

The Apostle Paul, with the description of his life, proves that he was not benefited nor did he gain something human. The lack of selfishness in his apostolic work is shown forth, so for this reason also, the Christians of Corinth accepted his preaching. To the same lack of selfishness he is calling them, in the living of their Christian being. The "become ye imitators of me", does not refer to faithfully copying the Apostle's toils and labors. It aims at his underlining that the Christian life should not be distorted with secular elements from other and selfish motivations, but it should be lived in its fullness, with the only motive being the guileless love for the Savior Christ.

Why does the Apostle Paul stress this? Because he is attempting to secure the Christian preaching throughout time. Just as the generations come and go, it is the responsibility of the previous generation to impart the saving message of the Gospel to the following one. In the Church we speak of the Sacred Tradition. This means that he who is handing down, has the responsibility and not he who is receiving. So who convinces the ones coming after, better about the truth of the Gospel than someone who selflessly signs all that he is teaching about Christ, with his personal hardship?

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9 2015 10TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *The Holy Apostle Matthias, Anthony the Martyr of Alexandria, Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

TONE OF THE WEEK: Tone One

EOTHINON Tenth Eothinon

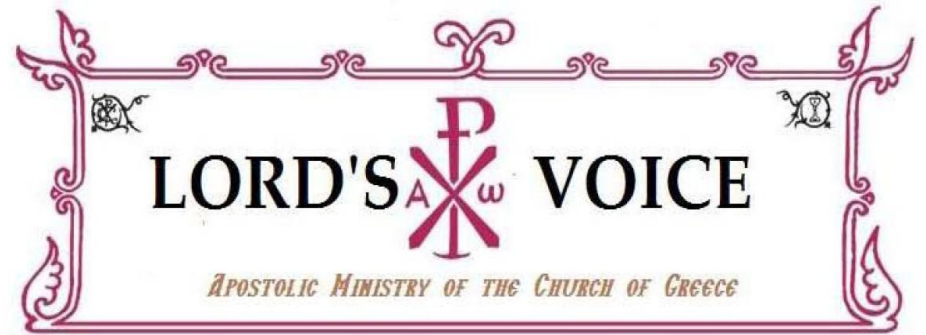
EPISTLE *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16*

GOSPEL *Matthew 17:14-23*

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 2015, 11TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Translation of the Image of Our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, Diomedes the Physician & Martyr of Tarsus, Timothy of Euripus, founder of the Monastery of Pentele, Nicodemus the New Martyr of Meteora, Gerasimos the New Ascetic of Cephalonia, Holy Monk Penteles, Afterfeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary*

EPISTLE *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 9:2-12*

GOSPEL *Matthew 18:23-35*



63RD YEAR

August 9, 2015

PAMPHLET # 32 (3245)

"BECOME YE IMITATORS OF ME"

Great audacity! At least a lack of humility! If nothing else, a tragic effort to substitute the Leader of our Faith instead of saying become ye imitators of Jesus Christ, he is saying become ye my imitators! These and many other things, the Apostle Paul has heard throughout the centuries, for this phrase of his. Especially in the Protestant world, he has been criticized as no one else, since there the viewpoint has been developed that it was Paul who received the beliefs of a small and unimportant group of spiritual orientation and he altered them into that, which in the end we reached the point of calling Christianity. So for this reason, many Westerners preach that without Paul, Christ would have been forgotten, and that only some special historians possibly would be occupied with Him!

To the perversion of this added alteration of the meaning of the words of the Apostle Paul, but also of the purposeful perversion of Ecclesiastical History, the only cure is the truth. One could simply remind that Paul nowhere referred to himself as a leader of a religion. Nowhere did he project or preach anyone else except only Christ! In no case did he found a new faith, nor did he depart from all that Christ had preached! Furthermore, he himself humbled himself submitting his preaching to the examination of the rest of the Apostles, when after his conversion, he received a

ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 4:9-16

Prokeimenon. Mode 1.

Psalm 32.22,1

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

BRETHREN, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

blessing and set out on his apostolic work (Gal. 1:19). However, the truth is shown forth better with the interpretation, so that what the Apostle Paul really wanted to say, can be ascertained, when he was calling the Christians of Corinth to imitate him.

The hardship

To what is the Apostle Paul calling the believers throughout time to imitate him in? Why to whatever he has previously described and what comprises the main body of the apostolic reading. He is speaking of his life as an Apostle, describing simultaneously the life of the rest of his fellow apostles. Their effort to preach Christ has brought them to be considered in the eyes of men as worthy of a

dishonorable death. Of course, that which they are doing is considered, by the believers and the angels, on the one hand, as something wondrous and majestic, while from the deniers of the faith, on the other hand, a cause for scorn and mockery. The Apostles reach the point of being considered foolish for all that they are preaching, but also for all they are suffering for them, being passed for weak people before the rulers of the earth, but also dishonorable, since with the imprisonments and the tortures which they are conscientiously suffering they are humiliated before men. But also the manner of their life, seems to be a vast hardship. They are going around the world, not with comfortable and safe means, but in conditions of hunger and thirst, in unstable weather conditions and with great deprivations, without staying in one place, but moving continuously, without being able to schedule their own life.

And along with these things, they have to work for their sustenance, granting simultaneously themselves as a model in society, especially by rendering back blessings, to the curses and swearing, but also forbearing the persecuting behavior of the people who they are trying to benefactor. Even when this behavior of theirs discredits them so much, that the Apostles are thought of as the refuse of the world!

The strange thing

To this life, the Apostle Paul is calling the Christians to imitate him in! To the life of hardship and self sacrifice! The sacrificing train of thought is necessary for the spreading of the gospel message. No one is convinced with the words, but with the way of life of whoever is speaking about Christ. And our Christ himself, convinced us about the truth of His words, not because He performed miracles, which throughout time are doubted by many people, but because He First walked the path of sacrifice, something which is not doubted by anyone, and He signed with His Precious Blood, all that He taught. No one entrusts whoever simply points to the journey with his finger, everyone however is supported on him who first walked the same path.