

St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology

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The Most Rev. Metropolitan JOSEPH, Primate

The V. Rev. Fr. Jon Braun, President

Please remember our Prisoner-Students

May 2019

Dear Friend of St. Athanasius Academy,

PATHWAY TO PARADISE

HE WHO IS LIFE AND LIGHT, AND IS THE TEMPLE RESURRECTED

From this month's Academy Booklet we read insights from St. Gregory of Nyssa:

The Holy Trinity is True Life and the Only-begotten Son is the Word of God Who became Incarnate. He is Life and Truth, and His Spirit is holy and divine. He Is the Creator of all things. Thus His creation draws its supply of goodness, from the One Who Is Creation. So it should be evident that if they have life by partaking of He Who is Life, if He dies or life stops partaking of Him, creation will stop living... Now, the meaning of 'life' and 'death' is manifold, not always understood in the same light of understanding.

With respect to flesh, the energy and motion of what we call the bodily form, is 'life,' and its extinction and dissolution is called 'death.' Yet when a human person, with its being of and from our Father, is considered, true 'death' is about relational separation from Him. Within this twofold conception of death, from Scriptures, one discovers He Who is truly unchangeable and immutable – and 'alone is eternal' – is our Father and He is Light; a Light unattainable, nor approached, nor grasped, nor even seen by the darkness of man's wickedness (cf. 1 Timothy 3:16).

On the other hand, all things which participate in death – being far removed from eternal life – if they fall away from His goodness, they, by the mortality of their fleshly clothing, enter into a worse condition called non-existence or death unto an unknowable hopelessness.

Just as the cessation of the activities of the things of nature, is called death, so too, can be the case of His children begotten immortal. In our absence of motion toward His goodness, death is understood as being an eternal separation from our loving relationship with our Father. The One Who is also called "I AM" – our High Priest and Father of life itself, YHWH.

Sincerely



Paul –SAAOT