



THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



FR. EUGENE'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 2018

EXCEPTING THE ALMIGHTY ONE, IS ANY AMONG US ORTHODOX?

"These were their thoughts, but they erred; for their wickedness blinded them, and they knew not the hidden counsels of God; neither did they count on a recompense of holiness nor discern the innocent souls' reward. Wisdom 2:21-22

If there is but one word, yes, one solitary adjective that has plagued each of us in the heart, the mind and the soul; it is the utterance ORTHODOX. Be it inscribed with a capital 'o' or a minor 'o' it all smells the same but differs on the taste buds of those who entertain its savor. To some this word indicates a narrow view often blindsided regarding theological dogmatism. Essentially it denotes the perfection in thoughts and actions related to the Almighty One, to our faith and life direction. Somehow declaring 'orthodoxy' seems to envelope oneself in the divine light of righteousness and assurance of 'the good ones saved'. What a merry-go-round of belief and dis-belief that must be, to constantly be looking over your shoulder to evidence that you ARE ORTHODOX and have been so from the beginning. As they say in Los Angeles "HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD....!"

In every 'ORTHODOX' church throughout the world, the sacred image of Christ the King enthroned with an open gospel book, beckons the faithful to read the declaration inscribed 'I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD'. Where there is light, there is hope, direction, correction, and nurturing through the Lord Jesus. Our human mind gravitates towards this as a natural consequence of being in the right, the light, and the might of orthodoxy. However, evil in its essence blinds the mind of man from what is good and holy. Evil seeks to dissuade us from truth.

Do we forget that the Lord himself declared that 'I AM THE TRUTH, THE WAY and the LIFE'. The base mission of the Lord from its inception is to transform the mind and spirit of the people to meditate and employ compassion and mercy upon each other. If we think on God 'right' and act 'right' accordingly to the will of God, then we may rightfully declare our ORTHODOXY. Intimately emulating the Christ we participate in the divine call. We need however to also muster up the courage and humility to confess our evil inclinations and wickedness. This is the dark side of our being which must be vanquished. Hence, as saint or sinner remember the refrain....'LORD JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, FORGIVE ME THE SINNER' (even though I think I'm orthodox).

In His service,

+ Rev. Eugene N. Pappas,
Archimandrite, Pastor.

