



**This week meditations on liturgical texts
from **Skynia Magazine****

September 19-25
The Gregorian calendar

Content

<u>Stages of meditation</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>September 19</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>September 20</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>September 21</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>September 22</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>September 23</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>September 24</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>September 25</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>What is Skynia Magazine?</u>	<u>29</u>

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Stages of meditation

Please find below some schematic prompts for each stage of the meditation on the Word of God. [Read more.](#)

1. Reading

- Read the text
- What does it tell by itself?
- Clear up the context
- Look up the comments
- Find the key-phrase

2. Meditation

- What is my here and now?
- What does the Word tell me?
- Use your imagination
- "Digest" the text
- The Word and my life

3. Prayer

- What will I say in response?
- Recognition and request
- Gratitude and glorifying
- Prayer in the Word
- My participation in the Divine Liturgy

4. Contemplation

- A call to conversion
- Now I am silent
- Staying in the presence of God
- Now He is guiding me

Biblical readings and meditations

September 19

**Sunday 17, after the
Exaltation of the Cross**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Galatians 2: 16-20

Mark 8:34 - 9:1

Galatians 2: 16-20

Brethren, yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

Mark 8:34 - 9:1

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

Meditation

What is required to follow Jesus, to become His disciple? – To renounce oneself, to take one's cross and go along the road Jesus has covered.

It is a difficult task – to renounce oneself. To give priority to the will of God over one's own will. To serve God, and not oneself. Fear is the greatest enemy of renunciation. People are afraid that they will not be able to cope with God's tasks since they are not talented, capable, wise enough, holy. Afraid of failing. Afraid that while performing God's will they will neglect their own needs, lose something, nobody will take care of them. But what benefits does a

person get even if (s)he conquers the whole world for himself/herself if (s)he ruins his/her own soul? Only performance of God's will opens the way to the Heavenly Kingdom. Performance of one's own will may bring great benefits only during the earthly life, since acquired treasures, achievements and human glory cannot be taken to heaven.

The fear of renouncing oneself for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel appears due to the lack of cognition of what the Heavenly Father is like, due to lack of acceptance of His love. How can I be afraid that I will lack something after Jesus encourages us to ask in His name for whatever we want? The Heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask. If the earthly parents can give their children good gifts, the Heavenly Father who is not limited in resources and opportunities will definitely take care of those asking Him and relying on Him.

Only those who intend to perform God's will by their own effort and power should be afraid of failure. With this in view one needs to have the power and to be holy, while sinful and weak people may only count on God's help. We may do everything together with God, and then He will supplement our weak points with His power and will thus glorify His name.

If Jesus, God's Son, holy and perfect, had to bear the cross in his earthly life, those who want to follow Him and to be where He is have to do the same. Reluctance to take one's cross leads a person to revolt, dissatisfaction and sufferings, while its acceptance brings peace.

September 20

Monday

Ephesians 4: 25-32

Luke 3: 19-22

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Ephesians 4: 25-32

Brethren, so then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Luke 3:19-22

But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Meditation

John the Baptist was imprisoned and later executed for rebuking Herod the ruler for *Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done*. He died because he was openly telling the truth. But in fact the reason for the death of John the Baptist was that Herod and Herodias did not want to accept this truth and change their lives, so, having enough authority, they ordered to kill the greatest of the prophets.

Paul the apostle, writing to the Ephesians, gives an important instruction: *putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors lies*. Apparently, this is not just about the truth concerning certain household things or affairs, but about the truth that aims at good for others; the truth that can take a person to the right path, the truth that points to sin.

Do we know how to tell such a truth to our neighbors? Are we not guided only by our own interests? Do we really care for the good of our neighbor? Or, perhaps, the way we convey the truth turns into constant accusations and humiliation of our neighbour, becomes psychological or emotional violence?

Equally important is the question of whether we can hear the truth about ourselves, about our imperfections and sins. Can we accept it

and fix our lives? Do we not imitate the behavior of Herod and Herodias towards those who reveal to us the truth about our lives?

Paul the apostle speaks of those who believe in Christ as of one, interconnected thing: *for we are members of one another*. Our body consists of different members, each of which performs a specific function. *If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it* (1 Corinthians 12:26). So it is in the Christian community, the Church, which is the mysterious Body of Christ. By hurting ourselves by sin, we hurt the whole Church, by hurting others, we also hurt ourselves. All the evil caused and all lies do not disappear without a trace, they leave their influence and wounds on the common body.

Let us ask the Lord for wisdom and courage to speak the truth to others with love, for the good of my brother, for the general building of the Body of Christ. Let us also ask for the ability to accept the truth about ourselves and change our lives.

September 21

Tuesday

Ephesians 5: 20-26

Luke 3:23-4:1

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Ephesians 5: 20-26

Brethren, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word.

Luke 3:23 - 4:1

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Jannai, son of Joseph, son of Mattathias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Esli, son of Naggai,

son of Maath, son of Mattathias, son of Semein, son of Josech, son of Joda, son of Joanan, son of Rhesa, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, son of Neri, son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosam, son of Elmadam, son of Er, son of Joshua, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Simeon, son of Judah, son of Joseph, son of Jonam, son of Eliakim, son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David, son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala, son of Nahshon, son of Amminadab, son of Admin, son of Arni, son of Hezron, son of Perez, son of Judah, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Terah, son of Nahor, son of Serug, son of Reu, son of Peleg, son of Eber, son of Shelah, son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, son of Lamech, son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.

Meditation

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. How can this be done biblically? How to do it in a right way? How to understand the phrase *be subject to*? The Bible has all the answers, so let's turn to other pages of the Scriptures where this phrase or a similar one is used.

This call applies not only to women, but above all to men - to obey the Lord. We have a very good example of obedience, - an example

of Caleb: *But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me wholeheartedly, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it* (Numbers 14:24). The Lord repeats this message throughout the book of Deuteronomy (see Deuteronomy 1:36), emphasizing once again this very important point.

What is so special about Caleb that I can follow in my life? He was obedient to God as a child, he believed and did not complain. It is written that he was of a different spirit, that is of a different type of thinking. Almost all the people of Israel thought in purely human terms: we will not be able to get this land, because a very strong and powerful people lives there. And Caleb thought differently: if God confirms and promises that we will conquer this land, then it is possible to do. Thus, God does not leave his obedience and trust unnoticed – He separates Caleb from a nation and assures that he will enter this land. Caleb's obedience led him to the promised land. Finally he received much more than that – God blesses his descendants.

My obedience to God or to my husband will be a blessing to my children. A very interesting point is that Moses, who seemed to be much closer to God than Caleb, who was constantly talking to God, was honored to see His glory, Moses' face shone with the glory of God so that he could not be looked at; He worked miracles, led the whole nation, was a guide of God's grace for the whole nation, interceded for his nation, prayed, put so much effort – and he did not enter the promised land!

Caleb's life of obedience proved more effective and precious in God's eyes than the life of Moses. Caleb entered the new land, but Moses did not. Do I have such obedience and such trust? What do I have to do to have them?

September 22

Wednesday

Ephesians 5: 25-33

Luke 4: 1-15

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Ephesians 5: 25-33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Luke 4: 1-15

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they

were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

Meditation

The devil is waiting for sweeping a person's leg. He wants everyone to crawl on their bellies as the cursed Serpent did. He is irritated by

everyone having strong feet, standing on their knees in front of God. Since only in such position does a person have a strong spine.

Once the devil decided to encroach on God, hoping that he will tempt the Son of God, drive the Holy Spirit away from Jesus. It is there, in the desert, after the Epiphany Annunciation, that Jesus as a human was staying face-to-face with the Holy Spirit. Forty days with ruach, with the one who gives a new breath to his beloved amidst the stuffy air of the world...

The Heavenly Father wants to touch us. Touch not that the world does it: the world pushes, demands, and oppresses, while the God's touch is the touch of Love. God does not demand anything from us. It's all His. The Lord touches us in a delicate, tender, unselfish way. He restores our dignity, gives freedom so often lost in the world back to us. God wants to touch us in order to heal us, for us to be able to further follow in faith, since we are His children.

The devil's temptation starts with the ominous *if you are the Son of God*. Since if we are the children of the King, we are destined to rule. The children of Love – to love. The children of the winner – to win. And no lapdogs can be made of those in love with Christ. Also, the devil's temptation has some continuation, even pious, at the first glance: *for it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you*. The satan is trying to convince humans that something is wrong in our lives, and maybe that is because God does not love us enough ... How tired we are of those devil's lies.

Come, the Holy Spirit! Enlighten our hearts and minds! When you come, one wants to follow you. You take us to the silence of the

Truth. You prove that Life itself is enough for life: *one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*. It is enough to have God to live. And everything else will come. We don't even need air when you are inside us!

Everything suddenly becomes different with you. We start realizing that nobody and nothing belongs to us. So desirable power and glory fade away. They become a glimmering butterfly at the feet of Jesus. All ambitions and fears that prevent us from sleeping and living follow the light. The herd of anxious *butterflies* burns in God's flame. To make it easier to fly. And wings grow from ashes. Not our wings, but yours.

September 23

Thursday

**The Conception of the
Honourable and Glorious
Prophet, Forerunner and
Baptist John**

Galatians 4: 22-31

Luke 1: 5-25

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Galatians 4: 22-31

Brethren, for it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. One, the child of the slave, was born according to the flesh; the other, the child of the free woman, was born through the promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, you childless one, you who bear no children, burst into song and shout, you who endure no birth pangs; for the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than the children of the one who is married."

Now you, my friends, are children of the promise, like Isaac. But just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the scripture say? “Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman.” So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman.

Luke 1: 5-25

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and

you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, “This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

Meditation

What can this Gospel reading about the conception of John the Baptist tell me? It is about Zechariah and Elizabeth. The Gospel

seems to suggest that they are good and godly people, but their lives are full of bitterness, because they have no children. But the Lord will turn this pain into something unexpected. That is why He sends archangel Gabriel to tell them a good news: *Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* Surprisingly, what is supposed to be a good news arouses fear and distrust in Zechariah's heart. I think this is a very human reaction. Especially if all his life he and his wife were trying to receive something they never succeeded to. So, even now it seems impossible: *How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.* Zechariah contrasts his old age and his limitations with God's Word. But that's the point: God is God because He can not only do certain things that are beyond our capabilities and limitations, but even build them on our imperfections. *After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived.* God takes root where we can do nothing. This is the message of this beautiful Gospel page. Let God's power guide us. It will turn our darkness into light, our limitations and sins into great grace. May we all acknowledge that His Love is greater than all our weaknesses.

September 24

Friday

Ephesians 6: 18-24

Luke 4: 22-30

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Ephesians 6: 18-24

Brethren, pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus will tell you everything. He is a dear brother and a faithful minister in the Lord. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, to let you know how we are, and to encourage your hearts.

Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 4: 22-30

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. 30 But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

Meditation

Jesus preaches in His hometown. The people of Nazareth *were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth*. However, they were surprised that the carpenter's son, the son of Joseph, - a simple worker they knew, could teach and work miracles. *Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his*

sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this? And they took offense at him (Matthew 13: 54-57).

The people of Israel often did not recognize their prophets, did not want to listen to their words. *Prophets are not without honor except in their own country.* The situation repeated itself. The people of Nazareth could not see the prophet in Jesus, let alone the Messiah. *And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief (Matthew 13:58).*

Jesus rebukes them for this and recalls two events in the lives of prophets Elijah and Elisha. The people of Israel refused to repent and accept the Word of God despite the many words and signs of these prophets. Instead, the widow of Zarephath believed the words of the Lord through prophet Elijah and, sharing with him the last she had, was saved from starvation together with her son. Naaman, the chief of the army of the king of Syria, an honorable and brave man, came with great honor to the prophet Elisha to receive healing from leprosy. After purification in the waters of the Jordan, he realized that *there is no God in all the earth except in Israel (2 Kings 5:15).*

The people of Israel did not honor their prophets, and the nations that worshiped pagan gods accepted these prophets and acknowledged their God as the only true God. Something similar was with Jesus: the chosen people did not believe Him, crucified Him, and the pagan nations recognized Him as their God. The Lord does not reject anyone, He is always ready to work miracles in our

lives only if we believe and acknowledge Him as the only true God and Savior.

September 25

Saturday

1 Corinthians 15: 39-45

Luke 4: 31-36

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

1 Corinthians 15: 39-45

Brethren, not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Luke 4: 31-36

He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on the sabbath. They were astounded at his teaching, because

he spoke with authority. In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Let us alone! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" When the demon had thrown him down before them, he came out of him without having done him any harm. They were all amazed and kept saying to one another, "What kind of utterance is this? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come!"

Meditation

Let us try and put ourselves among the righteous then we will mourn not those who die, but those who depart this life with their souls full of evil. A landowner does not cry when he sees the wheat sprouting out. On the contrary, when he sees that the wheat remains in the ground he trembles and worries a lot. When he sees that the wheat starts spoiling then he is happy, because that is the beginning for sprouts.

And we also shall rejoice when the mortal house decays, when a man is sown. Therefore, do not be astonished that today the apostle calls burial a sowing, and it is even better than sowing. Death, labour, danger and troubles come before sowing, but after it if we live righteously we receive only rewards and honour. (...) Everything happens unexpectedly and a person departing this life does not enter a difficult earthly life, but the life free from diseases, sadness and dolour.

If a woman needs protection, and it happens so that she later mourns her husband, then it is better to address our Protection, Redemptor and Benefactor – the omnipresent Lord: our insurmountable help, support always ready to come and reliable defence (...).

However, you may say that you do not mourn the dead, but yourself. But it is unnatural for one who loves; it is unnatural to the one you love to worry about you and feel the uncertainty for your future, while he needs to be honoured and walk towards his haven. However, *I do not know the place where he has gone*. How do you not know? His life was either righteous or not, therefore, his destination is known. Thus, do you worry because he died a sinner?

This is just an excuse. If it really was the reason for your mourning the dead then you had had to correct and improve his way of life during his lifetime. Thus, you care only for yourself and not for him.

After all, if he died a sinner, you still should rejoice, because he no longer sins and will not increase the evil; you should only help him in any way possible: not with tears but with prayers, supplications and sacrifice. The Church has established all this for a reason. No wonder we commemorate the dead during the divine liturgy; we ask for them begging the present Lamb who has taken upon Himself the sins of the world.

We do this in order to bring some consolation to dead. This is the reason why after the consecration of awesome mysteries of God a

priest prays: *For all those who have reposed in the Lord and whom we commemorate.* If they were not remembered in the time of the liturgy there would be no such words. Our actions are not a game of hypocrites, but the plan of the Spirit (...).

Then why are you grieving, why are you crying if you have so many possibilities to ask for forgiveness for a dead person? Just because you are left alone without your defender? Do not say that. You have not lost the Lord and as long as you have Him He will be to you more than a husband, father, son or son-in-law, because even when they were still alive He did everything for you.

Saint John Chrysostom

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