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Our Relationship with God: 10. Holiness (Very Rev. Archimandrite Zacharias (Zacharou))

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)

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God cannot be forced by anyone; neither does He impose His will on His creatures endowed with reasoning. Likewise the man with the gift of God does not want to impose power over any mortal, neither that his spirit be under the power of another. He imitates Christ Who overcame the world through His humble love and

drew unto Him^[1] all who freely desire to follow Him.

The freedom that the man born of the Spirit seeks is neither political nor social but spiritual and of the heart. The more he becomes sanctified, the more he becomes free. Holiness is not an ethical principle but is purely spiritual and ontological. The holy person is not someone who manages to have perfect ethics or external behaviour, but he who keeps the word of Christ, steadily gathering in his heart the grace of the Holy Spirit. When the heart of man opens to grace, then grace takes its abode in it. Through this grace, man acquires power over his heart, which is the root of his being, and thereby he acquires power over all his nature as well. Thus he builds up the temple of God within him. He is free and does not desire to sin, not because it is ethically forbidden and out of place, but because he does not want to destroy the temple of God within him.

In order to have the desired relationship with God, to love Him with all our heart and to remain constantly in His presence, it is necessary to have a pure and free heart. The heart becomes free when repentance uproots from within it the law of sin and all the commandments of God become the unique law of our being. Then a divine state and love is imparted to man which is made manifest in unceasing prayer and through it, love for his fellow man. This prayer shows that man is the image and likeness of God and he loves and honours this same image in his neighbour.

The word of God quietens our nature. The love of it keeps us on the hard path of His will, so that we may put ourselves second and honour others more than ourselves. The word of God is always the word of the Cross that guides us into the abundance of divine life and gives us the freedom of sinless-ness.

The End

^[1] John 12:32.