



73rd Year

May 25, 2025

Pamphlet #21 (3756)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (2 Corinthians 4:6-15)

The revelation of Christ's life

Brethren, it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

In today's Epistle reading, Paul speaks about the darkness that prevailed in the world until the coming of Christ to the earth. Humanity was experiencing a state of spiritual and moral decay. On one hand, there was the deception of idols, which represented

the pagan world; on the other, there was the distortion of the Messianic message and the religious hypocrisy that characterized Judaism. In this context, where people were held in darkness, God chose to shine the light of His truth through the person of Jesus Christ, who boldly proclaimed this truth about Himself.

Sin as darkness

Despite the fact that God benefitted man so much, so as to dispel the darkness of his life, in the course of history, we ascertain that man chooses the darkness of worldly deception over the light of Christ's truth. He chooses to live outside the space illuminated by the glory of God – outside His Church! This choice has two defining characteristics. The first is sin, which is so alluring that it clouds the mind and leads people to reject the light of Christ. That is why St. Basil the Great describes it as a "deprivation of light from the eyes." Sin is presented as a natural state, to which modern man must conform, abandoning the will of God, which is dismissed as outdated or even obscurantist!

In this manner, however, man yields to the life of the devil, rejecting the love of God. This is what the devil continually seeks: to make sin appear inevitable, to show that sin is something natural, in order to justify himself in this way. Sin, according to Saint Macarius of Egypt, is the "logic of Satan." "Sin has its own logic, its own apologetics, seeking to validate itself and present itself as necessary, as something natural. This is what the devil continuously does. Christ, however, is the only true Logos of the world, the divine logic of the world, He is the logic of goodness." (Saint Justin Popović).

Apostasy from God

The darkness of deception also has a second characteristic: apostasy from God. This choice is often presented arrogantly by those who embrace disbelief and worldly thinking. In fact, in the 21st century, it is considered a mark of intellectual superiority for a person to deny the existence of God and to place

himself in His position. However, this path is self-destructive. Human history is filled with examples of apostates who chose the darkness of rejecting God over the light of the Gospel.

Saint Nicholas Velimirović describes the consequences of this choice: "Know that whoever loses God from their mind and heart suddenly feels dismissed from their duties, stripped of all hope, darkened in intellect, and poisoned in heart. In such a state, murder becomes justified, as does suicide; marriage is seen as a comedy, love for children as foolishness, and friendship as mere partnership. To them, the world is nothing more than a pen of animals without a shepherd, and life is random decay upon the widths of the earth. All these are the logical consequences for one who has apostatized from God."

The choice of light

These are the consequences of choosing darkness, marked by sin and apostasy from God, in contrast to the choice of light, which the Church brings into history. Though the human dimension of the Church may sometimes trouble people due to the weaknesses of its clergy, however, as it is the Body of Christ, extending through the ages, it is able to illumine the paths of those who choose to live within it. The choice is ours.

Archimandrite E. Oik.

May 25, 2025: 6th Sunday of Pascha
The Healing of the Man Born Blind. The Third Finding of the Honorable
Head of the Forerunner and Baptist John (9th century).

Pl. 1st Tone – Eothinon: 8 – Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15
– Gospel: John 9:1-38

NEXT SUNDAY: June 1, The Holy 318 Fathers
Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36 – Gospel: John 17:1-13

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