



T E M P T A T I O N



In the Prayer of St. Ephrem we are called upon to "see our own transgressions." This is where the whole process of repentance starts: by placing the blame for our spiritual shortcomings right where it belongs - on ourselves.

Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Fifth Sunday in the Great Fast

March 29, 2015

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, 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 us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 – 8.

GLAD TIDINGS

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's feast of the Annunciation to the Mother of God. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ There will be no Pirohi Sale in April.

+++ Saturdays is the feast of St. Lazarus' Resurrection. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 9:00 AM. Please join us in prayer and praise.

+++ This Friday at 9:00 AM, we will make up the postponed All Souls' Liturgy due to snow.

+++ We thank sincerely the generosity of our good parishioners who labored to make yesterday's Bake Sale a success. We pray the Lord continues to bless all with continued good health for Many and Blessed Years!

+++ The offering for flowers for the coming feast days is taken today. Please be generous.

+++ We remind our faithful diocesan and parish dues are DUE. Please fulfill this obligation during this sacred season.

+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie, Father Myron, Pani Delores and Andrea..

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$349.00; Candles, \$34.00; Parish Dues, \$25.00; Kitchen, \$271.00; Food Coupons, \$200.00; Great Fast Self-Sacrifice, \$93.00; Holyday, \$5.00; Bulletin, \$25.00; Camp Nazareth Raffle, \$20.00, for a total of \$1022.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Bob Gorbich, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1819.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.



Freely Bestowed Grace

The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked; but the dwelling of the just he blesses; when he is dealing with the arrogant, he is stern, but to the humble he shows kindness Proverbs 3: 33, 34.

Of his fullness we have all received, grace for grace. For while the law was given through Moses, enduring grace comes only through Jesus Christ John 1: 16, 17.

Through whom we received grace and apostleship, that we might spread his name and bring to obedient faith all the gentiles, among whom are you who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ Romans 1: 5, 6.

All men have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. All men are now undeservedly justified through the grace of redemption wrought in Christ Jesus Romans 3: 23, 24.

Hence, all depends on faith; everything is grace Romans 4: 16.

Through him we have gained access by faith to the grace in which we now stand and we boast of our hope for the glory of God Romans 5: 2.

The law came in order to increase offenses, but despite the increase of sin, grace has far surpassed it, so that, as sin reigned through death, grace may reign by way of justice leading to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord Romans 5: 20, 21.

It is in Christ and through his grace that we have been redeemed and our sins forgiven, so immeasurably generous is God's grace to us Ephesians 1: 7.

GRACE

Those who enter the Church of Christ enter the kingdom of grace and they are invited to *come boldly into the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need* Hebrews 4: 16.

Grace, in God's revelation to us in Sacred Scripture has a variety of meanings and insights to offer. Essentially, however, it is taken for the free and eternal love and favor of God in the Holy Trinity, which is the spring and source of all the benefits which man receives from Him. *"But if the choice is by the grace of God, it is not because of their works, otherwise grace would not be grace"* Romans 11: 6; *God saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of any merit of ours, but according to his own design, the grace held out to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our Saviour* 2 Timothy 1: 9, 10.

This free and unmerited love of God is the original motivation in our salvation, and has no cause above it to excite or draw it forth, but merely arises from the will of God. It was this mercy or love of God that expresses itself in man's redemption. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him may not die, but have eternal life* John 3: 16.

At times it signifies in general the mercy of God; *God is the God of all grace* 1

Peter 5: 10. In this, its broadest meaning, grace is God's good will to man of worthy life in all ages of humanity, and particularly to the righteous souls of the Old Covenant such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, the Prophet Moses and the myriad later prophets.

In particularly precise meaning, the concept of grace refers to a New Testament understanding and comprehension. First, by the grace of God, the grace of Christ is to be understood the whole economy of our salvation, performed by the coming of the Son of God to earth, by His earthly life, His death on the Cross, His Resurrection, and His Ascension into heaven. *For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast* Ephesians 2: 8, 9. Secondly, grace is the name applied to the gifts of the Holy Spirit which have been imparted to the Church of Christ for the sanctification of its communicants, for their spiritual growth and for the attainment by them of the kingdom of heaven.

In this second New Testament meaning of the word, grace is power descending from on high, the very power of God inherent in the Body of Christ, His Church, the vehicle of salvation, which gives birth, imparts life, perfects and brings the believing and virtuous Christian to the appropriation of the salvation which has been made available by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostles, therefore, in their elucidative writings often used the Greek word *charis*, "grace" as identical in meaning with the word *dynamis*, "power." The term "grace" in this sense of "power" given from above for a holy life is found in many places of the Apostolic epistles (2 Peter 1: 3; Romans 5: 2; Romans 16: 20; 1 Peter 5: 12; 2 Peter 3: 18; 2 Timothy 2: 1; 1 Corinthians 16: 23; 2 Corinthians 13: 14; Galatians 6: 18; Ephesians 6: 24; and other citations as well). The Apostle Paul writes *The Lord said to me, my grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness* 2 Corinthians 12: 9.

The distinction between the two meanings of the word "grace" and the predominant understanding of it in the Sacred Scripture of the New Testament as a divine power, are important to keep in mind, because in Protestantism which surrounds us in this country, a teaching has become established about grace only in its general significance of the great work of our redemption from sin through the Saviour's exploit on the Cross, after which – as the Protestants think – a man who has come to believe and has received the remission of sin is already among the saved. However, the Apostles in contrast teach us that a Christian, having justification as a gift in accordance with the general grace of redemption, is in this life as an individual only *being saved* 1 Corinthians 1: 18, and further needs the support of grace given powers. *We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand* Romans 5: 2; *we are saved by hope* Romans 8: 24.

But how then, does the salutary grace of God act?

Both the spiritual birth and further spiritual growth and development of man occur through the mutual action of two fundamental principles. One of these is the grace of the Holy Spirit, the other is man's opening of his heart for the reception, a thirst after, and desire to receive benefit from what Christ accomplished, as the thirsty dry earth receives the moisture of rain, in other words, personal effort for the reception, preservation, and activity in the soul of heavenly bestowed divine gifts.

Synergy describes that vital process of the soul which wills to cooperate with heavenly grace for its own salvation. Therefore the ascetic quality of constant struggle is vital for every believer, regardless of status in life.

Concerning the cooperation of both principles, the Apostle Peter witnesses, *That divine power of his has freely bestowed on us everything necessary for a life of genuine piety, through knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and power. By virtue of them he has bestowed on us the great and precious things he promised, so that through these you who have fled a world corrupted by lust might become sharers of the divine nature. This is reason enough for you to make every effort to undergird your virtue with faith, your discernment with virtue, and your self-control with discernment; this self-control, in turn, should lead to perseverance, and perseverance to piety,*

and piety to care of your brother, and care for your brother, to love. Qualities like these, made increasingly your own, are by no means ineffectual; they bear fruit in true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any man who lacks these qualities is shortsighted to the point of blindness. He forgets the cleansing of his long-past sins 2 Peter 1: 3 – 9.

We read concerning the very same matter in the legacy of the Apostle Paul, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure* Philippians 2: 12, 13. In other words, the individual believer must cooperate, with God's grace to make it effectual reality, but always remember that everything is imparted by the grace of God. "Except the Lord build the house of virtue, we labor in vain" is reminder for us in the Sunday Matins Hymn (Tone 3).

Thus the Council of Carthage in the third century decreed: "Whoever should say that the grace of God, by which man is justified through Jesus Christ our Lord, avails only for the remission of past sins, and not for assistance against committing sins in the future, let him be anathema. For the grace of Christ gives not only the knowledge of our duty, but also inspires us with a desire that we may be able to accomplish what we know.

The experience of Orthodox ascetics inspires them to call all Christians with all power to the humble acknowledgement of one's own infirmity and limitation so that the salutary grace of God might act. Most

demonstrative in this case are the expressions of St. Simeon the New Theologian in the tenth century; "If the thought comes to you, instilled by the devil, that your salvation is accomplished not by the power of your God, but by your own wisdom, and your own power, and if your soul agrees with such thinking, grace departs from it. The struggle against such a powerful and most difficult battle which arises in the soul must be undertaken by the soul until its very last breath. The soul must, together with the blessed Apostle Paul, call out in a loud voice, in the hearing of angels and men: *Not I but the grace of God in me* 1 Corinthians 15: 10.

Ascetic struggle is vital and necessary. What, then is the significance of ascetic struggle? It is a weapon against *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* 1 John 2: 15, 16. It is the cleansing of the field of the soul from stones, overgrown weeds and swampy places, in preparation for a sacred sowing, which will be moistened from above by the grace of God.

That man must cooperate with God's freely bestowed grace is evident from St. Paul's advice to his disciple, *For this reason, I remind you to stir into flame the grace of God bestowed on you when my hands were laid on you* 1 Timothy 1: 6.

God created us without us, but He cannot save us without us!



RAISED FROM THE DEAD



C N I D X A E F D W N N D S Z Z D O
O W V H T R O F E M O C F F J G C K
N A O M R U E E A I I R Y M A D O V
D T M S Z G P R T S N D E K V B T D
N J X Q O I Y C D L E B J H B Q D L
V D Y J N E E V I S R D B D T H L O
P Y N G C R C F I O A M E E A O Q H
L S F Z R W E A J B B L V N T E R E
A G U U N V R B Y K F A S W O W D B
D W S L D O T L E U C D B Q T T Q D
Q E U E G Y U H H L P P N P S H S M
R R L R L P W O O E I A S I V E A R
E Q A V Y C P D I M W E X M B S I M
S V S D R C A I A N A A V H T N G M
E T Z B W B C R N U E S R E A P U I
C O M F O R T L I P H A R I S E E S
O J M M X H M R I M N E H N E X K L
J F U S A V A K P X Z E N E D A Q Z

RAISED
DEAD
MARTHA
THOMAS
COMFORT

BROTHER
BELIEVES
MASTER
WEeping
BEHOLD

COME FORTH
UNBIND
MIRACLES
MARY
PHARISEES

RESURRECTION
LIFE
STONE
CAVE
GRAVE



As Near As Our Breath

The Lord God ...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being
Genesis 2: 7.

Most of the time we do not even think about the breathing process. Day after day we automatically breathe in and breathe out with little thought or effort. Usually we can't even see our breath, so we take it for granted as something never thought about. However, on cold winter days, the contrast between the cold air around us and our warm breath when we exhale creates little short-lived clouds of dissipating vapor that are plainly visible, not that they arouse in our minds any particular gratitude our breathing faculties function well and we are still alive for another day in this glorious creation.

Just as we are usually unmindful of breathing, we can pass our time oblivious to God. St. Paul reminds us of our God's sacred pledge, "I will never leave nor forsake you" Hebrews 13: 5. But since we cannot physically see our God, we often sail through our days barely aware of God's presence.

We may utter a prayer in passing or spend a few minutes reading the parish bulletin. But after that, we sometimes give our God little thought until we get into a crisis, self-made or otherwise. Then we realize we need strength beyond ourselves. This contrast between our limitations and weaknesses and God's power and comfort makes God pretty visible. Our hard times have enabled us to see God.

But in reality God does not hide from us, even when we seek Him. He is as near as our breath. Our very life began with God's breath. So every breath we breathe can remind us of God's constant presence with us. Let us call on Him just as surely as we breathe. Let us enter into a relationship which makes Him just as vital for us as our breathing is for our physical bodies.

How many times do we forget God's presence, or that we are in His presence? The hymnology of our Church teaches and reminds us, "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord." Let every breath awaken our hearts to His vital presence in our lives because He is as near us and as vital to us as our breath!

He is *Revealed*
by many Names...



"...and His name shall be called..." Isaiah 9:6.

The Holy Name of our Lord, God and Saviour was revealed by the angelic visitor. Throughout salvation history, He is referred to in a variety of ways, each of which make known more and more of the enduring love of our Heavenly Father for each of us.

King of the Jews

"And Pilate asked him, are you the king of the Jews? And he answering said to him, 'You have said it'" Mark 15: 2.

What a title for our Lord to put His seal on at a time when the Jews were in abject subjection to the Romans and He himself their prisoner before a judge. But reality is that He is King of the Jews, yes, even more than that, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. The imperial Roman who metes out justice in a pagan way will at one time stand before this Jesus, this King of Kings to be fully examined and judged himself. Those faithful Jews who recognize the grace of God will one day proclaim Him their own King and more than that, their Messiah and Saviour. As for us? Let us give Him His rightful place as our King, as our ruler in this life. This points out how we can serve Him and accord Him a rightful place in our lives. Perhaps in some definite prayer, perhaps in exemplary example for the Jewish people with whom we interact, some testimony to them of the joy we know in being His faithful disciples, knowing, loving and serving Him. Let us in prayer call upon the Lord to remember His ancient people whose name we now share as His followers, as His Chosen People, and all else who seek to make His truth known in the world.

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

In you, O Mother Mary, the faithful divine likeness shone forth, for by taking up the cross, you followed Christ. You gave us an example to be not concerned with the flesh, but to be diligent over the eternal things of the spirit. Therefore, O Venerable Mary, you now rejoice with the angels Troparion, St. Mary of Egypt.

Once filled with all kinds of vices, today, through repentance, she appears as the bride of Christ. Leading an angelic life, she crushes the devil with the help of the cross. Therefore, O venerable Mary, you now rejoice with the angels Kontakion, St. Mary of Egypt.

O Christ God, You confirmed the resurrection of all before the time of Your passion by raising Lazarus from the dead; therefore we, as the children of Israel, carry the symbols of victory and cry out to You, the Conqueror of death: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord" Troparion, Lazarus Saturday.

Christ, the Joy of all, the Truth, the Light, the Life, and the Resurrection of the world appeared to those on earth. Because of His goodness, He became also the image of Resurrection, granting divine forgiveness to all Kontakion, Lazarus Saturday.

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; Whom shall I fear? Prokimenon, Lazarus Saturday.

Let us gloriously honor the pure Mother of God. She bore the divine Fire and was not consumed. With ceaseless praise, let us extol her Hymn instead of "It is truly proper...", Lazarus Saturday.

Out of the mouths of babes and infants, You have fashioned praise. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Communion hymn, Lazarus Saturday.

All you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia! Hymn Instead of "Holy God", Lazarus Saturday.

THE ETERNAL
SONSHIP
OF CHRIST

Some Evangelicals, such as John MacArthur, J. Oliver Buswell, and the late Walter Martin, have been abandoning the Trinitarian faith as defined by the First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325). Their abandonment of orthodox Trinitarianism consists in denying the eternal Sonship of Christ, the doctrine that the second person of the Trinity was the Son of God from all eternity. Instead, they claim that the second person of the Trinity only became the Son of God at his incarnation. Apart from the incarnation he was still God, but not *the Son*, just the second Person.

This teaching destroys the internal relationships within the Trinity, because if the Son was not eternally begotten by the Father then neither did the Spirit eternally proceed from the Father through the Son. It also destroys the Fatherhood of the first person, since without a Son there is no Father. Thus the fundamental familial relations among the persons of the Godhead are destroyed and replaced by mere social relationships, a bare existence of three persons in the Godhead. Prior to the incarnation, there is no longer the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but simply Number One, Number Two, and Number Three—the numbers themselves being an arbitrary designation.

The Church Fathers who wrote the creeds had a different view. They recognized that the Bible depicts the Son as having his identity *as the Son* before his incarnation. In 1 John 4:9 we read, that "the love of God was made manifest among us [in] that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." Thus, the second person of the Trinity was already the Son when he was sent into the world.

The same truth is taught under a different analogy in John 1:1,14 where we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Here the Word (i.e., the second person of the Trinity) is pictured as having his identity as the Word from all eternity. Thus, from all eternity the Word of God proceeded from God, just as speech proceeds from a speaker; similarly, a Son proceeds from his Father. Under both analogies, whether as the Son of God or the Word of God, the second person of the Trinity is depicted as eternally proceeding from the first person of the Trinity.

Of special interest among the following passages are those in which the early Christians wrote of God as Father prior to the incarnation. Such passages imply the role of the second person as Son *before* the incarnation, since as we have noted, without a Son there is no Father.

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

"Jesus Christ . . . was with the Father before the beginning of time, and in the end was revealed" (*Letter to the Magnesians* 6 [A.D. 110]).

JUSTIN MARTYR

"Jesus Christ is the only proper Son who has been begotten by God, being his Word and first-begotten, and power; and, becoming man according to his will, he taught us these things for the conversion and restoration of the human race" (*First Apology* 23 [A.D. 151]).

"God begot before all creatures a beginning, who was a certain rational power from himself and

whom the Holy Spirit calls . . . sometimes the Son . . . sometimes Lord and Word. . . . We see things happen similarly among ourselves, for whenever we utter some word, we beget a word, yet not by any cutting off, which would diminish the word in us when we utter it. We see a similar occurrence when one fire enkindles another. It is not diminished through the enkindling of the other, but remains as it was" (*Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* 61 [A.D. 155]).

IRENÆUS

"[The Gnostics] transfer the generation of the uttered word of men to the eternal Word of God, attributing to him a beginning of utterance and a coming into being In what manner, then, would the Word of God—indeed, the great God himself, since he is the Word—differ from the word of men?" (*Against Heresies* 2:13:8 [A.D. 189]).

TERTULLIAN

The Father makes him equal to himself, and the Son, by proceeding from him, was made the first-begotten, since he was begotten before all things, and the only-begotten, because he alone was begotten of God, in a manner peculiar to himself, from the womb of his own heart, to which even the Father himself gives witness: 'My heart has poured forth my finest Word' [Ps. 45:1-2]" (*Against Praxeas* 7:1 [A.D. 216]).

HIPPOLYTUS

"Therefore, this sole and universal God, by reflecting, first brought forth the Word—not a word as in speech, but as a mental word, the reason for every-

thing. . . . The Word was the cause of those things which came into existence, carrying out in himself the will of him by whom he was begotten. . . . Only [God's] Word is from himself and is therefore also God, becoming the substance of God" (*Refutation of All Heresies* 10:33 [A.D. 228]).

ORIGEN

"So also Wisdom, since he proceeds from God, is generated from the very substance of God" (*Commentary on Hebrews* [A.D. 237]).

GREGORY THE WONDERWORKER

"There is one God, the Father of the living Word, who is his subsistent wisdom and power and eternal image: perfect begetter of the perfect begotten, Father of the only-begotten Son. There is one Lord, only of the only, God of God, image and likeness of deity, efficient Word, wisdom comprehensive of the constitution of all things, and power formative of the whole creation, true Son of true Father" (*Declaration of Faith* [A.D. 265]).

LACTANTIUS

"When we speak of God the Father and God the Son, we do not speak of them as different, nor do we separate them, because the Father cannot exist without the Son, nor can the Son be separated from the Father, since the name of 'Father' cannot be given without the Son, nor can the Son be begotten without the Father. . . . [T]hey both have one mind, one spirit, one substance; but the former [the Father] is as it

were an overflowing fountain, the latter [the Son] as a stream flowing forth from it. The former as the sun, the latter as it were a ray [of light] extended from the sun" (*Divine Institutes* 4:28–29 [A.D. 307]).

COUNCIL OF NICAEA I

"We believe . . . in our one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the only-begotten born of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made . . ." (*The Creed of Nicaea* [A.D. 325]).

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

"Believe also in the Son of God, the one and only, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God begotten of God, who is life begotten of life, who is light begotten of light, who is in all things like unto the begetter, and who did not come to exist in time but was before all the ages, eternally and incomprehensibly begotten of the Father. He is the Wisdom of God" (*Catechetical Lectures* 4:7 [A.D. 350]).

THE LONG IGNATIUS

"[O]ur God, Jesus the Christ, the only-begotten Son and Word before time began, but who afterwards became also man, of Mary the Virgin. For 'the Word was made flesh' [John 1:14]" (*Letter to the Ephesians* 7 [A.D. 350]).

ATHANASIUS

"When these points have been demonstrated, then they [the Arians] speak even more impudently: 'If

there never was a time when the Son was not, and if he is eternal and coexists with the Father, then you are saying that he is not a Son at all, but the Father's brother.' O dull and contentious men! Indeed, if we said only that he coexisted eternally and had not called him Son, their pretended difficulty would have some plausibility. But if while saying that he is eternal, we confess him as Son of the Father, how were it possible for him that is begotten to be called a brother of him that begets? . . . For the Father and the Son were not generated from some preexisting source, so that they might be accounted as brothers. Rather, the Father is the source and begetter of the Son. . . . It is proper for men to beget in time, because of the imperfections of their nature; but the offspring of God is eternal because God's nature is ever perfect" (*Discourses Against the Arians* 1:14 [A.D. 360]).

BASIL THE GREAT

"What was in the beginning? 'The Word,' he says. . . . Why the Word? So that we might know that he proceeded from the mind. Why the Word? Because he was begotten without passion. Why the Word? Because he is image of the Father who begets him, showing forth the Father fully, in no way separated from him, and subsisting perfectly in himself, just as our word entirely befits our thought" (*Eulogies and Sermons* 16:3 [A.D. 368]).

AMBROSE OF MILAN

"[The Arians] think that they must posit the objection of his [Christ] having said, 'I live on account of the Father.' Certainly if they refer the saying to his divinity, the Son lives on account of the Father,

because the Son is from the Father; on account of the Father, because he is of one substance with the Father; on account of the Father, because he is the Word given forth from the heart of the Father; because he proceeds from the Father" (*The Faith* 4:10:132 [A.D. 379]).

GREGORY OF NAZIANZ

"He is called Son because he is identical to the Father in essence; and not only this, but also because he is of him. He is called only-begotten not because he is a unique Son . . . but because he is Son in a unique fashion and not in a corporeal way. He is called Word because he is to the Father what a word is to the mind" (*Orations* 30:20 [A.D. 380]).

COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE I

"We believe . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father" (*The Nicene Creed* [A.D. 381]).

COUNCIL OF ROME

"If anyone does not say that the Son was begotten of the Father, that is, of the divine substance of him himself, he is a heretic" (*Tome of Damasus*, canon 11 [A.D. 382]).

THE ATHANASIAN CREED

"The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone. The Son is from the Father alone, not made

or created, but begotten. . . . Let him who wishes to be saved, think thus concerning the Trinity. But it is necessary for eternal salvation that he faithfully believe also in the incarnation. . . . He is God begotten of the substance of the Father before time, and he is man born of the substance of his mother in time. . . . This is the Catholic faith; unless everyone believes this faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved" (*Athanasian Creed* [A.D. 400]).

AUGUSTINE

"In the way that you speak a word that you have in your heart and it is with you . . . that is how God issued the Word, that is to say, how he begot the Son. And you, indeed, beget a word too in your heart, without temporal preparation; God begot the Son outside of time, the Son through whom he created all things" (*Homilies on John* 14:7 [A.D. 416]).

PATRICK OF IRELAND

"Jesus Christ, whom we . . . confess to have always been with the Father—before the world's beginning, spiritually and ineffably [he was] begotten of the Father before all beginning" (*Confession of St. Patrick* 4 [A.D. 452]).

COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE II

"If anyone does not confess that there are two generations of the Word of God, one from the Father before all ages, without time and incorporeally, the other in the last days when the same came down from heaven and was incarnate . . . let such a one be anathema" (*Anathemas Concerning the Three Chapters*, canon 2 [A.D. 553]).

WHERE DOES THE BLAME TRULY LIE?



we are all familiar with the story of Adam and Eve. God gave them everything they needed, but with that came one stipulation. He told them not to eat fruit from the apple tree. Unfortunately for mankind, they did not obey His rule.

When God questioned Eve about eating the forbidden fruit, she said ***"The serpent deceived me."*** Adam took it one step further, not only blaming Eve for his sin, but indirectly inferring it was somehow God's fault when he protested: ***"The woman whom You gave to me gave me from the tree . . ."*** Yes, from the time of Adam and Eve, we have become a race of ***"blameshifters"*** when it comes to taking responsibility for sin.

It's always easier to point the finger of guilt elsewhere. When a child gets in trouble, it is almost guaranteed that he or she will try to pin the blame on one of their friends. Husbands blame wives . . . wives blame husbands . . . workers blame coworkers . . . it goes on and on and on. Where does the Devil fit in with all of this?

While we strongly believe that Satan labors tirelessly to ***tempt*** us to sin (he even worked overtime on our Lord Himself in the Judean wilderness at the beginning of His ministry), he cannot make us do anything. God gave each of us a free will to choose what course of behavior to follow, and He has clearly mapped out the road we should travel if we truly seek His kingdom. The advice given to us by the Apostle James provides us with the perfect ***"battle plan"*** in fighting temptation: ***"Submit therefore to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you."*** (James 4:7) If we falter in our attempt to fight off temptation, then we must have enough maturity to confess our sins and seek forgiveness.