

Ο Γ' ΖΕΝΟΦΩΝ ΜΕΤΗΣΥΝΟΔΙ
ΑΥΤΩ



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Thirty Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

January 24, 2016

**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

+++ The next Pirohi Sale will be Saturday, February 13.

+++ This Saturday is the simple feast of the Three Hierarchs. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated Saturday morning at 9:00 AM. Please come and join us in prayer and praise.

+1+ The miraculous icon has been removed from the church. Since it is difficult for Father to drive and stand and since so very few came to the devotions and Father wishes to continue them, he will do it in his own home from now on.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie 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, \$260.00; Candles, \$31.00; Parish Dues, \$50.00; Diocesan Dues, \$130.00; Holyday, \$4.00, for a total of \$475.00. 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 **\$1851.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$6750 on this project to date!

+++ The Clothing Drive is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.

The Insufficiency Of Private Worship

Our secular society has as one of its fundamental axioms that regular collective worship of God is both unnecessary and foolish. Large numbers, almost everywhere today, not only do not attend church regularly, but do not do anything which could be considered as a valid attendance at prayer groups or regular gathering together as a family for prayer at home. Worship, it would seem, has become obsolete. Many do not gather together with others in any regular way to worship God. In a great many cases these same people also seldom or never attend a Bible class or read books about religion or spirituality.

Such people will often allege they still worship God privately, when they are alone, and that this private worship is more than sufficient. They say that when they are walking through the woods or by a lakeshore or seashore, they feel they are in the presence of God and that they worship God in their own fashion at such a moment in time.

What about the person who says he does this regularly, once a week, meditates on God privately, even in the privacy of his home if not on regular walks? We certainly also sense the special presence of God at certain times, especially in the woods as also at the seashore where the God-created works express themselves so plainly. But the question is, does this alone suffice? And if not, what is insufficient about it?

One way in which this approach is seen to be grossly insufficient is that such person is doing nothing to learn about the Creator God. By avoiding all regular church going, prayer groups, Bible classes, and regular reading and study of books about religious faith, such people avoid any learning and growth in faith about our heavenly Father, particularly about God's universal moral law which is taught to a greater or lesser extent in all religious gatherings and religious books. All such a person learns about the morality our God expects us to live and observe has to come from within himself and personal prejudiced interpretations. He has turned his

back on all serious and regular attempts at gaining insights from outside himself about God's expectations. Secular society, secular news will not provide it in any significant manner.

It is learning about God which this secular generation has turned away from. And it is a basic mistake. No one who would fancy himself an expert on science, on politics, on medicine, on law, or anything else for that matter, would expect to be able to do it if he had not regularly, by attendance at conferences or by reading and some study, or by both, kept up on the subject for at least twenty years. As we grow older, we all need to learn as we go along on all important issues. If we turn our back on this learning process, any expertise ossifies into a pitiable sham.

Just regular attendance at church, in a minimal sense, covers all of this. A person who goes to church regularly, but does not go to Bible classes and does not even read or study any religious literature of any kind, will still hear adequately, even apart from the sermons, about the laws of God from the readings and rest of the liturgical language in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and varied prayer services. He will even learn from the portion of those things he has heard before, because he himself has matured and is able to see things in them that he could not understand or perceive before. And this goes on in a different but still meaningful way for those outside the Church as well who regularly attend services in their own places of worship as well. Not so, however, for the irreligious man, for the person who neither regularly attends any religious services nor reads regularly about our heavenly Father and his love of mankind.

The element of the basic privilege of worship in recognition of God's astounding creation and forming of our life is being ignored. Knowledge comes first, at the very beginning. We must learn about God first of all and must continue to learn and appreciate his blessings in our daily life. For how can we worship or serve God who we do not know?

The secular world tries to skip this knowledge. It tries to claim that uprightness, honor, and probity can be learned elsewhere than in church or from Christ and from his Body and Bride. This is disastrous and has led to self-righteous and hardened immorality on the part of immense numbers of people who have been irreligious for a long period of time. Their self-righteousness will not excuse them from giving an accounting on Judgment Day.



THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

Author—The author is the prophet Haggai, whose name means “festal.” He is the first of the postexilic prophets and a contemporary of the prophet Zechariah. Jewish tradition suggests he was a priest.

Date—520 BC, during the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia. Four prophetic messages were delivered over a period of four months.

Major Theme—*Forsake life's comforts and rebuild the temple.* Other themes revolve around the consequences of disobedience (1:6, 11; 2:16, 17) and the blessings of obedience (2:7–9, 19). A further prophetic theme points to the building of the Church from among the Gentiles (2:7).

Background—In 587 BC, the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and carried the Jews into exile in Babylon. In 539 BC, the Persian king Cyrus conquered the Babylonians and decreed that the Jews could return to their homeland. The rebuilding of the temple was begun by the remnant that returned. Theodoret of Cyrrus points out, “Since the completion of the construction was interrupted partly on account of the wickedness of their enemies and partly on account of their own sluggishness, Haggai, the blessed prophet, induced the people to begin rebuilding the temple.” It was finished and consecrated five years after the Book of Haggai was written, in 515 BC.

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1)
- II. First Prophetic Message: Exhortation to Rebuild the Temple (1:2–15)
 - A. The people's excuse (1:2–4)
 - B. God's response to their disobedience (1:5–11)
 - C. The people go to work (1:12–15)
- III. Second Prophetic Message: Future Glory of the Temple (2:1–9)
 - A. God's presence is with the people in their work (2:1–5)
 - B. The “choice things” to come, filling the house with glory (2:6–9)

- IV. Third Prophetic Message: God Will Bless the Nation's Obedience (2:10–19)
 - A. Holiness and uncleanness (2:10–14)
 - B. Further consequences of disobedience (2:15–17)
 - C. Immediate blessings: the reward of faithfulness (2:18, 19)
- V. Fourth Prophetic Message: God's Promise to Zerubbabel (2:20–23)
 - A. Judgment of kings and nations (2:20–22)
 - B. The calling and role of Zerubbabel (2:23)

**How our
heart
and
soul
and
physical activity
expresses
itself
when we notice
a non-parishioner
in our midst.**

Welcome!

We've been waiting for you! It's true, because we believe that every person who comes into the circle of this special fellowship was sent by God Himself. It's not by accident that we have the joy of meeting you. So, above all else we want to express Christ's love to you with genuine, heartfelt warmth. We're eager to know you, and we're excited to share with you the marvelous ways God is working in our church.

It won't take you long to discover that this is truly a family, rich in the relationships that matter most. Growing together, we worship, we serve, we laugh, we cry, we learn, and we reach out to our world with life-transforming truth. We reach out to you, as well. Our doors are open. Our hearts are open, too. If you've been thinking, praying, searching and hoping for a place to belong, we say again —

Welcome!

God's Beloved

Tender God, you have compassion for all whose lives are altered
by mental illness.

Help us be the same.

Overcome our fears with courage

our suspicions with understanding

and our complacency with a deep reverence for all of life.

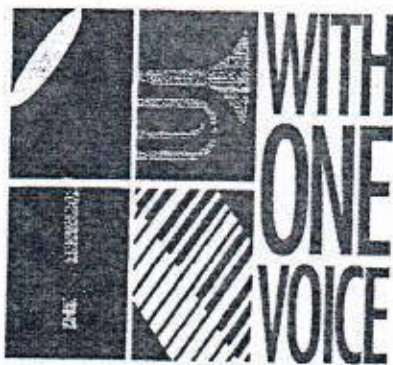
Make us one with those

whose actions may appear strange

and whose choices may seem uncooperative

for we are more alike than any of us can comprehend

and we each are your beloved. Amen.



"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."

Colossians 3:15, 16

**We are now among people
who are better and worse than savages.**

**They are in most places,
and for the time being,
less likely to break the
crockery of our modern culture,
than were savages of old.**

**They will cut babies
into pieces in the womb,
more than a million a year,
but they will be roused to the
height of righteous wrath
should they see someone
leave a dog in a hot car
in the summer.**

Wrong Place

Someone has written a poem that talks about the problem of using a spellchecking program on computer. The first stanza says:

I have a spelling checker
I disk covered four my PC
It plane lee marks for my revue
Miss steaks aye can knot see.

The words are spelled correctly, but they aren't the right words to convey the message of the writer. It is proof positive that if you are looking to the wrong source for correctness, then you certainly are not right!

Only God is right; only our God is the only standard we can be sure of!

Can versus Cannot

Set yourself up for success with an "I believe, I believe" approach. You may have heard the slogan "Success comes in cans." Well, failure comes in cannots, "I cannot stop fidgeting," "I cannot keep my attention on anything for more than a few seconds." From now on, boost your perception of capability by saying, "I can sit quietly," "I can stay focused."

Everything begins with belief, with having faith. Believe that you can be more effective and your belief will help create that fact.

There is a wonderful example of planting and presuming desired behavior in the basketball movie, *Hoosiers*. The game is on the line in the final second with the score tied. The coach gathers his players together in a huddle and, in the midst of the bedlam, says calmly, "After Steven makes the two shots, go into this...." His assumption that the player would sink both throws eased doubts, eliminated fear and imprinted confidence.



Words of prayer are commitments. We stand for what we utter. The word of prayer is like a pledge in the making.

Love's first step is attention.

When we see God, it will not be a new discovery. It will be a profound recognition of that heart and soul of yourself that is already in union with God. All contemplation, all true prayer, is an attempt to go back to that place.

Life's most urgent question is: What are you doing for others?

God's Name

When we finally come to fullness of faith in God, we become aware that God is not simply an unconscious "ground of being," or "force of nature," but himself the Almighty Creator of all that exists, living and non-living, as Dionysius has asserted, "mind beyond mind, word beyond speech," "the life of the living, the being of beings," who makes us who we are, and with whom we must have a relationship to be, to live and to think. If, therefore, our God is essential personhood, inevitably we must ask the question of him, "Who are you, what is your name?" We use the word "God" rather freely and incorrectly as a name, but this is more a title of what God is. When he was called by God to win the freedom of his people from slavery, it was the Great Prophet Moses who posed the inevitable question, "But," said Moses to God, "if I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of you ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what do I tell them?" God replied to Moses, 'I am who I am.' Then He added, 'This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3: 13, 14. In a certain way, our God replies to Moses indirectly. God is unique. He does not have a name like descriptions of creatures. His very name is his being. He is! He alone exists by his own integrity and power. All else is related to him as source of life and creation. Everything else around us owes itself to him and his sharing of love. The people, in the day of Moses did not have the philosophical system the Greeks were later to develop and which formed our way of thinking and reasoning. God's name is who He is and how He acts as God. It is not a passive name, but a name that accomplishes God's creative activity, for He is and so in him everything else has its existence by his creative being, acting always to keep all this in being. The name of God is not passive and static, but active and dynamic. It has the inherent nature of goodness. Thus God reveals his name more fully to Moses on Mount Sinai, "The Lord came down in a cloud and stood with him here and announced the name, 'Lord.' So the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity'" Exodus 34: 5, 6.

We see there the use of the word "Lord" for God. In the Jewish faith, the name of God, "I AM" revealed to Moses was all and uniquely holy. The name of God was so sacred that it was never to be pronounced. The holiness of God's name was taught by Jesus in the basic prayer of Christians, "Our Father in heaven, holy be your name." Since it was never said, its pronunciation was disputed. We think now it most likely was said "Yahweh" although a currently unthinking text says, "Jehovah," because of the publication of Jehovah's Witnesses popularized it. Whenever this sacred name

appeared in revealed texts, the pious Jew would substitute the word *Adonai* which we translate *Lord*. In Scripture, then, 'Lord,' is the name given to God and is a synonym for his holy name, though the Greek word for "Lord," which is *Kyrios*, also is used as an honorific for some human beings.

The Divine Liturgy does use the sacred name of God in certain solemn prayers, not in its Hebrew form, but translated into Greek. It is the beginning of the Anaphora of St. Basil the Great. We address God as "You Who are." This is very difficult to translate into English because to hear it sounds like sentence rather than the name of God, as if we were saying to God, "You are Master, Lord, God, Father Almighty..." In our very limited English translation then we have rendered it as "Eternal Being." This is because God "is," a recognition that He essentially exists by himself, of himself, eternally, without beginning or end, in the fullness and totality of being, Creator of all that is, therefore, "Eternal Being." We also use God's name in the solemn dismissal for the morning and evening prayer of the Church, Matins and Vespers. Here the Name of God is given to Jesus, the Lord and God, and we pray, "Blessed is Christ our God, the One Who is, always now and ever and forever." This expresses our faith in the Trinity, that truly the Father is God, Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit is God, so that they all are to be called by the name of God.

Jesus uses his name in the Gospel of St. John. "So the Jews said to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you before Abraham came to be, I AM.' So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area" John 8: 57 – 59. We see here that his audience understood immediately that Jesus was giving the divine name to himself and that He was claiming to be eternal. They considered this to be blasphemy and were ready to apply the punishment for blasphemy, execution by stoning. Jesus also brought us to a greater understanding of God through his name. These are the "I am" sayings, for example, "I am the way, the truth and the life" John 14: 6; "I am the resurrection and the life" John 11: 25; "I am the light of the world" John 8: 12, along with many others. It is not surprising then, that from the very beginning of our faith in Christ, He is addressed in prayer as God. The name of God is essential to our faith and again Jesus teaches, "And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me my name, I will do it." John 14: 13 – 14. Therefore, every Sunday the Church in her prayer reminds us of the privilege we have of knowing God's name, "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, let us bow to the holy Lord Jesus who alone is sinless...For you alone are our God and we know no other. We call you by name."

"DOGS WELCOME"

A man wrote a letter to a small hotel in a Midwest town he planned to visit on his vacation. He wrote: *I would very much like to bring my dog with me. He is well-groomed and very well behaved. Would you be willing to permit me to keep him in my room with me at night?"*

An immediate reply came from the hotel owner, who wrote: *SIR: "I've been operating this hotel for many years. In all that time, I've never had a dog steal towels, bedclothes, silverware or steal pictures off the walls or use them as a coloring book. I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. And I've never had a dog run out on a hotel bill. Yes, indeed, your dog is welcome at my hotel. And, if your dog will vouch for you, you're welcome to stay here, too."*

*Jesus, in time of weakness, be my strength;
in time of desolation, be my consolation; in time of loneli-
ness, be my companion; in time of doubt, be my security;
in time of weariness, be my rest. In sickness of mind,
body or spirit, be my Healer.*

She is a **VALIANT** woman; her roots are firmly planted. The kingdom is within; her heart, treasure-filled. She is a **JOYFUL** woman for whom laughter is no stranger: a song to sing, a smile to give, a hand clasp or embrace. She is a **STRONG** woman whose heart and arms withstand the pressures and the worries that each day unfolds. She is a **PATIENT** woman waiting through storm and night for new life, new growth, rich harvest. She is a **LOVING** woman ever giving and forgiving, ever caring and concerned. She is a **SHARING** woman who with arms outstretched gives her gifts and treasures to those both near and far. PRV 31



ANOINTING



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OIL	PREPARATION	SYMBOL	PROSPERITY
ANOINT	MATERIAL	POURING	HAPPINESS
RESPECT	SPIRITUAL	CONSECRATION	MARK
TOKEN	SPICES	PRACTICE	SPECIAL
RITE	BURIAL	HEAD	COMMON





The
LORD
& My
Shepherd:

*I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down
in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;
He leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for Thou art with me; Thy rod
and Thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house
of the LORD forever.*

P S A L M 23

YOU CAN DO NOTHING BETTER FOR ANYONE THAN TO PRAY FOR HIM, AND
WHEN YOU CAN DO NOTHING ELSE YOU CAN
STILL DO THAT.—Peter Green

Did You Know That ...

...the way to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything?

...a changed life is the result of a changed heart?

...why we are here is important but where we are going is more important?

...Christian unity begins at the cross?

...to follow the Lord, you must walk with the Lord?

...Christ creates unity out of diversity?

...we may face situations beyond our reserves, but never beyond God's resources?

...they witness best who witness with lives more than their lips?

...in every desert of trial, our heavenly Father has made an oasis of comfort?

...it is never too late to make a fresh start with God?

...Christ is the reason for our living and our giving?

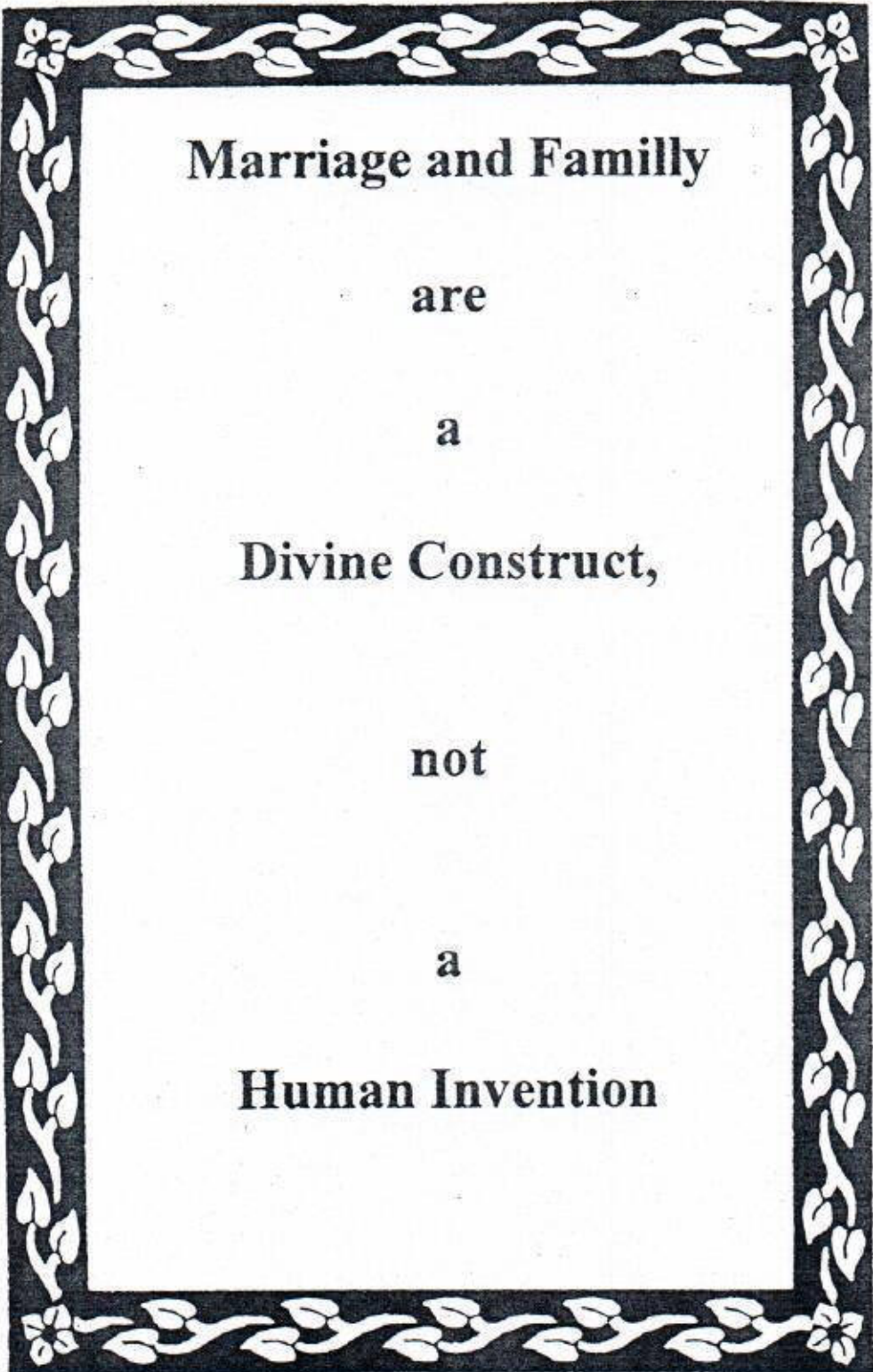
...without the light of God's spirit, we will be in the dark about God's word?

...it is better to be poor and walk by faith than to be rich and walk by sight?

...to give our life stability, we hold to God's Word?

...to maintain harmony in the Church, we must keep in tune with Christ?

...great praise for God often comes out of great pain?



Marriage and Family

are

a

Divine Construct,

not

a

Human Invention

A FAMILY UNITED BY THE LORD

We have all heard heartwarming stories of family members that have been separated for long periods of time, only to be reunited later in life under circumstances that could only be described as miraculous. Such is the story of Xenophon and his family. Xenophon lived in Constantinople in the sixth century. He and his wife Maria were the parents of two sons -- John and Arcadios. They were determined to give them the best Christian upbringing, so when the boys became young adults, Xenophon and Maria sent them to Beirut to further their education in one of the finest institutions of higher learning at the time.

Disaster struck for John and Arcadios as they crossed the sea on their journey. Encountering a terrible storm, their ship capsized. Both young men survived and made their way to shore. Unfortunately, they were separated and each thought the other had perished! In their grief, they each entered a monastery, with John settling in a community near the city of Tyre and Arcadios becoming a part of the St. Sabbas Monastery near Jerusalem.

Two years later, a monk visiting Constantinople happened to meet Xenophon and Maria. When he told them of a young monk he had met in Jerusalem who had survived a ship wreck, the couple immediately set out for the Holy City. At the same time, John decided to make a pilgrimage to the sacred places in the Holy Land. Through divine providence, all four were reunited at the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem.

In gratitude to God for restoring their family, Xenophon and Maria also embraced the monastic way of life, giving themselves entirely to the service of His Holy Church.

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