

28th Week After Pentecost – TUESDAY

Today's readings, followed by a few pastoral & personal thoughts.

2 Timothy 3:16-4:4 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Luke 19:45-48 45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; 46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. 47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, 48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

When St Paul was writing about scripture, the NT as we know it did not exist. He was referring to the OT here, but of course, his words apply to the NT also. At the time, the canon of the NT was just in its nascent stage. Various letters were treasured by the church, copied, and read in services, but there was as yet no discussion by the church about which letters to include in “scripture”.

Most of us would agree that the NT is somewhat more understandable. The OT language is much more difficult, and on almost every page, the events being described have a meaning that applies to the present time in which they were written, and also point to Jesus Christ, the cross, and other things that are quintessentially about the Christian church.

What are our reasons for neglecting so great a treasure? The Gospels are often quite simple and direct, and we MUST read them often. It is good to read them every day. The Epistles help apply the Gospels to our lives and explain the theology and practice touched on in them. The Psalms are the church's prayer book, used in every service. They have a marvelous way of applying to every person, in every moment of their life. I try to chant at least a kisma every day, and every time I do this, something “jumps out” at me. Try this habit, and you will become more literate as a Christian, and be empowered to make significant changes in your life.

I know the bible is difficult to understand for many people, including some in my flock. We are lazy people, and tend to give up things that are difficult, however, the bible is not like some physics textbook that we would never understand no matter how many times

we read it (Reader Nicholas, a physics teacher, being excepted). When we read the scriptures with effort, we will begin to understand them. I write these meditations to inform and encourage, but only the reader is capable of taking the next step: **READING THE SCRIPTURES**. Like Philip, I must say to you “Come and see!” See what happens if you actually apply yourself to treading the scriptures daily.

We were born for perfection. Do not neglect such a treasure which was designed such that:

“the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works”

Bibliography

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to St Luke, by Blessed Theophylact, published by Chrysostom Press - <http://www.chrysostompress.org/>. ALL FOUR BOOKS ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!

Priest Seraphim Dec 10/23 2008.

[St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas](http://www.orthodox.net/scripture/pentecost-tuesday-28_2008_2timothy3;16-4;4+luke19;45-48.html)

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