

ASCETICALLY SPEAKING, pp. 49-50

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FORGIVE!

St. John Climacus

In times of despondency, never fail to bear in mind the Lord's commandment to Peter, to forgive a person who sins seventy times seven, For He who gave this command to another will Himself do far more.

BEING HOSTILE

St. John Chrysostom

It is not God who is hostile, but we, for God is never hostile.

HELL

St. John (Maximovitch) of Shanghai and San Francisco

A 'fiery gehenna' - such is the inner fire. 'Here there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' Such is the state of hell.

BLESSED ARE THE PERSECUTED!

Our Lord Jesus Christ

And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matt. 10:22)... Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My sake (Matt. 5:11).

A COUNCIL WHICH CONVEYS THE PATRISTIC WITNESS OF THE TRUE
ORTHODOX CHURCH; IT IS AS RELEVANT TODAY AS EVER

Council Convened by Patriarch Jeremias II, the Illustrious, of Constantinople
The Sigillion of the Council in Constantinople of 1583
Anathematising false beliefs about the Dogma of the Procession of the Holy Spirit, Holy Communion, unleavened bread, the Judgment, Purgatory, the heretical Pope, the Paschalia, and the New Calendar Innovation.

To all the genuine Christian children of the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ of the East in Trgovyst and in all places, be grace and mercy from Almighty God. Not a little distress took possession of that Ark of old, when, storm-tossed, it was borne upon the waters; and if the Lord God, remembering Noe, had not in His good will calmed the water, there would have been no hope for salvation in it. In a like manner with the

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new Ark of our Church, the heretics have raised up a relentless war against us, and we have deemed it well to leave behind the present tome against them so that with the things written in it you may be able more surely to defend your Orthodoxy. But in order that the document may not be burdensome to simpler people, we have decided to set forth the entire subject to you in simple speech as follows:

From Old Rome have come certain persons who learned there to think like Latins; and the bad thing is that from being Byzantines (that is, Greeks) born and bred in our own parts, they not only have changed their faith, but they also battle the Orthodox and true dogmas of the Eastern Church which Christ delivered Himself to us. Whereupon, having cut them off as rotten members we order:

- 1) Whosoever does not confess with heart and mouth that he is a child of the Eastern Church baptised in an Orthodox manner, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father, essentially and hypostatically, as Christ says in the Gospel, although He proceeds from Father and Son in time, let such a one be out of our Church and let him be anathematised.
- 2) Whosoever does not confess that in the Mystery of the Holy Communion laymen should commune with two kinds, both of the precious Body and Blood, but says that it is enough to receive only the Body, for the Blood is also there, even though Christ has spoken and has given each one separately, and they do not keep it, let such be anathematised.
- 3) Whosoever says that our Lord Jesus Christ at the Mystical Last Supper used unleavened bread as do the Hebrews and not leavened bread, that is, raised bread, let him be far from us and under the anathema as one who thinks like a Jew and as one who introduces the doctrines of Appolinarios and of the Armenians into our Church, on which account let him be anathematised a second time.
- 4) Whosoever says that when our Christ and God comes to judge He does not come to judge the souls together with the bodies, but comes in order to decide only for the body, anathema to him.

- 5) Whosoever says that when they die the souls of the Christians who repented in this life but did not do their penance go to Purgatory - which is a Greek myth - where fire and torment purify them, and they think that there is no eternal torment, as did Origen, and give cause by this to sin freely, let such a one have the anathema.
- 6) Whosoever says that the Pope is head of the Church and not Christ, and that he has authority to admit into Paradise with his letters, and can forgive as many sins as will be committed by one who with money received an indulgence from him, let such a one have the anathema.
- 7) Whosoever does not follow the customs of the Church which the Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils have decreed, and the Holy Pascha and calendar which they enacted well for us to follow, but wants to follow the newly-invented Paschalion [method of fixing the date of Pascha] and the new calendar of the atheist astronomers of the Pope; and opposing them, wishes to overthrow and destroy the doctrines and customs of the Church which we have inherited from our Fathers, let any such have the anathema and let him be outside of the Church and the Assembly of the Faithful.
- 8) We exhort all pious and Orthodox Christians: remain in those things which you have learned and in which you were born and bred, and when the times and circumstances call for it, shed your very blood in order both to keep the Faith given us by our Fathers and to keep your confession. Beware of such people and take care, that our Lord Jesus Christ help you. May the blessing of our humility be with you all. Amen.

The 1583rd year from the birth of the God-man, Indiction 12, November 20th.

Jeremias, of Constantinople, Sylvester, of Alexandria, Sophronios, of Jerusalem
(and the rest of the Bishops of the Synod who were present)