

The conclusion of this theatrical presentation, reminds us of the familiar atheist slogan, which a contemporary “preacher” of atheism has persistently addressed, and they had put it on the buses of England: “God very likely does not exist. Consequently, stop worrying and enjoy your life”.

Christ at the end of today’s gospel passage, responds to these empty proclamations saying: “don’t go to build your happiness without Me. I am the cornerstone of true life and of your genuine joy. Whoever throws me away from his life, does not mistreat me but his own self”. In Great Lent we chant the idiomelon: “O you who has planted the vineyard and called the workers, are close by, oh Saviour”. The Lord of the vineyard is very near us. He is coming to save us and to make us sons and fellow heirs of His. So for this reason, we also, “having worked a little, shall reap the souls’ mercy”.

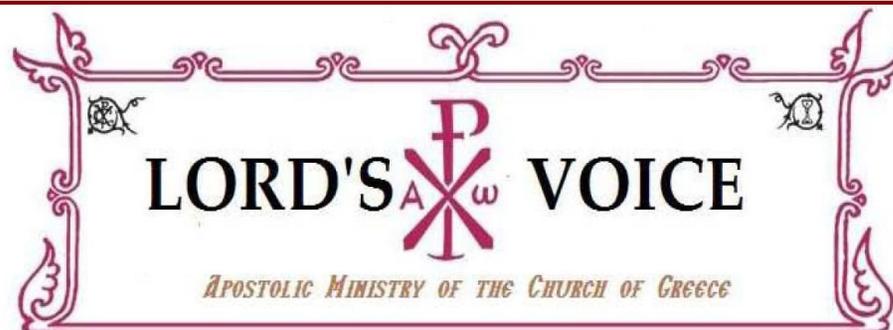
Archim. B.

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 26, 2018 13TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW *The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalie , Our Righteous Father Joseph*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Tone Four*
EOTHINON : *Second Orthros Gospel*
EPISTLE READING: *I CORINTHIANS 16:13-24*
GOSPEL READING: *MATTHEW 21:33-44*

NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2018 14TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW , *Mammas the Martyr , John the Abstainer, Patriarch of Constantinople , Paul, Patriarch of Constantinople, Ammon & Aeithalas the Martyrs of Thrace, Cosmas the Hermit .*

EPISTLE READING: *II Corinthians 1:21-24; 2:1-4*
GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 22:2-14*



66TH YEAR AUGUST 26 2018 PAMPHLET #34 (3404)

WORKING IN THE VINEYARD?

In the first petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, the prayer which our Christ handed down for us to address His Father, is included the “thy kingdom come”. With these words, He enlightened us to seek for the Lord to come and become lord and king of our whole being and life. About this kingdom, Christ spoke repeatedly in His sermons using various parables and images and enlightening its beauty and our relationship with it, each time, from a different optical corner. Of course, in all the images, two basic characteristics of it are very obvious: first, that it is an expression of God’s infinite love for man. And second – a result of the first – that it is not imposed tyrannically on man, but presupposes his free acceptance.

“Let us work a little”

In today’s parable, He likens the kingdom that He grants us with a vineyard. So about this vineyard, God first spoke to the Prophet Isaiah: “and what did I not do”, He says, “for this vineyard of mine. I fenced it in, I plowed it, I planted it, I built it a tower, I made it a wine press” (5:2). He did not leave us heavy jobs. “Just a little remained to us”, says the sacred Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 21:33-44

The Lord said this parable, "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

And the "light yoke" that He entrusted to us is "to take care of what exists and to preserve the things given". Our obligation was to care and preserve the vineyard, so that at the appropriate time it could render fruits.

Afterwards, the lord of the vineyard "departed". He did not stay as a strict overseer, holding a whip "and bringing about the punishments close, whenever He would see us being lazy or doing harms to His vineyard with our negligence. "He departed" means "He long suffered", interprets the golden-tongued one. He showed His great longsuffering and His vast respect for our freedom. This is the majesty of His love and His honor to the workers of the vineyard. He honored us, giving us the capability of enjoying the joy and the "vigilant intoxication" from the

"grapes" of His kingdom. And Christ, with the parable, reveals that the "thorns" were not simply negligence and the chosen people's disobedience to His commandments, but also their completely unjustified frustration and hate against His messenger prophets, which reached the degree of them beating some, and killing others. The Lord again sent prophets and teachers to wake up His people, but they did the same things to them also. At the end, He sent them His Son in the hope that they would be ashamed of Him and recover. And they, thinking that it was their opportunity to obtain full domination of the vineyard, also killed the heir.

Christ, saying this parable, a little before His passion, is trying to make the Jews realize that they are the evil workers of His vineyard. And that He is the sent Son of the Lord of the vineyard. The parable, of course, is not being addressed only to the then "glory seeking" crucifiers of Christ, but also to each person, who thinks that taking God out of his life, he will enjoy it better and more freely.

The deception of atheism

In a certain theatrical work, the central hero breaks out in the most luciferian announcement of dethroning God and deifying man. The following outbreak could be the "symbol of faith" of self-deified man: I exist... Only I. Do you see this gap over our heads? It is God. Where the door has been worn down? It is God. The absence, it is God. The loneliness of men, it is God. All this time I did not exist, except I alone. I found the good on my own. I decided on the evil. I today accused my own self, and I, on my own, am able to forgive me. I, man. If God exists, man is nothing. But God does not exist. Joy. Tears of joy. Alleluia. God does not exist".