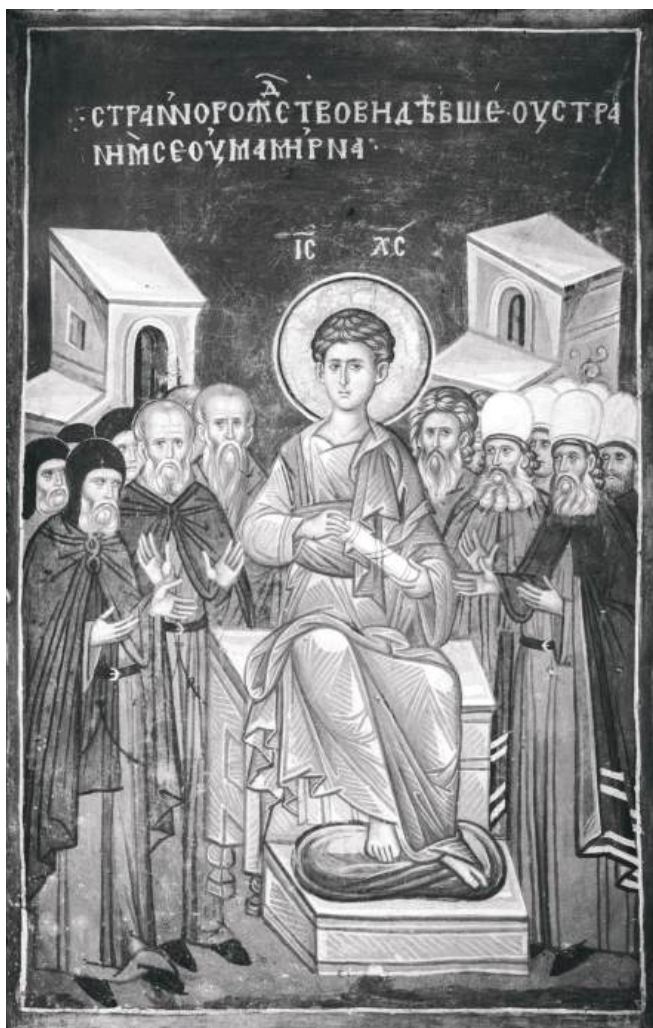


FORMATION IN THE LOVE OF TRUTH:
PRINCIPLES OF ORTHODOX EDUCATION



Visoki Dečani Monastery, Serbia - 14th century

Christ Teaching in the Temple

FORMATION IN THE LOVE OF TRUTH:

Principles of Orthodox Education

By Archpriest Peter Heers



Uncut Mountain Press
E D U C A T I O N

FORMATION IN THE LOVE OF TRUTH

Principles of Orthodox Education

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Scriptural quotations are primarily taken from the King James Version. The translator has emended some quotations to better reflect the original Greek text.

Archpriest Peter Alban Heers, 1971–

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I. Eastern Orthodox Theology
II. Orthodox Christian Education

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

I Corinthians 2:14–16 KJV

“We are heading again to the secret schools.... The priest, or whoever was educated in the community, in the villages, would teach the children using the liturgical books of the Church. The great educator and apostle to Greece, Saint Kosmas Aitolos, said famously... ‘you must educate your children, open up schools if possible, but educate your children.’....This is why we have to understand that our role is not to have great ideas for our children’s educational future, but to be focused on the preservation of the faith.... this is the end goal of their education: to serve their salvation and to serve the Church.”

From the lecture “Have Faith”

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Examining Homeschooling and Compulsory
State Education"**

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Christ in the Synagogue of Nazareth



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In the West, we are inheritors of a robust educational tradition. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, we, the citizens of Western society, saw this tradition transformed into a mechanism of totalitarian political control through compulsory state education. All major Western nations, regardless of whether they were of fascist, communist, liberal, or even monarchical constitution, succumbed to this distorted view on education. This fraudulent educational system dominates our society to this day.

As Orthodox Christians living in the West in this situation, we have the responsibility not only to learn the place of education in relation to our Faith and Holy Tradition but also to realize the progressive corruption of education since the time when the West lost its grace due to heresy and schism. With these lectures, given in 2018 and 2019, Archpriest Peter Heers (D. Th.) provides Orthodox Christians with the principles which ought to govern our education as the acquisition of knowledge and growth in virtue, as explicated in the Holy Scriptures and among the Holy Fathers. Fr. Peter shares his experience and observations to inform all Orthodox Christian educators (at home or in parish schools) of the work still needed for our Church's investment, through our children, in the future.

In these four lectures, we learn about the history of compulsory state education, the different methods by which our souls acquire knowledge and understand the truth, how the Holy Fathers understood the distinction between spiritual wisdom and philosophical knowledge, the theory and practice of how this vision may be seen and applied in the specific realm of education, and over two dozen questions and answers which serve to complete one's understanding of the principles presented in these lectures. Whether one chooses to homeschool, do a homeschool co-op, or participate in a private Orthodox school, Uncut Mountain Press believes any of these environments will benefit from this book and the principles found herein.





Nikolaos Gyzis, Oil on Canvas

To Kryfo Scholio (The Secret School).



Saint Basil the Great



CHAPTER I

Have Faith: Examining Homeschooling & Compulsory State Education

Lecture delivered at the
Orthodox Homeschool Conference: “Have Faith”
April 19-22, 2018
St. Nicholas Ranch, Dunlap, CA

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

At Stake is Not Simply Education, But the Faithfulness of Our Children to Christ

It is a great joy and blessing for me to be here, back in California, as Fr. Paul said. I grew up in the East Bay, from age ten to nineteen—before I went away to college. And I spent my formative three or four years before I went to Greece in this area, going to St. John, the relics, and Platina, and many other places. So, it is a joy to be back. Actually, in this place right here, I met Elder Ephraim for the first time, twenty-four years ago. So this brings back a lot of memories.

I want to thank the director of the conference for inviting me. She has done a tremendous job. Thank you very

much, Christine, for inviting me and allowing me to be here and to speak to you. Fr. Noah as well, who is an old friend on the East Coast and also involved.

My topic today is “Have Faith,” and the directions that I received from the director of the conference, regarding the topic was, “This needs to be motivational. We need to give people courage in this struggle for home education, and not just for educating, but actually imparting the faith.” I think this is one of the main reasons why we are all here and why we are all believers in homeschooling and struggling to continue, because we understand what is at stake is not simply the education of our children, but the faithfulness of our children to Christ.

This is why today I am going to focus a little bit—as a jumping off point—on homeschooling in relation to state compulsory schooling and history. I think it is important for us to see the big picture. We start out homeschooling, we are looking at our small children, and we look at the various things we need to do to impart to them the basics, and a lot of us are uneasy. Are we really capable? Can we really do this? But if we step back and see the larger picture, I think it is very encouraging. It is also very frightening, when we see the history of compulsory schooling. But it is also encouraging, because we see that homeschooling is so very necessary, not just for ourselves, but for the Church and for the survival of the Church as we go forward.

Fr. Peter’s Homeschooling Experience in Greece

I started out my homeschooling in Greece about eighteen years ago, and you might not know, but in Greece, it is actually illegal to homeschool. It is not allowed. You have to send your children to the state school. It is kind of ironic that here we are in California and you are free to homeschool,

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Archpriest Peter Heers is the founder and current head of Uncut Mountain Press (est. 2000), the founder and head of The Orthodox Ethos (est. 2016), and the founder and first editor of *Divine Ascent, A Journal of Orthodox Faith* (est. 1995). Fr. Peter was also the host of the Ancient Faith Ministries podcast, *Postcards from Greece*.

Fr. Peter is the author of *The Missionary Origins of Modern Ecumenism: Milestones Leading up to 1920*, as well as *The Ecclesiological Renovation of the Second Vatican Council: An Orthodox Examination of Rome's Ecumenical Theology Regarding Baptism and the Church*.

Fr. Peter is also the translator of several books, including *The Life of Elder Paisios* by Elder Isaac (co-translator) and *The Epistles of Elder Paisios*, *The Truth of our Faith* (vols. 1 & 2) by Elder Cleopa and *Apostle to Zaire: The Life of Fr. Cosmas of Grigoriou*, as well as the best-selling children's book *From I-ville to You-ville*.

Fr. Peter was born in Dallas, Texas and raised near San Francisco, California. The son of an Anglican priest, in 1992 his parents and much of his father's parish converted to the Orthodox Church. In 1996 he came to Thessalonica,

Greece, in order to visit Mt. Athos, returning in 1998 to begin the Theological School of the University of Thessalonica. Fr. Peter has undergraduate, master's and doctoral degrees in Dogmatic Theology from the Theological School of the University of Thessalonica, all completed under the tutelage of Professor Demetrios Tselingides.

He lived in the Thessaloniki area for 20 years where he was married to a Thessaloniki native, blessed with 5 children, and ordained to the diaconate and priesthood in 2003, in the Diocese of Kastoria. In 2014 he was made Protopresbyter and Spiritual Father of the Diocese of Ierissou and Agion Oros. He was the rector of the parish of the Holy Prophet Elias in Petrokerasa, a small village in the mountains outside of Thessalonica, from 2006 until 2017.

Fr. Peter served as the instructor of Old and New Testament at Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary in Jordanville, New York, and later as a Lecturer of Ecclesiology in the Certificate of Theological Studies Program. Fr. Peter was also the Headmaster of Three Hierarchs Academy in Florence, Arizona. He is a regular speaker to parish groups in the United States and Canada. Fr. Peter Heers currently resides outside of Coolidge, AZ.





Archpriest Peter Heers giving the
Commencement Address at Jordanville's 2017 Graduation

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**GLORY BE TO GOD
FOR ALL THINGS**

AMEN.