

BIBLE, CHURCH, HISTORY

A THEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION



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St. Hilarion (Troitsky)

# **BIBLE, CHURCH, HISTORY**

A Theological Examination

St. Hilarion (Troitsky) the Hieromartyr

Translated by Fr. Nathan Williams



Uncut Mountain Press

Bible, Church, History:  
A Theological Examination

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In the Church there abides the Spirit of God. This is not a dry, barren dogmatic tenet, maintained merely out of respect for the old days. No, this is specifically the truth empirically experienced by each person who has become permeated with church consciousness and church life. The grace-filled life of the Church cannot even be subjected to dry scientific research: it is subject to empirical research. The life of grace, though experienced with such clarity, is something that the human tongue can only describe in vague and obscure terms. Only one who has the life of the Church actually knows it, and for him it needs no proof, while for one who does not have it proof is nearly impossible.

—From “There is no Christianity Without the Church”

## CONTENTS

### **Chapter 1**

The Old Testament Prophetic Schools:  
An Essay in Biblical History ..... 9

### **Chapter 2**

The Chief Principles of the Old Testament  
Priesthood and Prophecy ..... 51

### **Chapter 3**

Gnosticism and the Church in Relation  
to the New Testament ..... 95

### **Chapter 4**

The Trinity of the Divinity and the  
Unity of Humanity ..... 135

### **Chapter 5**

The Churchliness of the Theological School  
and of Theological Science ..... 159

### **Chapter 6**

Repentance in the Church and  
Repentance in Catholicism ..... 179

### **Chapter 7**

Holy Scripture and the Church ..... 239

**Chapter 8**

There is no Christianity Without the Church..... 281

**Chapter 9**

Theology and the Freedom of the Church  
(On the Objectives of the War of Liberation  
in the Field of Russian Theology) ..... 341

**Chapter 10**

The Cornerstone of the Church (Mt. 16:13-18).... 387

**Chapter 11**

Bethlehem and Golgotha (Letter to a Friend) ..... 413

**Chapter 12**

The New Testament in Apostolic Times ..... 431

**Chapter 13**

The New Testament in the Second Century..... 455

**Chapter 14**

Unity of the Church and the  
World Conference of Christian Communities..... 481



The Root of Jesse



## CHAPTER 1

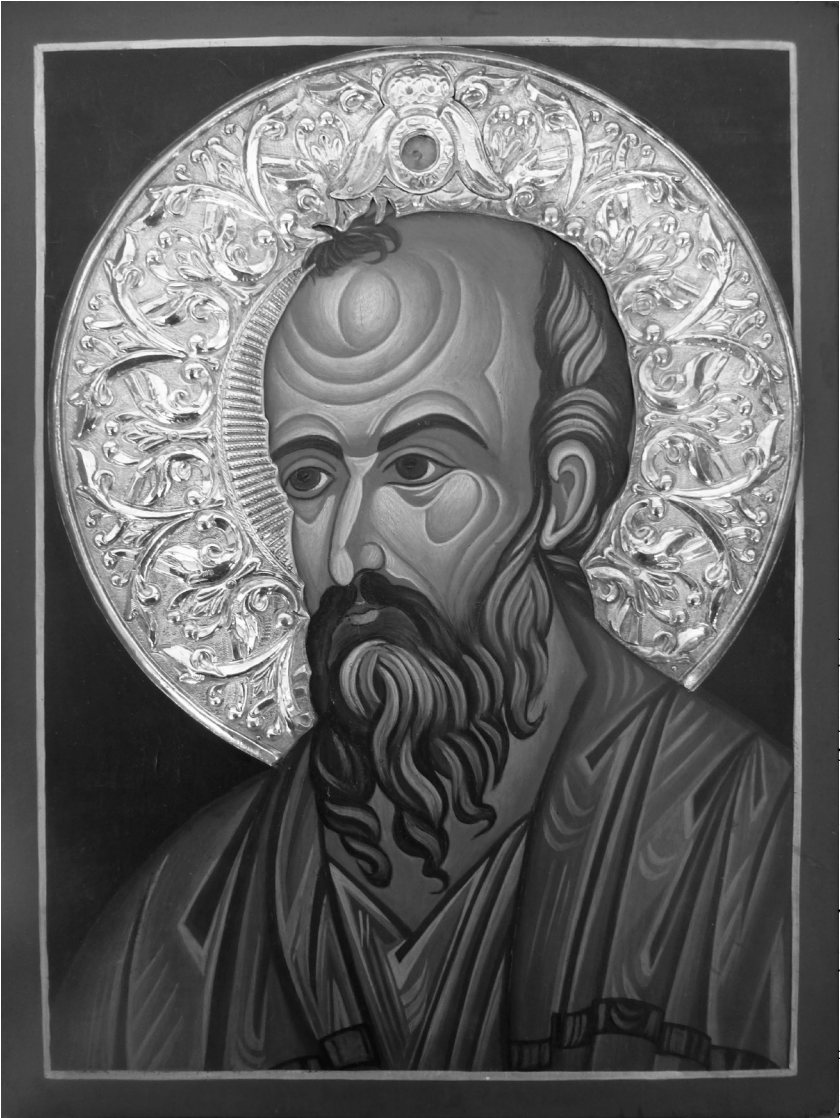
### **The Old Testament Prophetic Schools: An Essay in Biblical History**

The prophetic schools are encountered in the historical books of the Old Testament primarily under two names: “the companies of the prophets” and “the sons of the prophets.” We will hardly err in saying that, for one who reads the Bible, these names evoke no definite concepts. If any concepts are occasionally evoked, they are completely arbitrary, and when subjected to scholarly verification they are [sometimes] altered completely, very nearly becoming their polar opposites. At the same time, however, one somehow instinctively feels that “the companies of the prophets” and “the sons of the prophets” are not insignificant or random biblical historical realities, but realities highly characteristic for all of Old Testament Hebrew history, which left their mark on its religious and moral visage, especially at certain moments of Old Testament history; realities that are especially characteristic of the greatest and most exalted phenomenon in the Old Testament: the Old Testament prophetic ministry. The prophetic schools appear particularly important for the history and assessment of the Old Testament prophetic ministry because they figure in periods when the work of the greatest prophets was at its height—“in the heroic eras of Old Testament prophetism,” to quote one German scholar.

But all this historical significance, along with the external form of the institution, is presented to the reader of the Bible in the dimmest and most indistinct outlines. This circumstance, undesirable to say the least, is due to the fact that the sole source from which one may draw any information on the prophetic schools—the Bible—offers too scant a quantity of material to assess the institution in question and for its scholarly analysis. The historical books, which sometimes present the external history of Israel and its kings' affairs in considerable detail, are too perfunctory in their treatment of the religious and moral state of the people at any given period of their history, occasionally letting it suffice to say that such-and-such a king did something that was evil in the sight of the Lord. The historical books refer to the prophetic schools only when they appear on the stage of national foreign policy, and then they discuss them insofar as their life and work affected the common political life. The Bible contains no discussion whatsoever specifically of the prophetic schools as such. Concerning the internal nature of the prophetic schools, their external structure, the lessons of "the sons of the prophets," the objectives and tasks which they set themselves, the methods and means adopted to accomplish these objectives and tasks—concerning all this the Bible occasionally lets slip, as though by accident, two or three perfectly insignificant words of commentary, and that quite rarely. Given this stance of the primary source, naturally the field is left wide open for endless conjecture and guesswork, the majority of which can neither be accepted for want of positive authorities, nor rejected for the same want of negative authorities.

If scholarly research must not consist solely of conjecture and guesswork, clearly the question of the prophetic schools cannot be addressed on a strictly scholarly basis and no indisputable scholarly resolution can be reached. Is this not why this question fails to attract the attention of scholarly researchers of the Bible and biblical history? Even German scholarly literature contains not a single fundamental treatise on the prophetic schools—a rare thing

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St. Paul the Apostle



## CHAPTER 5

### **The Churchliness<sup>286</sup> of the Theological School and of Theological Science**

It is with understandable perturbation and reverent trembling that I ascend this rostrum to deliver my first lecture. These most unforgettable minutes mark the beginning of my labors at the academic chair. What awaits me here? What will befall me from now until I descend this rostrum for the final time?

When the helmsman of a ship is replaced and a new helmsman takes his post at the wheel, he first hastens to ascertain the direction in which he is going, in which he must guide the ship entrusted to him. He peers intently into the darkening distance, where the lights of the salvific lighthouses flicker in the blackness, and by the light of these immovable beacons he guides the course of his ship over the billowing sea with a firm and sure hand. And at this moment I feel myself to be in a similar position. Here, upon this rostrum, I am destined to replace an experienced and trustworthy helmsman; I am destined at least in part to replace one who is irreplaceable. As a helmsman I am young and inexperienced; in the sciences I am unlearned. This is why a whole series of questions now stand before

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286 A rare word, yet there is none other that conveys the full weight of церковность. —TRANS.

me in all their urgency: Why have I come here? Where shall I go, and what am I to do?

Yes, I permit myself to think that the current circumstances of which you are all well aware, and the demands made upon us and upon our school so plentifully and so insistently in recent times from various quarters—all this presents not only me, but also you at the start of each academic year, perhaps no less urgently, with a series of similar questions: Why have we come here? What are we to do? Toward what goals must we aspire? In the hope that our sentiments now have something in common, insofar as my understanding permits, I make bold to answer these questions in my first introductory lecture—one that introduces not the course of this academic year, but the whole of my life and work at the academy.

We too must look to see whether some beacon may not be seen shining toward us. For if the poet even says that

Nowhere burns more purely bright  
Than in the New Testament the beacon of true light,<sup>287</sup>

then I think that it especially behooves me, a teacher of the New Testament, and all of you gathered for this lecture on the Holy Scripture of the New Testament, to seek our guiding light specifically in the books of the New Testament. In commencing my work as a teacher of the New Testament, I naturally began by asking myself the question: What exactly does the New Testament teach concerning any activity whatsoever of the Christian man?

In asking myself this question, naturally I first recall the Lord's parable concerning the talents. The Lord has given each of us a talent. We must not bury our talent in the earth, as did the wicked and slothful servant. But we cannot think that the talent is given us for our own personal use, as our own absolute property. No, our Lord will come to us and demand a reckoning. What then are we? We are no more than the custodians of another's property. We are

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287 An inexact quote from *Faust* by Goethe, based on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: A Tragedy*, Captain Knox, trans. (London: John Olliver, 1847), p. 98.

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The Three Hierarchs



## CHAPTER 6

### **Repentance in the Church and Repentance in Catholicism**

In the history of the Christian Church is there any more lamentable fact than that of Rome's apostasy from the universal Church? This apostasy occurred when ecclesiastical theological thought had already grown dim, when the great luminaries of Christian theology had already sunken beneath the horizon of this earthly life. The church writers who lived at or about the time of Rome's apostasy proved ill-equipped to evaluate this apostasy to its full fundamental, vital extent. When you read polemical works against the Latins by Greek writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, such as Patriarch Michael Cerularius and Metropolitan John of Claudiopolis, as well as the writings of the authors of Old Rus who unswervingly adhered to their Greek archetypes—for example, "A Sermon on the Christian and Latin Faiths" by the venerable Theodosius of the Caves,<sup>310</sup> "The Struggle Against

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310 Venerable Theodosius of the Caves (1008–1074, commemorated May 3/16, August 14/27, and September 2/15). His "Sermon on the Christian and Latin Faiths" is an epistle to Prince Izyaslav Yaroslavovich. —ED.

the Latin Church” by Metropolitan George,<sup>311</sup> the writings of Metropolitan Nicephorus,<sup>312</sup> the article “Concerning the Franks and Other Latins,” of Greek origin but later Russified<sup>313</sup>—when you read all this you cannot help but notice that all these polemics specify no essential differences whatsoever between Catholic **life** and the life of the Church. The church writers speak harshly of Catholicism, but they speak of trivial matters, striving only to amass as many accusations of every possible kind against the Latins: they appear to care more about the quantity of the accusations than their quality and gravity. Furthermore, they constantly reproach all of Catholicism for the abuses of certain individuals. Our Russian metropolitan George rebukes the Latins for having neither great nor small entrances at the liturgy; for performing the service not in the altar, but throughout the whole church; and because their bishops wear rings. “They eat the meat of bears and asses; their priests eat beaver meat when fasting, for they say that it is aquatic and is a kind of fish.” “They eat with dogs from the same plate: when they have eaten, they place what is left over for the dogs to lick, and then they themselves again eat what they wish.” The Greek patriarch Michael Cerularius writes, “They eat things strangled and much that is unclean; their monks eat cured pork fat, called *salo*, and every kind of skin that touches the meat.” The same patriarch, followed by our own Metropolitan George, censures the Latins: “They shave their beards with a razor, which is contrary to<sup>314</sup> the law of Moses

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311 George, metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus. He began administering the metropolitan see of Kiev around the year 1062 (some sources say 1067). He reposed in 1079 (some sources say 1077). “The Struggle Against the Latin Church” is a polemical work by this hierarch. —Ed.

312 Nicephorus, metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus. Of Greek descent, born in Sura in Lycia (in Asia Minor). Began serving in the metropolitan see of Kiev in 1104 (according to other sources, 1103). Reposed in 1121. Two compositions are known, originally written in Greek and addressed to individuals—one to Great Prince Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev, the other to Prince Yaroslav Svyatopolkovich of Vladimir-Volynya. —Ed.

313 The term *Franks* (*frjažkij*) is the ancient name for inhabitants of the Italian (Genoese) city-colonies in Crimea—essentially, Italians. —Ed.

314 Literally “severed from”.

and that of the Gospel.”<sup>315</sup> All such “faults” of the Latins were equated to heresies.

But even in our own time seminary textbooks of “accusatory theology” tend to strain out the gnat while completely ignoring the camel. The filioque, unleavened bread, purgatory—these are the main points of their polemics. A person who looks no further than these textbooks might indeed ask himself: Really, what cause is there for division? What cause is there to deny that Catholics will be saved? Our time is a time of all manner of forgeries and falsifications. The Church has been replaced with Christianity, living life with abstract doctrine. Many boundaries between Orthodoxy and heresy, between truth and error, are being erased from our consciousness. A sort of pan-Christianity, hitherto unknown to the Church, has emerged in modern religious consciousness. Orthodoxy and Catholicism have been placed upon the same level. We now have multiple Churches—Orthodox, Catholic, even Protestant, Anglican, and so on, although seemingly it ought to be clear that the one Head can only have one Body.

The essential difference between every heresy and church truth only becomes clear to us when we leave the sphere of the purely dogmatic and theoretical, and compare the actual worldview—the religious psychology, so to speak—of a member of the Church with that of the heretic. It is this approach to the fundamental assessment of Western heresies that Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) recommends in his article, “How is the Orthodox Faith Different from Western Confessions?”<sup>316</sup>—the most interesting and informative article in all of polemical literature in recent years. As the author quite rightly maintains, “**all** the errors of the West are rooted in

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315 See Alexey Pavlov, *Критические отъѣты по исторіи древнейшей греко-русской полеміки противъ латинян* [*Critical Essays on the History of the Ancient Greco-Russian Polemics Against the Latins*] (St. Petersburg: 1878), pp. 152, 192, 195.

316 Anthony (Khrapovitsky), archbishop of Volynya and Zhitomir, hieroarchimandrite of the Pochaev Dormition Lavra, later metropolitan of Kiev and Galitia. The article “Чемъ отливається православная вера отъ западныхъ исповѣданій” [“How the Orthodox Faith Differs from Western Confessions”] was first printed in *Russky Palomnik* magazine in 1912, № 42. —Ed.

a failure to understand Christianity as an ascetic labor of man's gradual self-improvement." The essential distinguishing feature of Western confessions is declared to be "the failure to understand the simple truth that Christianity is an ascetic religion, that Christianity is the doctrine of the gradual eradication of the passions, and of the means and conditions for the gradual acquisition of the virtues. These conditions are both internal, consisting of ascetic labors, and imparted from without, consisting of our dogmatic beliefs and grace-filled rites, which have a single purpose: to heal human sinfulness and to lead us up to perfection."<sup>317</sup>

It is quite natural that we should choose repentance for the purpose of comparing the religious psychology of the Catholic with that of a member of the Church. Repentance is the essence of Christian life. The whole life of a Christian is repentance, the changing of the old man into a new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24).

Consequently, how a man understands the essence of repentance is how he sees the essence of his life and his salvation. Like rays in focus, religious psychology is concentrated in the psychology of the penitent. We will be discussing not the dogmatic aspect of repentance, but specifically its psychology. Dogmatic doctrine is always in part the product of a school, and the link between a school and church life is admittedly rather remote. The Church should not be judged by the products of a school, at least not without considerable caution. In addressing the question of repentance, we have an abundant and most interesting body of literature, in which the church life and worldview of those who actually repented instead of speculating on the topic has been cast and solidified. Numerous such literary works exist for both Catholicism and Orthodoxy: these are partly handbooks for spiritual fathers and partly the latter's own writings. All this is customarily termed penitential literature. The Orthodox Church has its penitential nomocanons, while Catholicism has its penitentials. The Catholic penitentials

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317 Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "How the Orthodox Faith Differs from Western Confessions," in *Полное собрание сочинений* [*Complete Collected Writings*], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 2 (Saint Petersburg: 1911), pp. 200–201.

were compiled and published in scholarly form long ago, while the penitential literature of the Church has only become known in recent times thanks to the editions of Professor Alexey Almazov and Professor Sergey Smirnov, prior to which they had lain in ancient manuscript volumes in various monastery libraries. For us these old manuscripts are invaluable because they grew old in the hands of the spiritual fathers of Old Rus: they are the records of Old Russian theological thought and the highly religious psychology of Old Rus.

The literary specimens of our chosen class primarily discuss penances or *epitimias*,<sup>318</sup> but the view on the penance is in fact the view on the meaning of repentance itself.

## 1

### THE VIEW OF REPENTANCE IN THE CANONICAL PENITENTIAL NOMOCANONS

The crucial foundation for the Church's penitential system was laid in the heyday of church theology by the greatest theologians of the ancient Church. As early as the fourth century the first groundbreaking penitential nomocanons were created. These penitential nomocanons may be deemed the three canonical epistles of St. Basil the Great to Amphilochius, bishop of Iconum, and the canonical epistle of St. Gregory of Nyssa to Letoius, bishop of Melitene. These epistles, declared canonical by the second canon of the Sixth Œcumenical Council, became the foundation for all later works of this nature. To this day they retain their indisputable canonical authority in the Christian Church, and they are found in the *Book of Canons*.<sup>319</sup> Later penitential nomocanons constantly cite the penitential system of St. Basil the Great, to whom the origins of the penitential nomocanon of the Eastern Church may be traced.<sup>320</sup> But the penitential canons above express a particular view

318 From the Greek ἐπιτιμία (*epitimía*), or “penance.” —TRANS.

319 Also known as *The Rudder* or *The Pedalion*. —TRANS.

320 Nikolay Zaozersky, *Номоканон Иоанна Постника в его редакциях грузинской, греческой и славянской* [*The Nomocanon of John the Faster in its Georgian, Greek,*

of the purpose of penances and of the meaning of repentance—a view that is canonical, so to speak, for the Church, if she would be faithful to her eternal truths.

Foremost, it should be noted that in their nature the aforementioned epistles do not in the least resemble some sort of judicial codex containing a list of sins and corresponding penances. No, this is a manual for pastors. Christian pastoral ministry must resemble the good Shepherd, Who seeks the sheep that had become lost, “taketh it upon His shoulders,”<sup>321</sup> and brings it to His Heavenly Father. This is the pastoral ideal of which the penitential canons of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa speak.

By the fourth century the Church had clearly and definitively expressed the doctrine that she is a hospital for the infirmities of human souls and also a pedagogical institution. The rigorists of old, who for the sake of the ostensible holiness of the Church wished to completely abolish or limit repentance in one way or another, were condemned by the Church as heretics (the Montanists) or schismatics (the Novatians and the Donatists). Closely linked to the concept of the Church as a hospital for the infirm human conscience is the general spirit of idealism in our canonical penitential nomocanons. In the view of these nomocanons, a penance barring a person for a certain duration from communing of the Holy Mysteries and participating in public worship (in certain of its aspects) is not just the direct consequence of the sin, but invariably serves a pedagogical purpose for the sinner himself. In the understanding of the ancient Church, repentance consists not solely of confessing one’s sins, but also invariably of fulfilling a penance, the penance itself being neither more nor less than one method of treatment. St. Basil the Great refers to penances by hardly any other name than that of “cure”: the whole purpose of the penance is in order that those who have sinned might be “rescued from the snare of the Evil One”

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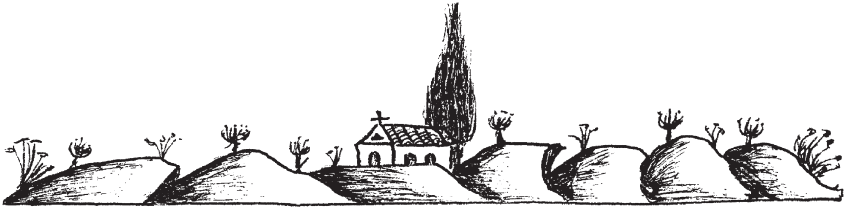
*and Slavonic Editions*] (Moscow: 1902), p. 64. Cf. Alexander Almazov, “Канонарий монаха Иоанна” [“The Canonarium of the Monk John”], pp. 141–143, in *Записки Императорского Новороссийского университета* [*Notes from the Imperial University of Novorossiia*] (1907), vol. 109.

321 See the dogmatic theotokion at great vespers on Sunday, tone 4. —TRANS.

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The Nativity of Christ



## CHAPTER 11

### **Bethlehem and Golgotha**

(LETTER TO A FRIEND)

My dear friend,

Ten years ago here in Russia, in Erivan, a composition by the holy hierarch Irenaeus of Lyons, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, of which the Greek original had been lost, was discovered in an Armenian translation. We became acquainted with this composition in the German translation, which in turn has been translated into Russian. In this composition some seven years ago I was particularly struck by the following words: “Others ascribe no significance to the descent of the Son of God and the economy of His Incarnation, through which the apostles proclaimed and the prophets foretold that our humanity is to be brought to perfection. And such should be numbered with those who lack faith” (ch. 99). Do you know, friend, what these words of the holy father seem to me to be? They seem to me to be a reproach against our modern times. The holy father is reproaching our modern times for a lack of faith. It is no accident that these words resounded at the dawn of the twentieth century! People are becoming increasingly forgetful of

the economy of the incarnation: they do not believe in it, they wish to do without it, and in their beliefs they replace the incarnate Son of God with a great man and a great teacher, Jesus of Nazareth.

But it is not of these people that I wish to converse with you in this letter, my friend—now, when in the churches “Christ is born” is already being sung. It is not to these strangers to the Church of Christ that my gaze turns in the present instance. I look upon the church community and upon churchly people. Are they able with full awareness to heed the words of the church hymn, “Christ cometh from the heavens, meet ye Him”? My gaze is turned toward our scholastic theology, and—alas!—I see clearly that it does not teach people to meet the feast of Christ’s Nativity in the fullness of theological contemplation. To a considerable degree, St. Irenaeus of Lyons’ reproach for a lack of faith also applies to our scholastic theology: the latter does not ascribe sufficient importance to the economy of the incarnation, and does not at all teach that it is through this economy that our humanity must be brought to perfection. In our scholastic theology the focal point of our salvation has been shifted from Bethlehem to Golgotha. This shift in our Russian theology occurred comparatively recently, about two hundred years ago, when the Latin theological trend came to Moscow via Catholic Poland and Kiev, and when various scholastically-minded fathers acquired greater authority than the ancient fathers of the Church.

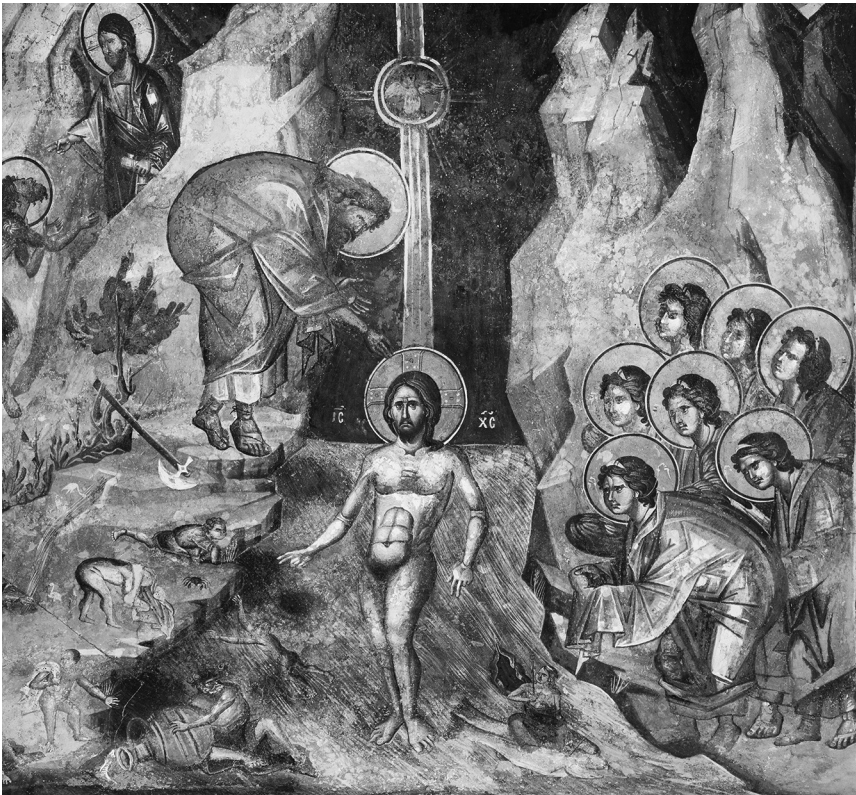
The reasoning of the ancient Church concerning salvation is incomparably more lofty and engaging than our modern Latin-leaning theology. The theological thinking of the ancient Church piously dwelt not so much on Golgotha as on Bethlehem. Take, friend, the works of the greatest theologians of the ancient Church. In the writings of each you will find entire compositions and extensive discourses on the incarnation. Consider the inspired sermon of Gregory the Theologian, “On the Theophany, or Birthday of Christ”! Can this sermon possibly be read without heartfelt trembling and joyous exultation?! Take *The Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* by the venerable John of Damascus. The third book of this renowned dogmatist deals with our salvation. But what exactly is discussed here? Here the holy father discourses almost

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Vladimir Troitsky on the far left (the future St. Hilarion)  
with his father (Fr. Alexei Troitsky) and siblings.



Baptism of Christ



## CHAPTER 14

### **Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christian Communities**

I was very pleased to receive the pamphlets that you sent: they enabled me to become acquainted with the gratifying movement among the American Christians whose aim is to do everything possible for bringing together people who throughout the world make their appeals to the holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I could not help noticing the spirit of love and humility with which all the publications of your Commission are imbued, and this spirit could not fail in convincing me that all your intentions issue from a pure and sincere heart. I am also impressed by the zeal with which you propagate your idea of a world conference of Christians. I have before me your pamphlets which have been printed in three parts of the world—Europe, America, and Africa.

I also have had the pleasure of receiving your kind letters, one of which (of September 13/26, 1916) you expressed the hope that besides reading your pamphlets I would also inform you of my comments.

I am very glad to enter into a discussion with you on a question which is so close to my heart, that is, the question concerning the Church. How could it be otherwise? What conscientious Christian

does not feel sorrow in his heart when he witnesses hostility and dissent among those who should be united by virtue of their faith, among whom there should reign the peace, left behind by Christ as a gift to His disciples, and the love infused into the hearts of Christians by the Holy Spirit! There has been so much enmity and so many mutual accusations during the ages of separation, that now is the time to start speaking in the spirit of love and goodwill. I am quite willing to reiterate the words you use in your letter: The spirit of love must triumph over the spirit of hate; the spirit of humility—over the spirit of rebellion and pride.

During the years 1915 and 1916 I had followed with keen interest, in the journal “Faith and Reason,” your correspondence with one of the most enlightened hierarchs of the Russian Church, Antony, Archbishop of Kharkov. This correspondence appears to me to be the most significant event in Russian theology for the past two years. The spirit of ardor for Divine truth in this correspondence is marvelously combined with frankness and with the spirit of love and goodwill. The Archbishop Antony presented his objections with complete candidness and resoluteness; but I was glad to read, in one of your booklets in *Modern Greek*, your comment that, according to the impression you got, those objections had not been made by an enemy wishing to perpetuate dissent among brethren. I also have read in your letter of November 1/14, 1916, about your fondness for the kind of research which, in the spirit of humility, either reveals new aspects of the Divine truth or roots out the tares growing in the midst of good wheat.

Because of all this I am convinced that I can write to you with complete frankness, without concealing my total disagreement with you at times, and without passing over in silence certain doubtful propositions.

I should like to make a brief preliminary remark. In your article, published in “*Revue internationale ecclésiastique*,” a reprint of which I have received from you, you say about Archbishop Antony’s treatises: “They are marked by stricter orthodoxy (*de la plus stricte orthodoxie*), but they are of significance in determining

the doctrinal position of ultraconservative elements in the Russian Orthodox Church, in other words, of the hierarchy.”

In no wise can I acknowledge Archbishop Antony to be a representative of ultraconservative elements in our Church. We have long since grown accustomed to regard him as a foremost champion of renovation in our school theology, of its emancipation from the strangling fetters of scholasticism, imposed on it by the unfortunate historical conditions in which our Church had existed in the seventeenth and, especially, in the eighteenth century. The appellation “ultraconservatives” may be applied in our theology only to those who blindly adhere to the scholastic theology imported from the West as the only possible and exclusively true one. I assure you that among such ultraconservatives you would find more persons holding the same views as you do on the questions touched upon in your correspondence with Archbishop Antony. You and they would have agreed on certain scholastic propositions left intact in the “new” Russian theology which does not acknowledge scholastic authorities. Nor can I regard Archbishop Antony’s views as being typical of our hierarchy alone. Not being of the hierarchy,<sup>1012</sup> I rather share his opinions, and I also know laymen with like views, who express them in print as well. Besides, no matter how I try, I cannot understand your statement concerning stricter orthodoxy. I am of the opinion that in the matters of faith there can be but one strict orthodoxy; here we can have either truth or error, but there can be no truth which is strict, and another which is less so. Archbishop Antony emphasized strongly, moreover, in his epistolary pamphlets that he was presenting not his personal views but the doctrine of the Church, just as an unbiased Mohammedan or Jewish scholar would have done.

Archbishop Antony has already raised the question concerning the unity of the Church. So do I in order to answer your kind letters. I am raising this question precisely because I wish the planned world conference of Christian communities the greatest success possible in achieving its lofty goal; this question, it seems to me,

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1012 This letter was written when the author was still an archimandrite.

—TRANS.

cannot by any means be circumvented at the conference itself. I am not satisfied with the views on the unity of the Church expressed in the pamphlets you sent me. What is important is, of course, not that they do not satisfy me, but that they hardly can be justified from the point of view of the ancient Christian Church.

You have presented in brief your viewpoint concerning the unity of the Church in your third letter (of February 5/18, 1916) to Archbishop Antony "The Church of Christ is of course one, despite the existence of various particular churches, but the sins of humanity have obscured her visibility." Your second letter (of June 12/25, 1915) dealt with the subject in greater detail. "I believe that there exists a spirit of Christian solidarity among all those who worship Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who believe in a Divine mission of the Church in the world, and in the praeternatural effect of the sacraments. This spirit of solidarity exists in spite of all theological differences of opinion. Through the sacrament of baptism, correctly administered, we all enter the spiritual kingdom of Christ. It is beyond my grasp that just because we are at odds concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit, or because we differ in sacramental rites, we acquire the right to hurl anathemas at those who do not share our viewpoint on these matters. I regard it as inconceivable that everything could be lost in the Christian world outside a particular church, whatever she may be, that all the churches which call themselves those of Christ, could in actual fact be nothing but cadavers rotting away with gangrene." In the pamphlets that you sent I took particular notice of the prayers which you recommend for communal and private use, and which give solemn expression to your outlook on the unity of the Church, namely this: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst unto Thine Apostles, Peace I leave with you: My peace I give unto you! Regard not our sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and grant her peace and unity, if this be Thy will. Our Lord Jesus Christ, we beseech Thee, look with compassion upon Thy Church, weakened and fettered by dissent and strife; bless the resolve to gather for a conference all who confess Thy Holy Name."

Thus, all communities which call themselves Christian comprise one Church of Christ, albeit weakened in her unity. Such a theory on the unity of the Church is not alien to some of the Russian theologians as well. Thus, the archpriest P. Ya. Svetlov asserts that the Christian creeds of the West comprise along with the Orthodox faith, Christian churches belonging to the Catholic Church, and that they are not extra-ecclesiastical communities separated from the Church; that the extant Christian churches in the West and in the East are local churches or parts of the Catholic Church, and for any of them to assume the right of the Catholic Church constitutes misappropriation. At the same time, the Catholic Church is in Fr. Svetlov's opinion, a unity of true believers scattered everywhere in all local or particular Christian churches in the West and in the East, or, what amounts to the same thing, an aggregate of local churches of the East and the West which in the absence of a possibility of convoking an Œcumenical Council and with the Church in a state of external division is deprived of a complete outward or visible organization, yet in possession of an internal unity of faith and of grace-filled life in Christ, Who Himself is at the head of His Church or Body.<sup>1013</sup>

As you can see, our Russian author expresses himself even more strongly than you do. Such a doctrine of the Church is absolutely inadmissible, however, since it was, beyond any doubt, alien to the ancient Church, where no reduced concept of Church unity had ever been known and where faith "in One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" had always and invariably been professed through the ninth article of the Creed. I could ask you this question: Do you and I belong to the one Church of Christ? In answering it you undoubtedly would mention the insignificance of our dogmatic differences and the virtually negligible difference in rites. For me, however, the answer is determined not by considerations of dogmatic disagreements but by the fact on hand: there is no ecclesiastical unity in grace between us. This fact cannot be disregarded, whereas you and Fr. Svetlov try to compensate for it by discoursing

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1013 *Apologetic Presentation of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. 1, 3rd printing, Kiev, 1910, pp. 208-209.

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FOR ALL THINGS**

**AMEN.**