



73rd Year

February 9, 2025

Pamphlet #6 (3741)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (2 Timothy 3:10-15)

The persecutions in the Lord

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

SECULAR AND CHRIST-CENTERED WISDOM

Today marks the beginning of the comprehensive period of the Triodion, during which we are invited to embark on a journey of introspection and self-criticism, leading us to a better understanding of ourselves and a more complete experience of the divine events that will follow. Our Church, during this period, with targeted scriptural readings, helps us decisively in achieving the aforementioned spiritual goals.

In this approach follows the scriptural reading we heard today, in which the Apostle Paul offers Timothy guidelines for spiritual life which concern us all. Among other things, he points out to him to never forget that from his infancy he has known and has

been taught the Word of God, which can make him wise, leading him to "salvation in Christ."

The value of the Word of God

The first thing we observe is how the Word of God can make a person wise and lead him to his perfection. This apostolic principle contrasts with the worldly perception of wisdom, which promotes as wise those who are distinguished by their high intelligence, excellent academic skills, and outstanding achievements in art, philosophy, and other fields. The world accepts these persons as wise, who are often excessively promoted by worldly communication systems to be imposed as such.

The wisdom of God

In the ecclesiastical view, wisdom comes from above. It is spread among people, regardless of their educational level or the degree of their recognition. The true wisdom of God is identified with the person of Jesus Christ, who, according to Saint Basil the Great, is wisdom Himself, which means that wise is the one who is constantly perfected by participating in the life of Christ, as Christ is the wisdom.

In the Old Testament, we see that wisdom was associated with the concept of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," proclaimed David. The truly wise person respects and believes in God, adopts His commandments, and understands that, alone, he is incapable of achieving anything, but owes and depends everything on the absolute divine wisdom. The opposite attitude, which denies the existence and grandeur of God, causes arrogance and solely exalts human intelligence. It forms a perception of wisdom that becomes dangerous, self-destructive, and precarious. It may temporarily cause admiration, but in the eyes of God, it appears as absolute foolishness, as "the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight" (1 Cor. 3:19).

With goodness and love

Saint Justin Popović said, "With intelligence and without goodness and affection, man is like the devil... the devil is great

intelligence without a trace of goodness and love. But man is the same when he lacks kindness and love. The intelligent man, without kindness and compassion, is hell for my affectionate soul, for my embittered heart, for my innocent eyes, for my humble being. From my soul, only one desire springs forth: not to live either in this world or the next beside a person who is only intelligent, without goodness and compassionate affection. Only then do I accept immortality and eternity."

We see how differently the world and the Church perceive things. Our faith does not deny wisdom and knowledge. However, it highlights their true value in the logic of the Gospel and the life of Christ. The true wisdom of God is achieved through continuous study of the Word of God, faith in Christ, and love for God and people. This wisdom makes us true human beings, gives meaning to our present life, and opens the way to eternity, which may we all achieve. Amen!

Archimandrite E. Oik.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

ΜΕΤΑΞΥ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΗΣ:
ΠΥΡΟΒΑΤΩΝΤΑΣ ΑΝΑΜΕΣΑ ΣΕ ΔΙΑΚΕΚΑΥΜΕΝΕΣ ΖΩΝΕΣ

(BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND ARCHITECTURE:
WALKING THROUGH SCORCHED ZONES)

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 17x24 cm, 376 pages
by Joseph Roilidis

41 texts of theological criticism, ecology, architecture, restoration, church constructions, and contemplation.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

Η Α΄ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΔΟΣ: ΝΙΚΑΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΒΙΘΥΝΙΑΣ - 325 μ.Χ.
(THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL: NICAEA OF BITHYNIA - 325 A.D.)

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 14x24 cm, 160 pages
by Chrysostomos Savvatou, Metropolitan of Messenia

In the context of the celebrations of 1,700 years since the convening of the First Ecumenical Council (325-2025), this text presents the historical and doctrinal work and the contribution of this particular Council, both at the theological level and its significance for matters of the life of the Church. It expresses in this way the unity of the Church in faith.

February 9, 2025: Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee

Leavetaking of the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple;
Nicephoros the Martyr (+257);
Philagrios of Cyprus, Pankratios of Tauromenium (4th century).

Pl. 4th Tone – Eothinon: 11 – Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15
– Gospel: Luke 18:10-14

NEXT SUNDAY: February 16, The Prodigal Son
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 – Gospel: Luke 15:11-32

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΔΑΧΗ
(THEOLOGY AND TEACHING)

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 20x26 cm, 432 pages
by His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

The Patriarchal Encyclicals of His All-Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, for the feasts of Christmas and Holy Pascha, the Catechetical Homilies for the Holy and Great Lent, and the messages for the day of the Indiction (September 1), which is a day of prayer for the protection of the natural environment, were published in this luxurious Volume. This new publication of the Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece was presented to His All-Holiness by His Eminence Metropolitan Agathangelos of Phanarion, General Director of the Organization, on Saturday, June 1, 2024, and was received with emotion and spiritual joy by His All-Holiness.

Follow the Program of the Radio Station of the Church of Greece:

www.ecclesia.gr

VOICE OF THE LORD, a weekly pamphlet of Orthodox faith and life of the "Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece". Iasiou 1, 115 21 Athens. Publisher – Director: Metropolitan of Phanariou, Agathangelos. Editorial office, tel. 210.7272.331. Processing, tel. 210.7272.388. Through the holy churches, it is distributed free of charge. From the Printing Office of the Apostolic Ministry.

The *VOICE OF THE LORD* worldwide via the Internet:

www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr
