

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN



ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ THE WORD OF OUR LORD

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΙΓ' ΛΟΥΚΑ
29 Νοεμβρίου 2020
Ἦχος πλ. δ'. Ἀριθμ. 48

13th SUNDAY OF LUKE
29 November 2020
Plagal of the 4th Mode. No. 48

Διονυσίου Κορίνθου ἱερομάρτυρος, Φιλουμένου νέου ἱερομάρτυρος, Φαίδρου μάρτυρος, Μάρκου ὁσίου
Paramonus & 370 Martyrs, Dionysius of Corinth bishop, Philumenus priest & Martyr

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ἐφεσ. δ', 1-7

Αδελφοί, παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγώ, ὁ
δέσμιος ἐν Κυρίῳ, ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι
τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, μετὰ πάσης
ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραότητος, μετὰ
μακροθυμίας, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν
ἀγάπῃ, σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα
τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς
εἰρήνης. Ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα, καθὼς
καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως
ὑμῶν· εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἐν βάπτισμα,
εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων,
καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν. Ἐνὶ δὲ
ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον
τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

EPISTLE READING

Eph. 4: 1-7

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord,
beg you to lead a life worthy of the
calling to which you have been called,
with all lowliness and meekness, with
patience, forbearing one another in love,
eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace. There is one body
and one Spirit, just as you were called to
the one hope that belongs to your call,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one
God and Father of us all, who is above
all and through all and in all. But grace
was given to each of us according to the
measure of Christ's gift.



Christ became man, to save man. The whole point is to unite with Christ and to
continually progress until we enter paradise. The sacraments (baptism, anointing,
thanksgiving) are everything, but if someone does not live according to them, it is as
if nothing happened. And not only that, but the mysteries in the day of judgment will
be to our detriment. The Salvation is safe and certain, but only for someone who loves
Christ and unites with Him.

God did and is doing His work, but man is not exempt. Whoever ignores all this and
escapes from here and there, can not hope for salvation.

Unfortunately, nowadays Christians simply follow certain formalities. They don't
ask themselves these main questions: "What does Christ want? Is my heart clean and
pure deeply inside? Simply they do not care and live their life following the easy living.

We need to change this way of living while there is still time.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. ιη', 18-27

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, ἐπηρώτησέ τις αὐτὸν ἄρχων λέγων· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός. τὰς ἐντολὰς οἶδας· μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης, μὴ κλέψης, μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης, τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου. ἀκούσας δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἔτι ἓν σοι λείπει· πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ διάδος πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα περίλυπος ἐγένετο· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς περίλυπον γενόμενον εἶπε· πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ! εὐκοπώτερον γάρ ἐστι κάμηλον διὰ τρυμαλιᾶς ῥαφίδος εἰσελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. εἶπον δὲ οἱ ἀκούσαντες· καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· τὰ ἀδύνατα παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἐστίν.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 18: 18-27

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, «Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?» And Jesus said to him, «Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' «And he said, «All these I have observed from my youth». And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, «One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me». But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, «How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God». Those who heard it said, «Then who can be saved?» But he said, «What is impossible with men is possible with God».

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Ἄς σκεφτοῦμε γιὰ λίγο τὴ σημερινή περικοπή: ὁ πλούσιος νέος πίστευε στὸν Θεό· πίστευε στὴν αἰώνια ζωή· πίστευε στὴν τελικὴ κρίση καὶ ἤθελε νὰ τὴν ἀποφύγει. Σὲ ποιὸν λοιπὸν ἔπρεπε νὰ ἀπευθυνθεῖ; Σωστά, στὸν Ἰησοῦ! Καὶ αὐτὸ ποὺ μᾶς ἐκπλήσσει εἶναι ὅτι, παρ' ὅλο τὸ ἐμφανὲς ἐνδιαφέρον του γιὰ τὰ πνευματικὰ ζητήματα, ἔφυγε ἀπὸ τὴ συνάντηση μὲ ἄδεια χέρια, ὅπως λέμε.

Αὐτὸς ὁ νέος τὰ εἶχε ὅλα: χρήματα, κοινωνικὴ ἀναγνώριση, ἥθος, πίστη... Ὅμως, παρ' ὅλα τὰ πλεονεκτήματά του, στὸ βάθος τῆς ψυχῆς του, ἤξερε ὅτι δὲν εἶχε κερδίσει τὴν αἰώνια ζωή. Πολλοὶ πιστεύουν ὅτι θὰ πάνε στὸν Παράδεισο ἐπειδὴ εἶναι αὐτοὶ ποὺ εἶναι, ἄλλοι γι' αὐτὸ ποὺ πράττουν. Ὅμως ἂν κάποιος πιστεύει ὅτι θὰ κάνει κάτι καὶ ἔχει κερδίσει τὸν Παράδεισο, τότε ἀπατᾷ τὸν ἑαυτό του. Καὶ ἀπὸ τὴν ἄλλη πλευρά, ὅταν κάποιος συνειδητοποιεῖ ὅτι εἶναι ἁμαρτωλός, ὅτι εἶναι ἓνας «ζητιάνος» ποὺ δὲν ἔχει τίποτα νὰ προσφέρει στὸν Θεὸ ὡς ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς σωτηρίας του, τότε καὶ μόνο τότε ὁ Θεὸς μπορεῖ νὰ σώσει τὴν ψυχὴ του.

Ἡ σύγχρονη κοινωνία ἐπιβάλλει ἓνα συγκεκριμένο πρότυπο, τὸ ὁποῖο θὰ μπορούσε νὰ ἐκφρασθεῖ στὴν ἀκόλουθη πρόταση: «εὐτυχισμένοι εἶναι οἱ πλούσιοι, οἱ ἐπιτυχημένοι,

οί δημοφιλείς κι οί ὄμορφοι». Ὅμως τὰ πρό-
 τυπα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἶναι ἐντελῶς διαφορετικά
 ἀπὸ αὐτὰ πού ἐπιτακτικά ἐπιβάλλει ἡ σύγ-
 χρονη κοινωνία. Διότι ἡ Βασιλεία Του δὲν
 εἶναι ἀπὸ αὐτὸν τὸν κόσμο («οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐκ
 τοῦ κόσμου τούτου»), δηλαδή δὲν στηρίζε-
 ται στὶς ἀνθρώπινες ἀντιλήψεις περὶ τοῦ
 κοινωνικοῦ «γίγνεσθαι». Ἡ φιλοσοφία
 τῆς σύγχρονης κοινωνίας εἶναι ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ
 πλεῖστον ἡ φιλοσοφία τῆς καταναλώσεως,
 σύμφωνα μὲ τὴν ὁποία ἡ ἀπόκτηση ὑλικῶν
 ἀγαθῶν δημιουργεῖ τὴν ψευδαίσθηση
 τῆς εὐτυχίας, μιᾶς εὐτυχίας ὅμως πάντα
 μὲ «ἡμερομηνία λήξεως». Ἔτσι, ποία θὰ
 μπορούσε νὰ ἦταν ἡ ἀντίδραση τοῦ νέου
 στὴν προκειμένη πρίπτωση; Θὰ μπορούσε
 νὰ πεῖ ὅτι δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ ἀγαπάει τὸν Θεὸ
 μὲ ὅλη του τὴν ψυχὴ. ὅτι δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ
 ἀγαπάει τοὺς «ἄλλους» ὅπως ἀγαπάει τὸν
 ἑαυτὸν του. ὅτι συνειδητοποιεῖ πὼς δὲν θὰ
 μπορέσει ποτὲ νὰ κερδίσει τὴν Βασιλεία
 τῶν οὐρανῶν. Ὅμως ἀπὸ τὴν σημερινὴ
 εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ καθίσταται σαφές
 ὅτι ὁ νέος δὲν μπορούσε νὰ συνειδητοποι-
 ῇ τὴν πραγματικὴ κατάσταση τῆς ψυχῆς
 του, διότι ἦταν ἀνίκανος νὰ ὑπερβεῖ τὴν
 ψευδαίσθηση τῆς ἐφήμερης εὐδαιμονίας πού δημιουργοῦσε ὁ πλοῦτος καὶ ἡ κοινω-
 νικὴ του θέση.



Ἔτσι, ἡ πρόταση τοῦ Κυρίου νὰ μοιράσει τὴν περιουσία του στοὺς φτωχοὺς καὶ νὰ
 τὸν ἀκολουθήσει, ἀποτελέσει κυριολεκτικὰ ἓνα «σὸκ» γιὰ τὸν νέο, ἐφόσον σύμφωνα
 μὲ τὴν ἐβραϊκὴ κουλτούρα ἡ μεγάλη περιουσία ἀποτελεῖ εὐλογία Θεοῦ. Ἄς σημειώ-
 σουμε ὅμως σὲ αὐτὸ τὸ σημεῖο ὅτι, ὁ Κύριος δὲν θεωρεῖ τὸν πλοῦτο ἁμαρτία, ἀλλὰ
 καυτηριάζει τὴν μετατροπὴ του πλούτου σὲ αὐτοσκοπὸ, δηλαδή τὴν τοποθέτησή του
 στὸ ἐπίκεντρο ὅλων των ἐκφάνσεων τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ ἀτόμου, ἐμποδίζοντας τὸν κάτοχό
 του νὰ κερδίσει τὴν οὐράνια Βασιλεία.

Ὑπὸ αὐτὴ τὴν ἔννοια ἦταν ἀπολύτως δικαιολογημένη ἡ ἀπορία πού ἐξέφρασαν
 ὅσοι ἄκουσαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ Ἰησοῦ: «Ποῖος λοιπὸν μπορεῖ νὰ σωθεῖ;» Ἡ ἀπάντηση τοῦ
 Κυρίου «τὰ ἀδύνατα παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἐστὶν» δίνει οὐσιαστικά τὴν
 λύση σὲ αὐτὸ τὸ πρόβλημα: μόνο ὁ Θεὸς μπορεῖ νὰ ἀλλάξει τὶς καρδιές μας. Μόνο
 μὲ τὴν βοήθειά Του θὰ κατορθώσουμε νὰ κερδίσουμε τὴν Βασιλεία Του. Μόνον ἐὰν
 ταπεινωθοῦμε ἐνώπιόν Του καὶ συνειδητοποιήσουμε ὅτι, ἐπειδὴ «ὡς ράκος ἀποκαθημένης
 πᾶσα ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἡμῶν», ἔχουμε ἀνάγκη τὴν καθαρτήρια δύναμη τοῦ Σώματος καὶ
 τοῦ Αἵματος τοῦ Κυρίου. Μόνον τότε ὁ Θεὸς θὰ σώσει τὶς καρδιές μας.

Πρωτοπρεσβ. Βασίλειος Παπαθανασίου

SERMON ON THE PARABLE ON THE RICH FOOL

In today's Gospel reading, we hear the well-known story of the rich man who came to Jesus to ask what one must do to inherit eternal life. Before addressing his question directly, Jesus reminds him of something much more basic, which also provides us with the key to understanding his subsequent answer. The rich man had addressed Jesus with the words, 'Good teacher'. Jesus answers, *'Why do you call me good? No one is good except one: God'*. Far from denying his divinity here, as some suggest, Jesus is pointing out to the rich man that, although he has approached him as a mere man — calling him 'teacher' —, by calling him 'good' he is also confessing his divinity (albeit unintentionally), since only God is good, and all that is good has its source in him. As we read in the Epistle of James — quoted in the final prayer of the Divine Liturgy — *'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights'* (1:17).

The same is of course true of earthly goods. They come from and belong to God. As St Cyril of Jerusalem says, 'Riches, and gold, and silver are not, as some think, the devil's [...] if you use it well, there is no fault to be found with money [...] a man may even be justified by money'. Referring to today's Gospel reading, he continues, 'Money can become a door to the kingdom of heaven: "Sell, says Jesus, all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven"' (*Catechetical Lectures* 8:6). This is why other Church Fathers, commenting on this story, make a distinction between those who are 'rich' and those who are 'stewards' of riches. The 'rich' man is one who places his trust in material wealth, who considers what he has to be his own, hoarding it for himself and spending it on himself. The 'steward', on the other hand, is the one that recognises that what he has is not his own, but comes from and belongs to God — the source of every good, in whom he puts his trust — and spends it accordingly.

While the wealth of a good steward can 'become a door to the kingdom', it is the rich man's failure to acknowledge God, to trust in God, and to offer the things of God back to God (which is the purpose of every human being as priest of creation) that makes it so difficult, if not impossible, for him to enter the kingdom of heaven. And this failure to acknowledge that all things ultimately belong to God — even our very being is "on loan", as St Maximus the Confessor says — is one we are all guilty of, regardless of how little or how much we may think we possess by way of material wealth.

This brings us to another important point: the words of the Lord apply to every one of us. It is easy when reading today's passage to think of the super-rich, of celebrities, politicians, business tycoons, or even well-off acquaintances. But whenever hear the Lord admonishing a person or group of people in the Gospels, we should first and foremost hear him speaking to us, not others. I am the Pharisee, I am the Sadducee, the tax-collector, the harlot, and today the wealthy ruler who became "very sad" when he realised that, in order to inherit eternal life, he had to render all his goods to the one who alone is Good.

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