

Sunday, November 11, 2012

Spiritual Remedies (4)

In the previous article, we explained that our saintly Fathers recognized the importance of carrying the cross in their lives and accepting suffering in patience. They recognized how the cross is important to their spiritual growth and in protecting them from the serious disease of pride. Therefore, they endured suffering with thanksgiving and used it for their edification.

Now, let's consider some of their quotes and spiritual experiences to help us follow their path carrying our cross, and thanking God for caring for us.

* Tribulation is a cosmetic surgery performed by God to beautify our soul to be fit for his blessed wedding. [Fr. Pishoy Kamel]

* The honor of people is dreadful; flee from their honor lest they sink your boat. [St. Timothy]

Quotes from St. Moses the Black:

* Let's endure the insults and dishonor to get rid of pride.

* If a man accepts scolding and rebuke, it makes him humble.

Quotes from St. Isaac the Syrian:

* The most serious of all sins is loving and regarding one's self highly.

* He who loves honor cannot be safe from the ailment of sins.

* He who is stricken by the love of praise and honor from people has no cure to his wounds even if he was a teacher of many.

* If you love humility don't be fond of embellishment. He who loves embellishment cannot endure disdain and doesn't hasten to perform the lowly acts. He also finds it very difficult to submit to someone less than himself and becomes ashamed of doing so.

* Out of sorrow springs humility and through humility, gifts are given. Therefore, gifts are neither given because of works or sorrow, but rather are given because of humility which springs from them.

* When man takes pride in any matter, God changes it so he is humbled.

* It is impossible that God leaves a humble heart without comfort.

* Indeed O Lord, you don't stop taming us with all kinds of trials and tribulations until we are humbled.

Quotes from St. Pakhomius:

* If someone is unjust towards you, don't be unjust towards him, rather rejoice and thank God.

* Don't be saddened if people are unjust towards you, rather be sad if you sin to God.

* If you are admonished by one of the brethren and didn't accept his reproach, but rather held a grudge against him, it is as though the devils slain your soul. Not only do I say this but also if you don't consider him a physician treating you, you would be unfair towards yourself. Don't you know that he had cleaned your dirtiness? It is only natural to thank him as a physician sent to you by Christ. You ought to have feelings of gratitude towards this brother because through him you were able to recognize your deadly disease, which is pride. You must accept his scolding as a healing medicine sent from the Lord Jesus Christ. If you don't thank him but rather resist him, it is as though you are saying to Jesus Christ: "I don't want you to heal me and I don't want any of your remedies!"

* Sorrow is the Cautery [Hot iron] of Jesus. He who wants to be healed from his illness, must endure whatever the physician introduces to him. The Cautery [Hot iron] of Jesus is the person who humbles you, for if he insults you, he is only relieving and saving you from vainglory. The healing medicine of Jesus is the person who discards and rebukes you, for he relieves you from complacency and the love of the world. Nonetheless, if you can't endure the medicine, you are being unfair to yourself.

* A patient doesn't normally like to go through the suffering of the treatment such as bitter medicine or surgical procedures. However, because he is certain that without treatment he will not be cured, he surrenders himself to the physician. In doing so he recognizes that through the bitter medicine he gets rid of the harmful diseases.

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