

Let the wicked and the charmers triumph. Let them be persecuting us because we're keeping the will of God. At the same moment, when they are persecuting us, we are called to pray, to forgive and to remain in the will of God. Not in order for us to be justified, but because we freely love Him who opened the road of salvation to us. And we have entrusted to Him why He allows whoever denies Him, to show that they are prevailing. Their ethos does not express us. Furthermore, their prevailing is temporary, since death lurks. At the same moment, however, we're not proud of what we're doing, but we recognize that before God we are deficient. And we do not expect justification because we also see our own condition. And just as Christ sees our own publican attitude, He gives His mercy, but also strengthening in our life, so that we remain in the desire to be living piously. This is also the meaning of the period of the Triodion, into which we are entering!

Fr. T. M

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2021 SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE: TRIODION BEGINS TODAY**, Timothy the Righteous, John III, Patriarch of Constantinople, Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch, Zachariah, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : Fourth Tone

**EOTHINON** : Fourth Eothinon

**EPISTLE READING** : St. Paul's 2nd Letter to Timothy 3:10-15

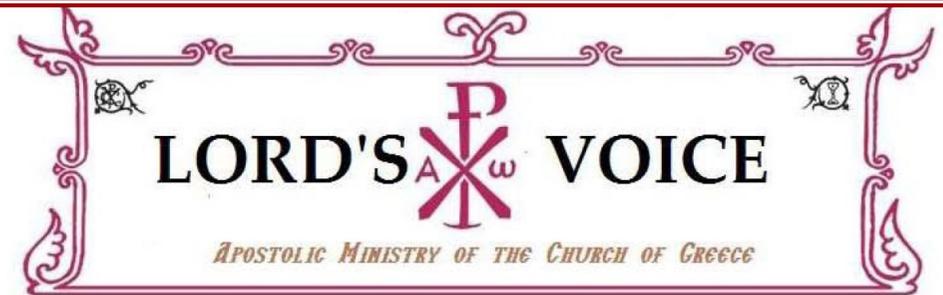
**GOSPEL READING** : Luke 18:10-14

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2021 SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL**

**SON**, Righteous John Cassian the Confessor, Basil the Confessor, Kyranna the New Martyr of Thessaloniki, Jonah the Righteous Martyr of Lerios.

**EPISTLE READING** : St. Paul's 1st Letter to Corinthians 6:12-20

**GOSPEL READING** : Luke 15:11- 32



69<sup>TH</sup> YEAR FEBRUARY 21 2021 PAMPHLET # 08 (3534)

## NOT RECONCILING WITH EVIL

One of the questions which can be reconciled with difficulty is why "all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived." (2 Tim. 3:12-13). All who wish to live with piety, according to the will of Jesus Christ, will face persecutions. Just that the evil people and the deceivers will advance to what is worse. They will be deceiving the others and the others will be deceiving them. The Apostle Paul, writing to his disciple Timothy, a little before his martyrdom in Rome, in the years of Nero, makes the account of his life and he describes what the Christians always had and have to face. That we ascertain that they who not only do not keep the will of God, but go against Him, against the truth and righteousness, advance according to secular measures. Sometimes they are glorified. They certainly live well and deceive the others, whereas there also is competition in evil, in which case they also deceive them. At the same moment, all those who wish to live with respect for God and according to His will, will face persecutions, either of blood, or of conscience.

## EPISTILE ST. PAUL 2<sup>ND</sup> LETTER TIMOTHY 3: 10 -15

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

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### **A relationship of love and freedom**

We do not know why God allows these events to happen. No matter what interpretations are given, they have to do with the human capability to understand matters, and not with the way in which God functions. Nevertheless, merely the fact that in the relationship of God and man, the logic of recompense and of interest does not function, in other words, that because we gave to God, He will return us to the pleasant things, it shows that the relationship with God is based on love and freedom. God respects our will, our decisions, the way in which we proceed, even if this does not have to do with His will, even if this is harmful for other people.

Within us, of course, we have signs, which show what God truly seeks from us, and what of all that we do, is contrary. The locum, tenens of God in our soul is the voice of our conscience. This reminds us what is in agreement with the will of God, and what not. The question is to what degree do we allow our conscience to function or we choke it.

### **Pharisaical self justification**

It suits us to render to God responsibilities for evil in the world, as also for the fact that there exist people who, being wicked and charmers, advance. Thus, we avoid our responsibilities, because we put up with the structures of the world and of society to be advancing without God. We put up with the evil. We do not protest against it. Sometimes we are jealous of it and desire it. At other times again, we use it pharisaically to be self justified, because we're not like them who are committing the evil, and so we consider that we have the right to be accepted by God for our own choices.

Social evil, people being deceived by those who freely choose to live contrary to God's will, cannot be corrected if we do not hunger for righteousness, in other words, for the fulfillment of the will of God in our life and in the life of the world, as also if we do not struggle for this in society, in the surroundings, in our own self. Struggling means that we know what is correct and what wrong, what is virtue and what sin, what leads to God and what goes against His will.

### **Attachment to the will of God**

This today does not occur. The world considers evil as man's right, sin, a choice, and the denouncing of evil, condemnation. We are called, however, to repent, to remain humble, to not be reconciled with the secular spirit. To keep our conscience faithful to all that it has learned from those who love God, the Saints, our spiritual fathers, the tradition of our Church. So, for this reason also, Paul urges Timothy: "while you remain in what you learned and were entrusted, knowing from whom you learned " (2 Timothy 3:14). You, however, remain faithful to those things that you learned and for their trustworthiness you have proofs from him who taught them to you.