

all of which are based on the New Testament? Do we not remember and re-live His death and resurrection on each Sunday (Kyriake, that is, the Lord's Day) and in each Liturgy? Do we not continuously hear about Jesus' teachings, miracles and encounters with men and women from all walks of life? Even the Feastdays of the Prophets, the Apostles, the Theotokos and the Saints, properly understood, point to the centrality of Christ, the Saviour and Lord of all.

This is the essential message of the Orthodox faith: Christ lives and desires to be one with us in a union of holy love. He is the Leader of our life and the Celebrant of the sacraments. He is the Good Shepherd who continues not only to seek out the lost but also to feed those who are already in His flock. Are we prepared to hear His call? Are we willing to open our hearts to Him? Do we seek Him as eagerly as He seeks us? I would like to end this preface with the image of Christ the Pursuer from the conclusion of St. John Chrysostom's 15th Homily on 1 Timothy, a passage to which George Florovsky has pointed. In the final part of this Homily,

St. John Chrysostom meditates on Christ's love for us and exhorts Christians to glorify Christ for His countless material and spiritual gifts — the same Christ that we often neglect and perhaps even secretly dislike for pursuing us and seeking to change our lives. Then St. John has Christ speaking to us in these words:

“But what shall I say? It is not in this way only that I have shown my love to you, but also by what I have suffered. For you I was spit upon, I was scourged. I emptied myself of glory, I left my Father and came to you, who hate me, and turn from me, and are loath to hear my name. I pursued you, I ran after you, that I might overtake you. I united and joined you to myself, “eat me, drink me,” I said. In heaven above I hold you, and on earth below I embrace you. Is it not enough for you that I have your pledge of salvation in heaven? Does this not satisfy your desire? I again descended on earth (through the Eucharist): I not only am mingled with you, I am entwined in you. I am eaten, broken into tiny particles, that the fusion, intermingling, and union may be more complete. Things united remain yet (sometimes) in their own limits, but I am interwoven with you. I would have nothing separating us. I will that we both be one”.