

23rd Week After Pentecost – MONDAY

TODAY'S READINGS, FOLLOWED BY A FEW PASTORAL & PERSONAL THOUGHTS.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. ² We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; ³ Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; ⁴ Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. ⁵ For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

Luke 10:22-24 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. ²³ And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: ²⁴ For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

The Gospel today contains the classic, immutable, Christological truth: salvation is through the Son. There are many places in scripture where Jesus touches on this critical dogma:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. John 1:18

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. John 6:44-45

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. John 10:15

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3

There are many more scriptures which teach this central dogma of our faith, and not all of them are in the Gospel of John, but these have been selected because the Evangelist John preeminently among all the Apostles reveals the Son to the church.

Most heresies have denigrated the Son. This makes perfect sense if salvation is only through the Son, Who reveals the Father. Of the “Great Three” religions, only true Christianity has the way of salvation, because it knows the Son. The Jews reject the Son, believing that the Messiah is not yet come, and the Moslems believe Jesus to be only a prophet, and subordinate in importance to Mohammed.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe the Son to be a creation of the Father, the Mormons likewise believe foolish things about the Son which are Arian in nature. Arianism is an ancient heresy, which was firmly addressed in the 1st Ecumenical council and is refuted for all time in the Symbol of Faith. It denies that the Son is God, believing Him to be a creation. A creature cannot perfectly know God. Only God knows Himself. If the Son is a creature, even if He is first created, and “god-like” in His qualities, He is incapable of knowing that which is higher than Himself, and His words: “no man knoweth... who the Father is, except the Son” (Luke 10:22, above) are a lie.

The question which we must answer if we are to be saved, is how do we place ourselves amongst those of whom the Lord says: “and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him” (Luke 10:22, above)

The Son knows the Father because He is *like* Him. So then, for us to know the Father, we must become *like* the Son. *Like understands like*. The Son understands the Father, and if we are like the Son, we will share in the Son’s understanding, which He will share with us. Of course, we cannot *become* the Son, since we are creatures, but as we have the “adoption of sonship”¹, we can become like the Son in morality, thought and purpose.

There is no other way to be saved, but to strive for moral improvement. Our works do not of themselves save us, but without working to become better morally, we can never understand God.

It is understandable, therefore, that another major way to attack the way of salvation (other than directly slandering Jesus Christ, as described above) is to deny that works are necessary to be saved. This is a “standard” Protestant heresy held by many. They

¹ Gal 4:4-7 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

misunderstand the Scriptures, because they do not read them in the context of the church.

Do not join in this heresy. We cannot know God is we do not struggle to become like Him. We cannot know the Father, except through the Son, but we can know the Son. He lived among us; He is God and man, and He showed us the way of life, for our eyes to see and our ears to hear, by his example and His words.

Today, the best and most important thing you must do in order to be closer to salvation is to become more like the Son.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Mat 11:29

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 Nov 4/17 2008.

[St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas](http://www.orthodox.net/scripture/pentecost-monday-23_2008_1thessalonians1;1-5+luke10;22-24.rtf)

http://www.orthodox.net/scripture/pentecost-monday-23_2008_1thessalonians1;1-5+luke10;22-24.rtf

http://www.orthodox.net/scripture/pentecost-monday-23_2008_1thessalonians1;1-5+luke10;22-24.pdf

New commentaries are posted on our **BLOG**: <http://www.orthodox.net/redeemingthetime>

Archive of: **commentaries**: <http://www.orthodox.net/scripture>

Archive of **homilies**: <http://www.orthodox.net/sermons>

Use this for any edifying reason, but please give credit, and include the URL were the text was found. We would love to hear from you with comments!