

# MISSIONARY CONVERSATIONS WITH PROTESTANT SECTARIANS



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ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1927, Father Kyril Zaits had the occasion to be in the Ascension parish on the feast day of St. Simeon Stylites. Every year on this day there was a large gathering of people. Many came by train from distant places and returned home on the evening train.

This time there were many passengers, particularly peasants in the third-class coach. There were also members of the local intelligentsia, merchants and several Jewish people to be seen.

The time was after 10 P.M. and some of the passengers were dozing off, while others, on raised bunks, were preparing to sleep. Talking could be heard through-out the entire coach since the compartment was not closed. Suddenly, in the compartment next to mine, some passenger began to speak especially passionately and loudly. General conversation died down and Father Kyril was roused from his dozing.

The speaker, a young man of small stature, began to walk about the coach, inviting everyone to listen to him. Evidently many people became interested.

“I was a great sinner. I did not know what spiritual life was..., “said the young passenger, “but now here I am a believer! I heard secret voices calling me to salvation. I was converted and I became a different person. I was saved by dear Jesus. With his own blood He washed away my sins...I now have no sins...I am holy...Christ is my Brother, etc.”

While he spoke of himself, of his former sins and present holiness (and he spoke much), the public listened in silence and some women turned to the wall in order to doze off. They probably were not listening to such a speech for the first time.

Then, however, the sectarian preacher began to touch upon Orthodox dogmas, especially the reverencing of icons and objections began to be raised by the passengers.

“So you worship the icon of Simeon Stylites,” said the Baptist. “Icons are unnecessary. This is idol worship! One cannot bow down before pictures! The word of God forbids it...It is necessary to pray only to dear Jesus...I was wounded twice, was seriously ill, but I turned to Jesus Christ, prayed, and became well without any icons...”.

Objections were heard. One irritated peasant asked the sectarian:

“What are you doing here, agitating us? I likewise was seriously wounded, but I went to the church, asked our priest to serve a thanksgiving service before the icon of the Mother of God and I became well.”

Thereupon a general discussion began. The sectarian attempted to answer all the objections and began to sprinkle his speech with quotations from the Holy Scripture—his speech became incoherent. Texts were introduced out of context and often pointlessly. It seemed that he would achieve a victory of sorts simply by speaking endlessly.

One could not tell if this eruption of words and playing with Holy Scripture would last long, but the argument had gradually become very heated, so Fr. Kyril, unable to sleep, decided to interject.

The unexpected appearance of a priest at once cooled the sectarian. Everyone became silent.

“You have spoken quite a bit tonight, my friend,” began Fr. Kyril, turning to the protestant, “but you have made precious little sense. You have talked around and touched upon some things, but I for one cannot tell what it is that you are getting at. You present yourself as saved and you have tried very hard to convince all these people who are believers to accept that. Nevertheless, it is clear that you are at enmity with Orthodox Christianity.”

“Please allow me to ask you several clear questions and be so kind as to reply to them clearly, without any misleading eloquence.

“You are quite probably a preacher—of which confession is of no significance to us at the present. One thing however is clear; you are not in the Church of Christ. Tell us, have you preserved the great spiritual wealth which the Holy Apostles have given to Christ’s Church, or have you never thought of this? In fact, have you ever even heard of this wealth?”

The sectarian remained silent.

Father Kyril continued, "Do you have the priesthood? No? But it has been in the Church from Apostolic times. It was passed on by the apostles and it is clearly spoken of in that very Holy Bible which you are now holding in your hands."

"Have you preserved all the Mysteries: baptism, chrismation, repentance (i.e. confession), the Holy Eucharist, marriage, holy orders and unction? These things were already established in the times of the Apostles and they are spoken of in the holy books of the New Testament.

"Do you obey the Holy Gospel by honoring the Mother of God? [cf. Lk. 1:28; 42, esp. 48.]

"Do you have prayerful communion with the Heavenly Church, with the holy Apostles whose writings are in your hands right now, with the saints, martyrs, confessors and all the righteous?

"Do you have prayerful communion with angels? Do you pray to your guardian angel? [cf. Mt. 18:10; Heb. 12:22-24]

"All this was in the Apostolic Church and all this remains with us in the Orthodox Church.

"Do you have prayerful communion with deceased fathers, mothers, grandparents and all those who have reposed in the faith? Do you pray for the dead, or have you forgotten about them so that death for you has proven to be stronger than the

love of Christ? Don't you know that they prayed for the dead in the Apostolic Church?

"You do not honor icons nor do you honor the life-giving Cross of the Lord. And do you sign yourself with the Holy Cross? Do you wear the cross on your breast in accordance with the words of the apostle—'bearing the reproach that he bore'. [Heb. 13:13.] All this was known in the Apostolic Church.

"My questions are clear and simple. Answer them. Why are you silent? Well, what is there for you to say when you do not maintain any of this? Can't you see that this is a great spiritual wealth?

"Then tell us," continued Father Kyril, "what do you have? Faith? Yes, you brag of it and call upon these people to believe in Christ. Your invitation, however, is late: all of these people, with the exception of two or three Jews, have believed in Christ for a long time already; they have been in the Church since childhood. Calling upon Orthodox Christians to come to believe in Christ is foolish vanity. We all believe incomparably more strongly than you. We believe so strongly that we preserve all that has been handed down to us and we fulfill all that has been commanded—you cannot say this of yourselves.

"Call upon the Jews to believe in Christ, go to the heathens, to Mohammedans—preach there, but not here amongst Orthodox believers.

“You cannot give us faith for we already have it. What can you give? What kind of spiritual treasure? Absolutely nothing. You come to us as a beggar in rags.

“There was, however, something you said which was completely contrary to Christ’s teaching: pride and self-conceit. We have heard only of your sinlessness, your holiness, about which you bragged and boasted. But this does not deceive us. We remember the words of the Apostle about the Christians of his own time: ‘We all sin much’. [cf. 1 Jn. 1:8, “If we claim to be sinless, we are self-deceived and strangers to the truth.]

“Could it be that you sectarians, in your lives, are better than the first Christians? The Apostle Paul says of himself, ‘It is not to be thought that I have already achieved all this. I have not yet reached perfection, but I press on, hoping to take hold of that for which Christ once took hold of me. My friends, I do not reckon myself to have hold of it yet...’. [Phil. 3:12-13.]

“And you believe that you have surpassed even the Holy Apostle in spiritual perfection? The Apostle calls himself the ‘Chief of sinners’, [1 Tim. 1:15] but you call yourself ‘holy’!?”

“Don’t you see the absurdity of your boasting and on what a dangerous road you’re walking?”

The young man was silent. Shortly the train came up to a station and some passengers reluctantly left this late night



conversation. When the train began to move again, the priest continued.

“I would like to call your attention to one more thing. You are holding a Bible in your hands. You know and admit that every word in the Bible is the unalterable truth. Good. We Orthodox also acknowledge this. I would say that you are a Baptist, yes? Let us assume that there is an Adventist standing next to you, and over there a Methodist and next to him a member of another Protestant sect and so on. Let us say that there would be several hundred men gathered here since now Protestant sects number in the hundreds [*Editor—a decade or so ago a U.N. study said it had become more than 26,000 sects*]. Each man will be holding a Bible. You all acknowledge the Bible as your only source of faith. You all preach that the Holy Spirit speaks by your lips. Please tell us, then, why you do not all teach the same thing? Why do you Protestants consider one another as being lost? Do you mean to say that the Holy Spirit says one thing to one, and another thing to a second? Did this ever cross your mind?

“Here is a small example for you and it would be good for the rest of you to pay close attention to it also. Let us assume that a jug of crystal clear water was brought here. Each one of us is holding an absolutely clean glass. Let each of us scoop up clear water with his glass from the common vessel. In all the glasses there will be seen absolutely identical clean water.

“This young man has a Bible in his hands; this is the source of the purest water. Why is it that when he scoops up water from

it, when the Methodist, Adventist, Lutheran and all the rest scoop up water from it, they get un-identical water, un-identical teaching?

“It is very simple. Their glasses are not clean. The glasses are their reason, their weak human minds. Their minds are not clean; they are full of much sophistry and much destructive fantasy. All of this they apply to the most pure water, to God’s word. Does one have to be so wise to see that their teachings are muddled, contradictory to one another and unhealthy, just as dirty water is not healthy?”

Father Kyril paused and turned to the Baptist preacher.

“I have finished for the time being. Now you, my friend, have achieved the interest of these fellow-travelers of ours and you may give replies and explanations to all these questions which have been presented to you, and we shall all listen.”

The preacher did not begin to speak at once. It was necessary for him to come out of a somewhat difficult situation, especially since some of the passengers were beginning to make unflattering remarks about him among themselves.

Then, without emotion, in a quieter voice, he began:

“You heard the priest just now speaking about icons. I will read to you what the Holy Scripture says about icons.”

Thereupon, he began to read slowly from certain verses of the prophetic books—Isaiah, Jeremiah—about idols. During the reading the Baptist explained and suggested that here, it was precisely saying that icons are idols.

When the reading had finished Fr. Kyril spoke up, “We have listened to your reading about idols but there are neither heathens nor idols here. You said you would read about icons. Very well, then read to us about icons. Idols don’t interest us.”

“There is nothing said about icons in the Bible!” the Baptist retorted.

“Are you really telling the truth?” asked the priest. “I don’t believe that you are so ignorant as to not know where icons are spoken of in the Holy Scripture. You know very well, but you don’t want to read it. It doesn’t fit into your calculations.”

“Very well, I will indicate the place for you. Find the twenty-fifth chapter of the book of Exodus and read it.” [Ex. 25:18-19: “make two golden Cherubim of beaten work”; 26:2, 31, 32: “...with icons of Cherubim worked into them.”]

The young man hesitated, but the people began to demand that he read it. Unwillingly, he sought out the indicated place. He began to read slowly, as if thinking of what to say. When he read about the ark of the covenant and the two golden cherubim on top of the ark, the priest turned to him with the question:

“Please tell us, the cherubim which Moses made of gold according to God’s command, are they not idols according to you?”

“That was in the Old Testament” replied the Protestant. “We are living in the New Testament and we don’t need the Old Testament...”

“Is that so?” asked the priest. “But when you wanted to read about idols in order to lead the listeners into error, then the Old Testament was necessary. It is a great sin to treat God’s word in this manner, and you well know how our Savior speaks about those who lead others, lesser than they, into error and temptation.”

The Baptist, feeling the awkwardness of his position, again began to read something more in reference to idols.

“He always comes back to these idols of his!” Father Kyril said. “Well, if you do not want to accept the testimony of the Old Testament about the Divine descent of holy images, let us turn to the New Testament. Read several of the beginning verses from the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.” [Heb. 9:5: “And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat.”]

The sectarian fell silent. We heard no more of his reading and talking. Gradually, the farther passengers began to fall asleep, lulled by the rhythmic clacking of the train’s wheels.

## Conversation about the Holy Church

A baptist propagandist, from either Petrograd or Helsinki, arrived in one village, accompanied by several Baptist women who served as singers. Meetings were arranged for the purpose of propagandizing.

The local priest, an elderly little man—Father John, asked the missionary priest Father Kyril Zaits to come and bring the parishioners to their senses since several of them had begun to visit meetings arranged by the sectarians.

Father Kyril agreed to come on August 20, 1912, and Father John announced his impending arrival to the entire parish, requesting that as many as possible be present. The sectarians were also invited.

The day turned out to be warm and clear and by nine o'clock the church began to fill up with worshippers. Towards the end of the Divine Liturgy, not only the church but the entire court-yard was filled with people. It was decided, for convenience, to open the conversation from the steps of the church porch. A lectern and a small table were carried out.

In front of the crowd there stood a sectarian with a Bible in his hands and near him were the women who had arrived together with some of the local parishioners.

We all sang the prayers, "O Heavenly King" and "Save, O Lord, Thy people".

Father John appealed to his parishioners in a short speech, calling on them to hold firmly to Holy Orthodoxy and not to listen to those who slander the Holy Cross, throw out Holy Icons, refuse to honor the Theotokos. There are many faiths in the world and one cannot pursue all of them. Our faith is true; our Orthodox Church is the one which the Lord founded and which the gates of hell, all the satanic powers, cannot defeat. There is salvation only in the Orthodox Church...

After his short word, we sang the "Our Father" and the conversation about the Church of Christ began.

#### I.

"These people have come to you from afar," Father Kyril began, "as if to their relatives or friends. In actual fact, it is evident that they have come with the aim of offering you some sort of new teaching, some sort of new path to salvation without the Orthodox Church."

"Regardless of their sharp condemnation of Holy Orthodoxy, of their mocking of sacred things, you not only have failed to turn away from their propaganda, which at times is sacrilege, but many of you have begun regularly to visit the meetings which they have arranged. Some few have even joined together with them, daring to blaspheme the Holy Orthodox Church."

"Unfortunate ones! They have forgotten the warning of the Holy Apostle Paul: '... or if even an angel from heaven preach

another gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema” [Gal. 1:8-9].

“Understand! Our Orthodox Church has existed since the time of the Apostles; our Church is the very one which the Lord Jesus Christ founded, our Church preserves in a pure, unaltered form all that has been handed down from the Apostles.

“What does this sectarian-Baptist say, however? He who comes from who knows where, for who knows what reason? He refutes all the apostolic teaching, as you yourselves have heard, and in its place he offers a new teaching. But if the Apostle Paul pronounces ‘anathema’ even on an angel if it would offer a new teaching, then, of course, this gentleman and all preachers of new faiths are under this anathema.

“Brethren, fear the apostolic anathema and flee from those who offer new teachings!”

Suddenly the sectarian shouted out: “We are not offering a new teaching! We are teaching and living according to the Gospel. The Lord wants everyone to be saved and we teach how to be saved. We are opening up everyone’s eyes according to the Gospel; we call upon everyone to believe in Christ. We want everyone to be saved as we are, so that all will be holy as we are!

“This is what we wish, what we speak about and what we preach. Is teaching about salvation and faith in Christ really a

new teaching? Is this not apostolic teaching? Why, then, are you placing us under anathema?"

This sharp shouting out of the sectarian evidently created an impression with the people. Deep silence reigned in the crowd.

"Let us try," replied Father Kyril, "to examine, in an unperturbed manner, what you have said and to shed some light upon the matter of salvation from the point of view of the Gospel.

"In the first place, it is an act of vanity for you to call upon these listeners to come to believe in Christ. You see how many people there are here? I know that they have believed in Christ since childhood. It is necessary, however, for them to understand that faith alone is not sufficient for salvation. It is quite possible to believe and yet at the same time be walking along the path which leads to destruction.

"Think of yourself, young preacher: you may believe, but are you walking along the path which leads to salvation, or are you complacent in that mistaken conviction that you are already saved and an un-doubtable heir to heavenly bliss, thanks to the fact that you believe?"

"Yes, I am saved, I am saved, I am holy and I will definitely be in paradise!" the sectarian cried out passionately.



“Do not fly into a passion!” Father Kyril rejoined, “Remember and think about what I will say to you and to everyone gathered here.

“Everyone, with the exception of some lunatics about which the prophet said: ‘The fool has said in his heart—there is no God’—seeks salvation.

“Some hope to reach salvation through Christ, others through Mohammed, still others through Buddha, the Jews through the fulfillment of the Old Testament law, etc. Who is walking along the true path? Who is in error? Take a look—even amongst those seeking salvation through Mohammed or Buddha, there are many very good people who fulfill God’s moral laws according to the direction of their consciences, themselves not knowing why. Are there not many good people amongst the Jews?

“How are we to think about them? Is there hope for them for a blessed life after death? I know that you will agree with me when I say: it is necessary to believe in Christ. Without faith in Christ, in the direct sense of the Gospel teaching, salvation is not available. It is written: ‘Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved’ [Acts 4:12].

“And so, not in Buddha nor in Mohammed, not in Judaism—not in anything else is there salvation, except in Christ. Everyone seeks salvation, but their hopes are in vain if they do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only path to eternal

bliss: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,' He Himself said. It is quite dear, 'There is salvation in no one else'.

"Do you agree with this?" asked Father Kyril, turning to the Baptist "Do you believe this?"

"Yes!" replied the minister. "We also believe and preach this. It is said in God's word: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you and all your house will be saved'" [Acts 16:81].

"Correct It is evident that the path to salvation is the same for you as for us: faith in Jesus Christ But, alas, not all who call upon the name of Jesus and believe in Him are going along the same path. The Baptists are going on one separate path, the Papists on a different path, the Lutherans on another separate path, the Adventists on still another path, etc. Yet on each path there is, as we see and hear, the name of Christ; everyone believes in Christ, everyone hopes to be saved through Christ.

"Which path is to be followed, which path is to be chosen? Can it be that all paths equally lead to Christ in His heavenly abode? Will all those who call upon the name of Christ and who believe in Him be saved?"

"We find the answer of the Lord and the apostles in God's word:

“Not everyone who calls to me,—Lord, Lord—will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.,” [Mt. 7:21] And again; ‘the demons also believe and tremble.’ [James 2:19].

“The demons tremble even though they believe, because they fear God’s judgment. Faith will not save them. Faith all alone will not save these new preachers of new faiths and their followers, even though they invoke: ‘Lord, Lord’, ‘dear Jesus’, etc.

“In addition to faith, something else is necessary. What is still required?—It is necessary to belong to the Church. It is necessary to enter into a special union with the Lord. What is the nature of this union? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaks of this. Let us read the Lord’s words in the Gospel of John, the fifteenth chapter:

“Abide in Me and I in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by its own power, but only if it abides in the vine; neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine and you are the branches: He that abides in Me and I in him shall bring forth much fruit; but without me you can do nothing.

“If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast off as a withered branch and men gather them up and throw them into a fire where they are burned.” [Jn. 15:4-6].

“Are you, my co-interrogator, and all your Baptists on this Vine like its branches?”

“If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch that is withered” (Jn. 15:6).

“Yes!” exclaimed the Baptist sectarian, “We are on the Vine, like branches.”

“When did you graft yourselves to this Vine?”

“When we began to believe. Christ Himself said: ‘Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.’ [Jn. 3:36] We believe and nothing more is demanded of us. Where the Lord is, we also will be. Did He not say, ‘Where I am my servant will also be there?’” [Jn. 12:26]

“But you heard,” replied Father Kyril, “what the Apostle says, that even demons believe and confess Christ as the Son of God. Remember how those possessed cried out: ‘What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of God!’ [Mt. 8:29] And, of course, both faith and confession are not sufficient for salvation for them.

“Let us clarify the Lord’s words about the Vine and branches. “Take a look at this big tree, which is probably at least a hundred years old. How many green branches there are on it. How many sap-filled leaves. As long as the branch is on the tree, it is alive, it is full of life-giving sap, for it receives this vital fluid from the tree.

“If, however, a branch or a leaf tears away from the tree, it perishes. At first such a branch will remain green, but with

each passing hour this greenness will fade, the leaves will curl, fall off and death will overcome the branch; it will dry up and rot.

“The same rays of sun heat this torn branch as heat the tree; both are watered by the same rain. Nevertheless, there is already no life in the branch which has torn away. This is what it means to tear away from the Vine.”

“But this does not mean us,” shouted the Baptist. “We have not torn away from the tree. Just as we once believed in Jesus Christ, so we believe now!”

“It is not enough to believe. Faith alone in Christ does not yet give the right to assert that you are on the Vine.

“Here on the ground is a little green branch. Pass me that little branch, son.

“You see, the little branch is still altogether green, just as those on the tree. Even this branch could have said: ‘I am alive; the sap of the tree is in me. I will definitely always be green and blossom in blessed happiness with the tree!’ Yet we know that its destruction is unavoidable. Is it not necessary to say the same about all the preachers of new faiths, about all sectarians? They, like this little branch, cry: ‘We are green, we are with Christ, we are saved, we are inhabitants of paradise, etc...’ But, alas! They are not on the Vine, they are not members of Christ’s Body.”

“Allow me,” the sectarian interrupted. “We say about ourselves what God’s word says. Yes, we are saved! We know, just as you yourself read, that there is no other name given whereby we must be saved. Read in the Epistle to the Romans: ‘... Christ died for us...being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved...’ [Rom. 5:8-9]; ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from every sin’ [1 Jn. 1:7]. We strongly believe this and ‘having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ [Rm. 5:1]

“Listen to still more. The Lord Himself said, ‘... So that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have life everlasting’ [Jn. 3:15-16], and the Apostle clearly says: ‘You are saved by grace through faith...’ [Eph. 2:8].

“You see, we are not branches which have been torn from the tree; we are on the Vine because we believe. Listen also, all you who have gathered here. Do not fear to believe in Christ. He who believes in Christ is saved, is on the Vine, is with Christ”.

“And the demons which, according to the Holy Scriptures, also believe and confess Christ, are they also with Christ?” Father Kyril asked. “The evil spirit clearly said: ‘I know Jesus.’” [Acts 19:15] The evil spirit also confesses that salvation is through Jesus Christ. Remember when the apostles preached in Philippi, the evil spirit which possessed the

servant-woman said: "These men are the servants of the most high God, who have come to show us the way to salvation" [Acts 16:17].

"The demons know that people are redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, they believe this with fear and trembling; but what benefit do they derive from their faith?"—None. Why? Because faith alone will not suffice; alone it will not unify one with Christ. Besides faith, something else is necessary. It is necessary to be in Christ's Church. It is necessary to be a member of this Church for salvation."

"So how would you have it—that these stones and wood are the Church?" exclaimed the sectarian. "The word of God clearly says: "Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus Christ, there is the Church." [not a quotation, but cf. Mt. 18:20] And here we already have up to ten persons, believers, at present re-born. We are the Church; but for you, the Church is a building of stone or brick with bells and a cross on top.

"Did you not say today, 'The meeting will be held near the church'? Did not these people say today, 'Let us go to the church'? You have forgotten that we ourselves are the church, as the Apostle says: 'do you not know that you are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you?' [1 Cor. 3:16]".

"Stop!" said Father Kyril sternly. "I don't know whether you have consciously or unconsciously swerved off the subject. Right now our conversation is not about temples. I said that

for salvation it is necessary to be a member of Christ's Church, that is, to be a member of that visible community of believers which Christ founded.

"Pious listeners, I think that you understand that when I speak of Christ's Church, we are not speaking of a building of stone or wood, and we are not speaking about the temple."

"We understand, father," said one of the faithful. "This sectarian, is only saying these things intentionally in order to confuse the matter."

"That is true; but to speak only in order to confuse the matter is both sinful and shameful," continued Father Kyril, turning to the Baptist. "You are taking upon yourself an especially heavy sin, young preacher. There is no doubt that you understand perfectly well what our conversation is about, but you are being evasive in order to lead these good and simple people into error. I can imagine what you say at your gatherings to these simple-souled believers; on what a destructive path you are seeking to lead them."

"The ears grow weary, father, from the sacrilege that he speaks," called out some person, evidently zealous in the Faith. "He seeks to destroy everything, raving that neither priests nor the Lord's House are necessary. He demands that icons and even the Cross of Christ be thrown out. He denies the Theotokos, the angels and the saints—throw everything out! Nor does he say it simply, but with mockery and cursing."



“Then why do you go and listen to this sacrilege?” asked Father Kyril.

“We do not know why ourselves,” the zealot replied. “Some kind of demon encourages: ‘go and listen!’ One goes and listens to all this; one becomes angry, inflamed, but you can’t leave. It is exactly as if some alien power is holding you there. One feels that there is something unclean in all this. Is this not the activity of Antichrist?”

“Your guesses are correct and in agreement with God’s word. All these preachers of new faiths are doing great evil; they are striving to destroy Christ’s Church and to prepare people for the acceptance of Antichrist. Therefore, brethren, be careful and prudent. Listen to what the Holy Apostle John says: ‘Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but try these spirits to ascertain if they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world’ [1 Jn. 4:1].

“And here we are scrutinizing this preacher; what sort of spirit has appeared amongst us—is he from God? No, it is evident that he belongs to the number of false prophets. Since he has torn away from the tree—from Christ, since he does not belong to the Church, then, of course, the spirit of God is not in him. That he speaks well, that he sings well, together with the young women who have come with him, that he calls himself holy—this does not mean that he is sent by God.

“The Apostle Paul warns: For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ;

but do not wonder at this, for Satan himself takes on the appearance of an angel of light...' [2 Cor. 11:13-14]

"Watch out for yourselves, Orthodox Christians! Danger is near if Satan himself takes on the appearance of an angel of light. Do not follow every spirit, but remain firm in Orthodoxy. Listen to the Apostle who says: 'Do those things which you have learned, received, heard and seen in me and the God of peace will be with you' [Phil. 4:9].

"When anyone appears before you with any kind of new teaching, ask of him first of all: does he belong to the Holy Church? Who sent him to preach? Does he love holy Orthodoxy? The Apostle, in another place, warns, 'Beware of the workers of evil' [Phil. 3:2]."

"We are not workers of evil!" the sectarian cried out frantically. "I have already said that we believe in Christ. I have already said that we compose the Church of Christ. Christ Himself said that, 'Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there amongst them', and where Christ is there is the Church."

Concerning your statement that two or three gathered together compose the Church," replied Father Kyril, "I shall have something to say about this later. Now, however, let us clarify still further, in detail, the teaching of God's word concerning the Church.

“First of all, I shall tell you something terrible; terrible but correct: Not only are you not with Christ, but you are actually against Christ, because you are seeking to tear believers away from the Church. You seek to destroy the unity of the Faith. Here is what the Lord says about you Protestants: ‘He that is not with Me is against Me and he that does not gather with me scatters abroad’ [Mt. 12:30].

“And never have any people, while calling upon one Name, been more scattered abroad than you Protestants. What kind of unity of faith do you have, tearing at one another, refusing to accept the baptisms of one another, one sect dividing into another, which in turn re-divides, preaching hatred from the pulpit, one for another.

“Now let us continue our explanations about the Church, on the basis of the Holy Scripture.

“First let us sing the prayer, ‘O Lord, save Thy people.’”

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Let us read from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, in the twentieth chapter, from the twelfth verse: ‘Just as the body is one and has many organs, all the organs together, while many, compose one body: just so is Christ. We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body...we have all been made to drink into one Spirit.’ [1 Cor. 12:12-13].

“Here the Apostle compares the society of true believers, those saved, with the human body. The body of man is composed of many various organs—arms, legs, eyes, etc. Each of these organs, so long as they are not separated from the body, are alive and each one fulfils its function.

“Cut off and separate, for example, an arm or a leg from the whole organism—and then what? It not only loses life, but begins to decay, becoming an object which arouses repulsion, spreading around itself an odour which is harmful to health. It is dangerous even to touch it because it is possible to become infected and die from it.

“Why does the Apostle speak thus? He explains later what this comparison is for. He says: ‘And you are Christ’s Body, each individually, you are members.’ [1 Cor, 12:27].

“So we all are members of Christ’s Body. We are near and beloved to Christ. As each member of our body is fed with vital strength from our body, so we live by that abundant strength which we receive from Christ.

“But perhaps you do not comprehend—we are members of what Body of Christ? We know of Christ’s Body which was covered with wounds, suffered for us and was nailed to the Cross; that body with which Christ later ascended to heaven. Does the Apostle speak of this Body of Christ when in Matthew we read: ‘Where two or three are gathered in My Name...’? No, we cannot become members of this body. This body the Lord gives us in the Holy Communion: ‘take, eat—

this is My Body,' 'He who eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood has eternal life.' [Jn. 6:54 (cf. 66)]

"Then, about which Body of Christ does the Apostle speak, declaring that we must belong to it as organs in order to be saved? God's word gives you the answer to this question. Opening the Epistle to the Ephesians we read: 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... and has put all things under His feet and appointed Him as head over all things pertaining to the Church which is His Body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.' [Eph. 1:22-23]

"And so Christ is the Head of the Church and the Church is His Body. We must be members of this Body of Christ, i.e., the Church, in order to be saved. Remember we read, 'and you are Christ's Body, each individually, you are members (organs).' [1 Cor. 12:27] He who will not be a member of this Body cannot, of course, be saved; for he will not be receiving abundant life from Christ, because Christ feeds only His own Body, as its Head, as the Head of the Church.

"Outside the Church there is no salvation. And you, my dear sir, have repudiated the Church; by what path do you hope to attain salvation?"

"I am saved already; I have nothing to attain. God's word clearly says: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.' [Acts 16:31] I believe and so I am saved," the sectarian answered.

“But we have seen that faith alone is still insufficient for salvation. That same word of God says that it is necessary for each one who has come to believe to join on to Christ’s Body as a member, to become a member of Christ’s Church. Do you find yourself in Christ’s Church? Are you a member of Christ’s Body or not?”

“I have already repeatedly said that where two or three are gathered in Christ’s Name, the Church is there. We are more than two or three; that means that I am in the Church,” the Baptist replied.

“But this is your own invention and not the teaching of God’s word. In the usual fashion of Protestants, you have pre-empted only a small portion of a scripture and re-interpreted it to fit your own preconceived teaching.”

“No, this is the teaching of God’s word. Here in the Gospel of Matthew we read: ‘Where two or three are gathered in My Name, I am there in the midst of them’ [Mat. 18:20]. If Christ is in the midst of us, then the Church is here and so we assert that we find ourselves in the Church.” “You are in error yourself,” replied Father Kyril, “and you are purposely leading others into error. The words you read do not at all say what you claim.

“He read only the twentieth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, excluding that part of the Scripture which does not bear out the Baptist interpretation. Let us read also, only we will begin with the preceding verse: ‘And if he refuses to listen

to them, tell it to the Church: but if he refuses to listen to the Church, then consider him to be a heathen and a publican’.

“‘In truth I tell you that whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven’.

“‘Again I tell you that if two of you shall agree on earth concerning anything that they shall request, My Father in Heaven will do it for them; for where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them.’ [Mat. 8:17-20]

“As you can see here the words which the sectarian quoted are not about the Church, but about the prayers of those who are already in the Church. Christ speaks first about the Church as already established, the Church to which all must submit. Further, He promises that, of those in the Church, if two or three will pray about one and the same thing, the Lord will hear them. The prayer of many is stronger than the prayer of one. That is why we, all the members of the Church, gather for common prayer.

“As you see,” continued Father Kyril, turning to the Protestant, “you completely misread, misunderstood and misused the Gospel words. This is clear to all the listeners. I will not say you intentionally tried to fool them, but you have erred yourself.

“If everywhere that two or three faithful gathered together, that would constitute the Church, then how many bodies would Christ have; for contrary to the Holy Scripture, these faithful would not be members of the Body of Christ, but would rather constitute separate Bodies of Christ.

“But Christ founded only one Church. He said: ‘I will found My Church...’ [Mat. 11:18] not, My Churches; and ‘My Church’ means only one. It is necessary to belong only to it. According to Protestantism, there is not one but thousands and thousands of Churches—as this one says: ‘where two or three are, there is the Church.’ He is a Baptist and, of course, he considers that only Baptists constitute the true Church.

“By means of sweet words, ‘flattery and eloquence’, [Rm. 16:18; Eph. 4:14; 5:6; etc.] as the Apostle says, he has deceived you, charmed you, and you have listened attentively saying: ‘he is telling the truth, that’s the way it is, and, see—it’s all according to the Gospel!’ Yet he has read text after text completely out of order and proper context, thus mutilating the Gospel.

“You people are not well educated, you are no theologians, how can you grasp it? You have already heard ‘two or three gathered’ and ‘here is the Church.’ Now understand this yourselves that the Church is not there where two or three are gathered, even when they are gathered in Christ’s Name. The Baptists also gather in Christ’s Name, and the Adventists and the Molokans and the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Mormons and the Pentecostalists and the Khlysts and every other



heretical sect. They all gather in the name of Christ—‘there’ this Baptist tells us, ‘is the Church’. There are so many of these Protestant sects that they number in the many hundreds. Are they each one of them equally the Church of Christ?’

“All of you should understand that they are not. The Church is one. It was founded by Jesus Christ and spread abroad by the Apostles. Throughout all the centuries it has been a visible community in the whole world. Its teaching is unchanged; it can neither be concealed nor can it err. Such is the Orthodox Church.

“And when did your Baptist church come into existence?”

“We live according to the Gospel,” retorted the Baptist, “we don’t need history.”

“Do you not know when you were born? Who your parents are? How is it then that you do not know when your Baptist sect was born and who founded it? And yet you step forth as a preacher of truth!

“I think that you know very well, but you are afraid to say. Your Baptist sect appeared even later than the Lutheran sect, well after Martin Luther. He was your parent, and John Calvin—he also was your parent and founder; they and the humanist philosophy of the West created and founded your sect.

“You cannot even count more than four-hundred years of your existence. And where was your ‘truth’, your ‘Church’ before Luther? Does this mean that for a whole fifteen-hundred years no one knew the truth, no one knew the Church? That would mean that for fifteen centuries no one was saved. It means that the Church had not existed at all or that the ‘gates of hell’ had prevailed against it. This is but a lot of nonsense! ‘A city standing on a hill cannot be concealed’ [Mat 15:14] says the Lord, and the Holy Church certainly was not concealed for fifteen centuries.

“I think,” continued the priest, “that it is clear to everyone that your sect is on a destructive path and you are calling others to that very same destructive path. Woe unto you tempters! Think of your own salvation!”

“We are already saved. Faith in Christ saves and we believe,” the sectarian shouted angrily.

“Leave that!” exclaimed Father Kyril. “We have already heard that from your lips. Do not forget that, according to the Holy Scripture, even demons believe.

“And now brothers and sisters,” said Father Kyril, turning to the faithful, “hear further the teaching of the Holy Church about itself. In our time, when there have appeared so many false prophets, with Gospel in hand, yet speaking against the Gospel and seeking to destroy God’s deed, you must firmly know that our Orthodox Church is precisely that Church

which the Lord God created and in that Church alone can we be saved.

“If you become a member of Christ’s Church, you have the hope of salvation, you become a member of Christ’s Body, you are fed with the abundant strength for life and piety from the True Vine—Christ the Lord. If you enter a false society which calls itself a Church, you will find yourself opposed to God, you will find inevitable ruin for yourself. Yes, it is terrifying to err in this matter.

“How can one recognize Christ’s Church in all this number of various religious communities? It is not difficult. The Lord gave signs by which each person can, if he truly desires, distinguish His Church from other religious communities.

“Here is one of the signs which you will recognize easily. The true Church bears its existence from the moment when the Lord created it. It can be traced, without interruption, directly back to Christ; its growth and development can be followed clearly from the Apostles to this very day.

“The Protestant sects, on the other hand, can trace their history back only to some philosopher-theologian. The date when the Baptist sect, for example, created itself, can be firmly established as having taken place some fifteen hundred years after Christ. This sect is not ‘of Christ’, but Calvinist, ‘of Calvin’. Its growth and development can be clearly traced only back to Martin Luther, for the Baptists are a schism of Lutheranism which is, in turn, a schism from Papism. Each

new Protestant sect is a schism of a schism, and so on, ad infinitum.

“During His earthly sojourn, the Lord promised to create His Church—‘I will create My Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it’; [Mat. 16:18] and He created when He gave Himself up on the Cross and spilled His all-pure Blood on Calvary.

“The Apostle says: ‘Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it’. [Eph. 5:25] Let us remember—Christ’s Church carries Her beginning from the time of the suffering of Christ the Savior. At the cost of His sufferings, at the cost of His all-pure Blood, Christ created, redeemed His Church—the visible community of His true followers. On the fortieth day after His resurrection, the Lord ascended into heaven, having promised His disciples that He would be with them invisibly to the end of the ages and that the Father would send them the Holy Spirit as Comforter.

“He sent them the Holy Spirit-Comforter on the day of Pentecost, as we read in the book of Acts. But that was when the Apostle lived, you will say. But now with whom does Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit abide? In every separate person who claims that he believes in Christ? In every religious society which, even though it acknowledges Christ, lives a life separated from Christ’s Church?

“No, these communities must be considered to be societies of those opposed to God, since they violate Christ’s will that all be united.

“Where and with whom does Christ and the Holy Spirit abide now? You already know that Christ is the Head of the Church: ‘God placed Him over all...as Head of the Church which is His Body.’ [Eph. 1:22-23]

“This means that the promise of Christ, ‘I am with you always, even until the end of the ages’ concerns Christ’s Church in which He will abide eternally, as its Head. Concerning the Holy Spirit, we read: ‘I will plead with the Father,’ says Christ, ‘and He will send another Comforter which will be with you forever.’ [Jn. 14:16]

“This was said to the Apostles. But they are not now on earth, yet the Holy Spirit abides ‘forever’, ‘unto all ages’. With whom does It abide then? ‘With you’, with the believers who are ‘one’ in Christ’s Church. Can Christ and the Holy Spirit be there where there are hundreds of sectarian cults despising one another, at enmity with each other, cursing and condemning each other in the Name of Christ? For, such is Protestantism. Of course not. In order to receive salvation each person must be in the Church. ‘Whoever does not listen to the Church is equal to a heathen’ [cf. Mt. 18:17], says the word of God.

“This concerns you Baptists, ‘Beware that you do not become fighters against God’ [Acts 5:39].”

“Remember,” Father Kyril continued, “Christ and the Spirit-Comforter will abide in the Church until the end of the ages. This is the promise of the Lord; it is completely inevitable that it will be fulfilled—‘Heaven and earth will pass, but My words will not pass away,’ [Mk. 13:31; Lk.. 21:33] said Christ the Savior. It is clear that Christ’s Church will endure until the end of the ages, until the second coming of the Savior, and that it will preserve, in all purity, Christ’s truth and the teachings and statutes given to it by God.

“No attack by the enemies are terrifying to it, even though there are many of them. The Jews persecuted it, the heathens persecuted it and now the militant atheists especially torment it and it is tormented by these false preachers with new teachings, sectarians of various numerous so-called ‘Churches’, these ‘satanic assemblies’ [Rev. 2:9] as they are called in the Revelation.

“The Church, nevertheless, like a ship in a stormy sea, guided by the hand of an experienced helmsman, bravely cuts through these ferocious waves and does not fear sinking. In vain is this work, these fruitless efforts of all the enemies of the Church. In vain also are the works of your Baptist sect. You cannot sink Christ’s ship; you cannot turn Christ’s Church from the proper path.

“It happens, sometimes, that during a storm, waves wash some careless passenger off the deck into the deep. So it is in the life of the Church—false prophets can sometimes tear some weak believer from the Church and he will perish. But

not all the powers of Hell can vanquish the whole Church. The Helmsman of the Church is Christ the Lord Himself; the Guide of this ship is the Holy Spirit.

“Stand firmly on that Ship. Do not turn away from the Church. Strengthen each other and pray that the Lord may preserve everyone from drowning in the waves of unbelief, in the waves of sectarian false teaching which, in our days, so fiercely attack the Holy Orthodox Church, seeking to devour its weak children.

“I think that all of you here present, with the exception of the sectarians, of course, have been in the Church of Christ since your childhood. How did you enter into this salutary Ship—Christ’s Church? By what door did you enter? Where is the entrance into it? God’s word testifies clearly about this. The Lord Jesus Christ said: ‘Truly I tell you, that unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.’ [Jn. 3:5]

“And the Apostle Paul, speaking about the Church in his Epistles to the Ephesians, says: ‘Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it in order to sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.’ [Eph. 5:25-26]

“So the Church is cleansed by a washing of water; in it are found only those who have been through this washing of water. Can one who has not gone through this washing of water belong to the Church? No! What is this washing of

water? What is this birth from water? It is not necessary to explain this to you; you all know already that this is Baptism.

“When the Lord Himself called Saul, the great persecutor of believers, to the apostolic service, Saul was told: ‘arise and be baptized and wash your sins away.’ [Acts 22:16] By baptism with water, Saul entered Christ’s Church. There is no other path. In order to come to a more firm understanding of this, let us read the following words of the epistle to the Corinthians: ‘because we are all baptized by one Spirit into one Body...’ [1 Cor. 12:13]

“We had already heard earlier that the Church is Christ’s Body. How did we all become one Body of Christ, His Holy Church? We have just seen that it is through baptism. Without this there is not ‘one Body’; there are no un-baptized in the Church. And now, my Baptist co-interrogator, you say that you are in the Church, but what about your children? Where are they—in the Church or not? For, they have not gone through the washing of water; they are not baptized. Where are they?”

“They are unable to believe,” the sectarian answered, “therefore they cannot be baptized and they are not in the Church.” He paused for thought and then said, “They don’t need this. After all, haven’t you read in the Gospel what the Lord said about children? He clearly said: ‘let the children come to Me, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.’ [Mk. 10:14] They do not need baptism; they do not need the Church, They are automatically inheritors of the Kingdom of God.”



“Yes!” replied Father Kyril, “The Lord says: ‘Tolerate the little children and do not prevent them from coming unto Me...’ You know this, but still you prevent these children from coming to Christ.

“What would you say if, while sailing on a ship at sea, some wretched mother began to throw her own children overboard into the deep as a sacrifice to fierce sharks? But, you see, you are doing just this. By not allowing children to be baptized, you are leaving them as a sacrifice to the powers of hell; you are not allowing them into the Church; you are forbidding them to come unto Christ.

“There is no salvation outside the Church. The Lord provided the possibility for all mankind to be saved, but only those who become members of His Body, i.e., the Church, are saved. The Apostle Paul says:

“... Christ is the Savior of the Body.’ [Eph. 5:23]

“Children must be allowed into the Church, they must be as young little branches on the Vine, as organs of the Body of Christ.”

“But the Lord says ‘theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven’ and they will enter heaven without any of this,” replied the Baptist.

“In truth,” said Father Kyril, “what is actually said by the Lord is ‘of such is the Kingdom of heaven...’ Childlike pureness and innocence has a right to the heavenly kingdom. Children,

however, must be led, even carried there. They, being pure and sinless, must be freed from the consequences of the ancestral sin through the Church. It was not in vain that the Lord strictly warned the apostles: ‘Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto Me...’[Mk. 10:14] and He says this to you sectarians—‘do not prevent the children from coming unto Me...’ But what is your reply?—‘No, Lord, we won’t let them come unto You!’

“Fear God, you unfortunates. For you are committing the outrage of Herod who had killed 14,000 babes [cf. Mat. 2:16]. Stop committing Herod’s crime against your own children. Do not destroy them! Do not forget that only those who have ‘clothed themselves’ in Christ through baptism can be with Christ, as the Apostle says: ‘as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have vested yourselves in Christ.’ [Gal. 3:27]

“Your children, although they are innocent in personal sins, are never-the-less ‘unclean’ without baptism, according to the words of the Holy Scripture. They must ‘be clothed’ in Christ through baptism.

“Now, Orthodox Christians, you clearly see what this new teaching is like, this teaching which is brought to you by false teachers. In the Holy Scripture, such teaching is called a heresy and its preachers are called ‘heretics’. Listen to the command of the Holy Apostle Paul about how to treat such heretics: ‘If a man remains a heretic after the first and second

admonition, reject him, knowing that he is subverted and in sin, being self-condemned.' [Tit. 3:10-11]

“Thus, we have seen that both adults and little children must belong to the Church and they enter the Church, become members of it, through the mystery of baptism. Through baptism, all believers become ‘complete in one’ [1 Cor. 12:12-13; vid. Gal. 3:28; Col.3:11], the Greek and the Judean, are united by invisible bonds both amongst themselves and with Christ the Lord. They become ‘one’ in Christ, they become one body restored to life by the Holy Spirit. It is in this fact that one comes to understand why the Church is undefeatable. It is in vain that you Baptists attack Christ’s Church. Have you ever seen the rocky shore of a sea? What terrifying waves are driven against these cliffs. And what happens? These waves are smashed, they turn into foam and spray, but the cliff stands on and on.

“So it is that Christ’s Church does not fear you false teachers, nor even the powers of hell themselves. The strongest, crudest enemies have smashed, are smashing now and will be smashing in the future against the firmness of the Holy Church. How many heretics have there been in former times? Where are they now? They have all perished.

“Christ’s Church, as the Body of Christ, unites all the baptized, truly believing, amongst themselves; not only the faithful on this earth, but also those who have already left this sinful world.

“God’s word testifies that: ‘God the Father,...having revealed to us the mystery of His will, in accordance with His desire...to gather together all things, both that which is in heaven and that which is on earth, into one under the headship of Christ’. [cf. Eph. 1:3-10. (Christ’s Body, i.e., the Church, is one, encompassing the faithful of both heaven and earth).]”

“In what magnitude and wondrous beauty the Orthodox Church is depicted before our spiritual gaze. It is here on earth, and it is in heaven—yet it is undivided, one under a single Head, Christ Jesus. Both we, the sinful inhabitants of the world, and they, the heavenly righteous-ones—we are all of us members of one Body. The Apostle says: ‘But you have arrived upon Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the numberless company of the angels; to the triumphant council and church of the first-born which are written in heaven; and to God the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant...’ [Heb. 12:22-24].”

“You see that we are united with the angels, with the Church of the first-born and with the spirits of the righteous-ones who have reached perfection. Oh, how majestic is Christ’s Church. In it, both heaven and earth have been united, in it are the angels, the souls of the righteous-ones and Christ the Lord Himself, and the Life-giving Holy Spirit; and, oh, the mercy and love of God, we sinners are in it too. This is what the God-created Church is like. What beauty, what majesty!”

“Compare all this with that invention of man’s weak mind: ‘where two or three have gathered—there is the Church’; how insignificant it is. How insignificant is man and how insignificant is his teaching. Yet you opened your ears in order to hear their empty words and at least some of you were ready to throw away what is eternal and Divine in order to adhere to what is insignificant, corruptible and disastrous. Be repentant, and in the future watch over your salvation. ‘See that you walk carefully, not as foolish ones, but as wise...do not be unwise, but understand what the Lord’s will is’. [Eph. 5:15, 17]

“The Gospel teaching that not only the believers on earth, but also the heavenly dwellers belong to the Church, under the Headship of Christ, gives us a firm hope for salvation. Why? Because they and we are, therefore, members of one Body.

“The dwellers of heaven, being older and stronger members, do not abandon us or leave us without their help. They succor us in our struggles, for they are living testimony of the truth of salvation and eternal life. The Theotokos, the angels, all of God’s Holy-Ones, the Apostles, Prophets, Holy Prelates, Martyrs, the Unmercenary-Healers, and the righteous-ones to whom we turn with our supplications: all of them pray for us, intercede for us before Christ our Head. They extend their hand of help to us in our misfortunes and they comfort us in our suffering. Where do you Protestants have this wondrous help of the dwellers of heaven? Where is their support for you in your march to eternal life?”

“Our support is Christ!” exclaimed the sectarian. “No other support is necessary for us. Christ redeemed us and saved us. No one can help us—neither the Theotokos nor your saints. It is in vain that you speak to them; they absolutely cannot hear you and they cannot intercede for you.

“You reproach us for going against God’s word,” he continued, “but now you yourself contradict the Holy Scripture. What does the Apostle Paul say? ‘For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus’ [1 Tim. 2:5 (i.e. Christ-God as Man, God become man in order to unite man to God.)] Do you hear? It says one mediator, one intercessor. But you have the Theotokos, angels, thousands of intercessors! Where did you get them? Is the intercession of Jesus Christ before God the Father insufficient for salvation? To ask for the intercessions of the Saints is a degradation of Christ. Judge for yourselves, listeners; does the Orthodox Church act correctly when it prays to Saints?”

“The Orthodox Church acts correctly,” replied Father Kyril calmly. “But one is amazed by you. How is it that you, a preacher, completely refuse to understand the Holy Scripture? Tell us why Christ is called Intercessor and Mediator.”

“Because,” the Baptist answered, “He alone redeemed us. He alone saved us. We know no other redeemers or Saviors.”

“Absolutely correct,” the priest began. “He brought Himself to be a sacrifice; nor is there any other being able to bring such a sacrifice. In this fact, Christ is the only Mediator and the only Intercessor.

“When we appeal to the heavenly members of the Church with requests for their aid, we ask only that they pray for us before the one Intercessor, Christ. Could it be that to pray for one another is a degradation of Christ? If that is so then why does the Apostle James say, ‘...pray for one another.’ [Jas. 5:16.] and was the Apostle Paul teaching US to degrade Christ when he commanded: ‘Thus I exhort you, first of all, that you make supplications, prayers and intercessions...for all men’. [1 Tim. 2:1]

“And you—why do you pray for the members of your sect, and not for them only, but you also intercede for non-members that they will be converted and join your sect? Thus you intercede. Yet, according to you, only Christ can intercede in this way. What right do you have to become an intercessor? Therefore, cease at once to pray for others since that, according to your teaching, is a great sin.

“I am amazed at how poorly you understand the Holy Scripture. We appeal for help to the Saints, and the Saints pray for us because we are all members of one and the same Body of Christ—the Church; for, members of a body help each other and both commiserate and rejoice together. Read in the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and remember these words:

“‘If one member suffers, all members commiserate with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ.’ [1 Cor. 12:26-27.] Therefore, the holy dwellers of heaven cannot do otherwise than to rejoice with us or commiserate with us in our misfortune. What kind of commiseration would it be if they will not desire to help us? And, wishing to give us help, where else would they turn with their fervent prayer for us but to this One Intercessor and Intermediary, Christ, Who has shed his Blood for us?

“Now where is there a contradiction here to the Holy Scripture?

“We have already seen that there is a tight bond of unity and a close communion between all members of the Church. They are bound together by concern for one another, by commiseration and by love for one another. Therefore, all members of the Church, without differentiation, whether living on earth or having reposed, all pray for one another.

“You sectarians, however, divide people and separate them into living and dead. The Church, on the other hand, knows no such divisions. We know that no such division exists with God, ‘...for with Him, all are alive,’ [Lk. 20:38] as God’s word says.

“The souls of the righteous-ones who have reached perfection rejoice and celebrate, and we rejoice and celebrate with them, for, according to the Holy Scripture, ‘If one member is



honored, all members rejoice with him.” [1 Cor. 12:36] If we who dwell on earth suffer from our sins, needs and illnesses, we know that all the souls of the righteous-ones who have reached perfection commiserate with us. ‘If one member suffers, all members commiserate with it,’ the Bible says. We know that they pray for us and we are assured that, ‘The...prayer of a righteous-one availeth much’. [Jas. 5:16]

We in our turn, pray for all those who have reposed in the faith, who have not yet reached perfection, not been glorified by the Church. In this is the highest manifestation of Christ’s love which unites both heaven and earth.

“How poor you are, sectarians; for you do not possess what is most important, what must be foremost in Christianity—you do not have love. You have hardened and become cold in your pride—‘I believe, I am saved, I am an inheritor of paradise, I am holy,’ you say. But you do not have the most important thing of all—love. What will you Baptists do when, according to the Apostle’s words, you will see the future life not conjecturally, as if through a dull glass, but face to face and you will find that love is greater than faith? [1 Cor. 13:12-13]

“How will you go to the Source of Love, not possessing love? Do not forget that ‘if you had all the faith so that you could even move mountains, but do not possess love, then you are nothing’. [1 Cor. 13:2] And where is your love if death has become the victor and has broken your spiritual bonds of unity both with relatives and with fellow believers? Can you cry out in ecstasy with the Apostle: ‘Death! where is thy sting?

Grave! Where is thy victory?' [1 Cor. 15:55] Alas, you cannot. You do not have love, and faith without love is nothing. A handful of soil, a tombstone have become unconquerable obstacles for communion with those who have departed from the world. Can there be salvation there, where there is no love? Decide for yourselves.

“And thus, in Christ’s Church, heaven and earth are united. Members of the Church are all the truly-believing of all times and from all places, both the living and those who have reposed. And since those who have reposed are not dead, but alive, intercourse between all the members has never ceased and will never cease.”

Having prayed together, we took a recess from the discourse, and animated conversations were carried on throughout the crowd.

Father Kyril called the discussion to order, and began again: “In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

“In the Symbol of Faith we read: ‘I believe in one Holy...Church’. The Church is holy without a doubt. God’s word says: ‘Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it in order to sanctify it.’ (Eph. 5:25-26.) If Christ Himself is the founder and sanctifier of the Church, He is also the Head of the Church and so there can be no doubt that it is holy. It is written: ‘If the first fruit is holy, the rest is also holy: and if the root is holy, so are the branches’ (Rom. 11:16).

“The Church is holy also because the Holy Spirit abides in it and because the Heavenly Church is one with it. Finally, it is holy because all its teaching and statutes are holy. According to God’s mercy, we belong to the Holy Church which is called ‘Orthodox’. By vigils and virtues, being quickened by prayer, strengthened by hope and consecrated by the Holy Mysteries, we ascend from perfection to perfection and become worthy upon our repose, to enter into the joy of our Lord.”

“As far as I know,” the Protestant raised his voice, “Orthodox Christians always call themselves sinners. Is that so?”

“Yes, we are all sinners and we call ourselves sinners.”

“Then how,” said the Baptist triumphantly, “can your Church be Holy if all of you are sinners? You say that all the millions of people, each one individually, is a sinner, but as soon as all have gathered together, the Church is already ‘holy’? This doesn’t make sense and isn’t in agreement with God’s word. Permit me to read you something from an Epistle of the Apostle Paul: ‘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, spotless, without wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.’ (Eph, 5:26 27).

“This” he proclaimed, “is how the true Church must be. There must not be a single sinner there, but only those who are holy and pure. Amongst you Orthodox, however, no matter whom

you ask, it is the same reply: 'I am sinful, a sinner.' Is that what Christ's Church is like?"

"Well," asked Father Kyril, "what do you think about yourselves?"

"We are holy and pure! We do not sin! We believe in Jesus Christ and abide in Him and 'everyone who abides in him does not sin,' we read at first John, chapter three, verse six."

"It would appear to me," replied Father Kyril, "that you are not giving such a correct report of yourselves. So far your words are dripping with self-conceit, boasting and gross pride. Moreover, you have a complete lack of knowledge not only of the spirit of the Holy Scripture, but also of its letter.

"Now I will answer your questions," the priest continued. "We have already seen why the Church is holy. I will repeat: it is holy because the Founder and Head of it is Christ; because the Holy Spirit abides in it; it is holy because the heavenly Church is one with it; and it is holy because its teachings are holy and because it is the steward of the Divine Mysteries (sacraments). There are clear testimonies to all this in the Holy Scripture.

"The presence of sinners as well as the righteous in the earthly Church in no way prevents it from being holy. I can't understand where the Protestants found such a teaching that sinners must not be permitted in the Church. This is not spoken of in God's word."

“What do you mean, it is not spoken of?” replied the sectarian. “The Apostle repeatedly writes: ‘to be called saints’ (1 Corinthians 1:1); ‘with all the saints’ (2 Corinthians 1:1); ‘to all the saints and faithful’ (Ephesians 1:1); ‘to all the saints in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 1:1); and so on. The Apostle always calls the faithful ‘saints’. If they are saints, then, of course, they are not sinful—a sinner is not holy and a saint is not a sinner. Our Baptist church is a holy church. We who have accepted Christ as our personal Savior are all holy saints. We are believers and we do not sin. But your Orthodox Church, how can it be called holy when you are all sinners? And what kind of sinners yet? Whom do I see here?—drunkards, thieves, adulterers, smokers, yet suddenly, the Church is holy?”

At this reference to the people gathered, many, of course, became offended and a general disorder erupted. After some time the priest finally managed to restore order. He began again.

“Don’t be angry at our visitor. He didn’t mean to offend you. The whole trouble lies in the fact that he does not understand what the word ‘holy’ means. He thinks ‘holy’ means sinless. This, however, is a common mistake. But this is an error. Only the Lord can be called holy in the sense of one completely sinless, without any kind of insufficiency. God’s word testifies to this: ‘Only Thou art holy’ (Rev. 15:4). This is the testimony of the heavenly beings, precisely those whom we call ‘holy’. How can one say, then, that this Baptist with us today is holy in the sense of not possessing any sin?”

“What does the word ‘holy’ then mean in application to the faithful? It means: one who is set apart, apportioned to the Lord, separate from others. It means those believers in Christ who are separated by their faith from all other peoples. Thus the Lord says to the Jews: ‘And you will be with Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...’ (Ex.19:6). “As you see, the Hebrews were often called ‘holy’, a ‘holy nation’. Why? Because they were sinless? Of course not; for that same Lord who calls this people ‘holy’ also calls them ‘corrupted’ and ‘stiff-necked’, and we see that ‘they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them, and have made for themselves a molten calf and have worshipped it’ (Ex. 32:8).

“Bear in mind also that the Holy Scripture calls not only believing people ‘holy’, but also various elements and objects: earth (Ex. 3:5); water (Num. 5:17); house (1 Ki. 29:3); oil (Ps. 88:21) and other things as well. Do we then apply the meaning ‘sinlessness’ to these objects? Of course not. This means only that the objects are apportioned by a special act or word of God, Mt. Sinai, for example, or by special usage in Divine service, water, oil, holy vessels, etc. I think that-you all should understand what I mean.”

“It is in precisely this sense that we must understand the term ‘saints’, ‘holy’ as applied to believers by the apostles in their letters.

“Even now I could address you all as, ‘holy brothers and sisters in Christ’ and neither you nor I will think that you are sinless. Believers are ‘holy’, i.e., they are apportioned, set

apart from all other peoples who do not believe. Were there sinners in the local churches, amongst the believers to whom the apostles wrote? Did these believers consider themselves to be sinners at that time, the same faithful whom the apostle addressed as 'holy'? Let the Holy Scripture itself answer these questions: 'We all sin much' (cf. Jas. 3:2), the Apostle says of the believers of the Church. And John, the beloved Apostle says: 'If we say that we are sinless, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us' (1 Jn. 1:8).

"Do you hear that, Baptists? If you consider yourselves as possessing no sin, then you are self-deceived, and deceiving others, you are walking on a false path—there is no truth in you. This is said by the very same Apostle whose words you quoted, 'everyone who abides in Him does not sin'. What is this? Can it be that the Apostle contradicts himself? Of course not; for he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The whole trouble lies in the fact that you can read but you cannot understand what you read, just as Philip heard the Ethiopian reading scripture and asked, 'do you understand what you are reading?' (Acts 8:30). The Ethiopian was not full of pride as you Protestants are, he asked for the supervision of the Apostle in order to understand. You, with your weak human minds, want to seize the profound meaning of the Holy Scripture without the supervision of the Holy Apostolic Church; you wish to ignore and repudiate the words of the Apostle Peter: 'Know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is for any private interpretation.' (2 Pet. 1:20). Yet you dare to do this and to teach others to do it also. The holy Apostle Peter responds to you thus: '... in all his (Paul's)

epistles, he speaks of these things, and in them (the epistles) there are some things which are difficult to understand; yet those who are unlearned and unstable twist these, as they do the Scripture, to their own destruction...' (2 Pet. 3:16).

"No doubt you (speaking to the Baptist preacher) have read the Epistles of the Holy Apostles more than once. Could it be that you purposely ignored what insufficiencies, sins and crimes of which the apostles accuse those whom they call 'holy'? Read the Epistle of James who accuses and reproaches the faithful believers for scorning the poor, partiality, looseness of the tongue, animosity, quarrels, envy, slander and withholding the pay of workers, and so on. Those same Corinthians whom Paul calls 'holy' in his invocation, he reproaches for adultery, avarice, evil-speaking, drunkenness, robbery, litigation, and so on. He calls them sensual.

"It is clear that even the first Christians with their firm belief, love, confession and martyrdom, they who have shone forth in the whole world like bright heavenly stars, nevertheless, were not sinless and did not consider themselves to be so. The great Apostle himself, who was translated into heaven, sealed by Christ as a chosen vessel, who had seen the mansions of paradise and the bliss of those who dwell in the heavens; he was so completely remote from that gross pride and self-esteem which is so inherent in Protestantism. Behold how he speaks of himself, 'I am the chief of sinners' (1 Tim. 1:15), and again, 'Not that I have now attained (this) or am already made perfect: but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus once took hold of me. Brethren, I do not consider that I have



attained it yet: But I do this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' (Phil. 3:12-14).

"The apostle Paul does not consider himself as having reached holiness, perfection or having a guarantee of dwelling in paradise. He does not consider himself as being sinless, but he considers himself to be struggling forward.

"On this path one member of the Church will have progressed farther; another will have progressed less; another will still be only beginning his first step—is only just beginning the process of being perfected. In the Church, says the Apostle, as 'in a large house, there are vessels not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and of clay' (2 Tim. 2:20).

"Each person is exposed to temptations and all his life he must struggle with his sinful inclinations. The holy Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, depicts with amazing clarity, this picture of man struggling with his sinful inclinations: 'For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I work out, I know not. For what I wish, this I practise not; but what I hate, this I do. But if, what I do not wish, this I do, I consent to the law that it is good. Now then, no longer am I working it out, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good; for to will lieth beside me, but to work out the good I find not. For what good I wish, I do not; but what evil I wish not, this I practise. Now if, what I wish not, this I practise, no longer am

I working it out, but the sin dwelling in me. I find then the law in me, that, when I wish to do the good that the evil lies beside me. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and taking me captive in the law of sin which is in my members.’ (Rom. 7:14-23).

“When you Baptists penetrate into the meaning of these words of the great Apostle, you will understand how far you stand from the Evangelical truth. You Protestants do not possess humility. Pride has overwhelmed you—in this fact lies the entire horror of your situation. You cannot say with the publican, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ because on your lips and in your hearts are always the proud words of the Pharisee, ‘Thank you, O God, that I am not sinful like other people!’ This you have several times said here today.

“Now can you understand how far you are from any justification, how far indeed you are from salvation?

“Now you should come to realize that the Church is holy. The presence of sinners in it cannot serve as an obstacle to keep it from being holy.

“The time has grown quite late,” said Father Kyril, pausing for a moment. “Many of you have far to go home. I don’t wish to keep you for long, but in order to end the talk about the Church, it is necessary to explain why, in the Symbol of Faith, our Orthodox Christian Church is called Apostolic.

“It is written in the book of Revelation: ‘And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb’ (21:14).

“The cornerstone of the Church is Christ. Stones laid in the foundation of the Church are the Apostles. The Lord left to the Apostles all His teachings, all the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God. After his resurrection, He, in the course of forty days, instructed them how to establish His Church and how to spread it over the whole world, how to protect it from the attacks of unbelieving people, false teachers and the powers of hell.

“The Apostles, being inspired with the Holy Spirit, created that amazing order of Church life which we now see in the Orthodox Church. We see the pastors—bishops, priests and deacons; we see the flock—the laity; we are consecrated by the Divinely established Mysteries (sacraments) and the performance of divine services; we have prayerful communion with all members of the Church. We see various services in the Church which were established by the Apostles, as we read in the Holy Scripture: ‘And His gifts were varied; He Himself appointed some to protect it from the attacks of unbelieving people and false teachers and some to be teachers.’ (cf. Eph. 4:11 and 1 Cor. 12:28-29).

“As you can see, the positions and services of the various members of the Church differ. There are pastors and there are flocks. In the Epistle of the Apostle Peter it is written: ‘I warn and counsel the presbyters amongst you, as a fellow presbyter

and as an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a sharer in the glory that is to be revealed: Tend the flock of God that is your responsibility, not by coercion or constraint, but willingly; not dishonorably motivated by the advantages and profits, but eagerly and cheerfully. Not as domineering over those in your charge, but by being examples to the flock.

“And when the Chief Shepherd is revealed you will win the conqueror’s crown of glory.

“Likewise you that are younger and of lesser rank be subject to the presbyters, giving them due respect and yielding to their counsel. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility...’ (1 Pet. 5:1-5).

“In the Apostolic Church there is a Pastor-Overseer (i.e. Shepherd-Bishop)—Christ, there are pastors, there is the flock. Christ entrusts His flock to the pastors; they must tend it, guard it from fierce wolves, and feed it spiritually. The pastors are responsible for the flock entrusted to them and when the Pastor-Overseer appears, He will demand an account from them.

“Here is the order and arrangement of Church life in the Holy, Orthodox, Apostolic Church. Thus it has been up to the present time and will be to the end of the ages. We are the pastors and you are the flock. We shall have to give an account about you on the day of the dread judgment, we shall have to lead you up to Christ and say, ‘Here I am and the children whom the Lord entrusted to me!’ The Lord will ask us how

we tended the flock entrusted to us and we shall have to give an account.

“But he will ask you, ‘were you in obedience to your pastors? Did you listen to their calling and instructing voice? Did your hearts burn with love toward the Holy Apostolic Church? Or did you listen to those who change the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:7-8), “injure the word of God” (2 Cor. 2:7), “speak perversely” (Acts 20:30) “wander away into empty words” (1 Tim. 1:6): Did you run after every wind, after every preacher of new teachings?’

“If the answer to the latter is yes, then woe unto you! Do not try to justify yourselves by saying that they charmed you ‘by flattering words’ (2 Pet. 2-3), ‘by flattery’ (Horn. 16:18), ‘sly artfulness, seduction’ (Eph. 4:14).

“Does God’s word give signs by which one can recognize these false preachers? Yes it does give them—and very clearly. The Apostle Peter says that they are: ‘insolent, self-willed, they blaspheme the highest...’ (2 Pet. 2:10), and the Apostle Paul says that they are: ‘proud, arrogant, slanderous, treacherous, rash and inflated with self-conceit...For although they hold a form of religiousness, they deny, reject, and are strangers to the power of it. Avoid and turn, away from all such people’ (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5).

“The foresighted Apostles, warning the believers away from false teachers, also foretold the fate of these teachers: ‘But they

will not get very far, for their rash folly will become obvious to everybody...' (2 Tim. 3:9).

“‘Their end will be according to their deeds’ (2 Cor. 11-15), says that same Apostle; and ‘Their fate is long ago readied, their destruction has not been asleep’ (2 Pet. 2:3), says the Apostle Peter.

“But the same fate also awaits those who listen to them, accept, and agree with their false teaching. They are blind leaders who have not only voluntarily blinded themselves, but who even dare to lead others. God’s word warns: ‘If the blind lead the blind, then both will fall into a pit.’ (Mat 15:14).

“Therefore, my dear ones, ‘beware of evil doers’.

“I consider my talk ended. I thank you for the attention with which you followed the course of the talk. I pray that you understand that one cannot destroy what God has created, one cannot mock at the Church which was created by God: no one can prevail against the Church, but all such attackers will themselves in the end perish.

“In farewell, here is a little example which you can remember and tell to your children: We are standing near the church-building; look at it. For many years now it has endured bad weather—winds, rains. Some bricks in the foundation are being broken up by the influences of the weather and have fallen out; they are lying around near the fence. Here is a piece of rotten board from the trimming and over there a stone. Do

they have any significance now? None—anyone can throw it anywhere; no one will object; no one will pay any attention. Yet while these stones and boards were in the walls of this temple, they were holy images because this temple is called 'holy', you are on the path to salvation; but if you leave Christ's Church, repudiate Holy Orthodoxy, then you will be like this little stone, like that rotten board, which are trampled by the people like any rubbish. Every unclean spirit, every unclean power will trample you, will dirty your soul.

"I will remind you of the words of the Apostles: 'Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise, making the very most of time because the days are evil.' (Eph. 5:15-16)."

"You want to end the talk," said the sectarian, "but I would like to ask another question. May I?"

"Of course."

"You spoke much about the Church and I listened attentively. But I would like to know, who saves, strictly speaking, Christ or the Church?"

"I understand you," replied Father Kyril. "You are not asking because you do not know and not because the question interests you, but in order to try to snare me with sly questions. Such 'questions' were also given to Christ the Lord

and He often answered these questions with questions. I shall here answer your question with questions:

“First: Can the Church be in obscurity, can it be invisible, or for that matter, imaginary? Clearly, it cannot. The Lord founded a definite Church—‘I will found My Church’ (Mt.16:18). It cannot be invisible since the enemies—the ‘gates of hell’ will attack it, and it must obtain victory in this struggle. The combatants which are struggling are known, definite quantities.”

“You are evading my question and not answering it!” cried out the Baptist.

“Have patience to hear out my reply. A clear, exact answer will be given.

“Second: Can one who does not belong to the ‘Body of Christ’, i.e., the Church, be saved? The answer is clear: one cannot. ‘Jesus Christ’, according to the Scripture, ‘is the Savior of the Body’, i.e., the Church.

“Finally: Can one separate the head from the body? Yes one can, but there will be life in neither the head nor the body.

“You see my friend, your question, ‘what saves, Christ or the Church’ is evident nonsense. Christ is the Head of the Church which is His Body (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23-27; Rom. 12:4). It means that Christ saves those who are in His Body, who are in the Church, said otherwise: Christ saves through the Church.



“One cannot say ‘who saves, Christ or the Church’. The question as you see, is senseless. If you are an honorable person, if you do not ‘philosophize evilly’, then by this answer you must be satisfied.”

Then Father Kyril asked that everyone who did not already have the New Testament in their homes, get one as soon as possible.

“I will give to your parish priest, Fr. John here, a list of those places in the Holy Scripture which are necessary to know in order to correctly contemplate Christ’s Church, so that no one can throw you off from the path of salvation. You may copy out the list from Father John. [The List is given at the end of this narrative].

“And what would you say about yourself, missionary; are *you* sinful or holy? You said nothing about yourself,” one of the Baptist women cried out. “I, like everyone, am a sinful person,” replied the priest.

“You are sinful? Well, then, you will go to hell. There is no place for sinners in paradise. But we who have accepted Jesus will go to paradise with the angels!”.

“You spoke the truth,” replied Fr. Kyril. “For unrepentant sinners a place is prepared in hell. Imagine to yourself this picture: the unrepentant sinners of the Orthodox Church, the drunkards, the adulterers, thieves, enviers and murderers, those with malice and haters of others and other sinners, are

heading along a wide road to hell. What is to be done? The answer is clear: don't sin! But do you know who is going with them arm in arm, although she is not an adulteress, not a drunkard, not a thief?—a heretic. Read in the Epistle to the Galatians, 5:20. That means, in one company? Well then, the farther they go together, the nearer they come to hell.

“Almost at the very vestibule of hell the great sinners who are members of the Church have come to their senses: ‘O Lord, you saved both the thief and the fornicator, softened the hard heart of Zacchaeus, accepted the repentant Peter—save us, too, forgive us our great sinning. Accept us even though it is past the eleventh hour! For our salvation You shed Your own Blood and established Your Holy Church!’ And what then? Will the Lord not forgive these great sinners? Undoubtedly He will. And they will turn back and go along the path to paradise. And on hell’s road there will then remain only the heretic. There will be no salvation for her, for she will not confess her sinfulness and repent, she does not ask for forgiveness. And *you* will go, my lady, to hell, to eternal torment! Repent, while there is still time!”

This created a strong impression on all of us.

“Let us give thanks to the Lord for His help in *the* explaining of the Evangelical teaching about the Church,” said Fr. Kyril and then led us in the hymns “O Lord, save Thy people!” and “Meet it is”. The gathering then began to separate into smaller groups as families began to prepare to set out for home and their afternoon tea.

## **Appendix: Scriptures relating to the Church.**

### **1. THE CHURCH IS THE CHANNEL OF REVELATION, TEACHING AND SALVATION.**

Eph. 3:9-10: "...and to enlighten all as to what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things through Jesus Christ, in order that now the much-variegated wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and to the authorities in the heavenlies through the Church,..."

1 Tim. 3:15: "But if I delay, I write in order that thou mayest know how one ought to be conducting oneself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, pillar and stay of the truth."

### **2. THE CHURCH IS FOUNDED BY CHRIST AND WILL ENDURE TO ETERNITY.**

Mt. 16:18; 28:20: "...I will build My Church and the gates of hades (the powers of hell) shall not overcome it." "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the ages."

### **3. THE CHURCH IS A VISIBLE, GOVERNED COMMUNITY.**

Acts 2:41-47: "Then they indeed who gladly welcomed his words were baptized; and in that day about three thousand

souls were added. And they were persevering in the teaching of the apostles and in the communion, and in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers...And all who believed were united together, and together they had everything in common...And the Lord was adding to the Church those who were being saved day by day."

Heb. 3:5-6: "And indeed, 'Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant,' for a testimony of the things which were to be spoken, but Christ as Son over His house, Whose house are we, if indeed we should hold fast the boldness and the boasting of the hope firm until the end."

Acts 20:28: "Be taking heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit set you for Himself as bishops, to shepherd the Church of the Lord and God, which He kept for Himself through His own blood."

#### **4. ONE MUST HEED AND OBEY THE CHURCH AND BE JOINED TO IT**

Mt. 18:17-18: "And if he should take no heed of them, tell it to the Church. But if also he should take no heed of the Church, let him be to thee even as the heathen and the tax collector. Verily I say to you, as many as ye shall bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and as many as ye shall loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens."

## 5. THE CHURCH IS ONE.

Jn. 9:40-10:27: "And those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and...He said to them, '...And I have other sheep which are not of this fold; them also it is needful for Me to bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd...But ye believe not; for ye are not of My sheep, even as I said to you. The sheep, those that are Mine, hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

Mt. 12:30: "The one who is not with Me is against Me; and the one who gathereth not with Me scattereth."

Eph. 4:1-6: "I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you...to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye also were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in you all."

John 17:6-26: "I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were, and Thou hast given them to Me, and they have kept Thy word...For the words which Thou hast given Me, I have given them; and they received them, and know truly that I came forth from Thee; and they believed that Thou didst send Me forth. I make request concerning them. I do not make request concerning the world, but concerning these whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine...Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given Me, in order that they may be one,

even as We...Sanctify them in Thy truth; the word which is Thine is truth..., that they also may be sanctified in truth. And I do not make request for these only, but also for those who shall believe on Me through their word; in order that all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us...And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them, in order that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one... And I made known to them Thy name, and will make it known, in order that the love with which Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them."

1 Cor. 12:12-27:"For even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ. For also by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and were all given to drink into one Spirit. For also the body is not one member, but many...But now indeed are they many members, but one body...God tempered the body...in order that there may not be a schism in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members severally."

Rom. 12:4-5: "For even as we have many members in one body, but all the members have not the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another."

## 6. THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.

1 Cor. 3:11: "...for no one is able to lay any other foundation beside the One being laid, Who is Jesus Christ."

Mt.21:42: "Jesus saith to them, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the head of the corner; this came to be from the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes?'"

Acts 4:10-11: "...be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, in Him this one standeth before you healthy. This is the 'stone which was set at nought by you, the builders, which came to be for the head of the corner.'"

Eph. 2:19-22: "So then ye are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God, who were built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone, in Whom every building, being joined together, increaseth to a holy temple in the Lord, in Whom ye also are being built up together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

(cf. 1 Pet. 2:6; Rom. 9:33).

## **7. THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH IS CHRIST.**

Eph. 5:23: "...the Christ is head of the Church, and is Himself Savior of the body."

Col. 1:18: "And He is the head of the body, the Church..." (cf. Eph. 1:22; 4:15.)

Eph. 1:22-23: "And He (God the Father) put in subjection all things under His feet, and gave Him (Christ the Son of God) to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him Who filleth all things in all."

## **8. THE CHURCH IS HOLY (CONSECRATED).**

Eph. 5:25-27: "...the Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for her, in order that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her in the laver of the water with the word, that He might present her to Himself the glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things; but that she may be holy and unblemished."

Rom. 11:16 -24: "Now if the firstfruits be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And...some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wast grafted in among them, and became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree...thou wast cut out of the olive tree which is wild according to nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree..." [Rom. 11:16-24]



## **9. THE CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS ARE HOLY.**

1 Cor. 6:19; Jn. 17:17-19; 16:13; 14:26; 1 Cor. 6:11.

## **10. MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH ARE CALLED TO STRUGGLE TOWARDS HOLINESS.**

1 Pt. 1:15-16: "...but according as the One Who called you is holy, do ye also become holy in all manner of behavior, because it hath been written: 'Become holy; for I am holy.'"

Eph. 4:20-24: "But ye have not thus learned the Christ—if indeed ye heard Him and were taught in Him, as truth is in Jesus: to put off from yourselves the old man, with respect to the former manner of life, who is being corrupted according to the desires of the deceit, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man, who, according to God, was created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

Eph. 1:4: "...even as He chose us for Himself before the foundation of the world, for us to be holy and blameless before Him..."

## **11. THAT SINNERS ARE ALSO ALLOWED INTO THE CHURCH.**

Mt. 13:24-4; 13:47-49; 2 Tim. 2:20-21; Rom. 9:22-23.

## **12. THE CHURCH CANNOT BE REPROACHED FOR ALLOWING SINNERS INTO ITSELF.**

Rom. 11:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:21-24; Rom. 14:4; 2 Tim. 2:20.

## **13. THE HOLY SPIRIT ABIDES IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH.**

Jn. 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-5; 2:17-18; 1 Cor. 3:16; 12:13.

## **14. THE CHURCH IS CATHOLIC.**

Mt. 28:19-20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and behold, I am with you all the days until the completion of the age."

Acts 15:13-17: "And after they became silent, James answered, saying, 'Men, brethren, hear me. Symeon related how God first visited to take from the nations a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, even as it hath been written: 'After these things I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen, and I will build again the things which have been dug down, and I will set it up, so that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, even all the nations upon whom My name hath been called upon them,' saith the Lord Who doeth all these things.'"

Heb. 12:22-24: "But ye have come to Mount Sion and the city of the living God, a heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, a festal assembly and Church of the firstborn ones who have been enrolled in the heavens, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous who have been perfected, and to Jesus, Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better than Abel."

### **15. THE CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC.**

Eph. 2:19-20; Rev. 21:14.

### **16. THE CHURCH HAS AN UNBROKEN CONTINUITY.**

Eph. 3:21: "...to Him be the glory in the Church in Christ Jesus, in all the generations of the age of the ages. Amen." (cf. Mt 28:20)

Mt. 16:18; 28:20: "...I will build My Church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against her." "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the ages."

### **17. THE CHURCH CANNOT BE HIDDEN OR INVISIBLE.**

Mt 5:14; Mk. 4:21; Lk.11:33.

**18. WHO MAY TEACH IN THE CHURCH.**

Mt. 28:19-20; Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 10:15; 2 Tim. 1:11; 2:2; Heb. 5:4.

**19. COMMUNION OF SAINTS.**

Lk. 20:35-38; Genesis 32:9; 4 Kings (KJV: 2 Kings) 2:14; 4 Kings 20:6; Rev. 14:12-13; Rev. 7:9-11; Rev. 8:3-4.

**20. RELICS.**

4 Kings 2:14; 4 Kings 13:21; Acts 19:12.