

However Paul comes to remind simultaneously, that unchangability is not a characteristic of human nature in the present life and condition! No matter what great spiritual heights the person of God ascends to, he is not allowed to obtain trust in himself and to feel certain, but he ought to remember that the danger of falling lurks. And furthermore, the higher a person slips from, all the greater is his fall and all the stronger he is crushed.

Having spoken about the gifts of the Spirit, having indicated the likelihood of the weak people falling, having indicated the duty of the more spiritual people to support them in a correcting way, with the feeling that they also are in danger of falling into the same transgressions, the Apostle Paul comes to crown his text with the way we can make the love of Christ complete in our life. "Bear one another's burdens"! Christians behave, at least, as one united whole without divisions and distinctions. Don't allow your brother's behavior to break you off, but put up with one another! Everyone has deficiencies, everyone has faults and everyone desires the others to be patient with them. So let us become for one another, his staff, his comfort, his family.

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 2015, 5TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Athanasius of Mount Athos, Righteous Father Lampadus the Wonderworker, Kyprianos the New Martyr of Koutloumousiou Monastery, Uncovering of the Holy Relics of Our Righteous Father Sergius of Radonezh, Holy New Martyrs Elizabeth the Grand Duchess and the Novice Barbara.*

tone OF THE WEEK: Tone Fourth, EOTHINON Fifth Eothinon

EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 5:22-26; 6:1-2

GOSPEL Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015 6TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Proclus & Hilary the Martyrs of Ancyra, Our Holy Father Michael of Maleinus, Veronica, the woman with the issue of blood who was healed by Jesus, Andre the Commander & his Companion Martyrs*

EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:6-14

GOSPEL Matthew 9:1-8



63RD YEAR

JULY 5, 2015

PAMPHLET # 27 (3240)

THE DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITUAL PEOPLE

Our holy Church presents an excerpt from the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, in order to help us understand with how much discretion we must face those circumstances in our life, during which we perceive our brother's mistake and we must somewhat support him. The important thing in the Epistle to the Galatians is that it addresses more Churches of an area and not one alone. It thus ends up the first ecclesiastical Encyclical throughout the centuries, with its exhortations claiming more general strength and consequently aiming at a more general implementation

The competence

"You who are spiritual should restore." What is the Apostle Paul recommending in a case where a brother's transgression is ascertained? Not the whatsoever one, but he who from the pleroma of the Church has been distinguished for his spiritual maturity and consequently has the experience and the guarantees to respond to the spiritual struggle. Him whom the Church has recognized as such and has pointed out, he alone has the competence to support the brother who fell.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 5:22-26; 6:1-2

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Psalm 103.24,1

O Lord, how manifold are your works. You have made all things in wisdom.

Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Unfortunately, in our days a great insolence and indiscretion has been observed in the way some people act. Acting as self called "saviors" and without previously having questioned if they fulfill the necessary and capable condition which the Apostle Paul poses concerning spiritual maturity, without having the Church's blessing, they hasten to "discover" their brothers' transgressions, not in order to indicate the correction, but in order to offend, to put down, to "make a show" of the other person, in order to strengthen the fake image which they are cultivating about their own self, to nurture their haughtiness and to dazzle naïve people. If the Church considers simple criticism a sin, therefore what a great condemnation is this type of behavior considered?

The way

What does Paul command the spiritual person to do? To "restore" the spiritually weak person. He doesn't say to "correct". He prefers a verb which more so means to "support", to "make up that which is lacking"! Of course, he doesn't say, nor mean, "punish", "condemn". More so he urges indicating the deception and the slip up to him who sinned, with persuasion as the main weapon, so that he will return to the spiritual path, girded up by hope in the Lord's mercy, strengthened by the love of the brothers!

How does Paul order the spiritual person to act? "In a spirit of meekness"! In other words, without the sense of superiority, without wrath, with a disposition of healing. The Sacred Chrysostom underlines interpretatively "they must be very gentle"! The real spiritual person, on whom the Holy Spirit has placed his seal, has the gift to correct with leniency, with sincere love and interest in the brother's spiritual benefit.

The danger

Along with these things however, the Apostle, as a genuine Spiritual Father and par excellence experienced, urges attention also on a danger. "Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted". You who have from the Church the blessing to try to restore the weak person, you who have the experience in the spiritual battle and par excellence are able to sympathize with whoever missed the mark, do it without ever forgetting that you may still fall into the same temptation, into the same transgression!

The spiritual person can't boast that he is correcting the other people, because the Apostle Paul is coming to impose the feeling of danger in the same fall. He urges him to embrace humility, so that delicate passions, like vainglory or loving to rule, from guiding people, or impatience for the brother's quick correction of, don't choke him, don't weaken him and don't throw him into the common denominator of sins, human egotism!