



74th Year

July 19, 2026

Pamphlet #29 (3816)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Matthew 5:14-19)

The life of the Christians

The Lord said to his disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

TRUTH AND HERESY

Today the Church honors and commemorates the Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which convened in Chalcedon of Bithynia, in Asia Minor, in the year 451. The purpose of the Council was to confront the heresy of Monophysitism, which had disturbed the Church. Monophysitism, like every other heresy, attempted to alter and distort the Truth that Christ Himself handed down to the Church.

The Council of Chalcedon articulated the Orthodox faith and experience concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. According to its teaching, Christ is perfect God and perfect Man. He possesses two natures, the divine and the human, which are united without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation in His Person, that is, in His Hypostasis. Likewise, He has two wills and two energies, which freely submit to the divine will and energy.

The God-Man saves man

For Orthodox spirituality, truth and life are inseparable realities, since each presupposes the other. Truth and life are, first and foremost, Jesus Christ Himself, as He told us: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Heresy means taking one part of the truth and putting it in the place of the whole. Such an act, however, constitutes a distortion of the truth and a loss of life. The Church's teaching about Christ is inseparably linked to its teaching about the salvation of man. For example, if Christ were only perfect God and had not truly assumed human nature, then man would not be saved, because "what is not assumed is not healed," as Saint Gregory the Theologian points out. If Christ is only a man, no matter how perfect and ideal He may be, He cannot save man, because salvation is the work of God. In the hypostasis of the true God and true man, the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the true union of man with God, of the created with the uncreated. The Monophysites, or anti-Chalcedonians, held that Christ does not in reality possess two natures. As the second Person of the Holy Trinity, they believed He has only the divine nature, which has absorbed the human nature.

Consequently, what we find here is the withdrawal of human nature from the life of God. The Orthodox belief that the destiny of man is his union with God and his participation in the divine life through the incarnation of the Son of God – that is, the actual assumption and deification (theosis) of human nature – is called into question.

Light to the world

For this reason, in today's Gospel reading we heard the Lord say to His disciples: "You are the light of the world." Light, both in the Old and New Testaments, is the foremost sign of God's presence in the world. It is the communion of God's love with humans. Therefore, the Apostles of Christ became heralds of Christ's presence among people and protected them from heresies and false teachings, which separate man from God. Throughout the centuries, our holy Orthodox Church continues this apostolic mission, passing through crushing hardships, persecutions, and trials, with Her God-bearing Fathers, the Ecumenical Councils, and the theology and lives of Her Saints.

We Orthodox Christians firmly believe that the Church is the ark of divine Revelation and that through Her we become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Unfortunately, people who at various times become enslaved to heresies, destructive cults, and other demonic influences not only cut themselves off from the Body of the Church, but also create schisms and divisions which, because of human egotism, are difficult to heal. They also draw others into their error – people who do not know well the teaching, ethos, and life of the Church.

For this reason, the faithful member of the Church must be vigilant against the proselytizing propaganda of heretics, study Orthodox books, and seek the guidance of the spiritual fathers of his or her parish.

Archimandrite N. K.

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July 19, 2026: SUNDAY OF THE HOLY AND GOD-BEARING FATHERS OF
THE FOURTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON (451)

Saint Macrina the Righteous, sister of Saint Basil the Great, and Saint
Dium (Dios) the Righteous (†380).

Pl. 2nd Tone – Eothinon: 7 – Epistle: Titus 3:8-15
– Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

NEXT SUNDAY: July 26, 8th Sunday of Matthew
Epistle: Galatians 3:23-4:5 – Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

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