

interested in seeing noteworthy odd things, not only to be benefited, but also to be impressed, to be enthused, in order to pervert...

But they were also not able to understand one more danger. The fact that whoever is distinguished, is not praised, but on the contrary becomes either an object of abuse, or the target of jealousy and envy. And Christ, distinguished for His perfection, had been targeted by the envy and the hate of whoever opposed His preaching, both then, and throughout the ages. So for this reason also, today's Gospel is completed by the slanderous reaction of the Pharisees, that the miracles of Christ are not activated by the power of God, but with the cooperation of the ruler of the demons. And this planned slander, which was caused because the two previous blind men did not listen to Christ and advertised Him, certainly had as an aim to shake up the weak ones, to sow doubts, and to make people hesitant towards Christ, something that unfortunately was achieved.

How many times did exposition to publicity, cause results, contrary to those pursued? So for this reason also, the Lord clearly commands: the spiritual life and progress of believers should be placed "in hiding", so that it is not influenced by human plots or misunderstandings, and has an exclusively heavenly orientation.

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2016 7TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, , Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, The Holy Righteous Martyr Dometius, Our Holy Father Nicanorus the Wonderworker, Theodosius the New, Sozon of Nicomedeia , The Holy Ten Thousand Ascetics of Thebes, Narcissus the Hieromartyr of Jerusalem, Joseph Gerontogiannis of Lithines Sitia.

tone of the week: Plagal of the Second

EOTHINON : Seventh Eothinon

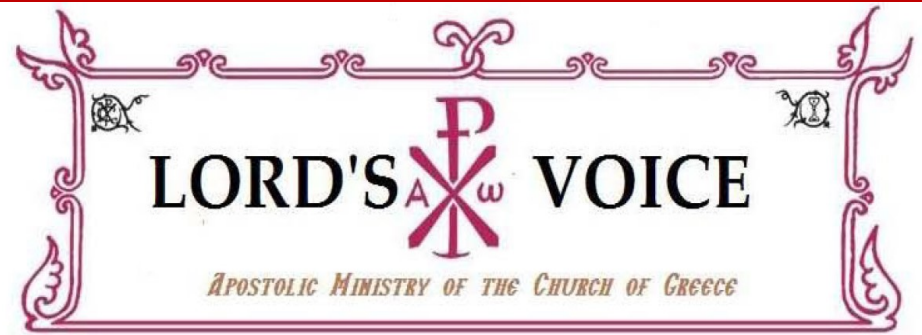
EPISTLE: St. Paul's Letter to Romans 15:1-7

GOSPEL: Matthew 9:27-35

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 2016 8TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, Forefeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, The Holy Prophet Michaias (Micah), Holy Hieromartyr Marcellus, Bishop of Apameia, Holy New Martyr Symeon of Trapezoundos (1653)

EPISTLE: St. Paul's Letter to Corinthians 1:10-17

GOSPEL: Matthew 14:14-22



64TH YEAR AUGUST 7, 2016 PAMPHLET # 32 (3297)

PUBLICITY AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Contemporary man strongly demands to try to become famous. Everyone wants a wide circle of acquaintances, recognizability and popularity. And in order to achieve this, they use every means, they do whatever is advantageous, they hand themselves over to what they believe, will show them forth. But also our society cultivates this, especially with the means of social networking, pushing the false sense of closeness and approaching others. And all these things, in a society and in an age, when everyone admits, that the love of the many has grown cold, indifference prevails, and individualism is showing its harsh face.

So for this reason also, whoever ends up famous in our days, is faced with conditions of a show. They don't end up objects of respect, as in older times, nor does their word resound with increased demands. On the contrary, they are subject to terms of publicity so harsh, that our society is accused of a peculiar "cannibalism". And most importantly, they lose the right to a private life. Furthermore, they are destructured as personalities, in a planned manner or involuntarily, their public life is misunderstood and perverted. Despite this, contemporary man subject to his egocentric belief, and rejecting the example of whoever preceded-insists on undermining himself, chasing publicity.

Characteristic behavior

The gospel passages that preceded, such as today's, present to us a series of the miracles which characterize the Lord's public activity. Each miracle is performed and described in the Gospels, serving a

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 9:27-35

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

different goal. While today, the manner of describing the wondrous cure of the two blind men, but also of a possessed man, comes to challenge our thought concerning the manner with which Christ acts, so that He preaches by example, claiming respect.

The two blind men are shouting behind Christ, seeking His mercy. Then Christ, as if He doesn't care, continues His journey to the home where they were receiving hospitality, in Capernaum, very likely at the home of Matthew. And Christ, who does care, receives them in the home, far from the curious gazes of indiscreet people. And Christ, who knows, does not ask the blind men what they want, but if they believe that He has the power to do that which they are asking, without them naming it. And Christ, who trains, acts according to their faith, not doubting about it, but showing it forth.

How discreetly Christ behaves, even also at His personal cost! He does not solve the problem of the blind men publicly, but privately. And furthermore, whereas the blind men are shouting, following Him, He puts up with it, He does not get upset, He does not keep in mind what the people might be saying, but also He does not yield to the peculiar pressure which is exercised on Him, through the noise which is created

Christ trains, and does not allow Himself to be swayed by social pressure, nor does He serve His advantageousness, to act merely in order "to be unburdened" of the problem and to calm down. He acts, being philanthropic, without being coerced or being forced in any manner whatsoever.

How Christ works the miracle

Christ plans the lack of publicity, in order to work the miracle. He does not respond to the supplications on the road, so that whatever curious person could consider that He is not being occupied with the blind men, and consequently they don't need to gather, in order to "observe the miracle". He closes Himself in the house, far from indiscreet gazes of people that can misinterpret and offend, and only after He is certain that He has been delivered from the conditions of publicity, does He proceed to the wondrous cure. And not only this, upon finishing "Jesus charged them sternly saying. See, do not let anyone know", in other words, He ordered them sternly that no one learn anything about the miracle.

Why this behavior? In any case, why suddenly does He decide to do miracles "secretly"? And why for so long was He working miracles in the squares, in side streets, on the streets, in the presence of thousands of people? In one phrase, when the miracle was causing the glorification of God or was stressing the divine truth which our Christ had previously taught, in other words, it was purely supporting man's reference to his Maker and his Creator God, then the miracle would take place publicly. When however, there was danger that a human perception and viewing of matters would prevail, resulting in the teaching being misunderstood, and people being mixed up, then not only did the miracle occur discreetly, but the recommendation that it not be advertised, would also follow. Also, when there was a personal matter, or of a respectable internal spiritual condition, everything was surrounded by silence. So for this reason also, most of Christ's miracles are unknown to us.

The blind men, thinking that Christ is ordering them to silence out of humility, and believing that in this way they are expressing their gratitude, do not obey, they do not keep their mouth shut, and they spread the benefaction which occurred to them. They were not able to understand how much Christ protected them with His discreteness, avoiding making them "a show" to the multitudes who were always