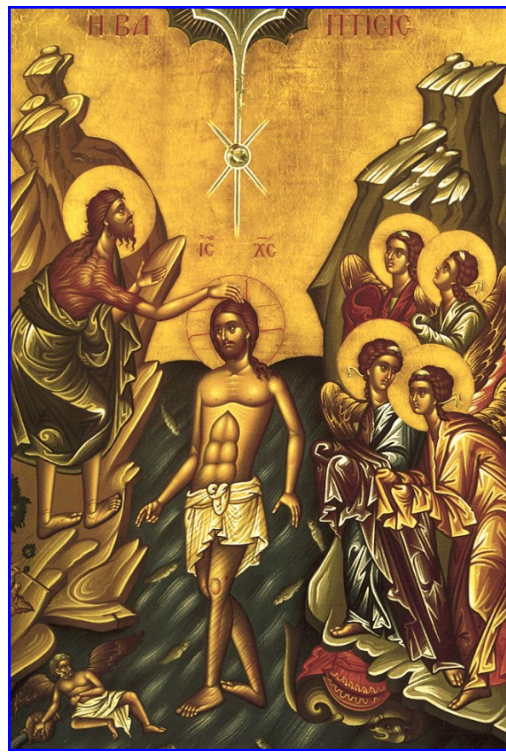


Holy Ascension Orthodox Christian Mission

Even though He did NOT deserve to die, we must die to our old life's will and become like Him and do the will of the Father. Even though He did NOT need to humble himself, we need to humble ourselves. Even though He did NOT need to fast and pray, we need to fast and pray. Even though He did NOT need to heal, we need to heal. Even though He did NOT need to love us, we need to love Him and others. Even though He did NOT need to stay with us and dwell in us, we need to stay with Him and dwell with Him.

How do we do this? We follow Christ. We choose His way. We become one with Him partaking of His Divine Grace - through the assembly of Christ's body on earth—the Church. The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church that He established has survived the centuries. Follow Him by doing His will and caring for others. Become like Him, participating together in His living body in the Mysteries of the Orthodox Church ...united together with God. And pray. St Symeon of Thessaloniki said, "Prayer is a conversation directly with God, being always with God, having one's soul united with Him and one's mind inseparable." A person becomes one with the angels and unites with them in perpetual praise and longing for God—Worship. In doing so, our lives become a sacrifice and we become more like God.

What Should be our prayer? As in the story of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner." As Christ taught us, "Our Father in the heavens, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."



And as St Ephraim the Syrian taught us, "Lord and Master of my life, do not give me the spirit of sloth, despondency, lust for power and idle talk. But give me, Your servant, a spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love. Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and not to judge my brother. For You are blessed to ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Ascension Orthodox Christian Mission

www.ascensionorthodox.org

What
Announcement
did Jesus make
to Mankind?

God and Man
can become One



Holy Ascension
Orthodox Christian Mission

**The Greek word
“Evangelion” means
Good News.**

**God become man
through Jesus Christ**

**Man can become
united with God**

Christ is our example

**Our life in prayer and
worship of God**

The Greek word “Evangelion” means Good News. The “Good News” or the “Gospel,” is this: God became man so that man could become like god. Confusing? Preposterous? Sacrilegious? Let’s see. Although this word seems familiar to us, it is interesting that the word angel comes from the same root word as Evangelion. Angels or messengers announce the advent of Jesus and that his name would mean “God with us.”

Also, the writers of the Evangelion or Gospels are called the four Evangelists. We also remember St John the Baptist as the Evangelist. He announced that the Kingdom of God was near and told us that we must repent to enter it.

Perhaps St Athanasius sums it up best: “God became human so that we might become gods... [Jesus] manifested Himself by a body that we might receive the idea of the unseen Father, and He endured shame from us so that we might inherit immortality.” God, the second person of the Holy Trinity, became one of us so that we could become one with God. God, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity came to live in us through Baptism.

What does it mean to become like God? Do we change our very being and suddenly become a god? No, but we do change, not from being human into being god, but while staying human become imitators of Christ, becoming perfect, making corruptible incorruptible, restoring the “image of God,” in us. This is the process the early Church Fathers called theosis or deification ...becoming god-like. Is it so hard for us to believe that man’s body, soul and spirit can become transformed or transfigured into the likeness of God?

And how did God become man? By extreme humility. “Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:5-11)

And how can man become like god? Christ is our example. By extreme humility through living the mystical life. By putting “on Christ” through living the liturgical and sacramental life. Attending the Divine Services to learn about Him and put what we hear from these Services into practice in our lives. Also by putting God and all others ahead of us not only can we become one with God repairing our relationship with Him, but Christ makes it clear that we can and must repair our relationships with others.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ We are called to humble ourselves in love for God and begin to develop virtues and good works must also accompany our Faith and prove it to be true. The Great Judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 is a sobering depiction of this challenge to give to a needy world because as we do, we show our love for God. By doing these things “to the least in the kingdom,” we do them to Christ Himself.

What should we do with this information? It is simple and it is difficult. Like the Rich Young Ruler, we must sell everything and follow Christ. How do we follow Christ? Even though He was the only one who did NOT need to Repent and be Baptized, we must follow Him in Repentance and Baptism.