

coming out of his mouth, and, on the other hand, he freely allowed “the things that were coming in” scorning fasting?

In the end, both extremes, both they who remain attached to the letter and to the external forms of the Mosaic Law, but also those who today put down as “forms” and “hypocrisies” the keeping of fasting and the frequent participation in the Divine Liturgy, are following –for us to use a Paulian terminology – “religions of their own volition”, in other words, a religion of their own pleasure and invention, the fruits of an egotistical train of thought. However, whoever cultivates such tendencies of religious auto-planning, is never able to make room to accept the authentic ecclesiastical way of life, which Christ founded and the holy Apostles and their successors the holy Fathers handed down to us unaltered.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2019 8TH SUNDAY OF LUKE ,
Erastus, Olympas, Rodion, Sosipater, Quartus, and Tertios, Apostles of the 70, Orestes the Martyr of Cappadocia , Holy Father Arsenius of Cappadocia, Our Holy Father Gregory, Bishop of Assa

tone of the week : Fourth Tone

EOTHINON : Tenth Orthros Gospel

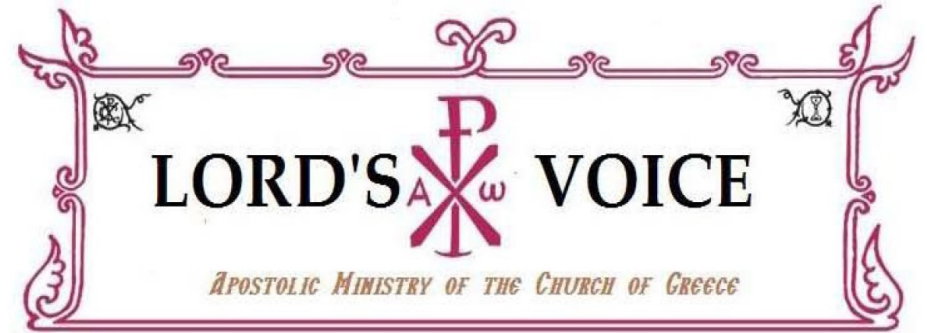
EPISTLE READING: St.Paul’s Letter to GALATIANS 2:16-20

GOSPEL READING: Luke 10:25-37

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2019, 9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,
Gregory the Wonderworker & Bishop of Neo-Caesarea , Gennadios I and Maximus, Patriarchs of Constantinople, Righteous Mother Hilda of Whitby.

EPISTLE READING: ST.PAUL’S LETTER TO GALATIANS 6:11-18

GOSPEL READING: LUKE 12:16-21



67TH YEAR NOVEMBER 10 2019 PAMPHLET #45 (3467)

TYPOS AND ESSENCE

Saint Cyril of Alexandria, commenting the manner with which God trained the difficult and disobedient Israelite people, sometimes with threats and punishments, and at other times with a multitude of benefactions, observes: “Look at how much tameness and philanthropy God shows, calling to knowledge of the truth and bringing back, those who constantly were straying from the correct journey”. A fruit of the divine philanthropy was also the Law that was given to Moses. His purpose was to help the Israelites to know and sense their sinfulness, so that they be ready to receive Christ who would grant them remission and salvation.

“Circumcision of heart in spirit”

Neither the keeping of the many regulations of the Mosaic Law, nor the various multifarious sacrifices and rituals that it demanded, had the power to liberate them from guilt and from sin. “Just as the shadow of the body”, says Saint Makarios the Egyptian, “is not able to offer any physical service, nor, in other words, to bind wounds, nor to offer food, nor much more so to cut bonds, thus also the old Law, as a shadow of the New Testament, was not able to liberate the human heart and to take away the filthy clothing of sin”. The same with the physical circumcision that the Law imposed, revealed that the true “circumcision of the

EPISTLE S T. PAUL'S LETTER TO 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.

heart in spirit" and freedom and salvation in Christ is approaching. The Judaizing false brethren were not able, or rather did not want to understand these things. They insisted on considering necessary for salvation, the rubric works of the Law, such as circumcision and the distinction of foods, that did not cost so much, as the internal change and conversion of the "stony heart" to a "fleshly" one "cost", in other words, the obtaining of a healthy humble-mindedness and love, as also the exercising of a god-loving fasting and prayer. So for this reason, the Apostle Paul also in his Epistle to the Romans and in the Epistle to the Galatians, as in today's passage, repeatedly stresses that a person is not justified, is not saved by the works of the Law. He is saved by faith in Jesus Christ. A faith however, which is expressed with the constant keeping of His divine will, as He revealed it literally, not abolishing, but completing and perfecting the training God-given Law unto Him. With the coming of Christ, only the ritual regulations of the Law were abolished, which had a foreshadowing character, they had, in other words, the aim of preparing the spiritual life in Christ. Now, that "the shadow of the Law has passed" since the foreshadowed Christ has been made manifest, "if I strive", says Paul, to "resurrect again these legal regulations, then essentially I am appearing a transgressor of the Law, trying to keep these things which in the end, Christ himself abolished".

Contemporary ethnophyletistic fixations

Today in the Church obviously the matter of the circumcision has not been surpassed, but rather the spirit of the «circumcision» still exists. A manifestation of this spirit comprises the not rare racist behavior towards those who convert to the faith from another religion or from another confession. A foreigner, Orthodox for six years, admits: "When for the first time after my baptism, I attended church in my new parish, almost no one told me even a mechanical «Welcome». When I was entering the Church, everyone would nail me with their gaze and then murmur. She's a foreigner! The years that I lived in Greece before my conversion, the fact that I was a foreigner did not bother anyone. Now however, after my entrance into the Church, they began behaving towards me as if I have just arrived. Finally they give me the impression that they believe that if you have not been born a Greek, you're not able to be Orthodox».

Aside however, from ethnophyletistic pangs and fixations on external forms, there also is at the other extreme, the portion of those who boast that they are not following religious official rubrics, but they believe – as they say – in their own way. They usually relativize the value of frequent participation in worship or the keeping of the fasts. Thus they conclude in an also inspiration of their own "religion of circumcision", by cutting short the essential ways of ecclesiastical asceticism and diet.

One's own religions "which should be rejected"

What mother however, does not cease daily feeding her child, so that she can be proud that she is bringing him up in her own way? Similarly, how is one able to boast, like the Apostle Paul that "Christ lives in me" if he remembers to go to liturgy only on Christmas and Pascha? I wonder when Christ was saying "he who is eating my flesh and is drinking my blood remains in me and I in him" did He mean "twice a year"? Furthermore, how is someone able to be "co-crucified" with Christ, like Paul, if he rejects the Christ-making ascetical program of the Church? I wonder, when the Apostle was saying "I subdue my body and enslave it", maybe did he mean that he simply limits the condemnation and the gossip, censuring only the things that were