

Patristic Writings Concerning Heretics



Icon of the First Ecumenical Council with St. Constantine in the center surrounded by his bishops.

Heretics

<http://orthodoxy1982.blogspot.com/2015/02/heretics.html?m=1>

“We know that salvation itself is a property of the One Church, and that no one can be outside of the catholic Church and yet share the Faith of Christ, or be saved...Neither do we offer any part of that hope to the ungodly heretics, but we place them entirely outside of that

hope; indeed, they have not the least participation in Christ, but vainly assume for themselves that saving Name.”

St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (4th Century AD)

[Migne P. G. 59:725]

“Another thing the blessed man taught and insisted upon with all was never on any occasion whatsoever to associate with heretics and, above all, never to take the Holy Communion with them, ‘even if’, the blessed man said, ‘you remain without communicating all your life, if through stress of circumstances you cannot find a community of the catholic Church. For if, having legally married a wife in this world of the flesh, we are forbidden by God and by the laws to desert her and be united to another woman, even though we have to spend a long time separated from her in a distant country, and shall incur punishment if we violate our vows, how then shall we, who have been joined to God through the Orthodox faith and the catholic Church -- as the apostle says: ‘I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ’ (2 Cor. 11:2) -- how shall we escape from sharing in that punishment which in the world to come awaits heretics, if we defile the orthodox and holy faith by adulterous communion with heretics?’

“For ‘communion’, he said, ‘has been so called because he who has ‘communion’ has things in common and agrees with those with whom he has ‘communion’. Therefore I implore you earnestly, children, never to go near the oratories of the heretics in order to communicate there.’”

St. John the Almsgiver, Patriarch of Alexandria (7th Century AD)
[*Three Byzantine Saints*, “The Life of Saint John the Almsgiver”,
Translators: Elizabeth Dawes & Norman H. Baynes,
St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, Crestwood: 1977; p. 251]

“‘But if,’ they say, ‘we had devised some middle ground between the dogmas (of the Papists and the Orthodox), then thanks to this we would have united with them and accomplished our business superbly, without at all having been forced to say anything except what corresponds to custom and has been handed down (by the Fathers).’ This is precisely the means by which many, from of old, have been deceived and persuaded to follow those who have led them off the steep precipice of impiety; believing that there is some middle ground between the two teachings that can reconcile obvious contradictions, they have been exposed to peril.”

St. Mark of Ephesus, “Encyclical Letter” (see *Orthodox Word* ,
March-April-May, 1967)]

“Several brothers once visited Abba Agathon, for they had been informed that he was possessed of great spiritual discretion. And wishing to test him, to see if he would become angry, they said: “Are you Agathon? We have heard about you that you are debauched and proud.” He replied, “Yes, it is so.” They said to him once more, “Are you Agathon

the loose-tongued lover of slander?” “I am he,” he responded. And the visitors spoke to him a third time, “You are Agathon, the heretic?” To this, he answered, “I am not a heretic.” After this answer, they asked him to explain: “Why, when we called you so many things, did you admit them, while you would not, however, endure the accusation that you were a heretic?” And the Abba said to them: “The first things I accepted since they were beneficial for my soul; but not the accusation that I am a heretic, since heresy is separation from God.” On hearing this reply, the visitors marvelled at the spiritual discretion of the Abba and departed, benefitted in soul.”

Abba Agathon, Desert Father
[*The Evergetinos: A Complete Text* ,
Translated by Hm. Patapios &
Bp. Auxentios, CTOS:
Etna, CA, 1999; Bk. II, Vol. I,
Hypothesis II, p.44]

“Heresy separates every man from the Church.”

Seventh Holy Ecumenical Council
[Mansi, Vol. xii, col. 1022cd;
Praktika, Vol. II, p. 733a (First Session)]

“The universal [catholic] Church is a great paradise...and should anyone be found in the Church ailing with heretical error from the teaching of the serpent...then he is cast out of this paradise, even as Adam was cast out from the paradise

[of old].”

St. John Chrysostom
[PG 59:545CD]

“‘There is one Lord, one Faith, one baptism’ [Eph. 4:5], and this is what we believe with all our soul, with all our heart, and with all our mind, that there is salvation in none other than in Jesus Christ the Nazerene [cf. Acts 4:10-12]. And this is what we piously believe and follow. And we recognize that works without true doctrine are not accepted by God, neither is true doctrine without works accepted by God. For what profit is it, to know well the doctrines concerning God, and yet to be a vile fornicator? And again, what profit is it, to be nobly temperate, and an impious blasphemer? A most precious possession therefore is the knowledge of doctrines: also there is need of a wakeful soul, since there are many that make spoil through philosophy and vain deceit. The Greeks on the one hand draw men away by their smooth tongue, for honey droppeth from a harlot’s lips: whereas they of the Circumcision deceive those who come to them by means of the Divine Scriptures, which they miserably misinterpret though studying them from childhood to all age, and growing old in ignorance. But the children of heretics, by their good words and smooth tongue, deceive the hearts of the innocent, disguising with the name of Christ as it were with honey the poisoned arrows of their impious doctrines: concerning all of whom together the Lord saith, Take heed lest any man mislead you. This is the reason for the teaching of the Creed and for expositions upon it.”

St. Cyril, Archbishop Of Jerusalem
[*Catechetical Lectures* - Lecture 4:
On Ten Points Of Doctrine]

“I therefore, yet not I, but the love of Jesus Christ, entreat you that ye use Christian nourishment only, and abstain from herbage of a different kind; I mean heresy. For heretics mix up Jesus Christ with their own poison, speaking things which are unworthy of credit, like those who administer a deadly drug in sweet wine, which he who is ignorant of does greedily take, with a fatal pleasure leading to his own death.”

St. Ignatius the Godbearer, Hieromartyr of Antioch
[*Epistle to the Trallians*]

“Just as the fishermen hide the hook with bait and covertly hook the fish, similarly, the crafty allies of the heresies cover their evil teachings and corrupt understanding with pietism and hook the more simple, bringing them to spiritual death”

St. Isidore of Pelusium
[Letter to Timothy the Reader,
Patrologia Graeca 78, 252C]

“In *The Spiritual Meadow* of St. John Moschus, we read:

“Once a monk called Theophan came to see the great elder Kyriakos...” (He tells the elder that in his country he is in contact with Nestorians whereupon) “the elder begins to try to convince the monk of his error and to pray that he

abandon that fatal heresy and join himself to the holy catholic and apostolic Church.”

“‘It is impossible to be saved (‘without right belief).’” (The monk is interested and the elder offers him his cell saying:) “‘I have hope that God in His mercy will reveal the truth to you.’”

“And leaving the monk in his cave, the elder set out for the Dead Sea, praying for the monk as he went. And indeed the next day about the ninth hour the monk sees someone, strange in appearance, who says to him, ‘Come and find out the truth.’ And taking him he leads him to a gloomy, stinking place emitting flames and shows him Nestorius and Theodore (of Mopsuestia), Eutyches and Apollonarius, Evagrius and Didymus, Dioscorus and Severus, Arius and Origen, and others. And pointing at them he says to the monk, ‘That is the place prepared for heretics and those who taught falsely about the Mother of God and those who follow their teachings. If you do not want to taste the same punishment turn to the holy catholic and apostolic Church to which the elder who is instructing you belongs. I tell you: even though a man be adorned with all the works of charity, but does not have right belief he will find himself in that place.’

“With these words the monk came to himself. When the elder returned the monk told him everything that he had seen and in a short time joined himself to the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Staying in the monastery of Kalamon he lived with the elder for some years and died in peace.””

St. John Moscus

[*Spiritual Meadow* ; cited in

“Commentary on the Latest Recommendations of the ‘Joint Commission For Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox And Oriental Churches’”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, no. 3 (May-June 1991), pp. 5-18.; quotation appears on p. 17]

“One might say much more against this detestable and antichristian heresy...But...in order that our words may not be too many, it will be well to content ourselves with the divine Scripture, and that we all obey the precept which it has been given us both in regard to other heresies, and especially respecting this. That precept is as follows; ‘Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of them, and be ye separate, that bear the vessels of the Lord’ This may suffice to instruct us all, so that if any one has been deceived by them, he may go out from them, as out of Sodom, and not return again unto them, lest he suffer the fate of Lot’s wife; and if any one has continued from the beginning pure from this impious thing, heresy, he may glory in Christ and say, ‘We have not stretched out our hands to a strange god; neither have we worshipped the works of our own hands, nor served the creature more than Thee, the God that hast created all things through Thy word, the Only-Begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom to Thee the Father together with the same Word in the Holy Spirit be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.’”

St. Athanasius the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria
[*History of the Arians* , 80]

“Abba Theodore used to say, “If thou hast affection for a man, and it happeneth that he fall into temptation, stretch out thy hand to him, and lift him up therefrom, but if he fall into heresy, and will not be persuaded by thee to return, cut him off from thee immediately, lest, if thou tarry long with him, thou be drawn unto him, and thou sink down into the uttermost depths.”

Abba Theodore, Desert Father
[*Sayings of the Desert Fathers* , 315]

“As for all those who pretend to confess sound Orthodox Faith, but are in communion with people who hold a different opinion, if they are forewarned and still remain stubborn, you must not only not be in communion with them, but you must not even call them brothers.”

St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesaria in Cappodocia
(*Patrologia Orientalis*, Vol. 17, p. 303)

“Another thing the blessed man taught and insisted upon with all was never on any occasion whatsoever to associate with heretics and, above all, never to take the Holy Communion with them, ‘even if’, the blessed man said, ‘you remain without communicating all your life, if through stress of circumstances you cannot find a community of the catholic Church. For if, having legally married a wife in this world of

the flesh, we are forbidden by God and by the laws to desert her and be united to another woman, even though we have to spend a long time separated from her in a distant country, and shall incur punishment if we violate our vows, how then shall we, who have been joined to God through the Orthodox faith and the catholic Church -- as the apostle says: "I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2) -- how shall we escape from sharing in that punishment which in the world to come awaits heretics, if we defile the orthodox and holy faith by adulterous communion with heretics?'

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[*Three Byzantine Saints* , "The Life of Saint John the Almsgiver",

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"With all our strength let us beware lest we receive Communion from or give it to heretics. 'Give not what is holy to the dogs,' says the Lord. 'Neither cast ye your pearls before swine', lest we become partakers in their dishonour and condemnation."

St. John of Damascus [*An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* , IV, 13]

“Even if one should give away all his possessions in the world, and yet be in communion with heresy, he cannot be a friend of God, but is rather an enemy.”

St. Theodore the Studite
(PG 99, 1205)

“Chrysostomos loudly declares not only heretics, but also those who have communion with them, to be enemies of God.”

St. Theodore the Studite
[*Epistle to Abbot Theophilus*]

“Guard yourselves from soul-destroying heresy, communion with which is alienation from Christ.”

St. Theodore the Studite
[P.G. 99.1216.]

“The heretics were totally shipwrecked with regard to the Faith; but as for the others, even if in their thinking they did not founder, nevertheless, because of their communion with heresy they are perishing.”

St. Theodore the Studite

[Patrologia Graeca 99, 1164]

“As we walk the unerring and life-bringing path, let us pluck out the eye that scandalizes us, not the physical eye, but the noetic one. For example, if a bishop... who is the eyes of the Church conduct himself in an evil manner and scandalize the people, he must be plucked out. For it is more profitable to gather without him in a house of prayer, than to be cast together with him into the gehenna of fire together with Annas and Caiaphas.”

Saint Athanasius the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria
(Migne PG 26, 1257 C)

“Do not err, my brethren. Those that corrupt families shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And if those that corrupt mere human families are condemned to death, how much more shall those suffer everlasting punishment who endeavour to corrupt the Church of Christ, for which the Lord Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, endured the Cross, and submitted to death! Whosoever, “being waxen fat,” and “become gross,” sets at nought His doctrine, shall go into gehenna. In like manner, every one that has received from God the power of distinguishing, and yet follows an unskillful shepherd, and receives a false opinion for the truth, shall be punished. “What communion hath light with darkness? or Christ with Belial? Or what portion hath he that believeth with an infidel? or the temple of God with idols? “And in like manner say I, what communion hath truth with falsehood? or

righteousness with unrighteousness? or true doctrine with that which is false? For this end did the Lord suffer the ointment to be poured upon His head, that His Church might breathe forth immortality. For saith [the Scripture], “Thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore have the virgins loved Thee; they have drawn Thee; at the odour of Thine ointments we will run after Thee.” Let no one be anointed with the bad odour of the doctrine of [the prince of] this world; let not the holy Church of God be led captive by his subtlety, as was the first woman. Why do we not, as gifted with reason, act wisely? When we had received from Christ, and had grafted in us the faculty of judging concerning God, why do we fall headlong into ignorance? and why, through a careless neglect of acknowledging the gift which we have received, do we foolishly perish?”

St. Ignatius the Godbearer, Hieromartyr of Antioch
[*Epistle to the Ephesians*]

“How then does Paul say, ‘Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves’? (Heb. 13:17) After having said before, ‘Whose faith follow, considering the end of their life’ (Heb. 13:7), he then said, ‘Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves’. What then (you say), when he is wicked, should we obey? Wicked? In what sense? If indeed in regard to matters of the Faith, flee and avoid him; not only if he be a man, but even if he be an angel come down from Heaven; but if in regard to his life, be not overly-curious.”

St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (4th

Century AD)

[*Homily Thirty-Four on the Epistle to the Hebrews*]

“Is the shepherd a heretic? Then he is a wolf! You must flee from him; do not be deceived to approach him even if he appears gentle and tame. Flee from communion and conversation with him even as you would flee from a poisonous snake.”

St. Photius the Great, Patriarch of Constantinople

[*Homily Fifteen* , 10]

“‘That thou mayest know,’ he says, ‘how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.’ Not like that Jewish house. For it is this that maintains the Faith and the preaching of the Word. For the truth is the pillar and the ground of the Church.”

St. John Chrysostom

Homily XI on the First Epistle to St. Timothy, commenting on verse 3:15

“They that are of the Church of Christ are they that are of the truth; and they that are not of the truth are not of the Church of Christ...for we are reminded that we are to distinguish Christianity not by persons, who have ecclesiastical titles*, but by the truth and by the exactness of

the Faith.” *[e.g. ‘Patriarch of Constantinople’, etc.]

St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop and Wonderworker of
Thessalonika

[*Collected Works* , II, 627, pp.10-16]

Even if false hierarchs, while being in heresy, “will succeed in deceiving and enticing a certain number of ignorant ones and in gathering even a considerable number of followers, then they are outside the sacred walls of the Church just the same. But even if very few remain in Orthodoxy and piety, they are in the Church, and the authority and the protection of the ecclesiastical institution resides in them. And if they should suffer for true piety, then this will undoubtedly contribute to their eternal glory and salvation of their souls.”

St. Nicephorus the Confessor [*PG* 100, 844D]

“I exhort you, therefore, not to faint in your afflictions, but to be revived by God’s love, and to add daily to your zeal knowing that in you ought to be preserved that remnant of true religion which the Lord will find when He cometh on the earth. Even if bishops are driven from their Churches, be not dismayed. If traitors have arisen from among the very clergy themselves, let not this undermine your confidence in God. We are saved not by names, but by mind and purpose, and genuine love toward our Creator. Bethink you how in the attack against our Lord, high priests and scribes and elders devised the plot, and how few of the people were found really receiving the word. Remember that it is not the multitude who are being saved, but the elect of God. Be not

then affrighted at the great multitude of the people who are carried hither and thither by winds like the waters of the sea. If but one would be saved, like Lot at Sodom, he ought to abide in right judgment, keeping his hope in Christ unshaken, for the Lord will not forsake His holy ones. Salute all the brethren in Christ from me. Pray earnestly for my miserable soul.”

St. Basil the Great
[*Epistle CCLVII*,
To the Monks Harassed by Arians]

“It is your prerogative to prefer the drowned multitude to Noah who was saved; but as for me, allow me to run to the Ark along with the few.” “One who is well-pleasing to God is to be preferred over myriads who are invested with presumption.”

Saint Theodore the Studite
[PG 99, 1081C; PG 99, 1084A]

“Let us not raise a stumbling-block for the Church of God which, according to the teaching of the Saints, is made up of even three Orthodox, so that we may not be condemned according to the Lord’s verdict.”

Saint Theodore the Studite
[*Epistle to Abbot Theophilus* , PG 99, 1049C.]

“When Saint Hypatius understood what opinions Nestorius held, immediately, in the Church of the Apostles, he erased his name from the diptychs, so that it should no longer be pronounced at the Oblation. [This was before Nestorius’ condemnation by the Third Ecumenical Council.] “When Bishop Eulalius learned of this, he was anxious about the outcome of the affair. And seeing that it had been noised abroad, Nestorius also ordered him to reprimand Hypatius. For Nestorius was still powerful in the city. Bishop Eulalius spoke thus to Hypatius: Why have you erased his name without understanding what the consequences would be? Saint Hypatius replied: From the time that I learned that he said unrighteous things about the Lord, I have no longer been in communion with him and I do not commemorate his name; for he is not a bishop. Then the bishop, in anger, said: Be off with you! Make amends for what you have done, for I shall take measures against you. Saint Hypatius replied: Do as you wish. As for me, I have decided to suffer anything, and it is with this in mind that I have done this.”

From the *Life* of Saint Hypatius (Sources Chretiennes, No.177, pp. 210-214)

“Of old the anathema was fearful and something to be avoided when it was imposed by the preachers of piety upon those who were guilty of impiety. But ever since the daring and insolent mindlessness of the pernicious contrary to every divine and human law and contrary to every way of thinking, both Greek and barbarian, became so insanely arrogant as to turn the anathema, which they deserved, back on the proponents of Orthodoxy, and as they bickered, in their barbarian frenzy, to accomplish their ecclesiastical transgression, then that fearful and last extremity of all

penalties became degraded into a myth and a joke, or rather it became even desirable to the pious. Certainly, it is not the utterly presumptuous opinion of the enemies of truth that makes penalties (especially ecclesiastical penalties) fearful, but rather the culpability of those who are condemned; for guiltlessness changes their punishments into a mockery, and turns their condemnations back upon them, and results in undefiled crowns and immortal glory, rather than condemnation, for him who is castigated by them. Therefore, all the pious and holy prefer to be reviled myriads of times by those who are alienated from Christ rather than, with splendid acclamations, to have communion with their Christ-hating and God-hating villainies.”

St. Photius the Great

[Letter to Ignatius, Metropolitan of Claudiopolis,
PG 102, 833 A-C]

“For a long span of time, every heretical council and every assembly of the Iconoclasts anathematized us (and not only us, but our father and our uncle also men who were confessors of Christ and the lustre of the hierarchy); but by anathematizing us, they caused that we be raised, though unwilling, to the archiepiscopal throne. Therefore let those who, together with the former, have irrationally strayed from the Master’s commandments and have thrown wide open the gate of all iniquity, anathematize us even now so that they may raise us, though faltering, from earth to the Heavenly Kingdom.”

St. Photius the Great

[Letter Sixty-four to Gregory,
the deacon and archivist,
PG 102, 877 B-C]

“The fact that we do not become indignant over small matters is the cause of all our calamities; and because slight errors escape fitting correction, greater ones creep in. As in a body, a neglect of wounds generates fever, infection and death; so in the soul, slight evils overlooked open the door to graver ones... But if a proper rebuke had at first been given to those who attempted to depart from the divine sayings and change some small matter, such a pestilence would not have been generated, nor such a storm have seized upon the Church; for he that overturns even that which is minor in the sound Faith, will cause ruin in all.”

St. John Chrysostom
[Homily One on the Epistle to the Galatians]

“To sin in respect of the dogmas whether in small or great is the same thing; for the law of God is disregarded in either case.”

St. Tarasius of Constantinople
[1st Act of the 7th Holy Ecumenical Council;
cited in The Pedalion {The Rudder},
tr. D. Cummings, p.775]

“It is incumbent upon everyone to observe the letter of all

that is common to all, and, above all, the points touching the Faith, where to deviate a little is to commit a sin unto death.”

St. Photius the Great, Patriarch of Constantinople
[*Epistle to Pope Nicholas of Rome* ;
cited in *The Rudder* ,
D. Cummings translation,
pp. 775-776]

“Not only if one possesses rank or knowledge is one obliged to strive to speak and to teach the doctrines of Orthodoxy, but even if one be a disciple in rank, one is obliged to speak the truth boldly and openly.”

Saint Theodore the Studite
[*Letter Two (Book Two) to Monastics* ,
(PG 99, 1120 B)]

“It is a commandment of the Lord that we should not be silent when the Faith is in peril. So, when it is a matter of the Faith, one cannot say, ‘Who am I? A priest, a ruler, a soldier, a farmer, a poor man? I have no say or concern in this matter.’ Alas! The stones shall cry out, and you remain silent and unconcerned?”

Saint Theodore the Studite
[*Epistle Eighty-One* ,
(PG 99, 1321 AB)]

“Many people were being irrational by trying to convince the martyr to deny Christ with his words only, and keep his faith in his soul, in his inner disposition, claiming that God does not pay attention to our words but to our disposition. However, Gordios the Martyr was rigid in his belief and replied, “The tongue, which is created by Christ, cannot bear to utter anything against Him... Do not deceive yourselves, God cannot be mocked, He judges us according to our own mouth, He justifies us by our words, and by our words, He convicts us”.

St. Basil the Great
[*Homily on Gordius, the Martyr*]

St. Gregory of Nyssa writes in regard of peace with heresy that “better is a laudable war than a peace which severs a man from God.” “For disagreement over piety is better than emotional concord.”

St. Gregory of Nyssa
Oration 2.82 (In Defense of his Flight to Pontus; *PG* 35:488C);
and *Oration* 6.11 (First Eirenica; *PG* 35:736AB):

“Live in peace not only with your friends but with your enemies; but only with your personal enemies and not with the enemies of God.”

St. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves (+1074)

“Beware, my son, of heretics and all their talking, for our land too, has become filled with them! If anyone will save his

soul, it will be only through life in the Orthodox Faith. For there is no better faith, than our Holy Orthodox Faith. My son, it is not meet to praise another's faith. Whoever praises an alien faith is like a detractor of his own Orthodox Faith. If anyone should praise his own and another's faith, then he is a man of dual faith and is close to heresy. If anyone should say to you: "your faith and our faith is from God", you, my son, should reply: "Heretic! do you consider God to be of two faiths? Don't you hear what the Scriptures say: "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism" (Eph. 4,5). Thus, my son, beware of such people and always stand up for your Faith. Do not fraternize with them, but avoid them and pursue your own Faith with good deeds!" "My son, even if there would be the need for you to die for your holy Faith, dare to embrace death! Thus the Saints died for their Faith, and now they are alive in Christ."

St. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves Lavra (+1074)
[From his "Testament" to the Great Prince
Izyaslav of Kiev (1054-1068) whom the Papists
attempted to convert to their delusion
[I.P. Yeremin, "The Literary Heritage of Theodosius
of the Kiev Caves Lavra", TODRL,
1947, vol. 5, p. 171-172.]

"Do not be disturbed by any restrictions that the apostates from the Christian Faith are preparing for you. No interdicts or ejections of you from your rank by Metropolitan Sergius, his Synod or his bishops are valid for you. As long as there remains just one firmly Orthodox bishop, have

communion with him. If the Lord permits it, and you remain without a bishop, then may the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, be with you all, inspiring you to solve all the questions which you may encounter on your path in the spirit of True Orthodoxy."

- Demetrius the New
Confessor of the Communist Yoke

"Submit not yourselves to monastics, nor to presbyters, who teach lawless things and evilly propound them. And why do I say only monastics or presbyters? Follow not even after bishops who guilefully exhort you to do and say and believe things that are not profitable. What pious man will keep silence, or who will remain altogether at peace? For silence means consent. Oftentimes war is known to be praiseworthy, and a battle proves to be better than a peace that harms the soul. For it is better to separate ourselves from them who do not believe aright than to follow them in evil concord, and by our union with them separate ourselves from God."

--Saint
Meletius the Confessor

"Is the shepherd a heretic? Then he is a wolf, and it will be needful to flee and leap away from him, and not be deceived into approaching him, even if he appears to be fawning gently. Avoid communion and intercourse with him as snake's poison: for fish are caught with

hook and bait, while an evil intercourse, which contains the poison of heresy concealed therein, has captured many of the more simpleminded who came close and expected to suffer no harm. Wherefore it is fitting to avoid such men with all our might. Is the shepherd orthodox, does he bear the seal of piety, does he have none of the heretical crew trailing after him? Then submit to him, since he presides in the likeness of Christ. Thou doest honour not to him, if thou doest it with all thy soul: Christ receives it. Do not meddle in other matters. God is their examiner; leave the judgment to Him. Do thou, however, show him obedience and a pure disposition in accordance with thy love of Christ."

--St.

Photius the Great

"As we walk the unerring and life-bringing path, let us pluck out the eye that scandalizes us--not the physical eye, but the noetic one. For example, if a bishop or a presbyter, who are the eyes of the Church, conduct themselves in an evil manner and scandalize the people, they must be plucked out. For it is more profitable to gather in a house of prayer without them, than to be cast together with them, as it were with Annas and Caiaphas, into the gehenna of fire."

--St.

Athanasius the Great

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."

What then (you say), when he is wicked should we obey? Wicked? In what sense? If indeed in regard to Faith, flee and avoid him; not only if he be a man, but even if he be an angel come down from Heaven; but if in regard to life, be not over-curious.

--St. John Chrysostom

“And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: This is the law of the Passover: no stranger shall eat of it. And every slave or servant bought with money - him thou shalt circumcise, and then shall he eat of it. A sojourner or hireling shall not eat of it. In one house shall it be eaten.”

Exodus 12.43-46.

St. Apraphat of Syria writes that the “one house” in which the Passover is to be eaten is “the Church of Christ”, and that just as the slave could not eat the Passover unless he was circumcised, so the sinner “comes to Baptism, the true Circumcision, and is joined to the People of God, and communicates in the Body and Blood of Christ”. Demonstrations 12, 525.8, 525.12.

St. John Chrysostom writes: “Let no-one communicate who is not of the disciples. Let no Judas receive, lest he suffer the fate of Judas... I would give up my life rather than impart of the Lord’s Blood to the

unworthy; and I will
shed my own blood rather than give such awful Blood contrary
to what is right.”

Homilies on Matthew, 83.6.

St. John the Almsgiver said: “We shall not escape sharing in
that punishment
which, in the world to come, awaits heretics, if we defile
Orthodoxy and the holy Faith by adulterous communion with
heretics.”

The Life of St. John the Almsgiver.

St. John of Damascus writes: “With all our strength let us
beware lest we
receive Communion from or give it to heretics. ‘Give not what is
holy to the
dogs,’ says the Lord. ‘Neither cast ye your pearls before swine’,
lest we
become partakers in their dishonour and condemnation.”

Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, IV, 13.

“Holy things to the holy!”
The Divine Liturgy.

“And the Lord said to Joshua, Rise up: why hast thou fallen
upon thy face?

The people has sinned, and transgressed the covenant which I made with them; they have stolen from the accursed things (Greek: anathema), and put it into their store. And the children of Israel will not be able to stand before their enemies, for they have become an accursed thing (anathema); I will no longer be with you, unless ye remove the accursed thing (anathema) from yourselves.”

Joshua 7.10-11.

“Let any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon that merely joins in prayer with heretics be suspended, but if he has permitted them to perform any service as clergymen, let him be deposed.”

Apostolic Canon 45.

“Let any clergyman or layman who enters a synagogue of Jews, or of heretics, to pray be both deposed and excommunicated.”

Apostolic Canon 65.

“Concerning the necessity of not permitting heretics to come into the house of God, so long as they persist in their heresy.”

Canon 6 of the Council of Laodicea.

“That one must not accept the blessings of heretics, which are rather misfortunes than blessings.”

Canon 32 of the Council of Laodicea.

“That one must not join in prayer with heretics or schismatics.”

Canon 33 of the Council of Laodicea.

St. Maximus the Confessor said: “Even if the whole universe holds communion with the [heretical] patriarch, I will not communicate with him. For I know from the writings of the holy Apostle Paul: the Holy Spirit declares that even the angels would be anathema if they should begin to preach another Gospel, introducing some new teaching.”

The Life of St. Maximus the Confessor.

“The divine and sacred canons say: ‘He who has communion with an excommunicate, let him be excommunicated, as overthrowing the rule of the Church.’ And again: ‘He who receives a heretic is subject to the same indictment...’ The great apostle and evangelist John says: ‘If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching with him, do not greet him and do not receive him into your house; for he who greets him communicates with his evil deeds’ (II John 10-11). If we are forbidden merely to greet him on the way, and if

inviting him into our house is prohibited, how can it be otherwise not in a house, but in the temple of God, in the sanctuary at the mystical and terrible Supper of the Son of God... Whoever belches out the commemoration of him who has been worthily cut off by the Holy Spirit for his arrogance towards God and the Divine things, becomes for that reason an enemy of God and the Divine things.”

From an Epistle of the Martyred Fathers of the Holy Mountain to Emperor Michael Palaeologus against the heretical Patriarch John Beccus of Constantinople.

“All the teachers of the Church, and all the Councils, and all the Divine Scriptures advise us to flee from the heterodox and separate from their communion.”

St. Mark of Ephesus.

“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.”

II Corinthians 6.14-16.

“Come out of her, My people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share

in her plagues.”

Revelation 18.4.

"If your bishop be heretical, flee, flee, flee as from fire and a serpent"

(Saint John Chrysostom).

"If thy bishop should teach any thing outside of the appointed order, even if he lives in chastity, or if he work signs, or if he prophecy, let him be unto thee as a wolf in sheep's clothing, for he works the destruction of souls"

(Saint Ignatius)

St. Sophronius of Jerusalem writes: "If any should separate themselves from someone, not on the pretext of a [moral] offence, but on account of a heresy that has been condemned by a Synod or by the Holy Fathers, they are worthy of honour and approbation, for they are the Orthodox."

And, as St. Nicephorus of Constantinople writes:

"You know, even if very few remain in Orthodox and piety, then it is precisely these that are the Church, and

the authority and leadership (concerning) the ecclesiastical institutions remains with them.”

“For it is better to be led by no one,” says St. John Chrysostom, “than to be led by one who is evil. For the former indeed are often saved, and often in peril,