



## *Fire & Light*

### **St. Symeon Orthodox Church**

3101 Clairmont Ave. Birmingham, AL 35205

Church Tel. 205-930-9681 / 205-907-9447

Visit [stsymeon.com](http://stsymeon.com)

✠ **June 28, 2015** ✠

“AND I say unto thee,  
Thou art Peter,  
and upon this rock  
I will build My Church,  
that is, on the faith  
of his confession.”

~ St. John Chrysostom

Holy Unmercenary Wonderworkers, Sts. Cyrus & John of Cyprus (311)

| Sts. Sergius and Herman, Founders and Abbots of Valaam (1353)

✠ Anniversary of Repose of + Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov) of Essex (1993)

✠ **Tomorrow – 10:00am Divine Liturgy – Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul**

⇒ Tomorrow – Inquirer's Class – 6:30pm

✠ **Wed July 1 6:30pm ~ Great Vespers – St. John of San Francisco** > *NO Vespers*

✠ **Thurs July 2 6:00am ~ Divine Liturgy – St. John of San Francisco** \* **Sat. July 4 \***

**18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council – July 19-25, Hilton Downtown Atlanta**

– **See [oca.org](http://oca.org).** You can attend for a day or two at any time of the week. There will be morning and evening services each day and all kinds of Orthodox stores and exhibits. It's an extraordinary experience as well to be together with so many Orthodox clergy and faithful.

➤ **New Iconography Donations are welcome ! We have \$25,000 given and will need closer to \$30,000, with the costs of scaffolding, travel, etc. But please don't give if doing so cuts into your current Building Fund support. Please only consider it if it's something extra. *May it be blessed!***

"... We commemorate each of the Saints with hymns and appropriate songs of praise, **how much more should we celebrate the memory of Peter and Paul, the supreme Leaders of the pre-eminent company of the Apostles?** They are the fathers and guides of all Christians: Apostles, martyrs, holy ascetics, priests, hierarchs, pastors and teachers. As chief shepherds and master builders of our common godliness and virtue, they tend and teach us all, like lights in the world, holding forth the word of life."  
~ St. Gregory Palamas (14<sup>th</sup> C)

**"UPON THIS ROCK I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it** (Matt. 16:18). Upon this firmness, He says, I shall raise My Temple, and it will rise upon the steadfastness of this Faith, and the summit of My Church will mingle with the heavens. *The gates of Hades shall not master this profession; nor the bonds of death bind it. For these words are the words of life, and as they raise those who confess them up to Heaven, so they plunge those that deny them down into hell.*"  
St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome (461)

**"FAITH is the foundation of the Church, for it was not of the person but of the faith of Saint Peter** that it was said that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. It is the confession of faith that has vanquished hell. Jesus Christ is the Rock. He did not deny the grace of His name when He called him Peter, because he borrowed from the Rock the constancy and solidity of his faith. Endeavour then, to be a rock yourself; your rock is your faith, and faith is the foundation of the Church. If you are a rock, you will be in the Church, for the Church is built upon the Rock."

St. Ambrose of Milan (397)



# Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

*Office of the Bishop*

June 27, 2015

St. Sampson the Hospitable of Constantinople, St. Joanna the Myrrhbearer

Reg. 15-102

To the Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania:

It is by now common knowledge that the Supreme Court of the United States rendered a decision on Friday, June 26, which declared that marriage between members of the same sex is a constitutional right. This ruling effectively overturned laws in several states which declared such unions to be illegal, and ruled that such unions can be legally performed in all states.

While this ruling marks a significant change in the way that homosexuality is regarded according to the civil statutes, it in no way affects the teaching and practice of the Orthodox Christian Church either in this country or anywhere else in the world. In the interests of clarity, it should be understood that Orthodox Parish Churches are not "Wedding Chapels". Our Churches do not function as places where the sacrament of Holy Matrimony is offered to the public at large on a non-sectarian basis for a fee. Nobody can be married in an Orthodox Church who is not a member in good standing. The qualifications to be a "Member in good standing" have not changed. A member in good standing must be someone who has been properly received into the Church, a faithful believer in the teachings of the Church, a regular participant in the sacraments of Confession and Communion, and gives regular financial and material support to the parish. Persons who do not meet these criteria do not have a blessing to be married in the Church, and no clergy have a blessing to ignore or in any way set aside these criteria.

The Church, following the direct teaching of Jesus Christ, " ...He which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Matthew 19:4-6)", allows for no other form of marriage. Thus anyone who contracts or who has, in the past, contracted such a relationship and does not repent of that relationship, in addition to those who live together in a conjugal relationship without being married are not to be communed.

I encourage our clergy and faithful to refresh their knowledge of Church teaching on these matters by reading the Synodal Affirmation on the Mystery of Marriage <http://oca.org/holy-synod/statements/holy-synod/synodal-affirmation-of-the-mystery-of-marriage>. and the Statement of the Assembly of Bishops of the United States <http://assemblyofbishops.org/about/documents/2013-assembly-statement-on-marriage-and-sexuality>.

Any further questions may be addressed through my office

Sincerely in Christ

*+ Melchisedek*

+Melchisedek  
Archbishop of Pittsburgh  
and Western Pennsylvania



# Encyclical Letter of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America on Marriage (1970's)

**"... the two shall become one flesh." (Ephesians 5:31)**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We find it imperative to address you on an issue of crucial importance for the Christian life. An increasingly secularized world tends more and more to neglect the traditional biblical understanding of marriage and family. Misunderstanding freedom and proclaiming the progress of a humanity supposedly too mature, sophisticated and scientific to follow Christ's Gospel, many have abandoned its moral demands. The consequences are plain for all to see: the family is disintegrating, legalized abortion is killing millions of unborn children, corrupt sexual behavior is rampant. The moral foundations of society are collapsing.

We, the bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, therefore proclaim anew to you, the flock entrusted to our care, the great and holy vision of marriage that is gloriously preserved and manifested in the doctrine, liturgy and canonical tradition of the Church. We do not make this proclamation in the name of an outdated conservatism or because we consider our present society intrinsically more corrupt than the past generations. We speak because we are concerned for the welfare and salvation both of you, the members of our flock, and of all men. We speak of "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes ... concerning the word of life" (John 1:1). We speak because we know the Truth of the Gospel of Christ to be the eternal Truth, the one needful thing, the good portion (Luke 10:42) for all men, in all times and places.

Many - Orthodox, non-Orthodox, and even non-Christians - admire our beautiful Marriage Service. Our task is to show them the vision that this Service reveals, a vision of marriage as an icon of the Trinitarian life of God Himself, and to indicate the responsibility and commitment that this vision of marriage implies.

We therefore appeal to all of you who are responsible for the life of our parishes and for the future of our youth to make a common effort to provide appropriate guidance and help to all in matrimonial matters, both through your own personal examples of pure and upright lives and undefiled marriages and also through words of exhortation and explanation, "knowing how you ought to answer everyone" (Colossians 4:6), and through programs of education.

From the Old Testament Scriptures we learn that God created man "in His own image," "male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27), and, since that beginning, "a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Man and woman are mutually complementary, and this complementarity, expressed in their union and common activity, reflects the very image and likeness of God. This spiritual basis of marriage clearly transcends, without suppressing, the fleshly union of the bodies. Fleshly relations when separated from spiritual ones are depraved; they must be woven into the pure and total love between a man and a woman united in marriage.

In the New Testament Scripture, from the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, we learn that marriage is a unique and unbreakable union of husband and wife joined by God Himself: "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). The Marriage Service likewise makes it clear that the bridegroom and the bride are united not by themselves, but by God: "For by Thee is the husband joined unto the wife" (Marriage Service). For this reason the Orthodox Marriage Service is devoid of any oaths or marriage vows on the part of the couple. Their desire and freely given consent are certainly necessary for the marriage, for sacraments are not acts of magic that eliminate the need for human cooperation. Yet no vow or oath can possibly join a man and a woman together in the gracious and absolute way called for in Christian marriage. The true Christian marriage is effected by God Himself. In such a union, described by St. Paul as "a great mystery" (Ephesians 5:32), human love and desire for companionship become a love pervaded and sanctified by divine grace: water is

transformed into the good wine, as it was at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. In a Christian marriage husband and wife manifest in their own lives the union between God and His beloved people; between Christ, the Bridegroom, and the Church, His Bride (Ephesians 5:32). God accompanies husband and wife, bringing them into a unity which will be revealed as perfect and eternal in His Kingdom, and filling their lives with the Holy Spirit so that selfishness and division may be overcome. He sanctifies and purifies their total relationship. According to the prayers of the Marriage Service, God communicates to those being joined in unity and love, faith and oneness of mind, holiness, purity and chastity, joy and glory, and the possibility for eternal life. He unites them in body and spirit, heart and mind.

Obviously, Christian marriage will never find its ultimate fulfillment and happiness in this world. Like all things in Christ, marriage too must pass through the Cross, through temptation, suffering, trial and finally death, before coming to its ultimate consummation in the Resurrection and the Kingdom of God which will come in power at the end of the ages. All this Christian couples experience as they strive to realize in their own lives the great gift given to them by God in marriage: "Thou hast set upon their heads crowns of precious stones; they asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it them" (Psalm 21, the Prokeimenon of the Marriage Service). For those who fight the good fight as good and faithful servants, the crowns become their eternal reward as witnesses to Christ and the wedding garments are transformed into robes of salvation and eternal glory.

Marriage is the most perfect realization of love between a man and a woman: two become one. Love unites in such a way that two lives become one life in perfect harmony. This love, sanctified by God, is the great source of the happiness which is sought in marriage, and in it lies a power that transforms both those who love and those who are loved. Because of this transforming power of love, all the difficulties and defects in family life can be overcome. True love never ceases, whether in this world or in the age to come. Faithfulness and confidence must reign in marriage, for there can be no deception in love. When husband and wife are united by love, they share a common life and help each other in everything they do, for their love for each other expresses itself in mutual help and support.

Such love implies a relationship in marriage which is total in character. Husband and wife must live not for purely individual gratification, but for each other, for such is the meaning of true love. Marriage must be offered to God continually and consciously, and it must always be rooted in the life and teachings of the Church. Husband and wife can achieve their final glorification in the age to come only by self-sacrifice for the sake of one another in this life unto the glory of God. Christian marriage is a specific application of one of Christ's fundamental teachings: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39).

The greatest miracle of this divinely sanctified love of marriage is the procreation of good, fair and holy children. In the image of God who brings forth life in love, the Christian marriage, a unity in love established by God, brings forth holy and good life (1 Cor. 7:14).

The perfect marriage can only be one, single and unique. The prototype of marriage, the unity between Christ and His Church, excludes multiple marriages: Christ has only one Church; the Church has no other Christ. Even death cannot break the bond of perfect love. Therefore, the Church does not advocate second or third marriages, even for widows or widowers; rather, they are tolerated as condescension to human frailty and weakness, while fourth marriages are totally forbidden.

The crowning which takes place in the Marriage Service reveals the bridegroom and the bride to be a new community in Christ. The husband is the head of this community, as God is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3) and as Christ "is the head of the Church" (Ephesians 5:23). His headship is not a power over his wife and family, but a divinely-given responsibility, to be discharged after the image of Christ, the perfect man. "... a man approved of God among you" (Acts 2:22). His headship is a service of love and sacrifice. He is to nourish and cherish his wife and family "as Christ does the Church" (Ephesians 5:29). The wife is the helpmate of her husband, his beloved companion for life, his source of joy and wellbeing. In Eve, the mother of life, the fullness

of life was revealed, for without her Adam was alone and had no companion fit for him (Genesis 2:18). As the bearer of life in the conception of children, the wife has an immediate concern for life and its quality. It is she who gives content to the life of her husband and family: purity, kindness, peace, gentleness and the concern for others. Her true adornment is "the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious" (1 Peter 3:4).

To live up to its high calling, the Christian family must be firmly established in the Faith. Husband and wife must strive to learn more about the Faith and to accept its teachings as the law of their life. It must become for them the authority, against which all else that they read, hear or see is tested and evaluated. It is especially important that the Christian family participate in the life of the Church; by praying at home, by coming to the church services, by participating in the sacraments, by observing the Church's fasts and feasts and by keeping her traditions. It is also important that the Christian family participate in the general life of their parish and have as friends those distinguished by a firm personal faith and purity of life.

Each Christian must seek the advice and guidance of the pastors of the Church. Especially before entering into marriage, Orthodox men and women must contact their pastor, so that he might explain the true nature of marriage in the Church and help them better to understand all the demands of a truly spiritual and moral family life. Each family likewise must continue to live under the guidance and with the help of the Church and her pastors.

With the help of God all the difficulties and misfortunes which are inevitable in life will be overcome, because what is impossible for man is possible for God. With faith in God, the husband will be truly capable of leading the family in the way of salvation toward the Kingdom of God, loving his wife and his children more than himself. With the help of God, the wife will be capable of being a source of purity, holiness and love for the entire family. And the children born for God in such a family from the beginning will be brought up as Christians. Such a family will be a beautiful model and source of faith, goodness and kindness for all those around it.

The Christian ideal of marriage and family, manhood and womanhood, is incomparably more exalted, balanced and fulfilling than those broken, one-sided or totally erroneous ideologies of today's world which reduce the meaning of human life to the satisfaction of sexual appetites, material security, or to other such limited functions and desires. In Christ man is revealed as son and friend of God. He is able to become a member of Christ in soul and body. In the Christian marriage, he is able to achieve an eternal, unique and total union in love.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: be true men and women. Be faithful to the Christian ideal of marriage and family. Let our Christian families be united in mutual love and concern. Husbands and wives: love each other; love your children. Children: respect your parents. "Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21). "Mortify immorality, impurity, evil desire ... on account of these the wrath of God is coming" (Colossians 3:5-6).

+ **IRENEY**, Archbishop of New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada ; + **SYLVESTER**, Archbishop of Montreal and Canada ; + **JOHN**, Archbishop of Chicago and Minneapolis; + **JOHN**, Archbishop of San Francisco and Western United States, + **NIKON**, Archbishop of Brooklyn, + **KIPRIAN**, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, Secretary of the Holy Synod; + **VALERIAN**, Archbishop of Detroit and Michigan; + **THEODOSIUS**, Bishop of Pittsburgh and West Virginia, + **DMITRI**, Bishop of Hartford and New England; + **GREGORY**, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska; + **JOASAPH**, Bishop of Edmonton; + **HERMAN**, Bishop of Wilkes-Barre

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## On Preserving Purity of the Flesh

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*Guard the purity of thy flesh in the Lord, as a precious pearl.* -- St. Ephraim the Syrian

The lust of the flesh is very seductive; it easily catches the one who is careless and makes his soul a prisoner of the devil. According to the word of the Lord, anyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matt. 5:28). This means that one can defile oneself without having any physical contact with another person – simply through one’s eyes, through one’s imagination and the desires of the heart. When lustful thoughts enter the heart, they already defile a man (Matt. 15:20). For this reason Scripture says, *Keep thy heart with all diligence* (Prov. 4:23). Inasmuch as the desires of the heart are often aroused in us through external impressions, one must also strive to guard one’s bodily senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch. Referring to these, Scripture tells us: *death has come up through your windows, it has entered into our land* (Jer. 9:21). Through the senses the seductions of the world penetrate the heart and, even if it is full of good thoughts, they make of it a desolation, as it is said: *evil conversations corrupt good manners* (I Cor. 15:33).

Of all the external senses, **sight** serves as the most convenient transmitter of deceptions, and for this reason it poses the greatest danger to virginity. The lust of the eyes, which catch beguiling objects, easily and quickly joins them with the lust of the flesh, and the man, without regard for time or place, commits adultery with whomever he so desires. Deliberately gazing at beautiful faces, this adulterer always and everywhere carries and feeds within himself the indomitable beast of unclean desire. What could be worse than such a state? This is the same as a raging fever in which the afflicted, no matter how much he drinks, cannot slake his thirst. The Scripture says: *look not upon another’s beauty...for herewith lust is kindled as a fire* (Eccles. 9:9). And what kind of pleasure can there be in the lust of the eyes? Here there is no real pleasure, just a shadow, a surrogate, a deception. Those who enjoy peace of heart are not those who give themselves over to the lust of the eyes, but those who do not give themselves over. No matter how much the lustful man tries to capture pleasures for himself, he cannot retain them and make them last. **Not so is the consolation of the chaste: one can say that his whole life is spent in enjoyment because his conscience is at peace and nothing agitates his heart; it is always calm and looks joyously up to heaven, as if winged with the desire of eternal good things.**

Well, you might say, what harm is there if I look and am not carried away by passion? The first time you may not notice any harm to yourself, and if, as you say, you look once, twice, three times like this, perhaps you will still be able to overcome passion; but if you begin to do this often then you will surely be vanquished. For you are not greater than the Prophet David who, we know, subjected himself to dangers from admiring the beauty of the female sex. If you come close to a fire and burn yourself you will jump away at once; but once your soul is weakened by a woman’s flattery, you will not turn away from her soon. In the Old Testament it is said: *Turn away thine eye from a beautiful woman...for many have been deceived by the beauty of a woman* (Eccles. 9:8).

In order to keep one’s eyes from beguilement, one should lower them more often, recalling the words revealed by God to St. Ephraim: “From the earth thou art taken, look therefore to the earth.”

One should be similarly careful in guarding one’s **ears** from hearing lewd conversation, worldly songs, music which is pleasurable and weakens the soul, because all this arouses in the soul impure love and carnal desire.

The sense of **taste** poses great danger to chastity, and therefore one should avoid taking pleasure in food and drink. Who has not noticed what ruinous consequences come from indulging in sweet delicacies.

The sense of **touch**, although less subject to temptation, even so is extremely dangerous to virginity. For this reason, avoid physical contact not only with the opposite sex but likewise refrain from touching those parts of your own body which lead to the arousal of passion.

Of all the physical senses, **smell** poses the least danger to chastity; nevertheless, one should avoid perfumes which draw the soul towards effeminacy and dispose it towards sensuality.

Besides all this, one must be very wary of impure thoughts or imaginings; these subject a man to spiritual decay much more than fulfilling the desire of the flesh within the lawful bonds of marriage. For this reason the Apostle says *It is better to marry than to burn* (I Cor. 7:9). Those who live in virginity must inevitably engage in warfare against carnal passion; and those who are inexperienced or untried in this warfare are threatened with being overpowered and falling; sometimes it even results in spiritual death, for, as Apostle Paul says, *to be carnally minded is death* (Rom. 8:6). All the more so, then, are deeds born of lust considered deadly sins; it is said that *no adulterer nor unclean person hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God* (Eph. 5:5) if he does not repent, if he does not in his mind and heart turn away from his sin.

*Every man that striveth for mastery is temperate in all things.* (I Cor. 9:25)

Although abstinence from carnality is a difficult virtue, it is nevertheless possible, and in return it rewards its practitioner with an inexhaustible well-spring of consolation in God. If a man desires to delight in spiritual blessings, he should strive to destroy within himself the desires of this sin-loving flesh, to exhaust his “old man”; here, let him imitate St. Ephraim the Syrian who said, “I torment him who torments me.”

All ascetic strugglers, as Apostle Paul writes, are temperate in all things. Imitating them, you, too, should not only refrain from eating anything that weighs down the body; you should not even drink water beyond moderation, so as not to burden the heart with a surfeit of drink and draw yourself away from the podvig of prayer and vigilance. For, more than anything else, keeping vigil with prayer aids in all that is good: it uproots passions of the flesh, it motivates one to guard purity of virginity, and it plants in the heart hope in God and love for God. “He who loves God,” writes St. Maximus the Confessor, “will live an angelic life on earth, fasting and keeping vigil, chanting and praying.”

It is rightly said in Scripture that neither adulterers nor fornicators will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (I Cor. 6:9). Apostle Paul counsels us not to communicate with adulterers, placing them in the same category with idolators; one should not even eat together with such people (I Cor. 5:11). And this is given not without reason, as we can see from the following example.

**A**round the year 1140, there lived in the Kiev Caves Lavra a hieromonk by the name of Onesiphoros. He had a spiritual son and friend, a monk who gave every appearance of being a faster, although he freely indulged in the sins of the flesh – a fact he kept secret from his spiritual father. He was in good health when suddenly he died. His body gave off such a stench that no one could come close to it. The monks had to stand at a distance and even so they were barely able to conduct the burial service. Covering their noses, they carried him away and placed him in the caves. Many times the monks heard shrieks, as though someone were being tormented. One night St. Anthony appeared to Onesiphoros and said to him sternly, “Why have you put here such an abominable man of iniquity? He defamed a holy place.” The next night Onesiphoros again heard a voice: “Quickly throw him out of here; give him to the dogs. He’s not worthy of being here.” This shows how offensive to God and His Saints is the secret sin of one who indulges the flesh. Not only his soul but even his lifeless corpse is intolerable for them. Justly does the Apostle write: *Every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that commiteth fornication sinneth against his own body* (I Cor 6:18).

One must also be aware that without God's grace no one can preserve the purity of virginity; not is it granted to the negligent. One must have ardent love for the study of God's wisdom, eat and drink in moderation, and keep the body under subjection by vigils, labors and prayer. Without this one inevitably faces a battle with the lust of the flesh, is overmastered by it and falls into sinful impurity. The Saints have observed that for pride and judging others, a man is also allowed to suffer fall from the despoiler of the flesh, and that to guard one's purity it is very beneficial to frequently have confession and partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.

(Translated and excerpted from *How a Youth Can Guard His Path in Purity*, Moscow, 1910)

## The Holy Fathers on...CHASTITY

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Every man who loves purity and chastity becomes the temple of God. -- St. Ephraim the Syrian

Not he is chaste in whom shameful thoughts stop in time of struggle, work and endeavor, but he who by the trueness of his heart makes chaste the vision of his mind not letting it stretch out towards unseemly thoughts. -- St. Isaac the Syrian

Offer to the Lord the weakness of your nature, fully acknowledging your own powerlessness, and imperceptibly you will receive the gift of chastity. -- St. John Climacus

*O Lord our God...Stop the rushing of passions, and quench the burning of bodily tension. Grant us to live chastely in word and act, that we may live a life of heroic virtue and not fall away from Thy promised blessings.* -- The Evening Prayers

I write to you in the midst of life, yet in love with death, for my love (eros) has been crucified. There is within me no fire of material longing, but living water, within me springing up, within me crying, "Come to the Father." -- St. Ignatius of Antioch

**"BODILY discipline is essential** in order to make the ground of the heart fit to receive the spiritual seeds and bear spiritual fruit. To abandon or neglect it is to render the ground unfit for sowing and bearing fruit. Excess in this direction and putting one's trust in it is just as harmful, or even more so, than neglect of it. Neglect of bodily discipline makes men like animals, who give free rein and scope to their bodily passions; but excess makes men like devils and fosters the tendency to pride and the reactivation of other passions of the soul. Those who relinquish bodily discipline become subject to gluttony, lust and anger in its cruder forms. Those who practice immoderate bodily discipline, use it indiscreetly, or put all their trust in it, seeing in it their merit and worth in God's sight, fall into vainglory, self-opinion, presumption, pride, hardness and obduracy, contempt of their neighbors, detraction and condemnation of others, rancor, resentment, hate, blasphemy, schism, heresy, self-deception and diabolic delusion." ~ St. Ignatius Brianchaninov (+ 1867)

"GOD SEEKS nothing else from us except that we do not sin; this alone. But this is not a work of law. It is rather a careful guarding of the image and dignity from above."

~ St. Symeon the New Theologian (+ 1022)