

AN ELDER SAID...



Edifying Stories and Teachings from Ancient and Modern Times

On Peace of Soul and Love*

by the Holy Elder Silouan the Athonite († 11 September 1938)

It is impossible for us to preserve peace of soul if we do not guard our mind. If someone wishes to have peace of soul, he must be abstemious, because peace is also expelled on account of our body. You must not be curious; avoid reading newspapers and worldly books, which desolate the soul and bring about listlessness and disturbance. Do not judge others, because it is often the case that people condemn a person without knowing him, while he is similar to the Angels in mind. Do not desire to know other people's affairs, but only your own. Take care only to entrust yourself in the Elders, and then, on account of your obedience, the Lord will help you by His Grace.

The Grace of God in the cœnobium primarily withdraws because we have not learned to love our brother according to the Lord's commandment. If a brother affronts you, and at that moment you accept thoughts of anger and hatred against him, then you will feel that Grace has left you and your peace has been lost. For the sake of peace of soul, the soul should learn to love the person that has affronted it, and to pray immediately for him. It is not possible for the soul to have peace, if it does not ask the Lord with all its strength for the gift of loving all



people. The Lord said: “Love your enemies,” and if we do not love our enemies, we will not have peace in our souls.

It is necessary to acquire obedience, humility, and love, or else all of our great ascetic feats and vigils will prove to be in vain.

A certain Elder saw this vision: A person was pouring water into a basin with a perforated bottom. The man went to great efforts, but the water continuously ran out, and the basin remained empty. In a like manner, we live ascetically, but neglecting a certain virtue, the soul remains empty.



(*) Source: *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 328 (September-October 2005), p. 232.

Archimandrite Sophrony, *St. Silouan the Athonite (1866-1938), The Writings of St. Silouan*, 6th edition (Essex: Monastery of the Venerable Forerunner, 1995), pp. 518-519.