



61st Year

March 31, 2013

Pamphlet #13 (3122)

WAKEFULNESS FOR OUR SALVATION

The exhortation of the Lord “be vigilant and pray, so that you don’t enter into temptation” (Mt: 26:41 and again, “therefore be vigilant, for you do not know at what hour Lord is coming” is familiar.

The virtue of spiritual readiness and of wakefulness safeguards us from unexpected falls into sin. So for this reason, the vigilance which all saints of our Church, the nyptic fathers, the ascetics of the desert and the venerable monastic personalities and the righteous people in the world cultivated is beneficial for our spiritual life. The example of their life, their bright counsels, are precious aids for our spiritual struggle. Deep faith, compunction, undistracted prayer, humility, temperance of words and works are spiritual powers which strengthen us to preserve our spiritual wakefulness. So that we avoid “the fiery darts of the devil which slyly move against us” and do not neglect our salvation. “Wash, be vigilant” the apostle Peter also advises us (1 Peter 5:8), because the devil like a lion roars, searching someone to swallow.

The causes of spiritual negligence

However, many times we are swayed by superficiality and negligence and the basic causes for this behavior of ours are: First, the lack of theological knowledge. Many Christians have not realized the moral and spiritual majesty of Him who saved us from the curse of sin. The apostle Paul projects to us through the words of the Psalms of David, the inconceivable magnitude of the power Christ for us to realize that as the Son of God, it is He who “initially made the Earth firm and the heavens are His work” (Ps. 102:26). It is He through whom everything was made. He is cocreator with the Father and the All Holy Spirit. The Father gave Christ the authority: “All authority in heaven and on earth was given to me” (Mt. 28:18), as He Himself said to His disciples. He assured us that, even though He became a man for us, He remained unaltered as God “forever sitting together with the Father”, always enthroned together with the Father.

So He, who created the world, He also will change it. Because this world is led to corruption, like the clothes which become old, and Christ will drag it away, just as a cloak is wrapped up (Ps.

101:27). Whatever we see today will change and a new earth and new heavens will be created, where the injustice of human apostasy will not prevail, but it will be worthy of the expectation of our Orthodox confession: "I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the future age".

Because, as the apostle Paul notes: "Whoever is in Christ, is new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). Whoever believes and lives in Christ, lives the new age. And Christ himself assures us "that until heaven and earth pass, not even one iota, nor one tittle from the law will cease applying until everything is fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).

So let us not be swayed, by the passage of time. Time will not wipe out the eternal truths of the Gospel. They are indelible.

The calming down of the conscience

We happen to be swayed by the fact that God, as a God of love and compassion, did not come to the world to punish us. Consequently, there is His permanent forbearance to our deviations, even to our apostasy from His will. We ought to be careful, because the God of love does not cease also being the God of justice. When He expresses His love for men He does not put His justice to the side. Divine love is harmoniously associated with divine justice, so that He loves with justice and justifies out of love.

However God's long-suffering aims to guide us to repentance. The Apostle Peter tells us that God: "is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). He long suffers in our mistakes and deviations because He does not want us to lose our salvation, but to lead us to correction and not to disobedience. If we do not show the disposition to change and correct, God's long-suffering will judge us because we did not utilize the opportunity for our salvation. And we will end up before surprises because, as the apostle Peter again notes, the Lord will come "as a thief in the night" (verse 10) in order to judge the world.

The apostle Paul tells us very clearly, that every transgression and disobedience of the law and of the commandments of the Lord by men but also by Angels (Lucifer) has the analogous consequence: "Every transgression and disobedience received the innate recompense" (Heb. 2:2). The Old Testament has a multitude of such examples. So if this occurred in the Old Testament because the chosen people of God strayed from the commandments of the Law, how is it possible that we Christians escape, be exempted

from the consequences of such behavior towards Christ, for our destructive superficiality to neglect such salvation. Salvation which compared to the Law is infinitely greater and more precious. Because here the Father sacrificed His Only Begotten Son for our salvation. We were bought from sin with the invaluable cost of the Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us have in mind this great truth and let us regulate our lives with prudence and understanding in Christ.

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