

. necessities of life from the faithful he is pastoring. Let him suffice, that is, for a little consolation of the body and only the necessary food, as St. Chrysostom emphasizes. In fact, to Scripturally support the above, he also presents arguments from the Old Testament.

### **The special attitude of the Apostle Paul**

Paul records, on the one hand, his legal rights, which, however, he himself does not wish to claim. He is not scorning the Old Testament law, he does not disparage reason or promote himself as superior to the other Apostles. His attitude reveals for the umpteenth time the transcendence of sacrificial love in Christ. In a world that is constantly claiming rights forgetting, usually, the obligations to others, with first and foremost being that of love, the ethos of the Apostle, who endured everything so as not to interject any obstacle to the Gospel of Christ, is an inexhaustible source inspiration for everyone.

**Archim. N.K**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 20 2023 ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF**

**MATTHEW** *Samuel the Prophet, Holy Martyr Luke the Bouleutos, Stephen, First King of Hungary, Hierotheos Bishop of Hungary, Oswin the Martyr, King of Deira, Afterfeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary.*

**EPISTLE READING** : *St. Paul's First Letter to Corinthians 9:2-12*

**GOSPEL READING** : *Matthew 18:23—35*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : *Second Tone*

**EOTHINON** : *Eleventh Eothinon*

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 2023 TWELFTH SUNDAY OF**

**MATTHEW** *Pimen the Great, Holy Martyr Phanurius, Anthousa the Martyr, Poimen of Palestine, Hosisos the Confessor, Liverios, Pope of Rome, Monica,*

**EPISTLE READING** : *St. Paul's Letter to Ephesians 6:10-17*

**GOSPEL READING** : *Matthew 19:16—26*



**71<sup>ST</sup> YEAR AUGUST 20 2024 PAMPHLET # 34 (3664)**

### **THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE APOSTLE IN EXCEEDING THE RIGHTS**

The Apostle Paul, in the 9th chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, from which the present passage comes, offers his own example for imitation, in the way that he followed the example of Christ.

Without a trace of complacency, he develops the issue that he did not use the right, of the "authority", as he says in the text, to be fed from the communities that he is serving. He didn't want to live, burdening the faithful, even a little, even though he offered his whole life and his spiritual wealth for the spread of the Gospel and the consolidation of faith. In other words, he also sacrificed his right, which was derived from his apostolic office, and which obviously cost him many extra labors, to avoid any malicious hint about his work.

Paul, as we have written before, founded the Church of Corinth, which he loved deeply. His apostolic work in Corinth had a great impact and effect, but this does not mean that many problems of a moral and spiritual nature did not arise. Paul's holiness and selflessness seem to have disturbed various pseudo-brothers and pseudo-apostles, who acted there, and those who, in order to justify their spiritual misdeeds, dangerously accused the Apostle. Several believers, influenced by their slanders, began to

## *EPISTLE ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO CORINTHIANS*

### *9:2-12*

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

question Paul's apostolic office. That is, instead of admiring Paul's self-denial and his sacrificial attitude, they were scandalized by the fact that he did not burden the churches with his maintenance, as was the case with other Apostles, and, therefore, they considered that he should not be counted among them. Paul grieves and apologizes, not in order to defend himself, but in order to help the believers understand their mistake and the danger to the Church from the division of its unity.

### **The believers are the proof of Paul's apostleship**

That is why the Apostle tells the Corinthians that they are "the seal", the proof of his apostolicity. And that the true believers are his apology to those who accuse him of not being an Apostle. That is, his work in the Church, the apostolic attraction of so many people in the sea of unbelief and idolatry of cosmopolitan Corinth, the dangers, the toils, the daily threat of death for the sake of Christ and the spreading of His word, is the testimony for the authenticity of the office of the Apostle. Given that apostolic authority is not an external force of imposition on others, like worldly authority.

In the Church, "office" and "authority" is man's gift to serve other people with the love and the spirit of Christ, members of the body itself, the body of Christ. The example of this truth is found in the person of the Lord. Jesus Christ is the Lord. And He offers His sovereignty, His divine power and energy with His love, goodness and mercy to every human being.

### **The material rewards of the apostolic work**

It would not be possible for the Apostle Paul not to recognize or ignore the Lord's command that the preachers of the Gospel should live from the preaching (Luke 10:7). For this reason, and with a series of three examples, he shows that it is natural for the Apostle to be fed by those whom he is serving. Initially, he writes that just as no soldier takes part in a campaign with his own expenses, so also the worker of the Gospel is entitled to be supported by the apostolic work he is doing.

Then, because just as the vine grower who plants and cultivates a vineyard has the right to eat its fruit, so also the Apostle has the right to be supported by the Church, which he is loyally serving. And finally, just as the shepherd who labors day and night, caring for his sheep is fed with their milk, so the spiritual shepherd of the rational flock deserves to receive the