

1: The intellect cannot be Orthodox Christian Quotes and Catechism

ON WATCHFULNESS AND HOLINESS WRITTEN FOR THEODOULOS. www.enganchecubano.com *holiness is a spiritual method which, if sedulously practiced over a long period, completely frees us with God's help from impassioned thoughts, impassioned words and evil actions.*

Michael has been spending time in the deep reading of Hesychios the Priest. In this writing, Hesychios reflects on the two virtues of watchfulness and stillness. He is bold to speak like this not because of anything that we can do, but by what Jesus can do as we learn to call on his gentle name. For Hesychios, the name of Jesus is powerful. He speaks of it as the weapon that we have been given to fight against our sinful desires and the demons. Hesychios gives us a great example of how the powerful name of Jesus helps us move from a defensive position in our battle of sin, to a more aggressive, offensive position. For this, he gives us the model of a spider. Just as the spider waits still and watchful for its food to get caught in its web, so we should also be watchful and still as we wait for the opportunity to reject sin in our lives when it comes and choose Jesus instead. The example of the spider has revealed to me a new way to look at my pursuit of holiness. For most of my life I have looked at sin as something that I needed to avoid doing. In believing this way, I became more and more frustrated when I would continue falling into sin. After reading Hesychios, it was clear that avoidance of sin is not the focus; instead to call on the name of Jesus and wield his name as a weapon. With this in mind I want to share a spoken word that I wrote as I have been reflecting on being fearless in my faith. If perfect love drives out fear, then why is fear driving and I am in the passenger seat holding on for dear life. If I have been given the power to stamp on scorpions and snakes why then do I feel powerless in my desire to please people that often leads to pain? Why when I am called to be courageous and bold do I often seemed to fold like a lawn chair that is sitting next to the ocean whose unsettling waves match the way I feel inside. Why, If perfect love drives out fear? If perfect love drives out fear then why is fear leading the dance of my life? Spinning me, twisting me, seducing my mind as it stares into my eyes paralyzing me. If perfect love drives out fear is there still all this doubt. But Take Paul an apostle of our lord Jesus, who was beaten, flogged, laughed at, stoned, spat upon, mocked, cursed, abandoned, and yet was fearless. Everywhere Paul went he was equipped at all times with the full armor of God telling people to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power assured them of their hope in Christ by telling them to: Put on Truth like a belt around their waist and attaching Righteousness to their bodies like a breastplate, like shoes on their feet put on whatever will make them ready to proclaim the gospel of Peace and continuing on in these take up the shield of Faith and Put on Salvation like a helmet and finally equip yourself with the sword of the Spirit, the Word. Finally, let us look at the greatest example of all, Jesus and his victory over fear on the cross.

2: Philokalia - Wikipedia

St. Hesychios the Priest: On Watchfulness and Holiness St. Hesychios the Priest. This magnificent treatise has been cherished by readers of the Philokalia for its penetrating insight into the working of the human intellect and heart, and for its strategic guidance toward victory in the unseen warfare with the demons.

Rebuttal bridles evil thoughts, but the invocation of Jesus Christ drives them from the heart. It will not allow the impassioned fantasy to consort with it or allow our thoughts passionately to conform themselves to the fantasy, or to become intimate with it, or be distracted by it, or give assent to it. If anything like this happens, then evil actions will follow as surely as night follows day. If our intellect is inexperienced in the art of watchfulness it at once begins to entertain whatever impassioned fantasy appears in it, and plies it with illicit questions and responds to it illicitly. Then our own thoughts are conjoined to the demonic fantasy, which waxes and burgeons until it appears lovely and delectable to the welcoming and despoiled intellect. The intellect then is deceived in much the same way as lambs when a stray dog comes into the field in which they happen to be: In the same way our thoughts run ignorantly after demonic fantasies that appear in our intellect and, as I said, the two join together and one can see them plotting to destroy the city of Troy like Agamemnon and Menelaus. For they plot together the course of action they must take in order to bring about, in practice and by means of the body, that purpose which the demons have persuaded them is sweet and delectable. In this way sins are produced in the soul: The intellect, being good-natured and innocent, readily goes in pursuit of lawless fantasies: Contemplation and spiritual knowledge are indeed the guides and agents of the ascetic life; for when the mind is raised up by them it becomes indifferent to sensual pleasures and to other material attractions, regarding them as worthless. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware trans. *The Complete Text*, vol. For when that fire enters into us, it at once drives the evil spirits from our heart and remits the sins we have previously committed, leaving the intellect free from the turbulence of wicked thoughts. And if after this, standing at the entrance to our heart, we keep strict watch over the intellect, when we are again permitted to receive those Mysteries the divine body will illumine our intellect still more and make it shine like a star. Forgetfulness can extinguish our guard over our intellect as water extinguishes fire; but the continuous repetition of the Jesus Prayer combined with strict watchfulness uproots it from our heart. The Jesus Prayer requires watchfulness as a lantern requires a candle. We should strive to preserve the precious gifts which preserve us from all evil, whether on the plane of the senses or on that of the intellect. In this way the demons will not steal in undetected; and if we suffer pain through remaining centered in the heart, consolation is at hand. The heart which is constantly guarded, and is not allowed to receive the forms, images and fantasies of the dark and evil spirits, is conditioned by nature to give birth from within itself to thoughts filled with light. For just as coal engenders a flame, or a flame lights a candle, so will God, who from our baptism dwells in our heart, kindle our mind to contemplation when He finds it free from the winds of evil and protected by the guarding of the intellect. The name of Jesus should be repeated over and over in the heart as flashes of lightning are repeated over and over in the sky before rain. On Watchfulness and Holiness chs , Text from G.

3: Patristic Nectar Publications - St. Hesychios the Priest: On Watchfulness and Holiness

One of my favorite podcasts is entitled A Word from the Holy Fathers on Ancient Faith Radio. For Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Christians the writings of the Fathers (and Mothers) of the Church are our guides to living the fullness of the Apostolic faith.

History[edit] Nikodemos and Makarios were monks at Mt. Athos , a mountainous peninsula in northern Greece, historically considered the geographical center of Orthodox spirituality and home to twenty monasteries. The first edition, in Greek, was published in Venice in 1493, with a second Greek edition published in Athens in 1593. All the original texts were in Greek—two of them were first written in Latin and translated into Greek in the Byzantine era. That book about a Russian pilgrim who is seeking advice on interior prayer helped popularize the Philokalia and its teachings in Russia. The latter was published in five volumes, and included texts that were not in the original Greek edition. He was concerned that people living in the world would not have the adequate supervision and guidance of the startsy in the monastery, nor would they have the support of the liturgical life of the monks. He was finally persuaded by the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg to publish the book in 1818. Brianchaninov expressed the same concerns in his work, warning his readers that regular practice of the Jesus Prayer , without adequate guidance, could potentially cause spiritual delusion and pride, even among monks. Their concerns were contrary to the original compiler of the Philokalia, Nicodemos, who wrote that the Jesus Prayer could be used to good effect by anyone, whether monastic or layperson. All agreed that the teachings on constant inner prayer should be practiced under the guidance of a spiritual teacher, or startets. Eliot persuaded his fellow directors of the publishing house Faber and Faber to publish a partial translation into English from the Theophan Russian version, which met with surprising success in 1909. A more complete English translation, from the original Greek, began in 1958 with a collaboration between G. Palmer , Kallistos Ware , and Philip Sherrard. They released four of the five volumes of the Philokalia between 1958 and 1978. This work is 4,000 pages in length. There are similarities between this ancient practice and the concept of mindfulness as practiced in Buddhism and other spiritual traditions. According to the authors of the English translation, Kallistos Ware , G. Palmer , and Philip Sherrard , the writings of the Philokalia have been chosen above others because they: They describe the conditions most effective for learning what their authors call the art of arts and the science of sciences, a learning which is not a matter of information or agility of mind but of a radical change of will and heart leading man towards the highest possibilities open to him, shaping and nourishing the unseen part of his being, and helping him to spiritual fulfilment and union with God. While traditionally taught and practiced in monasteries, hesychasm teachings have spread over the years to include laymen. A common theme is the need for a spiritual father or guide. You can help by adding to it. October 4th centuries The original texts are written by various spiritual masters. Most are written in Greek, two are written in Latin and translated into Greek during Byzantine times. This translation was carried by the pilgrim in The Way of a Pilgrim. First to be read outside of monasteries, with a strong influence on the two following Russian translations. Palmer in two volumes: Modern English translation based on this edition. Palmer, and Philip Sherrard, of the first four of the five Greek volumes, from the Third Greek edition. This was published by Faber and Faber. An appendix fifth volume was published at Palmer , and Philip Sherrard. The fifth volume has yet to be published in English.

4: Hesychios the Priest «Enlarging the Heart Enlarging the Heart

- *On Watchfulness and Holiness, St Hesychios' teachings, the heart of which are preserved in the Philokalia (see the English translation by Palmer, Sherrard & Ware, vol. i), centre upon just the above ideas: one must live humbly before God and man, and pray in truth at all times, with all his being.*

He is probably later than St John Klimakos sixth or seventh century, with whose book *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* he seems to be familiar; possibly he lived in the eighth or ninth century. Hesychios has a warm devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, and this makes his treatise of particular value to all who use the Jesus Prayer. We have followed the numbering of sections as given in the Greek *Philokalia*, which differs from that in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, xciii. It leads, in so far as this is possible, to a sure knowledge of the inapprehensible God, and helps us to penetrate the divine and hidden mysteries. It enables us to fulfill every divine commandment in the Old and New Testaments and bestows upon us every blessing of the age to come. It is, in the true sense, purity of heart, a state blessed by Christ when He says: Because this is its nature, watchfulness is to be bought only at a great price. But once established in us, it guides us to a true and holy way of life. It teaches us how to activate the three aspects of our soul correctly, and how to keep a firm guard over the senses. It promotes the daily growth of the four principal virtues, and is the basis of our contemplation. The great lawgiver Moses " or, rather, the Holy Spirit " indicates the pure, comprehensive and ennobling character of this virtue, and teaches us how to acquire and perfect it, when he says: This the Fathers call a provocation introduced into the heart by the devil. As soon as this thought appears in our intellect, our own thoughts chase after it and enter into impassioned intercourse with it. Watchfulness is a way embracing every virtue, every commandment. He cannot free himself from evil thoughts, words and actions, and because of these thoughts and actions he will not be able freely to pass the lords of hell when he dies. In this stillness the heart breathes and invokes, endlessly and without ceasing, only Jesus Christ who is the Son of God and Himself God. It confesses Him who alone has power to forgive our sins, and with His aid it courageously faces its enemies. Through this invocation enfolded continually in Christ, who secretly divines all hearts, the soul does everything it can to keep its sweetness and its inner struggle hidden from men, so that the devil, coming upon it surreptitiously, does not lead it into evil and destroy its precious work. Watchfulness is a continual fixing and halting of thought at the entrance to the heart. In this way predatory and murderous thoughts are marked down as they approach and what they say and do is noted; and we can see in what specious and delusive form the demons are trying to deceive the intellect. If we are conscientious in this, we can gain much experience and knowledge of spiritual warfare. For these withdrawals and unexpected trials help us to correct our life, especially when, having once experienced the tranquility of watchfulness, we neglect it. Continuity of attention produces inner stability; inner stability produces a natural intensification of watchfulness; and this intensification gradually and in due measure gives contemplative insight into spiritual warfare. This in its turn is succeeded by persistence in the Jesus Prayer and by the state that Jesus confers, in which the intellect, free from all images, enjoys complete quietude. When the mind, taking refuge in Christ and calling upon Him, stands firm and repels its unseen enemies, like a wild beast facing a pack of hounds from a good position of defense, then it inwardly anticipates their inner ambushes well in advance. Through continually invoking Jesus the peacemaker against them, it remains invulnerable, 9. If you are an adept, initiated into the mysteries and standing before God at dawn cf. Otherwise be watchful and you will discover it. Much water makes up the sea. But extreme watchfulness and the Prayer of Jesus Christ, undistracted by thoughts, are the necessary basis for inner vigilance and unfathomable stillness of soul, for the deeps of secret and singular contemplation, for the humility that knows and assesses, for rectitude and love. This watchfulness and this Prayer must be intense, concentrated and unremitting. The will of the Father is indicated in the words: Hence we should both pray the Prayer of Jesus Christ and hate our evil thoughts. Through His incarnation God gave us the model for a holy life and recalled us from our ancient fall. In addition to many other things, He taught us, feeble as we are, that we should fight against the demons with humility, fasting, prayer and watchfulness. For when, after His baptism, He went into the desert and the devil came up to Him as though He

were merely a man, He began His spiritual warfare by fasting and won the battle by this means — though, being God, and God of gods, He had no need of any such means at all. I shall now tell you in plain, straightforward language what I consider to be the types of watchfulness which gradually cleanse the intellect from impassioned thoughts. In these times of spiritual warfare I have no wish to conceal beneath words whatever in this treatise may be of use, especially to more simple people. As St Paul puts it: One type of watchfulness consists in closely scrutinizing every mental image or provocation; for only by means of a mental image can Satan fabricate an evil thought and insinuate this into the intellect in order to lead it astray. A second type of watchfulness consists in freeing the heart from all thoughts, keeping it profoundly silent and still, and in praying. A third type consists in continually and humbly calling upon the Lord Jesus Christ for help. These types of watchfulness, my child, act like doorkeepers and bar entry to evil thoughts. Elsewhere, if God gives me words, I shall deal more fully with a farther type which, along with the others, is also effective: When we have to some extent cut off the causes of the passions, we should devote our time to spiritual contemplation; for if we fail to do this we shall easily revert to the fleshly passions, and so achieve nothing but the complete darkening of our intellect and its reversion to material things. The man engaged in spiritual warfare should simultaneously possess humility, perfect attentiveness, the power of rebuttal, and prayer. He should possess attentiveness in order always to keep his heart clear of all thoughts, even of those that appear to be good. He should possess the power of rebuttal so that, whenever he recognizes the devil, he may at once repulse him angrily; for it is written: Then he will see the devil broken and routed by the venerable name of Jesus — will see him and his dissimulation scattered like dust or smoke before the wind. If we have not attained prayer that is free from thoughts, we have no weapon to fight with. By this prayer I mean the prayer which is ever active in the inner shrine of the soul, and which by invoking Christ scourges and sears our secret enemy. The glance of your intellect should be quick and keen, able to perceive the invading demons. When you perceive one, you should at once rebut it, crushing it like the head of a serpent. Just as someone in the midst of a crowd, holding a mirror and looking at it, sees not only his own face but also the faces of those looking in the mirror with him, so someone who looks into his own heart sees in it not only his own state, but also the black faces of the demons. The intellect cannot conquer a demonic fantasy by its own unaided powers, and should never attempt to do so. The demons are a sly lot: But when we call upon Jesus Christ, they do not dare to play their tricks with us even for a second. Do not become conceited like the ancient Israelites, and so betray yourself into the hands of your spiritual enemies. For the Israelites, liberated from the Egyptians by the God of all, devised a molten idol to help them cf. The molten idol denotes our crippled intellect. So long as the intellect invokes Jesus Christ against the demons, it easily routs them, putting their invisible forces to flight with the skill born of knowledge. But when it stupidly places all its confidence in itself, it falls headlong like a hawk. For it is written: Whoever places his confidence in himself and not in God will indeed fall headlong. If you wish to engage in spiritual warfare, let that little animal, the spider, always be your example for stillness of heart; otherwise you will not be as still in your intellect as you should be. It is impossible to find the Red Sea among the stars or to walk this earth without breathing air; so too it is impossible to cleanse our heart from impassioned thoughts and to expel its spiritual enemies without the frequent invocation of Jesus Christ. Be watchful as you travel each day the narrow but joyous and exhilarating road of the mind, keeping your attention humbly in your heart, reproaching yourself, ready to rebut your enemies, thinking of your death and invoking Jesus Christ. You will then attain a vision of the Holy of Holies and be illumined by Christ with deep mysteries. In the presence of Christ you will feel the Holy Spirit spring up within your soul. Those who love true knowledge should also be aware that the demons in their jealousy sometimes hide themselves and cease from open spiritual battle. Begrudging us the benefit, knowledge and progress towards God that we derive from the battle, they try to make us careless so that they can suddenly capture our intellect and again reduce our mind to inattention. Their unremitting purpose is to prevent the heart from being attentive, for they know how greatly such attentiveness enriches the soul. We on the contrary, through remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ, should redouble our efforts to achieve spiritual contemplation; and then the intellect again finds itself engaged in battle. Let all we do be done with great humility and only, if I may put it like this, with the will of the Lord Himself. We who live in coenobitic monasteries should of our own free choice gladly cut off our

whole will through obedience to the abbot. It is good to acquire this art, for then our bile will not be aroused and we shall not excite our incensive power unnaturally and uncontrollably, and so be deprived of communion with God in our unseen warfare. If we do not voluntarily cut off our self-will, it will become enraged with those who try to compel us to cut it off; and then our incensive power will become abusively aggressive and so destroy that knowledge of the warfare which we have gained only after great effort. The incensive power by nature is prone to be destructive. If it is turned against demonic thoughts it destroys them; but if it is roused against people it then destroys the good thoughts that are in us. In other words, the incensive power, although God-given as a weapon or a bow against evil thoughts, can be turned the other way and used to destroy good thoughts as well, for it destroys whatever it is directed against. I have seen a spirited dog destroying equally both wolves and sheep. This accursed forgetfulness is as opposed to attentiveness as water to fire, and forcibly fights against it all the time. Forgetfulness leads to negligence, and negligence to indifference, laziness and unnatural desire. In this way we return to where we started, like a dog to his own vomit cf. So let us shun loose speech like deadly poison. As for forgetfulness and all its consequences, they can be cured by the most strict guarding of the intellect and by the constant invocation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For without Him, we can do nothing cf. Slavish nocturnal thing of perishable clay that it is, there must be no dallying allowed it; it must be made to recognize its true and imperishable mistress. Until you leave this world, do not trust the flesh. The flesh desires against the Spirit. The task of wisdom is to prompt the intelligence to strict watchfulness, constancy, and spiritual contemplation. The task of righteousness is to direct the appetitive aspect of the soul towards holiness and towards God. LXX â€” that is, upon the intellect that beholds, so far as this is possible, the beauty of the glory of God Himself. A single sinner, says the Holy Scripture, destroys much righteousness cf. We are not mightier than Samson, wiser than Solomon, more knowledgeable about God than David, and we do not love God better than did Peter, prince of the apostles. So let us not have confidence in ourselves; for he who has confidence in himself will fall headlong. Let us learn humility from Christ, humiliation from David, and from Peter to shed tears over what has happened; but let us also learn to avoid the despair of Samson, Judas, and that wisest of men, Solomon. So you must never relax your attentiveness of heart, your watchfulness, your power of rebuttal or your prayer to Jesus Christ our God. You will not find a greater help than Jesus in all your life, for He alone, as God, knows the deceitful ways of the demons, their subtlety and their guile.

5: Spiritual quotes of Saint Hesychios the Priest

St Hesychios the Priest. On Watchfulness and Holiness "Through His incarnation God gave us the model for a holy life and recalled us from our ancient fall.

For when that fire enters into us, it at once drives the evil spirits from our heart and remits the sins we have previously committed, leaving the intellect free from the turbulence of wicked thoughts. And if after this, standing at the entrance to our heart, we keep strict watch over the intellect, when we are again permitted to receive those Mysteries the divine body will illumine our intellect still more and make it shine like a star. Saint Hesychios the Priest, *Died On Watchfulness and Holiness: The sun rising over the earth creates the daylight; and the venerable and holy name of the Lord Jesus, shining continually in the mind, gives birth to countless intellections radiant as the sun. The guarding of the intellect may appropriately be called light-producing, lightning-producing, light-giving and fire-bearing, for truly it surpasses endless virtues, bodily and other. They have tasted that the Lord is good cf. If you really wish to cover your evil thoughts with shame, to be still and calm, and to watch over your heart without hindrance, let the Jesus Prayer cleave to your breath, and in a few days you will find that this is possible. In this stillness the heart breathes and invokes, endlessly and without ceasing, only Jesus Christ who is the Son of God and Himself God. The delighted intellect delights in the light of the Lord when, free from concepts, it enters into the dawn of spiritual knowledge. By continually denying itself, it advances from the wisdom necessary for the practice of the virtues to an ineffable vision in which it contemplates holy and ineffable things. Then the heart is filled with perceptions of infinite and divine realities and sees the God of gods in its own depths, so far as this is possible. Astounded, the intellect lovingly glorifies God, the Seer and the Seen, and the Saviour of those who contemplate Him in this way. To human beings it seems hard and difficult to still the mind so that it rests from all thoughts. Indeed, to enclose what is bodiless within the limits of the body does demand toil and struggle, not only from the uninitiated but also from those experienced in inner immaterial warfare. But he who through unceasing prayer holds the Lord Jesus within his breast will not tire in following Him, as the Prophet says cf. Because every thought enters the heart in the form of a mental image of some sensible object, the blessed light of the Divinity will illumine the heart only when the heart is completely empty of everything and so free from all form. Indeed, this light reveals itself to the pure intellect in the measure to which the intellect is purged of all concepts. When there are no fantasies or mental images in the heart, the intellect is established in its true nature, ready to contemplate whatever is full of delight, spiritual and close to God. As Antony, the great servant of God, said, "Holiness is achieved when the intellect is in its natural state.*

6: Hesychios the Priest: Four types of watchfulness Â«Enlarging the Heart Enlarging the Heart

Extreme watchfulness and the Prayer of Jesus Christ, undistracted by thoughts, are the necessary basis for inner vigilance and unfathomable stillness of soul, for the deeps of secret and singular contemplation, for the humility that knows and assesses, for rectitude and love.

Orthodox Christian Member Posted 20 November - Elder Paisios always urged us to think positively. Our positive thinking however, should not be our ultimate aim; eventually our soul must be cleansed from our positive thoughts as well, and be left bare having as its sole vestment divine grace granted to us through Holy Baptism. The only thing Christ is asking from us is our humility. The rest is taken care of by His grace. In the beginning, we should willingly try to develop positive thoughts, which will gradually lead us to the perfect good, God, to whom belongs every glory, honor, and worship. On the contrary we should neither trust nor accept them. We must not have any thoughts in our mind or heart, neither positive ones, nor negative ones, for this space inside us belongs to the grace of God. We are obliged to keep it clean, not only of our various thoughts but also of the most elusive slip of the mind. We can only achieve this if we fervently love Christ and unhesitatingly trust Him. This is where reading the Bible and the Fathers can help. They sensitize our conscience to things that the culture would never see as wrong. Our culture teaches us how to think and tries to tell us what is true. An important part of watchfulness, at least for those of us living in the world rather than a monastery, is to guard against this. From what I have read, though, for those like St Hesychios and Elder Paisios watchfulness consisted in actually keeping the mind clear of thoughts altogether. It all depends on what level of maturity we are at and how much faith and love we have. Growing our faith and love seems to be a prerequisite to the degree of watchfulness the Elder and St Hesychios achieved. Why do trials come when we do not exercise nepsis? Is nepsis prohibitive of trials? Do these trials serve as a cathartic replacement instead of nepsis when we do not have the latter? It is my thought that God has two things He is dealing with in us. The first and most substantial is pride, the second is the passions. All the Teachers stress the need for humility. Not the kind of humility that puts oneself down, this in its own way is a false humility but the kind that allows us to be dependent on Him. I think that God allows temptations as a way of humbling us and teaching us to be dependent on Him because our natural tendency is to trust in our own strength, or to seek security in the world. To get out of the first needs humility, the second faith. If right away God gave us the grace to keep our mind clear no doubt we would start thinking, "look what I can do. Or if things always went well for us we would continue to trust the world. As it is when people let us down, or money issues arise, etc. Fix your attention on what has been said. Before a man gives way to his passions even if his thoughts mount an assault against him, he is always a free man in his own city and he has God as his ally. If therefore he humbles himself before God and bears the yoke of his trial and affliction with thanksgiving, and puts up a little fight, the help of God will deliver him. But if he flees labor and goes after bodily pleasures, then he is necessarily led into the land of the Egyptians and without wishing it becomes their slave. Whereas we were saying from his ignorance and pride a man is overcome when he is beset by his unruly passions, he ought after the humiliation of falling all the more correctly to take his own measure and to continue praying until God pours out His mercy upon him. For unless a man is tempted and sees the troubles which uncontrolled passions cause him, he will not at any time fight to be cleansed of them. When passionate thoughts arise in the soul therefore, they are brought to light; this means that the For whenever passionate desires reappear in the mind of those who put up a fight, they are utterly and immediately rejected. Consider now the consequences of this saying. First passionate desires arise in the mind, and then the underlying passion comes to light and they are destroyed. All this applies to contestants. But we who give way to the sins and are always satisfying our passions, never recognize the passionate desires that spring up, or the underlying passions they reveal, so that we can combat them, but we remain under their sway, in Egypt in the pitiful brickfields of Egypt.

7: The single-phrased Jesus Prayer destroys and - City a Desert

Feast of St Andrew the General & Martyr and His 2, Soldiers. WATCHFULNESS is a spiritual method, if sedulously practiced over a long period, completely frees us with God's help from impassioned thoughts, impassioned words and evil actions.

Gleanings from Orthodox Christian Authors and the Holy Fathers watchfulness 14 Entries All of us men must be watchful and take heed to ourselves, whether we are believers or unbelievers, small or great. If we are unbelieving we must do so in order that we may arrive at knowledge and faith towards the God Who has made us, if we believe, it is in order that we may live rightly and be found well pleasing to Him in every good work. On Works of Mercy, St. I tell you, many have injured their bodies without discernment and have gone away from us having achieved nothing. Our mouths smell bad through fasting, we know the Scriptures by heart, we recite all the Psalms of David, but we have not that which God seeks: Through them He was giving a warning to us all about the remembrance of death, so that we should be prepared to offer a defense, grounded in works and attentiveness, that will be acceptable to God. Peter of Damaskos The Guarding of the Intellect Continuity of attention produces inner stability; inner stability produces a natural intensification of watchfulness; and this intensification gradually and in due measure gives contemplative insight into spiritual warfare. This in its turn is succeeded by persistence in the Jesus Prayer and by the state that Jesus confers, in which the intellect, free from all images, enjoys complete quietude. Hesychios the Priest On Watchfulness and Holiness no. Hesychios the Priest On Watchfulness and Holiness nos. What do I mean? A spiritual heaven with sun, moon and stars, is formed in the blessed heart of one who has reached a state of watchfulness, or who strives to attain it; for such a heart, as a result of mystical contemplation and ascent, is enabled to contain within itself the uncontainable God. Philotheos of Sinai Texts on Watchfulness no. Elsewhere, if God gives me words, I shall deal more fully with a further type which, along with the others, is also effective: In this way predatory and murderous thoughts are marked down as they approach and what they say and do is noted; and we can see in what specious and delusive form the demons are trying to deceive the intellect. If we are conscientious in this, we can gain much experience and knowledge of spiritual warfare. Apophthegmata Patrum The guarding of the intellect may appropriately be called light-producing, lightning-producing, light-giving and fire-bearing, for truly it surpasses endless virtues, bodily and other. Because of this, and because of the glorious light to which it gives birth, one must honor this virtue with worthy epithets They have tasted that the Lord is good cf. Hesychios the Priest, On Watchfulness and Holiness.

8: Gleanings from Orthodox Christian Authors & the Holy Fathers - watchfulness

Watchfulness is a spiritual method which, if sedulously practiced over a long period, completely frees us, with God's help, from impassioned thoughts, impassioned words and evil actions.

Silence is a way, a state of soul, in which all the powers of the soul and the faculties of the body are completely at peace, quiet, and recollected, perfectly alert yet free from any turmoil or agitation. But based on my limited experience talking about the personal spiritual journey with good-willed Christians, I would concur with St. On the matter of daily and serious quiet time for prayer, I think we all have a long way to go. And there is no better place to start than here. No better time to start than now. Of course, this opens many questions. How do we deepen our inner stillness? How do stillness and prayer go together? And what is the role of prayer in healing? We begin where the Scriptures tell us to begin. We begin with outer and inner stillness. If I am not still, I run the danger of not knowing the real God. I need to know God to know who I am, to have an authentic identity. Much of the contemporary search for identity is a deeper, though often unconscious, seeking for Christ within our hearts. As Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn said, not everything has a name. Some things lead us into a realm beyond words. And the next four words in Isaiah are devastating to the Israelites, and to us: Would not be still. We will ride on swift horses. I need to go on the internet and my smartphone. I need to work on my many good projects. I need to talk with friends and plan good things. I will schedule my day with beneficial projects and even church-related work. I will not be still. We are back to silence being a choice, as led by God. When my daughter was a teenager, she had a sign outside her bedroom door. Beth is now married and living on the other side of the equation. She has learned to be quiet and is trying to raise her three energetic children to value silence. We learn as we grow. The high price for not being still is the possibility that we might not know God. Hence, today many people are looking for their identity, for their place in the world, for who they are. The only place we can find who we are is in God. He did what the Israelites of old refused to do. He did what we often refuse to do. And, in that act of supreme stillness, He saved the cosmos. We need to seek silence so we can begin to be still. Elders tells us that unless we maintain contact with our inner depths, unless there is a still center in the middle of the storm, unless in the middle of all our activity we preserve a secret space in our heart where we stand alone with God, we will lose all sense of direction and be torn in pieces. All of us must, to the extent that we can, be hermits of the heart. Templegate Publishers, , p. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, trans. The Complete Text, vol.

9: Hesychios the Priest – House of St Michael the Archangel

"Much water makes up the sea," so begins our holy Father Hesychios the Priest in #10 [page] of his sayings entitled "On Watchfulness and Holiness," as appear in Volume 1 of The Philokalia (translated; pages , in pleno).

On Personal Holiness Hesychios the Priest: Anything else taught in the Christian Way with relation to personal holiness is but an extrapolation and explanation of these central ideas. One must humble the self and open the heart to union with God. One must bring himself down, that he may be brought up by the Lord. This is our true aim, says Hesychios: It is He who must affect true change, it is our task to willingly assent to His transformation of our person. It is not ours to attempt to that change - such haughtiness is only presumption. We must realize our complete inability to restore our souls and bodies to life, for God alone can work such salvation. For He has blessed the pure of heart and given the commandments; and so Jesus, who alone is truly pure, in a divine way readily enters into hearts that are pure and dwells in them. Therefore, as Paul counsels, let us ceaselessly exercise our intellect in devotion. For devotion uproots the seeds sown by the devil, and is the path of the intelligence. God is our guide, captain, and champion leader in the work of personal transformation. His promise is to lead us always, to ever be our guide and Father as One who loves mankind. And guide us He shall, change us He shall. Our task becomes that of attentive watchfulness to His action in our lives: The passions that thrive in the unrestrained soul tear us away from the work of Christ in our flesh; ill-ordered minds race without control from one thought to the next, rarely contemplating God, rarely pouring energy and zeal into the transformative workings of theosis. Such unbridled activity is personal war with God. We must strive to be silent, strive to be still, that all His workings may be embraced. The spider hunts small flies; but you will continually slay "the children of Babylon" if during your struggle you are as still in your soul as is the spider; and, in the course of this slaughter, you will be blessed by the Holy Spirit. Our stillness, be it true stillness, will open our eyes not only to the weaknesses in our own person, but also to the activity of the Evil One and the demons who never cease in their attempts to drive us further from Christ. The more still our heart becomes, the more clearly we see the dread attacks of the devil. Yet even as the spider is at his most deadly when in motionless stillness at the centre of his web, so are we most potently able to resist and destroy all demonic attacks when our minds are stilled within our hearts, silent and calm, resonating with the pure name of Jesus Christ. It is here that we find victory, and here that we find peace. Thus Hesychios exhorts us to work ever toward this blessed stillness which brings such growth. We must work after our salvation in fear and trembling, ever aware of the gravity of our sin and the danger of demonic temptation, but ever confident in the promise, hope, and blessings of salvation in Christ God. Under the guidance of a worthy spiritual father, we must follow the example of Jesus Himself, the author and perfecter of our faith, and the living model of a holy life: In addition to many other things, He taught us, feeble as we are, that we should fight against the demons with humility, fasting, prayer and watchfulness. Humility, fasting, prayer, watchfulness. These are the tools which advance men and women toward holiness, and they are the fruits, too, of that advancement. Humility brings us to a more realistic and understanding view of ourselves, and thus of the grace of God. Fasting trains the body, so long left to unrestrained gluttony, and through its training brings clarity to the mind and soul. Prayer lifts our whole being into the embrace of God and propels us to divine union. Finally, watchfulness brings our whole mind and soul to rest in the heart, there to know the love and grace of God. It is the tool by which we are guided by Christ to know good from evil, to maintain the former in our person and repel the latter before it has the opportunity to work harm in our lives. The combined use of these tools brings us closer to Christ, who has promised that whoever knocks, to him the door shall be opened. And though this promise is eternal, Hesychios knew well that its realization does not always come easily. Yet still we must knock, and knock still more. Our knocking is to be that very cry of the heart that he mentioned in the quotation above: Through whatever droughts of faith, we must continue to call out to the Lord. Let us thus engage fully upon this path of spiritual growth, that we, too, may be accounted worthy to taste of the good things of life in Christ Jesus and see the light of His glory for which our whole being longs. And may the prayers of St. Hesychios, rich in faith and standing ever in that light, aid us on that journey. The above is excerpted from a

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short, informal talk on the teachings of St. Hesychios given by M. Steenberg in September, Quotations are from On Watchfulness and Holiness in the Philokalia, vol. From our Patristics Broadcasts

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