

journey. Through the grace of Christ, that is of faith in his Person, the believer correctly understands both the Law and its usefulness, as also its “rigidity”, which helps in understanding that we are unlawful. So, being unlawful, we ceaselessly seek the divine mercy, which as a cool breeze, comes and resurrects us. Daily many times, as disoriented beings we trip, but the grace of faith, as a loving, caring mother nurtures us, safeguards us, consoles us. We live through Christ, in Christ, with Christ and from Christ, in which case we are “dead” to the Law, since it cannot justify us henceforth, “Grace having come”. What would be the reason furthermore for Christ to come, if the Law sufficed for us to be justified and saved?

So the more, my brethren, we live the truth of Christ, so much more “we are justified” in Christ beyond the letter of the Law, with the freedom that Christ granted us.

Archim. E. T.

### **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2017 SUNDAY AFTER HOLY**

**CROSS**, *Sophia & her three daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love, Herakleides & Myron, Bishops of Crete, Afterfeast of the Holy Cross*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : *Plagal of the Second Tone*

**EOTHINON** *Fourth Orthros Gospel*

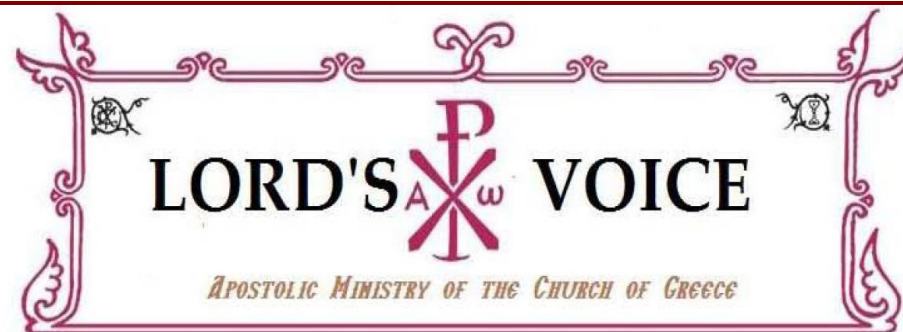
**EPISTLE READING**: *St. Paul’s First Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20*

**GOSPEL READING**: *Mark 8:34-38; 9:1*

**NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017 1ST SUNDAY OF LUKE** *Thecla the Protomartyr & Equal to the Apostles, Silouan of Athos, Coprios the Righteous, Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut, New Martyrs of Alaska, Stephen the Martyr, The Most Holy Theotokos of Palianis, The Commemoration of the Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtydiotissis in Kythyra*

**EPISTLE READING**: *St. Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy 3:10-15*

**GOSPEL READING**: *Luke 5:1-11*



65<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

SEPTEMBER 17 2017

PAMPHLET # 38 (3355)

## **FAITH AND WORKS**

The relationship of faith and works in the life of Christians Paul, is investigating in depth with the things he is saying here to the Galatians, my beloved brethren. We also would not be far from his words, if we related our faith in Christ with our works. Faith is an uncreated energy of the grace of God, which notifies the heart with certainty about those things we hope for from God and which He has promised us. With our works again, we externalize this faith of ours.

### **Attention to onesidednesses is necessary**

Let the believer avoid overstressing either faith to the detriment of works, or works to the detriment of faith. By stressing faith one-sidedly, we fall into the trap of Protestantism, where a naïve and external mechanical believer’s confession of the type, “I believe in Christ,” suffices for him to be considered His “child.” Here there doesn’t exist even the slightest suspicion about the titanic struggle that a person undertakes in the Church, armed with the grace of the sacraments - baptism, chrismation, repentance, Divine Eucharist - against the old man and his desires, the spiritual struggle against the ruler of this world, and the wicked spiritual powers, about which the Apostle Paul.

## ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me..

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eloquently speaks in his Epistle to the Ephesians, the triple evil which ragingly fights against us: the world- the worldly train of thought, the flesh and the devil.

A firm battle will take place for the heart's throne, which is battled against, on the one hand, by the passions with their poisonous fumes, their "snakelike and beastly-formed wickedness" (Isidore of Pelusium) and on the other hand, the entire person, who brandishes mercilessly, ceaselessly, persistently and patiently the axe of prayer, until this polyarchy of evils subsides into an oligarchy and this in the end, bows to the monarchy of the nous, united with Christ, and where this nous is enthroned as a skillful governor in the holy of holies of our being, very deeply in us, having subjected all the "rebels".

Probably- both the psychoemotional upsurges of the Protestants as well as the overstressing of works and of preaching on the part of the Roman Catholics unsuspectingly stand towards these harsh and ruthless realities of the spiritual battle. Who though, guarantees that the sermons and the works are not

"used" in such a manner, so as to project a successful public image, in which case we slip towards pharisaism?

## The golden balance

As Christians we are not able to live with lewdness, because our works must "shine" among men from the light of Grace: so that they see your good works and glorify your heavenly Father", our Church told us on the day of our baptism. However it is necessary that we not overstress them and the important thing is that we try so that all our activity proves our faith referring to Christ and not to us.

Thus our faith will be incarnated in our works and our works will materialize our faith. Furthermore, we struggle to implement Christ's commandments, not someone else's, but also the ascesis in virtues, fasts, vigil, prayer, charity, and temperance, are also Christocentric, they have the person of Christ as a reference. To Him they refer and from Him we draw strength and courage in our difficult and many sided struggle.

Works on their own, don't save. On the contrary faith in Christ, with the repentance which floods man, proves an "ark" which saves us from the flood of sin, even in the case when the deadline of implemented repentance is not given to us, as happened in the case of the thief on the right. Saint Chrysostom commemorates his amazing repentance, when he calls him "a true thief", who first "stole" Paradise!

## Law and Grace

Paul feels and confesses himself to be crucified together with Christ. Through the Law, man understood that he is not able to keep anything, since even if he is at fault in one thing, he is at fault in all of them. Thus the grace of faith in Christ, becomes a driving force of our being and directs our works to the correct