

## Abstract

The thesis deals with traditional Orthodox spirituality. The thesis describes two personalities of Orthodox spirituality of the 20th century, whose examples show the fruits obtained and given by the Grace of God on the path of spiritual perfection as preserved in the Orthodox Church to this day.

The first part outlines the doctrine of the creation of man and then the method of attaining the goal of the Christian life. The importance of the distinction between the creation of man in the image of God and in the likeness of God will be mentioned. This dynamic determines the whole setting of the doctrine of man's spiritual journey. It has a certain order and we can traditionally divide it into an active phase, praxis, and a phase of theoria, or seeing, looking. It is described how man, in cooperation with divine grace, is to progress on the path of perfection and spiritual growth through the active phase, which includes all good endeavors such as prayer, fasting, vigil, and can and ideally should arrive at the theoria phase, when man beholds the uncreated glory of God. Prayer plays a very important role here. That is why I also focus on hesychasm as a method of spiritual life, of which prayer is an important part. In prayer the heart as the spiritual centre of man has the most important place. This is the origin of the so-called noetic prayer (of the heart). The nous, which has been obscured by the fall, must be purified through ascetic practice and prayer in order for noetic (pure) prayer to work in it. This is the first step on the path to spiritual healing. It will not be overlooked that the whole of hesychastic spirituality, including true repentance, is entirely positive and is intended to lead to spiritual healing, and is therefore in a real sense a therapy of the human person. Man becomes what he was meant to be from his creation and attains at the highest stage of the theoria the goal of spiritual life - union with God, theosis, deification. It is then that the likeness of God is truly manifested in him, when he is healed by the action of divine grace. It is also then that he attains the full freedom and love made possible by the state of being conformed to God. This is shown by concrete examples in the second part of the work.

In the second part, two saintly personalities of the 20th century are presented who fulfilled this ideal in their lives and achieved deification. Along with brief biographies of elders Silouan and Paisios, some sections of their journey of spiritual ascent are briefly presented as they left it in their texts or testimonies about them. Examples are pointed out of how this challenging

hesychastic spirituality was lived by specific people and what fruit its practice bore, that is, illumination and seeing the uncreated light in the context of theosis.

The main aim of the present work is to show how hesychastic spirituality, despite its difficulty, could be practiced by the elders of the 20th century and what fruits it bore until it led to the holiness of the two now canonized saints of the Orthodox Church.