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Saint Nikolai of Serbia

The Faith of the Saints

The Catechism of the Eastern Orthodox Church

Introduction

On the Christian Faith Generally

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Q. In that case ought we to think that the Christian religion is above all other religions in the world, is it not so?

A. The Christian Faith should not be compared with other religions, and strictly speaking it ought not to be called "religion" at all, in the pagan meaning of the word. For it is not a religion among religions but it is the Faith in Christ and Christ's revelation. It is God's personal, unique and final revelation to men for the sake of men's enlightenment and salvation. Another God's revelation shall not be given, and another Messiah besides Jesus Christ should not be expected until the end of the world.

Q. How then should we think of the modern tendency in some quarters to level the Christian Faith with all other religions?

A. It is a wrong tendency and a dangerous experiment. For "God is not to be mocked" (Gal. 6: 7), nor is the blood of the Son of God to be made equal with the ink of the scribes. For though we as the members of our ancient church of the East are bound to unrestricted charity toward all human beings, yet we are strictly forbidden to compromise our inherited God revealed Truth with manmade religions or philosophies.

Q. By what means shall we fight against such a tendency of levelling?

A. First of all by profound knowledge of our own Orthodox Faith, by practicing it in daily life, and by sticking to it just as the scientist stick to the discovered fact that the earth is round as against those who still might think it to be flat. Second, by charitable and wise efforts – never by force – to lift up the peoples of lower and the lowest beliefs to the height of our perfect Faith, instead of pulling down what is perfect and mixing it with the imperfect for some convenience's sake.

Q. But why do we call our Faith the living Faith?

A. Because Faith and Life are inseparably connected as the cause and the effect. Jesus said: "He that believeth the Son (of God) has everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3: 36). It is also said: "The just shall live by faith" (Heb. 10: 38).

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