

Christ. When however, the other person insists in his beliefs and his autonomy, then the characteristic of the genuine pastor is to abandon the effort.

What does abandon the effort mean? It means that which Theodoreto the Bishop of Cyrus mentions as an interpretation. "No longer make lectures to him, for the toil is senseless", in other words, don't try anymore to speak to him, because the toil has no response. The stubbornness and the other's persistence in his private theories is recognized, so for this reason also, the genuine pastor of Christ ceases trying to discuss with him, because time and efforts are being spent and squandered in vain, without the whatsoever effort bearing fruit, since it is neutralized by the foreign will, which is respected in everything.

And this is the qualitative difference of Christianity from religions. Whoever disagrees is not made a target, nor is he defined as an object of polemics and revengeful fanaticism. He becomes an object of prayer, so that God may enlighten him in His Truth and return him to His fold, but in the rest of the things, he is left to his choice. The Church is a mother and has learned to forbear and await her children, even when they are wandering very far from her. She prays that Holy God will enlighten and indicate the return path, but she does not obligate, or impose. She desires the return, in freedom, as a necessary condition for love to be cultivated and grow strong.

Archimandrite I. N

**SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2015, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS,** Macrina the Righteous, sister of St. Basil, Dius, Abbot of Antioch, Translation of the Holy Relics of Righteous Seraphim of Sarov, Saint Theodore, Bishop of Edessa

**TONE OF THE WEEK:** Tone Sixth, EOTHINON Seventh Eothinon

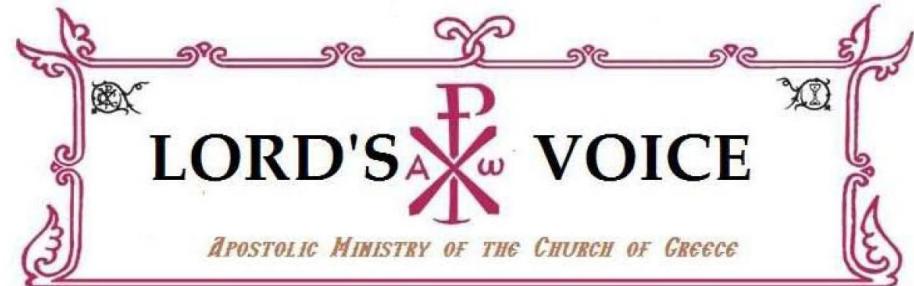
**EPISTLE** St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15

**GOSPEL** Matthew 5:14-19

**NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2015 8TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**, The Holy Hieromartyrs Hermolaus, Hermippus, and Hermocrates , Paraskeve the Righteous Martyr of Rome , St. Prisca, the Righteous Martyr , Moses the Hungarian , Jacob Netsvetov the Enlightener of Alaska

**EPISTLE** St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5

**GOSPEL** Matthew 14:14-22



63<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

JULY 19, 2015

PAMPHLET # 29 (3242)

## WITH WHAT WE ARE OCCUPIED

Our age, our world, has filled us, has satiated us, has overburdened us with words. A ceaseless gossiping and diarrhea of words, characterizes the social status quo, with the main point being the showing forth of unimportant matters and secondary things, to the detriment always of the important and primary things. The Means of Mass Communication and whoever demagogues, pronouncing public speech, bear a great portion of the responsibility in this. While the noise and the clamor from the things which are unworthy of speech, which with the analogous polish are presented as important things, has established a peculiar censuring of speech. Truly, in olden years, censuring of speech was for them to do a preventative examination on the text or the expression of speech and to cut out whatever, according to the judgment of the censor, points were considered as dangerous or undesirable for those in power. Today something like that does not exist, since the only thing which whatever establishment has to do, is to allow the gossip and the gabbing to choke the noise and the clamor of each serious voice and critical speech. And so, in our day, the voice of truth, the preaching the Gospel is not in danger of being silenced. On the contrary, it is in danger from the noise which doesn't allow it to be heard, since the yodeling

**ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS 3:8-15**

**Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 2.**  
**Psalm 31.11,1**

**Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, o righteous**

**Verse: Blessed are they whose transgressions have been forgiven**

TITUS, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful.

All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

---

and the high pitches of the orators and demagogues are choking the word of the revealed truth, imposing the senseless gossip and the barren juxtaposition with matters which are unworthy of speech.

**"Avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law"**

The Apostle Paul's exhortation to his disciple and apostle Titus is characteristic, whom he had installed as the first Bishop of Crete. There are matters for which it is worthy and just for discussions to take place, for clarifications to be given, for time and spiritual effort to be spent, because they bring about knowledge, they cultivate a healthy spiritual train of thought and guide people to holy decisions, embodying a genuine spiritual life. There are, however, cases in which, even from people of the Church, speech is squandered in noise, vanity and vainglory. The showing off of supposed wisdom, a guiding of the common opinion, the cultivation of division, vain litigation and brawling, are the results of babbling, so for this reason, it is also understood how dangerous they are, even if they're being pronounced seemingly by "important and responsible" lips.

The danger mainly lurks, especially from those inexperienced in the spiritual battle, even if they have a good disposition, being occupied with "the foolish matters and legal battles", to reach instead of preaching Christ, to be advertising the opponent... It is unjust for our Christ, when we have an opportunity to speak about Him to people, to not use speech to project the truth, but to be completely squandering it in matters and issues which may interest us personally, however don't have any importance for the brother's spiritual advancement. So for this reason also, the Apostle Paul's exhortation is clear cut, without room for misinterpretations and deviations, "avoid." Avoid all these things! Stand far away from shadowboxing and focus on what is worthy....

**"As for a heretical man, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him"**

And the Apostle Paul does something else as well. He gives the boundary for arguing. He defines that point beyond which the man of God, is simply losing his time and words and he is not able to achieve the return in Christ of a deceived soul. His love and wholehearted longing for each person's acquaintance with the truth of Faith, and embracing it, is prevailing. So for this reason, with these things, and only with these things, the motives of the person of God, especially of the Spiritual Father Clergyman who has the increased responsibility, ought to try for the return of all those who have strayed far from the safety of the love of