

## Personal Issues

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*Icon of Christ*

by Fr. Stephen

The title of this post is quite misleading – for in proper theological language – there are no “personal issues.” Our culture is quite fond of issues – both the politico-entertainment industry – and many individuals. It is a word and a phenomenon that has been baptized by the culture such that “being concerned with the issues” makes someone sound as if things matter to them in a significant way. The Orthodox response to the issues should generally be – not to respond.

The true “issue” of our time and of all times is the salvation of our souls. And, it is important to note, this is not a “legal” or “forensic” issue, but a matter of the deep healing of the spiritual disease that infects us, and, through us, all the world around us. We do not see things as they are (we are spiritually blind); we do not think as we ought (we are spiritually ignorant); we do not feel about things in a proper way (we are spiritually disordered in our emotions). Coming to grips with the passions and their disordered state (which effects our mind, emotions and our body) is very

difficult work. It requires insight and honesty and a deep commitment to the Truth of Christ, through Whom we may alone find healing and salvation.

In the meantime it is possible to avoid all this by concerning ourselves with issues. Some concern themselves with political issues, particularly if those issues carry a moral component. But it is as possible to take the “right” position on a political issue as a wretched sinner as it is to take the “right” position on a political issue as a saint – though saints often have a strange way of not being involved in “political issues.”

Others set their sights in other places and concern themselves with theological issues or local issues such as the goings-on in a parish.

I would offer a brief definition of “issue” as I am using it here: any subject or situation with which we may concern ourselves, that having been addressed, leaves ourselves and others involved no closer to our salvation than when we began (and perhaps farther away). ([περισσότερα...](#))