

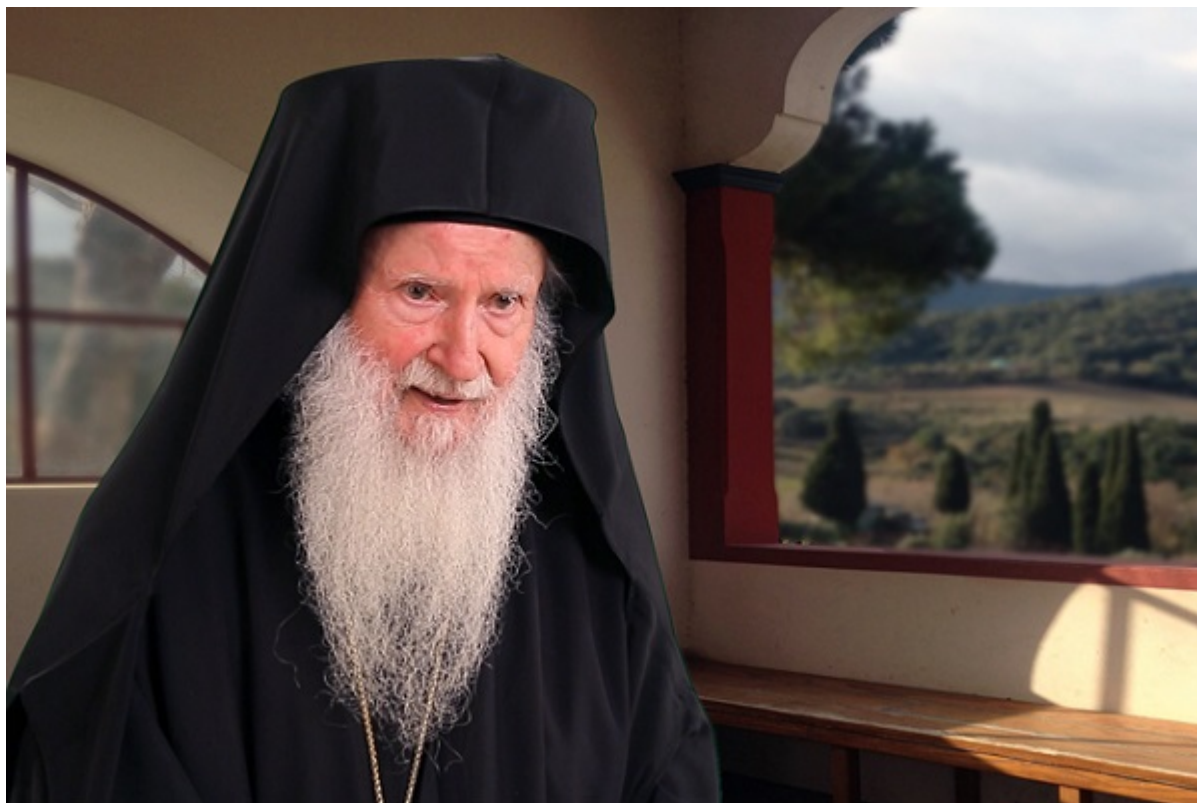
14 Οκτωβρίου 2018

## **Sermon on the Apostolic reading - 4th Sunday of Luke (Titus 3: 8-15) (Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios)**

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



The Apostle Paul, after being freed from his first imprisonment in Rome, went to Crete with his valued companion, Titus. After a short period of apostolic activity, The Apostle Paul made Titus the Bishop of Crete to continue the work of evangelizing the people, and the Apostle himself once again continued his tour through Asia Minor and Greece. He found his way to Nikopolis (N.W. Greece), where he intended to spend the winter of 66-67 AD. It was here that he sent his Letter to Titus, where he invited Titus to meet him in Nikopolis. We heard the last part of this Letter today.



As we know from his other 13 Epistles, the Apostle Paul was particularly concerned with the matter of practical love. With this Letter, he wanted to turn the attention of Bishop Titus once again to this cherished work that is love. It is worth noting that in this short passage, the Apostle twice emphasizes the same subject; he writes: “Those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.” (verse 8). And a little further: “Let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful lives” (verse 14).

Let’s look carefully at the word the Apostle Paul repeats: to “maintain” (to “lead”) in good works. To teach Christians to lead in doing good works, and not to be last. For the Apostle Paul, it is not enough for a Christian to simply give what he has left over to a poor man who knocks on the door for charity. He asks Christians to take the initiative, and lead in helping the hungry, naked, sick, refugees, and other fellow human beings who cannot survive without support. Besides, we know that Christ, in His Second Coming, will judge us based on these works of love (see Matthew 25: 31-46).

Do you know why the Apostle Paul does not write: “Do the rich know how to give and lead in good works?” The Gospel also, in writing of Christ’s Second Coming, does not specifically mention the rich in judging whether they have helped the hungry, or the naked, etc. This is because All people, be they rich, poor, or middle-

class, will be judged together. Why? Because in whatever financial situation a person is in, and in whatever social class they belong, they can do much to help others if they have love in their heart.

There are many examples of people who were poor, but found ways to effectively help others. Let's take a look at some brief examples: A large family that was struggling to live, decided that before each meal they would take a spoonful of food from each person's dish. All of those spoonfuls filled another dish, and this food went to their poor neighbor, who had nothing to eat. A poor widow, several years ago, would go into her garbage cans every night to pick out items to sort and sell. With this she helped 24 poor students in their studies. A well known priest-monk, went to the hospital at night, helping serious patients who had no money to pay for a private nurse. Workers, who lived paycheck to paycheck, had days where they were not busy, and they went to repair the roof of a poor house, waterproofing the tiles or making other repairs. Farmers, coming together as a group, would gather the grains of elderly people who could not finish the job on their own. We could mention many more such examples, to show that you do not have to be rich to do good works.

My brothers and sisters, a Christian without works of love is fruitless, says the Apostle Paul. This saying reminds us of the fruitless fig tree, which Jesus wanted to get rid of. Let us face this issue, and think of what possibilities each of us may have to do good for our brothers and sisters in need. Let us motivate others, so that together we may be worthy on the day of Judgement to hear the words of Christ: "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:35).