

Convent 2016

A couple of years ago I attended a lecture by Fr. George Metallinos, Dean of Athens University School of Theology. He said something, which on the face of it is absolutely startling: “For we Christians the unique and absolute goal of our life in Christ is theosis, our union with God, so that human kind- through our participation in God’s uncreated energy - may become “by the Grace of God” that which God is himself by nature. Fr. George said, this is what “salvation” means, in Christianity.”

As Christians we know that our salvation is an every day, ongoing process, wrought on the anvil of life itself, and that as believers, we are called to cooperate in this process. We are instructed to “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17). The Apostle Paul made clear the necessity of human cooperation when he told us to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure (Philippians 2:1-13)”.

Our salvation is a process by which we become more and more like Christ. Our faith is a free gift from God, not dependent upon anything we can do, but this life long process of salvation requires that we cooperate with God’s grace, that we might be transformed by the Holy Spirit, and be made holy. If we are to spend eternity with God, transformation must take place.

The sole purpose of the Church is to enable the salvation of every human being, whereby we are united to Christ, and transformed by Him in all holiness, and prepared for

eternal life. Through the Church we hear the Good News, that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, and that he rose from the dead, and because of this we have eternal life. This work of salvation is a gradual, life-long process by which we Christians gradually become more and more like Christ. Our salvation begins the moment we commit ourselves to Christ, and within the daily abounding grace of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn ever closer in communion with God.