Through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), 171, 176.

governs all things, and gives them all their being'.[338] The Son and the Spirit, the two 'hands' of God, although used as instruments, are not external tools which can be assumed or laid aside.[339] Irenaeus distinguishes their modes of creating in the words, 'the Spirit indeed working, and the Son ministering, while the Father was approving'.[340] According to Swete, Irenaeus dwelt especially on the work of the Son and the Spirit in creation and in man because he was confronting Gnostic ideas.[341]

Further, according to Origen, the Spirit is powerfully at work in grace, but not at all in creation. St Athanasius and St Gregory of Nyssa hold that the Spirit participates in the one divine act of creation.[342] St Gregory of Nazianzus writes, 'This Spirit shares with the Son in working both the Creation and the Resurrection… And he is the Author of spiritual regeneration'.[343] According to Didymus, the Spirit possesses all the attributes of God: he fills all things, he creates, he remits sins, he inspires, he commands. He writes, 'In operation the Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, and this oneness of operation involves oneness of essence'.[344]

From these authors, except for Origen, we see that God created everything through the Son and the Spirit. The latter is described as the Creative Wisdom of God. St Athanasius, Didymus, and St Gregory of Nyssa write that there is one act of creation in which all three Persons participate. On the contrary, St Basil's opponent, Eunomius, describes the Spirit, similarly to Origen, as 'filled with the power of sanctification', but 'bereft of divinity and creative power'. He considers the Spirit a servant of God.[345]

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[338] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, ed. Roberts, Donaldson, Coxe, trans. Roberts, W. Rambaut, ANF 1 (New York: CLP, 1885), 4.20: 3-4, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103420.htm, <accessed 10.02.2017>.
[339] Swete, *The Holy Spirit*, 88.
[340] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 4:20:6.
[341] Swete, *The Holy Spirit*, 93.
[342] Edwards, *Breath of Life*, 40-1.
[343] Gregory Nazianzen, 'Oration on Pentecost' in St Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzum, *Catechetical Lectures. Select Orations and Letters*, NPNF 2, vol. 7, trans. H. Wace, P. Schaff, (Oxford: Parker, 1894), 763.
[344] Swete, *The Holy Spirit*, 223-4.
[345] Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea*, 81.

Turning now to St Basil, he begins by arguing that matter is not eternal, but created by God; the world was created out of nothing by the free will of God. He follows St Athanasius in drawing a line between the Creator and creatures instead of adopting the Platonic division between the perceptible things and intelligible ideas.[346] He argues that the Spirit participated in creation equally with the other two Persons. As Costache beautifully expresses St Basil's overarching understanding, 'There is no space within the confines of creation that is deprived of the Spirit's presence; there is no creature that does not have its origin in the work of the Spirit; there is no perfection of creation outside the life-giving and enlightening energy of the Spirit'.[347]

Starting with *DSS* (374-5), St Basil writes, 'in every operation, the Holy Spirit is indivisibly united with the Father and the Son'.[348] He endeavours to show the inseparability of the Father, the Son and the Spirit in their united activity in the creation of visible things, in ordering human affairs, and in the coming judgment. He shows their unity, that is, the communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, in the creation of angels. In this arguing from the angels, McConnell notes the novelty of St Basil's thought.[349] St Basil writes, 'When you consider creation I advise you to first think of him who is the first cause of everything that exists: namely, the Father (τὴν προκαταρκτικὴν αἰτίαν), and then of the Son, who is the creator (τὴν δημιουργικήν αἰτίαν), and then the Holy Spirit, the perfector (τὴν τελειωτικήν αἰτίαν)'. He carries on, 'The Father creates through his will alone and does not need the Son, yet chooses to work through the Son. Likewise the Son…chooses to have his work completed by the Spirit'[350] We see that the three Persons have their specific roles, yet

[346] McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea*, 98.
[347] D. Costache, 'Christian Worldview: Understandings from St Basil the Great' in Costache, Kariatlis (eds.), *Cappadocian Legacy*, 99-130, 128-9.
[348] St Basil, *DSS*, 16.37, 61.
[349] McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea*, 106.
[350] St Basil, *DSS*, 62. Spirit-fighters say that the Spirit is not a Creator as we see from Scripture but St Gregory of Nyssa asks, how the Spirit can be imagined at one time together with the Father and the Son and at another time separately. He asks them what the Spirit was doing during the creation. Here we see a new development in argumentation. God created everything through the Son not because he needed his help, and the Son works by the Spirit not because he has less power to bring everything to completion, but because the Father is the source of power, the Son is power and the Spirit is a spirit of power, all creation is made by the divine power. See St Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Spirit*.

choose to work in cooperation. Similarly, St Basil writes in *Hex.* (378) that the Father is the original cause (τὴν προκαταρτικὴν αἰτίαν) in creation, the Son the creative cause (τὴν δημιουργικήν) and the Spirit the perfecting cause (τὴν τελειωτικήν).[351] Explaining the prepositions 'through whom' and 'with whom' when St Basil enumerates all the miracles of Jesus, he says that everyone will recognize him as 'our Master and Creator'.[352] He continues, 'the true doctrine… [is that] the Father creates through the Son. This does not insinuate that the Father's creation is imperfect, or that the Son's energy is feeble, but shows their unity of will. Therefore the expression "through whom" admits of a principal Cause, but cannot be used as an objection against the efficient Cause'.[353] We see from all these passages how St Basil calls the Father the 'principal Cause', the Son 'the efficient Cause', and the Spirit 'the perfecting Cause'. As McConnell notes, at the heart of St Basil's view of the Spirit as sustaining the world and drawing it towards its proper end is the doctrine of time as 'a creation of God bracketed within eternity by the ἀρχή at the beginning and the τέλος at the end'. Three Persons sustain creation from the beginning to the end of times.[354]

St Basil gives more precision in *DSS* when he writes, 'Perceive these three: the Lord who commands (τὸν προστάσσοντα Κύριον), the Word who creates (τὸν δημιουργοῦντα Λόγον), and the Spirit who strengthens (τὸ στερεοῦν τὸ Πνεῦμα)'. This strengthening, according to St Basil, is 'perfection in holiness (ἡ κατὰ τὸν ἁγιασμὸν τελείωσις), which expresses itself in an unyielding, unchangeable commitment to goodness. Such holiness is impossible without the Spirit'.[355] Thus, the specific roles of the Spirit in creation are those of strengthening, completing, perfecting and sanctifying. We will see below the parentage between this passage of *DSS* and the passage from *Hom. in Ps.* 32.

[351] St Basil, 'Hex. 10.4' in *On the Human Condition*, trans. N.V. Harrison (New York: SVSP, 2005), 33.
[352] St Basil, *DSS*, 23. Similarly, St Basil calls Christ a Creator, 'not a baptism into Moses, but into Christ, your creator'; see St Basil, 'Hom. in Bapt.' in *On Fasting and Feasts*, ed. J. Behr, trans. M. DelCogliano, S.R. Holman (New York: SVSP, 2013), 44.
[353] St Basil, *DSS*, 8.21, 42.
[354] McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea*, 108.
[355] St Basil, *DSS*, ch. 16.38, 63.

Further, St Basil states in *DSS* that 'the heavenly powers were established by the Spirit; this establishment means that they were disinclined to fall away from good'.[356] In the same passage he writes about three meanings of creation: bringing creation from non-existence to existence; from being morally low to assuming a better way of life; from death to life (in the sense of resurrection after death). He exclaims, 'If "creation" means bringing the dead back to life, how great the work of the Spirit is! He gives us risen life, refashioning our souls in the spiritual life'. He also states that the Spirit effects another 'creation', namely, 'the conversion of sinners to a better way of life, and the renewal of this earthly life, and changing our earthly, passionate life into heavenly citizenship'.[357] We see how St Basil interprets the word 'creation' in literal, spiritual, and metaphorical ways. He sees creation not just as bringing to life out of nothing, but as a new way of life and as the final resurrection. As Costache notes, although the emphasis of *DSS* falls mainly on the eschatological dimensions of renewal and fulfilment, it is obvious that for St Basil the universe depends on the Spirit's support throughout its entire duration.[358] Thus, the Spirit is creating even now. St Basil also mentions these three meanings of 'creation' in *Ep* 8, which some scholars consider as belonging to Evagrius of Pontus.[359] The author writes, 'In these you will find the Holy Spirit cooperating with the Father and the Son'. To prove the first meaning of creation he mentions Psalm 32:6; for the second, he writes about baptism (2 Cor. 5:17, Mt. 28:19); and concerning resurrection, he uses Genesis 3:19, 1 Corinthians 6:19.[360]

Furthermore, in *DSS* 9.22, which was written separately from the rest of the treatise, we see the life-giving characteristic of the Spirit, 'All things thirsting for holiness turn to him [Spirit]; everything living in virtue never turns away from him. He waters them with his life-giving breath (τῇ ἐπιπνοίᾳ) and helps them reach their proper fulfilment (τὸ οἰκεῖον ἑαυτοῖς καὶ κατὰ φύσιν τέλος). He perfects all other things, and himself lacks nothing; he gives life (ζωῆς χορηγόν) to all things, and is never

[356] Ibid., ch. 19.49, 77.
[357] Ibid., 77-8.
[358] Costache, 'Christian Worldview', 128-9.
[359] See discussion of authorship of *Ep* 8 in Introduction, 33.
[360] St Basil, *Ep* 8, vol. 13, 36-7.

depleted'.[361] Throughout the treatise St Basil states that the Spirit imparts holiness and life to all beings. The theologian also expands on the meaning of perfection by which he understands that the Spirit leads all creatures to their fulfilment, helping everything to achieve the purpose of their nature. In relation to this characterisation of the Spirit as giving life, whereas Theophilus of Antioch, St Gregory of Nazianzus and others say that the Spirit is the 'breath of life', St Irenaeus believes that breath is given to all, while the Spirit is offered only to those who overcome earthly desires.[362] It is also worth noticing that the name 'Giver of life' (τὸ ζωοποιόν) proved to be one of the two preeminent titles of the Spirit (along with 'Lord') enshrined in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.[363] As Blowers notes, concerning the perfecting role, a distinction should be drawn between the properly teleological and the eschatological work of the Spirit. He writes, 'Though the perfecting operations of the Spirit will not be consummated until the eschaton, the actual perfection of creatures was already underway at their very first creation'. Thus, St Basil points to the heavenly beings who were not created holy by nature and needed the sanctifying grace of the Spirit from their creation.[364] As Blowers remarks, sanctification was a special work of the Spirit, for many Fathers, as he has the power to grant physical vitality and participation in divine life and divine virtues. He also notes that creation and salvation were deeply overlapped in early Christian thought, since sanctification meant not just purification from sin, but also fulfillment of creatures' original vocation, namely, deification.[365] Thus, we see how St Basil was in line with earlier patristic thought.

Further, one will find the key passage on the creative power of the Spirit in *Hom. in Ps.* 32 (375). As Blowers notes, St Basil, St Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, and Nicetas of Remesiana, among others, appealed to Psalm 32:6 as testimony that the Logos had been working with the Spirit in intimate manner in establishing and renewing creation from its

[361] St Basil, *DSS*, 43.
[362] J. Elowsky (ed.), *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Ancient Christian Doctrine 4 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 42.
[363] J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. (London : Longman 1972), 339.
[364] P.M. Blowers, *Drama of the Divine Economy: Creator and Creation in Early Christian Theology and Piety* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 306.
[365] Ibid., 312.

very inception. He writes, 'Connecting, therefore, the Spirit's hovering over primordial waters then and baptismal waters now was no simple typology built on a dialectic of old and new'.[366] When interpreting Psalm 32:6, 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth', which was a key text for proving the cosmological role of three Persons by the Fathers, St Basil writes that here is a proof for the creative power of the Spirit, as well as for his unity with the Father and the Son. As he explains, by the 'word' one should understand the Word and by the 'spirit (breath)' the Holy Spirit. St Basil writes, 'That is why as the creative Word established heavens, in the same way that the Spirit, which is from God, who proceeds from the Father (that is "from his mouth" so that one could not recognize him as something external or creaturely, but may glorify him as having his hypostasis from God), brought all the strength which he had'.[367] All of the heavenly hosts were established by the Spirit, and with his help they have strength and certainty in sanctity and all virtues proper to the holy hosts. Similarly, commenting on Isaiah 1:20, St Basil discloses something about the nature of the Spirit. He says, 'The Holy Spirit [is]…called "the mouth" because he is also said to have proceeded from the mouth of God'.[368] As he explains, 'breath of his mouth' and 'word of the Lord' are written so that we understand that both the Son and the Spirit are from the Father. St Basil continues, 'both joined with him [the Father] in the creation of the heavens and the powers in them'. Whatever is sanctified is only sanctified by the presence of the Spirit. Whereas the creative Word brought angels into existence, the Spirit immediately gave them sanctification. That is why they are not inclined to sin, being sanctified by the gift of the Spirit and having stability in virtue.[369] Here we see, similarly to *DSS* 19.49, St Basil's ideas about establishing the heavenly hosts in sanctity. Thus, we see that the particular function of the Spirit within the creative activity of the Godhead is the establishment or strengthening (στερέωσις) of angels in holiness, providing an unshakeable adherence to what is good. St Basil uses the same verb (στερεόω) to say that the Word established, or created,

[366] Ibid., 295.
[367] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 235.
[368] St Basil, *Is.*, 60.
[369] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 235.

the heavens. St Basil asserts the creative power of the Spirit, refuting the ideas of his creaturely status. This passage, according to St Basil, tells us also about the unity of three Persons, and the mode of generation of the Spirit from the Father. Radde-Gallwitz notes that although St Basil does not affirm here that the Spirit is Creator, he stresses the divine activity of the Spirit sanctifying and confirming the heavenly powers.[370] In fact, as we have seen above, St Basil calls only the Son the Creator or creative cause, whereas about the Father and the Spirit he says that they participate in creation, or concerning the Spirit – that he has creative power. St Basil mostly uses term *proerchomai*, rather than *ekporeusis* when he talks about the procession of the Spirit.[371]

St Basil also writes about the Spirit as a creative power in his *Hex*. Commenting on Genesis 1:2, according to St Basil, on the Septuagint reading, 'spirit' can be 'the diffusion of air, understanding that the author is enumerating to you the parts of the world'. On the Syrian reading/interpretation, 'Spirit' is the Creator. Taking into account both interpretations, St Basil does not reject the creaturely reading of 'spirit' altogether but says that the divine reading is 'truer and approved by those before us'.[372] By the Spirit of God who was 'borne upon the face of the waters' he understands the Holy Spirit. This name 'Spirit of God' is given to the Spirit who completes the divine Trinity.[373] Concerning the phrase 'was borne', St Basil mentions the Syrians[374] who give an example of a bird who covers eggs with her body to impart to them vital force from her warmth to show that the Spirit prepared the nature of the waters in a similar way to produce living creatures. It is a sufficient proof, as St Basil states, for the fact that the Spirit took active part in the creation of the world and 'is not wanting in the creative power'.[375] We know that St Basil had access to the Syriac tradition since he went on a trip to Syria in chasing Eustathius (*Ep* 1); he visited Eusebius of Samosata in

[370] Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea,* 86.
[371] Andia, 'L'illumination de l'Esprit', 161.
[372] St Basil, 'Hex. 2', 31.
[373] Ibid., 31.
[374] As Blowers writes, 'Basil's Syrian source was Eusebius of Emesa, though the same image of the Holy Spirit appears in the Armenian *Commentary on Genesis* erroneously attributed to Ephrem'; see id., *Drama of the Divine Economy,* 116-7.
[375] St Basil, 'Hex. 2', 31.

Euphratensis, a province in the Syrian region, and in Samosata in spring 372 (*Ep* 145), and exchanged 19 letters with him.[376]

Later, when explaining the phrase 'Let there be a firmament', St Basil writes that it was God who made the firmament and that it was not simply written in Genesis that 'the firmament was made' by itself. St Basil exclaims, 'And who is deaf, except he who does not hear the Spirit when he calls so loudly? And who is blind? He who does not discern such clear arguments concerning the Only-Begotten…This is the utterance of the first and principal Cause. "God made the firmament". This is the testimony of the efficient and creative Power'.[377] We see here how St Basil asserts the participation of all three Persons in the creation of the firmament and the whole of creation. Similarly to *DSS* 16.38, the Father is designated as the 'original cause' of creation. St Basil also mentions the Son, calling him the 'creative power' instead of 'creative cause' as in other works. The Spirit is described as calling out the words, 'Let there be'. Further, St Basil writes about Christ as the 'Companion of his [Father's] creative activity'.[378] He does not mention the Spirit here because he is arguing against the Jews, who did not recognize the divinity of the Son, let alone that of the Spirit. However, Tertullian was also arguing against Jews who saw angels as co-operators of God in the creation of humanity. Nevertheless, he stated that the Spirit and the Son made the first man with the Father.[379] Possibly, St Basil was considerate of his audience.

Further, St Basil comments on Genesis 1:26, 'Let us make a human being', that creation was a common work and so all three Persons should be worshipped together. He asserts that each Person participated in creation and at the same time explains that there are not three gods. He writes, 'It says "God made the human being," that you may unite the Godhead and unite not the hypostases but the power, that you may have

[376] D.G.K. Taylor, 'Basil of Caesarea's Contacts with Syriac-Speaking Christians', *SP* 32 (1997): 213-9, 215-6.
[377] St Basil, *'*Hex. 3', 44.
[378] St Basil, *'*Hex. 9', 148.
[379] Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, ed. Roberts, Donaldson, Coxe, trans. P. Holmes, ANF 3 (New York: CLP, 1885), ch. 12, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0317.htm, <accessed 10.02.2017>.

one glory not divided in the worship, not divided into polytheism'. He continues, 'the Godhead is one. For that Godhead which I see in the Father, the same also is in the Son; and that which is in the Holy Spirit, the same also in the Son. Since there is one form in each of them…Because of this, our worship and praise are also one'.[380] Here we see how St Basil argues from the participation of the three Persons in creation to their unity and divinity. We also see a theme of interconnection between worship and theology, which runs as a red thread through all of his works.

Thus, we see that the Spirit has a creative power and acts in communion with the Father and the Son in creation. St Basil draws his argument from Scripture (Ps. 18:2, 26, 101; 32:6; 103:30; Job 10:8; 33:4). He cites Psalm 104:30 to emphasize spiritual regeneration, moral meaning of creation. Likewise, he cites Job 33:4 in *Eun*. referring to perfection in virtue, and in *DSS* when he shows that the supreme titles of divinity are shared by the three Persons, mentioning that the Spirit holds together with the Father and the Son the title 'Maker'. We have shown that St Basil advanced the views of his predecessors. He asserted that the Spirit is not a creature, but a Creator. The specific role of the Spirit is not just being the Creative Wisdom and not an instrument through which the Father creates. Instead, the Spirit establishes or strengthens angels and humans in holiness (*DSS*, *Hom. in Ps*. 32), helping to achieve the proper end of each creature (*DSS* 9); he also gives life (*DSS* 9, *Hex*.). There is continuity and coherence of thought in all of the mentioned works. There is no significant change in his views over time. Despite his arguments for the creative power of the Spirit in all his works and in *Hex*., we notice that in *Hex*. 3 and 9 St Basil mentions the Father and the Son, and not the Spirit, as active in creation which may be explained by the expectations of the audience. We also observe how the ideas of *Hex*. 10 are in line with the rest of *Hex*., which proves its author to be St Basil. Interestingly, St Basil states that the Spirit completes creation and also elsewhere that the Trinity is not complete without him.

[380] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 33-4.

2.4 Conclusion

To conclude, we have seen in this chapter how St Basil defends the divine nature of the Spirit through his work of inspiration of prophets and creation of the world. St Basil shows that the source of inspiration is the Spirit, which is his peculiar function, in contrast to the Son. We have seen what requirements St Basil sets for the prophets. We noticed how St Basil argues for the wise teachings of the Spirit in contrast to human foolish wisdom. We have also seen that the Spirit possesses creative power and participates in creation with the other two Persons. His specific role is strengthening in holiness and perfection of creatures. He participates in all kinds of creation. In the following chapter we will examine the role of the Spirit as God in leading the church.

Chapter 3. Guiding, Counselling and Teaching Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Church as a Whole and in the Lives of Individuals

3.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates how the Spirit guides the Church as a whole, as well as individuals, in determining what is true doctrine, and how one's life in the Spirit influences one's understanding of such teachings.[381] The whole of St Basil's life was dedicated to defining and defending Christian doctrine as he understood it. For him theology, or our knowledge of God, is impossible without *ascesis*. The goal of *ascesis* is *apatheia* (passionlessness), which allows a life in the Spirit. We find discussions on the theme of asceticism and spirituality in his works where he defines the doctrines (*Eun*., *DSS*) and in a similar way we find discussions of doctrine in his ascetic works (*Ask.*, *Reg. Mor*.). These themes are equally discussed in his homilies and letters. St Basil describes the Spirit not only as Inspirer and Creator, as we have seen in the previous chapter, but also as the Teacher and Guide. As Swete notes, the Church owes a debt to the Arian leaders who persistently called attention to the teaching and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, even though this insistence on the work of the Spirit suggested for them his inferiority to the Son.[382] In contrast, for St Basil, this role of the Spirit reflected his divine status. It will be demonstrated in this chapter how, in St Basil's view, the Spirit teaches doctrines to bishops and ordinary people, how he helps to fight against heresies, and distributes divine gifts. We will also explore how St Basil distinguishes true doctrines from the teachings of heretics, how he emphasizes the interconnectedness of doctrines and ascetic life, and how he describes simplicity as a characteristic of the doctrine of the Spirit and as a virtue. This chapter attempts to show St Basil's understanding of the Spirit as a Person who is alive, not as One who is a mere theological

[381] As St Gregory of Nazianzus and Epiphanius of Salamis state, confession of the Spirit's divinity depends on the possession of the Spirit, and those who possess him know when to move beyond the 'letter' of Scripture and how to understand it; see L. Ayres, 'Innovation and Resourcement in Pro-Nicene Pneumatology', *Augustinian Studies* 39.2 (2008): 187-206, 193. Similarly, only the life of prayer, life in the Spirit, gives us the true knowledge of the Spirit; see Karam, 'Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit', 152.
[382] Swete, *The Holy Spirit*, 169.

construct. We will see how St Basil describes the Spirit as abiding in people and how spiritual fruits even shine through the letters of St Basil's addressees.

3.2 The Guiding and Counselling Role of the Spirit

We will first talk about bishops, who played a crucial role in defining the doctrines of the Church, especially with regrd to their teachings on the Spirit. Primarily, we will recall some key characteristics of the holy person in late antiquity, among which are the gifts of teaching and intercessory prayer, and note how St Basil's understanding of a figure of bishop coincides with a figure of a holy man. Rapp explains that in the early Christian tradition spiritual authority resulted from the possession of the Spirit. The Greek Fathers distinguished between 'bearers of the Spirit' (*pneumatophoroi*) as passive recipients of the Spirit and 'Christ-bearers' (*christophoroi*) as conscious collaborators of the Spirit, who imitate Christ.[383] The Spirit-bearer becomes a holy person when he/she communicates with others. Holy men were appreciated for their ability to work intercessory prayer, that is, to intercede for people before God. Similarly, St Basil asks some bishops in his letters, whom he considered holy, for their intercessory prayers. The most prominent gift of the Spirit, which the *pneumatophoros* 'communicates' to others is a gift of teaching and preaching.[384] St Basil also describes some bishops as explicating true doctrine in writing and speaking. Rapp writes that tension between Spirit-bearers (usually monks) and clergy could arise concerning the power to absolve sins.[385] However, in St Basil's works we do not find this conflict,

[383] Rapp explains, 'Spirit-bearers are most prominently, although not exclusively, recognizable because of their teaching and preaching, which is inspired by the Holy Ghost…Christ-bearers are identified as such because they have followed the example of Christ, either in the course of their life, as is the case with ascetics and monks, or through their manner of death, as in the case with martyrs'; see C. Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 60.
[384] Ibid., 66-7.
[385] There was also an issue whether monks should accept ordination themselves and thereby introduce clergymen into their monasteries. For example, St Athanasius' intimacy with monks in Egypt produced some monk-bishops. St Athanasius persuaded monk Dracontius to be a bishop of Hermopolis Parva in one of his letters; however, many monks were ordained but never served in the church. Pachomius, in his turn, refused to admit any clergy, regarding them as bossy people who cause envy and factions. By contrast,

because he was trying to integrate monastic communities into the body of the Church and to establish order and harmony among all members of the Church, possibly by ordaining those monks who became spiritual fathers. Thus, we see that some of the bishops St Basil addresses in his letters because of their closeness to the Spirit were able to intercede in prayers for other people and to teach true doctrines.

Now, we will look closely at the guiding role of the Spirit in the life of the church leaders and detect the signs of presence of the Spirit in their lives. In *Ep* 50, 'To Bishop Innocent' (beg. 371), St Basil writes, 'You have also manifested your excellence in all perfections…' and explains that his letter brought spiritual joy and uplifted souls. St Basil begs for his prayers and calls him the one 'who [is] led by the Holy Spirit'. He continues, 'And, since we hear that you are his friend and true glorifier…In our prayers we beg of the Lord that our place be with the true adorers, among whom assuredly your Perfection stands… '[386] St Basil describes Innocent as a true glorifier and friend of the Spirit. It is noteworthy that St Basil calls Innocent a friend not just of Christ or God but also of the Spirit, which shows that the latter is of divine nature. In addition, in *Ep* 69, 'To Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria' (371), St Basil describes this bishop as the one who cares not only about his own church but also about other churches, and as one who establishes peace, [387] joining together those who were torn asunder. St Basil calls St Athanasius 'the head of all… counsellor and guide of our actions'. He writes that his local church will

Augustine thought that monks have a duty to accept a call to episcopate (*Ep* 48). St Athanasius, St Basil and St Augustine did much to bring bishops and monks together. See H. Chadwick, 'Bishops and Monks', *SP* 24 (1993): 45-61, 49, 57.

[386] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 132-3.

[387] As Chrysostom writes in his *Eulogy to Eustathius of Antioch*, the task of the bishop is not to care only for the particular local church, but also for the universal Church; this is in the context of maintaining orthodox faith. His task is also to fight with heresies, guide people and set them in security. And in the *Eulogy to Meletius of Antioch* Chrysostom writes that responsibility of the bishop is superior even to the one of the emperor because bishop will have to respond before God not only for his own behaviour, but also for the behaviour and faults of those who are under his authority; he is a guardian of the universal Church. From the point of view of Chrysostom, a life of piety and asceticism is not sufficient for a good bishop, if he is not at the same time well-educated, capable of refuting heresies and proclaiming with firmness the orthodox faith; see J.R. Pouchet, 'Athanase d'Alexandrie, modéle de l'évéque, selon Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 21' in *Vescovi e pastori in epoca Teodosiana*. *In occasione del XVI centenario della consacrazione episcopale di S. Agostino, 396-1996. XXV Incontro di studiosi dell'atichità Cristiana 2* (1996): 347-57, 405, 408, 417, 420.

follow St Athanasius' advice on how to reach peace because of his age, experience in affairs and because he '[has] the guidance of the Spirit beyond other men (…ἔχειν τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος συμβολίαν ἀσφαλεστέρας…)'.[388] According to St Basil, this church hierarch is taught by the Spirit himself on how to manage dissensions in the Church.[389] Further, in *Ep* 200, 'To Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium' (375), St Basil writes that because of the maladies in the church he could not visit him. He asks Amphilochius to pray for peace in the church and to care for St Basil's own regions, 'and by the grace of the Spirit which is in you, [that you] may rearrange all things according to what is pleasing to the Lord'.[390] Therefore, we see that, according to St Basil, bishop Amphilochius, like St Athanasius, was led by the Spirit in Church affairs.

Further, St Basil writes that the Spirit guides in doctrines not just individual bishops but the Western church as a whole. In *Ep* 90, 'To the Most Holy Brothers and Bishops of the West' (before Easter of 372), St Basil describes the miserable state of the Church in the East, which has been attacked by its opponents 'like a boat in the midst of the sea racked by the continuous blows of the waves'. St Basil expects earnest prayers and consolation from the brothers in the West, 'Therefore, just as we esteem your mutual agreement and union, so also we beg you to sympathise with us in our dissensions, and not, because we are separated by the situation of our countries, to sever us from yourselves, but since we are united in the communion of the Spirit (ἑνούμεθα τῇ κατὰ τὸ Πνεῦμα κοινωνίᾳ), to admit us to the harmonious union of one body'.[391] So here St Basil, while begging for help, mentions the Person of the Spirit who unites all members of the Christian church into one body. Similarly, in *Ep* 59, 'To Gregory, His Uncle' (371), concerning dissensions with suffragan

[388] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 165.
[389] As St Gregory of Nazianzus writes, '…to make eulogy to St Athanasius is to make eulogy to virtue'. He stressed two aspects in the life of St Athanasius: his being an ascetic and a man of the Church. In his life *ascesis* and orthodox faith went together. On the one hand, episcopal ministry and monastic institution tend to unite around the Nicene faith. On the other hand, following an example of ascetics of the desert St Athanasius consented to their ideal of contemplation as the most complete union with God. St Athanasius united the charism of ministry and that of monasticism. See Pouchet, 'Athanase d'Alexandrie', 349, 352.
[390] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 63.
[391] Ibid., 199. Newman considers that this plea for help and also *Ep* 92 are closely connected with *Ep* 70 addressed to Pope Damasus; see ibid., 200.

bishops with whom Gregory was in sympathy, St Basil asks for peace, 'If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any communion of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, fulfil our prayer'. [392] Therefore, St Basil presupposes that there should be communion of the Spirit between different churches. Later in *Ep* 90, he asks the Western Churches to help defend the sound doctrine of the Fathers which states that '…the Son is acknowledged to be consubstantial with the Father, and the Holy Spirit is numbered with them and adored with equal honour… divine and saving Trinity' from the heresy of Arius. As Courtonne comments on the description of the Spirit in this letter, St Basil expressed his ideas in this way because he thought that it would reassure those who reproached him for not calling the Spirit God and at the same time it would not offend those who would be embarrassed if he called the Spirit God.[393] We see here St Basil's effort to keep more people in the Church by not offending them with his choice of terminology.

Similarly to this letter, when he writes in *Ep* 92, 'To the Bishops of Italy and Gaul' (372), about all the tumults in the Eastern Church, he says that they will know how to help out because 'you will [learn] from the Holy Spirit [or more literally, 'he will himself counsel you'] (ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ὑμῖν ὑποθήσεται)'. In addition, St Basil writes, 'For, truly, it is deserving of the highest praise that the Lord has bestowed upon your Reverence the power to distinguish the spurious from the approved and pure and to proclaim the faith of the Fathers with no evasion'.[394] We see the Spirit is called the 'Lord'. Thus, according to St Basil, the Western Fathers possessed the gift of discernment of true beliefs.

St Basil also affirms the guidance of the Spirit in the First Ecumenical Council. From *Ep* 114, 'To Cyriacus and His Followers in Tarsus' (372), we can gather that there was tension between Cyriacus and his brethren. St Basil himself attests to the correctness of Cyriacus's faith before them, stating that the fact of Cyriacus professing the faith of the Fathers is a sufficient assurance. St Basil continues, 'the three hundred and eighteen,

[392] Ibid., 151.
[393] Courtonne, *Un témoin*, 196.
[394] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 207.

coming together without contention, did not speak without the operation of the Holy Spirit; and that you add to that Creed also that one must not say that the Holy Spirit is a creature'.[395] We see here that in 372 bishops could accept back into church those who acknowledged the Creed and affirmed that the Spirit is not a creature. We will see more bold expressions about the Spirit in St Basil's later works, after his rupture with Eustathius.

We also notice that the Spirit works together with the Son in counselling and directing right actions, in particular, the appointment of bishops. In *Ep* 229, 'To the Clergy of Nicopolis', St Basil writes that '…action taken by one or two pious men is done through the counsel of the Spirit (τῇ συμβολίᾳ τοῦ Πνεύματος γίγνεσθαι)' and 'saintly men are moved to action not with an aim of personal advantage, but after having proposed to themselves what is pleasing to God, it is evident that it is the Lord who directs their hearts'.[396] St Basil writes this when describing the action of Poemenius, bishop of Satala, who appointed Euphronius to the open vacancy caused by Theodotus' death, coming to the people at the right time and accomplishing it immediately before the opponents could act. St Basil explains the decision of the bishop of Satala and others as having been advised by the Spirit since these men were pleasing to the Lord.

The way in which St Basil addressed different bishops deserves some attention. This shows how St Basil respected them for the spiritual gifts they possessed and the role they played in managing the Church. He exchanged letters with numerous bishops from all parts of the empire. What we have noticed is that St Basil addresses Western bishops with more elevated titles: for example, he calls both St Athanasius and Pope Damasus 'father'; they are 'true worshipper[s]' led by the Spirit (bishop Innocent), 'beloved and much desired brethren', who have confidence in speaking to the Lord. St Basil even calls Ambrose of Milan a 'man of God'. This might be explained by the rhetorical skills of St Basil who desperately needed the help of the Western churches in combatting heresies but it does not mean that he did not acknowledge spiritual gifts

[395] Ibid., 242.
[396] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 151

present in them. For the latter reason he usually asks bishops to pray for him, for peace in the Church, and expresses what joy their letters bring and how he would be happy to get spiritual profit from meeting with them; he himself prays for them that God may preserve them for the Church.

Therefore, we see that St Basil describes bishops as guided by the Spirit, true glorifiers of the Spirit, taught by the Spirit how to manage dissensions in the Church. The Spirit is the principle of unity of the Western and Eastern Churches in one body. He led the Fathers of Nicaea and bestowed the gift of discernment of true doctrines on bishops. All of this demonstrates his divine nature, according to St Basil.

Further, St Basil writes not only to bishops but also to individual women concerning the help of the Spirit. He addressed very few women, as is evidenced by five letters to widows,[397] one to a virgin who had renounced her vows, and one to canonesses. In *Ep* 283, 'To a Widow', St Basil says that he would only meet her at the next synod of the presbyters of her region, since he was busy at that moment. He writes that she should pay attention to 'spiritual contemplation and… train the mental sight by which God is wont to be seen'. He notes that she does not need help from anyone to understand what is proper because she will find consolation from Scripture and she 'will have in sufficient measure from the Holy Spirit counsel and guidance of what is expedient'.[398] It seems from this letter that this lady was probably from a rich background or that her deceased

[397] By the second century there was an order of widows in the Church with religious functions. These were women dedicated to chastity and Lord's work. An image of altar was applied to widows: they had a special ministry consisting of prayer; this was an act of spiritual sacrifice, according to Polycarp, Tertullian, Methodius, *Didascalia*, and the *Apostolic Constitutions*. See B. Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), 201-2. Clement of Alexandria sets widows after three male orders as 'persons of distinction' and Origen ranks them among those who hold ecclesiastical status. As is clear from the third century document, *Apostolic Church Order*, canon 21, there were to be chosen two widows to pray and receive revelations and one to care for the sick. Among exemplary widows of the fourth century were Marcella in Rome, Paula, Melania the Elder, and Olympias. Widows were encouraged to serve each other and those 'inferior' to them, including married women and penitents. They were also supposed to supervise virgins. Chrysostom writes concerning the status of widows in *Against Re-Marriage*, '…the widow starts off inferior only to the virgin; but at the last she equals her and joins her'; see G. Cloke, *This Female Man of God. Women and Spiritual Power in the Patristic Age, AD 350-450* (London: Routledge, 1995), 89-99. Against all customs, Chrysostom allowed widow Olympias, a deaconess, to sit among the virgins in the Church of Constantinople; see G.H. Tavard, *Woman in Christian Tradition* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), 85.

[398] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 273.

husband had played an important role in the life of the local church. We see also that she is in a close relationship with God, since St Basil advises her to give time to spiritual contemplation and to rely on the counsel of the Spirit. As we have seen, whereas St Basil describes bishops as led by the Spirit in managing difficult situations in the Church, he gives advice to this widow about spiritual life and guidance of the Spirit on her spiritual path.

Moreover, in *Ep* 302, 'A Letter of Condolence to the Wife of Briso' (370),[399] St Basil describes the great lamentation at the death of the 'most excellent of men' being 'the common loss of mankind' (in this we can see St Basil's excellent rhetorical and letter-writing skills).[400] He wishes this widow consolation of the blessing, which comes from the Spirit, and 'to be a good example of a virtuous life (ἀγαθὸν τοῦ κατ' ἀρετὴν βίου) to all [her] companions of like age'.[401] Here we see how St Basil was moved by the death of Briso and how he comforted her in an extensive letter. The Spirit is here portrayed as a Person who is not remote but comes to help and console anyone in trouble.

We have seen that St Basil describes the Spirit as the one who guides and advises the bishops, helps them to elect new bishops, to solve doctrinal problems and manage dissensions in the Church. The Spirit also consoles and guides the widows, helps them in spiritual contemplation, and blesses them in becoming virtuous examples for others. We see that there were widows, who no less than bishops were progressing in spiritual life, and were expecting help not from people or spiritual guides, but from the Spirit himself.

[399] As Urben notes, St Basil repeats the same idea in all of his consolatory letters: whatever happens in human life, happens by the will of God (for example, *Ep* 6); see M.E. Urben, 'The Social Life of the Church as Reflected in the Letters of St Basil of Caesarea and St Gregory of Nazianzus' (Nottingham University, MPhil, 1971), 111.
[400] We should remember that it was a feature of the funeral eulogy to contain exaggerations; see Saint Basile, *Lettres*, ed., trans. Y. Courtonne, 3 vols., Collection des universités de France, vol. 3 (Paris: Société d'édition 'Les Belles Lettres', 1957-1966), 181.
[401] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 297.

3.3 Teaching Role of the Spirit

Sometimes St Basil writes about the Son as the Teacher. For instance, he writes in *Ep* 18 (361-63), saying, 'Oppose all of these with right reason, invoking as its ally and guide our Lord Jesus Christ, the teacher of piety (τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας Διδάσκαλον), for whom to suffer evil is sweet, "to die is gain"'.[402] However, he stresses the teaching role of the Spirit. Concerning the latter, he writes in *Fid.* (after 370), 'the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of adoption… who teaches and brings to remembrance all things, as many as he hears from the Son (Jn. 14:26).[403] St Basil also mentions in *Iud.* (after 370) that 'through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Holy Spirit we have turned from the habit of our own desires and from the observance of human traditions…'[404] Moreover, he writes in *Ep* 159 (373), 'The creature is in need of life, "it is the Spirit that gives life"; the creature also needs teaching, the Spirit is the Teacher (Jn. 14:26).[405] When St Basil discusses the divine works of the Spirit in *DSS*, he argues that the Spirit is not an inferior being, and that 'leading' by the Spirit is not a lowly service (Ps. 78:52, Ps 80:1). Further, he writes, 'Do not deprive him [the Spirit] of the faith and praise he is due. He has been within you; have you expelled him? He teaches us who formerly were blind; he guides us to choose what is good'.[406]

In addition, St Basil mentions that the Spirit helps to interpret Scripture and explain doctrines. When St Basil begins to explain how baptism according to the Gospel of Christ is conferred, he asks for prayers 'that by the grace of the good God and his Christ, the good Holy Spirit, reminding and instructing us regarding that which he hears from the Lord, may direct our thoughts into the path of peace and sound doctrine, to the end that faith may be strengthened…'[407] We see here the Spirit in his instructing role, in particular, on baptism. St Basil mentions three Persons, but

[402] St Basil *Eps*, vol. 13, 52.
[403] St Basil, 'Fid.', 81.
[404] St Basil, 'Iud.' in St Basil, *On Christian Ethics*, 65.
[405] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 313.
[406] St Basil, *DSS*, 78-9.
[407] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 349.

specifies the teaching function of the Spirit. From the fact that the Spirit cooperates with the Father and the Son we see divine nature of the Spirit. It is interesting that the Spirit strengthens faith, whereas in the previous chapter we saw that he strengthens angels in holiness.[408] From all of these texts we see that, according to St Basil, the Spirit teaches Christians true doctrines and this proves that he is not a creature. The theologian bases his teaching, which stays the same over the years, on John 14:26.

As we have shown in the chapter above, St Basil often calls Scripture 'the teachings of the Spirit'. We can also add that in *Hex.* 1 St Basil writes about Moses who was instructed by the Spirit: 'So then, this man, who is made equal to the angels, being considered worthy of the sight of God face-to-face, reports to us those things which he heard from God. Let us hear, therefore, the words of truth expressed not in the persuasive language of human wisdom (1 Cor. 2:14), but in the teachings of the Spirit…'[409] Thus, we see from these texts that the Spirit is not an inferior being but rather he is God, because he teaches and guides Christians.

3.4 True Doctrines and the Teachings of Heretics

Since we will look in this chapter among other questions at the relation between doctrine and spiritual life, we need to know what St Basil means by the 'teaching' or 'doctrine' (διδασκαλία, δόγματα or διδάγματα) in which the Spirit instructs the Christians. As we read his writings we notice that he mentions the doctrines of the Nicene Fathers and the doctrines of heretics.

First, he writes in *Ep* 91, 'May the good teaching of the Fathers, who met at Nicaea, shine forth so that the ascription of glory may be rendered to the blessed Trinity in the terms of the baptism of salvation'.[410] Here, by the term 'good teaching', he means the decisions of the Fathers of the Council of Nicaea.

[408] See 105.
[409] St Basil, 'Hex. 1', 4-5.
[410] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 202. Similarly, in *Ep* 164, p. 325.

Second, St Basil uses different terms to talk about evil teachings, including πονηρὰ δόγματα, τῶν πονηρῶν διδαγμάτων, and πονηρὰς διδασκαλίας. In *Ep* 207 St Basil writes, 'Do not, brethren, flatter those who are introducing evil doctrines into your souls, and do not knowingly allow yourselves to disregard the fact that the people of God are being undone through evil teachings (πονηρὰ δόγματα)'.[411] Further, in *Ep* 251 St Basil writes, 'guard yourselves from the harmful teachings against the Spirit (τῶν βλαβερῶν κατὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος διδαγμάτων)…this part which is diseased is small, but all the rest of the church, which has received the Gospel from one end of the world to the other, remains in this sound and unperverted docrine (ἐπὶ τῆς ὑγιοῦς ἐστι ταύτης καὶ ἀδιαστρόφου διδασκαλίας)'.[412] Thus, there are true doctrines based on Scripture and decisions of the councils, and evil doctrines which arise because of perverted understanding of Scripture; these destroy churches and do great harm.

Moreover, St Basil writes that out of wrong interpretations grow heretical[413] doctrines. In his work *Is.* he likens the 'counterfeit doctrine which is not stamped by the Spirit with his own impress of truth which has been granted to us through the prophets and apostles' to a debased drachma.[414] St Basil writes elsewhere that the teachings of Scripture and the Spirit pour out through apostles and prophets.[415] Here we see a connection between the inspiration of prophets and apostles by the Spirit and the true doctrines proclaimed by them. The true doctrine, according to St Basil, is the one that is authorised and approved by the Spirit. However, we cannot know how the Spirit does it. St Basil writes in the latter text separately about the teachings of Scripture and those of the Spirit, meaning by the latter possibly the unwritten traditions, that is, the liturgical customs.

[411] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 81-2.
[412] Ibid., 209-10.
[413] As Hanson notes, orthodoxy in the fourth century was reached by a process of trial and error in which the error was not all on the side of the 'heretics', but was shared by the 'orthodox' too. See Hanson, 'The Achievement of Orthodoxy', 152.
[414] St Basil, *Is.*, 62.
[415] Ibid., 63.

Further, as a proof that the truth of the doctrine is inspired by the Spirit, St Basil mentions unity and peace among the believers. In *Ep* 223, 'Against Eustathius of Sebaste' (375), St Basil answers the accusations of Eustathius, who had published with alterations St Basil's letter to the heresiarch Apollinarius, written twenty-five years earlier. In the middle of the letter St Basil writes (concerning those who slandered him) that 'a proof of their not being led by the Holy Spirit is the fact that among themselves they hold false beliefs'.[416] In addition, in *Bapt*., St Basil writes that he wishes that God and his Christ, and the Spirit may direct his and audience's thoughts into the path of peace and sound doctrine.[417] The Trinity as a whole directs humans in understanding the doctrines. Similarly, St Basil writes in his letters that the grace of God unifies bishops (*Eps* 77, 204). Thanks to the grace of God, there are no quarrels (*Eps* 156, 310), and there is agreement in faith with nothing hindering the Church from being one body and one spirit (*Ep* 191). Thus, we see that the Spirit brings unity to all Christians and that this distinguishes them from the heretics.

Further, St Basil writes about the need of people who can spread doctrines and about the direction of God in following true doctrines. He states that the Church needs people who 'spread firm and vigorous doctrines that are filled with the divine mind'.[418] By the latter phrase 'divine mind' we can understand doctrines with divine intent or meaning. In *Hom. in Ps.* 7, St Basil says that it is necessary that even the righteous person be directed by God, 'so that he shall never through weakness turn aside from the canon, as it were, of truth, nor be misled by the enemy of truth through perverted doctrines'.[419] Here we see, according to St Basil's view, that God directs true understanding of doctrine by means of the Spirit.

Thus, we see that true doctrines are those that are approved by the Spirit. He inspired both the prophets and the Church Fathers. The Spirit authorizes true doctrines, whereas heretical teachings grow out of wrong

[416] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 133. St Basil states that breaking off from the Church and true faith is a breaking off from the Spirit; see ibid., *Ep* 188, 10.
[417] St Basil, *'Bapt.'*, 349.
[418] Ibid., 113-4.
[419] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 7', 175.

interpretations. He unifies Christians, whereas those who hold false beliefs are all divided amongst themselves. We notice that even righteous people need the direction of the Spirit in order not to be caught up into perverted doctrines.

3.5 The Help of the Spirit in Fighting Against Heresies

Further, St Basil explains how heretics blaspheme the Spirit and how the Spirit can prevent the spreading of unsound doctrines. In *Ep* 113, 'To the Presbyters at Tarsus' (372), St Basil describes the church at that time as 'an old garment easily rent by any trifling strain, and incapable of being restored to its original strength'. Since 'many mouths are opened against the Holy Spirit, and many tongues are spurred on to blasphemy against him', St Basil urges presbyters to reduce the number of blasphemers and to 'receive in communion [only] those who do not say that the Holy Spirit is a creature'.[420] By being shamed in this way, they might return to the Church or, if they persisted in their beliefs, they would be held unworthy of attention because of their small numbers. Here we see that the Spirit as a member of the Trinity was under attack from some people. In relation to blasphemy, St Basil also writes in *Reg. Mor.*, citing the text of Matthew 12:22-24, 28, that those who see a person that possesses the fruit of the Spirit and is consistent with true piety and who attribute this to the Adversary, blaspheme the Spirit himself.[421]

Moreover, St Basil mentions that bishops can act as those who mediate between parties and persuade opponents in the theological tensions with the assistance of the Spirit. In *Ep* 156, 'To Evagrius, a Presbyter' (373), St Basil expresses the desirability of peace and deplores the persistence of schisms. He writes that frictions arising from controversy cannot be

[420] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 240. Blasphemers were temporarily excommunicated and required to stand outside the church building during communion. The Councils of Ancyra (314), Neo-Caesarea (320), Nicaea (325), and Laodicea (between 344 and 363) established a graded system of penance, which meant that different sins were accorded different lengths and types of punishment. St Basil was not an innovator of this system in Caesarea; he followed St Gregory Thaumaturgus. There were the stages of mourners, prostrates, hearers and bystanders; see O.D.A. Watkins, *History of Penance: Being a Study of the Authorities*, 2 vols., Burt Franklin Research and Source Works Series 16 (New York: B. Franklin, 1961), 320-2.
[421] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 35, 175.

removed unless a certain person acts as a mediator in the interests of peace. St Basil continues, 'And if all the strength of grace flowed upon us and we were able by word, and deed and the gifts of the Spirit to move our opponents, we should be obliged to attempt such a task'.[422] However, as St Basil writes, it is a responsibility of a local bishop, in this case, Meletius of Antioch,[423] to care for the churches and maintain peace. Thus, we see that it was considered possible to persuade opponents of faith by words, deeds and the gifts of the Spirit. Further, in *Ep* 164, 'To Ascholius, bishop of Thessalonica' (374), St Basil calls him the trainer of the martyr Sabas. He also mentions the martyr Eutyches after whose death the land of his captivity became Christian, 'For no one of us resembles Eutyches in virtue, we who are so far from taming the barbarians by the power of the Spirit and by the action of his graces…'.[424] Similarly, in *Ep* 79, 'To Eustathius, Bishop of Sebaste' (371), St Basil thanks God for Eleusinius who transmitted the letter from Eustathius, and mentions that he himself endured some attacks from high officials, 'Meanwhile we have endured every attack unmoved, by the mercy of God, who is favouring us with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and through him has strengthened our weakness'.[425] Here St Basil describes the Spirit as the one who strengthens, defends, and assists in difficult circumstances. Thus, one can resist heretics and non-believers and win them over through the assistance and gifts of the Spirit.

Moreover, in *Reg. Mor.* St Basil writes that any Christian, and not only a bishop, should not be afraid or distressed in difficult circumstances and should not be distracted from trust in God, but should believe that the Lord

[422] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 309.
[423] As St John Chrysostom thought, a bishop being placed at the head of the Church and exercising authority is at the same time 'a commander, physician and helmsman' as Eustathius of Antioch, 'shepherd, helmsman and wine-grower' as Meletius of Antioch, and 'father, master, shepherd, and helmsman' as Flavian. According to Chrysostom, Meletius was one of the models for a bishop because he held the doctrines firm in front of Arianism; audience of this panegyric may have learnt from Meletius 'piety, wisdom, zeal for faith, and all the virtues that are connected to the dignity of priesthood'. See J.-N. Guinot, 'L'apport des panégyriques de Jean Chrysostome à une definition de l'évêque modèle' in *Vescovi e pastori*: 395-421, 404, 413-4.
[424] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 325.
[425] Ibid., 185.

is at hand strengthening him against all his adversaries and that the Spirit instructs him even on how to reply to his foes.[426]

Therefore, we have seen how St Basil describes the Spirit as a Person, who instructs the leaders of the Church and helps them to solve theological conflicts. The Spirit helps bishops to persuade heretics in true doctrines, and to defend themselves against the false teachings. It is not only bishops who are taught how to respond to adversaries but also lay Christians.

3.6 The Importance of True Doctrines for Ascetic Life and the Influence of Ascetic Life on the Understanding of True Doctrines

Throughout his works, we see that St Basil considers the ascetic life and purification of one's soul as necessary in order to understand Christian doctrines, to be able to talk about God and grasp the divine nature of the Spirit. Within the broader theme of the relationship between doctrine and spiritual life, St Basil writes about the interrelatedness of faith, baptism, and worship. In *Ep* 125 (373) he states, 'And, a proof of orthodox opinion is not to separate him [the Spirit] from the Father and the Son (for we must be baptised as we have received the words; and we must believe as we are baptised; and we must give glory as we have believed, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit)'.[427]

Concerning the relationship of teaching about the Spirit and baptism, St Basil exhorts Christians to keep faith inviolate and not to 'divide the Spirit from the Father, but … preserve in the profession of faith and in the doxology the teaching they received at their baptism'.[428] St Basil mentions 'the deceitful sophistries of the Spirit-deniers'. He writes, '…it is impossible to believe in the Father and the Son without the presence of the Spirit… It is impossible to worship the Son except in the Holy Spirit; it is impossible to call upon the Father except in the Spirit of adoption'.[429] We

[426] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 63, 233.
[427] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 259. St Basil similarly writes in *Ep* 159 (373), 190, *Ep* 175 'To Count Magnenianus' (374), 338, and in *Ep* 251 (376), 209.
[428] St Basil, *DSS*, 47.
[429] Ibid., 48.

see here unity of worship and faith. One cannot even believe in the Father or the Son without the Spirit! St Basil writes, 'Faith and baptism are two inseparably united means of salvation. Faith is perfected through baptism; the foundation of baptism is faith, and both are fulfilled through the same names'.[430] As we see, only faith and baptism combined together lead to salvation. Likewise, in *Ep* 234 (Jan. 376) St Basil writes about the interconnection of knowledge of God, faith in God, and adoration of him: 'We know God through his power. Therefore, we believe in him who is known, and we adore him who is believed'.[431] This applies to all three Persons.

Besides, according to St Basil, the phrase 'blessed are the pure in heart' refers to those who hold the right and proper understanding of God, an understanding possible only to those who live pure lives. As Luckman explains, St Basil considers, in reaction against Eustathius, purity of heart and purification as a communal virtue and one that presupposes right belief. St Basil believes that one can become a perfect Christian not only in virtue and deed, but also in having a proper understanding of Scripture and the mysteries of the Christian faith.[432]

Further, we will look at the key idea of this chapter, namely, at how St Basil writes about the relation of faith in the Trinity and the Spirit to asceticism and spiritual life. Starting from *Ask.* (365-76), he writes about the importance of being able to define one's faith and of living according to the Gospel, as well as about the interrelatedness of faith and life. In the Prologue to the *SR* he writes, '…we who have been entrusted with the "ministry of the word" must at all times be eager for the training of souls, now bearing witness in the common hearing of the Church to all concerning the commandments of the Lord, now making ourselves available in private to the best of our ability for anyone who cares to question us concerning the soundness of faith and the truth of the way of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is through both of these that the "man of God" is assuredly made perfect'.[433] As we see

[430] Ibid., 50.
[431] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 161. The same idea is also found in *Ep* 235 (Jan 376) vol. 28, 162.
[432] Luckman, *Purity of Heart*, 91-9.
[433] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 272-3.

here, both 'soundness of faith' and a pious way of life are necessary for perfection. St Basil is probably addressing here other priests or monks with pastoral duties. As Silvas notes, there is a new stress, in the Greek text on the 'soundness' of faith, which is a sign of development of St Basil's thought over time. A similar idea occurs in the Prologue to the *LR* and in *SR* 20.

Ep 296, 'To Monks' (370), epitomizes St Basil's views on the relationship between faith and life. It belongs to the years after the rupture with Eustathius, that is to say, in St Basil's later years, when he addresses a community that was formerly under Eustathian leadership but which seeks reform, '…strictness of life in itself, if not illuminated by faith in God, is of no advantage, nor will a right profession of faith, if bereft of good works, be able to commend us to the Lord; for it is necessary for both to be present, so that the man of God may be perfect and our life may not be incomplete'.[434] We see here that, according to St Basil who follows St Paul, both right belief and good works are essential in spiritual life. Although this letter is addressed to monks, it is true for all Christians as we can see in *Hom. in Ps.* 48 where the theologian writes, 'If, then, one who believes in Christ does not make his actions consistent with his faith, he, because he has given his attention to depraved doctrines and because he has perverted the meaning of Scripture, hews out in the rock a sepulchre for himself'.[435] We see that one's life should be consistent with one's beliefs. As Haykin notes, St Basil's ascetic experience exerted great influence upon his Trinitarian theology.[436] As Sferlea rightly emphasizes, 'At stake was therefore not only how to oppose and reject logical errors about God but also how to preserve the kind of worship that would secure a transforming and salvific relationship with him'.[437] St Basil writes that only the one who is cleansed from carnal desire can receive the Spirit and so engage in the contemplation of the Father and the Son. [438]

[434] St Basil, *Eps,* vol. 28, 287.
[435] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 323.
[436] Haykin, *The Spirit of God,* p. 128.
[437] G.O. Sferlea, 'Philosophical Arguments and Christian Worship in St Basil's Debate with Eunomius' in N. Dumitrașcu (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016): 93-104, 94.
[438] St Basil, *DSS,* 44.

Similarly, St Basil writes in *Ep* 223 about the relationship between doubtful doctrinal beliefs and an exalted spiritual life. He describes the life of the monks of Palestine as blessed because they 'show by their works that they bear around in their body the dying of Jesus'.[439] He continues, '…because of their extraordinary manner of life, I was filled with zeal in their regard. For this reason I did not admit the charges concerning their doctrines, although many affirmed that they did not have correct notions about God, but, having been instructed by the leader of the present heresy [Arius], were secretly sowing his teachings'.[440] Because of their lofty life, St Basil could not believe in the heretical nature of their doctrines. It seems that those who live a truly spiritual life in the Spirit cannot be heretical in their views, according to St Basil.

Further, in *Fid.*, St Basil asks ascetics not to be involved in unseemly controversies, but to be satisfied with the words of the saints and the Lord, and 'to live in a manner befitting the Gospel of Christ, relying on the hope of eternal life and the heavenly kingdom prepared for all those who keep the commandments of God the Father according to the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord in the Holy Spirit and in truth'.[441] He also writes that we should keep the commandments 'by the grace of Christ in the Holy Spirit'.[442] We see how ascetic life and the profession of the Trinitarian faith are linked together here. It is noteworthy that St Basil advises monks not to be involved in 'unseemly controversies' but simply to live the life of following divine commandments. In the same vein, St Basil interprets the 'vine of Sibmah' in Isaiah 16:8 as the writings of the heterodox, who urge to conversion and exhort to orderly life, but in fact profess simulated and false doctrines. As he writes, 'It is impossible for you to receive the might which is born of the Spirit in those who walk aright, unless you "trample down" the "vines of Sibmah" [the false doctrines]'.[443] It means that before a person can become mighty in the Spirit, he/she should deny false doctrines.

[439] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 128.
[440] Ibid., 129.
[441] St Basil, 'Fid.', 66-7.
[442] Ibid., 68.
[443] St Basil, *Is.*, 379.

Then, St Basil writes about monastics as examples of true faith and ascetic life. In *Ep* 44, 'To a Fallen Monk', St Basil writes about a fallen monk as a traitor to faith; the one who was 'inspiring all with a reverence for the doctrine' and the one who preached holiness was found polluted.[444] Similarly, in *Ep* 45 St Basil writes to a fallen monk, 'what intricate nets of the evil one entangled you, bringing to nought your steadfast practices of virtues'.[445] In St Basil's view, monks should be examples of holy life and should confess true faith. Likewise, in *Ep* 257, 'To the Monks Oppressed by the Arians', St Basil encourages monks to preserve faith and to '…renew yourselves in your love for God and daily increase your zeal, being conscious that in you ought to be preserved the remnants of true religion…'[446] Further, in *Eps* 169-71 (374), St Basil writes about the chaos in the church caused by deacon Glycerius who led many virgins away from the church. From these examples we see how the ascetics were influenced by different doctrines. In *Ep* 262, 'To the Monk Urbicius' (377), concerning the Incarnation of Christ, St Basil warns this monk from false beliefs: '…we urge that these matters meet with ecclesiastical correction and that you refrain from communion with the heretics, knowing that indifference in these matters destroys our freedom in Christ'.[447] In these letters St Basil spoke directly about the necessity for monks to confess true faith and not be entangled in heretical circles.

Moreover, St Basil writes in *Hom. in Ps.* 44, 'the spiritual garment is woven when the attendant action is interwoven with the word of doctrine'. He continues, 'Certain souls, since they have not accepted seeds of false doctrines, follow the spouse of the Lord and because they are following his spouse they will be led to the King. Let those also who have vowed virginity to the Lord hear that virgins will be led to the King, but [only those] virgins who are close to the Church, who follow after her, and who do not wander away from the ecclesiastical discipline'.[448] By the 'spouse' St Basil probably means the Church, and by the 'King' – God. As we see, according to St Basil, an action in spiritual life should be connected with

[444] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 113.
[445] Ibid., 117.
[446] Ibid., vol. 28, 216.
[447] Ibid., 237.
[448] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 294.

the true doctrine, as expressed by the Church. He states that not every kind of virginity is commendable and salvific but only that one which is exercised with respect to the teachings of the Church.

Further, St Basil establishes the connection between glorifying God and holding a right doctrine in *Hom. in Ps.* 28 (374), addressed to both monks and lay people. He writes that one glorifies God through temperance and holiness and that 'everyone who discusses divine matters in an orderly way so as always to hold the correct opinion/doctrine concerning the Father, the Godhead/divinity of the Only-Begotten, and the glory of the Holy Spirit, brings glory and honour to the Lord'.[449] Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 33 (375), St Basil writes, explaining what it means to turn away from evil and do good, 'Seek, then, after peace, a release from the troubles of this world; possess a calm mind, a tranquil and unconfused state of soul, which is neither agitated by the passions, nor drawn aside by false doctrines that challenge by their persuasiveness to an assent'.[450] We see here that humans have to fight in their lives both against passions and against false doctrines. Life and doctrines are intertwined.

Thus, we have seen that for St Basil, the ascetical/spiritual life is closely united with the right faith. He asserts that faith without good works and vice versa is in vain. One needs both for salvation. He also states that not all ascetic efforts are praiseworthy, but only those which are in accord with the teachings of the church. We see how St Basil warns monks from communication with heretics and encourages them to preserve true faith. He addresses not only monks, but also lay people, in *Eps, Hom. in Ps*., and *Ask*. in the years 365-77.

3.6.1 Simplicity of the Doctrine of the Spirit and Simplicity as a Virtue

One example of the interconnectedness of spiritual life and doctrines is the concept of simplicity as a virtue and as a characteristic of God. When arguing against Eunomius and heretical teachings, St Basil often refers to the simplicity of true doctrines as given or inspired by the Spirit.

[449] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 196.
[450] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 266.

Commenting on Proverbs 1:3, St Basil mentions grasping 'the twists and turns of arguments'. We have seen above that in order to interpret Scripture correctly and to understand the doctrines one needs the guidance of the Spirit. Here St Basil criticizes the devious use of rhetoric; he deplores complex arguments of great stylistic value which seek to persuade that the facts are different from what they really are and which seek to please the audience. St Basil understands this as 'the distortion of truth through argument'.[451] Instead, he prefers simple arguments which clarify the truth. He seems to direct his critique against the advocates of heretical doctrines who reject the simplicity of the Spirit's teaching. Perhaps he refers here to Eunomius of whose teaching he was aware at this time (361-362). *Prov*., as DelCogliano supposes, is probably the earliest version of the anti-Eunomian rhetoric which he developed in *Eun.* (363-365). According to St Basil, the book of Proverbs provides the resources for detecting the fallacious arguments of heretics and helps Christians not to be tricked by them.[452]

Further, besides the simplicity of arguments, St Basil writes about simple belief in God. In the beginning of the *Hom. in Ps.* 115, St Basil states that a discourse on God should be based on faith which is engendered not by deductive proofs and logical demonstration but by the work of the Spirit. The tone of this homily is polemical; St Basil's opponents are Eunomius and *heteroousians*.[453] St Basil writes, 'what now inspires confidence when discussing God is not the works of the Spirit, but rather elaborate demonstrations which place their hope in the plausibility of the wisdom of the world, not in the powerful and clear revelation of the Spirit. It was through those who believed God in simplicity of heart without engaging in futile investigations that the Spirit gave this revelation for the salvation of many'.[454] As we see, according to St Basil, the true discussion of the nature of God should be based on the 'works of the Spirit', Scripture and tradition; simplicity of heart enables acceptance of the revelation of the Spirit.

[451] St Basil, 'Prov.', 62.
[452] DelCogliano, 'Introduction to *Prov*.' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 45-6.
[453] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 212.
[454] Ibid., 218-9.

Moreover, St Basil writes in *Ep* 172 (374) about 'serving the Lord through frank and simple confession and preserving inviolate and simple the faith in the Father and Son and Holy Spirit'.[455] Further, when St Basil shows in *DSS* the origins of the technical application of prepositions 'by/through/from whom' in paganism, he writes, 'Our opponents have first studied and admired these vain and empty distinctions, and then transferred them to the simple and uncluttered doctrine of the Spirit, using them to belittle God the Word and deny the divine Spirit'. [456] We see how St Basil talks here about the simple nature of the doctrine of the Spirit. It is interesting that St Basil describes the Spirit here as 'divine' whereas he calls the Son 'God'; this is one of his boldest expressions about the nature of the Spirit. Similarly, when discussing the numbering of the Persons, St Basil writes, 'With technical jargon of this kind they [the opponents] pervert the uncluttered simplicity of the faith'.[457] Thus, St Basil writes about simplicity of faith in and the doctrine of the Spirit.

In addition, St Basil not only mentions simplicity as a characteristic of a true doctrine and faith, but also as a virtue. In *Ep* 51 (370), similarly to *Ep* 223, St Basil praises the virtues of the deceased bishop Bosporius, among which were 'simplicity, the nobility, and the generosity of his disposition', describing him as the 'most eminent in virtue'. Even though Bosporius signed the *homoean* Creed of Ariminum (359) and accepted it at the Acacian Synod of Constantinople, St Basil explains that he accepted it 'in the simplicity of heart', but agreed to nothing which was against the faith set up by the Fathers of Nicaea.[458] Here we see that the truth is simple. The same Spirit inspires true doctrines and helps to acquire simplicity of heart.

We can further see an interrelation between doctrine and ascetic life. When describing the life according to the Gospel among many virtues and dispositions, St Basil mentions soundness of faith (*Ep* 173, written in 374).[459] Further, in the end of *Hom. in Ps.* 115 St Basil encourages his

[455] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 334.
[456] St Basil, *DSS*, 20.
[457] Ibid., 29.
[458] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 135.
[459] Ibid., 336.

audience to 'persevere in faith, and grow perfect in the precepts of the Lord'.[460] Here we see faith and life according to the commandments of God combined. In addition, in *Iei.* 1 (371) we see reference to the doctrines in the context of practical moral exhortation. St Basil asks, 'Are you placing no value on the salvific and life-giving doctrines when you cause your mind to waste away from want of such nourishment?' He advises, 'If you wish to make your mind strong, subdue your flesh though fasting'.[461]

Thus, we have seen how St Basil shows the relationship between simplicity of faith or doctrine and simplicity as virtue, as well as how he connects 'life-giving doctrines' with the necessity of following the precepts of God.

3.6.2 Christians as Exemplifying True Faith and Holiness

Very often St Basil writes in his letters about clergy who uphold sound doctrines and lead the life of virtue and asceticism. In condolence letter 28 on the death of Musonius, bishop of Neo-Caesarea (spr. 368), St Basil describes him as follows: 'A man has departed this life, one who has conspicuously surpassed all those about him in all human virtues, a mainstay of his country, an ornament of the churches, a pillar and support of truth, a solid foundation of faith in Christ, a sure protector of his friends, a most invincible foe of his opponents, a guardian of the laws of the Fathers, and an enemy to innovations.'[462] St Basil continues, 'on no occasion did we fail in our agreement in doctrine and in our summons to him as a partner of the contests against the heretics'.[463] Although this description of the merits of bishop Musonius seems exaggerated, on St Basil's testimony, he both developed many virtues and defended faith. Similarly, in *Ep* 81 St Basil recommends to bishop Innocent a priest whom St Basil has chosen to be a messenger because he was 'steadfast in character, fully acquainted with the canons, undeviating in faith, and [as

[460] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 226.
[461] St Basil, 'Iei. 1' in *On Fasting and Feasts,* 55-71, 67.
[462] St Basil, *Eps,* vol. 13, 69.
[463] Ibid., 73.

the one who] has lived a life up to the present time of self-control and asceticism…'. [464] Here we see soundness of faith organically united with the ascetic life. In addition, in *Ep* 271, 'A Letter of Recommendation to Eusebius His Companion, On Behalf of the Presbyter Cyriacus' (374) St Basil recommends Cyriacus and describes his priestly life; he mentions that this priest is free from any calumny and has never been abused by opponents. St Basil writes that the enemies of the Lord, even when they are fighting against certain priests, confirm ecclesiastical orders, and recognize the grace of the Spirit bestowed upon the priestly office.[465]

St Basil also writes on the same matter to lay people. In *Ep* 18, to lay individuals, St Basil mentions that 'afflictions of the present life do not find unprepared those who choose to live in a holy way, and those alone who labour for holiness are not deceived in their hopes'. He continues, 'As long, therefore, as truth is on our side, let no deceitful slander trouble you…Oppose all of these with right reason, invoking as its ally and guide our Lord Jesus Christ, the teacher of true religion'.[466] Further, in *Ep* 105, 'To the Deaconesses, the Daughters of Count Terentius' (372), St Basil writes that they are 'a noble offspring of a noble root, fruitful in good works'. He continues that they did not yield to the deceits of heretics even though they were surrounded 'by the great perverseness of men who corrupt the doctrine of truth'.[467] These deaconesses did not abandon 'the apostolic pronunciation of the faith, turning to the innovations' of that time. We notice how these women embodied the harmonic relationship between good works with true doctrines and faith. Moreover, St Basil writes *Ep* 152 to commander Victor (373), who 'excelled almost all on earth in the loftiness of [his] honours', who 'have walked his [of God] road with truth and have kept [his] heart unswerving in rightness of faith from beginning to end'.[468]

Thus, we have seen how St Basil praises true Christians, both clergy and lay people, for their undeviating faith and pious life.

[464] Ibid., 187. There are similar ideas in *Eps* 70, 133, 154, pp. 170, 274, 305-6.
[465] Ibid., vol. 28, 261.
[466] Ibid., 51-2.
[467] Ibid., 230.
[468] Ibid., 304.

3.7 Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit

We can also see interconnectedness of ascetic life and doctrines in the manner in which St Basil describes the presence of the Spirit in Christians. St Basil writes about gifts of grace of the Spirit that are present in bishops and shining through their letters. In *Ep* 164, 'To Ascholius, bishop of Thessalonica' (374), St Basil writes that he perceived 'the grace of the Spirit abounding in it [in Ascholius' letter]'. In *Ep* 165 St Basil describes the same bishop as having the 'graces of the Spirit in [him]'.[469] We read in this letter that the Spirit inspired the letter of bishop Ascholius, helping to keep Christians as one body in peace and to fight against heresies. Similarly, in *Ep* 161 'To Amphilochius on His Consecration' (374), St Basil writes at the end of the letter, 'May you be preserved in high esteem for the gifts of the Spirit and of wisdom'.[470] St Basil also writes to Eusebius of Samosata in 374 that his letters are the source of pride since they are written by 'a man so great in virtue and enjoying such intimacy with God that he is able to make others, also, his [of God] friends both by word and by example'.[471]

Furthermore, St Basil writes that gifts are granted by God and Christ. In *Ep* 103, 'To the People of Satala' (372-73), St Basil recommends a new bishop, Poemenius, as one whom 'the Lord…has filled…with his spiritual gifts'.[472] In addition, in *Ep* 185, 'To Theodotus Bishop of Berrhoea' (374), St Basil writes that he hopes that the bishop remembers him, not because of St Basil's worthiness but because '[his] soul is rich in its superabundance of charity', in possession of 'great gifts from Master'. St Basil wishes to meet with him in order to increase this love and to gratify God for his gifts.[473] However, the theologian mostly writes about the gifts as granted by the Spirit.

St Basil pays great attention to the fruits of the Spirit, especially charity (ἀγάπη).[474] In *Ep* 22 (366-69), St Basil describes the life which is pleasing

[469] Ibid., vol. 13, 326. Similar expression, 'gifts of grace', in *Ep* 264, 'To Barses, Bishop of Edessa, during His Exile' (377), see Ibid., vol. 28, 243.
[470] Ibid., vol. 13, 321.
[471] Ibid., *Ep* 167, 329.
[472] Ibid., 227.
[473] Ibid., 345.
[474] Ibid., *Ep* 65, 158.

to God and also answers some questions. At the end of the letter he writes, 'The Lord grant that you receive with full confidence what I have said, and for the glory of God show forth the fruits of the Spirit, according to the will of God and with the assistance of our Lord Jesus Christ'.[475] We see that three Persons are glorified through the fruits of the Spirit in a Christian. St Basil also mentions in *Ep* 62 his custom of writing consolatory letters, which shows the fruit of the Spirit, love.[476] In addition, in *Ep* 133, 'To Peter, Bishop of Alexandria', St Basil, describing his spiritual union and friendship with this bishop, writes, '…the gift of the Spirit[477] brings about true love, joining together things separated by long distances and making known the beloved ones to each other not through physical characteristics but through the peculiar qualities of the soul'.[478] We see that the Spirit unifies humans by means of love.

Further, St Basil writes about those who bear the fruits of the Spirit. In *Ep* 155 (373), we see that a misunderstanding arose between St Basil and the addressee of the letter; the latter presented numerous accusations and the former explains it by his ignorance of facts. In one place in the letter St Basil mentions that 'we pray for our brethren on their journeys abroad…for those who are numbered in the military service, for those who speak openly in defence of the name of the Lord, and for those who show forth the fruits of the Spirit (ὑπὲρ τῶν τοὺς πνευματικοὺς καρποὺς ἐπιδεικνυμένων), we offer our prayers in the holy Church'.[479] It is interesting that those who manifest the fruits of the Spirit are depicted as a separate group for whom prayers are offered. These might have been bishops or monks.

[475] Ibid., 60.
[476] Ibid., 155. Same idea in *Ep* 91.
[477] Origen argues that faith is a gift of the Spirit and cites 1 Corinthians 12:9 as evidence. He understands that the main interest of this text is to show that faith is ranked after wisdom and knowledge in the list of the Spirit's gifts, but he does not ignore the implication that faith is spoken of as a gift and quotes Philippians 1:29 in support. One of the principles, according to which the gifts are given is 'according to the proportion of faith'. Origen distinguishes between the initial germ of faith, which is something within our power and the complete faith which can only be achieved with the addition of the God-given grace of faith; see M.F. Wiles, *The Divine Apostle: The Interpretation of St Paul's Epistles in the Early Church* (London: CUP, 1967), 105.
[478] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 274.
[479] Ibid., 307.

Thus, we see how St Basil writes about the grace, gifts and fruits of the Spirit and about the greatest fruit of the Spirit, namely love, as they are present in clergy.

Now we will look at how St Basil writes about the fruits and gifts of the Spirit to the laity. In *Ep* 159, 'To Eupaterius and His Daughter' (373), St Basil explains his views on the nature of the Spirit following the Nicene Creed. He repeats many ideas about the nature of the Spirit, as expounded in the *DSS*. At the end of the letter he says, 'For, from scant seeds you will produce the more fruit of piety, if the Holy Spirit is working with you'.[480] We see that St Basil explains here the dogmas concerning the nature of the Spirit to lay people and shows how they can increase the fruits of the Spirit.

Turning now to *Reg. Mor*., which St Basil addressed to all Christians, he writes that since the gifts of the Spirit are varied and one person cannot receive them all, nor all receive the same gift, everyone should thankfully remain content with their own gift and be in accord with other members of the church. There should be no discouragement or disdain among the Christians concerning the number and kind of gifts granted to each, otherwise, division between brothers will bring destruction (Mt. 12:25, Gal. 5:15).[481] Further, St Basil exemplifies the idea that Christians should be one body, one heart and one soul by quoting Scriptural texts.[482] St Basil concludes that the gifts of the Spirit should serve the unity of the Church. He further writes that those who know Scripture insufficiently should recognize the distinctive mark of the saints by the fruits of the Spirit and should receive those who have it and avoid those who do not; here he cites Philippians 3:17 about following the example of apostles and Matthew 7:15, 16 concerning false prophets.[483] When St Basil describes the qualities that Scripture prescribes Christians to possess, as disciples of Christ, he writes, 'As members of Christ, perfect in every observance of

[480] Ibid., 314.
[481] As Fedwick notes, St Basil strongly emphasizes here both the non-egalitarian principle and the unitary action of the Spirit. *Charismata*, as stemming from the Spirit, are the grounds of Christian unity, peace and love. See Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma*, 29.
[482] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 60, 223.
[483] Ibid., Rule 72.1, 186.

the Lord's commandments or in showing forth the gifts of the Holy Spirit in conformity with the dignity of their Head which is Christ…'[484]

St Basil frequently mentions that one can grieve the Spirit, in the same way as one can grieve another human being, by one's way of life. He writes in *Reg. Mor* that we should not engage in controversial discussions, pronounce idle words, since even to perform a good deed without the aim of giving edification is to grieve the Spirit.[485] In addition, in *Bapt*. St Basil writes that Christians should bring forth the abundance of fruits from good heart in order not to grieve the Spirit.[486] He continues that even the one who utters a good word but not unto edification, grieves the Spirit. Moreover, the one who eats the Body of Christ and drinks his Blood carelessly grieves the Spirit profoundly.[487] In *Ep* 22, St Basil writes that those who 'have been entrusted … with directing others for the upbuilding of their faith will stimulate the workers with good discourses in order that the Holy Spirit of God may not be grieved'.[488] Therefore, priests encourage the laity by means of sermons.

Thus, we see how, when writing to different bishops, St Basil mentions that they possess the fruits of the Spirit, namely, love (Peter of Alexandria, Atarbius of Neocaesarea, Sophronius), and wisdom (Amphilochius of Iconium). The theologian mostly mentions the gifts of the Spirit rather than of Christ; he also describes the grace of God as being in the possession of bishops or clergy. In his works addressed to all Christians St Basil writes that everyone should be contented with the gifts of the Spirit he/she has, and that the gifts of the Spirit bring about unity among everyone. He also states that one can recognize the saint by the fruits of the Spirit and that the mark of the true Christian is the bringing forth of the gifts of the Spirit. What St Basil especially stresses in his works addressed to laymen is that a Christian grieves the Spirit by his/her behaviour, by lack of the fruits of the Spirit, unworthy partaking of the Communion and saying words which are not conducive to edification.

[484] Ibid., Rule 80.3, 197.
[485] Ibid., Rule 25.1, 105.
[486] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 383.
[487] Ibid., 390.
[488] Ibid., 56-7.

3.8 Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter that St Basil views the Spirit as the Teacher and Guide in defining true doctrines. These roles demonstrate his divine nature. St Basil describes the Spirit as directing bishops and individuals in their lives, as advising Church leaders and assisting them in fighting with false doctrines, and as the one who distributes the gifts. The Spirit also guides laywomen and men in their spiritual lives. Communion in the Spirit and sharing of the varied gifts of the Spirit serve the unity of the Church. For the most part, St Basil does not trouble lay people with controversies concerning the Spirit. However, in one letter, *Ep* 159, St Basil explains the doctrine of the Trinity and the Spirit to Eupaterios and his daughter. According to St Basil, there are true doctrines based on Scripture and the decisions of the councils, and evil doctrines, which appear because of the perverted understanding of Scripture and destroy churches. True doctrines are approved by the Spirit. For St Basil, baptism, faith and worship are intertwined. He sees the perfect life of a Christian as the practice of all the commandments and virtues, and as confession of the true faith. He warns monks against accepting and communicating with heretical groups. However, in the case of Palestinian monks, he also cannot accept that they, despite their high spiritual life, confessed wrong beliefs; he does not believe such charges. We have shown a connection in St Basil's works between simplicity of the doctrine of the Spirit, and simplicity as a virtue, that is, simplicity of heart, and demonstrated examples of some bishops and lay people as living holy lives and upholding true doctrines. We have also seen how St Basil writes about the grace, gifts and fruits of the Spirit in clergy and laity. All of these ideas contribute to the proof of the divine nature of the Spirit. In the following chapter we will consider the role of the Spirit in relation to human nature and in helping humans to manage the passions. We will look at how the Spirit assists Christians in preparing their souls as the dwelling-places for God.

Chapter 4. The Relationship between Human Nature and the Spirit. The Place of the Spirit in the Life according to Passions and according to Reason

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will examine St Basil's anthropological views in relation to pneumatology. We will show that one of his greatest arguments for the divinity of the Spirit refers to an analogy with human nature. We will also demonstrate that St Basil argues for the divinity of the Spirit because only God can render humans spiritual. First, we will look at the foundational ideas of St Basil's anthropology, how he defines the 'image' and 'likeness' of the human being to God. We will explore what features in human nature, as it was created, show the impress of divine work and by what means humans can acquire likeness to God after the Fall. Further, we will see how St Basil describes the interrelationship between the human body and soul. Afterwards, we will focus on the relationship between the human spirit and the divine Spirit. Then, we will explore how St Basil describes the conditions for the coming of the Spirit to indwell each human being. We will look at how St Basil views the place of the Spirit in two types of life: the life according to reason and the life according to passions. We will show that the former is advised for all Christians and not just for the monastics. Finally, we will examine what St Basil writes about human passions and the ways of managing them: whether he prefers the language of purification or that of the destruction or controlling of passions, and what his view on *apatheia* is. Generally, we will show his way of arguing that only the Spirit, as God, can purify the human soul of passions and consequently deify it. In order to demonstrate the importance of the Spirit in St Basil's view of the human person, it is necessary first to demonstrate his understanding of theological anthropology.

4.2 The Role of the Spirit in Relation to Human Nature

4.2.1 Image and Likeness of God

Apart from homilies and *Hex*., St Basil develops his anthropological ideas both in ascetic works and in dogmatic treatises. He follows closely the biblical narrative about the creation of human beings. Starting with his exegetical homilies, St Basil writes in *Hom. in Ps.* 32 (375) that a human being is composed of an earthy form and a soul dwelling within it. He elaborates on the biblical text, saying, 'In the case of our form which was made from the earth, "they were made", but, in the case of the part created according to the image of God, "they were created", since the creation is frequently understood as transformation and improvement'.[489] We see that St Basil understands the soul alone as being created according to the image of God. Further, when commenting on Psalm 48:13-14, St Basil writes that human dignity is in his/her natural constitution, in being made in the image of God. The human being 'has fallen a little below the dignity of the angels[490] because of his union with the earthly body', and has 'the power of understanding and recognizing [his/her] own Creator and Maker'.[491] Even despite having a body, humans can understand their God, but never fully. Likewise, St Basil interprets Genesis 2:7, 'And he breathed into his nostrils' by saying, 'he placed in man some share of his own grace, in order that he might recognize likeness[492] through likeness'.[493] Thus, God gave humans abilities to know him. Moreover,

[489] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 238.
[490] St Basil writes about humans becoming like angels in *Hex*. 9. In the end of it he explains, arguing against Jews and pagans, that the phrase 'God said, "Let us make man"' means that the Father created man with the help of the Son. St Basil mentions that the Jews related the words in this verse to an angel, to which St Basil replies, 'And denying the Son, they attribute to the servants the honour of counsel and make our fellow slaves the lords of our creation. Man, when perfected, is lifted up to the dignity of angels'. See St Basil, 'Hex. 9', 148.
[491] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 324.
[492] Likeness to God (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ) first appears in Plato's *Theaetetus* followed by the words 'κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν', meaning 'to the limits of one's capacity', while Aristotle builds on the notion of δύναμις and would prefer to say, as Kustas remarks, 'with the resources at one's control'. The follower of the Middle Platonism, Eudorus, being concerned with intellect as one of the faculties by which we become like God, would say, 'according to that part of us which is capable of this'; the latter interpretation was adopted by Neoplatonism. See G.L. Kustas, 'Saint Basil and the Rhetorical Tradition' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 257.
[493] St Irenaeus differentiates between the 'image' as having similarity with God, which is found in the body, and 'likeness' as resembling God, being the result of the work of the Spirit in humans; see M. Aghiorgoussis, 'Applications of the Theme "Eikon Theou"

none of the creatures possess such honour and none have a mind,[494] voluntary motions, and free will.[495] Freedom enables humans to collaborate with God in his own creative activities. As St Basil writes, 'In giving us the power to become like God, [the Creator] let us be artisans of the likeness of God.'[496] Similarly, St Gregory of Nyssa writes that every person is a painter. If we paint well we become an image of Christ, who is the image of the Father, 'as did Paul, who became an "imitator of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1) through his life of virtue'.[497] As Aghiorgoussis writes, according to St Basil, image and likeness can be distinguished as 'power' and 'action' or as being and becoming; the image can be seen on an ontological level, as a matter of 'nature', whereas the likeness can be seen on an ethical level, as a purpose to be achieved.[498]

It is interesting to note, as Harrison writes, that 'Christ is the image, while we are made according to the image'. The difference between Christ and humans is qualitative and not just quantitative.[499] She also remarks that this distinction means that before his incarnation Christ, God's true Image, was the model according to whom humans were made. Thus, since human beings are images of Christ, they are also images of the Father, but never as fully as Christ is. As Origen explains in *Contra Celsus*, the difference is that 'the Image of God is… the very Logos and truth, and further, the very wisdom himself, being "the image of his goodness" (Wis. 7:26), whereas the human being was made "in the image of God" and, furthermore, every human being of whom Christ is head is God's image and glory (1 Cor

According to Saint Basil the Great', *GOTR* 21 (1976): 265-88, 271. St Gregory of Nyssa, as opposed to St Basil, does not make a difference between the image and the likeness; see N.V. Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation* (Grand Rapid: Baker Academic, 2010), 13-4.

[494] St Basil expands on the possession of reason and rulership over creation as a defining characteristic of human nature in St Basil, 'Ebr.' in *On Fasting and Feasts*, 83-95, 85; 'Hex. 4', 62; 'Hex. 6', 84; 'Hex. 10', 36-7; *Ep* 233, vol. 28, 156.

[495] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 324-5.

[496] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 16.

[497] St Gregory of Nyssa, 'On Perfection' in Ascetical Works, trans. V.W. Callahan (Washington: CUAP, 1967), 111.

[498] Aghiorgoussis, 'Applications of the theme "Eikon Theou"', 275-6.

[499] N.V. Harrison, 'The Human Person as Image and Likeness of God' in M.B. Cunningham, E. Theokritoff (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 78-92, 79.

11:3,7)'.[500] Here we see an ecclesiastical dimension of the human being as the image.[501]

From these passages we see that the greatness of man lies in his ability to acquire knowledge about the Creator, in having reason, free will, and creativity. According to St Basil, humans are lower in dignity than angels only because of being clothed in the body, but they can become like angels by leading a good life.

Further, we find in many of St Basil's works a theme of virtue being natural to human nature and an idea that the Spirit makes rational creatures wise. In *Hex.* 7 St Basil writes, 'If the unreasoning animals are able to contrive and look out for their own preservation, and if a fish knows what it should choose and what to avoid, what shall we say who have been honoured with reason, taught by the law, encouraged by the promises, made wise by the Spirit, and who have then handled our own affairs more unreasonably than fish?' St Basil continues, 'Natural reason which teaches us an attraction for the good and aversion for the harmful is implanted in us'.[502] We see here a significant role for the Spirit, who makes humans who are endowed with natural reason wise. Moreover, in the *Hex.* 9, St Basil writes, 'We also possess natural virtues toward which there is an attraction of soul not from the teaching of men, but from nature itself…Therefore, the soul, without being taught, strives for what is proper to it and conformable to its nature. For this reason, self-control is praised by all, justice is approved, courage is admired, and prudence is greatly desired. These virtues are more proper to the soul than health is to the body.'[503] As we shall see later, virtues can even become part of human nature which is composed of the soul and the body. Further, in his homily *Att*., St Basil notes that humans can arrive at an 'equality of honor with the angels through good conduct'.[504] As Harrison notes, virtues are excellence of character, and 'when we imitate Christ and the saints and are united with them, we acquire God's likeness, since virtues are originally divine

[500] Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. Chadwick (Cambridge: CUP, 1953), 6.63, 378.
[501] Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image,* 35.
[502] St Basil, 'Hex. 7', 113.
[503] St Basil, 'Hex. 9', 141.
[504] St Basil, 'Att.', in *On the Human Condition,* 93-105, 101. Similarly, see 'Mund.' In Ibid., *On Christian Doctrine,* 170.

attributes such as wisdom, justice, humility, forbearance, compassion and love; by grace God shares them with us'.[505] So virtues can become part of human nature and play an important role in the process of acquiring divine likeness. Humans can even become equal to angels by the practice of virtues.

Further, St Basil writes about being conformed to the image of the Son in *DSS*, 'For he, who no longer "lives after the flesh," but, being "led by the Spirit of God," is called a son of God, being "conformed to the image of the Son of God," (Rom. 8:29) is described as spiritual'.[506] Thus, a person becomes according to the image of the Son and spiritual in nature by living according to divine commandments and being led by the Spirit. We also see a differentiation of two lifestyles, one according to the flesh, and one according to the Spirit, which we will further discuss. St Basil mentions Romans 8:29 also in *Bapt*. where he writes that a person who put off the old man and, by Christ's teaching in the Spirit, has put on the new is 'renewed unto knowledge according to the very image of the Creator [and] becomes worthy to win the divine approval'.[507]

St Basil also writes about the image of God as referring to both men and women. He writes in *Iul*. (372) that when Julitta refused to renounce Christ, she encouraged women standing close to her by these words, 'We are made of the same stuff as men. We are made in the likeness of God just as they are. The woman is made by the Creator to be just as capable of virtue as men…[508] For not only was the woman made by taking flesh from man, but also bone from his bone. Do we not then have the same obligation to the Lord as men, to be as constant in courage and patience?'[509] We notice here that St Basil interprets being an image of God as being capable of virtue. Interestingly, Harrison notes that the Church Fathers considered Eve's creation from Adam's side by pointing to the fact that she is consubstantial with him. As the scholar aptly remarks, 'the unity of humankind and the likeness between human persons are affirmed

[505] Harrison, 'The Human Person', 84.
[506] St Basil, *DSS* 26, 93.
[507] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 380.
[508] We find the same idea in St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 1', 156.
[509] St Basil, 'Iul.' in *On Fasting and Feasts*, 109-22, 110-1.

with the same strong word used to affirm that in the Trinity the Son is fully God and is of one essence with the Father'.[510]

Now, we will briefly look at the reasons for the Fall, according to St Basil. In *Mal.* (369-70) where St Basil discusses the question of the free will and the origin of evil, he writes that the human soul was harmed by avoiding what was natural for it, that is, from being in unity with God through love. After falling away from God, it started to suffer. It chose evil, because of the free will that pertains to the rational nature. A person can understand, contemplate the good and enjoy it, and follow a life natural to it, or alternatively he/she can avoid the good. As St Basil explains in line with Origen, the first man having been satiated with divine blessings, preferred communication with flesh over spiritual pleasures, fell from heaven, and became evil not by necessity but by foolishness.[511] Therefore, according to St Basil, the life of following God, or living according to virtue, is natural to the human being, while the sinful life is a defective one. It is also noteworthy that the first human being disobeyed God because of being satiated (Origen's idea) and because of foolishness; this derives from the Stoic idea that a human cannot commit evil knowingly.

In all of these passages, we have seen that St Basil defines 'the image of God' as creativity, the ability to know God, reason, freedom, and lordship over creation. St Basil defines 'likeness' as being acquired by the practice of virtue. According to St Basil, humans can attain the dignity of angels by living the life of virtue which is natural to human nature. Men and women are both created in 'the image of God'. The Spirit makes humans, who possess reason by nature, wise by grace. The Spirit leads humans to being likened to the image of Christ and becoming sons of God.

4.2.2 The Relationship Between the Soul and the Body

Now, we will first start with an exposition of the relationship between the soul and the body. In *Mund.* St Basil writes that instead of pleasures one should take care of something that is truly one's own. The latter is 'the soul

[510] Harrison, 'The Human Person', 81.
[511] St Basil, 'Mal.' in *On the Human Condition*, 74-5.

by which we live, which is light and intelligent, and needs none of the things that weigh us down. The same is true of the body, which the Creator gives to the soul as a vehicle (σχήμα) for living this life. And so, this is a human being: a mind united to a suitable and fitting body (προσφόρῳ καὶ πρεπούσῃ σαρκί)… This is what has been appointed to rule over the earth. It was for this that creation was spread out as a place to practise virtue. It was for this that the law was laid down, to imitate the Artificer in his power and to bring about upon the earth a reflection of the good order in heaven'.[512] St Basil continues further that the virtues can also come into our possession. We observe here that the body and soul were created to fit each other, to be harmoniously united, and to rule over creation. We also notice that both the body and soul are human possessions and that virtues can become part of human nature.

We find a slightly different description of human nature in *Att.*, where St Basil writes, 'For we ourselves are one thing, and what is ours is another, and the things around us are another. Thus we are the soul and the mind, through which we have come into being according to the image of the Creator, but the body is ours and the sense perceptions through it, while around us are possessions (χρήματα), skills and the other equipment of life'.[513] Here we notice a stricter hierarchy of things. The soul is not ranked together with the body as a human possession; it is equated with the essence of the human being. We notice that the body is not included in the 'image';[514] it is only a human possession, even though different from external possessions. As Hildebrand remarks, St Basil sounds very much like Origen and Eusebius when he writes that the outer man, the body, is the possession or instrument of the inner man, that is, his rational soul.[515] Nonetheless, the fact that the body is called a human possession and does not express a person's essence does not deprive it from its intrinsic value as a co-worker with the soul. In addition, in another work St Basil writes, 'What is lacking in the strength of body is encompassed by the

[512] St Basil, 'Mund.', 170.
[513] St Basil, 'Att.', 96.
[514] Tertullian affirms that the flesh is made in God's image; see Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, 29.
[515] Ibid., 30-2.

employment of reason',[516] which demonstrates that the soul harmoniously complements the body.

Further, St Basil mentions three aspects of the soul, namely, the lofty and diligent or ruling aspect (reason), the pleasure-loving or passionate one, and the appetitive one.[517] St Basil also associates the mind with the heart and names it a discerning faculty of the soul. He mentions '"a wine which gladdens the heart of man" (Col 2:4) (that it is, the mind and the ruling aspect of the soul)'.[518] When St Basil comments on Psalm 7:10, 'The searcher of hearts and reins is God', he explains, '…Scripture in many places accepts the heart for the principal part of the body, and the reins for the affective part of the soul'.[519]

One of the recurrent themes in St Basil's works is an opposition between the soul and the body. He states that excess in the soul inevitably causes defects in the body and vice versa. He writes, 'If…the soul is in good case and has been developed to its proper stature by the practice of virtue, the body suffers corresponding deterioration'.[520] Moreover, St Basil writes in *Iei.* 1, 'The one who has joined the side of the flesh prevails over the spirit and the one who has switched to the side of the spirit enslaves the flesh. "For these are opposed to each other" (Gal. 5:17). Hence if you wish to make your mind strong, subdue your flesh through fasting'.[521] We face here this struggle between the spirit and the flesh, which we can interpret as two attitudes to life, one focused only on the bodily passions and another focused just on the spirit, both of which are wrong attitudes. This tension is a consequence of the Fall. These passages also demonstrate how closely the body and the soul are interconnected.

Further, St Basil encourages one to marvel at how soul and body are joined and permeate each other. He writes, 'Consider, also, what this power is which the soul imparts to the body and what sympathy the body renders the soul in return…' He continues, 'Think of how the soul

[516] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 35.
[517] St Basil, *Is.*, 16-7.
[518] Ibid., 62.
[519] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 7', 175.
[520] St Basil, 'Att.', 97; see also 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 244.
[521] St Basil, 'Iei. 1', 67.

destroys the beauty properly belonging to it by yielding to carnal passion and how, on the contrary, it recovers the likeness to its Creator through the practice of virtue, after it has been purified from the shame of iniquity'.[522] In relation to virtues, Harrison notes that the Fathers talked about human nature, person and energies in a similar way to the nature, person and energies in God. The energies/activities in humans are virtues, which they are called to acquire and exercise, share with God and share in God's energies.[523] As Bouteneff notes, 'Unlike that of Basil, Platonic anthropology was not particularly concerned to ascribe a particular role to the body or to address the soul's interaction with it'.[524]

St Basil develops this theme of destroying the likeness to God by following carnal passions. Explaining in *Hom. in Ps.* 32 that God sees the hearts of all humans, he writes, 'He even looks into the hearts, which he himself formed without any admixture of evil. God, the Creator of men, made the heart simple according to his own saving image; but later we made it, by union with passions of the flesh, a complicated and manifold heart, destroying its likeness to God, its simplicity, and its integrity'.[525] We see from these words that humans themselves are the authors of evil, and that likeness, not image was destroyed as a result of sin. We also interestingly notice that just as the Spirit is simple, so the human heart was also made simple.

Even though St Basil does not mention the body as made in the image of God in *Hom. in Ps.* 32, [526] and in *Hom. in Ps.* 48 he says that the body makes humans lower in dignity than angels, he, nevertheless, demonstrates that the human bodily constitution testifies to its celestial origins. In *Hex.* 9 he writes, 'The herds are earthy and are bent toward the earth, but man is a heavenly creature who excels them as much by the excellence of his soul

[522] St Basil, 'Att.', 104.
[523] Harrison, 'The Human Person', 81.
[524] P.C. Bouteneff, *The Theological Value of Christ's Human Soul in the Cappadocian Fathers* (Oxford University, PhD, 1996), 48.
[525] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 242.
[526] As Hildebrand notes, Tertullian affirms that the flesh is made in God's image: 'God forbid, God forbid (I repeat), that he should abandon to everlasting destruction the labour of his own hands, the care of his own thoughts, the receptacle of his own Spirit, the queen of his creation, the inheritor of his own liberality, the priestess of his religion, the champion of his testimony, the sister of his Christ!' See Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, 29.

as by the character of his bodily structure…Your head stands erect toward the heavens; your eyes look upward, so that, if ever you dishonour yourself by the passions of the flesh, serving your belly and your lower parts, "you are compared to senseless beasts, and are become like to them"' (Ps. 48:13).[527] In addition, St Basil writes that human dignity lies also in the fact that God made humans, unlike animals, with his own hands. When interpreting Genesis 2:7, St Basil writes that 'Our body is quite worthy to be entirely moulded by [God's] own hands'. The body was created for no other reason than 'to be an instrument fit for the glory of God'.[528] Moreover, he interprets the phrase 'fill the earth' as 'fill the flesh which has been given you for serving through good works…Let every usage of our limbs be filled with actions according to the commandments'.[529] Thus, the body shares in the dignity of the soul and participates in the dignity of divine deliberation.[530]

Moreover, the Pauline idea about the body as a dwelling place of God (1 Cor. 6:19) is of key importance in St Basil's thought. Commenting on Psalm 14:1, 'Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? And who shall dwell on your holy mountain?', he explains that God's tent is the human flesh 'given by God to the soul of a human being as a place of habitation' and that 'we are entrusted with the care of our flesh under a contract, whereby we are obligated to care for it properly through a labour of love so that we may return it to the Giver fruitful'. This is a very positive and elevated view of the human body since it is seen as a dwelling of the soul and should become fruitful to God, rather than being neglected. He further writes, 'And if the flesh is worthy of God, it truly becomes a tent of God insofar as it is his place of habitation in the saints'. Thus, the body becomes a dwelling place not just of the soul, but also of God. St Basil continues, 'So then, if someone transcends this flesh, sojourning undisturbed by the passions as if this flesh were foreign to him, and if he is not attached to it as if it were his very own, then on account of the

[527] St Basil, 'Hex. 9', 138. We find the same thought in St Basil, 'Att.', 104. St Gregory of Nyssa develops it in his *Op. Hom.*, ch. 8, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2914.htm, <accessed 14.02.2016>.
[528] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 50-1.
[529] Ibid., 52.
[530] Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, 31.

mortification of his members upon the earth and his acquisition of holiness he is worthy of dwelling on the holy mountain [which is a heavenly country/paradise]'.[531] However, St Basil writes that 'it is rare for someone to both sojourn in the body and dwell on the mountain'. We see here that the ideal, according to St Basil, is being undisturbed by the passions and unattached to the body, but still caring for it and making it fruitful. In order to let God enter the human body one has to prepare it by fighting against passions. We find a similar idea in St Basil's interpretation of Isaiah 1:8 where he explains that the 'tent' is the body where the Spirit is dwelling, and the 'vineyard' is the soul charged with bringing forth fruits.[532]

Similarly, commenting on Isaiah 1:13, as referring to the immaterial and pure worship of God, 'St Basil writes that we should not deem that God seeks after the pleasure of the smell of incense, but should realise that 'incense to the Lord is bodily sanctity made perfect by restraint in the soul when the aspects of the soul are balanced and not in conflict with each other'.[533] Thus, one can acquire holiness in the body by keeping all parts of the soul in the right order. In addition, St Basil comments on Psalm 33:10, 'Unless fear disciplines our life, it is impossible successfully to attain holiness in body…those who are possessed by the divine fear in their soul escape all annoyance from sinful passions' and will be 'failing with regard to no virtue'.[534] We see that it is possible to achieve holiness in the body, but not without the assistance of the soul. The soul uses the body in order to acquire likeness to God.

Furthermore, St Basil states that one can serve God with the body. In *Hom. in Ps.* 32 he describes how one can praise God. One should first praise God 'on the harp', that is, 'to render harmoniously the actions of the body' and 'since we sinned in the body…let us give praise with our own body, using the same instrument for the destruction of sin'. He continues, 'For, it is necessary, first, to correct the actions of our body, so that we perform them harmoniously with the divine Word and thus mount up to

[531] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 14' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 93-4.
[532] St Basil, *Is.*, 27.
[533] Ibid., 40.
[534] St Basil, 'Hex. 5', 259.

the contemplation of things intellectual'.[535] He explains that the body participates in glorifying God by performing virtues opposite to vices: blessing, making restitution, fasting, being humble, consoling, and by correcting its actions. Moreover, St Basil frequently gives examples of achieving likeness to God which involve the body. He writes about 'bodily service' which comprises fraternal love and compassion, good works, fasting, tears in prayer, and dominating the passions of sin.

4.2.3 The Human Spirit and the Holy Spirit

Having explored how St Basil understands the image and likeness to God and the relationship between the soul and the body in humans, we will examine his views on the human spirit. First, we will look at what St Basil's predecessors said about the nature of human spirit and its relationship with the body and the soul. The question of a trichotomous nature of human being was raised in the early church. St Irenaeus explains that the soul is spiritual when it is permeated by the power of the Spirit and it can spiritualize itself through free choice.[536]

Origen mentions three parts in human nature, calling the third element the spirit, the intellectual part or the heart. In addition to 1 Thessalonians 5:23 he cites Romans 8:16, and 1 Corinthians 2:11 as referring to the human spirit, which in these texts is presented as a good element in human nature, incapable of evil. Origen understands the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22 as relating sometimes to the Spirit and sometimes to the human spirit.[537] The soul is that part of human nature, which lies between the weak flesh and the willing spirit, capable of turning either to good or to evil. It is that part, which has fallen away from its original status, but is capable of restoration through association with the spirit. The soul must break association with the body and associate with the spirit in its struggle

[535] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 229-30.
[536] T. Špidlík, *Prayer. The Spirituality of the Christian East*, vol. 1, trans. A. P. Gythiel (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1986), 92-110. According to Clement, the Spirit blends and unites himself mysteriously with the human spirit, as wine with water, and the true gnostic who strives to become spiritual 'is united to the Spirit through the love that knows no bounds'; see Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.*, ed. Roberts, Donaldson, Coxe, trans. W. Wilson, ANF 2 (New York: CLP, 1885), b. 2.2, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0209.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>.
[537] Wiles, *The Divine Apostle*, 31.

against the flesh. The effect of receiving the Spirit is to render the human spirit holy.[538] According to Origen, those who are in the spirit and not in the flesh are said to be those who by their deeds and manner of life merit having the Spirit of God within themselves.[539]

Didymus follows Origen in putting greater emphasis on the threefold division of human nature. The soul is known while the spirit knows. Sometimes he uses 'spirit' as a simple equivalent for 'soul'. He asserts that by nature humans consist of body and soul, but only the believer can be described in threefold terms. According to Didymus, not all references to spirit are references to the divine person of the Spirit. Diodore and Chrysostom, in their turn, interpret 'our spirit' of Romans 8:16 with which the Spirit bears witness as 'that which we have through baptism'. They classify humans into three groups: spiritual, psychic and bodily. Only the first group has spirit, which is also its dominant component. [540] In stating this, they follow Didymus. Apollinaris of Laodicea was convinced that the soul performed a mediatory function between the spirit and the body. Theologians of the church considered that this view would lead to a concept of two different souls, and therefore to a splitting of the human subject into two centres: thus, the trichotomous view was condemned as heretical at the Fourth Council of Constantinople in 869-70.[541]

Very rarely does St Basil write about the human spirit as a part of human nature alongside the soul and the body. However, he writes about the human spirit in different contexts. First, he writes about it in relation to baptism. In *Bapt*., St Basil encourages the baptised to show docility and submission in observing the evangelical precepts and to 'send [their] light, fervent in spirit, and gain deliverance from the power of darkness…'[542] Thus, through their ardent spirit, Christians should share the good news. Furthermore, St Basil states that the one who is poor in spirit but was not born of water and the Spirit cannot enter into the kingdom of God.[543] He

[538] Ibid., 33-4.
[539] Ibid., 118.
[540] Ibid., 35-6.
[541] R.S. Anderson, *On Being Human. Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 207-8.
[542] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 363.
[543] Ibid., 353.

comments on St Paul's understanding of baptism in the *Epistle to the Galatians* and writes that those who are born of the Spirit are, necessarily, of a spiritual nature. He continues, 'But this spirit is not according to that great glory of the Holy Spirit which cannot be comprehended by the human mind, but it is according to the glory which is in the distribution to every man for his profit of the gifts of God, through his Christ. It is mysteriously discerned also in the operation of all these gifts and in other instances, by words, likewise, as when we recall to memory the commandments of God which were proclaimed through our Lord Jesus Christ'. Thus, humans become spirit through baptism and this is perceived in the operation of the spiritual gifts. St Basil also recalls the Apostle who tells about the attitudes of mind when a person becomes spiritual, 'the fruit of the spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience (Gal. 5:22)'. The person who becomes spirit is 'strengthened by his [God's] Spirit with might unto the inward man (Eph. 3:14-16)'. Those who live and walk in the Spirit become receptive of the Spirit and are enabled to confess Christ (Gal. 5:25, 1 Cor. 12:3). In this spiritual regeneration, as St Basil explains, a person changes his/her abode and alters his/her ways by strengthening the inner man in spirit; as a result, such a person also changes his/her companions.[544] Thus, a person who becomes spirit experiences charity, joy, peace and is strengthened by the Spirit. Through the Spirit he/she is able to confess Christ, and his/her whole life is changed. In addition, St Basil explains that a disciple of Christ is the one who follows him, hears his words, believes and obeys him. If a person perseveres in this disposition then he/she will become free (Jn. 8:31-2), which St Basil interprets saying, 'we shall receive freedom of spirit from the cruel tyranny of the devil by being delivered from the dominion of sin'.[545]

Moreover, St Basil mentions the human spirit and evokes the verse of 1 Corinthians 2:11 to give one of his most important arguments for the divinity of the Spirit and his unity with the Father and the Son. He shows that the relationship between the Spirit, on the one hand, and the Father

[544] Ibid., 377-8.
[545] Ibid., 341.

and the Son, on the other hand, is the same as the relationship between the human spirit and human nature as a whole.[546] They are intimately related.

St Basil also writes about the human spirit when he explains what contrition and humility is. Commenting on Psalm 33:19, St Basil writes that the Lord is near to those who are contrite and humble in spirit; contrition of heart, according to St Basil, is the destruction of human reckonings. The contrite are also those who despise present things, follow the word of God, and use their mind for the more divine thoughts; they are also those who are not proud of anything human and have no vanity. St Basil continues, 'those who have destroyed the majesty and elevation of their soul' are cast down to the earth by sin; these are 'humbled but not in spirit; for their humility is not praiseworthy. But whoever, having the gift of the Holy Spirit, willingly humble themselves under their inferiors…these use humility in a spiritual way, making themselves the last of all…'[547] Thus, we see that human spirit becomes humble through the gift of the Spirit. Similarly, in *Renunc*., St Basil writes that the rank of cleric should not elate one, but should rather make one humble, since advancement in spirit is advancement in humility.[548]

Furthermore, St Basil writes about glorifying God with the spirit, as the highest part of human nature. In *Hom. in Ps.* 28, after reproaching his audience for unseemly behaviour in the church, he writes, 'Let the tongue sing, let the mind interpret the meaning of what has been said, that you may sing with your spirit, that you may sing likewise with your mind'.[549] Here we see the human spirit and the mind both singing glory to God. Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 29, St Basil interprets Matthew 12:33 by encouraging his audience to cleanse their hearts 'in order that you may bear fruit in the spirit and may be able, after becoming saints, to sing psalms intelligently to the Lord'.[550]

Further, St Basil writes about the disposition of the human spirit and the help of the Spirit in fighting with evil spirits. Among the necessary

[546] St Basil, *DSS*, 67.
[547] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 269-70.
[548] St Basil, 'Renunc.' in *Ascetical Works*, 30.
[549] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 210.
[550] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 218.

features of behaviour for the monk, St Basil mentions keeping the spirit uplifted.[551] The monk should love God as a son, but also fear and obey him as a servant, and 'work out his salvation in fear and trembling, fervent in spirit, girt about with the full armour (Eph. 6:13) of the Holy Spirit, overthrowing the Adversary with strength of body and spirit'.[552] We see here that both body and spirit, helped by the Spirit, participate in fighting against demons.

Moreover, St Basil writes about the human spirit being aroused by different passions. He writes in *Ira.* that neither sword, nor fire not any fearful thing can restrain 'the spirit frenzied with wrath', because such people are possessed by the devil.[553] Later, St Basil explains how one can avoid being insulted and offers two possibilities of being either the friends of God or 'men filled with the spirit of iniquity'.[554] St Basil mentions also the human spirit in *Mund*., writing that his previous rebukes of his addressees encouraged them to kindliness and zeal, because they are 'wise in the things of the spirit',[555] that is, they can make sense of rebuke, they can understand spiritual things. St Basil also mentions freedom of spirit from sin. Similarly, in *Renunc.*, St Basil encourages Christians not to rely upon noble birth in a fleshly sense or to seek worldly fame because the sensual person does not perceive the things that are of the Spirit.[556]

Thus, we see that in order to reach salvation and fulfilment of human nature one has to become spirit through baptism, being born of the Spirit. Baptism makes one's spirit free from sin. Importantly, St Basil also uses the human spirit in relation to human nature as an example to prove the divine nature of the Spirit. The Spirit grants humans humility of spirit. The Spirit strengthens the human spirit, soul and body in fighting against temptations. One's spirit unites with one's mind in glorifying God. St Basil mentions that one's spirit can be aroused by passions, and a person can be clever in the things of the Spirit.

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[551] St Basil, 'A Discourse on Ascetical Discipline' in *Ascetical Works*, 33.
[552] Ibid., 35. The same idea of the 'full armour of the Spirit' and fighting with demons and passions occurs in Ibid., 'Att.', 98.
[553] St Basil, 'Ira.' in *On the Human Condition*, 83.
[554] Ibid., 85.
[555] St Basil, 'Mund.', 164. See similar expression in Ibid., *Is*., 298.
[556] St Basil, 'Renunc.', 16.

4.3 Conditions for the Presence of the Spirit in the Life of Christians and for Acquiring the Knowledge of God

4.3.1 Life According to the Gospel or According to Passions

Very often St Basil opposes life according to reason or virtue to the life according to passions;[557] that is, life according to the Gospel[558] to a bestial or irrational existence, that is, a pleasure-loving life. Only the former allows one close communication with God and indwelling of the Spirit.

First, we will look at what St Basil means by the 'life according to the Gospel or virtue'.[559] We will continue the discussion initiated by scholars, as we have shown in the Introduction. As we will demonstrate, this phrase relates not just to the life of monastics but to that of all Christians, as we see in St Basil's words, '…God is called the Father of those who have believed in Christ and embrace the way of life of the Gospel'.[560] By this expression, he probably means the acceptance of Christian faith. He writes further that if a person complements his/her natural faculties with ascetic practice, he/she can advance much further in virtue. Augmenting his/her natural faculties, he/she can become 'with ascetic practice and aid from the Holy Spirit … worthy of brightness given by God's grace to saints'.[561] We see here a similarity to *DSS* 9 on the shining of saints as a result of their encounter with the Spirit. We see how St Basil mentions ascetic

[557] Interestingly, St Gregory of Nyssa writes about virginity according to passion or according to reason. He asserts that celibacy requires an interior purity of heart to accompany its physical purity. In *On Virginity* 2.2.14-18, he writes that to be a virgin according to reason the mind should be freed from the fetters of passion. Thus, it is opposed to being a virgin according to passion, i.e. to be engaged in an irrational practice of virginity. St Gregory's distinction is similar to that of Clement of Alexandria, who distinguished between irrational continence and continence according to reason; see M. Hart, 'Reconciliation of Body and Soul: Saint Gregory of Nyssa's Deeper Theology of Marriage', *TS* 51 (1990): 450-79, 457.

[558] St Basil uses the following expressions interchangeably: 'virtuous mode of life', 'perfect way of life', 'life of virtue', 'devout life', 'life according to the measure of Incarnation', 'life of perfection', 'life in accordance with the Gospel', 'life according to the Gospel of Christ', and 'life according to God' etc.

[559] St Basil writes about the attitude of monks to their relatives who might 'live according to God' or lead 'worldly life'; see id., *LR* 32, p. 233. He also mentions 'the perfect way of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ'; see id., Prologue to *SR,* 272; 'life according to God'; see id., *SR* 107, 112, pp. 232, 334. We also find the phrase 'life of virtue' meaning the monastic life; see St Basil, 'Renunc.' in *Ascetical Works,* 22. He calls ascetics 'those engaged in the combat of the devout life'; see St Basil, 'Iud.' in *Ascetical Works,* 54. St Basil mentions 'life of virtue' and 'a manner of life in harmony with God'; St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 1', 157.

[560] St Basil, *Is.*, 55

[561] Ibid., 59.

practice and the help of the Spirit, which expresses a synergy of human effort and divine grace in the process of salvation.[562] Furthermore, in one place, interpreting Isaiah 1:27, St Basil equates living according to the Gospel to Christianity,[563] saying that many nations accept such a life.[564] Commenting on Isaiah 5:20, St Basil explains that '… he who does not live according to virtue but is wrapped up in material passions, must be a man who warmly welcomes a life of evil like some light, but avoids life according to the commandment of the Lord'.[565] Thus, we see that this expression, 'life according to the Gospel', refers both to ascetics and to lay people. It is an important point because it means that in order to approach God and become worthy of the indwelling of the Spirit, one does not have to become a monastic, but should have the right disposition of mind and lead the ascetic life of fighting with passions and acquiring virtues. St Basil reproves following pleasures, but encourages performing virtues. In *Ep* 276, we see that a person can become a 'friend of God' by leading a life of virtue and that this does not necessarily entail becoming a monk.[566]

Moreover, St Basil writes about Christians who practised a life of virtue and asceticism in the world.[567] We find that there were ascetics in the world, who regarded the life of perfection as a virginal life. Firminus, for example, writes in *Ep* 117 (372) about the 'blessed life of asceticism which alone leads to salvation'.[568] He continues further, 'if we show it [deliberate choice] inflexible and steadfast as regards the life of perfection, the keeping of our virginity will, with the help of God, be unassailable and inviolate for us'.[569] This sounds radical. However, it does not mean a monastic life, but rather a life of spiritual struggles. In addition, in *Ep* 119 (372-73), St Basil writes to Eustathius about Basil and Sophronius who spread slanders about him. He writes, 'how much sorrow… and occasion for laughter they gave those in this wretched city who always loathe the life of piety, and who affirm that a pretence of chastity is practised as a

[562] See further discussion in Chapter Five.
[563] We find similar phrases in St Basil, *Ep* 265, vol. 28, 247; *Ep* 22, vol. 13, 55, 57.
[564] Ibid., 83.
[565] Ibid., 196.
[566] Ibid., vol. 28, 266.
[567] We have mentioned some examples in Introducion, 37-41.
[568] Ibid., 245.
[569] Ibid., 246.

means of winning confidence and as a form of conceit…As a result there is no practice so suspected of wickedness by the citizens here as the profession of the ascetical life'.[570] We see here how the local population regarded the ascetical life as hypocritical as a result of slander.

Moreover, St Basil writes about the lives of those who were baptised but not necessarily monks, as opposed to the lives of those who lived according to the rules of this world. He writes in *Bapt.* that the one who is baptised is 'completely set apart from those who live according to the old man'; he/she 'is set apart therewith from all who live according to this world and his mind is elevated to heavenly converse…' This person who is 'dead with Christ' is justified from sin (Rom. 6:7), that is, he/she is 'set free, he is delivered, he is cleansed of all sin; and not only of sin *in* word and deed, but also of all passionate movements of the mind'. No transient pleasure defiles his/her mind, 'by hating and execrating all evil, even the vicious inclinations of the mind, the baptised soul shows forth purity of heart…' [571] St Basil writes that the sins of the person who is baptised are remitted by the blood of Christ and that such a person 'will not only be cleansed from all iniquity and sin, but also from every stain of the flesh and the spirit' (2 Cor. 7:1).[572] Therefore, the baptised person is baptised in the death of Christ and is conformed to his death, which means death to sin, oneself and to the world.[573] St Basil writes further in the treatise, 'Everyone, therefore, who has received the baptism of the Gospel ought to live in accordance with the Gospel…'[574] Thus, we see that 'life according to the Gospel' means here not necessarily a monastic life, but simply a life that is opposed to passions. It is striking how St Basil writes that a baptised person is free from any sin and passionate movements of the mind. The baptised person is set apart from those living according to this world and has his/her mind in heaven. This does not necessarily mean that

[570] Ibid., 248.
[571] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 368-9.
[572] Similarly in *Hom. in Ps.* 33 (this homily treats preparation to contemplation, mortification of the body and, thus, is not addressed to great public; see Bernardi, *La prédication*, 40. St Basil writes that those who possess divine fear 'escape all annoyance from sinful passions. In him who fears there is not want, that is, he is failing with regard to no virtue…' and such a person 'will commit no sin'. Thus, the fear of God helps to avoid passions and acquire all virtues; see St Basil, 259.
[573] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 362.
[574] Ibid., 391.

this person lives away from society, in a monastic community. It might merely mean a disposition of the mind. Likewise, St Basil writes that in order to lead a life according to virtue one should obtain remission of sins from God.[575] Therefore, one who repents of his previous sins should separate off the past by a boundary and begin a new life.

However, in some contexts this phrase may refer to *either* the monastic way of life (life in an organized community of monks) *or* the life of all the baptised. Commenting on Isaiah 1:26, St Basil writes that the Church in Christianity can be called '"a mother-city" despatching from herself as it were some colonies, which lead lives according to Gospel'.[576] This may indicate either the communities of monks or all Christians. He explains Isaiah 8:11-14, saying that the way to the kingdom of heaven is hard and 'many cannot bear the roughness and laboriousness of the life led according to virtue. For evil entices by the smoothness of pleasure, while virtue makes the life of those practising asceticism rough by hard discipline and labour.'[577] By this phrase St Basil means either the high standards of the Gospel compared to the Old Testament addressed to everyone or the ascetic life of monastics.

Moreover, in other places 'life according to the Gospel' most likely refers to monastic life. In *Ep* 207, 'To the Clergy of Neo-Caesarea' (375), after defending himself against slanders, St Basil mentions ascetics of Egypt and Mesopotamia. He mentions women who 'choose to live according to the Gospel, preferring virginity to marriage, bringing into subjection the proud designs of the flesh…' He continues, 'we profess to have orders of men and women whose conduct of life is heavenly, who have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires…'[578] We see here the austerity of the ascetic life, when flesh is denied with all its passions and desires; this passage clearly refers to monastic life. Further, in his *Ep* 10, 'To a Widow', St Basil writes that her son joined him and St Basil encourages her to come to 'our lofty way of life'.[579] In this context, he is referring to

[575] St Basil, *Is.*, 48
[576] Ibid., 72.
[577] Ibid., 257.
[578] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 83.
[579] Ibid., vol. 13, 44.

the ascetic life, since he was practising the ascetic lifestyle even in the world as a bishop.

Further, St Basil writes about renunciation as a prerequisite for leading a monastic life. In *Ep* 291, 'To the Suffragan Bishop Timotheus', while reproving him, St Basil mentions that 'it is not possible at the same time to have both the goods of the world and to lead a life according to God',[580] which means that monks and clergy had to renounce their possessions. Similarly, in *LR* 8, St Basil explains that it is necessary first to renounce everything and then come to the way of life according to God. He writes, '…before all else we renounce the devil and the cravings of the flesh…and bodily relationships and human friendships and any manner of life at war with the strict way of the Gospel of salvation'.[581] St Basil writes further that 'renunciation is the beginning of our becoming like Christ' and without accomplishing it, it is impossible to attain the way of life, which is according to the Gospel of Christ. St Basil asks, 'For how can contrition of heart, or a humble disposition, or deliverance from anger, grief, anxieties, and, in brief, all the destructive passions of the soul, be achieved amid the riches and the cares of this life, amid entanglement and habitual preoccupation with other matters?'[582] Thus, we see that, according to St Basil, one can start achieving likeness to God by renouncing the world and the cares of life. If these words were not found in the *Asketikon*, one might refer them to all Christians; however, it seems to refer to a monastic audience. It is also striking that, according to St Basil, it is harder to fight with passions in the midst of the world than in the monastic community. He also writes about this way of life as exclusively practised in the monastic environment. It sounds very radical, as if salvation is possible only in the monastery.

St Basil similarly writes about the cares of this world in *Hex*. 5, addressed to a wide public. He compares humans to climbing vines, who embrace with charity their neighbours, keep their desires always in direction to heaven, and their soul 'dug about' (Lk. 13:8), 'when we put aside the cares

[580] Ibid., vol. 28, 281.
[581] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 186.
[582] Ibid., 190.

of the world, which are a burden to our hearts. Therefore, he who has laid aside carnal love and the desire of possessions, or who has considered the violent desire for this wretched little glory detestable and contemptible, has, so to say, been "dug about" and freed of the vain burden of the earthy spirit, has breathed again'.[583] Thus, contrary to *LR* 8, St Basil describes the renunciation of passions as possible in the world; he contrasts Christian inner disposition with the worldly one.

Next, we will look at how St Basil employs the expression 'the life according to passion/pleasure'. Commenting on Isaiah 1:3, St Basil writes that the one who disregards God is compared to ox and ass: 'Such are those who live not according to reason but according to passion, being submitted by irrationality to a life like that of the beasts'.[584] Interpreting Isaiah 5:20, he writes, 'For he who does not convert from licentiousness and love of pleasure to chastity, "holds" for himself "bitter to be sweet", and he who flees life according to the Gospel and chooses a beastly and irrational existence, "holds" for himself "light to be darkness"'.[585] Thus, the life according to passions is related to pleasure, and the latter is the reason for a perceptive confusion between what is good and what is evil. Further, St Basil writes that sin makes one forget one's royal dignity. [586] In *Hom. in Ps.* 7, he writes that the soul of a person who severs him/herself from affection for the body, has life hidden with Christ in God. However, 'the soul of the sinner and of him who lives according to the flesh and is defiled by the pleasures of the body is wrapped up in the passions of the flesh as in mud…'[587] Thus, we see that life according to reason is opposed to the life according to flesh/passions of the body and bestial life. The life according to reason is open to all Christians.

Moreover, in *Hom. in Ps.* 44, St Basil writes about the mutability of human nature as related to pleasure: 'We are also changed through our concupiscences, becoming like beasts through a life of pleasure'.[588] Thus, whereas a life according to the Gospel allows one to acquire likeness to

[583] St Basil, 'Hex. 5', 76.
[584] St Basil, *Is.*, 16. Similar expression in id., 123, St Basil, 'Renunc.', 20.
[585] Ibid., 203. Similar idea in id., 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 208.
[586] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 327.
[587] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 7', 169.
[588] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 44', 276.

God and become a dwelling of the Spirit, the life of pleasure makes one like animal. Similarly, when humans become slaves of the passions of the flesh, they take up 'the image of the earthly'.[589] St Gregory of Nyssa writes similarly in his sixth *Homily on Beatitudes* about taking the image and form of devil by leading a sinful life.[590]

Further, St Basil mentions carnal life when he explains what St John the Evangelist means by the term 'world' and how it is related to the knowledge of God. St Basil writes that like the Father and the Son, the Spirit is incomprehensible[591] in nature and cannot be grasped by our thoughts and by the 'world'. He explains that the 'world', which cannot know God (Jn. 17:25), consists of those who are tied down by a carnal and material life and who restrict truth to the visible things. They do not believe in resurrection and 'become unable to see the Lord with the eyes of their hearts'.[592] St Basil continues, 'A carnal man's mind is not trained in contemplation, but remains buried in the mud of fleshly lusts, powerless to look up and see the spiritual light of the truth…the "world"- or a life enslaved by carnal passions - can no more receive the grace of the Spirit'.[593] Therefore, we see that the 'world' (ὁ κόσμος) represents those who are immersed in passionate life and thus cannot contemplate, see, or know God and are not sensitive to the light of truth. By 'the light' of the truth he means all spiritual things, borrowing this image from John 14:6 and other.

St Basil also writes about self-control in relation to the life of piety. He describes this virtue as abstinence not just from food but also from all pleasures. In *LR* 16 he explains that self-control is one of the gifts of the Spirit; with its help, the ministry is blameless and the body is brought under subjection.[594] By self-control St Basil means not complete

[589] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 325.
[590] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer*; *The Beatitudes*, ed., trans. H.C. Graef (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press; London: Longmans, Green 1954), 153.
[591] Only faith, a gift of the Spirit, can give one a glimpse of God in darkness as in a mirror; see Karam, 'Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit', 157.
[592] St Basil, *DSS*, 84. He took this image from Matthew 6:22, Ephesians 1:18 and other Biblical texts.
[593] St Basil comments on the same verse from John 17:25 and John 14:17 in *LR* 5; see Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 175.
[594] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 206.

abstinence from food, but 'abstinence from pleasures practised in order to overthrow "the mind of the flesh" (Rom. 8:6) in view of the goal of piety: by that with which the necessary but not superfluous sustenance of life is consistent, when we avoid what is gratifying and fulfil solely what necessity requires of the body. In summary, then, abstinence from all that those who live according to passion crave to enjoy, this is the abstinence necessary for those who train themselves to piety'.[595] Thus, we see that the Spirit assists those who wish to lead a life according to piety by granting them the gift of self-control. It is this gift which differentiates true Christians from those who follow a life according to passion.

Therefore, we have seen that St Basil's use of the phrase 'life according to the Gospel' is not always related to the monastic life. It can mean the life of a married/lay Christian. St Basil also opposes the 'life according to reason' to the 'life according to pleasures'. When passions rule over reason, a person becomes bestial, falls below human dignity, is unable to attain likeness to God, and receive the grace of the Spirit. One can become like Christ by renouncing the devil, the flesh, and by overcoming passions. In addition, St Basil writes that self-control, as one of the gifts of the Spirit, is necessary in order to abstain from passions and pleasures.

4.3.2 The Passionate State of a Person as a State of Drunkenness and Darkness of Mind

Further, St Basil likens a person overcome by passions to someone who is in a state of drunkenness, which makes it impossible for the Spirit to come. He writes, '…wine submerges reason and mind…kindles desires and pleasures', 'drunkenness is a source of godlessness, being a darkening of the meditative thinking through which God chiefly comes to be received'.[596] Here he writes about drunkenness in a literal sense, whereas other texts treat it in a more metaphorical sense. St Basil writes that just as drunkenness 'brings darkness to reason, so also the passions of lust or grief, or anger prevailing over reason drive those who are possessed by

[595] Ibid., 207.
[596] St Basil, *Is.*, 180-1.

them out of their mind'.[597] In the same text St Basil compares the darkness of ignorance and life outside of Christianity and darkness of estrangement from God with the darkness of passions. He also writes about passions making one drunk and unable to think properly. Similarly, when St Basil replies in *DSS* to the objection that we are baptised into water and how baptism in Moses (1 Cor. 10:2) is a type of baptism in Christ, he writes that his enemies 'argue like raging warriors sparing no attempt in their attack when they are offended. They have allowed their passions to obscure their reasoning'.[598] Thus, they cannot understand the truth of the divine nature of the Son and the Spirit because of their passions.

Further, St Basil writes specifically about anger as causing darkness when it is used in an unfitting way, 'Indeed, this vice [anger], when it has once succeeded in banishing reason, itself usurps the dominion over the soul. It makes a man wholly bestial and, in fact, it does not even allow him to be a man, since he no longer has the aid of his reason.'[599] St Basil writes that anger is 'a kind of temporary madness…It brings estrangement from God, forgetfulness of the ties of kindred, cause for strife, a full measure of disaster'.[600] Thus, the rule of passions in the person renders him/her bestial in nature.

Commenting on Isaiah 5:22, St Basil writes that the servants of the divine word, that is, priests, should keep away from everything that produces disturbance in the ruling aspect of the soul, including wine.[601] He describes grief, fear, love of glory and power, and all passions as drunkenness, or as an inability to follow with the mind, because they confuse the mind and prevent contemplation.[602] In relation to priests, St Basil writes that in the same way as rams are animals capable of leading, 'such are those who are set over the flock of Christ, since they lead them forth to the flagrant and flowery nourishment of spiritual doctrine, water them with living water, the gift of the Spirit…'[603] Priests should be above

[597] Ibid., 183.
[598] St Basil, *DSS*, 57.
[599] St Basil, 'Ira.', 447-8.
[600] Ibid., 460.
[601] St Basil, *Is.*, 206.
[602] Ibid., 207.
[603] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 195.

any passion and should set an example for people, because they are called to expound the spiritual doctrines that are a gift of the Spirit.

Thus, we have seen that a person who is overcome by passions is in a state similar to drunkenness and darkness. Such a person cannot use reason and is in a state of madness. It prevents them from contemplation of truth and knowledge of God.

4.3.3 Purity of Heart

Turning to the next theme, St Basil writes that in order to approach God one has to manage in some way the passionate movements of the soul. This can be done by means of controlling or destroying the passions so that purification may be achieved. We will first look at how St Basil describes purification, purity of heart and holiness.

St Basil describes in *Is*. how one can prepare to receive the Spirit. Entrusting people with different gifts, the Spirit is present everywhere, 'but he manifests his own particular power to those [who are] pure from passions, and no longer to those in whom the ruling aspect of the soul is confused by the stains of sin'. Not only purity, but also even temper and self-restraint are required, and 'the sentiment of the flesh' (Rom. 8:6-7) has to be subjected to the Spirit.[604] Likewise, St Basil writes in *Inv*., saying, 'So if virtue is a greater and more lasting good and is universally acknowledged as preferable, we ought to pursue it. But virtue cannot be present in the soul unless the soul is purified of all the passions, especially jealousy'.[605] He also writes that one can acquire virtue by practicing it. As Limberis puts it, 'Doing good works cleanses the body and opens the way for virtue to dwell in the person'.[606] We see that the Spirit or virtue cannot be present in the 'filthy' soul.

Further, in *Reg*. *Mor*., St Basil writes about the necessity of purification for the fulfilment of the Gospel, 'That for the one who has hearkened to the Gospel it is necessary first to be cleansed from all defilement of flesh

[604] St Basil, *Is.*, 3.
[605] St Basil, 'Inv.' in *On Christian Doctrine*, 144.
[606] V. Limberis, 'The Eyes Infected by Evil: Basil of Caesarea's Homily, "On Envy"', *THTR* 84.2 (Apr., 1991): 163-84, 183.

and spirit, so that he might thus become acceptable to God in the good works of holiness'.[607] Similarly, in *Bapt*., St Basil encourages us to purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and the spirit so as to achieve 'perfect holiness in love of Christ'.[608] Thus, all parts of human nature should be made clean.

Next, St Basil writes that purity of soul allows one even to stand in the presence of God and shine with divine grace. In *Ep* 292, 'To Palladius', St Basil praises him for becoming a Christian and writes, 'Thus having preserved the seal unsullied, you may stand beside the Lord, shining with the brightness of the saints, having put no stain or wrinkle in the garment of immortality, but retaining sacredness/holiness in all your members, as having put on Christ. Therefore, let all your members be holy that they may be worthy to be covered by that holy and radiant robe'.[609] Thus, we see that everyone should preserve holiness of both body and soul and spirit in order to be able to be in the presence of God. Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 115, St Basil explains, 'When a soul becomes pure in its manner of life, free from fleshly defilements…and when because of all these things it gleams with the beauty of virtue, it stands in the presence of the Lord and Judge of the universe in possession of the shining brilliance that comes from grace, which is more splendid than every precious stone'. [610]

Next, St Basil writes that both the book of Psalms and the book of Proverbs teach virtues and help to get rid of passions. St Basil writes that '…the starting point in acquiring the good is withdrawal from evil'.[611] Similarly, St Basil comments on Psalm 33:15, 'Turn away from evil and do good, seek after peace and pursue it' by saying that mere abstinence from evil is not a characteristic of a perfect man. However, 'it is impossible to cleave to the good unless one has withdrawn entirely and turned away from the evil'.[612] In addition, St Basil writes about the book

[607] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 2.2, 109.
[608] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 407.
[609] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 283.
[610] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 224.
[611] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 1', 152, 157.
[612] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 266.

of Proverbs, that it 'teaches what pertains to true justice, rescues human beings from their irrational passions'.[613]

St Basil also writes that God accepts worship only from the pure heart. He explains Psalm 28:10, 'Bring to the Lord, o ye children of God', saying that not everyone's gift is acceptable to God, but only that of the one who brings it with a pure heart. He writes, '…therefore, the psalm first wants us to be the children of God, then to seek to carry our gifts to God', whichever he has appointed.[614] In a similar way, in *Hom. in Ps.* 32, commenting on verse 1, 'Praise becometh the upright', St Basil writes that 'the praise of God is [not] suited to perverted hearts' and 'there is a need of a righteous heart, in order that the praise may be fitting and adapted to it'.[615] Moreover, St Basil writes, 'if "no one can say Jesus is Lord, except in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3), how would you give praise, since you do not have the right spirit in your heart'.[616] Thus, we see that the Spirit enables not just confession of Jesus as Lord, but also praise of God. We see here a parallel between the Spirit and the human spirit. Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 115, writing about the true sacrifice (Ps. 115:8), St Basil states that he will offer to God 'that which is my very own personal possession and the offspring of my heart, namely, I will glorify you from my very own mind, as if from an altar'. St Basil explains that God does not demand sacrifice of material things but 'confession from a good disposition and true heart'.[617]

Furthermore, St Basil writes that one needs a pure heart in order to know oneself[618] and to contemplate the Spirit. Further, St Basil writes in *De Fide,* 'The mind which can be purified of the material passions, and leave behind every intelligible creature, and swim like a fish from the depths to the surface above, that mind, when it becomes purified of the created order, will see the Holy Spirit there where the Son is and where the Father is'.[619] Similarly, St Basil writes in *DSS*, '…the Spirit comes to us when we

[613] Ibid., 64.
[614] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 194.
[615] See the same idea in St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 218.
[616] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 228-9.
[617] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 225.
[618] St Basil, *'*Adol.', ch. 9, http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/basil_litterature01.htm, <accessed 02.04.2017>.
[619] St Basil, 'De Fide', 237.

withdraw ourselves from evil passions, which have crept into the soul through its friendships with the flesh, alienating us from a close relationship with God. Only when a man has been cleansed from the shame of his evil, and has returned to his natural beauty, and the original form of the Royal Image has been restored in him, it is possible for him to approach the Paraclete'.[620] We see that one who has been purified from passions and lifted above creation and intelligible realities, can contemplate the Spirit. Moreover, one has to become pure not only to contemplate the Spirit, but also to let the Spirit enter the soul. Similarly, St Basil writes that one needs to be cleansed from passions if he/she wishes even to explore creation and gain the knowledge of God from it.[621]

St Gregory of Nyssa also presents a beautiful metaphor concerning the requisite purity for the coming of the Spirit. He writes that just as the Spirit descended on the Virgin, so does he also present himself to the souls with virginal spirits, that is, to the souls detached from all impurity. According to St Gregory, the coming of the Spirit precedes the coming of the Father and the Son. He prepares the way by purifying the soul. It is due to the Spirit that the soul frees itself from passions which prevent it from attaining love and becoming a new creature. Galtier notes that here we see the influence of Origen who reserved especially to the Spirit the preparation of souls for reception of the Father and the Son. Purification brought about by the Spirit was also a current idea.[622]

Therefore, we see that in order to lead a life of virtue and let the Spirit dwell in one's soul and body, one should preserve the holiness of body, soul and spirit that they acquired through baptism, or to purify oneself if the passions defiled one's nature. The Spirit approaches and gives his power only to those who are pure from passions. The pure soul gleams with the beauty of virtue and divine grace. St Basil writes that both the Psalms and Proverbs teach virtues and help us to get rid of passions. We see that in order to become a 'son of God' one has to have a pure heart and attain holiness. In order not only to confess Jesus as Lord one has to

[620] St Basil, *DSS*, 44.
[621] St Basil, 'Hex. 1', 3.
[622] Galtier, *Le Saint-Esprit*, 176-92.

confess him in the Spirit, but also to praise God with pure heart, one has to be in the Spirit. We see that one who has been purified from passions and lifted above creation and intelligible realities, can contemplate the Spirit and let him enter the soul. Moreover, St Basil writes that one needs to be cleansed from passions even to explore oneself, creation and gain the knowledge of God from it.

4.3.4 Destruction or Control of Passions

Now we will look at how one can purify the soul from passions and how St Basil describes two ways of managing passions, namely, by destroying or controlling them.[623] There are two views concerning the management of passions among the Greek Fathers. Some see them as intrinsically evil, or as corruptions of our true nature, and therefore, believe that they should be destroyed; this was also the position taken by the early Stoics. Others regard the passions as neutral impulses which should be controlled and put to good use instead of being eliminated; this view is based on the thought of Plato and Aristotle.[624] It seems that St Basil holds the second view, but at times also expresses the first position, as we will show in some of the following texts.

The theologian interprets Isaiah 1:8 by saying that God requires not burnt offerings but 'that the mind, or ruling aspect of the soul, be offered up to me whole, not divided by earthly preoccupations, but as if purified by the fire… that simplicity of life issuing from a guileless soul should be dedicated to me…that the appetitive and incensive aspects of the soul be utterly destroyed through painstaking prayer and perseverance in devotions'.[625] It is possible to understand 'destruction' here not as elimination but as the quieting of the passions through spiritual practices.

[623] The theme of passions has been widely examined by modern scholars. See Vinzent M., Papadogiannakis Y. (eds), *SP* 83, vol. 9 *Emotions* (Leuven, London: Peeters, 2017); J. Warren Smith, *Passion and Paradise and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa* (New York: Crossroad, 2004); C. Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus and the Eastern Monastic Tradition on the Intellect and the Passions', *Modern Theology* 27.2 (2011): 263-75 etc.

[624] K. Ware, 'The Meaning of "Pathos" in Abba Isaias and Theodoret of Cyrus', *SP* 20 (1989): 315-22, 315.

[625] St Basil, *Is.*, 35-6.

Further, commenting on Isaiah 5:16, St Basil mentions 'uproot[ing] passions and cut[ing] them from the soul'.[626]

Moreover, in *Ep* 42 'To Chilo, His Disciple' (before 371), St Basil advises him on the ascetic life. He writes about the gradual advance in spiritual life, saying, 'Therefore, gradually steal away from the pleasures of life, utterly destroying every worldly habit of yours, lest having aroused all your sensual desires at once, you should bring upon yourself a multitude of temptations. But, when with all your might you have prevailed over one passion of pleasure, gird yourself against another, and thus you will prevail in good time over all such pleasures'.[627] We see here military imagery being used for the destruction of desires and pleasures. Similarly in *Ep* 2, 'To Gregory', St Basil describes the ascetic solitary life, writing, 'Now, solitude provides us with the greatest help toward this achievement, quieting our passions, and giving leisure to our reason to uproot them completely from the soul. Just as animals, if they are stroked, are more easily subdued, so desires, wraths, fears, and griefs, the venomous evils of the soul, if they have been lulled to sleep by silence and have not been kept aflame by constant provocation, are more easily overcome by reason'.[628] In this we see how he is following the Stoics, in a way reminiscent of St Gregory of Nyssa. From these texts we see St Basil arguing that one should destroy passions by perseverance and prayer, by prevailing over one passion at a time, and by quieting them.

Further, St Basil also writes about training the passions. He was the first theologian in his day to express this idea of training passionate parts of the soul,[629] a view which Evagrius subsequently developed. Commenting on Isaiah 1:13 by relating it to the immaterial and pure worship of God, St Basil writes that we should not deem that God seeks after the pleasure of the smell of incense, but should realise that 'incense to the Lord is bodily sanctity made perfect by restraint in the soul when the aspects of the soul are balanced and not in conflict with each other'.[630] Thus, one has to attain

[626] Ibid., 195.
[627] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 104.
[628] Ibid., 7.
[629] Bouteneff, 'The Theological Value', 56.
[630] Ibid., 40.

holiness in the body by keeping the passionate parts of the soul in balance and not destroying them. In addition, in *LR* 2, St Basil explains that 'if we act uprightly and fittingly in these capacities [capacities to fulfil all the commandments], we fulfil by piety the life according to virtue, but if we corrupt their activity we succumb to vice'.[631] Similarly, in *Ep* 146, 'To Antiochus' (373), St Basil urges him 'to give earnest care to the safety of your soul, training all carnal passions according to reason, and keeping the thought of God continually fixed in your soul, as in a most holy temple.'[632]

St Basil also writes that humans have free will and are responsible for their actions, as well as for the right or wrong use of their souls and bodies. Commenting on Genesis 1:2, he writes, '…evil is not a living and animated substance, but a condition of the soul which is opposed to virtue and which springs up in the slothful because of their falling away from good… let each one recognize himself as the first author of the vice that is in him'. Some events in life happen naturally, like illnesses or old age; others occur accidentally, like meeting people; while still 'others however, are in our own power, as mastering our desires or neglecting to bridle our pleasures, as controlling our anger…'.[633]

Similarly to St Gregory of Nyssa, in Aristotle's line of thought, St Basil writes that, '…virtue is a mean (μεσότης) and a due proportion (συμμετρία), whereas excesses (ὑπερβολαί) and defects (ἐλλείψεις) exceeding on either side in respect of virtue are disproportion (ἀμετρία) and deformity (αἶσχος)'. He writes, 'Fairness of the soul is proportionality in respect of virtue, while deformity is disproportion originating from evil'.[634] Similarly, St Basil explains Psalm 7:11, saying, 'He is upright in heart who does not have his mind inclined to excess nor to deficiency, but directs his endeavours towards the mean of virtue'. [635] Further, St Basil writes about moderation in the passions. In his *Ep* 5, 'A Letter of Condolence to Nectarius', St Basil consoles him after the death of his son.

[631] Ibid., 163-4.
[632] Ibid., 294.
[633] St Basil, 'Hex. 2', 28-9.
[634] St Basil, *Is.*, 196
[635] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 7', 176.

He mentions 'the gift which God has placed in our hearts… [which is] sound reasoning' and it brings relief from suffering because it is able to keep 'our soul within moderate bounds' and reminds us of the lot of the mortal man.[636] Commenting on Psalm 61, St Basil mentions that evil spirits lay their snares thanks to a lack of moderation in humans.[637]

Likewise, when St Basil explains how to deal with anger in *Ira.*, he writes about its positive use. He explains that it is 'serviceable to us in many acts of virtue'; it 'is a sinew of the soul, which provides it with vigour for the accomplishment of good works'.[638] He continues, 'For, our hatred of sin should be as intense…as our love of virtue; and anger is very useful for bringing this about if…it follows closely the guidance of reason and remains quiet and docile to those who are helping it and readily obedient to the call of reason.' He writes, 'This cooperation between the irascible and the rational parts of the soul is most excellent and appropriate.' In the case of other powers of the soul, it is the same: each becomes good or evil depending on its use. The concupiscible part of the soul is put to good use if its possessor directs it 'toward the love of God and the desire for eternal goods' and not when he/she makes it 'subservient to carnal enjoyment and impure pleasure'. St Basil adds, '…anger, aroused at the proper time and in the proper manner, produces courage, endurance and continence; acting contrary to the right reason, however, it becomes a madness'.[639] Thus, we see that the passionate parts of the soul can be controlled and put to right use, and consequently produce virtues. Cooperation between the parts of the soul, without the destruction of some of them, is recommended. In addition, St Basil writes in *Adol*. concerning anger that 'one must altogether ignore the tragedy, which says in so many words: "Anger arms the hand against the enemy"; for it is much better not to give way to anger at all. But if such restraint is not easy, we shall at least curb our anger by reflection, so as not to give it too much rein'.[640] Thus, one should control it with the help of reason. Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 44, St Basil writes,

[636] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 14-5.
[637] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 61', 344. We find the same idea of right proportions and balance in the soul and rendering the passionate parts spiritual in St Basil, *Is.*, 41.
[638] St Basil, 'Ira.' in *Ascetical Works*, 456.
[639] Ibid., 457.
[640] St Basil, 'Adol.', ch. 7.

‘God has advantageously given all power to the rational soul, as that of loving, so also that of hating, in order that, guided by reason, we may love virtue but hate vice’.[641]

In a similar vein, St Basil describes the nature of another passion, namely, envy. Having shown many of its negative sides, St Basil asks, ‘Why are you not horrified at making yourself a servant of this deadly demon? Why instead do you admit that evil whereby you will become not only the enemy of those who do not wrong but also the enemy of God who is good and altogether free from envy?’[642] We notice how St Basil associates the passions with demons. He explains that the key to avoiding this passion is not to consider any human circumstance as great: ‘nor prosperity in human endeavour, nor renown which fades away, nor bodily health’. It is so because these things are ‘instruments of virtue when used in the right way, containing in themselves no intrinsic means to happiness’.[643] Thus, one should not envy anything, because it does not contain true good in itself.

Further, St Basil writes about virtues which help to restore harmony in the soul. Commenting on Psalm 61, St Basil writes that psalms 31 and 61, bearing the title ‘For Idithun’, mostly treat patience ‘through which the passions of the soul are reduced to order, all arrogance is banished, and humility is acquired’. Only the one who has acquired humility will be able to conquer wrath and the other passions, and will not be disturbed in the soul by words of disgrace and reproaches. One has to rule over the passions and emotions and serve God.[644] Thus, we see that one can or control the expression of passions by acquiring the virtues of patience and humility. Similarly, St Basil writes that meekness is the greatest of virtues. He explains, ‘Those of calm character and so free from all passion that they have no confusion present in their souls, they are the ones called meek’.[645]

St Basil explains that different manners of dealing with passion depend on the spiritual state of a person. Commenting on the words in Proverbs 31:4,

[641] St Basil, ‘Hom. in Ps. 44’, 289.
[642] St Basil, ‘Inv.’, 140.
[643] Ibid., 141.
[644] St Basil, ‘Hom. in Ps. 61’, 341-2.
[645] St Basil, ‘Hom. in Ps. 33’, 252.

he says that the person who has wisdom is 'prone to wrath'. He explains that at this point in Scripture it is recommended simply to restrain anger and to moderate the passions; [646] however, it does not discuss the passionless person (ἀπαθῆς) (Prov. 12:16, 29:11). Meanwhile the more perfect person, following command of Psalm 4:5, 'Be you angry and sin not', should cut out anger altogether and not simply prune it (Mt. 5:22).[647] Thus, we see that different methods of managing the passions depend on different levels of advancement in the spiritual life.

As Harrison notes, the Cappadocians and many other Fathers did not simply use, but also modified, Plato's model of human nature, stating that the soul and all its faculties are in harmony when a person obeys God, rather than simply his or her own reason.[648] However, I have noticed more references to the subjugation of the passions to reason than to God in St Basil's works, which demonstrates his deep foundations in the philosophical tradition.

To conclude, we see that most frequently St Basil suggests training the passionate parts of the soul and using them in a right manner, instead of completely destroying them. This may be because he addresses ordinary Christians who should control passions by reason and by acquiring patience and humility. However, he also advises destroying and totally uprooting the passions to those who have advanced further in spiritual life.

4.3.5 *Apatheia*, Self-Control and Inner Calm

Now, we will look at what St Basil can say about impassibility. He writes that the state of stillness and *apatheia* (passionlessness) is enabled by withdrawal from the world, both physically or spiritually. In this way the people of God, Christians, can attain tranquillity.[649] Further, he discusses the theme of stability of mind in *Hom. in Ps.* 28. He explains that 'Peace, which is a certain stability of mind, seems to be the most perfect of blessings, so that the peaceful man is distinguished by the calmness of his

[646] The person who moderates passions is called μετριοπαθῆς.
[647] St Basil, *Is.*, 206, 208
[648] Harrison, 'The Human Person', 82.
[649] St Basil, *Is.*, 42.

character, but, he who is attacked by his passions has not yet participated in the peace from God, which the Lord gave to his disciples'. He finishes the homily by saying, 'May it be granted to us, after we have struggled nobly and subdued the spirit of the flesh, which is an enemy of God, when our soul is in calm and tranquil state, to be called the sons of peace…'[650] We see how St Basil parallels these expressions: 'peace of mind', 'stability of mind' and 'tranquil state'. Whoever has this peace participates in God. It is also interesting how St Basil says that such a person not just controls passions, but is even not attacked by them. Perhaps he means that such a person does not even pay attention to the passions when they are stirred.

Further, St Basil writes about those who are above passions. Concerning keeping laughter in check, St Basil writes in *LR* 17, 'For to be overcome by unrestrained and unchecked laughter is a sign of intemperance, of a failure to steady the emotions and of a frivolity of the soul unchecked by strict reason'.[651] He continues, 'That is why he who is superior to every passion and does not admit any goad of pleasure, but is disposed to be self-controlled and unyielding towards every harmful enjoyment, is called perfectly self-controlled – and such a one is thereby clearly quit of every kind of sin'.[652] Thus, we see here that St Basil praises a self-controlled person, who is above any passion and does not commit any sin.

Next, in *Hom. in Ps.* 115, St Basil writes, 'Now those who are still in the grip of human passions are called "human beings". But as for the man who has already transcended his carnal passions, who because of the perfection of his intellect has passed over to the angelic state, when he discusses human concerns, it is clear that he excludes himself from the rest of humanity'.[653] We see that a perfect person is the one who is above passions, an idea mentioned above in *LR* 17, and in the angelic state.

Furthermore, St Basil writes about peace of the soul. He explains the words of David in Psalm 29:8, saying, 'As long as the rays of the sun of

[650] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 211.
[651] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 208.
[652] Ibid., 209-10.
[653] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 222.

your watchfulness shone upon me I lived in a calm and untroubled state, but, when you turned your face away, the agitation and confusion of my soul was exposed'. Thus, God enables life in an undisturbed state. St Basil continues that disorder is 'deformity and weakness of the soul, present in it because of its estrangement from God'. If the peace of God guards human hearts, then they will be able to escape the tumult and confusion of the passions. St Basil writes, 'We pray always for the face of God to shine upon us, in order that we may be in a state becoming to a holy person, gentle and untroubled in every way, because of our readiness for the good'.[654] Thus, the ideal is a holy person, with an ordered, calm and untroubled soul. It is affinity with God which guards humans from passions and gives peace. Thus, being above passions is made possible both through human effort and divine benevolence.

Further, St Basil explains Psalm 33:4, saying 'Let no one who is confused, no one who is disturbed, no one who is provoking his soul with the passions of the flesh, be united with me; but you, the meek, who have successfully attained to stability and firmness of soul, and who shake off sluggishness and drowsiness in the performance of your duties, you "magnify the Lord with me"'. Thus, only the meek can unite with God. We see that God gives peace to the soul, but humans should also fight against passions and acquire meekness. St Basil continues that it is necessary 'to achieve complete tranquillity from outside confusions, and bringing about an entire silence in the hidden recesses of the heart, thus to devote oneself to the contemplation of the truth'. He continues, '…not only indignation, but also concupiscence and cowardice and envy trouble the eye of the soul; and, on the whole, all the passions are confounding and disturbing to the clear-sightedness of the soul'.[655] Thus, we see that one should achieve inner silence from any disturbing passions. Further, St Basil comments on verse 15, 'as long as we were bound to the flesh, we were yoked to many things which also troubled us. Seek, then, after peace, a release from the troubles of this world; possess a calm mind, a tranquil and unconfused state of soul, which is neither agitated by the passions nor

[654] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 222.
[655] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 253.

drawn aside by false doctrines that challenge by their persuasiveness to an assent…'[656] It is interesting that a tranquil soul is not only affected by passions but also by false doctrines. We have shown above this interrelatedness of the spiritual life and the confession of right doctrines.

Further, in *Prov.*, St Basil writes about the necessity to steer wisely in life amidst different afflictions: '…the discerning steersman deals with what happens with careful attention to its underlying nature, and remains self-consistent at all times, neither elated by joys, nor dejected by misfortunes'.[657] We see an image of an almost Stoic wise man whose soul is in a stable state notwithstanding external circumstances. St Basil beautifully writes, 'For I know another kind of waves, that terrible storm that rises up against the soul from the passions of the flesh'. He continues, 'So the mind, as if a steersman, seated high above the passions and mounted on the flesh as if it were a ship and expertly turning the disturbing thoughts in the right direction as if they were rudders, must quell the waves in a vigorous manner'.[658] Thus, the mind should overcome passions and should be above them. One can steer well if he/she is guided by the commandments of the Lord. And also, 'If you never fall asleep at the tiller, then as long as you are in this life, in the midst of the instable nature of mundane realities, you will also receive assistance from the Spirit, who will propel you ever onward and transport you safely…to calm harbour of the will of God…'[659] We see that the Spirit guides humans and helps them in the course of life on the way to salvation. We also notice that the body is an instrument of the mind, which should be wisely directed.

Therefore, we see how St Basil describes the perfect man as being above any passion, having the peace of God in the soul, being self-controlled, as well as being helped by the Spirit in coming to salvation. St Basil also employs different metaphors in order to show how one should behave towards the passions and how one should lead a passionless life.

[656] Ibid., 266.
[657] St Basil, 'Prov.', 76.
[658] Ibid., 76.
[659] Ibid., 78.

Thus, from the above texts we can see that St Basil as also other Fathers does not distinguish 'passions' and 'emotions'. He understands 'passion' as lying at the root of irascible and concupiscible parts of the soul. It is a power of the soul which can be used in the good or bad way. In the first case, passion will manifest itself as a virtue, such as patience, humility, courage etc. In another case, it will appear as a vice, such as anger, envy, lust etc. The goal is to use human nature in a positive way and to have balance in the soul.

4.3.6 Conditions Necessary for the Contemplation, Illumination and Acquiring the Knowledge of God

St Basil also writes about the purification of passions in discussions of the role of the Spirit in contemplation of God and illumination. He explains in *Is.*, in a manner similar to what he says in his homilies on fasting, 'Some smoky vapours sent up from abundant and rich food block out, like a thick cloud, illuminations which are engendered in the mind from the Holy Spirit' (Is. 1:13-14). When Moses spoke with and contemplated God, he did not eat for forty days. In the same way did Elijah and the Lord when he descended to men.[660] St Basil explains that when flesh increases, the mind gets weaker. Ascetic practice and mortification of body are necessary for the fight with temptations and for the contemplation of God, and illumination from the Spirit.

We will now examine one text in which the theme of illumination is dominant. St Basil writes in *Ep* 210, 'To the Most Eloquent Citizens of Neo-Caesarea', that one has to purify the soul from passions in order to receive a divine vision concerning doctrinal questions. He defends himself against the calumnies of Eustathius of Sebaste and explains the doctrine of the Trinity. In the end of the letter, he reminds his correspondents of the comparison of evil teachings with deadly drugs made by opponents who were also dream interpreters. He writes, 'the prophetic gift shines in the souls that are undefiled and cleansed from every stain'. He continues, 'In fact, it is neither possible for the reflections of images to be received in a

[660] St Basil, *Is.*, 46

filthy mirror,[661] nor for the soul preoccupied with the cares pertaining to life and blinded by the passions arising from the pride of the flesh to receive the illuminations of the Holy Spirit'. He says that frequently an illusion is sent to unbelievers and they are being misled by false visions. One should not follow a vision if it contradicts the precepts of God. Besides, the Gospels have no need of visions in order to be proved reliable. One should not deem one's visions to be more authoritative than the doctrines of salvation.[662] Therefore, we see that St Basil, first, explains that humans who have not cleansed their souls cannot receive divine visions concerning any question of faith and doctrinal issues or receive a prophetic gift, and, second, that the doctrines of salvation contained in the Gospels are more important than visions. St Basil strongly believed in written revelation and emphasized its importance. Importantly, St Basil states that those who have a 'filthy mirror' (an image for the soul that frequently recurs in St Gregory of Nazianzus), that is, a soul blinded by passions, cannot receive prophetic gift and 'the illuminations of the Holy Spirit'. Thus, we see that St Basil is actively discouraging the kind of charismatic inspiration, which might have been prevalent in some circles, such as those of the Messalians.

Further, St Basil employs the images of sun, shining and light in *DSS* when describing the requisite purity of the soul. He writes that the person can approach the Spirit only after he/she has cleansed the soul from passions and 'the original form of the Royal Image has been restored in him[/her]'. He continues, 'Then, like the sun, he [the Spirit] will show you in himself the image of the invisible, and with purified eyes you will see in this blessed image the unspeakable beauty of its prototype'. Moreover, the Spirit shines upon those who are cleansed and makes them spiritual

[661] As Louth remarks, the idea of the soul as a mirror, which, when pure, can reflect the image of God is original to St Athanasius. For the Greeks the mirror image actually exists, it was not perceived as an illusion. The Fathers used this analogy to explain how the soul is the image of God. Self-knowledge involves the knowledge of God, because God made the soul to reflect his image; see A. Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 59, 79.

[662] In relation to visions, St Basil believes that is of no avail to make appeal, as some ascetics and heretics did, to some special endowments and *charismata* of the Spirit because 'even if someone may seem to confess the Lord and hear his words, but he disobeys his commandments, he is condemned'. See St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 7.1, 119.

men/women through fellowship with himself.[663] St Basil uses the images of sun and light to describe the work of the Spirit in the soul. As we have seen above, where he writes about the gift of prophecy 'shining' in the soul, so here he writes that the Spirit 'shines' in the soul. Similarly, St Gregory writes in *Vit. Moys.* that when a person withdraws from evil and turns to good it is as if he/she faces a mirror and God shows him/her images and impressions of virtues and imprints[664] them on the purity of his/her soul.[665] As Lebreton comments, 'Seeing God in the darkness', according to St Gregory of Nyssa, is seeing in the mirror of the soul. One cannot see divine essence except through the reflections in the soul, or in other words, through the image. This is a true mystical contemplation, which St Gregory calls *theologia*/*theognosia* (θεολογία/θεογνῶσια).[666]

Furthermore, St Basil explains that Jesus first cleansed his disciples through his teachings and then 'gave them the ability to both see and contemplate the Spirit'. He writes, 'The world cannot receive him [the Spirit], and only holy men can contemplate him through purity of heart'.[667] Here, in speaking of the Lordship of the Spirit, St Basil compares the one who contemplates the Spirit to Moses who spoke to God face-to-face. He says that the one who turns and fixes his gaze upon the Lord, the Spirit, is transfigured to greater brightness.[668] He also interestingly writes that Jesus prepared his disciples to contemplate the Spirit, which would not have happened if the Spirit had been lower in

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[663] St Basil, *DSS*, 44.

[664] As Calleres notes, St Gregory described the noetic letters inscribed into the soul's sensory substance. It enabled depositing the permanent stability of the immortal into the fluidity of the sensory and corruptible. He borrowed the Stoic understanding of impression as the fundamental constituent of true knowledge. According to Stoics, the goal of the virtuous life was *episteme* (secure cognition), which depended on the impression's imprint in the soul. Cognitive impression was understood as a building block of *episteme*, which allowed to forge non-corporeal impressions; see D.S. Kalleres, 'Demons and Divine Illumination: A Consideration of Eight Prayers by Gregory of Nazianzus', *VC* 61.2 (2007): 157-188, 173, 178.

[665] St Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.*, trans. A.J. Malherbe, E. Ferguson (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 65.

[666] J. Lebreton, 'Contemplation' in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, t. 2, col. 1643, p. 1775.

[667] St Basil, *DSS*, 84-5.

[668] As Goble notes, the one who contemplates the Spirit is also the one who turns away from a literal interpretation of Scripture, especially the Old Testament; see Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment*',* 247.

nature than God.[669] It is also remarkable how St Basil writes that it is possible to see the Spirit (it is not clear whether he means face-to-face, but probably it is a partial vision and knowing of God) after purification. Clement also writes that one should have a pure heart in order to come to the knowledge of God. He connects purity of heart, impassibility, contemplation of God and union with God.[670]

Further, we see other conditions of divine illumination: the necessity to repent and to free oneself from looking on earthly things. St Basil interprets Isaiah 8:21-23, saying that, 'Those who previously stooped and were not able to perceive the heights of divine contemplation, being freed from attraction to earthly things, as if from some bond, shall turn their free eyes towards heaven, contemplating the nature of invisible and intelligible thing and perceiving the place where one should place "one's treasure"'.[671] Therefore, after contemplation of the visible world comes contemplation of 'invisible and intelligible things'. For the latter, it is necessary to get away from earthly things. In addition, in *Hom. in Ps.* 32, St Basil writes about the necessity of repentance and purification before contemplation, 'For, it is necessary, first, to correct the actions of our body, so that we perform them harmoniously with the divine Word and thus mount up to the contemplation of things intellectual'.[672]

Moreover, St Basil continues this idea about being involved in the earthly things, which prevent one from knowing and contemplating God in *Hom. in Ps.* 45. He writes, 'Scripture invites those who are far from the word of truth to nearness through knowledge…in the case of objects of contemplation in the mind, he who has not been made familiar with God through his works nor has drawn near to him is not able to see his works with pure eyes of his mind'.[673] He comments on verse 11, 'Be still and see that I am God' saying that 'as far as we are engaged in affairs outside of God, we are not able to make progress in the knowledge of God'. Thorns

[669] According to Origen in his *Exhortation to Martyrdom* and *Homily 27 on Numbers*, the end of the Christian life is the vision of the Logos, beholding his glory and majesty; see Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 230.
[670] Clement, *Strom.,* b. 4, ch. 6; b. 7, ch. 10, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0210.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>.
[671] St Basil, *Is.*, 269.
[672] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 229.
[673] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 306.

which choke the word (Mt. 13:22) are 'the pleasures of the flesh and wealth and glory and the cares of life'. St Basil explains that there is leisure, which is useful, because it is leisure, which produces quiet for the acquisition of salutary doctrines. He cites David, saying, 'Have nothing to do with the enemies disturbing you, in order that in silence you may contemplate the words of truth'. In addition, St Basil mentions Luke 14:33 and writes, 'It is necessary, then, to be freed from the works of marriage, in order that we may have leisure for prayer; to be unoccupied with the pursuit of wealth, with the desire of this little glory, with the lust for pleasure, with envy and every form of wickedness against our neighbour, in order that, after our soul has found peace and is disturbed by no passion, the illumination of God, as if in a mirror, may become clear and unobscured'.[674] In relation to the latter quotation, I think that St Basil is not ruling out the possibility that lay people can participate in contemplation and a vision of God. He simply suggests that is it more easily achieved in the monastic way of life. We see that St Basil states that it is not possible not just to contemplate invisible things if one is engaged in worldly affairs and fleshly pleasures, but even to progress in the knowledge of God. He notes that silence is beneficial for contemplation. We encounter the idea of contemplation of God in the soul, as if in a mirror, also in St Gregory of Nyssa and St Gregory of Nazianzus.

Therefore, in order to receive illumination of the Spirit, contemplate and know God, a person should leave behind earthly things, cleanse the inner 'mirror' or 'eye of the soul', achieve purity of heart, repent and renounce evil doctrines.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined evidence from all of St Basil's works concerning human nature and the conditions that are necessary to prepare for coming of the Spirit. According to St Basil, the human being was made in the image of God, which means that humans were granted reason, freedom of will, creativity, lordship over creation and the ability to grow

[674] Ibid., 307-8.

in the knowledge of the Creator. We do not find many explanations of what is 'likeness', but St Basil mentions that one can become like Christ and God by renouncing the things of the world, overcoming passions and acquiring virtues. We concur with some scholars who note that St Basil holds a very rigorous view of human flesh and the body. One should care only for the soul and have one's mind in heaven. However, St Basil also expresses very strong opinions in support of the value of the body. He writes that one has to care for the body since it is a gift from God and can become a place of habitation of the Spirit. We have also shown that St Basil devised one of his arguments for the divinity of the Spirit based on an analogy to human nature. We have demonstrated his understanding of the affinity between the Spirit and the human spirit.

We have shown that St Basil's phrase, the 'life according to the Gospel', does not always mean a monastic life, but a way of life required of all the Christians. He further writes that when passions rule over reason, a person becomes bestial and falls below human dignity; he/she is therefore unable to be a dwelling of the Spirit. One can become like Christ by renouncing the devil, the flesh, and by overcoming the passions. In addition, St Basil writes that self-control is one of the gifts of the Spirit that helps human beings to abstain from passions and pleasures. Further, St Basil writes that in order not to be possessed by passions one should live in purity, bear spiritual fruits and forsake material things.

Concerning the destruction or control of the passionate parts of the soul, St Basil's views are not equivocal. However, one might draw the following conclusion: the beginners in spiritual life have to train and bring into harmony the various parts of the soul, while the perfect should be above passions and remain untroubled by them. Further, we have shown how St Basil describes the perfect person as being above any passion, having peace of God in the soul, being self-controlled, and being helped by the Spirit in coming to salvation.

The Spirit approaches and gives his power only to those who are pure from passions. According to St Basil, everyone should preserve holiness of both body and soul, along with the spirit that they acquired through baptism. And, in order to become a 'son/daughter of God', one has to have

a pure heart and attain holiness. One is able to confess Jesus as Lord only with the help of the Spirit, and to praise God with a pure heart, one has to be ‘in the Spirit’.

St Basil states that in order to receive illumination of the Spirit, contemplate and know God, a person should leave behind earthly things, achieve purity of heart, repent, and be always sober. Importantly, St Basil states that those who have a ‘filthy mirror’ cannot receive the prophetic gift and ‘the illuminations of the Holy Spirit’. Interestingly, St Basil explains that Jesus first cleansed his disciples by means of his teachings and then enabled them ‘to both see and contemplate the Spirit’. Thus, the Spirit cannot be a subordinate creature if such preparation is performed by the Son. St Basil asserts that only holy men ‘can contemplate him [the Spirit] through purity of heart’. He differs here from other theologians by mentioning both the contemplation of the Spirit and the direct vision of the Spirit, not just the Son or the Father. St Basil mentions the Spirit also in relation to the true doctrine by saying that before a person can become mighty in the Spirit, he/she should deny false doctrines. In the next chapter we will look at how St Basil describes the soteriological goal of Christian life and the ways in which the Spirit helps in spiritual life and comes to dwell in a human being.

Chapter 5. Role of the Spirit in Salvation

5.1 Introduction

One of the main arguments of the early Christian thinkers for the divinity of the Spirit was his deifying power. St Basil developed this idea and expanded on it. First, we will evaluate which model is more descriptive of St Basil's view of salvation: perfection in virtue (moral) or deification and union with God (ontological). Then, we will look at how St Basil describes the human soul as a 'container' of the Spirit. Finally, we will look at the relationship between human and divine agency in the process of salvation. Throughout all of these themes we will show that it is the Spirit as God who enables individuals to fight with passions and acquire virtue; it is also the Spirit who comes to dwell in the soul and body after they are purified.

5.2 Baptism and Perfection in Virtues as the Means for Union with God

Various models of salvation are expressed in St Basil's works. It is undeniable that St Basil uses both the language of perfection in virtues and unification with God when describing the process of salvation.

First, we will examine the model of perfection in virtues and two means of approaching God. The first one is adoption as sons/daughters in baptism. In *Hom. in Bapt.* St Basil calls Jesus' baptism a 'baptism of adoption'. Whereas 'John's baptism made a break from sin; Jesus' baptism is union with God'.[675] St Basil talks about an 'invitation to share in blessings… an invitation from the Spirit of truth'.[676] He continues, 'The Word here shows that the one who comes to God through baptism is affiliated with God. By their faith in the Trinity, a pure and heavenly light illuminates those who approach by baptism'. Through baptism one is granted 'citizenship equal to the angels' and is made 'a free child of God through adoption, heir to

[675] St Basil, 'Hom. in Bapt.', 42.
[676] Ibid., 43.

Christ's blessings'.[677] Further, St Basil presents the objections of the one who was not yet baptised, who might have said 'I am not quite ready to unite with the King'.[678] Thus, we see that in baptism one unites with God. St Basil also writes about baptism as a 'close relationship with God', and becoming 'God's close friend'.[679] Therefore, baptism is a first stage in unification with God, the moment of becoming close to God. It is the Spirit who invites people to baptism. Only by believing in the Trinity and in divine nature of the Spirit can one be illumined and affiliated with God.

Moreover, St Basil very beautifully describes the activities of the Spirit: 'He enlightens all so that they may comprehend God, inspires the prophets, gives wisdom to lawmakers, consecrates priests, empowers kings, perfects the just, exalts the prudent, is active in gifts of healing, gives life to the dead, frees those in bondage, turns foreigners into *adopted sons*'. [680] Thus, we see that the Spirit perfects and turns humans into sons of God in baptism. Through the Spirit humans are strengthened, made rich and wise. Similarly, when enumerating the works of the Spirit, St Basil writes, 'Through the Spirit we become intimate with God: "God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal. 4:6)'.[681]

Further, St Basil writes of the great glory of being made a child of God. In *Hom. in Ps.* 61, he describes what things make people proud: this occurs by means of the body, valour in the wars, buildings, and wealth; however, one should be glorified only in God. St Basil writes that if a person is proud of the fact that he serves a king and is honoured by him, by how much more should one be proud to serve the Great King, 'called by him to the closest intimacy, having received the Spirit of the promise, so that sealed by his approval, you are shown to be a son of God'.[682]

Furthermore, St Basil metaphorically describes the Church as a daughter of God. When commenting on Psalm 45:10, St Basil describes the bride of

[677] Ibid., 45.
[678] Ibid., 46.
[679] Ibid., 48.
[680] St Basil, 'De Fide', 238.
[681] St Basil, *DSS*, 77.
[682] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 61', 346.

Christ, or in other words, the Church. He says that since she has purified herself from the ancient teachings and forsaken her home, the Spirit sees her inner purity and through the adoption she becomes a 'daughter' to the King, that is, to God. This psalm encourages us to enter into the innermost mysteries of the glory of the Church because the beauty of the bride is within.[683] So we see how the Church can mean an individual soul on its way to God, how Christians are adopted as sons/daughters by God, and how they should achieve inner purity.

In addition, another means of approaching God, besides baptism, is the virtuous life. St Basil regards Psalm 14 as the Lord's description of the virtues of a perfect Christian. He believes that a person is perfect when his/her just deeds follow from their interior disposition of justice. In addition, perfection is achieved not by a single good deed, but by the continual performance of good deeds throughout life.[684] Among the virtues St Basil enumerates detachment, justice, truthfulness, and mercy.[685] In *Hom. in Ps.* 29, St Basil distinguishes between the virtues which spring from contemplation (prudence, self-control, justice, valour), those which follow from the contemplative ones (beauty and strength), and those which are non-contemplative.[686] In addition, in *Prov*., St Basil gives the following list of virtues: wisdom, discipline, grasping the twists and turns of arguments, judgement, innocence, insight, and the ability to steer through life's difficulties. As St Basil believes, virtue is more a matter of acquiring knowledge and the rational application of it by the mind than the strenuous efforts by will.[687] It is interesting that St Basil includes 'grasping the twists and turns of arguments' in the list of virtues, and describes virtue in intellectual terms rather than in moral ones, in which we trace both the influence of Stoicism and the polemical tone of the treatise.

Further, we see that the practice of virtue is related to being united to God. When St Basil comments on Psalm 81:6-7, he says that '"a son of the

[683] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 293.
[684] St Basil, 'First Hom. in Ps. 14', 85.
[685] Ibid., 94-5.
[686] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 220.
[687] St Basil, 'Prov.', 41.

Most High" is the man who has been brought into affinity with God through virtue. And he does not "die like a human being", but rather he has God living in himself'.[688] Thus, we see that the practice of virtues leads one to union with God. St Basil explains that all those who seek after piety should refute the thoughts of people who try to raise their intellect to transcendent realities while they are disturbed by the passions of the flesh.[689] By these people St Basil probably understands his opponents, especially Eunomius.

Furthermore, St Basil also describes the final goal of Christian life as becoming like God through the practice of virtues. He states that God not only created humans in his image, but also gave the power to become like God. The theologian explains that the image of God lies in being a rational creature, whereas likeness lies in becoming Christian. He further writes that being like God means hating evil, being compassionate, and forgiving one's enemies from the heart.[690] He adds, 'Therefore you have become like God through kindness, through endurance of evil, through communion, through love for one another and love for the brethren, being a hater of evil, dominating the passions of sin, that to you may belong the rule'.[691] Similarly, St Basil writes that 'the goal of our [Christian] calling… [is] to become like God, as far as this is possible for human nature'.[692] And for this purpose one needs to know God. Further, he writes that through the Spirit 'those who progress are brought to perfection'. St Basil describes here the final goal as 'becoming God'.[693] St Basil also writes that one becomes like God through baptism, 'If you are shown to be a Christian, hasten to become like God, put on Christ…When I wish to make you like God, do you flee the Word which divinizes you…?'[694]

Thus, we have seen that through baptism, invitation and the work of the Spirit, Christians acquire power or potential for union with God. The latter is achieved through the practice of virtues. Besides union with God, the

[688] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 222.
[689] Ibid., 222.
[690] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 44.
[691] Ibid., 46.
[692] St Basil, *DSS*, 16.
[693] Ibid., ch. 9.23, 44.
[694] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 45.

goal of Christian life is described as becoming like God. St Basil uses the term 'gods' to designate humans in relation to perfection, as he writes in *Eun.*: 'And if we call those who are perfect in virtue "gods", and this perfection comes through the Spirit, how does he make others gods if he is himself bereft of divinity?'[695] In contrast, St Athanasius applies the same term'gods' in relation to receiving the grace of adoption in baptism.[696] According to St Basil, as we have demonstrated, baptism also makes one close to God through the Spirit.

5.3 The Relationship between Divine Grace and Human Efforts

We will now look at the role of human actions on the way to salvation. We will first look at the thought of St Gregory of Nyssa and then at St Basil's ideas. We will then draw a comparison between them. As Jaeger notes, St Gregory of Nyssa denies that perfection can be attained by human effort alone.[697] He writes in one of his works, 'It is the grace of the Spirit that gives eternal life and unspeakable heavenly joy, but the *eros* of doubled effort, which is the fruit of faith, makes a soul worthy (ἀξίαν παρέχει) to receive the gifts and to enjoy the grace. When the work of righteousness (δικαιοσύνης ἔργον) and the grace of the Spirit (πνεύματος χάρις) come together (συνελθοῦσαι) in the same soul, they fill the soul with blessed life by their mutual support; but when they are divorced from one another they offer the soul no gain. For the grace of God cannot enter a soul that rejects salvation, and the power of human virtue is not itself sufficient to elevate to the form of divine life a soul that does not partake in grace'.[698] From this we see that love as a fruit of faith makes one worthy to receive the divine grace, that salvation is effected by both works of righteousness and divine grace, and that human virtues and works alone cannot bring one to salvation. We see that one needs to make some effort in order to receive

[695] St Basil, *Eun.*, 192.
[696] Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification*, 208.
[697] W. Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius* (Leiden: Brill, 1954), 86.
[698] St Gregory of Nyssa, 'On Christian Mode of Life' in *Ascetical Works*, trans. V. Woods Callahan (Washington: CUAP, 1967), 131.

the grace of the Spirit.[699] He also writes that to the gift of grace corresponds human worthiness (ἀξία) or being-found-worthy (ἀξιοῦσθαι and καταξιοῦσθαι are St Gregory's favourite words). As Jaeger notes, the ascetic way starts, according to St Gregory, not from purification but from the gift of divine help, and purification follows as an effect of divine help. While it is true that being-found-worthy is an act of divine initiative, which sets this process in motion, it presupposes worthiness, that is, struggle of the soul, on the part of a person.[700]

St Gregory's treatise *On Christian Mode of Life* attempted a reconciliation of the Christian concept of grace with the Hellenic ethical tradition or the classical ideal of virtue (ἀρετή). Jaeger calls St Gregory's doctrine of salvation 'semi-Pelagianism'.[701] In this treatise, St Gregory uses two terms to describe convergent activities of grace and works: συνελθεῖν, which does not delimit the range of divine and human actions, and συνεργεῖν,[702] which means something that contributes to the effect of an already existing faculty or its 'energy'. In St Gregory's treatise it is not man who cooperates with God but the grace of God that cooperates with human efforts.[703] Thus, human effort should be of significant size if not primary. The one who is said to cooperate is a human being, who when he/she feels that the grace is given, seizes the opportunity to yield to it.[704]

St Gregory also writes specifically about the role of the Spirit. He refutes Eunomius in *Eun.* I, where the latter said that the Spirit encourages those who are struggling (ὅτι τοῖς ἀγωνιζομένοις ὑποφωνεῖ).[705] St Gregory attacks the term ἀγωνιζομένοις as blasphemous and points out that it is a

[699] St Gregory of Nazianzus also writes that the final attainment of salvation is not solely a 'gift of God'; it is also a 'prize for virtue'; salvation can be 'purchased' by moral effort. However, human ascetic effort is impossible apart from the initial and sustaining grace of God. As Winslow notes, 'Grace without moral response is, for Gregory, meaningless, and free moral response without grace is impossible'. See D.F. Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, Mass: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979), 158-61.
[700] Ibid., 88.
[701] Ibid., 88-9.
[702] Clement was the first to use the word συνεργία and its derivatives, even though he never speaks of the 'cooperation of the Spirit' (or of God or Christ) as St Gregory does; see Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works*, 103.
[703] Ibid., 92.
[704] Ibid., 103.
[705] St Gregory of Nyssa, 'Eun. I', b. 2, ch. 15, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/290102.htm, <accessed 15.01.2017>.

metaphor taken from the word ἀγών (‘struggle’) in athletic games. According to Eunomius, the Spirit, through this ὑποφώνησις (‘response’), does not ‘cooperate’ in winning the victory, but simply ‘wishes’ (ὑποφωνεῖ designates a loud encouraging acclamation of the crowd) that its favourite may not come second.[706]

We can gather from St Basil’s works, as from those of St Gregory of Nyssa, that salvation is a joint effort of a person and of God. St Basil extensively describes the nature of the Spirit, divine grace and human labours in his treatise *DSS*. He writes that the Spirit ‘fills all things with his power, but only those who are worthy may share it. He distributes his energy in proportion to the faith of the recipient[707]…his powers are manifold: they are wholly present everywhere and in everything. He is distributed but does not change’. [708] We see here that the Spirit, along with his power, is shared among humans, but not among all of them. The Spirit gives his energies only to those who are worthy of it. In *DSS* 9, St Basil calls the Spirit ‘shared by the worthy’ (μεθεκτὸν τοῖς ἀξίοις). He further explains that on the day of judgement the Spirit will be completely ‘cut off’ from the soul that ‘has defiled his grace’. St Basil interestingly continues, ‘in hell no one confesses God and in death none can remember him (Ps. 6:6), since the Spirit’s help is no longer present’.[709] Thus, we see that one can confess God and remember him only with the assistance of the Spirit. As Jaeger notes, St Gregory’s ideas that the Spirit is given to the worthy and that a person can be found worthy of the Spirit have their origin in St Basil’s doctrine.[710]

Moreover, when St Basil writes about the many ways in which the preposition ‘in’ can be used in reference to the Spirit, he writes that the Spirit ‘will not stay with those whose wills are unstable. Such people have no perseverance, and drive away the grace they have received’. Thus, humans can drive away the grace of the Spirit by their manner of life. St Basil continues, ‘when we consider the distribution of gifts, we perceive

[706] Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works*, 99.
[707] St Basil develops this idea of proportion of faith from Romans 12:6. He cites it also in *LR* 7:14, Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 183.
[708] St Basil, *DSS*, 43.
[709] Ibid., 67.
[710] Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works*, 102.

that the Spirit is a whole divided into parts, since we are all members one of another, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us' (Rom. 12: 6-7).[711] Here we see how St Basil writes about the Spirit and the gifts interchangeably as being divided between the Christians.

Further, St Basil writes about saints dwelling in the Spirit and the Spirit dwelling in the saints, and also about St Paul speaking in Christ and Christ speaking in St Paul. St Basil also writes that 'those who are worthy, receive his [Spirit's] grace, and he works within them'. He notes that the preposition 'with' is used to express an indivisible union, while 'in' is used for the changeable things. Thus, 'in situations where the grace of the Spirit comes and goes, it is proper to say that the Spirit exists in someone, even in the case of well-disposed persons with whom he abides continually. Therefore, when we consider the Spirit's rank, we think of him as present *with* the Father and the Son, but when we consider the working of his grace on its recipients, we say that the Spirit is *in* us.'[712] What is important for us is the fact that divine grace can come and go from a person depending on his/her actions. In addition, in the commentary on the creation of humankind, St Basil rhetorically asks, 'If he [God] created you also according to the likeness, what would be yours to give? Through what would you be crowned?'[713] Similarly, when St Basil comments on Psalm 61:9, he writes that 'It is impossible for us to become capable of divine grace, unless we have driven out the evil passions which have preoccupied our souls'.[714] Thus, humans should do their part in order to approach God.

Further, commenting on Isaiah 1:8, St Basil writes, 'If we set ourselves to purity of life, God assists us in purification from passions, perfecting our zeal and eagerness for the good'.[715] Achieving a pure life is a double endeavour. Moreover, when St Basil explains in *DSS* how baptism in Moses is a type of baptism in Christ, he writes, 'The cloud is a shadow of the Spirit's gifts, for he cools the flames of our passions through

[711] Ibid., 93-4.
[712] Ibid., 95-6.
[713] St Basil, 'Hex. 10', 45.
[714] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 61', 346.
[715] Ibid., 27.

the mortification of our bodies'.[716] So it is the Spirit himself who assists in restraining our passions.

Likewise St Basil also writes about receiving the light of the Son and those who are worthy of it. He comments on Psalm 34:5, 'Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed' saying, 'He urges those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to come to the Lord and to approach the rays of his Godhead, in order that, illuminated with the truth by this nearness, they may through grace take his light unto themselves'. He continues, in the same way as the sick or blind cannot see the sun, so also the Son 'does not bestow his brightness on all, but on those who live in a manner worthy of him'.[717] Thus, in order to receive divine light, through divine grace, one has to be worthy of it. Further, commenting on Psalm 45:6, he explains that the Son is light, who brings knowledge to those in the darkness of ignorance. St Basil states that humans should open wide their minds and accept this Light. Then, 'When we have become children of light and "the night is far advanced for us, and the day is at hand" (Rom 13:12), then we shall become worthy of the help of God'.[718] So first comes human effort, and then divine help. In this we see a difference from St Gregory of Nyssa.

Further, St Basil compares human things with divine grace. When he comments on Psalm 32:16, 'The king is not saved by a great army', he writes that 'the king is saved, not through much power, but through divine grace… through divine guidance'. Later St Basil mentions Ephesians 2:5 and 1 Corinthians 3:7 in order to demonstrate that human things are nothing compared with divine might.[719] Similarly, commenting on Psalm 33:3, 'In the Lord shall my soul be praised. Let no one praise my intelligence, through which I was preserved from dangers', St Basil writes, 'For, not in the power of man, nor in wisdom, but in the grace of God is salvation'. St Basil explains that those who glory in riches, beauty of the

[716] Ibid., 54.
[717] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 254-5.
[718] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 304.
[719] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 243-4.

body, and strength do not keep their soul in the Lord.[720] The grace of God is the only foundation of salvation.

Interestingly, we also see that one needs to be worthy not only of the grace of the Spirit, but even of the guardianship of angels. As St Basil writes, God will protect those who fear him with angels. The guardian angel will not stay with a person who does evil deeds. St Basil continues, 'If you have in your soul works worthy of angelic custody, and if a mind rich in the contemplation of truth dwells within you, because of the wealth of your esteemed works of virtue God necessarily establishes guards and custodians beside you and fortifies you with the guardianship of angels'.[721]

Then, St Basil writes that the life of virtue requires many labours on the part of humanity. Commenting on Psalm 48:11, 'He shall not see destruction, when he shall see the wise dying', he writes that the righteous person who laboured in this life will live unto the end, but the person who lived a luxurious life and fled 'labours imposed by virtue' will not live in the future. The one 'who has sweated in numberless contests for the sake of virtue, and who, to attain it, has been proved in many more labours, he is the one who is going to live unto the end'.[722]

Similarly, St Basil describes the life of virtue as a life full of struggles. He interprets 'the cup of salvation' in Psalm 115:3-4 (116:13) as 'suffering in the contests of piety and resisting sin even unto death'.[723] Similarly, in *Inv.*, St Basil encourages Christians not to strive after riches, but rather after virtues, because, 'Virtue is within our power and can be acquired by one who labours earnestly for it'.[724] St Basil very often mentions spiritual struggles as athletic contests, 'as the toils of the contests lead the athletes on to their crowns, so also the test through tribulations leads Christians on

[720] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 251.
[721] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 257-8.
[722] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 319-20.
[723] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 115', 223.
[724] St Basil, 'Inv.' in St Basil, *Ascetic Works*, 473. The same idea in St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 62.

to perfection, if we receive with becoming patience and in all gratitude what is dispensed to us by the Lord'.[725]

Thus, we see that all the baptised are given a share in divine grace, but not everyone can preserve it or increase it. The grace of the Spirit leaves a person who leads a carnal life. Only those who are worthy can receive the grace of the Spirit. Worthiness is determined by the degree of faith, stability of will and by the extent of purification from the carnal passions. Overall, St Basil upholds a view of synergy in the process of salvation.

5.4 The Indwelling of the Spirit or Virtue in the Soul

When St Basil writes about Christian spiritual life, he often discusses the question about the soul being a dwelling place either of demons or of the Spirit. The latter can be regarded as a variation of the second model of salvation, namely, unification with God through indwelling of the Spirit. Although Russell states that St Basil emphasizes more the language of imitation of God through virtues than the language of participation,[726] we will show that for St Basil, deification is real and not metaphorical; it takes place through the indwelling of the Spirit.

First, St Basil writes about baptism as a sacrament which purifies the soul and makes it a suitable dwelling place for the Spirit. In *Hom. in Ps.* 28, he interprets verse 10, 'The Lord maketh the flood to dwell' as related to baptism, when 'the soul, being washed well of its sins and rid of the old man, is suitable henceforward as a dwelling place of God in the Spirit'. And then 'the sins shall not come nigh to him who received baptism for the remission of his transgressions through water and the Spirit'. Further, St Basil interprets the verse, 'And the Lord shall sit King forever' saying that God sits in the soul, 'which shines from its washing, as if he were making it a throne for himself.'[727] In addition, St Basil writes, 'The new and spiritual wine and that which is glowing with the Holy Spirit, the perception of truth which never becomes old, must be put in the new man,

[725] Ibid., *Ep* 101, vol. 13, 225.
[726] Ibid., 211.
[727] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 28', 210-1.

who… might justly be said to be a "new vessel"'.[728] We see that the one who has denied the 'old man' in baptism is filled by the Spirit, who leads him to a deeper perception of truth. Moreover, St Basil also writes, 'At present, before the day of judgment comes, even though the Spirit cannot dwell within those who are unworthy, he nevertheless is present in a limited way with those who have been baptised,[729] hoping that their conversion will result in salvation.'[730] From this we see that all the baptised are given a share of the grace of the Spirit, but he can come to dwell in the soul fully only if a person purifies the soul and acquires virtues.

In addition, in *Hom. in Ps.* 29, St Basil comments on verse 13, saying that 'the glory of the just man is the Spirit which is in him'; the just man praises God for forgiveness of sins.[731] Moreover, in *Ep* 207, 'To the Clergy of Neocaesarea' (375), St Basil answers the accusation of introducing new things in the church, which were not present in the time of St Gregory Thaumaturgus. St Basil describes what he was like and what customs were usual at his time. Among other things, St Basil writes that 'He avoided oaths, [being] that pure soul, worthy of fellowship with the Holy Spirit'.[732] So here St Basil shows how St Gregory came close to God.

Further, when commenting on Isaiah 1:8, St Basil explains that the people of Israel, whom he compares to the tent of vine, will be forsaken if they do not bring forth their fruit. He urges his audience not to be fruitless in order not to be forsaken by the Spirit when a soul 'is trampled upon by every bestial sentiment and every irrational desire'. However, if their souls bear fruits, the Spirit will guard them and ward off the demons.[733] St Basil explains the same verse further by saying, 'For the "tent" is perhaps the

[728] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 237.
[729] As Russell notes, though Origen limited the sphere of operation of the Spirit to the saints, on one occasion he wrote that every rational creature receives a share in the Spirit just as it does in the Logos. Russell explains that one can distinguish between a natural participation in the Spirit, which all humans enjoy by possessing a dormant created πνεῦμα, and a supernatural participation, which is limited to those whose πνεῦμα has been awakened; see Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification*, 149.
[730] St Basil, *DSS*, 67.
[731] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 29', 225.
[732] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 85
[733] St Basil, *Is.*, 25

body, where the Holy Spirit is indwelling…whereas a "vineyard" is the soul charged with bringing forth fruit…It was planted true after the image of the true God, and it is tilled by the regular care of the Creator…If we set ourselves to purity of life, God assists us in purification from passions, perfecting our zeal and eagerness for the good'. When the soul absorbs everything that is good for its nourishment, it makes itself ready to receive 'the inscriptions of the Spirit'. However, if the soul does not remove bodily concerns and the burden of material things, it does not partake of the help from above and remains fruitless. In this case the Spirit withdraws from the soul, and passions seize it.[734] Thus, we see that the Spirit protects any soul if it bears spiritual fruit and is pure. Humans should bring their fruit to the Spirit and then they will get support from God. St Basil does not explain what comes first, the help of the Spirit, or purification and producing of spiritual fruits by a person, but we can suggest that the Spirit creates circumstances that enable human spiritual efforts, while also assisting humans in purification. We see also that St Basil talks about the body and not the soul a place of habitation of the Spirit, which is a rare occurrence in his writings. In addition, when commenting on Isaiah 5:5-7, on the same image of vineyard symbolizing the house of Israel, St Basil writes that 'those, who are not fenced around by divine teaching and angelic powers, are given over to irrational emotions' and 'to bestial thoughts and to evil demons who perform impure deeds'. St Basil complements this by citation from Romans 1:26, 28.[735] Thus, we see that God protects those who follow his teachings from evil spirits. In one of the chapters of *DSS* where St Basil describes the works of the Spirit, he mentions that the Spirit of God drives out the demons and the presence of the Spirit despoils the devil.[736]

Moreover, as we saw above, St Basil believes that the Spirit indwells not just souls but also bodies, that is, the whole human person. He writes, 'Paul was weak, but through the presence of the Spirit, the handkerchiefs that had touched his body healed those who received them. Peter too was beset by bodily weakness, but through the indwelling grace of the Spirit,

[734] Ibid., 27
[735] St Basil, *Is.*, 167
[736] St Basil, *DSS*, 77.

the shadow that his body cast expelled the sicknesses of the infirm' (Acts 19:12; 5:15).[737]

Further, in *Hom. in Ps.* 32, St Basil writes that when a person has a sudden thought about God in his heart so that he feels love to God and despises everything in the world, from this one can learn about the state of the saints who steadily grow in joy of God. A saint is always in a state of divine and heavenly joy because the Spirit abides in him and the first fruit of the Spirit is 'love, joy, [and] peace' (Gal. 5:22). From this we can see that when the Spirit dwells in the soul, the latter feels joy and grows in love to God. St Basil further writes, 'for the just man the divine and heavenly joy is lasting, since the Holy Spirit dwells in him once for all…The Lord is like a place capable of containing the just', that is why the just person should be delighted. The just person in his/her turn also 'becomes a place for the Lord, when he[/she] receives him in him[/her]self'. It can be described as a mutual indwelling. However, 'he who sins gives place to the devil'.[738]

Similarly, St Basil writes about the joy of the Spirit when he explains what the future life will be like and the role of the Spirit in it when commenting on Psalm 45:5, 'The streams of the river make the city of God joyful'. He explains that now the righteous person drinks 'living' water, but only through the mirror and in obscure manner because of the gradual perception of the divine objects of contemplation. However, later 'it will welcome at once the flooded river, which is able to overwhelm all the city of God with joy'. St Basil explains that this river is 'the Holy Spirit who comes into those worthy because of the faith of the believers in Christ'. Then St Basil mentions other verses from Scripture, which describe the river and water as coming from Jesus (Jn. 7:38, 4:13-4); in this we see intimate connection between two Persons. He writes that the 'city of God' is the 'Church of those who hold to a heavenly manner of life. Or, every creature endowed with intelligence, from celestial powers even to human souls, must be understood as the city made joyful by the inflowing of the

[737] St Basil, 'De Fide', 238.
[738] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 228.

Holy Spirit'.[739] So future contemplation of divine objects will consist in being pervaded by the joy of the Spirit.

Next, St Basil comments on Isaiah 13:19-22. He names horoscopes, worldly riches, nobility according to flesh and other such things - 'of Babylon', which will be overthrown by God and it will become a 'dwelling of demons which have become wild, whether you wish to take it as a city, or as a confused soul'. When a soul becomes 'desolate of God's indwelling, it necessarily becomes a dwelling of evil spirits'.[740] When passions possess the confused soul, it gets incomprehensible clamour in it (which is probably a metaphorical expression).[741] Therefore, the soul is never empty, but is occupied either by the divine presence or by passions. Here St Basil sets out the polarity of the two positions very clearly.

Further, in *Ira.*, St Basil describes the pernicious nature of anger and how a demon enters into the soul by means of wrath. He writes, 'Neither the point of the sword, nor fire, nor any means of inspiring fear is able to restrain the spirit frenzied with wrath, any more than such threats subdue persons possessed by the devil (from whom angry men differ not at all, either in appearance or state of soul)'. So a person becomes bestial and demonic.[742] St Basil encourages his readers not to imitate an angry person or an enemy: 'Do not become a mirror, as it were, for an angry man by reflecting his image'.[743] St Basil vividly describes anger as 'a malady upon the soul, a dark mist over the reason. It brings estrangement from God, forgetfulness of the ties of kindred, and cause for strife. It is a wicked demon coming to birth in our very souls, taking prior possession of our interior, like a shameless tenant, and barring entrance to the Holy Spirit. Whenever there are enmities, strifes, bursts of anger, intrigues, rivalries, causing restless agitation in the soul, there the Spirit of Meekness does not take his rest'.[744] Thus, we see that St Basil views the angry person as being possessed by the demon, which bars the coming of the Spirit.

[739] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 302.
[740] St Basil, *Is.*, 338.
[741] Ibid., 339.
[742] St Basil, 'Ira.', 449.
[743] Ibid., 450.
[744] Ibid., 460-1.

Similarly, in *Ebr*., St Basil defines drunkenness as 'the demon of our own choosing, entering souls through pleasure. Drunkenness is the mother of wickedness, the antithesis of virtue'. In drunkenness a person becomes more irrational than animals.[745] In a similar vein, St Basil writes in *Iei*. 2 that 'if the temple of God is where the Spirit of God dwells, then those who permit the filth of licentiousness to enter into themselves through drunkenness are the temple of idols'.[746]

In his polemical works St Basil also writes about the Son, not just the Spirit, as dwelling in the soul, as well as about all three Persons dwelling in the soul at the same time.[747] Interpreting the words of John 1:1, St Basil writes, 'After articulating to you how to think about him [the Son], as if impressing upon your soul what you did not know through his teaching and causing Christ the Word to dwell in your heart, he says: "this One"'. Upon learning, as St Basil writes, that the Son proceeded as Word, and was in the beginning with God, and is always with God, St Basil encourages believers to 'worship your own Master who dwells in you through this teaching'.[748] We can see from this that the Son can dwell in the soul through the words of Scripture. We also see that true teaching about the Word is hidden in the heart, and that God dwells there when it recognizes this teaching. Moreover, when discussing the use of prepositions in *DSS,* St Basil quotes 1 John 3:24, 'And by this we know that he abides in us, *from* the Spirit which he has given us'.[749] We see that Spirit lets believers know that the Son abides in them. We observe a close interrelation between two Persons. St Basil also states in *Ep* 159 that we should be likened not just to God, but to Jesus Christ: '"to live is Christ"…our speech should be about Christ, and our every thought and act should depend upon his commands and our soul should be formed to his

[745] St Basil, 'Ebr.', 84-5.
[746] St Basil, 'Iei. 2', 80.
[747] According to Origen, as participation in the Son or in the Wisdom of God renders one a son and a sage, so participation in the Spirit makes one spiritual and saint. As Galtier writes, from the community of their nature and their sanctity Origen deduces that participation in one of the three Persons is to participate in the other two. He considers that the Son no less than the Spirit unites himself directly and immediately to the righteous soul. He regards sanctity as a common attribute of the Trinity; see Galtier, *Le Saint-Esprit*, 81-3, 92.
[748] St Basil, 'Verb.', 256-7.
[749] St Basil, *DSS*, 25.

image'.[750] In his commentary on Psalm 45, St Basil encourages us not to leave our inner house empty to the adversary but to allow Christ to dwell in it by the Spirit.[751] It is interesting that Christ lives in humans by means of the Spirit, through baptism. This shows their intimate relationship one with the other.

Moreover, in *Sab*. St Basil writes about the indwelling of God in the soul, 'For wherever there is the presence of the Holy Spirit, there also is the dwelling of Christ, and wherever Christ is, there clearly the Father is also present…So, then, when sanctified by the Holy Spirit, we receive Christ who dwells in "our inner man" (Eph. 3:16), and along with Christ we also receive the Father who makes a home with him in those who are worthy'.[752] Thus, we see that all three Persons indwell the human being when he/she becomes worthy of this.

Further, St Basil talks about virtue as dwelling in the soul. Explaining how the sins of the soul are remitted, commenting on Isaiah 1:14, 'I will remit your sins no more', St Basil writes, '…when virtue having mastered and gained possession of the whole of the soul through her own teachings, [it] produces aversion from the dispositions contrary to virtue…'.[753] For example, when there is an opportunity for greed, the soul is willing to respect fair dealing, and chastity delivers the soul from licentiousness. We see here a similarity to *Hom. in Ps.* 28 in that after baptism sins will not approach the baptised. Here it seems that the effect of virtue on the soul is understood metaphorically and is to be identified with God, the Spirit, who indwells pure souls. St Basil is reverting here to his Greek philosophical background. 'Virtue' is the goal of the pagan philosophers; however, St Basil associates it with God, or the Spirit, 'who indwells pure souls'.

St Basil also writes about memory of God as a way in which God indwells the soul. He writes, 'And prayer which imprints (ἐμποιοῦσα) in the soul a clear conception of God is an excellent thing. This abiding of God in our

[750] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 312.
[751] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 308.
[752] St Basil, 'Sab.', 298.
[753] St Basil, *Is.*, 48.

memory is the indwelling of God'.[754] Thus, we see how he sees indwelling of God also in a metaphorical way. Similarly, in *Hom. in Ps.* 33 he writes about praising God by mouth and interprets Psalm 80:11, 'Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it' by saying, 'The thought of God, therefore, having been once for all moulded and, as it were, sealed in the authoritative part of the soul, can be called praise of God, since it is always present in the soul'.[755] We see how St Basil writes here about continuous memory of God due to the inscription of divine thoughts in mind. Moreover, he writes in *LR* 5 that we need to imitate the apostle bearing 'about the holy thought of God stamped (ἐντετυπωμένην)[756] in our souls like an indelible seal through constant and pure memory'.[757]

Thus, when humans get rid of passions, they become worthy of accepting the Spirit in their souls and bodies. Anger, drunkenness and other passions prevent the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit and the other two Persons come to dwell in a human being ontologically.

5.5 Conclusion

We have seen throughout this chapter that the Spirit accompanies Christians throughout their spiritual lives, in granting them divine grace in baptism, purifying their souls from passions, helping them to acquire virtues, and coming to dwell in their souls and bodies. All of these activities prove his divine power. St Basil describes the goal of salvation as union with God, as perfection in virtues and becoming like God, and as the indwelling of God. In the next chapter we will show that it can also be seen as contemplation of divine nature. St Basil makes it clear that the soul can never be empty: it is either occupied by evil demons or indwelt by the Spirit. The latter brings constant joy and leads to deeper understanding of truth. According to St Basil, the body should not be neglected because it is

[754] Ibid., 9.
[755] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 250.
[756] St Gregory of Nyssa writes, 'The measure of what is accessible to you is in you, for thus your Maker from the start endowed your essential nature with such good. God has imprinted upon your structure replicas of the good things in his own nature, as though stamping wax with the shape of a design'; see Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer; The Beatitudes*, Beat. 6.4, 148.
[757] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 175.

called to become a dwelling of the Spirit. St Basil's language about deification is very flexible: sometimes he writes about the Spirit as being 'in' Christians, at others, he needs to be welcomed in, and in other passages still, it is the human being who is 'in' the Spirit.

We also showed that God helps humans in achieving a pure life, and that the Spirit himself cools human passions. When humans get rid of passions, they become worthy of accepting the Spirit in their souls and bodies. Anger, drunkenness and other passions prevent the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit and the other two Persons come literally, not just metaphorically, to dwell in a human being. We have also seen that all the baptised are given a share in divine grace, but that not everyone can preserve it or increase it. Only those who are worthy, namely, those who have strong faith, stable will and pure from passions, can receive the grace of the Spirit. In the next chapter we will see the role of the Spirit in the final stage of spiritual life, namely, illumination.

Chapter 6. The Role of the Spirit in Acquiring the Knowledge of God and Contemplation, and in Divine Illumination

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will examine the epistemological side of St Basil's pneumatology. We will look at how St Basil discusses the role of the Spirit in the last stage of the spiritual life, contemplation of God, the first being purification and union with God in baptism, and the second being perfection in virtues[758] and the indwelling of the Spirit in the soul. Although St Basil is not systematic in describing divine illumination and contemplation, and is not mentioned with Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Evagrius and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite as the key figure in treating these themes, we will consider his ideas because they contributed significantly to the later development of spiritual writing in the Eastern Christian tradition. We will see how St Basil defends the divinity of the Spirit by arguing that he illumines human souls with divine light and enables them to contemplate and know God. After the Spirit comes to dwell in the human being, the latter is illumined by the Spirit and made worthy to know and contemplate God in his/her own soul.

We will first explain the key terms and give an overview of the three stages of spiritual life. We will also present an understanding of these stages by Clement of Alexandria and Origen, who wrote extensively on contemplation and illumination. We will look at these theologians because they were key figures in translating Neo-Platonic ideas on the mystical ascent of the soul, contemplation and illumination to future Christian thinkers including St Basil. Then we will examine St Basil's thoughts on this subject, comparing his ideas with the thought of Clement, Origen and other two Cappadocians, by considering the following themes. We will start with baptism which was usually described as illumination and

[758] As Špidlík notes, for St Basil, observance of the commandments of God is inseparable from continuous remembrance of God. It is by the practice of commandments that one enters the contemplation of God. Morality is the condition and effective means, which leads to the continuous recollection of God, of providence and to dialogue with the Father in the Spirit who restores filial adoption; see Špidlík, 'L'ideal du Monachisme Basilien' in Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea*, 369-73.

initiation into saving doctrine and spiritual life by the Fathers, then look at different aspects of knowledge and contemplation of God, that is, the more static stages that are mostly driven by human efforts, and then will discuss the theme of light and divine illumination, which is completely granted by divine grace. After looking at baptism as illumination and the role of the Spirit in it, we will explore what the ways to know God are. Then we will examine how St Basil sees the Son and the Spirit as the sources of true wisdom and knowledge, and how he regards the Spirit as the 'place' of contemplation and as the one who enables humans to know the Son and the Father. Further, we will explore the views of the Fathers on divine light, focusing on how St Basil discusses the Son as the agent of illumination and the distinctive role of the Spirit as the source and agent of illumination. St Basil treats these themes not just in his more mystical *DSS*, but also in *Is.*, some *Eps* and *Hom. in Ps*. We can find some thoughts on the topic also in his *Hex.*, *Reg. Mor.*, *Ask.*, and miscellaneous homilies.

6.2 Overview of Key Terms

Before starting this chapter, it is necessary to define the key terms: contemplation (θεωρία), illumination (φωτισμός), revelation, mystery (μυστήριον), and mind/intellect/reason (νοῦς). In ancient Greek, 'to contemplate' meant to see, look, or be present at a spectacle; by extension, it meant to reflect, meditate, and investigate. Some scholars define contemplation as consideration of things by *nous* in order to search for their essence (οὐσία) or for their primordial meaning/reason (λόγος), which leads to God. For Christians, knowledge is either 'simple' or 'spiritual'.[759] As Špidlík explains, the latter kind of knowledge means 'participation in the knowledge of Christ, a revelation in the broad sense of the term'.[760] Understanding of the reason of things is a gift, a mystery, which one can know only by revelation. In order to achieve it one has to purify the *nous* through virtuous life (πρᾶξις). Contemplation also means

[759] Špidlík, 'Contemplation' in A. di Berardino (ed.), *EEC*, trans. Adrian Walford, prod. Patristic Augustinian Institute, 2 vols, vol. 1 (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992), 198.
[760] Špidlík, *Prayer. The Spirituality of the Christian East*, trans. A.P. Gythiel, vol. 2 (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 2005), 161.

the higher form of knowledge, contemplation by human nature of the transcendent realities or ideas, which exist together in the divine mind (λόγος). As Creator, the Word pervades all beings and contains the reasons of creation. Contemplation then can be understood as grasping of 'various "incarnations" of the *logos*, the "Christological" meaning of each event'. Among these 'manifestations' are the ones in Scripture, soul and universe.[761]

'Illumination' is sometimes understood as a synonym to 'contemplation'. Both suppose light, which elevates the intellect and enables it to get access to knowledge and love of superior divine realities. Illumination and contemplation are a condition of each other, as light is a condition of seeing. There are several kinds of illumination: intellectual, moral and mystical.[762]

The term 'mystery' means a secret that is hidden and revealed only to the initiated. Starting with Clement it acquired the philosophical sense of the soul's spiritual ascent to the vision of the transcendent God. It is not simply a secret teaching, but also an ineffable truth of God who is knowable in some way only through his own gratuitous revelation.[763] For Church Fathers, it also meant sacraments performed in the Church, such as baptism and Eucharist.

Concerning the term 'mind', scholars note that the Fathers were influenced by the speculations of contemporary Platonism and Neopythagoreanism on the relationship between *nous* and the first Principle; they oscillated between the concepts of total identity and subordination. Clement of Alexandria considers God as *Nous*, since he is the seat of ideas. Philo, like Clement, regards the human mind as a divine element and the most pure essence in human nature. Origen believes that God is somehow intellectual, but is superior to reason; in this he agrees with Aristotle. Origen also thinks that mind had its origin in God and the

[761] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 162-4.
[762] L. Veuthey, 'Illumination' in M. Viller, C. Baumgartner, A. Rayez (eds.), *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire*, 45 vols, 17 toms (Paris: Beauchesne: 1937-1995), t. 7. 2, (1971), col. 1330-44, p. 1330.
[763] Studer, 'Mystery' in *EEC*, vol. 1, 577.

relationship between them is that of *nous* to the One in Neoplatonism.[764] The Fathers consider the mind or heart as the organ of contemplation of divine realities.

6.3 The Church Fathers on the Stages of Spiritual Life

Now we will look at how the Fathers described the steps of spiritual ascent. They generally wrote about three stages in the spiritual life: purgation, illumination and contemplation. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who expressed the patristic view of spiritual ascent to God towards the end of the fifth century, named these 'three ways' as the purgative, illuminative, and unitive.[765] The third stage is interpreted either as the infused contemplation of the mysteries of faith or as the union with God, which results from this. At the first stage a person, a beginner in spiritual life, purifies his/her soul, mind and will from passions. At the illuminative stage, which is proper to the advanced level of spiritual life, a person receives the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gifts of wisdom and understanding from which infused contemplation follows. In the last stage a person, who is becoming perfect, approaches transformative union with God. This scheme can also be regarded in this way: purification, entrance of God into the human soul, and contemplation by the latter of the divine nature. One can interpret St Basil's ideas in this manner. We have already examined St Basil's views on purification and unification with God through the indwelling of the Spirit. In this chapter we will focus on the illuminative role of the Spirit.

Let us look now in short at the testimony of tradition. Clement describes the spiritual ascent as being composed of three successive states: the fear of God dominates in the first state, faith and hope - in the second, and charity and wisdom (γνῶσις) - in the third. The fear of God is the least elevated of the gifts of the Spirit, while charity and wisdom are the highest of all the virtues. According to Clement, the perfect are the tranquil souls

[764] Ibid., 577.
[765] R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life. Prelude of Eternal Life*, 2 vols, vol.1, trans M.T. Doyle (St. Louis: B. Herder Book, 1948), http://www.christianperfection.info/index.php, <accessed 02.02.2016>.

(who have reached ἀπάθεια) in whom charity dominates. Wisdom is a state of religious contemplation springing from the inspiration of the Spirit in the docile soul, which transforms the interior life.[766] As Lebreton notes, Clement made *gnosis* one of the stages of spiritual life, regarding *theoria* as its summit.[767] Clement was a pioneer in creating the language and in introducing a division into the three stages of spiritual life: these consist of the life of virtues/ascetic training (πρᾶξις), contemplation of creation (θεωρία φυσική) and contemplation of intelligible world and God (θεολογία). He borrowed from Philo the idea of the darkness as absence of knowledge, which Origen and Evagrius did not elaborate, but which St Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Denys the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor used.[768] As McGinn comments, contemplation of God was connected to two essential themes in his theology: the saving knowledge (γνῶσις) made available in Christ and the state of perfect harmony (ἀπάθεια) which ascetic practice and contemplative vision are meant to grant in this life.[769] Thus, we see that the Spirit enables contemplation by granting the gifts of charity and wisdom.

Origen, like his master Clement, similarly distinguishes three stages of spiritual life: that of beginners, in whom inordinate passions start losing their strength; that of the proficient, in whom these passions begin to die out under the abundance of the grace of the Spirit; and finally, that of the perfect. He recommends docility to the Spirit, through whom we can access Christ, and through whom we may rise even to the Father in the contemplation which solitude gives.[770] According to Origen, the final purpose of the Christian life is the fullness of contemplation of God after resurrection. He was the first to apply two types of life, active and contemplative (already distinguished by Philo and Clement before him), to Martha and Mary respectively (Lk. 10:38-42).[771] Although St Basil does not systematically describe the stages of spiritual life, as did Clement, we

[766] Ibid.
[767] Lebreton, 'Contemplation', 1767.
[768] Ibid., 1788.
[769] B. McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism* (New York: Modern Library, 2006), 311.
[770] Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages.*
[771] A. Meredith, 'Origen' in C. Jones, G. Wainwright, E. Yarnold (eds.), *The Study of Spirituality* (New York, Oxford: OUP, 1986), 117.

can trace characteristics of the three distinct stages. Similarly to both authors, he also sometimes addresses specifically the advanced in spiritual life.[772]

6.4 The Role of the Spirit in Acquiring the Knowledge of God

6.4.1 The Role of the Spirit in Baptism and Baptism as Enlightenment with Divine Knowledge

We have already touched on baptism in discussions of human spirit and baptism as union with God. Now we will look at how St Basil regards baptism as initiation into the divine mysteries and how the Spirit plays an illuminatory role in this. It was a tradition among the Fathers to call baptism the 'illumination' of a human being, enabled by the mystery of death and resurrection of Christ.[773] As Gorzo remarks, St Basil uses the term 'ἔλλαμψις' for illumination in *DSS* 9, whereas in *DSS* 26 he calls it 'φωτισμός'. Both of these terms have baptismal meaning, since contemplation and adoration of the Father through the Son in the Spirit is possible through the baptismal grace, which is given in the name of the three Persons.[774] When St Basil describes in *DSS* how the salvation of Christians takes place, he writes that he will not 'abandon the tradition which led me to the light [that is, baptism], and gave me the blessing of divine knowledge'.[775] Through baptism in the name of the Trinity, Christianity provides the knowledge of God and leads human beings to the light. St Basil builds his argument for the divinity of the Spirit, emphasizing that one has to glorify the Spirit because Christ first honoured him when he gave the baptismal formula.[776] This was one of St Basil's most significant arguments for the divinity of the Spirit. Because the Son taught baptism in the name of the Trinity (Mt. 28:19), the Spirit must be of the same nature and deserves the same honour as the other two

[772] St Basil, *Is.*, 39.
[773] As Goble notes, Justin was the first to call baptism enlightenment; see Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 206.
[774] V. Gorzo, 'Le mystère de l'Esprit Saint chez Basile de Césarée, L'illumination spirituelle de l'homme', *Studia Theologica* III, 1 (2005): 51-69, 62-3.
[775] St Basil, *DSS*, 47.
[776] Ibid., 112.

Persons.[777] Moreover, when St Basil responds to the objection that we are baptised 'into water', he writes that grace comes not from the water but from the Spirit's presence. Baptism is fulfilled in three immersions and with three invocations 'so that the image of death might be completely formed, and the newly-baptised might have their souls enlightened with divine knowledge'.[778]

Further, St Basil calls baptism an introduction to the knowledge of God and illumination. In *Exh.*, he writes that there is an appropriate time for each deed, but the time for baptism is at any point in the whole human life. He writes, 'The soul must know its Creator to live as surely as the body must breathe. For the soul must know God or die. The unbaptised person lacks that inner light, by which the eye can see things properly and the soul can meditate on God'.[779] As Goble remarks, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact source of enlightenment in baptism from St Basil's *DSS* 15. This scholar suggests that St Basil holds all three in tension: the gift of the Spirit, the confession of faith and three immersions with the invocation of the three Persons of the Trinity.[780] Gorzo notes that the illumination in baptism comes first in the spiritual life, since 'the way to the knowledge of God' presupposes baptism. Baptism is an introduction into the life of God through the mediation of the incarnate Word. The Spirit also plays an introductory role as a guide and sanctifier of humans in this movement of return to their true image and likeness. It is illumination, which enables participation and introduces one into intimacy with God. This illumination of the Spirit places the human person in communion with God.[781] Baptismal illumination enables one to contemplate the glory of God and

[777] Eunomius had a different ritual of baptism compared to the mainstream tradition. Epiphanius of Salamis, for instance, reports that Eunomius 'baptised persons already baptised - not only people who came to him from the Orthodox and the sects, but even from the Arians. He, however, baptised them in the name of God the Uncreated, and in the name of the Created Son, and in the name of the Sanctifying Spirit created by the Created Son'. In contrast, Theodoret of Cyrus, Philostorgius, Socrates, and Sozomen testified that Eunomius used one dipping of the one being baptised instead of three, he did not invoke the Trinity, but baptised once into the death of Christ. In his eyes, belief in Trinity was an illegitimate development of the pristine faith. For St Basil, in the contrary, devotional practice functioned as a canon for doctrinal Orthodoxy; see Sferlea, 'Philosophical Arguments', 99-100.
[778] Ibid., 59.
[779] St Basil, 'Exh.' in St Basil, *On Fasting and Feasts*, 41-2.
[780] Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 242-3.
[781] Gorzo, 'Le mystère de l'Esprit Saint', 63-6.

worship God in the Spirit and truth.[782] Thus, we see that the Spirit as God initiates humans into the knowledge of God, leads them on the path of restoration of human nature and enables communion with God.

In addition, St Basil writes about the necessity to repent and renounce the devil in order to be baptised and illumined. He writes, 'You cannot be under the true King if you do not "speak ill of the ruler"'. The person has to renounce Satan and his works (and this formula is pronounced in the rite of baptism). The one who speaks against the devil already approaches 'the true king and becomes illuminated'.[783] By denying the evil, a person approaches God who is light. Similarly, in his *Or*. 40, St Gregory of Nazianzus talks about illumination in baptism as 'following of the Spirit, the participation of light'.[784] He writes that in the same way as the devil withdrew from 'Christ the first Light, so he will from those who are illumined by Christ'.[785] Therefore, St Gregory talks here about both the Spirit and the Son as sources of light.

It is interesting to note how Clement writes about baptism as illumination and about the role of the Spirit in it. In his treatise *Protr.,* he addresses pagans and encourages them to accept Christian faith and be baptised. If a person abandons a previous life of unbelief, Clement explains, 'the Word of God will be your pilot, and the Holy Spirit will bring you to anchor in the haven of heaven. Then shall you see my God, and be initiated into the sacred mysteries…' He writes that 'Christ, by whom the eyes of the blind recover sight, will shed on you a light brighter than the sun' and this person will become holy while being initiated. Clement continues as if from the person of God, 'and I confer on you both the Word and the knowledge of God, my complete self'.[786] Thus, Clement believes that Christ and the Spirit bring a former unbeliever to salvation, who after being initiated, will be able to see God and will gain knowledge of God. We see a similarity of terms and ideas between St Basil and Clement;

[782] Andia, 'L'illumination de l'Esprit', 173.
[783] St Basil, *Is.*, 268.
[784] Gregory Nazianzen 'Or. 40' in *Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazianzen*, 720, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf207.i.html, <accessed 02.02.2016>.
[785] Ibid., 724.
[786] Clement, *Protr.*, ed. Roberts, Donaldson, Coxe, trans. Wilson, ANF 2 (New York: CLP, 1885), http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0208.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>, ch. 12.

however, the former stresses the role of the Spirit much more. Further, in his work *Paed.,* Clement compares being awakened and having one's eyes opened with being baptised and opening spiritual eyes: '…thus also we who are baptised, having wiped off the sins which obscure the light of the Divine Spirit, have the eye of the spirit free, unimpeded, and full of light, by which alone we contemplate the Divine, the Holy Spirit flowing down to us from above'.[787] We see a striking similarity with St Basil here. It is one of the few places where Clement describes the light of the Spirit as being obscured by sins, and that we contemplate the Spirit with the eye full of light.

We see how St Basil and other theologians describe baptism as illumination, which initiates one into divine knowledge. In contrast to Clement and St Gregory, who talk about both the Spirit and the Son as the sources of light and illumination in baptism, St Basil stresses more the role of the Spirit in initiating humans into Christian life.

6.4.2 Knowledge of God as Food for the Soul and the Mysteries of the Spirit

Now we will turn to St Basil's understanding of the role of the Spirit in the third stage of spiritual life, namely, in granting divine knowledge and enabling contemplation. First, we will look at how the theologian describes what knowledge of God is. He explains that those who do not accept food appropriate to their soul and do not drink from the water of which Lord talked to the Samaritan woman become dead. This is an incentive to knowledge because 'if they "become captives because they knew not the Lord", we must strive for the gift of the knowledge of God' and not be inattentive, and listen to the word of the Lord.[788] Therefore, knowledge of God is the food appropriate to the soul and it saves us from being captives of passions.

[787] Clement, *Paed.*, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0209.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>, b. 2, ch. 6.
[788] Ibid., 190.

Next, we will look at what is necessary to achieve the knowledge of God and how St Basil describes the mysteries of the Spirit as the objects of contemplation. In the introduction to *Is.*, the theologian mentions that we, the readers, should pray to receive 'the gift of wisdom and knowledge, and teaching', so that they coalesce in the ruling part of the soul and 'may imprint the form of all prophesied truth'. He explains that 'the faculty of knowledge' (1 Cor. 12:8) is needed for the contemplation of the mysteries of the Spirit.[789] In addition, St Basil mentions divine mysteries in the *Hom. in Ps.* 32. He explains that a psalter can mean a mind, which looks for the heavenly things, because this instrument has the force of producing sounds on its top part. Material actions come from below, whereas mysteries proclaimed by reason have their cause from above, as if the mind produced sounds through the Spirit. That is why the one who considers all the commandments and puts them in harmony 'sings to God on the psalter'.[790] Similarly, in *Gord.,* St Basil writes that the martyr Gordius purified his hearing, seeing, and primarily his heart in order to be able to see God and to become blessed. He had visions and learned mysteries taught by the great teacher, the Spirit of truth.[791] It is worth noting that St Basil writes that Gordius was able 'to see God' which is a fulfilment of one of the rewards of the Beatitudes. Further, St Basil writes that the Spirit is 'representing the divine nature through enigmas'.[792] Thus, we see that it is the Spirit who grants humans contemplation of divine mysteries though their minds.

Similarly, St Gregory of Nazianzus uses the phrase 'divine mysteries', referring to intellectual knowledge. In *Or.* 8, 'On His Sister Gorgonia', he writes that her 'native land was Jerusalem above, the object, not of sight but of contemplation[793]… whose citizen Christ is, and whose fellow-

[789] St Basil, *Is.*, 2-3.
[790] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 230.
[791] St Basil, 'Gord.', https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Vasilij_Velikij/Besedi/18, <accessed 02.02.2016>.
[792] Ibid., 5.
[793] As Cross writes, St Gregory of Nazianzus regarded Adam as a 'seer' in relation to the visible creation, but he received only primary initiation in the knowledge of God and intelligible world. *Theoria* was designed as a recompense for the successful coming through the test. Thus, Adam's fault was in the premature desire to know God; see J. Cross, *La divinisation du chrétien d'après les Pères grecs. Contribution historique à la doctrine de la grâce* (Paris: Gabalda, 1938), 246.

citizens are the assembly and church of the first born who are written in heaven, and feast around its great Founder in contemplation of his glory'. Her virtue consisted in 'the preservation of the image and the perfect likeness to the Archetype…conforming, in things pertaining to God, to those truly initiated into the heavenly mysteries'.[794] Thus, she was contemplating the glory of God and the divine mysteries.

6.4.3 The Ways to Know God: Contemplation of Creation, Divine Providence and Judgments

Now we will look at different ways to gather knowledge about the nature of God. We will look at how humans can learn something about God on their own before the Spirit comes and illumines their minds. In his numerous works, St Basil stresses the incomprehensibility of the nature of God for the human mind. In *Ep* 16, 'Against Eunomius the Heretic', St Basil argues that if a person is not able to explain and understand the nature of as simple creature as an ant, he/she cannot boast that 'the incomprehensible power of God is clear to [his/her] mind'.[795] In addition, in his work *Fid*., St Basil explains that God-inspired Scripture shows us unbounded knowledge and the incomprehensibility of divine mysteries for human nature in this present life. Perfect knowledge will only be achieved in the future life.[796] Not one name is sufficient to express all the perfect characteristics of God, and not one name can be used without danger of inappropriateness.[797] St Gregory of Nyssa also writes that contemplation of intelligible things surpasses contemplation of ordinary material things.[798]

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[794] Nazianzen, 'Or. 8', 495.
[795] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 50. Interestingly, St Gregory writes in his *Or*. 28 about angels contemplating God. He describes how humans are far from comprehending God. He wonders whether angels can have some understanding of the nature of God, '…because of their nearness to God, and because they are illumined with all his Light, [they] may possibly see, if not the whole, at any rate more perfectly and distinctly than we do'; see Nazianzen, 'Or. 28. The First Theological Oration' in *Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazianzen,* 589.
[796] Same idea in St Basil, *Ep* 223, vol. 28, 156-8.
[797] St Basil, 'Fid.', 75.
[798] Louth notes that whereas Philo and St Gregory of Nyssa assert unknowability of God, Origen talks about 'knowing God' or 'seeing God'. He employs biblical understanding of

Likewise, St Basil explains why a person cannot receive divine illuminations. In *SR* 80 he explains why good thoughts and cares pleasing to God fail the soul, writing that it 'comes from soul's slumbering and dullness of perception'.[799] Even if the eye of the body is adequate to the vision of only a few works of God, and is not filled with looking once only, and does not cease to look even at the same sight, 'how much more is the eye of the soul,[800] even when awake and sober, inadequate to the vision of the wonders and judgments of God'? The human soul cannot embrace the whole of divine knowledge. Silvas comments, 'But even in optimum spiritual conditions the best thoughts and desires will sooner or later be revealed as "failing" God, who is ever incomprehensible in his substance'.[801] However, mystical theologians, starting with St Gregory of Nyssa, will attempt to show that this spiritual 'failure' is not negative, but is a sign of progression towards union with God. St Basil writes that although the eye of the soul[802] is inadequate for divine visions, it should be sober and prepared for them.

Despite the incomprehensibility of God and inappropriateness of human faculties, St Basil writes that one can learn about God through natural scientific studies on creation, from the teachings of the Law or Scripture,[803] and from contemplating one's own soul. In *Hex.* 1 St Basil writes about creation, saying, 'it is truly a training place for rational souls and a school for attaining the knowledge of God, because through visible and perceptible objects[804] it provides guidance to the mind for the contemplation of the invisible'.[805] In addition, in *Hex*. 9 he writes, 'Yet the

'knowing' of God, namely, being known by and being united to God; see Louth, *The Origins*, 73.

[799] See also this idea in Clement, *Paed.,* b. 2, ch. 9.

[800] Clement also mentions a similar expression, the 'eye of the spirit', in *Paed.,* b. 2, ch. 6.

[801] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 317.

[802] St Basil writes more on the subject of the 'eye of the soul'. He encourages turning one's eye of the soul towards examination of oneself, since many notice sins in other people (Mt. 7:3). One has to examine oneself in order to determine whether one is leading a life according to the commandment; see St Basil, 'Att.', 100.

[803] St Basil, *Is.*, 256.

[804] Louth notes that for Origen, on the contrary, natural contemplation meant not observing the wonder of God in creation but rather the perception of the transience of the world and the desire to pass beyond it; see Louth, *The Origins*, 59.

[805] St Basil, 'Hex. 1', 11. We find the same idea in St Basil, 'Hex. 6', 103 and St Gregory of Nyssa, 'Answer to Eunomius' Second Book' in *Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises*, NPNF 2, vol. 5 (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1893), 517.

beholding of heaven and earth does not make us know God better than the attentive study of our being does'.[806]

St Basil continues this theme in *Is*. He writes that through the contemplation of visible beauty we can come to see the divine mysteries. When a person passes from knowing the beauty present in creation and the ways in which everything is very beautiful 'to ascending to him who is truly Beautiful and Beloved…, he[/she] can become a seer of divine mysteries'. St Basil continues, 'Thus David says: "Whenever I will stand before you and approach through my mind the very contemplation of you, then through the illumination of knowledge I will assume the activity of seeing the divine mysteries"'.[807] What is peculiar in the description of the way to know God in this passage is that, according to St Basil, one can approach by mind[808] 'the very contemplation' of God (possibly meaning seeing God) and after contemplating the creation achieve the 'illumination of knowledge' and proceed to contemplating divine mysteries.

Moreover, St Basil describes how one can know God when he comments on Isaiah 10:12. St Basil interprets this verse in an allegorical sense by saying that, 'Truly great is the mind which contemplates great things, which deliberates over the principles of creation and from them apprehends the beauty of wisdom of the Artificer of everything'.[809] Great is also the mind that mediates upon the dispensation of what comes from God, on his Providence, contemplates his righteous judgments and through the angels and powers above the earth reflects upon 'the King of glory' and 'the Lord of powers' (Ps. 23:10).[810] We see here that one can contemplate the *logoi* of creation,[811] and divine Providence. Similarly, St Basil describes how one can see the wisdom of God in the final judgment of people. Commenting on Isaiah 5:16, St Basil says that just as we contemplate the wisdom of the arrangement of celestial bodies, so also do

[806] St Basil, 'Hex. 9', 353.
[807] St Basil, *Is.*, 186-7.
[808] Clement also writes that the Word is contemplated by the mind; see *Strom.*, b. 5, ch. 3.
[809] We find the same idea in St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 252-3.
[810] St Basil, *Is.*, 292-3.
[811] For St Basil, the universe is the actualization of the powerful Word of God. Visible things acquire the name or the 'voice of God'. All things are true words addressed to humans, who should hear and understand them. The wisdom of God shines out in the smallest things; see Špidlík, *Prayer*, 164-7.

we observe the height of God's wisdom and intelligence in his judging all people and offering requital to each according to his or her worth.[812]

Further, St Basil continues by interpreting Isaiah 8:21-23 where he mentions the incomprehensibility of God. He explains that after the initial wonder at the comprehension of great things comes perplexity and darkness because one realizes how much one does *not* know after getting a taste of knowledge. This is reminiscent of St Gregory of Nyssa who talks about the cloud of darkness[813] in his *Vit. Moys.*[814] and in *Cant.*[815] Lebreton notes that darkness is a peak of the mystical experience, which takes place above the intellect.[816] However, this ignorance will not last forever, as St Basil believes, but the one who seeks out the truth will one day see '"face-to-face" (1 Cor. 13:12) and receive the perfection of knowledge, when the time comes for the restoration of all'.[817] Further, in *Hom. in Ps.* 33, St Basil mentions Matthew 18:10 and writes, 'The angels…since they do not have any such covering as our flesh, are prevented in no way from continually fastening their gaze upon the face of the glory of God.[818] We also, after we have been made "sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20:36), will be considered worthy of the knowledge face-to-face'.[819]

Holmes notes that, according to St Gregory of Nyssa, the knowing of God in the midst of darkness is knowing the presence of God, which the soul experiences in this darkness; it is the love of God that penetrates the soul so that the soul might participate in God.[820] As Crouzel explains, Origen did not exploit the theme of darkness and insisted on the 'enstatic' aspect of the union with God, rather than ecstatic, because of his polemic with pagans and Montanists. St Gregory, in his turn, developed the theme of the

[812] Ibid., 195.
[813] Clement also discusses this story and explains the 'cloud of darkness' as the human inability to comprehend God; see A. van den Hoek, 'God Beyond Knowing: Clement of Alexandria and Discourse on God', *SVC* 94, 40.
[814] St Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.*, 95.
[815] St Gregory of Nazianzus also describes spiritual progress and 'the height of contemplation' as climbing the mountain, entering the cloud and conversing with God; see Nazianzen, 'Or. 28', 585.
[816] Lebreton, 'Contemplation', 1775.
[817] St Basil, *Is.*, 269-70. A similar idea about face-to-face knowledge is expressed in id., 'Hom. in Ps. 32', 237.
[818] See also in St Basil, *Is.*, 219.
[819] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 268.
[820] U.T. Holmes, *A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction* (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 2002), 34.

darkness and ineffability of God, because he was fighting against Eunomius, who asserted the possibility for humans to know the essence of God.[821] However, St Basil did not develop this image of darkness, of the apophatic nature of our knowledge of God, probably because he stressed more the kataphatic way.

We have seen how St Basil stresses the incomprehensibility of divine nature and proposes to obtain some understanding of God through contemplation of the reasons of creation, one's own soul, and divine Providence. An idea peculiar to St Basil seems to be contemplation of the greatness of God in his providential dealings with humanity. Even though St Basil is more practical in his approach to theology than are some of the more mystical Greek Fathers, we have noticed some mystical ideas.

6.4.4 The Son and the Spirit as the Source of True Wisdom and Knowledge

Since we are discussing the theme of the knowledge of God we need to know what is the highest knowledge or the virtue of wisdom, how one can acquire it, and what its ultimate source is. When St Basil interprets Isaiah 5:21, he says that '"those who are intelligent in their own mind" are those who do not believe in the Lord'; in other words, such a person 'neither take(s) heed of the nature of true beauty, nor admit(s) the contemplation of it', nor does he/she 'accept with his[/her] own eyes the lightning flashes of divine beauty'. The theologian explains that true wisdom is 'the knowledge of divine and human matters and their causes'. He writes that someone can be called wise if he/she came to perfection 'by virtue of communion with Christ, as he is Wisdom (1 Cor. 1:24)'. Later, however, St Basil writes that everyone should attribute the cause of intelligence and knowledge of divine and human matters to the Spirit and he supports this by citing Isaiah 11:1-2.[822] Similarly, in *Hex.* 7, he mentions that humans are made wise by the Spirit.[823] In addition, in *Prov.*, St Basil writes that we

[821] H. Crouzel, *Origène et la «connaissance mystique»* (Bruges, Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, Museum Lessianum section théologique 56, 1961), 527.
[822] St Basil, *Is.*, 206.
[823] St Basil, 'Hex. 7', 113.

apply the term ‘wise’ to the wise of this world and also to those who accepted true wisdom, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. The wise of the world will become the wisest, by disregarding the knowledge of vain things and turning to truth.[824] Thus, we see that both the Son and the Spirit impart wisdom to humans and are the source of wisdom in their own way.

It is worth paying some attention to examining the application of the term ‘wisdom’ to the Logos and the Spirit in the Fathers. In Philo, the pre-existent wisdom of Proverbs 8 is identified with the Logos, whereas in the *Wisdom of Solomon* it is identified with the Spirit. In St Paul some see it as identified with the pre-existent Christ, who is identical with the Spirit. The general tendency was to transfer the identification from the Spirit to the Logos. This identification of the Logos with Wisdom can be found in Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, St Athanasius, St Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Cyril of Alexandria and St John of Damascus.[825] However, Theophilus in certain passages speaks of God, his Logos and his Wisdom, where by the latter, he means the Spirit. St Irenaeus also identifies Wisdom in Proverbs with the Spirit. Wolfson explains that this application of term ‘wisdom’ to the Spirit is a partial survival and revival of the old tradition of the identification in Paul of the Spirit with the preincarnate Word of God and hence with wisdom. Even though St Basil follows St Paul, he does not perceive the Spirit in his nature as Wisdom as the pre-existent Christ.

According to Philo, the Logos, whom he identifies with Wisdom, has two functions: as pre-existent (an aspect of the eternal God), he is the instrument of creation and as immanent he is the instrument of governance of the world. In the *Wisdom of Solomon*, Wisdom, who plays a similar role to that of the Spirit and is both pre-existent and immanent, has three functions: the two that were described above as belonging to the Logos and the prophetic one of the Spirit. In St Paul, the Spirit is described as having taken over the function of the abrogated Law of Moses and is responsible for creation of the world and its governance. St John combines

[824] St Basil, ‘*Prov.*’, 74.
[825] Meyendorff describes how the Son personified Wisdom of the Proverbs and how the Virgin was designated as a temple of Wisdom; see J. Meyendorff, ‘Wisdom-Sophia: Contrasting Approaches to a Complex Theme’, *DOP* 41 (1987): 391-401.

the ideas of Philo and St Paul. Philo's understanding of these functions of the Logos was restated later in the Fathers. Thus, the Spirit, according to most Fathers, is the instrument of prophecy and a substitute for the abrogated Law of Moses. Sometimes they ascribe the functions of creation and governance of the world to the Spirit (Philo).[826] Thus, we see that most Fathers, except Theophilus and Irenaeus, identified the figure of Wisdom in Proverbs with the Logos. In addition, they ascribed creation and governance of the world to the Son and the inspiration of prophets to the Spirit. St Basil does not identify the Wisdom in the Proverbs with either the Son or the Spirit, but rather writes about the virtue of wisdom being present in them in the highest degree.

St Basil writes about the Spirit and Christ as being the sources of the virtue of wisdom in *DSS*. When he shows how the belief in three Persons upholds the true doctrine of divine unity and argues against those who subordinate the Spirit, he writes that the Spirit is intimately related to the Father, proceeding from his mouth, and to the Son, being the Spirit of Christ. St Basil writes that only the Spirit can glorify the Lord not as a creature but as the Spirit of truth, because he is himself truth. He is also 'the Spirit of wisdom, revealing Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, in his own greatness'.[827] Thus, we see that the Spirit is closely related to the Son and is together with him the source of wisdom. Similarly, St Gregory of Nazianzus, in his *Or*. 32 describes the Spirit as the Spirit of wisdom, of knowledge, life and light.[828]

Interestingly, whereas St Basil writes about both the Son and the Spirit as the source of true wisdom and as the Spirit of wisdom, Clement writes solely about the Son. He explains that 'Christ himself is wisdom, and that it was his working which showed itself in the prophets'.[829] He also writes that the purpose of the wise man is contemplation. He states, 'The Son is wisdom, and knowledge, and truth, and all else that has affinity thereto...And all the powers of the Spirit, becoming collectively one thing,

[826] H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers. Volume I, Faith, Trinity, Incarnation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), 245-8.
[827] St Basil, *DSS*, 73.
[828] Nazianzen, 'Or. 32, The Fifth Theological Oration. On the Holy Spirit', 656.
[829] Clement, *Strom*., b. 6, ch. 7.

terminate in the same point - that is, in the Son'.[830] Thus, we see how the Spirit is subordinated to the Son. Origen also interprets the text of 1 Cor. 1:30-31, writing that Christ is the source of power, sanctification and redemption; 'Jesus himself is made sanctification to us and redemption. He was not the wisdom of God or the power of God, absolutely, but only for us'.[831] Here we notice a note of subordination concerning the Son.

Further, St Basil writes in *Hum*. that the true strength or majesty of a human being is to search glory in the glory of God, in Christ who became wisdom, holiness, righteousness for humans (1 Cor. 1:30-31).[832] Thus, this association of the Son with wisdom is based on a specific text from St Paul's Epistle to Corinthians, which talks about Christ as the power and wisdom of God. However, St Basil also mentions other verses in Corinthians about the Spirit as wisdom; he does not want to make the Spirit in any way subordinate to the Son. He writes that God reveals wisdom, gives strength in work, and delivers from dangers through his own Spirit (1 Cor. 2:7, 10).

We see clearly that the earlier theologians had a somewhat binary view of God, whereas St Basil is concerned to show the separate, though complementary, roles of the Son and the Spirit. St Basil affirms the status of the Spirit as that of the Son in their identification with Wisdom. We see that St Basil presents both the Son and the Spirit as the sources of wisdom, whereas Clement and Origen write only about the Son as the source of wisdom. St Basil follows Theophilus and Irenaeus in the identification of the Spirit with Wisdom.

6.4.5 The Spirit as the 'Place' of Contemplation and as the One Who Enables Humans to Know the Son and the Father

Now, we will examine the role of the Spirit in assisting humans in the attainment of the knowledge and contemplation of God. According to St Basil, the Spirit is the 'place' in which people are made holy. He writes,

[830] Ibid., b. 4, ch. 25. See similar ideas in b. 2, ch. 12, b. 6, ch. 7.
[831] Origen, *De Princ.*, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0412.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>, b. 1, ch. 39.
[832] St Basil, 'Hum.' in *Ascetical Works*, 479.

'This "place" is contemplation in the Spirit, and when Moses entered this "place" God revealed himself to him'.[833] Therefore, we can contemplate God *in* the Spirit. St Basil also states that we glorify God *in* the Spirit, and the Spirit is ranked with the Father and the Son, and cannot be separated from the Father and the Son *in* worship. If a person is outside the Spirit it is impossible for him/her to worship God and if he/she is *in* the Spirit it is impossible to separate the Spirit from God. Thus, the Spirit, as divine in nature, enables glorification of God.

St Basil continues, 'Light cannot be separated from what it makes visible, and it is impossible for you to recognize Christ, the Image of the invisible God, unless the Spirit enlightens you… you see the Light and the Image simultaneously. It is fitting that when we see Christ, the Brightness of God's glory, it is always through the illumination of the Spirit'. Thus, the Spirit enables us to see Christ, and at the same time to see the Spirit himself. Similarly, St Irenaeus writes, 'those who see the light are within the light', and 'those who see God are in God'.[834] The Spirit is called the Light without which one cannot recognize the Son. St Basil writes that 'to worship in the Spirit implies that our intelligence has been enlightened'.[835] Similarly in *Ep* 226 concerning the Spirit's enlightening role, St Basil writes, "…our mind spiritually enlightened by the Spirit, looks upon the Son, and in him as in an image sees the Father". [836] Therefore, the Spirit makes it possible for humans to know and to worship the Father and the Son. We see here again how worship, spiritual life, is interconnected with the knowledge of God.

Furthermore, in the chapter of *DSS* where St Basil shows how belief in three Persons supports the doctrine of divine unity and proves that the Spirit is not subordinate to the other two Persons, he describes the process of illumination. He writes that 'if we are illumined by divine power, and fix our eyes on the beauty of the image of the invisible God, and through the image are led up to indescribable beauty of its source, it is because we

[833] St Basil, *DSS*, 94.
[834] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 173. He identifies the vision of God as the final goal of human existence. Such a vision brings with it participation in the truly eternal life of God; see Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image*, 50.
[835] St Basil, *DSS*, 94-7.
[836] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 146.

have been inseparably joined to the Spirit of knowledge'. The Spirit is himself the power, which enables humans to see the divine Image. He leads humans to the knowledge of God not with the help of external sources, but personally. St Basil explains, '"God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth," (Jn. 4:24) and "in thy light do we see light," [Ps. 36:9][837] through [namely by] the illumination of the Spirit, "the true light that enlightens every man that comes into the world (Jn. 1:9)."' St Basil continues, 'He [the Spirit] reveals the glory of the Only-Begotten in himself, and he gives true worshippers the knowledge of God in himself'. The way to the knowledge of God ascends from one Spirit, through one Son to the one Father.[838] Similarly, in *Ep*. 226 St Basil writes, 'Our mind is spiritually enlightened by the Spirit, looks upon the Son, and in him as in an image sees the Father'.[839] We see that the Spirit enlightens humans and leads them to the knowledge of the Son and the Father in and through himself. The Spirit is described as a place of contemplation and a power, which enables seeing God, and as the Spirit of knowledge. It is noteworthy that St Basil interprets John 1:9 as related to the Spirit and not to the Son as do other theologians. Goble notes that the special contribution of St Basil to this growing tradition of enlightenment in Greek theology is emphasis upon worship of the Trinity which is dependent upon the enlightenment of the Spirit. Worship acts as a point of synthesis for all three aspects of the tradition: the theological, the sacramental/liturgical and the spiritual.[840]

Similarly, St Basil writes in *Ep* 233 that God gave us judgement of mind for the comprehension of truth. God is truth. Thus, St Basil deduces that 'the principal duty of our mind is to know our God, but to know him in such a way as the infinitely great one can be known by the very small'. And later in the letter he writes that if the mind is misled by demons it will

[837] As Andia notices, St Basil parallels two expressions 'in the light' and 'in the Spirit' in three Scriptural quotations: John 4:24, 1 Corinthians 12:2, and Psalm 36:10. Phrase 'in the Spirit' means adoration of God, confession of the lordship of Christ, and manifestation of the glory of the Only-Begotten; see Andia, 'L'illumination de l'Esprit', 163-4.
[838] St Basil, *DSS*, 74.
[839] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 146.
[840] Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 252.

turn to some form of impiety, 'but if it has given itself over to the aid of the Spirit, it will understand the truth and will learn to know God'.[841]

Notably, Origen also comments on Psalm 36:9 but in a Christological way. In *De Princ*, he explains how God is not a body, but light, 'Truly he is that light which illuminates the whole understanding of those who are capable of receiving truth, as is said in the thirty-sixth Psalm, "In your light we shall see light"'; the light of God in which one is able to see is 'an influence of God, by which a man, being enlightened, either thoroughly sees the truth of all things, or comes to know God himself, who is called the truth'. Origen interprets the mentioned verse as '…in your word and wisdom, which is your Son, in himself we shall see you the Father'.[842] Thus, there is no mention of the Spirit here.

Further, in *Ep* 38, St Gregory of Nyssa writes that the term 'Being Uncreated and Incomprehensible' has the same meaning for the Father, the Son and the Spirit. He adds that 'in fact, it is not possible for one not previously enlightened by the Spirit to arrive at a conception of the Son'. St Gregory also writes that the Spirit is always inseparably associated with the Son and inseparably comprehended.[843] In addition, in *Ep* 189, St Gregory mentions enlightenment as a common activity of the Trinity in order to prove the unity of the Godhead and the equal divinity of three Persons.[844] Origen also writes in *De Princ.*, 'It is impossible to become a partaker of the Father or of the Son without the Holy Spirit',[845] which is striking considering his subordinationist views on the Spirit; however, this may be explained by the scriptural references that he follows.

Thus, we see that, according to St Basil, the Spirit enables humans to know the Son and the Father. He leads humans to this knowledge personally and shows this knowledge in himself. We see how St Basil interprets Psalm 36:9 and John 1:9 pneumatologically. One important idea that we see developed in this discussion is that the Spirit possesses a

[841] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 156-8.
[842] Origen, *De Princ.*, b. 1, ch. 1.
[843] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 13, 87-8.
[844] Ibid., vol. 28, 31. We find the same idea in 'On the Holy Trinity, and of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit' in *St Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises*, 613.
[845] Origen, *De Princ.*, b. 1, ch. 3.5.

distinct personality. This is one of the important contributions which the Cappadocian Fathers, and especially St Basil, made to the discussion.

6.4.6 The Means or Form of Divine Revelation and the Organ of Contemplation/Illumination

Further, St Basil describes the ways in which human beings acquire knowledge of divine things or, put other way, the ways in which the Spirit reveals heavenly things. When commenting on Isaiah 2:1, St Basil explains why Isaiah had previously received a vision and now a verbal message.[846] He writes that the power given by God to his saints by the grace of the Spirit is one (knowledge of the incomprehensible things is engendered in the hearts of the saints through revelation and illumination) and that it is given either through vision or through speech, depending on the subject which is revealed, showing the past or foretelling the future. However, these visions or knowledge are not through the physical eyes or ears, but represent 'an illumination in the heart issuing from the Spirit'.[847] Therefore, it is the Spirit who illumines not the mind, but the human heart, and gives not only knowledge of God, but also knowledge of the incomprehensible things through either revelation or illumination. Špidlík notes that the twofold path to God includes a way through reasoning, 'according to knowledge', and another that occurs 'not through knowledge'. The latter, which is a true contemplation, is the revelation made to the purified intellect; it is sudden, effortless, without technique.[848] St Gregory of Nyssa also writes that the Lord shines in hearts by means of the Spirit.[849] We find similar expressions and ideas about the mind as the organ of contemplation and illumination.

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[846] Špidlík writes that Greeks understood contemplation in visual terms, whereas the Old Testament presents it in auditory terms. However, in Christian spiritual thought, contemplation takes either the form of seeing or of hearing. He notes that for St Basil the ideal of contemplation lies in auditory terms, remaining closer to the vocabulary of Scripture. However, we have encountered many places where St Basil writes about contemplation in terms of *seeing* divine things; see Špidlík, *Prayer*, 154.
[847] St Basil, *Is.*, 79.
[848] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 169-70.
[849] Gregory of Nyssa, 'Eun. I' in *Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises*, b. 1, ch. 36, 161. Origen in his turn writes about the mind as the organ of contemplation; see *De Princ.*, ch. 7.

Špidlík writes that the organ of contemplation, the *nous*, is the means by which one can attain sublime union with God. The Fathers Christianised Platonic ideas on this subject. They distinguished between secular dialectic and spiritual vision, emphasising the intuitive nature of contemplative *nous*; they also showed how the Christian purification of the *nous* is deeper than the philosophical concept, since it involves the entire Christian life. The mystics also located the highest experience of the divine not on the level of intellect, but on that of love. The Fathers preferred the biblical term 'heart' instead of *nous* for the organ of contemplation.[850] As Ware writes, the heart is seen by the Fathers as the place of insight, vision, wisdom, as the spiritual centre of the total person, the seat of memory, of reflection, and of self-awareness. It is the place where the Spirit dwells (Rom. 8:27) and 'God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba! Father!' (Gal. 4:6). It is also the place where we come face-to-face with the Holy Trinity.[851] We find all of these ideas in St Basil. However, as we have already noticed, St Basil does not oppose heart and mind as the organs of contemplation; rather, he sees them as one, as the centre of human nature. The use of such terms as 'the eyes of the soul/heart' and 'the mind' depend on the biblical references that he gives, as well as on the context. He uses the first phrase when he discusses the prophetic gift and the purification of human nature, and he uses the second phrase when he talks about knowledge and divine mysteries. Thus, we have seen here that, according to St Basil, the Spirit is the source of all revelation and that he illumines human hearts.

6.5 The Role of the Spirit in Divine Illuminations

6.5.1 The Church Fathers on Spiritual Light

Now we will look at how the Fathers viewed the source and kinds of spiritual light as it is related to the illumination of a human person before we examine the role of the Spirit in illlumination. The Fathers write about

[850] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 169-70.
[851] Ware, 'Body, Intellect, Heart: Prayer of the Total Self. Prayer of the Total Self', *St Nina Quarterly* 3.1, http://www.stnina.org/print-journal/volume-3/volume-3-no-1-winter-1999/body-intellect-heart-prayer-total-self, <accessed 02.02.2016>.

spiritual light as the light of Christ, which is the means by which God illumines the universe and becomes accessible to men in their souls. They also write about the light of the Spirit by which alone humans may see the light of God. They describe divine light as being revealed to, or attained by humans, in moral, intellectual and spiritual illumination. This light is universally diffused by the Logos and is communicated in Scripture, through Christ's advent and in sacraments. In baptism light is conferred by the Spirit and is associated with the baptismal seal; baptism represents the renunciation of the devil and a return to light.

By *moral illumination,* the Fathers mean passage from darkness of sin into light, purification from sin and demonic powers, practice of virtue, and light of conscience. By *intellectual illumination* they understand illumination of the mind by divine light which is the source of truth, as apprehension of the knowledge of God (mediated through the Gospel and traditional rite of baptism), and as the intellectual apprehension of light that is rendered possible through Christ. S*piritual illumination* is fully enjoyed in Paradise, bestowed on the soul in various degrees in the course of its progress towards perfection, along with the inward illumination by the Spirit. In *spiritual illumination* divine light restores the divine image in the soul. Believers themselves become light through illumination, and the soul becomes a mirror of divine light. Participation in or union with divine light is seen as the summit of the mystical ascent. Such participation is only possible for the soul through love. In a positive sense, divine light, which illuminates the soul in prayer, reveals the 'place' of God. Understood negatively, the transcendence of God implies that mystical experience is passage from light into darkness where God dwells. Divine light is also seen as possession of blessedness in the future life. St Basil employs all three senses of illumination.

As Špidlík writes, there were two schools of thought on the mysticism of light: one group, who based their teachings exclusively on the revelation of the Spirit promised in Scripture (Pseudo-Macarius), wrote about seeing external splendours or feeling 'surrounded by light'. The other group depended on Origen who wrote about human beings becoming light

itself.[852] It seems that St Basil follows the latter tendency. We can say that one group is more biblical in its inspiration, whereas the other is more Platonic.

6.5.2 Different Kinds of Light

Although the metaphor of light is important to St Basil, as well as to other early Fathers, it is often not associated with the Spirit. We will first look at how St Basil describes different kinds of spiritual light. He writes about the Law and the Gospel as light.[853] Commenting on Isaiah 2:3, St Basil writes, 'For those on whom "the light of the face of the Lord is marked" (Ps. 4:7) shall not be ashamed, while "he who does evil things hates the light" (Jn. 3:20)'. St Basil explains the verse of Isaiah 2:5, saying that the Jews assumed teaching of the Law to be sufficient light, whereas a new light was announced, namely, the Gospel.[854] Here we read that divine light is the light of the Lord and that it enlightens 'the eyes of the soul'. In addition, St Basil describes the commandments as light, which dissipate the darkness of ignorance.[855] Similarly, in *SR* 1 St Basil explains that the Son of God illumines believers with his commandments as with rays.[856] Thus, we see here the images of darkness of ignorance and the light of commandments. In his turn, Origen writes about the light of knowledge, and mentions the light of the commandments and of the precepts, and the light of higher knowledge. [857]

Further, St Basil writes about Christians as spreading light. Commenting on Isaiah 8:2, St Basil explains that the teaching of the Gospel, which was written in human speech, was quick and spread out to the ends of the world. The witnesses to the Gospel are not only the Law and the Prophets, but also those who are 'illuminated by God and [have] a permanent

[852] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 242-3.
[853] St Gregory of Nyssa describes the degrees of truth and light in the revelation of truth: first, through prophets and then in the divine Incarnation; see id., *Cant.*, 158-9.
[854] St Basil, *Is.*, 89.
[855] Ibid., 186-7.
[856] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 274.
[857] Origen, *In Ioh.*, b. 2, ch. 18, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/101502.htm, <accessed 02.02.2016>.

memory of God'.[858] Therefore, proof of the Gospel lies not only in the books of the Old Testament, but also in the lives of saints and faithful men who are illumined by God. Similarly, in *Reg. Mor.*, St Basil writes that Christians represent light through the example of their life that they set for unbelievers and other people. He writes that Christians and their leaders should be 'as light in the world: both that they admit of no evil and that they illuminate those who come near them with full knowledge of the truth, so that these either become what they must or are exposed for what they are'.[859] This is only possible after one is illumined by the Spirit. Similarly, St Gregory of Nazianzus talks about Christians becoming light and sharing their light with others.[860] He also calls God Light and sees deification as union with the Light.[861]

St Basil also describes divine love and beauty as light. After describing how all people have a natural impulse to love God in *LR* 2, St Basil writes about the beauty of God: 'What yearning of the soul is so keen and intolerable as that which comes from God upon the soul cleansed of all vice, which from true affection declares "I am wounded with love" (Song of Songs 2:5)'. It is interesting how this thought is rendered in the Latin translation of Rufinus: 'What grace is so great, what flame of love which sets alight the secret and inward places of the soul is there like that love of God which ought to inflame the hidden places of the mind, especially if it be cleansed from all pollution, (if it be a pure soul) which cries with true affection: "I am wounded by love"'.[862] Here we see that it is the grace of God and his love, which illumine hidden places of the soul or mind if it is cleansed from passions. St Basil writes, 'Wholly ineffable and indescribable, as I at any rate experience it, are the lightning flashes of the divine beauty; speech cannot express it, hearing cannot take it in'. Rufinus translates, 'The utterly ineffable love of God – as I at any rate experience it – which is more easily experienced than spoken of, is a certain inexplicable light'. Therefore, it is divine love and not divine beauty which is ineffable and which is inexplicable light. As Silvas comments, St

[858] St Basil, *Is.*, 249-50.
[859] St Basil, 'Reg. Mor.', Rule 80. 9, 315-7.
[860] Nazianzen 'Or. 39, Oration on the Holy Lights', 718.
[861] Nazianzen 'Or. 21. On the Great Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria', 550.
[862] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 165.

Basil foreshadowed the Hesychast doctrine of the uncreated light in the 14th century and stressed that we can never 'grasp' divine nature, but can only know divine energies (*Ep* 234). St Basil continues, 'Yet such beauty is not visible to fleshly eyes; it is comprehended only by the soul and the mind. Whenever it illuminated any of the saints it left embedded in them an intolerable sting of yearning' and they wished to depart from this life and be with God; 'insatiable (in their desire)[863] of the vision of the divine beauty they prayed that their vision of the sweetness of the Lord might extend into eternal life (Ps. 15:11, 26:4)'.[864] Likewise, as Špidlík mentions, John Cassian 'used the expression "prayer of fire" for the highest degree of illumination by which God manifests himself as the consuming fire of love and the light that illumines the intellect'. [865] Thus, we have seen how a purified soul can be illumined by the vision of divine love and beauty.

We see that St Basil, St Gregory of Nazianzus, and Origen write about the light of the Lord, of the Gospel and of truth, of the knowledge and of the commandments. They write about the Gospel as a greater light in relation to the Law and the Prophets. They talk about the disciples of the Lord as illuminating humans by the light of the Gospel and bringing saving knowledge. Both St Gregory and St Basil talk about divine light and God illuminating the eyes of the soul. We have also seen how St Basil calls divine grace and love as light. We will see further that the Son and the Spirit are also called Light.

6.5.3 The Son as the Agent of Illumination

St Basil also states that the Son illumines human souls and is 'the light'. The biblical designation of God and the Son as light indicates 'the fullness of revelation, the source of life, the brightness of holiness, and the radiance of the divine nature that excludes all imperfection'. [866] This theme of light is an important Trinitrian image. Origen employs it to show

[863] See St Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.*, 117.
[864] Silvas, *The Asketikon*, 165-6.
[865] Špidlík, *Prayer*, 173.
[866] Gilles, *Thomistic Ressourcement*, 71.

the co-eternity of the Father and the Son beyond time. When St Basil explains in what ways the prepositions 'through whom' and 'with whom' are used in relation to the Son of God, he writes that the Son accomplishes the will of the Father voluntarily and there is no opposition between his works and the will of the Father. When the Lord is called 'the Way' we should not understand this literally, but as 'the road to perfection, advancing in order step by step through the words of righteousness and the illumination of knowledge, always yearning for that which lies ahead and straining toward the last mile, until we reach that blessed end, the knowledge of God, with which the Lord blesses those who believe in him'.[867] From this we see that the end of perfection is the knowledge of God, which is given by the Son,[868] who leads believers directly to the Father.

St Basil often calls the Son Light, expressing by this term his divine substance. The Son is called light in *DSS* 8 where St Basil defends the use of the preposition 'by', attributed to the Son; he is called the 'way' to the comprehension of God, since he 'illumines' the mind of believers. The work of illumination is generally reserved for the Spirit, as we will see later, and in this aspect, as Gorzo notes, St Basil differs from the Alexandrian tradition of seeing exclusively the Logos as divine light.[869]

When St Basil is commenting on Psalm 33: 6, 'Come ye to him and be enlightened: and your faces shall not be confounded', he explains that God urges those who sit in darkness 'to come to the Lord and to approach the rays of his Godhead, in order that, illumined with the truth by this nearness, they may through grace take his light unto themselves'. St Basil explains that in the same way as sensible light cannot be equally perceived by all, but by those who are awake and have eyes, the Sun of justice (Mal. 4:2) '"the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world" (Jn. 1:9), does not bestow his brightness on all, but on those who live in a manner worthy of him'. Further, St Basil explains that this verse refers to

[867] St Basil, *DSS*, 137.
[868] Lanne comments on St Irenaeus saying that the light of the Father was granted to the humans through Incarnation of the Son and this is the most adequate expression of our participation in the Father; see D.E., Lanne, 'La vision de Dieu dans l'oeuvre de saint Irénée', *Irénikon* 33 (1960): 311-20, 319.
[869] Gorzo, 'Le mystère de l'Esprit Saint', 58-9.

the day of judgment when all counsels of heart and hidden deeds[870] will be brought to light and blessed is the person who will not be afraid of this light because of his/her clear conscience.[871] Here we see that St Basil interprets John 1:9 as referring to the Son, since he describes the role of the Son as bringing truth to humans. Similarly to the illumination by the Spirit, those who are illumined appropriate light and share it with everyone around them.

In addition, St Basil writes about illumination in the future life. When commenting on Isaiah 4:2, St Basil explains that present life is illuminated with the 'knowledge of Christ' (2 Pet. 1:2). He encourages us when 'God "shall shine forth in counsel with glory upon the earth"', either in this present age, or the time of judgment, to 'make ourselves worthy to receive his illumination in order that he who grants enlightenment in accordance with the disposition of each, by the greater readiness of our soul may give us greater and more perfect gifts that issue from himself'.[872]

Further, in *Bapt.* St Basil encourages the baptised 'by obeying the Lord, the Sun of justice, to become illuminated with his light and so be accounted worthy of understanding and power, that we may be justified in him'.[873] We see here that the Son illumines and gives access to the knowledge and power. St Basil uses this title, 'Sun of justice', also in *Hom. in Ps.* 45. He says that the Son 'produces the early morning in our soul by the rising of the spiritual light, making day in him who admits him'. St Basil exhorts, 'Therefore, having opened wide our mind, let us receive "the brightness of his glory", and let us be brightly illumined by the everlasting Light…When we have become children of light and "the night is far advanced for us, and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12), then we shall become worthy of the help of God'.[874] Thus, the light of the Son shines in the souls of the worthy.

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[870] St Paul, like St John, when talking about the role of the Son in enlightenment, suggests two purposes of enlightenment: a) to bring the knowledge of God and salvation (2 Tim. 1:10) and b) to expose the things which are hidden (1 Cor. 4:5); see Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 177.
[871] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 33', 254-5. See the same idea about illumination by God in the future life St Basil in *Is.*, 155.
[872] St Basil, *Is.*, 154-5.
[873] St Basil, 'Bapt.', 363.
[874] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 45', 304.

Clement also writes about illumination by the Son. He describes illumination as consisting in the knowledge of God. He compares delusion to darkness and knowledge of God to the sun and light. He writes, '…the Word of the Father, the benign light, the Lord that brings light, faith to all, and salvation'. He also writes that Christ gives light (Eph. 5:14) and he is himself light of men 'by whom we behold God'.[875] He calls the Son the illuminating Word who forgives sins. He quotes the verse from Scripture 'The Spirit of the Lord is a lamp, searching the recesses of the belly' (Prov. 20:27), and explains, 'the more of a Gnostic a man becomes by doing right, the nearer is the illuminating Spirit to him'. He again paraphrases Scripture, saying, 'Thus the Lord draws near to the righteous, and none of the thoughts and reasonings of which we are the authors escape him - I mean the Lord Jesus'.[876] Thus, here Clement possibly associates the Spirit and the Lord Jesus. We see from these quotations that Clement describes the Son as the one who makes humans contemplators of divine things and he understands the Spirit of the Lord, or the illuminating Spirit, as Lord Jesus Christ.

Further, Origen in his work *De Princ.*, writes, '…the word, and wisdom, and righteousness himself, who is the only-begotten Son of God, and who, pouring himself by his graces into our senses, may deign to illuminate what is dark, to lay open what is concealed, and to reveal what is secret'.[877] We see that Origen describes the Son as Wisdom, as illuminating and revealing the mysteries, whereas St Basil sees revelation of mysteries as the function of the Spirit.

We see that St Basil calls the Son 'light' in order to defend his divinity; that Christ bestows light only on those who lead worthy lives, and enlightens those who have pure hearts. We see also many places in Clement and Origen where they ascribe the functions of the Spirit as understood by St Basil to the Son.

[875] Clement, *Protr*., ch. 9.
[876] Clement, *Strom.*, b. 1, ch. 15.
[877] Origen, *De Princ.*, ch. 9.

6.5.4 The Spirit as the Source and Agent of Illumination

Let us look now at how St Basil describes the role of the Spirit in leading humans to divine illumination. As Gorzo notes, according to St Basil, experience of the Spirit and knowledge of the Spirit are one process; a person cannot simply reason about the Spirit, but must enter into an intimate relationship with the Spirit.[878] The theme of the Spirit as 'intelligible light', which can be perceived by the intellect, is very important for St Basil; he develops it in *DSS* 9, 18, 21, 26 and other places. Besides this title 'intelligible light' (φώς νοητόν), as Gorzo notes, the other term, which St Basil applies most frequently to the Spirit, are the energies (ἐνεργείαι) of illumination, clarification, and revelation. In *DSS* 8, the term 'light' does not designate the substance of divinity as it does in St Basil's letters, but rather the person of the Son. Here illuminative power is a characteristic of the Spirit, whereas 'light' signifies the Word. St Basil cites Psalm 35:10, 1 Corinthians 12:3 and John 4:24 to prove that the Spirit is the place and scene of illumination, of confession of the lordship of the Son and worship of the Father.[879] All three processes are deeply interrelated.

As Gorzo notices, St Basil in many of his works emphasizes three elements, which are implied in the participatory knowledge of God in the Spirit. The first element is theological knowledge; the subject represents 'the eyes of the soul' of the human person. The second element, the object, is 'the Image of the invisible God', Christ, who gives access to the Father. And the third element is 'intelligible light', which allows the person to see, and this is the Spirit. He affects the eyes and gives them strength, and he affects the Image, clarifying him. This light is not exterior to the eye, but enables it to see.[880]

St Basil writes about the Spirit as the agent of illumination. In the beginning of *DSS* St Basil states that in order to become like God, one has to learn who God is and to obtain knowledge of God. Later he explains what language is proper to speak about God and describes the distinctive

[878] Gorzo, 'Le mystère de l'Esprit Saint', 56.
[879] Ibid., 57-60.
[880] Ibid., 62-3.

features of the nature of the Spirit according to Scripture. Among other characteristics, St Basil writes that the Spirit gives holiness, virtue, life-giving breath, perfection, and fulfilment. St Basil continues, 'He is the source of sanctification, spiritual light, who gives illumination to everyone using his powers to search for the truth – and the illumination he gives is himself'.[881] Thus, it is essential to the nature of the Spirit to be the source and the goal of illumination. Similarly, St Basil continues in *DSS*, 'So too Spirit-bearing souls (*pneumatophoroi*), illumined by him, finally become spiritual themselves, and their grace is sent forth to others. From this comes knowledge of the future, understanding of mysteries, apprehension of hidden things, distribution of wonderful gifts, heavenly citizenship, a place in the choir of angels, endless joy in the presence of God, becoming like God, and, the highest of all desires, becoming God'. Therefore, the Spirit illumines human souls with divine knowledge and enables them to become divine.

We see from these extracts from *DSS* that the Spirit is the source of sanctity, perfection and is illumination himself. In order to approach the Spirit one has to draw away from evil passions and return to original beauty, then the Spirit comes, shows 'the image of the Invisible', and makes a person spiritual, opens understanding of hidden things and a person becomes like God.

St Basil also writes about the light of the Spirit in his *Hom. in Ps.* 48. Here he explains verses 11-12 on who is a senseless person and who is a fool. He writes that the first is the one who lacks common sense and is not clear-sighted as regards common human affairs. A fool is a person who does not have qualities characteristic of a human being. St Basil explains, 'These [qualities] are an understanding of God the Father and the acceptance of the Word, which "was in the beginning with God" (Jn. 1:2); also the light which comes from the Holy Spirit. And those persons have this mind who are able to say with Paul: "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16)'.[882] Remarkaby, a person is not fully a human being if he/she

[881] St Basil, *DSS*, 43-4.
[882] St Basil, 'Hom. in Ps. 48', 321-2.

does not recognize his/her Creator. We see here the Spirit described as the source of light.

Further, St Basil writes about the enlightening activity of the Spirit. In *Sab*., he explains the doctrine about the one and triune God, and argues for the divinity of the Spirit. He writes that when a person said something about the Spirit, which was unlawful, it is a sign that this person was forsaken by the Spirit, 'Just as anyone who has closed his eyes sits in a darkness of his own making, so too anyone who has withdrawn from the Spirit, now that he is outside the Enlightener, is confounded by the blindness in his soul'.[883]

In addition, St Basil calls the Trinity Light, in *Hex.* 1, explaining the verse, 'In the beginning God created…', and saying that God does not have a beginning, he writes about God as '…the Fount of life, the spiritual Light, the inaccessible Wisdom'.[884] Origen also speaks about the enlightenment of the Trinity. The Father gives the grace of enlightenment (Eph. 1: 17-8), the Son since he is the Light of the world (Jn. 1: 9) illumines the human mind with the knowledge of God, and the Spirit illumines human understanding especially with reference to the word of God (2 Tim. 3: 16). Origen says that all three - Father, Son and Spirit - could be interpreted as the cloud in the Transfiguration of Christ and thus be a source of protection and illumination for the righteous person.[885]

Further, St Basil describes the role of the Spirit in contemplation. In *Ep* 233, 'To Amphilochius, Who Had Questioned Him', St Basil explains the nature of the mind and its operations. St Basil writes that there are two powers in the mind, one wicked, leading to apostasy, and one more divine, leading to the likeness of God. St Basil continues, 'But, if it [mind] inclines toward the more divine part and receives the graces of the Spirit, then it is able to discern the more divine things, as far as it is commensurate with its nature'. St Basil writes that there are three conditions of life and three operations of mind: wicked ('the works of the flesh', Gal. 5:19-21), indifferent (for example, the art of medicine) and

[883] St Basil, *'Sab.'*, 299.
[884] St Basil, 'Hex. 1', 6.
[885] Goble, 'Conversion and Enlightenment', 185.

virtuous. Concerning the last condition, St Basil states, 'Yet the mind that is permeated with the divinity of the Spirit[886] is already initiated in the mighty contemplation, and beholds the divine beauties, as far, of course, as grace is granted and its constitution admits'.[887] From this we can see that the mind can become permeated by the Spirit and receive contemplation depending on its capacity.[888] As we see in this letter, according to St Basil, the mind was created to know God. It is interesting that St Basil marks out indifferent operations of the mind, the moral value of which depends on the use of will. It is also noticeable that the theologian stresses that the mind receives contemplation of divine things, which is commensurate with its nature. In this section we have seen that St Basil describes the Spirit as light and illumination. He writes about those who have received divine light and share it with others.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined St Basil's ideas on different aspects of the knowledge of God, illumination and contemplation, and the role of the Spirit in them. Where relevant we have compared St Basil with Clement, Origen, and the other two Cappadocians and showed his unique contribution to this discussion. Whereas Clement and Origen were mostly binitarians and simply stated a doctrine of the Spirit that complied with the rule of faith, St Basil worked out his doctrine more from observation of the Spirit's work in the Christian life. Thus, their statements about the role of the Spirit in illumination are scarce and at times show the subordination of the Spirit or confuse him with the Son. St Basil in his turn ascribed the illuminative role both to the Son and to the Spirit, showing in this way the equality of their divine nature.

Concerning the role of the Spirit in baptism, as well as the idea that baptism enlightens the baptizand with divine knowledge, we see a similarity of terms and ideas between St Basil and Clement; however, the

[886] St Irenaeus also writes that the soul becomes spiritual if it is 'permeated by the power of the Spirit'; see Špidlík, *Prayer*, 97.
[887] St Basil, *Eps*, vol. 28, 157.
[888] Ibid., 156-8.

former stresses the role of the Spirit much more. St Basil notes that one needs 'the faculty of knowledge' in order to contemplate the mysteries of the Spirit.

St Basil did not develop the image of darkness in contemplation, as did St Gregory of Nyssa who stressed in this way the apophatic nature of our knowledge of God. This may be because St Basil stressed more the kataphatic way, that is, the knowledge of God as light. Similarly to the two Gregories, St Basil stressed the incomprehensibility of the divine nature and described several ways in which one can obtain some understanding of God, that is, through contemplation of the reasons of creation (λόγοι), one's own soul, divine Providence, and Scripture.

We see that St Basil presents both the Son and the Spirit as the sources of wisdom, whereas Clement and Origen write only about the Son as the source of wisdom. Looking back in history we also see that most Fathers, except Theophilus and St Irenaeus, identified the figure of Wisdom in Proverbs with the Logos. In line with other theologians, St Basil mentions 1 Corinthians 1:30-31, saying that Christ became wisdom, holiness, and righteousness for humans. However, St Basil also quotes in the same discussion another verse in Corinthians about the Spirit as the Spirit of wisdom (1 Cor. 2:7, 10). We see that St Basil does not want to make the Spirit in any way subordinate to the Son.

Further, we have seen from St Basil's works that the Spirit enlightens humans and leads them to the knowledge of the Son and the Father in and through himself, personally. The Spirit is described as a 'place' of contemplation and a power, which enables seeing God, and as the Spirit of knowledge. It is noteworthy that St Basil interprets John 1:9 in one place as related to the Spirit and not solely to the Son as do other theologians. He also interprets Psalm 36:9 pneumatologically, whereas Origen interprets it without even mentioning the Spirit. St Gregory of Nyssa also discusses the role of the Spirit in leading to the knowledge of the Father and the Son but he stresses more the identity of operation in the Father, Son, and Spirit to prove the identity of their substance.

Further, St Basil writes that it is the Spirit who illumines the mind/heart, and gives not only the knowledge of God, but also knowledge of the incomprehensible things through either revelation or illumination. Concerning the organs of contemplation St Basil does not oppose 'the eyes of the soul/heart' and the mind; rather, he sees them as one, that is, as a centre of human being. The use of these terms depends on which biblical reference he gives. St Basil regards the Spirit as the source of all revelation illuminating human hearts.

We also encounter in St Basil the idea of 'bare contemplation of the divine thoughts' and seeing God face-to-face in the future life. Similarly to Clement, St Basil distinguishes between the beginners and the advanced in the spiritual life. He states that the advanced soul can approach 'bare contemplation of the divine thoughts'. We have encountered in both St Basil and the Cappadocians the idea of seeing God in the present life only in the mirror of the soul.

St Basil, like other theologians, describes different kinds of light. He writes about the Gospel as a greater light in relation to the Law and the Prophets, and about the disciples of the Lord as illuminating humans by the light of the Gospel and bringing saving knowledge. However, whereas St Gregory of Nyssa mostly talks about the light of the Son and St Gregory of Nazianzus focuses on the light of the Trinity, St Basil mostly mentions the light of the Spirit – although he does mention the light of God as Trinity, as well as the light of the Son, several times. St Basil also writes about the grace of God and his love, which illumine hidden places of soul or mind if it is cleansed from passions.

Further, St Basil writes about the Son as light. He uses John 1:9 as referring also to the Son when he describes the role of the Son as bringing truth to humans. He explains that the Son of God illumines believers with his commandments as with rays. We see that St Basil calls the Son 'light' in order to defend his divinity. In addition, Clement interprets Proverbs 20:27 as referring to the Spirit of the Lord, whereas St Basil refers it to the Spirit.

Furthermore, the theme of the Spirit as 'intelligible light' is very important for St Basil; he develops it in *DSS* 9, 18, 21, 26 and other passages. He cites Psalm 35:10, 1 Corinthians 12:3 and John 4:24 to prove that the Spirit is the 'place' and 'scene' of illumination, of confession of the lordship of the Son and worship of the Father. In contrast, Origen writes about the Spirit as illuminating humans in just one passage. According to St Basil, the mind can even become permeated by the Spirit and receive contemplation depending on its capacity.

Among the interesting questions and phrases that St Basil's ideas raise, and which we attempted to address in this chapter, are the following: whether 'perfect' men arrive at pure contemplation of divine thoughts – that is, whether this is possible in this life to contemplate the Spirit and God; whether wisdom comes from Christ or from the Spirit; and whether the final goal of life is contemplation of God (static activity) or unification with God (ontological and dynamic activity). We have shown in this chapter that, according to St Basil, the Spirit is divine because he illumines human hearts with divine light, enables worship, contemplation and makes possible ultimate unification with God.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined St Basil's way of arguing for the divinity of the Spirit. St Basil assumes *homoousios*, equality, inseparability, and full divinity of the Spirit, but he only applies the term *homotimos* to the third Person of the Trinity. He never writes that the Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son, but rather that he shares in the community of nature with the Father and the Son. Despite using the terms *homotimos* and *koinonia,* the theologian prefers to prove the divine nature of the Spirit by showing his divine works, based on Scripture and on the spiritual experience. The works of the Spirit define his nature more than do abstract terms. St Basil is taking for the most part an 'economic' approach to the Trinity in his handling of the Spirit. Even so, in the last resort, God is beyond philosophical categories; he is incomprehensible. The contemplation of the Spirit is at the core of the Christian life and is enabled by the Spirit himself. For St Basil, ascetic life influences the understanding and formulation of doctrines while the latter are essential for the right spiritual life.

In Chapter One we have looked at the theological environment of the fourth century and at the contribution of St Athanasius and the Cappadocians to the doctrine of the Spirit. Then we have demonstrated St Basil's views on the Spirit, his unity with two Persons and his individual properties. The unique properties of the Spirit are holiness, enabling glorification of God and prayer, revealing the mysteries, and bringing joy. We attempted to explain the theologian's reticence with regard to *homoousios* and examined development in his thought. He showed reservation because he strictly followed Scripture, wanted to secure more people in the Church, valued doxological formulae above abstract terms, preferred to explicate the nature of the Spirit in terms of his actions instead of philosophical terms, and, finally, believed that the nature of the Spirit is incomprehensible and hidden. Further, we discussed St Basil's approach to the interpretation of Scripture and his view on the role of the unwritten traditions in the formulation of the Church doctrines. St Basil mostly followed the Antiochene tradition, except for interpreting *Hex.*, *Hom. in*

Ps., and *Is*. His methods of exegesis varied depending on the genre of the books, history of their interpretation, and the use of spiritual interpretations. He saw the final goal of interpretation as contributing to the edification of Christians and their salvation.

In Chapter Two we examined the role of the Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture and in the creation of the world, both of which St Basil saw as proving his divine nature. We have shown how St Basil uses the phrase 'sayings of the Spirit' and how he describes the process of inspiration of prophets. According to St Basil, and contrary to his predecessors who held binitarian views on the nature of God, the Spirit, and not the Son, is the sole source of inspiration of Scripture. It is also one of his peculiar functions. The ultimate goal of the teachings of the Spirit is the salvation of humanity. Since the Spirit is God and since he inspired Scripture, the latter holds higher authority than mere human words. St Basil juxtaposes the teachings of the Spirit with human foolish wisdom. The Spirit also helps Christians to understand the right meaning of Scripture; without his help they might arrive at a heretical interpretation. The same Spirit inspires not just Scripture, but also liturgical prayers. In addition, for St Basil, the Spirit, possessing a creative power, cooperated with the Father and the Son in creation. His specific role was strengthening rational creatures in both holiness and perfection. St Basil shows the inseparability of the Father, the Son and the Spirit in their united activity in the creation of visible things, and from this demonstrates the unity of their nature. We see the novelty of St Basil's thought in his argument for the divinity of the Spirit from the communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in the creation specifically of angels. The Spirit participates in all kinds of creation: from non-being to being, from the life of sin to the perfect life, and from being dead to being resurrected.

In Chapter Three we investigated how the Spirit guides the Church as a whole, as well as individuals, in determining what is true doctrine, and how one's life in the Spirit influences one's understanding of the doctrines. This chapter showed the Spirit as a Person who is alive, not one who is a mere theological construct. It is crucial, for St Basil, that baptism, faith and worship are intertwined. St Basil views the Spirit as divine

because he is the Teacher of true doctrines and Guide in the true interpretation of Scripture. St Basil writes that bishops receive guidance from the Spirit in relation to explaining the doctrines and fighting against the heresies, whereas lay people receive consolation and help as the Spirit directs their daily lives. According to St Basil, there are true doctrines based on Scripture and the decisions of the councils, and evil doctrines, which appear because of the perverted understanding of Scripture; these can destroy churches. True doctrines are approved by the Spirit. The theologian warns monks against accepting and communicating with heretical groups, because it can lead them in wrong directions. We demonstrated, with the help of one example, an interrelation between St Basil's doctrinal views on the Spirit and his ascetic teaching, or in other words, between the simplicity of the doctrine of the Spirit and simplicity of heart. We also showed how St Basil writes about grace, or the gifts and fruits of the Spirit, in both the clergy and the laity.

In Chapter Four we looked at the place of the Spirit in St Basil's theological anthropology, at human nature as it was created and in its fallen state. Importantly, St Basil uses the relationship of the human spirit to human nature in order to prove the divine nature of the Spirit. According to St Basil, in order to reach salvation and fulfilment in human nature, one has to become spiritual through baptism, by being born of the Spirit. Baptism makes one's spirit free from sin. The Spirit both grants humans humility of spirit and strengthens the human spirit, so that the soul and the body may fight against temptations. St Basil frequently writes about two types of life in the post-lapsarian condition: the life according to reason and the life according to passions. It is fundamental to St Basil that one cannot become a dwelling place of the Spirit and of the Trinity if one leads the latter type of life and does not prepare one's own soul by means of ascetic exercises. We argued that St Basil addresses his spiritual advice to all Christians, not just to monastics. We also showed that St Basil's phrase, the 'life according to the Gospel', is not always related to the monastic life, but is open to all Christians. At the time when St Basil started writing his *Ask.* Christians were practising asceticism in the wider world; only over time did St Basil organise monastic communities and

define specific kinds of renunciations for entering them. We also looked at the first stage of spiritual life, namely, the purification of passions. When passions rule over reason, a person becomes bestial and falls below human dignity; he/she is therefore unable to be a dwelling-place of the Spirit. Concerning the destruction or control of the passionate parts of the soul, St Basil's views are not equivocal. However, one might draw the following conclusion: the beginners in spiritual life have to train and bring into harmony the various parts of the soul, while the perfect should be above passions and remain untroubled by them. Further, we have seen how St Basil describes the perfect person as being above any passion, having peace of God in the soul, being self-controlled, and being helped by the Spirit in coming to salvation. We have shown throughout this chapter that the Spirit accompanies Christians all along their spiritual lives, in granting them divine grace in baptism, purifying their souls from passions, and helping them to acquire virtues.

In Chapter Five we demonstrated, contrary to the views of Russell, that St Basil understands the way of salvation as consisting of perfection in virtue, deification and contemplation. Some of his works describe the first model, which may be addressed to Christians at the beginning of their spiritual journeys, whereas the models of deification and contemplation describe the final stages of the ascetic life. St Basil writes that self-control is one of the gifts of the Spirit that helps human beings to abstain from passions and pleasures; this enables the indwelling of the Spirit. The Spirit approaches and gives his power only to those who are pure from passions. He himself cools human passions. St Basil makes it clear that the soul can never be empty: it is either occupied by evil demons or indwelt by the Spirit. The indwelling of the Spirit brings joy and leads to deeper understanding of truth. According to St Basil, the body should not be neglected because it is called to become a dwelling of the Spirit. The Spirit and the other two Persons come literally, not just metaphorically, to dwell in a human being. St Basil also describes baptism as a means through which Christians acquire the power or potential for union with God. We have seen that Christians should be proud not of material things, but of God who adopted them as sons and called them to close intimacy with

himself. In order to become a 'son/daughter of God', one has to have a pure heart and attain holiness. In order not only to confess Jesus as Lord with the help of the Spirit, but also to praise God with a pure heart, one has to be 'in the Spirit'. The latter is achieved through the practice of virtues. We have also seen that all the baptised are given a share in divine grace, but that not everyone can preserve it or increase it. The grace of the Spirit leaves a person who leads a life according to passions. Only those who are worthy can receive the grace of the Spirit. Worthiness is determined by degree of faith, stability of will and by the degree of overcoming of carnal passions.

Chapter Six has shown how the Spirit provides the way to the knowledge of God and how he leads the purified souls to divine illumination. St Basil in many regards followed the tradition of the Fathers in his understanding of divine illumination and contemplation. The main difference lies in the fact that St Basil ascribed the illuminative role both to the Son and to the Spirit, showing by this the equality of their divine nature. Importantly, St Basil states that those who have souls that are like 'filthy mirrors' cannot receive the prophetic gift and 'the illuminations of the Holy Spirit'. Interestingly, St Basil explains that Jesus first cleansed his disciples through his teachings and then enabled them 'to both see and contemplate the Spirit'. In stating this, St Basil demonstrates that the Spirit is not subordinate to the Son. He also differs here from other theologians by mentioning contemplation of the Spirit and direct vision of the Spirit. St Basil mentions on different occasions the concept of 'inscription' on the soul. He writes that the Spirit himself inscribes divine laws and good deeds in human heart. St Basil also presents both the Son and the Spirit as the sources of wisdom in their specific ways. We have seen from St Basil's works that the Spirit enlightens humans and leads them to the knowledge of the Son and the Father in and through himself, personally. The Spirit is described as a 'place' of contemplation and a power, which enables seeing God. St Basil writes that it is the Spirit, who illumines the mind/heart, and gives not only knowledge of God, but also knowledge of the incomprehensible things. The theme of the Spirit as 'intelligible light' is very important for St Basil, he cites Psalm 35:10, 1 Corinthians 12:3

and John 4:24 to prove that the Spirit is the 'place' and 'scene' of illumination, of confession of the lordship of the Son and worship of the Father. According to St Basil, the mind can even become permeated by the Spirit and receive contemplation depending on its capacity.

To summarize, the contribution of this work lies in the systematic and comprehensive overview of St Basil's pneumatology with some consideration of each work's historical context and potential audience. Nobody can deny that there is development in St Basil's thought. *Eun*. contains the seed of most ideas on the nature of the Spirit which St Basil developed in his later works. However, he always believed that the Spirit is above creation and that holiness belongs to his nature. Both his early works (*Eun*., *Is*., *Hom. in Ps*., *Ask*., and some homilies) and later works (*DSS*, *Eps*, *Reg. Mor*., *Bapt.*) show divine activities of the Spirit in creation and in all spheres of human life. St Basil was pushed to develop his pneumatology under the attacks of heretics, whereas, according to his deep conviction, God is incomprehensible and our minds cannot know the Spirit completely, face-to-face, until the eschatological future. Such knowledge is only possible now through observation of the Spirit's divine works. It is also fundamental to St Basil's thought that spiritual life deeply depends on belief and worship, and vice versa. This thesis has shown that arguing for the divinity of the Spirit on the basis of his works is valid and that St Basil largely succeeds in this endeavour. This thesis thus develops our understanding of the pneumatological debate in the fourth century from systematic, exegetic, ascetic, and historical perspectives. The relationship between the history of the doctrine of the Spirit and the history of asceticism and monasticism may prove to be a fruitful direction for future research. One might, for example, study the role of the Spirit in ascetic life by turning to other Cappadocians, also comparing their views with those of St Basil. Another interesting project, which one might pursue in the future, would be to research the place of the doctrine of the Spirit within heretical ascetic movements.

Thus, St Basil has shown in both his doctrinal and ascetic works that the Spirit is equal, inseparable, and worthy of the same honour as the Father and the Son. According to this fourth-century Father, no one is able to

become a Christian, receive divine grace, become the dwelling-place of God, and know the Son and the Father without the help of the Holy Spirit.

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