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The Ecclesiocidal Heresy of Ecumenism Is Laying Waste to the Apostolicity of the Church

**Syncretistic Ecumenism Is an Intrinsic
Component of the “Mystery of Iniquity”**



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A Festal Homily
on the Occasion of the Commemoration
of the Holy Apostle Paul
June 29, 2014



Holy Church of St. Paraskeve
Monasteraki, Athens

The Ecclesiocidal Heresy of Ecumenism Is Laying Waste to the Apostolicity of the Church

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of Oropos and Phyle

Your Beatitude;
Most Reverend and Right Reverend Holy Hierarchs;
Reverend Fathers and Brethren;
Venerable Monastics, Elders and Eldresses;
Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

1. *Our indebtedness to the Holy Apostle Paul*

Today, in summer season, as we enjoy refreshment beneath the shade of the broad-leaved tree of our recent and God-pleasing **Union**, the Grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together to express prayerfully, in hymns and spiritual canticles, our exceptional gratitude to the Holy Apostle Paul: the traverser of the Heavens; the Enlightener of our Greek Fatherland; the founder of the first Churches on European soil; the layer of the foundation of the local Holy Orthodox Church of Athens; our Divinely impelled Initiator into the Mystery of Christ our Savior; the most excellent expounder of mystical, empirical, and Eucharistic theology; and the inexhaustible fount of the Christocentric ecclesiology of Orthodoxy.



We refer to St. Paul with reverence, and our hearts turn towards our Holy Faith, which he entrusted to us, which is one with the perennial Faith of the Church, which, for precisely this reason is, and is called, *Apostolic*, and on account of which our Holy Church is, is called, and is confessed to be the *Apostolic Church*.

Yea, to be sure, “the advent of the Apostle Paul in Greece created a new world, both for Europe and, above all, for our Fatherland.”¹

Yea, indeed, “the Apostle Paul was ‘the father’ of Christian Greece; ‘the establisher and architect of Hellenic Christianity’; ‘the great awakener of our nation’; the founder of our local Holy Greek Church.”²

Yea, it is true that St. Paul, impelled by Christ, “this tentmaker,” as the Divine Chrysostomos succinctly says, “converted Greece, which was entirely barbarian,” on account of its idolatry, to the knowledge of the only true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.³

Yea, it is unquestionably the God-bearing Paul who baptized us in the Name of the Holy Trinity, so that we might no longer be “strangers and sojourners, but...fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone.”⁴

Yea, for all of these reasons, since times of old, in our day, and yet at this very moment, we crown the memory and the Icon of the Holy Apostle Paul with sweet-smelling flowers of thanksgiving and glorification; with the noetic fragrance of faith, hope, and love; and, as well, with tears of self-reproach and repentance, in that we have not proved ourselves worthy of these heavenly gifts.

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2. The “Mystery of Iniquity” and syncretistic Ecumenism

Notwithstanding all of these truths, which are certainly a wellspring of inspiration and wakening, I would like for us to turn our attention, this evening, to the very timely subject of the **A**postolicity of the Orthodox Church.

This fourth attribute of the Church, which is indissolubly conjoined

¹ Pavlos Paloukas and Theodoros Anthimou, *Τὸ Αἰώνιο Χρέος πρὸς τὸν Ἀπόστολο Παῦλο* [Our eternal debt to the Apostle Paul] (Athens: 2002), p. 47.

² *Ibid.*

³ “Homily II on Romans,” §5, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LX, col. 407.

⁴ Ephesians 2:19-20.

with Her **O**ness, **H**oliness, and **C**atholicity, is under unremitting and open attack in our day from the “ecclesiocidal” heresy of ecumenism.

The reference made by the Holy Apostle Paul to the “foundation of the Apostles and Prophets”⁵ is of the utmost significance today, since both the Prophets and the Apostles—and, of course, their successors—fought steadfastly against syncretism, that is, the mingling of the Holy Faith with the alien elements of idolatry and heresy; opposed the adulteration of the Truth; condemned the gradual domination of indifference toward the Truth; and bore witness against the annulment of our relationship with the revealed God of truth and salvation.

We must be honest: a constantly increasing syncretistic estrangement from the Truth, alteration of the Truth by means of falsehood, and adequation of the Truth with error and heresy constitute the working, throughout the ages, of the “Mystery of Iniquity,”⁶ which precedes and prepares for the final “Apostasy,”⁷ until the manifestation and revelation of the “Lawless one”⁸ *par excellence*, the “Son of perdition,”⁹ him “that opposeth,”¹⁰ namely, the “Antichrist.”¹¹

Within this perspective, the so-called ecumenical movement, which appeared and evolved, during the past century, with the aim of reuniting divided and fragmented Christianity, is syncretistic in nature and forms part of the working of the “Mystery of Iniquity.”

The ecumenical movement was officially proclaimed in 1920; a few years later, in 1924, in order to implement its plan, it introduced the calendar reform, which sundered the unity of the local Orthodox Churches; thereafter, it demolished one thing after the other and moved the “eternal boundaries set by our Fathers”;¹² and today, it talks openly of syncretism with a mere semblance of Christianity,

- when it affirms that there is, supposedly, “room for the other

⁵ See note 4.

⁶ II Thessalonians 2:7.

⁷ II Thessalonians 2:3.

⁸ II Thessalonians 2:8.

⁹ See note 4.

¹⁰ II Thessalonians 2:4.

¹¹ I St. John 2:18, 2:22, 4:3; II St. John 7.

¹² Cf. Proverbs 22:28.

[heterodox] Churches within Orthodox ecclesiology”;

- when it “recognizes the ontological existence of other ecclesiastical communities,” to wit, “the ecclesiality of other [heterodox] Churches”;
- when it adopts an “inclusive, all-embracing attitude towards other Churches and Confessions”;
- when it talks about an “‘expansive’ Orthodox ecclesiological theory of other Churches”;
- when it espouses passing beyond an “archaic heresiology” as well as “ecclesiological and soteriological exclusivity.”¹³

It was only to be expected that this outright ecclesiological syncretism, which operates within the boundaries of Christianity, would also enter into the domain of other religions in the form of interfaith syncretism, ultimately, indeed, to be set forth by the Orthodox ecumenists as follows:

The Orthodox Church acknowledges the existence of a Church in the broadest sense, or rather of churches outside the true Orthodox Church (*ecclesia extra ecclesiam* [church(es) outside the Church]), and also of Christians outside Her walls and boundaries (*extra muros* [outside the walls]), to which the all-powerful saving Grace of God extends unimpeded.¹⁴

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3. *Apostolic Teaching and Succession*

I noted previously that the Apostolicity of the Orthodox Church is being constantly and openly assailed by syncretistic ecumenism.

It is, therefore, necessary that I advert briefly to the two primary characteristics of Apostolicity, so that you might understand yet

¹³ Stylianos Ch. Tsompanides, *Ἐκκλησία καὶ Ἐκκλησίες – Ἡ θέση τῶν ἄλλων Χριστιανικῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν στὴν ἐκκλησιολογικὴ αὐτοσυνειδησία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας στὰ πλαίσια τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ διαλόγου* [Church and Churches: The position of other Christian Churches in the ecclesiological self-understanding of the Orthodox Church in the context of ecumenical dialogue] (Athens: Ekdoseis “Harmos,” 2013), pp. 10, 283, 286, 287, 294, 295, etc.

¹⁴ Ioannes Karmires, “Ἡ σωτηρία τῶν ἐκτὸς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἀνθρώπων τοῦ Θεοῦ” [The salvation of the people of God outside the Church], *Πρακτικὰ Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν*, Vol. LVI (1981), pp. 401-402.

more deeply why ecumenism is laying waste to the Church and why, consequently, ecumenism constitutes one of the contemporary expressions of the “Mystery of Iniquity.”

Orthodox Patristic teaching has always made a distinction between, firstly, the Apostolicity of teaching and secondly, the Apostolicity of succession and Consecration [the Ordination of Bishops].

However, although a distinction is made between teaching and succession, they are indivisibly united, such that Apostolic teaching, on the one hand, is the basis of **A**postolic succession, while canonical **C**onsecration is, on the other hand, that external hallmark that ensures unity with the Church founded by the Apostles.

In other words, **A**postolicity of teaching makes the Church the mouthpiece of Christ and the Apostles, whereas **A**postolicity of succession and **C**onsecration is that which binds the Minister of the Mysteries to Christ and the Apostles.

Thus, the **A**postolicity of the Church is sundered and destroyed when **A**postolic teaching alone or **A**postolic succession alone is abrogated, and especially so when both are abrogated.

The **A**postolicity of the Church connects the Body of Christ with the **S**ource of **G**race, with the very **U**pper **R**oom of **P**entecost: by way of canonical Orthodox Ministers in communion with the Church, the members of the Church drink from the Source of truth and life and are Christified through the Mysteries.

Apostolicity cut off from the Source of truth and life is devoid of ecclesiastical content, is spurious, is not Churchly, and has fallen away from communion with Christ the Savior, the first and greatest “Apostle,”¹⁵ and from communion with the “twelve Apostles of the Lamb.”¹⁶

St. Athanasios the Great very pointedly inquires concerning the Arians: “How can those who have shaken off the Apostolic Faith belong to the Catholic Church?”¹⁷

In conclusion: **A**postolicity of teaching and **A**postolicity of succession, coexisting irrefragably, mutually intertwined, and mutually corroborative,

¹⁵ Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 3:1.

¹⁶ Revelation 21:14.

¹⁷ “Oration I Against the Arians,” §4, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XXVI, col. 20A.

are those indispensable elements which guarantee the Uniqueness, the Holiness, and the Catholicity of the Church and attest to the *authenticity* of the Church—the distinguishing characteristic of the True Church.

* * *

4. Ecumenism is laying waste the Apostolicity of the Church

Heresies such as syncretistic ecumenism, which is, in fact, an all-inclusive heresy, a panheresy, constitute—as we said before—a fundamental component of the “Mystery of Iniquity.”

Let this not be considered hyperbolic: it is a Patristic teaching, as St. John of Damascus reminds us:

“**B**y the ‘Mystery of Iniquity’ [St. Paul] means the teachings of heresies and their false doctrines. For they go before it [the Mystery], paving the way for it and providing occasion for deception; and heresies had already emerged in Apostolic times.”¹⁸

Likewise, let it not be forgotten that “there are no small or great heresies, nor any small or great deviation from Church teaching. Truth is never a matter of quantity. Our Orthodox Faith, the ethos of the Church, and the worship of the Church are a single and unique reality, one which is indivisible.”¹⁹

The Divine Chrysostomos tellingly remarks:

“**F**or just as he who pares away a small part of the image on a royal coin renders the whole coin counterfeit, so he who deviates even to the smallest extent from soundness of Faith becomes entirely corrupted, proceeding from this beginning to graver errors.”²⁰

Syncretistic ecumenism has not deviated only to a small extent from soundness of Faith, but has laid waste to the Apostolicity of the Church. It always has been, and continues to be, alien to our Synodal

¹⁸ “On II Thessalonians” (2:7), *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCV, col. 924AB.

¹⁹ Protopresbyter Basileios A. Georgakopoulos, “Τὸ μυστήριον τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ τὸ φαινόμενο τῶν αἱρέσεων” [The mystery of the Church and the phenomenon of heresies], *Ἱεροδόξος Τύπος*, No. 2010 (February 14, 2014), p. 3.

²⁰ “Commentary on Galatians,” ch. 1, §5, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXI, col. 622.

and Patristic Tradition; it unites its lackeys to the so-called “broad ecumenical world family,”²¹ within which a *de facto* syncretistic process is at work, developing dynamically and simultaneously at many mutually interdependent levels (theology, worship, ministry, witness, education, dialogues, congresses, councils, publications, etc.), always on the basis—as the ecumenists exult in proclaiming—of the allegedly “pioneering and dynamic 1920 Encyclical of the Œcumenical Patriarchate”!²²

In order to substantiate my thesis, *id est*, concerning the destruction of the Apostolicity of the Church by the heresy of ecumenism, I will not turn to a multitude of testimonies, but will content myself with just one, which is of exceptional weight and importance, since it is synodal and collaborative in nature: “with the blessing and authorisation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.”

We are referring to the *Thyateira Confession*,²³ which contains “completely heretical, Protestant, or...ecumenical teaching...regarding the Orthodox Church,”²⁴ as the Holy Confessor Metropolitan Philaret of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad correctly wrote on December 6, 1975.

Christians believe [so this ‘Confession’ teaches, among other heresies and errors] that Orthodox bishops, Roman Catholic bishops, Coptic, Armenian, and Ethiopian bishops, and Anglican bishops have and impart true ordination and priesthood.... For this reason, the mysteries of the

²¹ “Orthodox participation in ecumenical movement [*sic*]: ‘There is no alternative to dialogue’” (World Council of Churches Media Relations Office, Press Update, June 6, 2003), <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/orthodox-participation-in-ecumenical-movement-there-is-no-alternative-to-dialogue>.

²² Georgios Larentzakes, “Βασικαὶ ἀρχαὶ τηρήσεως καὶ ἀποκαταστάσεως τῆς χριστιανικῆς ἐνότητος – Ὁρθόδοξοὶ Ἀπόψεις” [Basic principles for the preservation and restoration of Christian unity: Orthodox viewpoints], in *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Παρουσία Ἐστίας Θεολόγων Χάλκης*, Vol. I (Athens: 1987), p. 351.

²³ Archbishop Athenagoras (Kokkinakis) of Thyateira and Great Britain, *The Thyateira Confession: The Faith and Prayer of the People of God, in English and Greek* (Leighton Buzzard: The Faith Press, 1975) (the English text occupies pp. 1-151, and the Greek text pp. 153-286).

²⁴ “The Thyateira Confession: An Appeal by Metropolitan Philaret to the Primates of the Holy Churches of God, and Their Eminences, the Orthodox Hierarchs,” <http://hsir.org/p/idc>.

Anglicans are mysteries of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic church, as are also the mysteries of the Roman Catholics.... Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Copts, Armenians, and Ethiopians, Lutherans and other Protestants are Christians baptised in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.... All of us Christians have become members, by the same baptism, of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.²⁵

In this “Confession,” which is an official Confession of the fallen Church of Constantinople, it is as clear as day that the two components of the **A**postolicity of the Church are abolished, since synodal recognition is hereby granted both to the teaching and to the succession and consecrations of the many different heresies of East and West, and especially of those which have been explicitly condemned by Ecumenical Synods.

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5. *Our calling today*

Glory to God for all things! The Holy Apostle Paul, the Enlightener of our nation and Founder of our most holy Church, has, by the prestige and authority of his Apostolic Grace, initiated us into the **A**postolicity of the Church; has helped us to attain to a deeper awareness of the catastrophic nature of the anti-ecclesiastical heresy of ecumenism; has made us more sensitive to the need for a sober and attentive analysis of the crucial aspects of heresy; and has strengthened us in exhibiting God-pleasing adherence to **A**postolic teaching and to **A**postolic succession and Priesthood.

Today, by the Grace of God, we are experiencing our unity in the love and truth of Christ our Savior. We, the Orthodox anti-ecumenists who follow the traditional Church Calendar, now form one Body, and indeed an international one. Having come together on a secure footing, to wit, our theological and ecclesiological text of confession, “The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism,”²⁶ we are called to



²⁵ Archbishop Athenagoras, *The Thyateira Confession*, pp. 203, 159, 204.

²⁶ “The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism: Dogmatic and

offer an authentic witness, so that “the preaching of the Apostles and the doctrines of the fathers”²⁷ might be our sure and unerring guide, and so that the “sound doctrine”²⁸ of the Evangelists and the Apostles might be preserved unadulterated by the syncretistic influences of ecumenism.

Every heresy, since it harms and destroys the Apostolic and Patristic nature of the Church, “constitutes another faith, another attitude towards life, which—as St. Irenæus of Lyon says—‘neither did the Prophets preach, nor did the Lord teach, nor did the Apostles hand on’²⁹”; “every heresy, as a system of error, is deprived of precisely that method of healing the human condition which Christ revealed and which we see in the spiritual struggles and the Christ-imitating ethos of the Saints.”³⁰

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May these humble thoughts and reminders be reckoned as a bouquet of gratitude to the Great Enlightener of our nation and Fatherland, the Holy Apostle Paul, and also as a stimulus to additional prayer and wakening in the face of the “Mystery of Iniquity” that is now at work by means of the syncretistic panheresy of ecumenism.

*May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Love of God the Father,
and the Communion of the Holy Spirit
be with us all, always, now and ever,
and unto the ages of ages. Amen!*

✠

To **G**od the **B**estower
be **g**lory and **t**hanksgiving,
unto the ages.

Amen!

Canonical Issues,” <http://hsir.org/p/fjp>.

²⁷ *Kontakion* of the Sunday of Holy 318 Fathers of the First (Ecumenical) Synod in Nicæa.

²⁸ I St. Timothy 1:10; II St. Timothy 4:3; St. Titus 1:9, 2:1.

²⁹ *Against Heresies*, I.8.1, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. VIIa, col. 520B.

³⁰ See note 19.