

## Humility

Paul recognizes that from the womb of his mother even, God set him apart, because thus He judged. This does not have to do with the quality of his works, or also of our own even. God judges in His own way. He adorns people differently - the miracle of variety - and does not regret for the gifts, with which He adorned someone, unrelated to if he cultivates them or not, whereas simultaneously He wants all of us people to be saved. The gifts, with which we are adorned, each of us, judge us, not God. It remains for us to cultivate them in humility, in a pleasing manner.

Paul's whole zealous train of thought, which showed clearly, as the Apostle himself narrates to us during the time of his Jewish phase, furthermore exceeded all the people of his own age in zealotism and, with the entrusting of his entire life to the Lord during the phase of his repentance, God "uses" it for the glory of the Church and of the Gospel and for the loving of his neighbor. So for this reason, my beloved, no matter how many and whichever are our passions, let us not be frustrated, but let us seek repentance and help from Christ, offering our disposition before Him. He will put a positive sign on them and, from a "red" color that they are, He will whiten them like the snow. Amen.

Archim. E. T.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2017 ,6TH SUNDAY OF LUKE** *Abercius, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Wonderworker of Hierapolis, Seven Holy Martyred Youths of Ephesus, Cecilia the Martyr*

**TONE OF THE WEEK :** *Third Tone*

**EOTHINON** *Ninth Orthros Gospel*

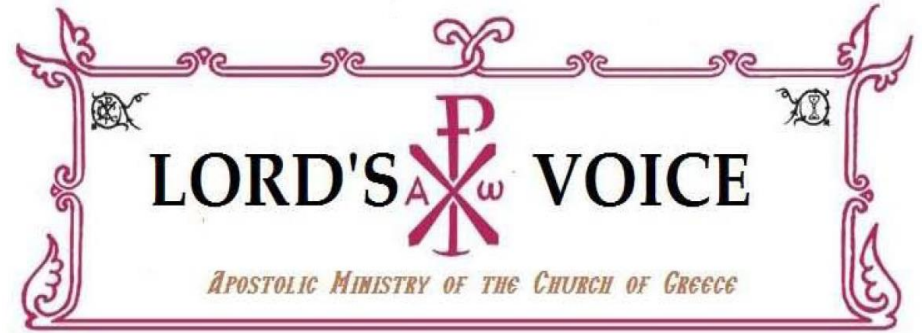
**EPISTLE READING:** *St. Paul's Letter to Galatians 1:11-19*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Luke 8:26-39*

**NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2017 7TH SUNDAY OF LUKE** , *Anastasia the Martyr of Rome, Our Righteous Father Abramius*

**EPISTLE READING:** *St. Paul's Letter to Galatians 2:16-20*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Luke 8:41-56*



65<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

OCTOBER 22 2017

PAMPHLET # 43 (3360)

## CALLING, REPENTANCE AND HUMILITY

In today's Epistle reading, Paul, my brethren, informs the Galatians, who were being troubled by the activity of Judaizing false teachers, that the Gospel that he is preaching to them, is not a human invention, but comes from God. He did not embrace a human teaching, but God Himself revealed Himself to him. The result was that he repented and, from a fearful persecutor, he became a fervent preacher of the Truth. A calling, consequently, from God, a lifelong repentance of the Apostle himself and a continual repentance, are joined together in a God-pleasing way in his apostolic work.

### Calling to the missionary work

God, knowing the depth of human hearts, examining "heart and kidneys", distinguishes the good disposition of someone, even if his works show the completely opposite. An example of this comprises the visitation, and furthermore in uncreated light, of Christ Himself, to the Apostle Paul, as he was going toward Damascus, full of wrath against the Christians. In the blinding brilliance of divine glory, the until then persecutor, loses the light of his eyes, in order to learn to see the things correctly.

## ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO GALATIANS 1:11-19

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

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Furthermore, Christ gives him the honor of having a personal dialogue with Him, during which the Lord reveals Himself to him. The acquaintance has henceforth taken place and the life of the Apostle is permanently and unchangeably cut into life before Christ and after Christ. The Lord has chosen him to carry His name with boldness before rulers and authorities of this world. To Ananias, furthermore, with all his objections, is burdened with the ministry of imparting the Holy Spirit to him through the laying of hands and of baptizing him, he calls Paul the "vessel of choice."

God sends a similar calling, with the analogies kept of course, to every worker of the Gospel. But also speaking more generally, the gifts with which each person has been adorned by the Lord, he has been called not to hide them, but to cultivate them to the utmost degree, recognizing always that they are gifts of God. Thus, Paul never lost this sense of calling, of the calling by

the Lord, in his life. He never became forgetful of the honor which Christ gave him.

Thus we also, my brethren, to whatsoever ministry we are entrusted by the Lord, with all our powers, we must try to remain diligent, unto our last breath.

### Repentance

Paul never forgot his former life. He always mourned that he was a persecutor and a "destroyer" of the Church of Christ, calling himself a "monstrosity" and not a human, and furthermore publicly. Consequently, a constant memory of our falls, with which we saddened the Lord, creates a moderate degree of sadness-not despair and a sense of choking of soul-and presuppositions of repentance in our heart, which then sinks into a more careful praying cry to the Lord, remaining united with Him, precisely because prayer connects us with God. When furthermore it is ceaseless, we remain constantly connected with God.

It is a fact, that when a person truly repents, it shows in his life and works. His way of life up to then suffers a shakeup and upheaval, he feels God to be his great benefactor, and his heart, praying and shedding tears, fervently desires to please the Lord. With his word and works, he is not interested in proving something to others, who, probably curiously are observing him, but he admits the mystery which is taking place in him and which is unheard of for him. Looking behind at the emptiness of his old actions, unstoppable currents of tears make grooves on the cheeks of his face and heart, whereas with a type of holy "maniacal" eagerness, he constantly desires more, with good works which salt, in other words, "make tasty" his life, to draw the divine mercy.