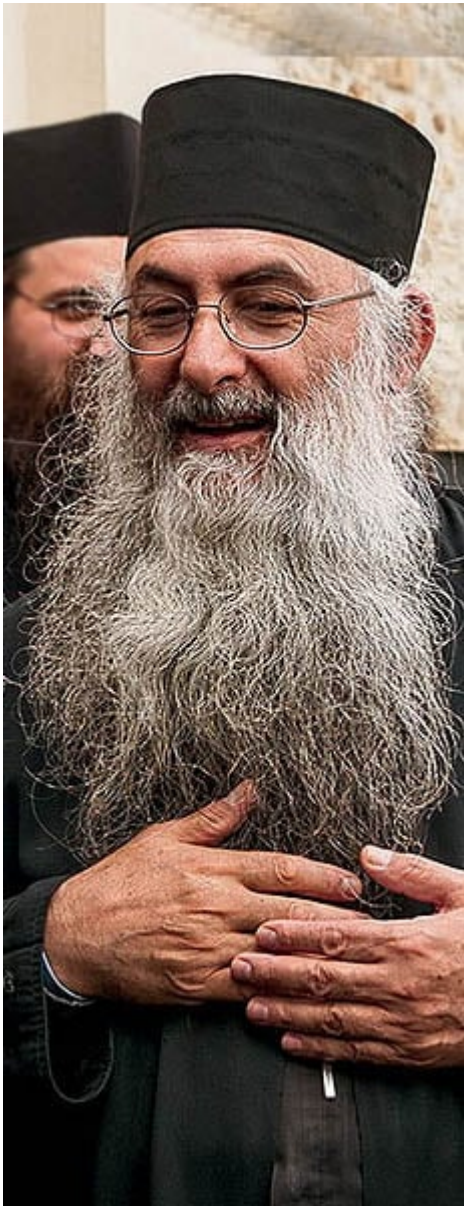


9 Οκτωβρίου 2016

Our Relationship with God: 8. Pride and despair (Very Rev. Archimandrite Zacharias (Zacharou))

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)

Image not found or type unknown



We also said that those who are born of the spirit have a heart in which dwells Christ 'through faith'. According to biblical anthropology and orthodox tradition, the heart of man is the centre of his personhood. It is there that choices occur and decisions are made. There, God is revealed and there He dwells. There, man meets

with God and through God he feels united with all the generations of men. God makes his heart 'His footstool'[1] and enlarges it with His grace, so that it can embrace heaven and earth. A man that bears this divine enlargement within him will always accept his brother as his own life and will never reject him because that would cause his being to be amputated. The relationships that such a man creates and the words that he utters will inform the hearts of all those who approach him with grace. He knows a great secret of spiritual life: he only needs to offer to God a contrite heart for Him to build in him 'a clean heart',[2] which is consistently able to see the traces of His presence and to be transported there where his treasure is hidden.[3]

The man of God has only two enemies from which he preserves himself: pride and despair. He abhors pride, because it chills the heart and makes it unable to love. The man who is full of himself is closed to others and unable to make any space for the other; the cardinal other is the Lord, but also the neighbour. The man of God also avoids despair because it implies that the Saviour God is unable to overcome the evil within us and thus makes him fall into the sin of blasphemy. Then the heart is deadened and is no longer able to connect either with God or with men.

From these two nightmares, from pride and despair, we are freed by humility. As salt preserves and flavours food, so humility preserves love and makes it ever new. It makes the heart well pleasing to God so that it may be built up as the temple of God and the dwelling place of His Spirit.

[1] Luke 20:43.

[2] Ps. 51:10.

[3] Luke 12:34. See Matt. 13:44.