

SALVATION

Salvation is the **divine gift** by which men and women are freed from sin and death, united to Christ, and brought into His Eternal Kingdom.

Those who heard St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost asked what they should do to be saved; He said to them, "*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 2:38).

Salvation begins with these **three steps**: 1) Repent. 2) Be baptized; and 3) receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. **To repent** means to change our minds about how we have been, to turn from our sin, and to dedicate ourselves to Christ. **To be baptized** means to **be born again** by being brought into union with Christ. **And to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost** means to receive the Spirit who empowers us to enter into new life in Christ, to be nurtured in the Church, and to be conformed to the image of God.

Salvation requires faith in Jesus Christ. No one can be saved by his own good works. Salvation is "faith that works by love."

It's an ongoing, life-long process.

Salvation in the past tense is because, through the death and resurrection of Christ, we have been saved. It is in the present tense, because we are "*being saved*" by our active participation through faith in our union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is also future, because we are yet to be saved at His glorious Second Coming.



IN THIS WE BELIEVE I

GOD THE FATHER



He is the source of the Trinity. Scripture reveals One God in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who eternally share the same divine essence.

Of the Father the Son is **begotten** before all time (Psalm 2:7; 2 Corinthians 11:31). It is from the Father from Whom the Holy Spirit **proceeds** eternally (John 15:26). God the Father created all things **through** the Son, **in** the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1; John 1:3; Job 33:4), And we are called to worship Him (John 4:23).

The Father loves human beings so much that he has sent the Son to us to give us eternal life (John 3:16).

JESUS CHRIST

He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, born of the Father eternally. He is at the same time **fully God and fully human**.

His coming to earth was prophesied in the Old Testament by the prophets. Since Jesus Christ is the heart of Christianity, the Orthodox Church pays the greatest attention to knowing Him, more than any person or thing.

In the recitation of the Nicene Creed, Orthodox Christians regularly affirm historic faith in Jesus by saying:

I believe "... in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, **True God** of True God, begotten, **not created**, of the same essence as the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven, and **became incarnate** of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and **became man**. He was crucified for us





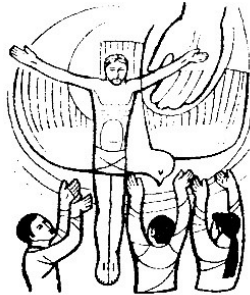
under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried. And he *rose* again on the third day, according to the Scriptures. ***And he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again, in glory,*** to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end."

THE HOLY SPIRIT

He is one of the Persons of the Trinity and ***is one in essence with the Father.***

Orthodox Christians confess repeatedly:

And I think... "in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-giver, ***who proceeds from the Father***, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified ..."



It is called "the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4) given by Christ as a gift to empower the Church in its mission to serve God. (Acts 1:8), to put God's love in our hearts (Romans 5:5), and to impart spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12:7-13;) and virtues (Galatians 5:22,23) for Christian witness and life.

Orthodox Christians believe that the biblical promise of the Holy Spirit ***is received through Chrismation*** (anointing) in Baptism (Acts 2:38). We must grow in our experience of the Holy Spirit for the rest of our lives.

THE INCARNATION



It refers to Jesus Christ ***having come "in the flesh"***.

The eternal Son of God the Father assumed ***a complete human nature*** from the Virgin Mary.

He was (and is) a Divine Person, who possesses completely of God the Father the totality of the divine nature, and by coming in the flesh possesses completely a human nature of the Virgin Mary.

By His incarnation, ***the Son possesses forever two natures in His one Person.***

The Son of God, unlimited in his divine nature, will-



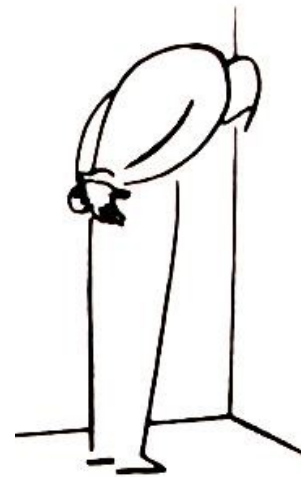
ingly and freely accepted the limitation in his humanity in which he experienced hunger, thirst, fatigue – and finally, death.

The Incarnation is indispensable to Christianity – there is no Christianity without it.

Scripture records: "... every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God" (1 John 4:3). ***By His Incarnation, the Son of God redeemed human nature,*** a redemption made accessible to all who are united to Him in His glorified humanity.



SIN



It literally means "*not hitting the mark.*" As St. Paul writes, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

We sin when we pervert what God has given us as good and turn away from His purposes. Our sins separate us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and leave us spiritually dead.

To save us, the Son of God took on our humanity, and being sinless, "condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). In His mercy, ***God forgives sins when we confess them and turn away from them,*** giving us strength to defeat sin in our lives: "*If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9).

And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.
(1 John 2:1-2)

