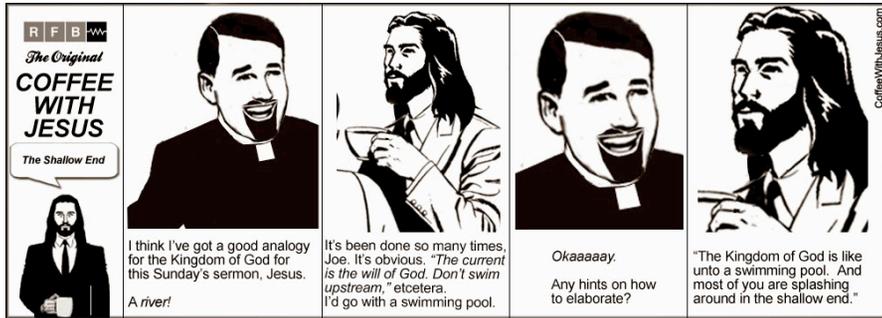


darkness have so often led astray, but about the “you” who is as I desire you to be, the “you” who dwells in my thoughts as the object of my love. I can say these things about the “you” who can still be what I want you to be, and to be so *visibly*.

Become visibly, then, what you already are in my mind. Be the ultimate reality of yourself. Realize all the potential I have placed within you.

No man or woman is capable of realizing any inner beauty that is not equally present within you. There is no divine gift toward which you cannot aspire. Indeed, you will receive all those gifts together, if you truly love, with me and in me.

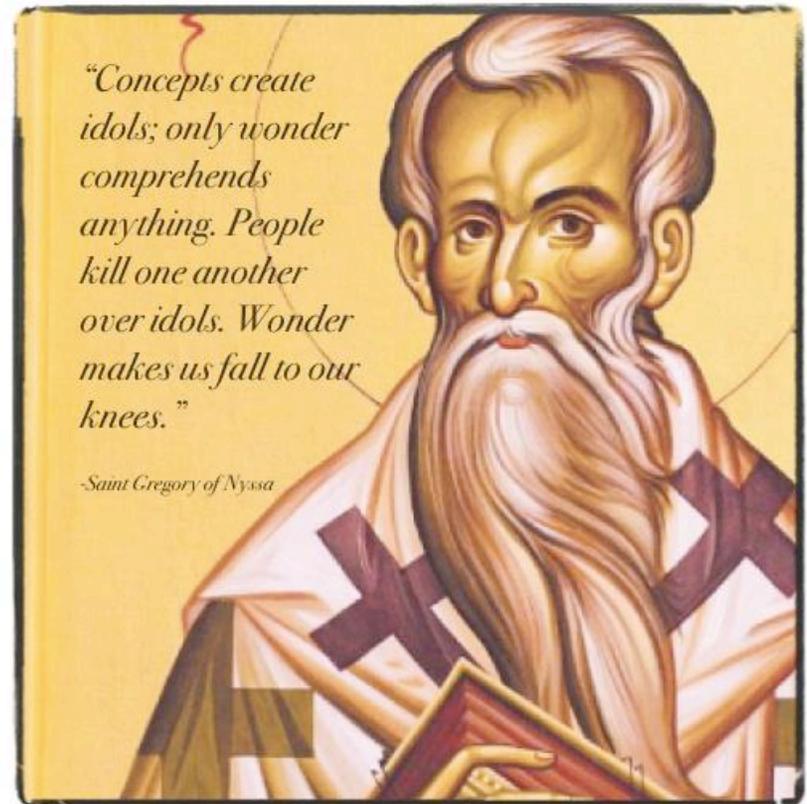
Whatever you may have done in the past, I will set you free, I will loose your bonds. And if I loose your bonds, who can prevent you from rising up and walking?



Saint Paul Orthodox Cathedral

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Sunday, July 23 2017
7TH Sunday after Pentecost



Today we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy of
St. John Chrysostom

Epistle – Romans 15:1-7

Brothers and sisters, we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of your Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Gospel – Matthew 9:27-35

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity.

"To You, Whoever You May Be"

Fr. Lev Gillet

Whoever you are, whatever you may be, says the Lord of Love, my hand is resting upon you at this very moment. By this gesture, I am letting you know that I love you and that I call you for my own.

I have never ceased loving you, speaking to you, or calling you. Sometimes it was in silence and solitude. Sometimes it was there, where others were gathered in my name.

Often you did not hear this call, because you were not listening. At other times you perceived it, but in a way that was vague and confused. Occasionally you were at the point of responding with acceptance. And sometimes you gave me that response without any lasting commitment.

You were deeply moved to hear me. You recoiled from the decision to follow me.

Never thereafter did you finally submit, totally and exclusively, to the calling of Love.

Yet now, once again, I come to you. I want to speak to you once more. I want you wholly for myself. Let me repeat: Love desires you, totally and exclusively.

I will speak to you in secret, confidentially, intimately. I will place my mouth close to your ear. Hear, then, what my lips want to speak to you in hushed tones—what they want to murmur to you.

I am your Lord, the Lord of Love. Do you want to enter into the life of Love?

This is not an invitation to some realm of tepid tenderness. It is a calling to enter into the burning flame of Love. There alone is true conversion: conversion to incandescent Love.

Do you wish to become someone other than you have been, someone other than you are? Do you wish to be someone who lives for others, and first of all for that Other and with that Other who calls all things into being? Do you wish to be a brother to all, a brother to the entire world?

Then hear what my Love speaks to you.

My child, you have never known who you really are. You do not yet know yourself. I mean, you have never really known yourself to be the object of my Love. As a result, you have never known who you are in me, or all the potential within yourself.

Awake from this sleep and its bad dreams! In certain moments of truth, you see nothing in yourself but failures and defeats, set-backs, corruption, and perhaps even crimes. But none of that is really of you. It is not your true "me," the most profound expression of your true self.

Beneath and behind all that, deeper than all your sin, transgressions and lacks, my eyes are upon you. I see you, and I love you. It is *you* that I love. It's not the evil you do—the evil that we can neither ignore nor deny nor lessen (is black actually white?). But underneath it all, at a greater depth, I see something else that is still very much alive.

The masks you wear, the disguises you adopt might well hide you from the eyes of others—and even from your own eyes. But they cannot hide you from me. I pursue you even there where no one has ever pursued you before.

Your deceptive expression, your feverish quest for excitement, your hard and avaricious heart—all of that I separate from you. I cut it away and cast it far off from you.

Hear me. No one truly understands you. But I understand you. I can speak about you such wonderful, marvelous things! I can say these things about you. Not about the "you" that the powers of