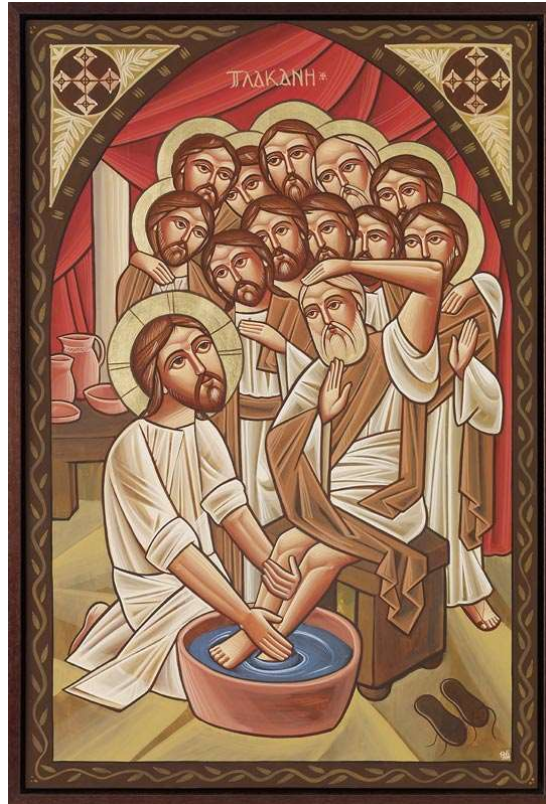


# Understanding the Cost and Requirements of The Service



St. Mary and Archangel Michael Coptic Orthodox Church

Servants Retreat

9/4/2023

# Back to the Garden: Adam the First Servant

- ▶ Adam: The First Priest/Servant
- ▶ The Garden as the Temple/Church where in Dwells the Tree of Life
- ▶ Adam's Service and Blessings:
  - To Tend and Keep the Garden (Genesis 2:15)
  - The Naming of All the Creatures and Dominion over them (Genesis 2:19-20)
  - Marriage and Responsibility to a Wife (Genesis 2:24)
  - Fatherhood and to Multiply and Fill the Earth (Genesis 1:28)
- ▶ Adam Servant of God and His Holy Place, Service to his Family, and Service to Others and Creation as a whole
- ▶ The Responsibilities of Adam were united to his Identity and not separate to him, but part of his duty as God's Servant and First Human



What was the Cost and Requirements of Adam's Service?

“And the Lord God **commanded** the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**” - Genesis 2:16-17

The Requirement of Obedience



## What happened as a Result?

“For as by one man’s **disobedience many were made sinners**, so also by **one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.**”- Romans 5:19

Every service and servant since the fall has missed the mark till the coming of the **Second Adam** the Perfect Servant our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



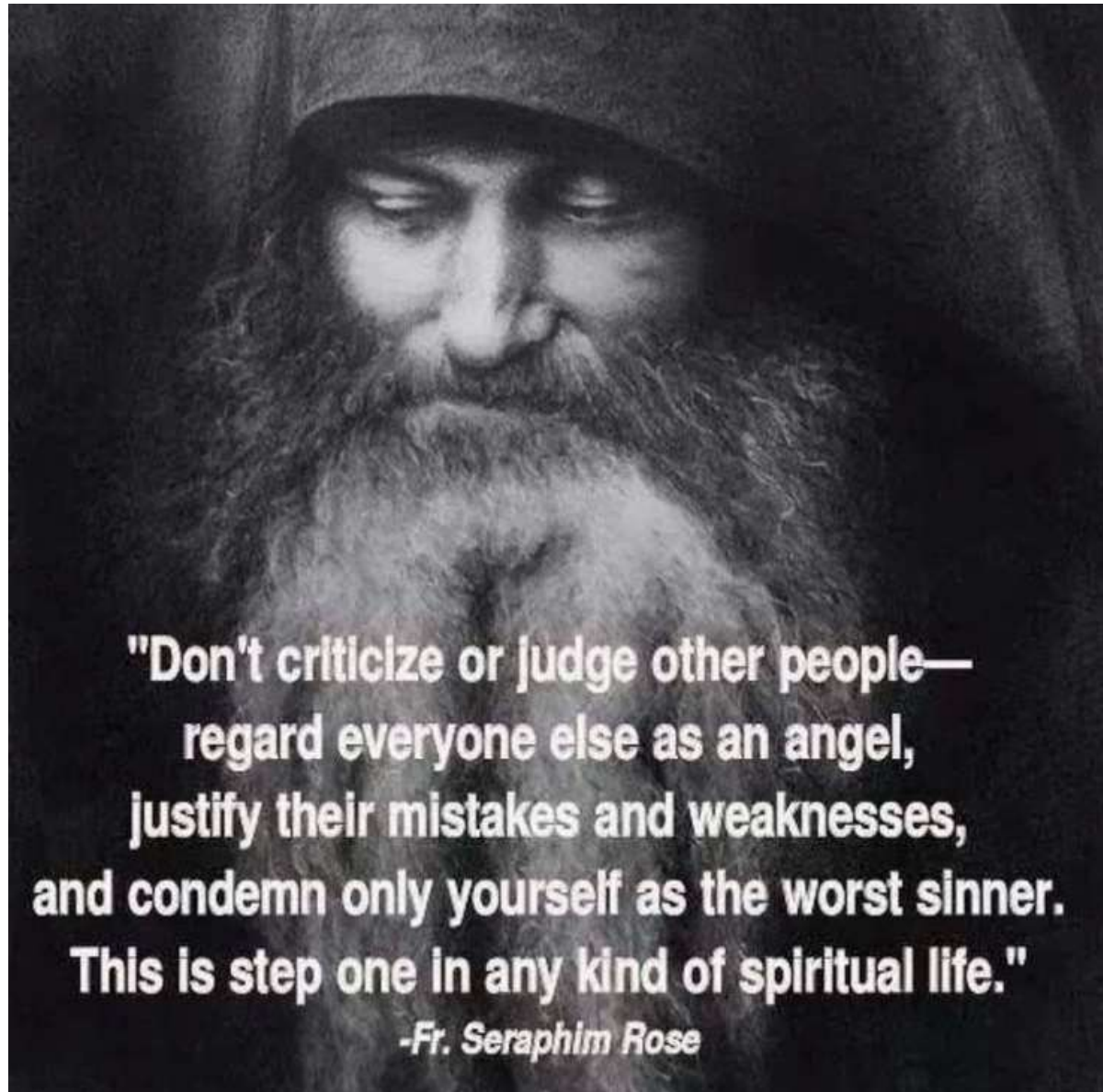


# The Requirement of Obedience

- ▶ What does it mean to obey?
- ▶ Obey in the Greek is *hupakouo*
- ▶ Literal meaning is to “listen **UNDER**”
- ▶ Understanding and Responding
- ▶ Outward expression of a heart that has turned to God
- ▶ Christian Attitude
- ▶ Obedience is NOT for Monastics Only
- ▶ Obedience is NOT to be bitter following of instructions
- ▶ Obedience is rooted in the foundations of **humility** and **love**
- ▶ Obedience is Sonship and Discipleship
- ▶ Example/St. John the Short and Tree of Obedience

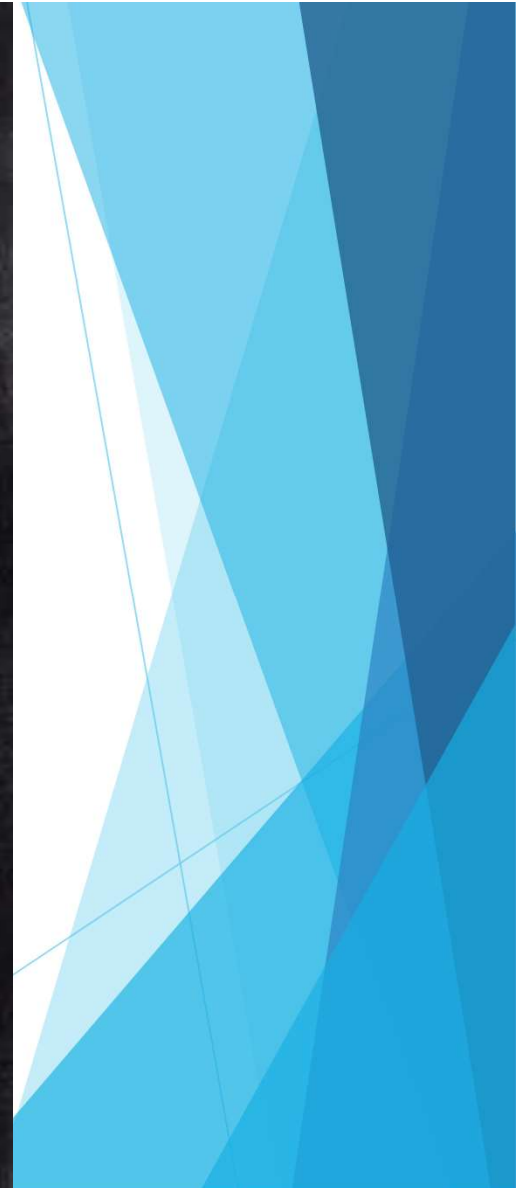
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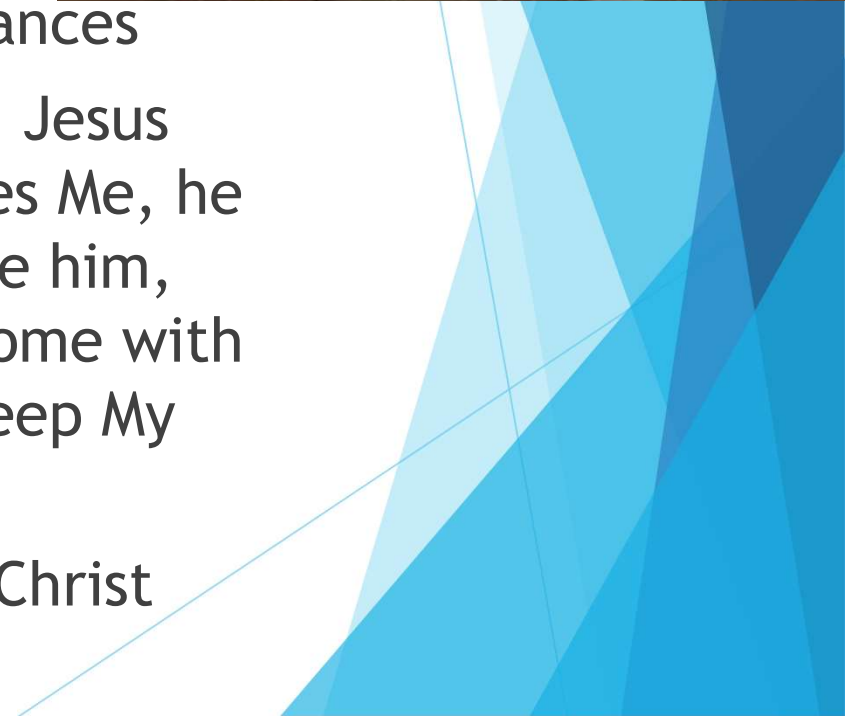
**"Don't criticize or judge other people—  
regard everyone else as an angel,  
justify their mistakes and weaknesses,  
and condemn only yourself as the worst sinner.  
This is step one in any kind of spiritual life."**

***-Fr. Seraphim Rose***

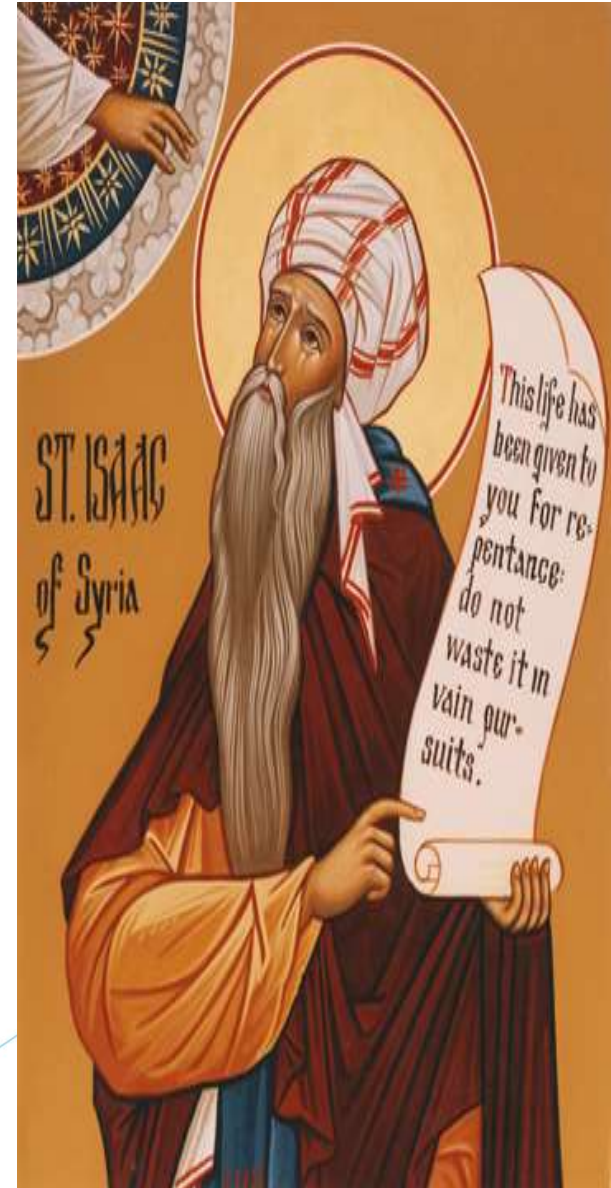


# Obedience to God

- ▶ Teachings of Scriptures
- ▶ Teachings of the Church
- ▶ Teachings of the Fathers/Tradition
- ▶ At all times, At all places, In all Circumstances
- ▶ “If you **love Me, keep My commandments**. Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words...” John 14:15, 23,24
- ▶ Obedience Rooted in Love. Obedience of Christ and His Church (St. Cyprian)



“The Commandments of God are **above all the treasures of the world.** Those who are **established in them find God**”- Mar Isaac the Syrian





# Obedience to Others

- ▶ Friends
- ▶ Family/Spouses
- ▶ Elders
- ▶ Learn to Obey in the Little things, so you can be able to obey in the larger things.
- ▶ OUR SPIRITUAL FATHER
- ▶ Do we have a relationship as a son/daughter/disciple to our Spiritual Fathers?
- ▶ Problem of the Younger Generation: Lack of Discipleship and Sonship
- ▶ Spiritual father gives us the ground to practice obedience and discipleship
- ▶ “One Christian is No Christian!”
- ▶ “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, **yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.**”- 1 Corinthians 4:15



# Obedience to One Self?

- ▶ Obeying myself?
- ▶ Internal Discord and Internal Battle
- ▶ “For what I am doing, I do not understand. **For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.** If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. **But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.** For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. **For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.**”- Romans 7: 15-20

▶ Passions vs Virtues. Man of Sin vs the Spiritual Man. Who will we obey? This Self Reflection is the Foundation of Repentance



# The First Servant vs The Perfect Servant

- ▶ Adam/Christ
- ▶ Disobedience/Obedience
- ▶ Ate/Fasted
- ▶ Brought Sin into the World/Brought Salvation and Healing into the World
- ▶ Broke the law/Fulfilled the Law
- ▶ Blamed Others and even God himself/Prayed for those who hated him
- ▶ Pride and Self Filling/Humility and Self Emptying
- ▶ Adam fell short, but the New Adam Christ was the perfection of what Humanity and Service should entail





# Requirements of the Service:

- ▶ Obedience to God's Word, Commands, and his Church
- ▶ Obedience to the spiritual desire of the self, others, families
- ▶ Find or Renew a discipleship with a spiritual father
- ▶ Practice of Obedience in small things as well as large things
- ▶ Obedience at all Times; not on certain days, or in certain circumstances. Always. Service is part of the Human Identity in the creation of Adam. The same way we hunger, and thirst, we are to serve as a necessity of our nature blessed by God.
- ▶ Obedience done in love and humility
- ▶ The One Requirement of Adam's Service and Blessings was Obedience.





Questions? Comments?

