

# A RE-EXAMINATION OF *DE SPIRITU SANCTO*: SAINT BASIL'S BOLD DEFENCE OF THE SPIRIT'S DEITY

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## INTRODUCTION: SAINT BASIL AND HIS PRESENTATION OF THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Saint Basil (330-379), the great fourth-century archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, has long been honoured as a defender of the doctrine of the Trinity. This respect and admiration has not been restricted to the churches of Eastern Orthodoxy. Basil was generally respected, for example, by the Protestant Reformers. David Wright states, 'Most Reformers accorded Basil due recognition for his vindication of the Nicene faith.'<sup>1</sup> It was Wolfgang Musculus, in particular, who praised Basil for defending the faith against heresy.<sup>2</sup>

Although Basil is remembered for many things, especially his monastic rules which are still used in Greek monasteries,<sup>3</sup> his endeavours in Trinitarian apologetics are still recognised. Johannes Quasten regards Basil as 'a second Athanasius in the defense of orthodoxy'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, it was Basil's steadfast determination to be a defender of the apostolic faith. Writing about the intention of the Pneumatomachians in his *magnum opus De Spiritu Sancto*,<sup>5</sup> Basil says, 'The one aim of the whole band of these enemies of sound doctrine is to shake the faith of Christ down to its foundations, by utterly levelling apostolic tradition to the ground.... But

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<sup>1</sup> David F. Wright, 'Basil the Great in the Protestant Reformers', *Studia Patristica* 17, no. 3 (1982), p. 1151.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, 'Basil the Great in the Protestant Reformers', p. 1151.

<sup>3</sup> William C. Placher, *A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Philadelphia, 1983), p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon* (Utrecht, Antwerp, and Westminster, MD, 1960), p. 204.

<sup>5</sup> Richard P. C. Hanson, 'The Divinity of the Holy Spirit', *The Church Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1969), p. 300, regards Basil's treatise *De Spiritu Sancto* as his *magnum opus*.

we will never surrender the truth; *we will not betray the defense like cowards.*<sup>6</sup>

One of the outstanding features of Basil's work in apologetics is the manner in which he engages in the defence of the faith. Even as Basil defended the deity of the Holy Spirit in *De Spiritu Sancto*, he did so in dependence upon the Spirit himself. Basil began his classic treatise with this testimony: 'Wherefore now with the help, if I may say so, of the Spirit Himself, I will approach the exposition of the subject.'<sup>7</sup> Basil's apologetic style is also commendable in terms of his attitude toward the heretics against whom he marshalled his arguments. Although Basil attempted to destroy the theological positions of the Pneumatomachians, he did not desire the destruction of the heretics themselves, but rather their salvation. He expresses his prayer for them in *De Spiritu Sancto*:

As for our opponents, what will they have to say? What defense will they have for their blasphemy? They have neither shown reverence to the honor which the Lord paid to the Spirit, nor have they feared His threats. They are responsible for their own actions; they can change their minds if they wish. For my own part, I fervently pray that the good God will make His peace to reign in everyone's heart, so that these men who are swollen with pride and who bitterly rage against us may be calmed by the Spirit of gentleness and love.<sup>8</sup>

One of the principal apologetic concerns of Saint Basil relates to the issue of the identity and nature of the Holy Spirit. Anthony Meredith is even willing to say this: 'It is primarily as the theologian of the Holy Spirit that Basil deserves particular attention.'<sup>9</sup> As to his competence as a theologian in general, Richard Hanson provides this estimate: 'Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzen were outstandingly able theologians, among the most intellectual men of their time.'<sup>10</sup> But more particularly,

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<sup>6</sup> St Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*, trans. David Anderson (Crestwood, N.Y., 1980), 10.25 p. 46. Emphasis added. This modern translation of the Greek text will be hereafter cited as *On the Holy Spirit*.

<sup>7</sup> Saint Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, trans. Blomfield Jackson, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 8 (Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1989), 1.2 p. 3. This nineteenth-century translation will be hereafter cited as *De Spiritu Sancto*.

<sup>8</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.75, p. 113.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, N.Y., 1995), p. 30.

<sup>10</sup> Hanson, 'The Divinity of the Holy Spirit', p. 304.

regarding his treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the *De Spiritu Sancto*, Henry Swete gives this glowing commendation: 'Others may have carried the doctrine of the Holy Spirit somewhat further, but no ancient writer either in East or West shews more sympathy with his subject, or treats it more worthily.'<sup>11</sup>

### *The consubstantiality and deity of the Holy Spirit*

When it comes to Basil's treatment of the Spirit's deity in *De Spiritu Sancto*, there is a universal recognition that Basil does not speak about the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit. Thomas Torrance, for example, asserts concerning Basil, 'While he was strangely hesitant in speaking of the Holy Spirit as *homoousios* with the Father and the Son, he held in accordance with the liturgy of the Church that the Spirit is glorified and adored equally with the Father and the Son in the indivisible oneness of the Holy Trinity.'<sup>12</sup> This approach, as Torrance points out, was different from that of Gregory of Nazianzus.<sup>13</sup> In Gregory's *Fifth Theological Oration*, he forthrightly declares, 'What, then? Is the Spirit God? Most certainly. Well, then, is he consubstantial? Yes, if he is God.'<sup>14</sup> Although Basil in referring to the Spirit did not explicitly use the word *homoousios* in *De Spiritu Sancto*, he nevertheless believed the doctrine. In at least one of his epistles (*Letter 8*), he speaks about the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit: 'And if He is not a creature, He is consubstantial with God.'<sup>15</sup>

A second perspective on Basil's treatise on the Holy Spirit is the position that the great Cappadocian father asserts the deity of the Spirit,

<sup>11</sup> Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church* (London, 1912), p. 240.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 126. Cf., Quasten, *Patrology*, p. 232.

<sup>13</sup> Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, p. 127.

<sup>14</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus, *The Fifth Theological Oration – On the Spirit*, in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. Edward R. Handy, vol. 3 of *The Library of Christian Classics* (Philadelphia, 1954), 31.10 p.199. This will be hereafter cited as *On the Spirit*. It is rather remarkable in light of this statement by Gregory on the Spirit's consubstantiality that Rosemary Jermann, 'The Fourth-Century Cappadocian Witness,' in *Faith to Creed*, ed. S. Mark Heim (Grand Rapids, 1991), p. 93, states concerning the Cappadocians, 'Acknowledging limits in speaking of what God is, they did not try to apply *homoousios* to the Spirit.'

<sup>15</sup> Saint Basil, *Letter 8*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in *Saint Basil: The Letters* (Cambridge and London, 1950), vol. 1, p. 81.

but that he does so in a rather restrained and reserved manner. This approach is seen in Meredith who writes, 'Despite all this willingness on Basil's part to unite the Holy Spirit in common worship with the Father and the Son, he is curiously reticent about the actual assertion of deity and consubstantiality of all three persons, a diplomatic reticence which the Creed of Constantinople also shared.'<sup>16</sup> In a similar way, Justo González states, 'In the treatise *On the Holy Spirit* Basil affirms and attempts to prove the divinity of the Holy Spirit. But his affirmations and arguments are always restrained, as if he were afraid to scandalize those who... have not yet been convinced of the divinity of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>17</sup>

One of the problems with this view is that it does not take into account Basil's own statement that he, far from being reserved in his declarations, was attempting to set forth boldly the truth about the nature of the Holy Spirit. As he concludes his treatise, Basil affirms, 'Therefore the cloud of our enemies does not dismay us, but we place our trust in the Spirit's help, and *boldly proclaim* the truth.'<sup>18</sup> Basil had no notion at all that he was 'holding back' as it were from making a strong case for the Spirit's deity. Rather, as it will be demonstrated in this paper, Basil presents an overwhelming amount of evidence which convincingly maintains the deity of the Holy Spirit. In addition, it needs to be recognised right from the outset that Basil was not at all reticent in *De Spiritu Sancto* about the actual assertion of the Spirit's deity.<sup>19</sup> Speaking about the Spirit, he says,

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<sup>16</sup> Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 33.

<sup>17</sup> Justo L. González, *A History of Christian Thought*, rev. ed. (Nashville, 1970), vol. 1, p. 309.

<sup>18</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 30.79, p. 118. Emphasis added.

<sup>19</sup> It is my own suspicion that this idea that Basil sets forth the Spirit's deity in *De Spiritu Sancto* in a restrained manner has its roots in a letter of Gregory Nazianzen which he wrote to Basil, *Letter 58*, trans. Charles G. Browne and James E. Swallow, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 7 (Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1989), p. 455. In this letter, Gregory relates to Basil what had recently happened at a party which he had attended. A certain monk spoke out questioning the orthodoxy of Basil. His proof was the hearing of one of Basil's sermons. According to his testimony, Basil spoke 'most beautifully and perfectly upon the Godhead of the Father and the Son, as hardly anyone could speak, but he slurred over the Spirit.' This monk, according to Gregory's letter, then compared the openness of Gregory's teaching on the Spirit's deity with the reticence of Basil to set forth

But what nature is it becoming to assign to Him who is omnipresent, and exists together with God?... Shall we not then highly exalt Him who is *in His nature divine*, in His greatness infinite, in His operations powerful, in the blessings He confers, good? Shall we not give Him glory?<sup>20</sup>

### *Identifying the Holy Spirit as God*

A third viewpoint with respect to *De Spiritu Sancto* is that Basil does not at any point explicitly identify the Spirit as being God. Writing about Gregory Nazianzen, Tom Noble affirms, 'Gregory stands out among the Cappadocian Fathers as the one most ready to declare the deity of the Spirit. Unlike the brothers, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory was prepared to say openly and explicitly that the Holy Spirit is God.'<sup>21</sup> Alasdair Heron takes the same line when he says, 'Basil... drew back – at least in his official, public statements – from calling the Spirit "God" because such an explicit identification was not made in the Bible, and because it could cause offence.'<sup>22</sup> Quasten, directing attention specifically to Basil's *magnum opus*, says, 'Basil... never calls the Holy Spirit explicitly "God" in his treatise *De Spiritu Sancto*.'<sup>23</sup> Now it is true that one will not find in Basil's exposition on the Holy Spirit the kind of statement made by Gregory of Nazianzus in his oration *On the Spirit*: 'What, then? *Is the Spirit God? Most certainly.* Well, then, is he

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explicitly the same doctrine: "As for you my good sir," he said, looking at me, "you do now express yourself openly on the Godhead of the Spirit... but the other man hints obscurely, and as it were, merely suggests the doctrine, but does not openly speak out the truth." It may or may not be true that Basil was reticent to articulate clearly the Spirit's Deity at one period of time in his public preaching. But even if it is true that he had been somewhat reserved, it does not necessarily follow that a restrained style characterizes *De Spiritu Sancto*.

<sup>20</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 23.54, p. 35. Emphasis added. The Greek text provided in Benoit Pruche, *Basile de Cesaree Sur le Saint-Esprit* (Paris, 1968), p. 444, reads *theion te phusei*. It should also be noted that Basil in 29.72 p. 45) also approvingly quotes from Irenaeus who referred to the Holy Spirit as 'the divine Spirit'. Pruche's text reads *theiou pneumatos* p. 506.

<sup>21</sup> Tom A. Noble, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Use of Scripture in Defence of the Deity of the Spirit', *Tyndale Bulletin* 39 (1988), p. 123. Frederick W. Norris, 'Gregory the Theologian', *Pro Ecclesia* 2, no. 4 (1993), p. 483, also appreciates Gregory's forthrightness: 'Gregory forcefully confessed that the Spirit is God.'

<sup>22</sup> Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia, 1983), p. 81.

<sup>23</sup> Quasten, *Patrology*, p. 231.

consubstantial? Yes, if he is God.<sup>24</sup> But it is not adequate merely to say that Basil never explicitly called the Spirit 'God' without any kind of qualification. It must be recognised that Basil does cite the apostle Peter explicitly identifying the Holy Spirit as God in Acts 5:3-4. In the context, Basil challenges the Pneumatomachians:

Let our opponents determine what place they will give to the Holy Spirit. Will they rank Him with God, or will they push Him down to a creature's place? Peter said to Sapphira, 'How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? You have not lied to men but to God,' and this shows that to sin against the Holy Spirit is to sin against God.<sup>25</sup>

Obviously enough, the very fact that Basil introduces this text into his discussion shows that he agrees with Peter's identification in Acts 5:3-4 – to lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God. Also, Basil does not merely cite the biblical text. He adds this comment in which he, like Peter, identifies the Holy Spirit as being God: 'This shows that to sin against the Holy Spirit is to sin against God.'<sup>26</sup> Later, in chapter XIX, Basil again draws an identification between the Spirit and God. Speaking about the leading of the Spirit, Basil writes,

Isaiah says, 'The Lord God and His Spirit have sent me,' and 'the Spirit came down from the Lord and led them.' Do not try to convince me that *this 'leading' by the Spirit* is some lowly service. Scripture testifies that *this is the work of God*: 'He led forth His people like sheep.'<sup>27</sup>

Finally, there is this passage in *De Spiritu Sancto* which helps to qualify the declaration that Basil never explicitly identifies the Spirit as being God. In chapter XXI, Basil directs these statements against the Pneumatomachians: 'Wherefore let them hear yet *another testimony which distinctly calls the Spirit Lord*. "The Lord," it is said, "is that Spirit:" and again, "even as from the Lord the Spirit".'<sup>28</sup> Basil's explicit identification of the Spirit and the Lord is later affirmed in the Constantinopolitan Creed: 'And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is worshiped and glorified

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<sup>24</sup> *On the Spirit*, p. 199. Emphasis added.

<sup>25</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 16.37, p. 61.

<sup>26</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 16.37, p. 61.

<sup>27</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 19.49, p. 78.

<sup>28</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 21.52, p. 33. Emphasis added.

together with the Father and Son, Who spoke through the prophets.<sup>29</sup> How shall we interpret this creedal declaration that the Holy Spirit is Lord (*kurios*)? It should be obvious that the intention of the Constantinopolitan statement is to affirm the Spirit's deity. Torrance rightly states that this statement 'had the effect of affirming full belief in the unqualified Deity of the Holy Spirit along with the Father and the Son.'<sup>30</sup> Surely, the same thing can be said about Basil's statement – it had the effect of affirming full belief in the unqualified deity of the Holy Spirit.

It can be seen then, in short order, that it is not legitimate (apart from qualification) to say that Basil 'drew back' in his public statements 'from calling the Spirit "God".'<sup>31</sup> But it still needs to be demonstrated more thoroughly that Basil was not reticent and reserved in *De Spiritu Sancto* in the way in which he sets forth the Spirit's Deity. After considering the historical setting of Basil's treatise, a reexamination of Basil's classic treatise will show that the thesis of Meredith and Gonzalez regarding Basil's so-called reticence and restraint does not fit the facts.

#### THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF BASIL'S TREATISE ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the year 375,<sup>32</sup> fifty years after the Council of Nicaea, Basil began his discourse *De Spiritu Sancto* with these words: 'Your desire for information, my right well-beloved and most deeply respected brother Amphilochius, I highly commend, and not less your industrious energy.'<sup>33</sup> Amphilochius (c.340-394), a disciple of Basil's,<sup>34</sup> was

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<sup>29</sup> John H. Leith, ed., *Creeeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present*, 3d ed. (Louisville, 1982), p. 33. The Greek text of the Constantinopolitan Creed is provided in Charles J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, trans. Henry N. Oxenham (Edinburgh, 1896), vol. 2, pp. 349-50.

<sup>30</sup> Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, p. 96. Writing about the Constantinopolitan Creed, Harold O.J. Brown, *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present* (Garden City, N.Y., 1984), p. 142, affirms, 'The Spirit is called the Lord, a title the religious use of which is reserved in the biblical tradition for the Deity, i.e. for God himself.'

<sup>31</sup> This is the position of Heron, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 81.

<sup>32</sup> Quasten, *Patrology*, p. 210. Cf., Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 31.

<sup>33</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 1.1, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> John R. Willis, *A History of Christian Thought: From Apostolic Times to*

approximately ten years younger in age. He doubtless provided strong representation for Basil's pneumatology at the Council of Constantinople in 381.<sup>35</sup> Thus, he is a significant figure when it comes to the eventual triumph of orthodox doctrine on the Holy Spirit at the Second Ecumenical Council. *De Spiritu Sancto* provides not only Basil's commendation of his younger brother in the ministry, but it also gives the information that it was because of a request of Amphilochius for clear instruction on the Holy Spirit that Basil determined to write this treatise. At the conclusion of chapter I, Basil writes, 'You... have expressed the opinion that some clear instruction ought to be published.'<sup>36</sup>

### *The Pneumatomachian heresy*

Chapter I not only mentions Amphilochius, a solid Trinitarian bishop, but it also provides the immediate historical occasion which precipitated Basil's treatise on the Spirit. Basil writes,

Lately while I pray with the people, we sometimes finish the doxology to God the Father with the form 'Glory to the Father *with* the Son, *together with* the Holy Spirit,' and at other times we use 'Glory to the Father *through* the Son *in* the Holy Spirit.' Some of those present accused us of using strange and mutually contradictory terms.<sup>37</sup>

Basil's theological adversaries which are here introduced are later identified as the *Pneumatomachoi* (literally, 'the Spirit-fighters').<sup>38</sup> Several scholars identify Eustathius and his disciples as Basil's chief adversaries in *De Spiritu Sancto*. Hanson declares, 'C'était Eustathe évêque de Sébaste et ses disciples.'<sup>39</sup> Noble more cautiously states, 'Basil's arguments in this

*Saint Augustine* (Hicksville, N.Y., 1976), p. 275.

<sup>35</sup> A. G. Gibson, 'Amphilochius of Iconium', in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, asserts that Amphilochius did attend the Council of Constantinople. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, p. 252, states, 'It was the role of Amphilochius... to defend and propagate the faith as it was taught by Basil.'

<sup>36</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 1. 3, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 1. 3, p. 17.

<sup>38</sup> Basil uses the Greek word *pneumatomachoi* twice in his treatise 11.27, 21.52.

<sup>39</sup> Richard P. C. Hanson, 'Basile et la doctrine de la Tradition en relation avec le Saint-Esprit', *Verbum Caro* 22, no. 88 (1968), p. 64. Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 31, also regards Eustathius as Basil's principal adversary.



treatise... seem to have been directed specifically against Eustathius who now stood forward as a leading Pneumatomachian.<sup>40</sup>

Although there is no internal evidence in *De Spiritu Sancto* that Eustathius was Basil's principal target, Hanson's judgement is probably correct. In his letter 'To the Westerns' (*Letter 263*), Basil identifies Eustathius in these words: 'He... is the prime leader of the heresy of the pneumatomachi.'<sup>41</sup> Eustathius (c.300-c.377), the bishop of Sebaste, was significantly older than Basil, and at one time had been his theological mentor.<sup>42</sup> Hanson characterises him as 'that extraordinary and unpredictable character.'<sup>43</sup> His unpredictability is reflected upon by Basil in *Letter 263*. Sometimes his Christology was Nicene, at other times he embraced the *homoiousios* position. Still on other occasions, he joined with the Arians.<sup>44</sup> Besides being all over the theological map, he seems to have had a messiah complex. Socrates Scholasticus (c.380-450) provides this description of Eustathius: 'He himself wore the habit of a philosopher, and induced *his followers* to adopt a new and extraordinary garb, directing that the hair of women should be cropped.'<sup>45</sup>

Eustathius apparently embraced the Pneumatomachian doctrine of the Holy Spirit as he learned it from Macedonius who had been the bishop of Constantinople.<sup>46</sup> Both Socrates and Sozomen give a formative place to Macedonius in the thinking of Eustathius. Socrates affirms, 'When Macedonius began to deny the Divinity Of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity,

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<sup>40</sup> Noble, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Use of Scripture', p. 107.

<sup>41</sup> Saint Basil, *Letter 263*, trans. Blomfield Jackson, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 8 (Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1989), p. 302.

<sup>42</sup> V. C. De Clerco, 'Eustathius of Sebaste', in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967. Michael A. G. Haykin, 'And Who Is the Spirit? Basil of Caesarea's Letters to the Church at Tarsus', *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), p. 377, adds, 'Eustathius had been instrumental in Basil's conversion.'

<sup>43</sup> Richard P. C. Hanson, 'The Doctrine of the Trinity Achieved in 381', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 36 (1983), p. 52.

<sup>44</sup> Saint Basil, *Letter 263*, 302. James O. Hannay, 'Eustathius', in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1960, states that Eustathius signed quite inconsistently the creeds of Ancyra (358), Seleucia (359), Constantinople (360), and Lampsacus (364).

<sup>45</sup> Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. A. C. Zenos, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 2 (Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1989), 2.43 p. 72. Emphasis added.

<sup>46</sup> W. H. C. Frend, *The Early Church* (Philadelphia, 1982), p. 171.

Eustathius said: "I can neither admit that the Holy Spirit is God, nor can I dare affirm him to be a creature."<sup>47</sup> Sozomen adds,

Macedonius.... began to teach that the Son is God, and that He is in all respects like unto the Father. But he affirmed that the Holy Ghost is not a participant of the same dignities, and designated Him a minister and a servant, and applied to Him whatever could, without error, be said of the holy angels. This doctrine was embraced by... Eustathius.<sup>48</sup>

When Basil composed his great refutation of the Pneumatomachian heresy in 375, he was addressing a movement which had been operative for approximately fifteen years. Sozomen states that 'after Macedonius had been deposed from the church of Constantinople', he began to teach this heresy.<sup>49</sup> It could be that Macedonius started to proclaim his Pneumatomachian views in 360, the very year of his deposition.<sup>50</sup> Already, by 362, this heresy had become a matter of significant concern. The synod of Alexandria (362) assembled with the Pneumatomachian heresy as part of its agenda. Summarising the work of this ecclesiastical assembly, Charles Hefele writes, 'Against this new heresy the Synod declared, that "the Holy Ghost was of the same substance and divinity with the Father and the Son, and that in the Trinity there was nothing of the nature of a creature".'<sup>51</sup> Although the Pneumatomachian heresy lasted for only twenty years (largely due to the work of the emperor Theodosius who demanded submission to the Trinitarian position of the Council of Constantinople<sup>52</sup>), it was nevertheless a significant movement. Hanson

<sup>47</sup> Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.45, p. 74.

<sup>48</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Chester D. Hartranft, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 2 (Edinburgh and Grand Rapids, 1989), 4.27, p. 322. Everett Ferguson, *Church History, Early and Medieval* (Abilene, TX, 1966), p. 43, blunders when he states that 'the position of Macedonius... denied the personality of the Spirit'. Macedonius did not deny that the Spirit is a person, but that he is a *divine* Person.

<sup>49</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.27, p. 322.

<sup>50</sup> Leon Cristiani, *Heresies and Heretics*, trans. Roderick Bright, vol. 136 of *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York, 1959), p. 28.

<sup>51</sup> Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 277.

<sup>52</sup> Theodosius began his reign as emperor by soon announcing his intention in 380 with regard to the Nicene faith and heretical deviations from it. N. Q. King, *The Emperor Theodosius and the Establishment of Christianity* (London, 1961), p. 28, affirms, "Theodosius opened his campaign against all the heresies with the magnificent trumpet blast of the edict *Cunctos*

describes it as 'a formidable movement'.<sup>53</sup> Adolph Harnack adds, 'The Macedonians in general made a deep impression on their contemporaries by their ascetic practices and by their determined struggle against the Homoeans. In the countries on the Hellespont they were the most important party.'<sup>54</sup> Sozomen likewise viewed the Pneumatomachian heresy as being a major problem:

A question was renewed at this juncture which had previously excited much inquiry and now more; namely, whether the Holy Ghost is or is not to be considered consubstantial with the Father and the Son. Many contentions and debates ensued on this subject, similar to those which had been held concerning the nature of God the Word.<sup>55</sup>

Saint Basil, who lived at the very time in which the heresy flourished, likened the situation to a 'naval battle, kindled by old quarrels, fought by men who love war, who cultivate hatred for one another, and have long experience in naval warfare.'<sup>56</sup> Basil goes on to say, 'Entire churches are

*populos.*' Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 7.4, p. 378, summarises the content of this edict: 'Theodosius enacted a law at Thessalonika, which he caused to be published at Constantinople.... He made known by this law his intention of leading all his subjects to the reception of that faith... which was professed by Damasus, bishop of Rome, and by Peter, bishop of Alexandria. He enacted that the title of "Catholic Church" should be exclusively confined to those who rendered equal homage to the Three Persons of the Trinity, and that those individuals who entertained opposite opinions should be treated as heretics, regarded with contempt, and delivered over to punishment.' Frend, *The Early Church*, p. 175, writes about the actions of Theodosius four months before the Council of Constantinople assembled: 'On 10 January 381 he... proclaimed the orthodoxy of the Nicene Faith alone, and forbade heretics of any color to assemble.' After the Council of Constantinople set forth a clear Trinitarian position and explicitly anathematized the Pneumatomachian heresy in its first canon, Theodosius effectively displaced the Pneumatomachians from the church. King, *The Emperor Theodosius and the Establishment of Christianity*, p. 370, makes the point that those heretics who would not embrace the Constantinopolitan position on the Godhead were to be 'driven from the church.'

<sup>53</sup> Hanson, 'The Doctrine of the Trinity achieved in 381,' p. 52.

<sup>54</sup> Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. E. B. Speirs and James Millar (London, Edinburgh, and Oxford, 1898), vol. 4, p. 118.

<sup>55</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.22, p. 359.

<sup>56</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 30.76, pp.113-14.

dashed and shattered on the sunken reefs of a subtle heresy, while other enemies of the Spirit of salvation have seized the helm and made shipwreck of the faith.<sup>57</sup> Finally, the significance of the problem faced by the church is illustrated by the fact that two years after the death of Basil, thirty-six Macedonian bishops showed up for the convening of the Council at Constantinople in 381.<sup>58</sup>

### *The unpardonable sin*

At multiple points throughout *De Spiritu Sancto*, the doctrine espoused by the Pneumatomachians is summarised by Basil. The most obvious feature of this heresy concerns its subordination of the Spirit. Basil states, 'They further insist that the Spirit must not be ranked with the Father or the Son, but under the Father and the Son, not in the same order of things as they are, but beneath them, not numbered with them.'<sup>59</sup> The type of nature which the Eustathians ascribed to the Spirit is also reflected upon: 'The Holy Spirit is to be ranked with the Father. Our opponents do not agree; instead they divide and tear away the Spirit from the Father, *transforming His nature to that of a ministering spirit*.'<sup>60</sup> Later, Basil asks his theological opponents, 'Do you call the Spirit a servant?'<sup>61</sup> For Basil, this issue of the nature of the Holy Spirit was not merely a matter of intellectual speculation and debate. Basil regarded the position of the Pneumatomachians as nothing less than the unpardonable sin. Near the end of the treatise, Basil asks his adversaries, 'How fearful will be the account you will have to give for your words to God who cannot lie, who said that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will never be

<sup>57</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 30.77, p. 115.

<sup>58</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 7.7, p. 380.

<sup>59</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 6.13, pp. 28-9. Basil makes a similar point in 10.24, p. 45: 'They say that it is not suitable to rank the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, because He is different in nature and inferior in dignity from them.'

<sup>60</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.25, p. 46. Emphasis added.

<sup>61</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 19.50, p. 32. It should also be noted that in Basil's judgement the Pneumatomachian movement also included a segment within it which affirmed the subordination of the Son. Basil writes (*On the Holy Spirit*, 6.13 p. 28), 'They say that the Son is not equal with the Father, but comes after the Father. Therefore it follows that glory should be ascribed to the Father *through* Him, but not *with* Him. *With* Him expresses equality but *through* Him indicates subordination.' Cf., 3.4-5, pp. 18-20; 4.6, pp. 21-2.

forgiven?'<sup>62</sup> To fail to place the Spirit within the Godhead had eternal consequences: 'Who is so contentious, who is so utterly without the heavenly gift, and unfed by God's good words, who is so devoid of part and lot in eternal hopes, so as to sever the Spirit from the Godhead and rank Him with the creature?'<sup>63</sup> It was with these perspectives on the Pneumatomachian movement that Basil rose to the defence of the deity of the Holy Spirit.

#### A RE-EXAMINATION OF DE SPIRITU SANCTO

Basil's treatise on the Holy Spirit was without doubt his greatest theological production. Hanson identifies it as such – 'son oeuvre principale, le *De Spiritu Sancto*'.<sup>64</sup> But it was not merely the greatest work produced by Basil. It was the most significant pneumatological treatise of the entire century. Hanson declares, 'The most important work on the theology of the Holy Spirit done in the fourth century came, of course, from the pen of Basil of Caesarea.'<sup>65</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto* is not only a theology of the Holy Spirit, but it is also a work of apologetics. As such, Basil had the two-fold intention of refuting heresy (the Pneumatomachian teaching) and defending apostolic truth (the deity of the Spirit, and more broadly the Trinitarian doctrine). As to the confutation of error, Basil said, 'But now we must attempt to refute our opponents' false ideas which have been directed against us.'<sup>66</sup> As to the defence of the Spirit's deity, Basil asserted, 'It would be utterly miserable that the Spirit is blasphemed and true religion is wrecked so easily by these men, while we, having such a mighty patron and protector, hesitate to defend a doctrine which has been maintained in unbroken sequence from the days of the fathers until now.'<sup>67</sup> In a broader sense, *De Spiritu Sancto* is also a defence of Trinitarianism. Henry Chadwick regards it as 'a decisive step forwards in the debate about the doctrine of the Trinity'.<sup>68</sup> Here is one passage, among many, which illustrates the Trinitarian emphasis of Basil's treatise:

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<sup>62</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 28.70, p. 106. Cf., 20.51, p. 79.

<sup>63</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 24.56, p. 36.

<sup>64</sup> Hanson, 'Basile et la doctrine de la Tradition', p. 61.

<sup>65</sup> Hanson, 'The Divinity of the Holy Spirit', p. 300.

<sup>66</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.23, p. 44.

<sup>67</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 30.79, p. 118.

<sup>68</sup> Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Grand Rapids, 1967), p. 149.

We worship God from God, confessing the uniqueness of the persons, while maintaining the unity of the Monarchy.... As unique Persons [i.e., the Father and the Son], they are one and one; as sharing a common nature, both are one.... The Holy Spirit... completes the all-praised and blessed Trinity.... He does not share created nature. He is united to the Father and the Son.<sup>69</sup>

The uniqueness of what Basil (along with the other Cappadocians) accomplished in terms of a complete integration of the Spirit into the Godhead must be appreciated. Hanson argues that the theologians of the first three centuries (writers such as Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Novation, Origen, and Athanasius) did not give to the Holy Spirit a necessary and absolutely indispensable place in their theological systems.<sup>70</sup> The Cappadocians, however, were different: 'The Cappadocian fathers were the first to find a way of fully integrating the Spirit within their theological thought.'<sup>71</sup> It is not difficult to find this emphasis in *De Spiritu Sancto*. Again and again, Basil makes statements in which he gives the Holy Spirit an absolutely indispensable place within the Godhead. He charges the Pneumatomachians with these words: 'I exhort them to keep the faith inviolate until the day of Christ's coming: they must not divide the Spirit from the Father and the Son.'<sup>72</sup> Later, he declares, 'In all things the Holy Spirit is inseparable and wholly incapable of being parted from the Father and the Son.'<sup>73</sup>

### *The structure and method*

Basil's exposition *On the Holy Spirit* consists of thirty chapters and seventy-nine sections. The basic order of its development is well summarised by Swete.<sup>74</sup> The treatise opens with reference being made to the attack made upon Basil by the Pneumatomachians relative to his doxology. The Pneumatomachians argued that a proper doxology should use the prepositions 'of the Father', 'through the Son', and 'in the Holy Spirit'. After Basil refutes this heretical argumentation, he expounds the deity of the Son in a lengthy section (from V.7 through VIII.21). As Jaroslav Pelikan observes, this material is 'about one-fifth' of the

<sup>69</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 18.45, pp. 72-3. The word *Trinity* is the Greek word *triada*, Pruche, *Basile de Césarée Sur le Saint-Esprit*, p. 408.

<sup>70</sup> Hanson, 'The Divinity of the Holy Spirit', p. 303.

<sup>71</sup> Hanson, 'The Divinity of the Holy Spirit', p. 304.

<sup>72</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.26, p. 47.

<sup>73</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 16.37, p. 23.

<sup>74</sup> Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, pp. 231-8.

treatise.<sup>75</sup> Basil then sets forth the Biblical teaching on the deity of the Holy Spirit. Following this, he meets the objections of the Pneumatomachians, returns to the form of the doxology, and then concludes by listing theologians from the first three centuries who used the doxology which the Pneumatomachians opposed.

As we consider the proofs in *De Spiritu Sancto* for the Spirit's deity, it must be recognised that for Basil this was a doctrine which had to be believed for one's salvation. Basil affirmed, 'The Lord has delivered to us a necessary and saving dogma: the Holy Spirit is to be ranked with the Father.'<sup>76</sup> Basil gave this warning concerning the soteriological implications of denying either the Father, the Son, or the Spirit:

I testify to every man who is confessing Christ and denying God, that Christ will profit him nothing; to every man that calls upon God but rejects the Son, that his faith is vain; to every man that sets aside the Spirit, that his faith in the Father and the Son will be useless, for he cannot even hold it without the presence of the Spirit. For he who does not believe in the Spirit does not believe in the Son, and he who has not believed in the Son does not believe in the Father.<sup>77</sup>

In addition to Basil's explicit declaration that the Spirit 'is in His nature divine',<sup>78</sup> he presents a number of arguments in which he meticulously and thoroughly demonstrates the deity of the Holy Spirit. Some of these arguments, as Pelikan notes, were also used in his defence of the deity of the Son.<sup>79</sup> Basil himself explains the real thrust of his argumentation: 'It is... possible for us to arrive to a certain extent at intelligent apprehension of the sublimity of His nature and of His unapproachable power, by looking at the meaning of His title, and at the magnitude of His operations, and by His good gifts bestowed on us or rather on all creation.'<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture: The Exegetical Basis for St. Basil's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit', in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick (Toronto, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 340-41.

<sup>76</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.25, p. 46.

<sup>77</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 11.27, pp. 17-18.

<sup>78</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 23.54, p. 35.

<sup>79</sup> Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture', pp. 340 and 343.

<sup>80</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 19.48, p. 30.

*The Spirit's titles, operations, and gifts*

In his discussion of the Spirit's titles, Basil asks, 'First of all, who can listen to the Spirit's titles and not be lifted up in his soul? Whose thoughts would not be raised to contemplate the supreme nature?'<sup>81</sup> There are a number of specific titles which Basil brings to the attention of his readers. Early on, Basil writes, 'He is called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, the right Spirit, willing Spirit. His first and most proper title is Holy Spirit.'<sup>82</sup> Later in the treatise, he adds, 'He is called Paraclete, like the Only begotten.... He is called royal... and Spirit of wisdom.'<sup>83</sup> Again, in Basil's thinking, these titles reflect the supreme nature of the Person to whom they are attributed.

Basil strengthens his case for the deity of the Spirit in his treatment of the Spirit's works.<sup>84</sup> His fundamental recognition in this discussion is expressed by this question and answer: 'What does the Spirit do? His works are ineffable in majesty, and innumerable in quantity.'<sup>85</sup> This basic perspective, however, does not keep Basil from making an attempt at describing the major works of the Spirit. Basil highlights the work of the Spirit with respect to sanctification, revelation and illumination, and as the Source of grace. In each of these areas, he distinguishes between what the Spirit does for human beings and what he does for the angels.<sup>86</sup> As Basil reflects upon the works of the Spirit, he makes this comment, 'Understanding all this, how can we be afraid of giving the Spirit too much honor? We should instead fear that even though we ascribe to Him the highest titles we can devise or our tongues pronounce, our ideas about Him might still fall short.'<sup>87</sup>

Certainly there is an overlap between the Spirit's works and his good gifts, but Basil sees the Spirit's gifts bestowed on believers as a distinct argument for the Spirit's deity.<sup>88</sup> Without a doubt, the principal gratuity

<sup>81</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.22, p. 42.

<sup>82</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.22, p. 42.

<sup>83</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 19.48, p. 30.

<sup>84</sup> Basil expounds upon the works of the Spirit in 9.22-23, 15.36, 16.38, and 19.49-50.

<sup>85</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 19.49, p. 76.

<sup>86</sup> The sanctification of the Spirit with respect to human beings is described in 9.22. His sanctifying work upon the holy angels is discussed in 16.38. The Spirit's illuminating and revelatory ministry for humans is seen in 9.22-23, for angels in 16.38. The Holy Spirit is both a fountain of grace for humans (9.22) and for the angels 16.38.

<sup>87</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 19.49, p. 78.

<sup>88</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 19.48, p. 30.



of the Spirit is the gift of everlasting salvation. Basil writes that from the dwelling of the Spirit in our souls come numerous blessings, such as 'heavenly citizenship, a place in the choir of angels', and 'endless joy in the presence of God'.<sup>89</sup> Later, Basil adds this: 'Through the Holy Spirit comes our restoration to Paradise, our ascension to the Kingdom of heaven, our adoption as God's sons, our freedom to call God our Father, our becoming partakers of the grace of Christ, being called children of light, sharing in eternal glory, and in a word, our inheritance of the fullness of blessing, both in this world and the world to come.'<sup>90</sup>

### *Divine attributes and additional considerations*

A fourth argument which Basil uses in his patent setting forth of the Spirit's divinity relates to the fact that the Spirit possesses the attributes of deity. Although Basil does not expressly call attention to this issue of the Divine attributes, he recognises throughout the treatise that the Spirit has characteristics which God alone possesses. Basil acknowledges the incomprehensibility of the Holy Spirit: 'We can learn about the loftiness of the Spirit's nature not only because He shares the same titles and works as the Father and the Son, but also because He, like them, cannot be grasped by our thoughts.'<sup>91</sup> Although we cannot comprehend the Spirit's infinite nature, the omniscient Spirit fully understands the mind of God: 'The greatest proof that the Spirit is one with the Father and the Son is that He is said to have the same relationship to God as the spirit within us has to us: "For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."<sup>92</sup> For Basil, the Spirit is eternal,<sup>93</sup> omnipresent,<sup>94</sup> immutable,<sup>95</sup> and omnipotent.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>89</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.23, p. 44.

<sup>90</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 15.36, p. 59.

<sup>91</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 22.53, pp. 83-4. Cornelius P. Venema, 'Gregory of Nyssa on the Trinity', *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 8, no. 1 (1992), pp.74-8, discusses the central place of God's incomprehensibility in the thought of Basil's brother Gregory of Nyssa. Tom A. Noble, 'Paradox in Gregory Nazianzen's Doctrine of the Trinity', *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993), p. 95, describes the Cappadocians as 'resting their essential theology on the divine infinity and incomprehensibility'.

<sup>92</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 16.40, p. 67.

<sup>93</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 19.49, p. 77.

<sup>94</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.22, p. 43. Basil expands upon omnipresence in 23.54, pp. 85-6.

<sup>95</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 19.48, p. 30.

Another consideration which Basil sets forth in his thorough and comprehensive argumentation for the Spirit's deity relates to the Trinitarian baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19-20. This passage had great importance in the life and thinking of Basil himself.<sup>97</sup> Basil raises the question as to how he will defend himself on the great day of judgement: 'But before the great tribunal what have I prepared to say in my defence?'<sup>98</sup> He then answers his own question with these words: 'This; that I was in the first place led to the glory of the Spirit by the honour conferred by the Lord in associating Him with Himself and with His Father at baptism.'<sup>99</sup> As Pelikan observes, Matthew's Trinitarian baptismal formula is a theme which is repeated throughout Basil's treatise.<sup>100</sup> Basil first introduces this text in connection with his refutation of the subordinationism of the Pneumatomachians:

When the Lord established the baptism of salvation, did He not clearly command His disciples to baptize all nations 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'? He did not disdain His fellowship with the Holy Spirit, but these men say that we should not rank Him with the Father and the Son. Are they not openly disregarding God's commandment? If they will not admit that this arrangement of Father, Son, and Spirit testifies to their union and fellowship, let them explain to us why we should agree with their opinion.<sup>101</sup>

Finally, there is one more argument which Basil used in his forthright declaration of the Spirit's deity. The Trinitarian baptismal passage of Matthew 28:19-20 was not the only text which figured large in the thinking of Basil. As Basil answers the question regarding his response on Judgement Day ('And what have we prepared for our defence on the great day of judgment?'<sup>102</sup>), he also affirms: 'Most of all, it was the threat of punishment which kept us away from unworthy definitions and demeaning opinions.'<sup>103</sup> Earlier in the treatise, Basil had referred to this

<sup>96</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 9.22, p. 43.

<sup>97</sup> Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture', p. 346, states, 'This passage became the cornerstone of Basil's case.'

<sup>98</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 29.75, p. 47.

<sup>99</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 29.75, pp. 47-8.

<sup>100</sup> Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture', p. 347. See 10.24, 17.43, 25.60, 27.66, and 29.75.

<sup>101</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.24, p. 45.

<sup>102</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.75, p. 112.

<sup>103</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.75, pp. 112-13.

threatened punishment (expressed in Matthew 12:31): ‘The Spirit is glorified by His communion with the Father and the Son, and by the testimony of the Only Begotten: “Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men: but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.”’<sup>104</sup> Basil regarded Christ’s solemn warning regarding the unpardonable sin as a primary argument establishing the deity of the Holy Spirit. It should also be observed that Basil’s introduction of Matthew 12:31 into his discussion shows, contrary to what Gonzalez maintains, that fear of scandalising those who were not yet convinced of the Spirit’s deity was not even an issue for Basil.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, Basil was only concerned to proclaim boldly the truth. Basil openly declares that in his judgement the Pneumatomachians had committed the unpardonable sin: ‘As for our opponents, what will they have to say? What defence will they have for their blasphemy? They have neither shown reverence to the honor which the Lord paid to the Spirit, nor have they feared His threats.’<sup>106</sup>

#### CONCLUSION: BOLDLY PROCLAIMING THE TRUTH

Basil would doubtless be surprised that certain modern writers speak about his so-called reserve and reticence in setting forth the doctrine of the Spirit’s deity. As Basil himself asserted, his determination was to ‘boldly proclaim the truth’ regarding the Spirit’s deity.<sup>107</sup> Surely, ‘the theologian of the Holy Spirit’<sup>108</sup> cannot ask questions which are more forthright than these: ‘Shall we not then highly exalt Him who is in His nature divine, in His greatness infinite, in His operations powerful, in the blessings He confers, good? Shall we not give Him glory?’<sup>109</sup>

The significant impact of *De Spiritu Sancto* upon subsequent history underscores the fallacy of characterising Basil’s treatment as one of hesitation and fear that someone might be offended. It is abundantly clear that the Constantinopolitan statement – ‘And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and lifegiver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and Son, Who spoke through the prophets’<sup>110</sup> – was impacted by Basil’s treatise. Chadwick affirms

<sup>104</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 18.46, p. 74.

<sup>105</sup> González, *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. 1, p. 309.

<sup>106</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.75, p. 113.

<sup>107</sup> *On the Holy Spirit*, 30.79 p. 118.

<sup>108</sup> Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 30.

<sup>109</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, 23.54, p. 35.

<sup>110</sup> Leith, *Creeds of the Churches*, p. 33.

concerning the Creed of Constantinople, 'The actual creed promulgated by the council... concerning the Holy Spirit... reflected the argument of Basil of Caesarea that in the liturgy the Holy Spirit is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son.'<sup>111</sup> Basil's pneumatological doctrine influenced not only the East, but also the church in the West. The principal channel of this influence was Saint Ambrose. Quasten writes, 'The treatise... served St. Ambrose as a source for his *De Spiritu Sancto* six years later, so that many of St. Basil's ideas reached the West.'<sup>112</sup>

But the widespread impact of Basil's doctrine of the Holy Spirit was not restricted merely to geographical localities. Basil's pneumatology influenced the church's teaching for hundreds of years to come. Pelikan states, 'Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* is one of a small group of treatises... that addressed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit directly, determining the form that it was to take in both East and West for a millennium or more.'<sup>113</sup> Surely, it is self-evident that only a bold proclamation of the Spirit's deity would have had such effects as these.

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<sup>111</sup> Chadwick, *The Early Church*, pp. 150-51. W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1984), p. 632, also recognises that Basil's theology triumphed at Constantinople. Kei Yamamura, 'The Development of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Patristic Philosophy: St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (1974), p. 4, takes the position that the third article of the Constantinopolitan Creed (on the Spirit's deity) was the work of Gregory of Nyssa, Basil's younger brother. This underscores the influence that Basil's Pneumatology had at Constantinople.

<sup>112</sup> Quasten, *Patrology*, p. 210. J. H. Srawley, 'Cappadocian Theology', in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1958, takes the same position: 'Through Ambrose, who was a diligent student of Basil's writings, the theology of the Cappadocians was imported into the West, and influenced the later developments of Trinitarian doctrine found in Augustine.'

<sup>113</sup> Pelikan, 'The "Spiritual Sense" of Scripture', p. 337.