

## The Basics of Orthodoxy Class 101

St. Gregory of Nyssa Orthodox Church, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

### Topic 11 B: The Teachings of Christ (part 2)

**Review:** Jesus taught a BIG view of salvation: “selling everything” in order to attain it (Matthew 13:45-44). Therefore, Orthodoxy has a **big view of salvation**. It is not simplistic. The Scriptures and the Church do not teach “*Sola Fida*”—“salvation by faith alone”—as Protestant reformers taught.

Rather, we are called to have a “faith that is active in love” (a faith that is alive and “working through love”).

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but **faith working through love.**” Galatians 5:6

Πίστις (pistis/**faith**) ἐνεργουμένη (energoumenē/**working**)  
δι’(di/**through**) ἀγάπης (agapēs/**love**)

Πίστις (**faith**) ἐνεργουμένη (**working**)

ἐνεργουμένη = **working, energizing**

For the Orthodox, “salvation” is not static but dynamic and very active.

A person’s faith is **alive and working** through the power of God’s love (GRACE).

Salvation is a **journey**; it is a **process** of healing and growth; it is a continual **repentance**; a constant **running** to Jesus for Grace; a daily **battle** for righteousness; an on-going **transfiguration** of one’s life by the Grace of God; it is a life of **union** with God; it is **life** in Christ; it is being **filled** more and more with the Holy Spirit; it is **denying** the flesh, **taking** up the cross of God’s will for your life; and it is **following** Christ, by the help of His Grace, in the **way of long-suffering love**.

**This view of salvation is best seen in the teachings of Christ:**

Jesus taught us, in Mark 8:34, that if we want to follow Him into the Kingdom of Heaven, then we have to go His way: ***“If you want to follow Me, deny yourself, take up your cross, and come with Me/follow Me.”***

**First, Jesus taught** this principle. **Then He showed it** to us in action on Holy Friday when He carried His cross up the hill of Golgotha and died for the life of the world.

**To live the life that Christ came to give us, we must be willing to follow His commandments, which is the way of suffering love.**

Salvation is to be with Christ every day:

To **live in Christ** each day.

To be **co-crucified with Christ** everyday. To **suffer with Christ**.

To **die with Christ** everyday. (To die to sin, to the devil, and to evil.)

To **rise with Christ** everyday. (To live for God.)

To **reign with Christ**. To **inherit with Christ**.

To be **glorified with Christ**. (To be transfigured.)

When we go the way of Christ, we will be:

- a) Co-**sufferers** with Christ
- b) Co-**crucified** with Christ
- c) Co-**risen** with Christ
- d) Co-**inheritors** with Christ (as adopted children)
- e) Co-**reigning** with Christ
- f) Co-**glorified** with Christ

**a) Co-suffering:** The LORD Jesus Christ Son of God is the One Mediator between God and man, the Link, the Ladder joining earth and Heaven. He carried away our sins on His cross. He did it all, a full and complete work of salvation, and He offers to us His Mystical Divine Body and Blood for our salvation and eternal life. That being said, He does allow us to **share His present sufferings** for the Church.

**Colossians 1:24-25**

“I now rejoice in my **sufferings** for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the **afflictions** of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the **Church**, of which I became a minister [*diakonos*, deacon].”

**2 Corinthians 4:17**

“For our light **affliction**, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”

**1 Peter 4:1-2**

“Therefore, since Christ **suffered** for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he **who has suffered** in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.”

**1 Peter 4:12-14 – Co-suffering and Co-glorified**

<sup>12</sup>Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; <sup>13</sup>but rejoice to the extent that **you partake of Christ’s sufferings**, that when His **glory is revealed**, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. <sup>14</sup>If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the **Spirit of glory** and of God **rests upon you**. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is **glorified**.

**Philippians 3:10**

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death”

**b) Co-crucified:****Galatians 2:20**

”I have been **crucified with Christ**; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

**Philippians 2:5-8**

<sup>5</sup>Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

**Galatians 6:14**

“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

**c) Co-risen:**

**Philippians 3:8-11**

<sup>8</sup>Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; <sup>10</sup>that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup>if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

<sup>20</sup>But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.  
<sup>21</sup>For since by man came death, by man came also the **resurrection** of the dead.  
<sup>22</sup>For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.  
<sup>23</sup>But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.

**Romans 8:11**

“And if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He Who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit Who lives in you.”

**Ephesians 2:6**

“And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”

**d) Co-inheritors: (as adopted children)**

**Galatians 4:7**

“So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are His child, God has made you also **an heir**.”

**Galatians 3:26-29**

<sup>26</sup>For you are all **sons of God** through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup>For as many of you as were **baptized** into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup>There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup>And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**Romans 8:16-17**

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are **children** of God, and if **children**, then **heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ**...”

**e) Co-reigning:**

**2 Timothy 2:11-12**

“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. **If we endure, we shall also reign with Him**. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.”

**Ephesians 2:6**

“and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

**f) Co-glorified:**

**Roman 8:16-17** suffer with Christ God, but be glorified with Christ God

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we **suffer with Him**, that we may also be glorified together.”

**2 Corinthians 4:17**

“For our **light affliction**, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and **eternal weight of glory**”

**2 Peter 1:4**

“by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these **you may be partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

**2 Thessalonians 2:14**

“to which **He called you** by our gospel, **for the obtaining of the glory** of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

**Jesus’ Plan of Salvation is BIG.** One’s faith must be alive and well and acting and working. Jesus told men that there was only one thing in life worth having – the Kingdom of God. It may cost a man all that he has in order to acquire it. **Jesus taught us, in Mark 8:34, that if we want to follow Christ into the Kingdom of Heaven, then we have to go His way: “If you want to follow Me, deny yourself, take up your cross, and come with Me/follow Me.”**

To live the life that Christ came to give us, we must be willing to follow His commandments, which is the way of suffering love...all by His Grace.