

Heretic Theologians and the Good News of Christ

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

The Lord said: "Repent and believe in the Gospel." True repentance is not only to grieve over the sins one has committed, but it is a complete return of the soul from darkness to light, from the worldly to the heavenly, from me to God.

What does faith in the Gospel mean? It means to believe the Good News that the Heavenly Messenger (Angel), the Son of God and God, brought to the human race. In other words, it is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and His revelation. The Revelation of Christ is the greatest revelation since the creation of the world. It is the only revelation that can change the man-worm into man-god and a son of God.

Only "the One who descended from Heaven, the Son of Man who is in Heaven" (John 3:13) could bear witness to the world what exists in Heaven, who God is, what the spiritual reality is in the other world, how the spiritual world is that encompasses God, and what happens to human souls after bodily death. "What we saw we preach and what we heard we confess (John 3:11)."

We could say His witness is on a spiritual level, completely empirical. He does not bear witness according to worldly logic, or according to the conclusions of human understanding, or according to the wisdom or philosophies of the earthly man, but according to Him who has seen and heard. He is the Heavenly Messenger of the heavenly reality. "And to this end am I come to this world, that I should bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37), which no one of those born on earth could bear witness to accurately. He Himself calls this witness *Good News*.

The Heavenly Messenger of the Good News bears witness that: God is one, in the triune harmony of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; that God is not only the Creator but also Father, namely the most beloved and closest relative of all who wish to become His children; that God as Father is true Love, and out of love for the human race He sent His only-begotten Son to save the world. He bears witness: that the soul of man has greater value than the whole material world and that there are legions of innumerable Angels in that world who - sometimes invisibly and at other times visibly, ceaselessly nonetheless - work for people in the events of this world; that after their death, the righteous of this world shine like the sun in the other world; and that the Son of God came down to the world with the purpose of making wormish men the sons of God, to make them gods, according to the will and mercy of the Father. He bears witness to the just judgment of God, the Resurrection of the dead and eternal life, and to many more things - one more joyous than the other.

Christ called men to believe this Good News: repent and believe in the Gospel. This means that He called us to believe Him and in Him, in His every word. Since for humans there is no other way to come to the knowledge of the truth about the most important questions of life and existence, other than accepting to believe His words, seeing as He

is an eyewitness to the heavenly and spiritual truths. Either they will believe in Christ or they will continue to walk in the dark and stormy seas of life, guessing and hypothesizing about the earth and the edge of the ocean. A third solution does not exist in the history of the human anthill to this day.

From this it becomes obvious that the Christian faith does not in the least resemble the other faiths and theories of the world, since the other faiths are man made, from the earth and of the earth, by people who spoke about the spiritual world, either according to their natural reasoning or through the deceit of evil spirits. None of the founders of other religions said about himself that he had descended from heaven, or that he had been sent by the Father, or that he bears witness to that concerning heaven which he saw and heard and that he will return to heaven. For this reason, there can be no talk about the equality of or similarity between the witness of Christ and that of the other religions and confessions of the rest of the world.

Do not ask a Christian if he believes in God but ask if he believes in the Gospel, in the Good News of Christ. For if he says he believes in God according to his own logic but not in the Gospel, then he is regressing and is a pagan, since he arrived at faith just as people who lived some two thousand years ago (*e.g.* some of the philosophers of Greece and Asia). Then for what reason did Christ descend from Heaven? For what reason did He seal with His blood His revelation to the world, the Good News? Such a Christian has in truth the All-Holy Blood of the Son of God on his head like those who cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

The Orthodox Church - the only Church of Christ in the world - has kept the faith in the Gospel, without looking right or left, without being supported by other faiths, or by pagan philosophies or by the natural sciences. For if one follows a far-sighted and keen eyed leader, it is useless and laughable to ask the crooked and blind for directions.

While Christ says: "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), the heretic world in thousands of ways expresses the following saying: "Without Christ we can do everything". The entire contemporary culture is turned against Christ. All the modern sciences compete in seeing who will succeed in serving the hardest blow to Christ's teaching. It is a revolution of the vulgar servants against the mistress of the house, a revolution of worldly science against the heavenly science of Christ. However, this whole revolution in our days boils down to what has been written with such clarity: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom 1:22).

Truthfully, no one knows where the greatest insanity of the modern world that has fallen away from Christ lies: in the each person's private life or in marriage? In school or in politics? In the economic structure or legislation? In war or in peace? Everywhere one sees what we call vulgar and barbaric. Falsehood and violence triumph.

Just as the faithless Jews once trampled upon the commandments of God, one after the other, and marched according to the wishes of the world and their hearts, they now have done the same with the teaching of Christ, the Master of all teachings. They have

undermined and abolished one dogma after the other. They have gotten rid of all the Gospel commandments. They have rejected the apostolic and patristic decrees. They have ridiculed all the sayings of the saints, and the ascetic examples they have reduced to myths.

The strongest blow the heretic theologians have imparted to the Gospel is in their questioning the divinity of the Messiah of the world, some doubting it and others totally rejecting it. This was followed by a whole string of denials of spiritual truths such as: the existence of Angels and Demons, of Paradise and Hell, of the eternal glory of the Saints and the Just, fasting, the power of the Cross, the value of the prayer, etc.

Simply put, the heretic theologians have concerned themselves with adaptations and homogenizations (of different faiths), even since the schism of the West from the East, with greater emphasis in the last 150 years. They conformed the heavens to earth, Christ to other "founders of religions" and the Good News to other religions: the Jewish, Muslim and pagan. Everything allegedly in the name of "tolerance" and "for the benefit of peace" between people and nations. However, this is where the beginning of wars and revolutions lie, such as have never been heard of before. For the Truth can in no way tolerate joining with half-truths and lies.

The theosophical view that the truth is scattered among all the religions, philosophies and mysteries got the best of the heretic theologians of the Western world. Thus, they say that there must be some truth in Christianity, as well as in Islam, and Hinduism or Brahmanism, in Plato and Aristotle, in Zed-Avesta, in Tantra and Mantras of Tibet. If it were so, then the ark of humanity would keep on sailing without hope in the dark seas of life, without compass or captain.

Then, why did Christ say this strange saying: "I am the Truth" (John 14:6). He did not say "I am a part of the truth", but "the truth". Also, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). So, He is the whole truth and the whole light. Moreover, according to His word, He is the only guide to the path to eternal life and the only One who knows God. He said to the Jews: "And you have not come to know Him, but I know Him and if I say that I do not know Him I will be a liar like you." (John 8:55). Is it possible Christ was deceived? Or perhaps He deceived us?

May God forgive us for putting forth such questions. We do not pose them ourselves, but the heretics posed them from very early on. And they are constantly answering them, one so and so and another differently - the one like the Jews, that Christ was a deceiver, and the other like the theosophists, that He was deceived. For us such a case does not exist.

The Orthodox believe and confess that Jesus Christ is the one and only Messiah, Savior of the World, the One who has redeemed the human race from sin and restored it, the Son of God who was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit, God of God, the fulfillment of truth, the source of life, the victor over death, the cause of resurrection, the only true path toward the proper goal, the judge of the living and the dead.

There is something which remains unexplained till now and forms the basic difference between our Eastern Church and the heretical churches of the West. However, before we proceed to its explanation, we must settle the fact that the new period for the heretics of the West did not start with the Reformation or with the French Revolution, but from the 11th century when the Christian West fell away from the Christian East. From that point on, Western Christianity started with the adaptations and the homogenizations. This constitutes the essence of this new period for them, of the contemporary age of modernism about which they even brag. For the Eastern Church, from the time of Christ's appearance in the world, there is no old and new age but everything is exactly the same and real, independent of periods, situations and subjugations.

Dogmatics is an applied science. This is something that the heretic theologians either don't realize or neglected. From the beginning dogmatics was an applied science - something that the Apostles were aware of, as well as the saints and the ascetics of the Eastern Church and for this reason they struggled to personally fulfill every dogma in their life.

The dogma of the Holy Trinity, for example concerning the one Triune God, seemed to many lay people and even to heretic theologians as the most abstract of all dogmas. However, in the *Menaion* of the Orthodox Church, it mentions many saints who through asceticism made themselves "the abode of the Holy Trinity." They illumined their mind, their heart and their will, these three, like connected receptacles which they filled with the Holy Spirit according to the Lord's parable of the leaven bread (Luke 13:21).

The Apostle Paul expressed it beautifully by saying: "What? Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God and you are not your own?" (1Cor 6:19) Of course wherever God the Holy Spirit is, there God the Father and God the Son are: the Holy Trinity, indivisible, inseparable and life giving. This is why in some *stichera* of the Saints we sing, "You became the abode of the Holy Trinity."

All the mysteries of the Orthodox Church, but also of many of the Services, begin with the prayer to the Holy Spirit, "Heavenly King, the Spirit of Truth... come and dwell in us." We pray, therefore, for the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in us. This does not happen immediately but after much asceticism with prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and toil. And then after all these things, with frequent weeping and sighing, the heart is cleansed and the Holy Spirit dwells in it (the heart) to enlighten the heart and the mind and the will. Then the Most High God dwells in man and works everything through him.

Mind, heart and will comprise the triune man. In the sinful and passionate soul, these three do not exist in union and divine harmony but are divided and ill-sorted. In such a case man looks like a house that is split, cannot stand and falls. Such a dwelling of the soul cannot then be saved, except through repentance and faith in the Gospel.

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