

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, SBOC 2017

CLASS 1: THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

- I. The “Bible” in Orthodox Worship
 - a. Gospel Book – an icon of Christ, who is called the “Word” of God
 - i. The Book itself has icons of Resurrection and (sometimes) Crucifixion; it is “enthroned” on the altar as an Image of Christ Himself; we kiss it as we would Christ.
 - b. Epistle Book (Apostol) – explains and preaches the Gospel
 - c. Old Testament readings (Prophetologion) – prefigures and prepares for the Gospel

- II. The Gospel = One, *according to* Four Evangelists
 - a. “Gospel as person” (“words” about the “Word”)
 - i. We sing this after the Gospel reading at Sunday Matins, and after Communion:
 1. “Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, let us worship, the holy Lord Jesus, the only Sinless One! We venerate Thy Cross, O Christ, and Thy Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify; for Thou art our God, and we know no other than Thee; we call on Thy name. Come, all you faithful, let us venerate Christ’s Holy Resurrection! For, behold, through the Cross joy has come into all the world. Let us ever bless the Lord, praising His Resurrection. By enduring the Cross for us, He destroyed death by death!”
 2. The Gospel isn’t just words *about* Christ, but *Christ Himself*
 - ii. Gospel according to John: Chapters 1-11 are like a prologue to Chapters 12-21 (Passion Week): Christ *crucified and resurrected*
 1. “The Cross stands while the world turns:” all of history prepares for the Cross, and everything after the Cross finds its meaning by looking back to it
 2. Christ’s Passion is an *eternal mystery*. He *is* the crucified and exalted One
 - a. “Today” – not yesterday, or in the future; we know Him *now*
 - b. Ezekiel 1 – four “living creatures” (cf. Daniel 7.7-13, Revelation 4.6-8)
 - i. Four witnesses to God’s appearance is *scriptural*
 - ii. What are practical reasons for having multiple accounts of the One Gospel?

III. Gospel Fulfills the Scriptures

- a. “on the third day He rose again *according to the Scriptures*” = “Old Testament”
- b. **Canon:** A type of hymn divided into nine (usually eight) sections, each one based on a biblical hymn (“ode”)
- c. **Typology:** Events and symbols from the Old Testament point beyond themselves to Christ – although historical, they are *fulfilled* in Christ
 - i. Look at the handout with the Canons of Holy Saturday and Pascha. There are many examples of typology, for example the Passage of the Israelites from Egypt through the Red Sea is a *type* of our Passage from this world to the Kingdom of God through (Christ’s) death.
 - ii. What are some other examples? Listen to these canons in addition to reading them (I apologize that the translation is slightly different).