

Lesson (44)

THE ORTHODOX CREED (II)

References:

Notes For Servants:

1. Split the Creed into 2 or more parts to be able to explain each part thoroughly.
2. Prepare some analogies to facilitate the explanation of the concepts therein.

Objectives:

General: Pray for your children during the week.

Specific:

1. Recite the Creed all together in class.
2. Explain part (2) today.
3. Spend more time with the areas that need more clarification.

Instructions:

1. Church occasion
2. Allow time for questions.
3. Take note of the absent children.
4. Remind them to give to the poor.
5. Report any question or concern that you cannot handle to Abouna or to your servant.

Bible Verse:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

(1Thes 4:14)

Lesson:

THE ORTHODOX CREED (II)

Who, for us Men and for our Salvation, Came Down from Heaven, and was Incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and Became Man:

The previous statements in the creed are talking about Christ before His incarnation. After that the creed talks about Christ's incarnation. Hence, Christ in whom we believe is eternal and has existed before all ages but He wanted to save Adam from His sins and save us from the original sin that we inherited through our natural birth from Adam who is the father of all the human race. Therefore, the Word came from heaven taking the shape of humanity

and in the thickness of the flesh. But this incarnation did not occur through natural birth, but it came from the Holy Spirit and from the Virgin Mary. The Holy Spirit came upon our Lady the pure Virgin Mary and her blood and flesh were united with the Divine Word and hence, God was incarnated (= became Man) and was born from the Virgin Mary. Therefore, the Virgin Mary became in a true sense the "Mother of God". It does not mean that she is the origin of the Divinity, but she is indeed the Mother of the Incarnated God.

What do we learn from this lesson?

God became Man to raise man to being the son of God, i.e., "that we might receive the adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:5). We must do our best to gain all these blessings of salvation in our lives.

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; arose from the dead on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; He ascended unto the heavens and hath sat at the right hand of His Father; He shall also come back in glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end"

This part talks about

- a) The sufferings and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. He suffered and died in the flesh, i.e. in the human nature only and not in the Divine nature because Divinity cannot die. He gave Himself up by His own free will for our salvation for the remission of our sins.
- b) Then Jesus resurrected from the dead in accordance with the prophecies. His resurrection and victory over death gave us also victory over death.
- c) He ascended to heaven with and in the flesh which He took from the Virgin Mary.
- d) Then Jesus will come again to earth and make His final judgement. "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:31-32). When would Jesus come for judgement? We do not know. Did Jesus reveal some of the signs for His second coming? Yes, He gave us some signs; for example: the lack of love between people, dishonesty, the rise of many wars and evil happenings, the preaching of the Gospels in all nations and the coming of the false Christ (or the lawless). Please read Matthew 24.

Who is the lawless one? He is the one against Christ (the Anti-Christ) who tries to destroy Christianity. But instead Christ is going to destroy him. "And the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming:" (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Truly we Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, Giver of Life Who Proceed from the Father; Who, with the Father and the Son Together, is Worshipped and Glorified; Who Spoke by the Prophets:

The third Person of the Holy Trinity is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God. About the Holy Spirit, our Lord Jesus said, "The Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father" (John

15:26).

The Holy Spirit Giver of Life:

The Holy Spirit is God because he is the origin of life and He inspires it. With the Holy Spirit we live, move and exist. We read in the Book of Genesis: "And the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being." (Gen. 2:7). When God created man, He breathed into him the Holy Spirit, thus, man became a living being.

The Holy Spirit ... Who Proceed from the Father:

To give an example of this: the sun itself has light, rays and heat, i.e., it is not 3 suns but 3 elements in one; the body of the sun, the light and the heat. So, the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father the same way as the rays come out from the sun.

How can a person have the communion of the Holy Spirit?

By prayers offered from the heart and through the Holy Sacraments.

What do we learn from this lesson?

When we are baptized we are newly born in Christ with the Holy Spirit. We must listen and obey the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking within us. In fact we must give the Holy Spirit control to fully guide our lives.

One Holy Church:

The unity of the church stems from the fact that all Christian believers together form the body of Christ, i.e., the church. "For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:30). Also St. Paul said "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the Church; and He is the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23).

All Christians have one faith, one God and one baptism. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:1-6).

- The church is Holy because its head is Christ Himself. The source of holiness is the Holy Spirit who works in the church. St. Paul said, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be Holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Catholic:

Means universal. The church is for all people from all nations of different tongues. It also means that the church has all degrees of priesthood: patriarch, bishops, priests and deacons. The church also has men, women and children all united in Christ.

Apostolic:

Our church is apostolic because it is founded on the basis of the Apostles and Jesus Christ Himself the cornerstone. St. Paul talks about Christ as the cornerstone of the church "having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20).

We Acknowledge one Baptism for the Remission of Sins:

- Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John 3:5).
- Baptism is never repeated because it is our death and burial with Christ and our resurrection with Him in the newness of life; and Christ's death and resurrection happened but once. St. Paul said, "buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12).

We Look for the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Life of the World to Come. Amen

- We believe that our spirits are eternal and never die. When the flesh dies, the spirit either goes to paradise or to Hades (hell).
- In the last judgement day at the second coming of Jesus, everyone will be judged according to his deeds. The bad ones will be subject to eternal suffering and the good ones will move further from paradise to eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Let us pray that we all live having the expectation of the resurrection from the dead and waiting for the second coming of the Lord and the glorification of His kingdom. St. John said, at the end of Revelation "Surely I am coming quickly. Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

What do we learn from this lesson?

Let us give the utmost importance to our salvation so that when we die we can go to paradise and at the second coming of Christ we will be with Him forever. Our life here on earth is but a preparation for our eternal life.

Conclusion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.