

Living the Orthodox World-View. Part 1

Before beginning my talk, a word or two on why it is important to have an Orthodox world-view, and why it is more difficult to build one today than in past centuries. In past centuries — for example, in 19th-century Russia — the Orthodox world-view was an important part of Orthodox life and was supported by the life around it. There was no need even to speak of it as a separate thing — you lived Orthodoxy in harmony with the Orthodox society around you, and you had an Orthodox world-view provided by the Church and society. In many countries the government itself confessed Orthodoxy; it was the center of public functions and the king or ruler himself was historically the first Orthodox layman with a responsibility to give a Christian example to all his subjects. Every city had Orthodox churches, and many of them had services every day, morning and evening. There were monasteries in all the great cities, in many cities, outside the cities, and in the countryside, in deserts and wildernesses. In Russia there were more than 1,000 officially organized monasteries, in addition to other more unofficial groups. Monasticism was an accepted part of life. Most families, in fact, had somewhere in them a sister or brother, uncle, grandfather, cousin or someone who was a monk or a nun, in addition to all the other examples of Orthodox life: people who wandered from monastery to monastery, and fools-for-Christ. The whole way of life was permeated with Orthodox kinds of people, of which, of course, monasticism is the center. Orthodox customs were a part of daily life. Most books that were commonly read were Orthodox. Daily life itself was difficult for most people: they had to work hard to survive, life expectancy was not great, death was a frequent reality — all of which reinforced the Church's teaching on the reality and nearness of the other world. Living an Orthodox life in such circumstances was really the same thing as having an Orthodox world-view, and there was little need to talk of such a thing. Today, on the other hand, all this has changed. Our Orthodoxy is a little island in the midst of a world which operates on totally different principles — and every day these principles are changing for the worse, making us more and more alienated from it. Many people are tempted to divide their lives into two sharply distinct categories: the daily life we lead at work, with worldly friends, in our worldly business, and Orthodoxy, which we live on Sundays and at other times in the week when we have time for it. But the world-view of such a person, if you look at it closely, is often a strange combination of Christian values and worldly values, which really do not mix. The purpose of this talk is to see how people living today can begin to make their world-view more of one piece, to make it a *whole* Orthodox world-view. Orthodoxy is life. If we don't *live* Orthodoxy, we simply are not Orthodox, no matter what formal beliefs we might hold. Life in our contemporary world has become very artificial, very uncertain, very confusing. Orthodoxy, it is true, has a life of its own, but it is also not very far from the life of the world around it, and so the life of the Orthodox Christian, even when he is being truly Orthodox, cannot help but reflect it in some way. A kind of uncertainty and confusion have also entered into Orthodox life in our times. In this talk we will try to look at contemporary life, and then at Orthodox life, to see how better we might fulfill our Christian obligation to lead *other-worldly lives* even in these quite terrible times, and to have an Orthodox Christian view of the whole of life today that will enable us to survive these times with our faith intact.

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February 9, 2014

Saturdays @ 5:00pm All Night Vigil

Sundays @10:00am Divine Liturgy and Coffee
Hour afterwards

Wednesday Night @7:00pm Vespers

Thursday @ 8:00am Divine Liturgy

"Acquire a Sprit of Peace, and around you thousands will be saved."

Saint Seraphim of Sarov



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **BUDGET SHORTFALL FOR JANUARY 2014: \$3500; We \$10,838 per month for Operating Expenses**
- House Blessing need to be scheduled, See Father Cyprian or Father Peter
 - Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed
- Have you filled out your Yearly Membership Form? If not please do so as soon as possible
 - Volunteers are still needed for the ALL American Council which will meet in Atlanta in 2015

On Tithing:

Leviticus 27:30-32

³⁰ And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD.

³¹ And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.

³² And concerning the tithes of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Usual Schedule of Services are on the front of the bulletin

Thursday at 7:00pm Catechumen Classes at the Church

Lessons from the Fathers

On Humility

Extirpate two thoughts within thyself: do not consider thyself worthy of anything great, and do not think that any other man is much lower than thou in worthiness. Learn humility beforehand, which the Lord commanded in word and showed forth in deed. Hence, do not expect obedience from others, but be ready for obedience thyself. Saint Basil the Great. If thou wilt endure an offensive word, then thou hast extinguished an ember. But if thou wilt think about it, then, like someone kindling a fire, thou wilt produce smoke, which is confusion. However, one can conveniently extinguish it too by silence, prayer and a bow from the heart. Venerable Dorotheus. If thou, being offended by anything, dost sense that grief and wrath have seized thee, preserve silence, and say naught until unceasing prayer pacifies thine heart. Venerable Ammon of Nitria. Even if thy soul should suffer somewhat from an offense, keep the sorrow within thyself. For it is said: "Within me my heart is troubled" (Psalm 142:4), that is, the passion has not come out, but has been humbled like a wave that has broken up on the shore. Calm thy raging heart. Let thy passions be ashamed at the presence of reason in thee, as playful children are ashamed before a man commanding respect. Saint Basil the Great.

Has someone offended thee? Guard thy breast with the sign of the Cross; remember what took place on the Cross, and all will be extinguished. Think not of offenses only, but recall also whatever good thou hast received from the one who has offended thee, and at once thou shalt grow meek. Bring to mind the fear of God, and quickly thou shalt grow more temperate and calm. Train thyself not to offend another during offenses themselves, and then, when offended, thou wilt not feel grief. Think to thyself that he who is offending thee is in a frenzy and not in his right mind, and then thou wilt not be vexed at the offense. Saint John Chrysostom.

Believe that dishonors and reproaches are medicines that heal the pride of thy soul, and pray for those who reproach thee, as for true physicians of thy soul, being assured that he who hates dishonor, hates humility, and he who avoids those who grieve him, flees from meekness. Venerable Dorotheus.