



73rd Year

September 21, 2025

Pamphlet #38 (3773)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (Galatians 2:16-20)

Salvation in Christ

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.

WHERE DOES SALVATION COME FROM?

The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, touches, among other things, on a chief spiritual issue that should concern all of us who wish to live in Christ. From this arises the knowledge through which the Kingdom of Heaven is attained. It is the matter of human salvation and the way in which it is achieved.

Just as in our time, so too in the early Apostolic years, many Christians believed that the salvation of the soul was the result of strict adherence to the Law that God gave to people.

They thought it depended on meticulous engagement with the formalities of Christian life. A blind attachment to these, however, leads one away from the essence and the real truth. Paul sets things in their proper place and teaches that the salvation of the soul is the fruit of genuine and tangible faith, cut off from hypocrisy and falsehood, distant from the captivity of rituals – a faith that does not delight in display, but warms the hearts of people and directs them toward the love of God.

The observance of the commandments

Let us see how this faith is understood according to the Orthodox perspective. First of all, as absolute trust in the will of God, the proof of which is the precise observance of His commandments. “Without the observance of the divine commandments, man does not progress even in a single virtue,” according to Abba Agathon. It is God who strives for the good of His creations, as long as they are given to Him without hesitation and doubt, with absolute trust in His choices and in His criteria. God opens paths, provides intellect and discernment to all so that they may distinguish between good and sinful, and accordingly walk through this life. Above all, He is the One who always offers Himself as an example of a humble, innocent, loving, and selfless life.

Love for God

Faith is also understood as love toward the person of God. This love transcends the framework of meaningless theorizing or hypocritical ideology when it is verified in the face of every human being, who is the living image of God. A characteristic quote from Saint Maximus the Confessor is: “He who loves God cannot help but love every person as himself.” The wholehearted love of a person toward God is an expression of gratitude for all that He has granted, for joys and successes, for life and its blessings, but also for afflictions and trials, which serve as purification of the soul for those who accept them as a visitation from God.

Ecclesiastical life

Faith is also understood as consistent and systematic participation in the life of the Church, which the Lord entrusted for the cultivation of spiritual life and the ontological union with Him. The sacred Mysteries (Sacraments) are what ensure uninterrupted communication between man and God; they sanctify and cleanse fallen man. They guarantee a smooth and safe journey through the paths of life and serve as a foretaste of the heavenly joy which God has promised to the citizens of His Kingdom.

Let us reflect on the above, considering the measure and quality of our faith. If we are followers of scholasticism, let us strive to free ourselves from it, as it is foreign to the Orthodox understanding of faith and ecclesiastical life. If we are attached to ritualism, whether willingly or unwillingly, let us realize that the salvation of our soul has to do with something deeper and more essential: with the degree of our active faith in our God-Man Lord, which radiates through our trust in His will and the application of His commandments, through our infinite love for His person, and through our conscious participation in His Mysteries.

Archimandrite E. Oik.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

Η ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΗΜΟΥ ***(THE DESERT CIVILIZATION)***

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 14x24 cm, 104 pages

by Metropolitan Agathangelos of Fanarion, General Director of the
Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece

The Apostolic Ministry proceeded with the publication of this spiritual book, which analyzes solitude, silence, and prayer as concepts of Orthodox spirituality.

September 21, 2025: Sunday After the Elevation

Leave-taking (Apodosis) of the Elevation of the Precious Cross.
Hieromartyr Codratus, Bishop of Athens (†130); Prophet Jonah (880 B.C.); Chrysostomos of Smyrna, Ambrose of Moschonisia, Gregory of Kydonies, Prokopios of Iconium, Euthymios of Zela, and those martyred with them during the Asia Minor Catastrophe (1922).

Pl. 2nd Tone – Eothinon: 4 – Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20
– Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

NEXT SUNDAY: September 28, 1st Sunday of Luke
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10 – Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

SEMINAR FOR LEARNING GREEK SIGN LANGUAGE

The offering of pure and sincere love is the motivation behind the creation and operation of the Seminar for Learning Greek Sign Language. Participants in this educational activity of the Apostolic Ministry, which is offered for free, have the opportunity to help all our fellow human beings who lack hearing but have other means of communication and who simultaneously thirst to learn about God and the Church.

On Thursday, October 9th, the classes of the Seminar begin.

For more information, you may contact:

- The Office of Catechesis and Youth of the Apostolic Ministry (Tel: +30 210 727 2347-348, Monday – Friday 8am-2pm)
- Email: katixisi@apostoliki-diakonia.gr
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/apostoliki.diakonia>
- Website: www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr → Section: Ποιοι είμαστε
→ Τομέας Κατηχήσεως καί Ὁρθοδόξου Μαρτυρίας

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
