

Scripture Readings

EPISTLE 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 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.

GOSPEL Luke 6:31-36 The Lord said, "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

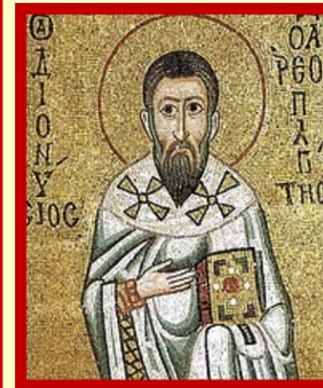
Scripture Reflection: Imitating the Love of God in Our Lives



Jesus left us no writings and no dogmas. He left us with a way of living, embodied in a simple message displayed in both His words and His deeds: "Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." He said: "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The Lord always cuts to the quick, not satisfied in a change of behavior alone, but calling for a complete change of thinking and being. The Ten Commandments say we shall not murder, but Jesus goes further, saying that we should not even allow anger to gain a foothold in our hearts. This transformation of mind and heart is not an instantaneous thing; it is a process which we control. St. Paul writes in his letter to Titus: "To the pure all

things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted." And St. Nikitas Stethatos writes: "The nature of things is measured by the interior disposition of the soul; that is, the kind of person one is will determine what he thinks of others. He who has attained to genuine prayer and love no longer puts things into categories. He does not separate the righteous from sinners, but loves all equally, and does not judge them, just as God gives the sun to shine and the rain to fall both on the just and the unjust." The Lord Jesus said it clearly: "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful." This is a summons to be loving as God is loving, forgiving as God is forgiving, merciful as God is merciful, to be blind to class, ethnicity and any other distinction that might cause one to shun another. Yes, to love our enemy boggles our minds. How instinctively we react against it! We justify our anger and resentment, casting blame on the other. Yes the Lord calls us to rise above what is "typical" human behavior. We are not called to be nice people, but to imitate the holy goodness of God. St. Irenaeus of Lyons wrote: "The glory of God is a human being fully realized." To be a God-like human being is to be like God. Anything in our thoughts and behavior that does not reflect the love of God is to be cast out of our hearts, even if it is contrary to what our natural mind tells us, for genuine holiness exceeds the feeble concepts of the human mind. It goes beyond our natural instincts to that transcendent place, where the law of love rules. So when we feel the call to lash out against an enemy, Jesus gives us another way: love that enemy. The late Athonite Elder +Archimandrite Aemilianos wrote: "Then it was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depth of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in the eyes of the Divine." This is the Lord Jesus' teaching in today's Gospel. Our work is to make that teaching alive in our own hearts and souls, to do the unthinkable and burst through our instinctive reactions to a new plane of existence, to see through the surface of the other and discover that, as the Divine Love lives in us, so He lives and moves and has His being in the one we have thoughtlessly deemed our "enemy." Lord Jesus forgive us as we forgive our enemies! Amen.

Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite, Bishop of Athens (Oct. 3)

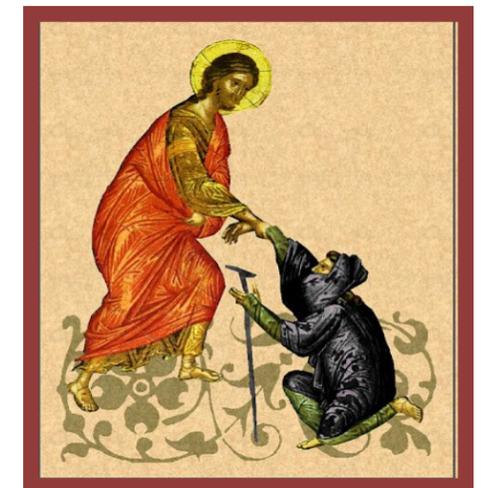
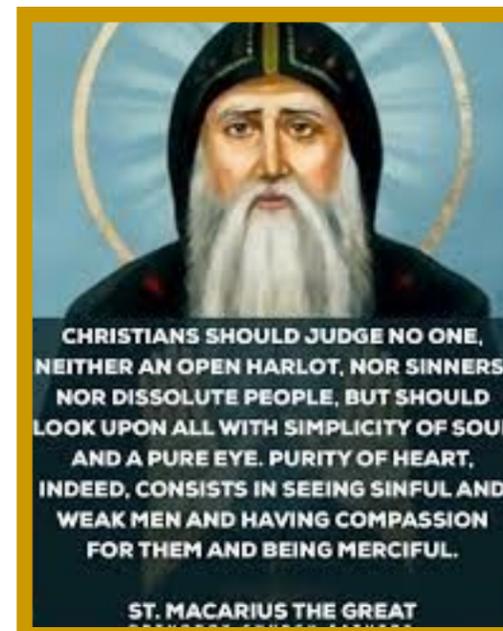


St. Dionysius was a first century judge in Athens, where he received a classical Greek education. He earlier studied astronomy in Heliopolis, Egypt. There, along with his friend Apollophonos, he witnessed the solar eclipse that occurred at the moment of the death in Jerusalem of the Lord Jesus Christ by Crucifixion. "Either the Creator of all the world now suffers, or this visible world is coming to an end," Dionysius said. Upon his return to Athens, he was chosen to be a member of the Areopagus Council (Athenian high court). When the holy Apostle Paul preached at the Areopagus (Acts 17:16-34), Dionysius accepted his salvific proclamation and became a Christian. For three years, Dionysius remained a companion of the holy Apostle Paul in preaching the Word of God. The Apostle Paul later selected Dionysius as bishop of Athens. In 57, Dionysius was present at the repose of the Most Holy Theotokos. After the death of the Apostle Paul, Dionysius continued his work preaching in the West. Accompanied by a priest and a deacon, they converted many to Christ in Rome, the Germanic lands, and Iberia (modern Spain). According to ancient tradition, he received a martyr's end, perhaps in Athens itself, around 96. We know the life of St. Dionysius through the classic work "Church History" written by Eusebius, the fourth-century Bishop of Caesaria. His is a pioneering work giving a chronological account of the development of the early Church, from the first to the fourth centuries. Written in Greek, there are also original manuscripts in Latin, Syriac and Armenian. A fifth-century author using Dionysius' name wrote the book "On Mystical Theology," which sets forth the teaching about the divine knowledge upon which the theology of the Orthodox Church is based. In order to know God, it is necessary to be in proximity to Him, to have come near to Him in some measure, so as to attain communion with God and deification (theosis). This condition is accomplished through prayer. This is not because prayer in itself brings us close to the incomprehensible God. It is that the purity of heart in true prayer brings us closer to God.

For Their Blessed Repose

Peter Vissas (40 days)
Sophia Matsangakis (7 years)

May he rest in peace and rise in glory
and may his memory be eternal!



LORD JESUS CHRIST, PHYSICIAN OF OUR SOULS AND BODIES, DELIVER US FROM THE PANDEMIC AND FROM ALL HARM AND GIVE ETERNAL REST TO THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO IT.

Save and Protect, O Lord

His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon of Antinoes, His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Abbess Christophora, Constantina Speris, Anatoly Seraphim, Megan, Patrick, Paul, Doris, Shelika, Ethan, Evan, Nicole, Dean, Ourania Mantzouranis, all victims of COVID, especially our children; Crystal Franz,

MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHOIR SUNDAY: Today the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese celebrates Choir Sunday after having celebrated the feast of St. Romanos the Melodist last Friday. It is a time for our parish to extend our sincere thanks to our Psalti, Senior and Junior Choirs, and their Directors. St. Augustine was said to have written "He who sings, prays twice." Our choirs and Psalti enhance our worship, help us lift our hearts to God, and put us in touch, for just moments each week, with the future blessedness of the Kingdom of heaven. For this we thank them from our hearts and ask the Lord to give them the strength and depth of faith to sing for many more years.

BIBLE STUDY: Every Thursday at 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM via ZOOM. Chrysostomos Gunning is facilitating the study of the Epistle to the Romans. All you need is your Bible and an open heart. Please register for all classes at <https://stgeorge.org/education/bible-study/>

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Today, 11:30 AM in the Library. Live roundtable format led by Michael Haldas, with an opening monologue on different topics, followed by discussion and a connecting the sacramentality and theology of Orthodoxy with our daily everyday lives. For information, see <https://myocn.net/adult-education-youtube-live-with-michael-haldas/>

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Register all students grades K-12 at <https://stgeorge.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/486/responses/new> Students grades 7-12 please select from four electives your preferred discussion for study at <https://stgeorge.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/551/responses/new> For information, contact sundayschool@stgeorge.org

HOPE AND JOY: Will be hosting an Apple Picking event on Saturday, October 9 at Homestead Farms. Please keep an eye out for a registration form soon! We look forward to seeing you there!"

GREEK PRESCHOOL: Register for Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM class, with half or full day options for children ages 2-5, at www.saintgeorgepreschool.com Contact Director Marilena Michalas at directorstgeorge-greekpreschool@gmail.com for information.

GREEK SCHOOL: Register for Friday and Saturday classes, and for Wednesday conversational Greek evening classes beginning in October at <https://stgeorge.org/education/greek-school/> Adult Greek classes available on weekday evenings for beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, including online classes for all three levels. Contact Director Eirini Iatrou at eirini.iatrou@gmail.com for information.

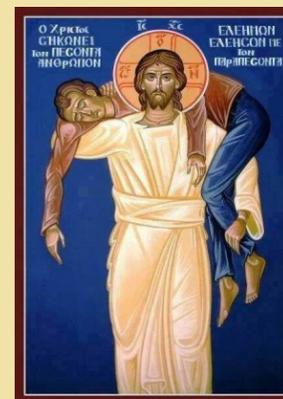
BURN THE MORTGAGE FUNDRAISER: The St. George Parish Council has launched a "Race to 400K" drive to burn our remaining nearly \$400,000 mortgage debt. Eliminating the debt also eliminates \$86,000 in debt service expenses that can be freed up for system updates, facility improvements, and other church initiatives. Please donate online at <https://pushpay.com/g/greekorthodoxstgeorge>, on the St. George app at Give>Burn the Mortgage Fundraiser, or by check with "Burn the Mortgage" in the memo. All donations are encouraged to help St. George soon become debt-free!

We continue to live-stream our Divine Services at http://meetingslive.net/stgeorge_live/ You can make candle offerings online at <https://stgeorge.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/463/responses/new> Thank you for your continued love and support



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT GEORGE

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Dimitrios J. Antokas,
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He Who Bears the Sinner

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE "LOVE YOUR ENEMIES" ST. DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

October 3, 2021

Resurrectional Apolytikion Plagal 2

Angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, and those guarding it became like dead, and at Your grave Mary was standing, seeking Your most pure body. You plundered Hades, not being tempted by it; You encountered the virgin, granting life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to You!

Kontakion

"O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you."

Apolytikion to St. George

O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives, supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!

Ἀπολυτίκιον

Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστῆς,
ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος, Τροπαιοφόρε
Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ,
σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.