

So for this reason also, in each case the question causes only grief.

One more observation. The Lord of life and of death does not seek the rich man's soul. It is defined that others are "demanding" it. The Fathers juxtapose between the way the righteous one and a sinner reposes. About the righteous one, usually it is said that he presents his soul into the hands of God, in other words, he deposits it as something complete, which Holy God receives with much respect, as something sacred.

About the sinner, the expression is used "they are demanding" and usually the demons are meant, so that the soul which is difficult to break off shows, as the process of departure is a great torture. But something else is also clarified. It is proven that the rich man's soul, that he thought his own, is not his own, since its masters are coming; they to whom his soul was handed over, they whom he was obeying upon the earth, to demand it. How much pain both "in life and after death".

My brethren, today's gospel passage has been read for two thousand years now trumpeting to humanity the loneliness and the agony, which being handed over to demanding wealth, causes. And humanity, being willfully blind, is unjustifiably dedicated to this demanding, ignoring the forewarning of the Church, reaping pain, injustice and black pages of history. Prayer, for Holy God to enlighten where it is worth it, for our heart to be attached, and how we will secure it, as our eternal peaceful companionship.

Archimandrite I. N

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2016 9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, *The Forefeast of the Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple, Gregory the Righteous of Decapolis, Proclus, Archbishop of Constantinople***

**TONE OF THE WEEK *Plagal of the First Tone***

**EOTHINON : *Eleventh Eothinon***

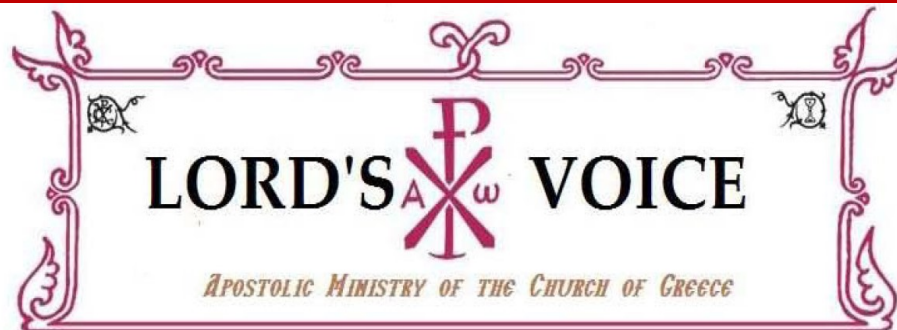
**EPISTLE: *St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18***

**GOSPEL: *Luke 12:16-21***

**NEXT SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2016 13TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, James the Great Martyr of Persia, Nathaniel of Nitria & Pinouphrios of Egypt, the Righteous, James the Wonderworker, Bishop of Rostov, Gregory of Sinai and his disciple Gerasimos, Arsenios of Rhaxos.**

**EPISTLE: *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:4-10***

**GOSPEL: *Luke 18:18-27***



64<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

NOVEMBER 20 2016

PAMPHLET # 47 (3312)

## LONELINESS AND ANXIETY

People don't have the right to criticize the Church. And this because as everyone's loving caring mother, unrelated to if some people persist in rejecting her, our Holy Church strives and grants counsels for life, both through the holy scriptural texts, as well as through their interpretation. While furthermore, the counsels are such that they become objectively accepted and have a more general implementation. Of course, many people pass by the fact that the Church's suggestions for life have as a perspective, the essential relationship and living of the true God; they agree together however, that they comprise the healthiest foundation for the organization and structuring of human society.

The strange thing is that while they admit the benefit of the Orthodox way of life, or they merely feel **unacknowledged** the correctness of the ecclesiastical ethos, they insist in rejecting its adoption, persisting in thorny beliefs and unbrotherly practices, responsible for the multifarious undermining and corrosion of the social web and of human relationships. Thus, the Church with her preeternal experience, does not cease forewarning, and people as unruly children do not cease believing that "they know better". And the Church respects this, because her aim is not to obligate, coerce and impose, but to convince, respecting human freedom, to inspire waking a man up from his lethargy and supporting his journey to the eternity of the divine Kingdom.

### **The pursuit of wealth**

A crucial point of ecclesiastical morality, a primary concern in man's education, a catalyst in taking whatsoever decisions, the Church

## 9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

### THE GOSPEL LUKE 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

considers to be one's attitude toward wealth. Not more generally toward material goods or matter in and of itself, which as creations of God, is faced analogously. But of wealth in particular. In other words, of man's disposition to validate in his favor, in whatsoever manner, and in whatsoever form, surpluses of material goods, which he does not need, to cover his direct and primary needs. And furthermore, in a sneaky manner, interrelated with improper means in its obtaining, and immoral means at his disposal.

In today's gospel passage, the Lord narrates the parable of the foolish rich man. What a strange truth. «Foolish» in the Holy Scripture is characterized, on the one hand, he who turns his back on God and, on the other hand, he who is attached to wealth, probably because the one is not unrelated to the other. It is a common determination of the Fathers of the Church, of the Ecumenical Teachers of the human race, that man rejects his relationship with God, believing that "it is not to his advantage", because usually his heart is attached elsewhere, usually to the pursuit of material goods, to the here and now.

What does the foolish rich man do? He is troubled. Or rather, he troubles himself, since he is responsible for his misfortune. The first thing that we could easily observe in the gospel narration is the obvious agony of the rich man to secure his wealth. Strange. A common belief of the

majority of people is, that wealth gives security, for this reason they have agony to obtain it and to validate it. And here the Church comes to stress the truth that wealth is a bad boss, who enslaves man and troubles him, the more he is attached to it. The agony of the rich man to not lose even in the slightest of what he had obtained, submits him to a series of cares, superfluous actions, painful efforts, to safeguard them for his own self, "enjoying" only insecurity and phobia for their loss.

### The final result

Something that is not mentioned literally in the Gospel, it is easily observed however in the whole narration, is the loneliness that characterizes the foolish rich man. He doesn't have any dialogue, he does not seek anyone's advice, he decides about everything on his own, with absolute self trust, and the unique orientation being the preservation of wealth for his own self. In the end, the whole loneliness is dictated, created and imposed by the wealth. The rich man is incapable of a relationship not with God whom he does not see, but with the people whom he sees, since everyone is considered suspicious of taking away his wealth. And he fortifies himself in his loneliness, thinking that wealth is a sufficient companion.

Precisely at the moment when he believes that he finally validated the wealth, and is able to begin enjoying his relationship with it, he hears someone else, who up to that moment he conscientiously overlooked, he purposefully ignored and from the start he forgot, giving him a question. Fool, you who sought security in wealth and dedicated yourself to it, this night when you think that you're comfortable, and enjoying life was setting out, this same night they are coming and seeking to take your soul. You are dying, and these things which you prepared, precisely because they cannot accompany you, who will enjoy them?

He who is asking is the Lord of life and of death. The question does not take an answer, rather it is merely expressive of the impasse of a life attached to wealth. The incapability of wealth is painted in various colors in bas relief, not in order to give an answer to the mystery of death, but to justify the squandering of a whole life for it. The vanity is imprinted in the pursuit of man's most important chimera, called wealth.