

The Confessor's Tongue for October 23, A. D. 2016

18th Sunday after Pentecost, Apostle James Brother of the Lord

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

The Commandments of Christ

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15)

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Matthew 5:38-41

The basic commands here may be summarized as "If struck, turn the other cheek", "If sued for thy coat, give thy cloak as well," "If compelled to go one mile, go a second mile." The basic principle is that when the disciples of Christ are asked or compelled to do something they do not want to do, Christ commands them to do more than required.

In Palestine under the Roman occupation, a Jewish man could be conscripted to carry a Roman soldier's heavy pack for a Roman mile (1000 paces), but no more. To carry upon demand for one mile was his obligation, but after the mile he was free to go his way.

One might grudgingly (or in fear) restrain one's anger and not hit the hitter back. One likely would resentfully surrender what the court compelled or carry the soldier's pack the required mile. But who would willingly carry the pack of a foreign soldier occupying one's homeland further than one was obligated? Who when sued by someone and having the judgment against him, would give his opponent even more than the judge awarded? Or who having had one cheek slapped would offer the other to be slapped? The answer is clear: no one.

But to be this 'no one' is precisely what Christ commands His disciples. When forced to do something unpleasant against their will and seeming best interest, they are to rise above it by doing more than required for Christ's sake. The Christian overcomes evil by doing good, and obedience to this principle contains great power to transform ugly situations. Try it at work with your difficult customers or co-workers, going the extra mile for them against the thought in your heart that they aren't worthy of it. Try it with your wife: when she asks you to do a job for her, get to it quickly and cheerfully, and then ask what else you may do for her. Try it with your husband or with your in-laws or with a fellow parishioner. There is far more power in good than in evil, especially when we do it in obedience to Christ's command with faith in Him that His command is good and obedience to it will bring His rich blessing.

In one case, a man's wife wanted to divorce him. He had thought the marriage to be happy and was oblivious to what he did to make her unhappy. After the divorce every time he had to pay alimony and

child support, he felt great bitterness. Asking a counselor what to do about the bitterness, he was directed to this command of Christ and encouraged to give more in payments than he was required. This obedience delivered him from bitterness, helped him to love his former wife as never before, communicated to her that he was changing, and resulted in their being eventually reunited in marriage. God's ways, though so often not our ways, do work—in mysteriously powerful ways. *Fr. Justin Frederick*

On the Lord's Prayer: A Short Interpretation 3

*Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name
St. Maximus the Confessor*

'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come' (Matt. 6:9-10) It is appropriate that at the outset the Lord should teach those who pray to start with theology, and should initiate them into the mode of existence of Him who is by essence the created Cause of all things. For these opening words of the prayer contain a revelation of the Father, of the name of the Father, and of the kingdom of the Father, so that from this beginning we may be taught to revere, invoke and worship the Trinity in unity. For the name of God the Father exists in substantial form as the only-begotten son. Again the kingdom of God the Father exists in substantial form as the Holy Spirit: what Matthew calls 'kingdom' in this context one of the other Evangelists has elsewhere called 'Holy Spirit', saying, 'May Thy Holy Spirit come and purify us. For the Father's name is not something which He has acquired, nor is the kingdom a dignity ascribed to Him: He does not have a beginning, so that at a certain moment He begins to be Father or King, but He is eternal and so is eternally Father and King. In no sense at all, therefore, has He either begun to exist or begun to exist as Father or King. And if He exists eternally, not only is He eternally Father and King but also the Son and Holy Spirit co-exist with Him eternally in substantial form, having their being from Him and by nature inhering in Him beyond any cause or principle: they are not sequent to Him, nor have they come into existence after Him in a contingent manner. The relationship of co-inherence between the Persons embraces all three of them simultaneously, not permitting any of the three to be regarded as prior or sequent to the others.

At the outset of this prayer, then, we honor the coessential and supraessential Trinity as the creative cause of our coming into existence. Secondly, we are taught to proclaim the grace of our adoption, since we have been found worthy of addressing our Creator by nature as our Father by grace. Thus, venerating this title of our begetter by grace, we strive to stamp our Creator's qualities on our lives, sanctifying His name

on earth, taking after Him as our Father, showing ourselves to be His children through our actions, and through all that we think or do glorifying the author of this adoption, who is by nature Son of the Father.

We hallow or sanctify the name of our heavenly Father by grace when we mortify our desire for material things and purify ourselves of corrupting passions. For sanctification is truly the complete mortification and cessation of desire in the senses. When we have achieved this we assuage the uncouth turbulence of our incensive power, for the desire that arouses it and persuades it to fight for its own pleasures has now been quelled by holiness. For anger, being by nature the protagonist of desire, stops of its own accord when once it sees the desire has been put to death. *To be continued...*

Spiritual Alertness

The Christian is commanded to be alert, to be watchful, to be sober-minded because his adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He is called to resist the prowling enemy, but will not be able to offer effective resistance if he is not alert.

In dealing with human enemies, the mind and its alertness is a man's most important weapon. A well-known teacher of self-defense with a pistol, Jeff Cooper, developed the following color codes for levels of alertness to help his students be mentally prepared for self-defense. Here they are as described by William Levinson:

Condition White means a person is daydreaming, talking on a cell phone, or is otherwise unaware of what is going on around him. Criminals love to catch victims in Condition White because the usual result of a surprise attack is **total paralysis**. Many carjacking victims are shot not because they resist, but because they freeze so thoroughly that they cannot even obey the robber's order to surrender the vehicle.

It is noteworthy, by the way, that the Nazis were able to murder upward of 10 million people at a relatively low cost to their own lives (the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was one of the few exceptions) by keeping them collectively in Condition White. Jews and other victims were not told they were being taken to extermination camps; they were told they were being "relocated."

Humans, and possibly domestic livestock, are the only animals that live even part of their lives in Condition White. All wild animals live their entire lives in Condition Yellow, and law enforcement experts suggest that law-abiding people should do so as well.

Condition Yellow is a prudent level of vigilance, and this vigilance stops many potentially deadly confrontations before they even begin. This is because there is not much difference between the decision processes that criminals and predatory

animals use. If a carnivore wins a fight, he gets a meal. If a criminal wins a fight, he gets the victim's property, or the enjoyment of a sexual assault. In either case, however, the attacker cannot risk anything but the most trivial injuries. If the predatory animal is hurt badly in a fight, the meal it just killed will be its last, because it will be unable to catch another. No rational criminal wants to get hurt, either, and even a non-fatal gunshot wound will almost certainly lead to an arrest. No rational criminal will therefore attack somebody who is in Condition Yellow; he does not know for sure that even a smaller and physically weaker victim won't do him some damage.

Pearl Harbor was obviously not caught in Condition White on December 7, 1941. A military base is always at no less than Condition Yellow because there are always sentries and lookouts, and Pearl Harbor also had a rudimentary radar system. The Japanese attack succeeded because the base did not go to Condition Orange when the radar operators saw things of whose identity they were uncertain.

Condition Orange means the identification of a potential threat -- a situation that "makes you uncomfortable." There is probably a good reason for this; our instincts, like those of all other animals, evolved to prevent us from becoming meals. Condition Orange is what police instructor Massaad Ayoob calls "bare fear," as opposed to "reasonable fear." You are justified in taking countermeasures to avoid the situation in question. You are emphatically not justified in even drawing a gun, much less aiming it at somebody, in Condition Orange.

If Condition Orange is the rustling in the woods that tells you a wolf might nearby, **Condition Red** means you can see the wolf. This is the condition that the law calls reasonable fear, and under which you may be justified in drawing a firearm. It is at this point that you decide, "If he does so-and-so [which is a direct threat to your life or that of another person], I will have to use a weapon, or a potentially lethal martial arts technique."

Cooper's color codes for levels of alertness can be readily translated into spiritual terms assist us in our daily spiritual combat with our prowling enemy. Like the wild animal, we can never allow ourselves to dwell in condition white, for that leaves us completely open to enemy attack. May God grant us all spiritual vigilance!

[Source:http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/07/how_the_cooper_color_code_explains_stand_your_ground_and_prevents_crime.html]

Upcoming Events 2016

31 October All-Saints Festival
7-8 November Feast Day at Holy Archangels Monastery
13 November Parish Thanksgiving Day & Picnic

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!