

# HABITS.

**Have a Plan ♦ Affirm your Faith ♦ Be a Friend**  
**Intentionally Choose Him ♦ Trust Him ♦ Surrender to Him**

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## Part Two Affirm your Faith

### Affirm your Faith

- In order to affirm your faith, you must ask what is faith? See Hebrews 11:1
- The Greek root-word *pistis* is translated as "faith", but also as "faithfulness." See Romans 3:3 There is no separating what a person believes from the evidence of that belief in the person's actions. Your faith determines the way you act and what you prioritize.
  - For instance, if you believe a parachute will slow down a fall, then you act on faith to jump out of a plane with a parachute.
- What is the difference between a faith and a religion?
- What do we believe as Christians? As Orthodox Christians we affirm what we believe each time we recite the Creed regarding:  
The Father See Genesis 1:1-3, the Son See John 3:16, the Holy Spirit See John 14:26, the Church See Acts 16:5, and life everlasting See Matthew 25:46.
- Faith is a confidence and a hope that no matter what the outcome is, our faith will remain unshaken. See Daniel 3:17-18

### Personal, not private, faith

- Your faith is personal, though not private. Everyone decides on their own what they believe and how they will act on that belief. No one is forced, faith is a choice. See 2 Corinthians 9:7
- We strengthen each other's faith in community. We should always strive to encourage each other's faith to grow. See Romans 1:12
- The majority of the Divine Liturgy is offered in the plural. However, there are two parts written in the first person:
  - The Creed. This is our "I Believe!" moment of the divine services.
  - The Communion prayers. Holy Communion is a personal encounter with Christ in a corporate context. See 1 Corinthians 11:26

### Sharing your Faith

- Are you prepared to share your faith? See 1 Peter 3:15
- Come and see! This invitation is first made by Jesus to His followers and then from Philip to Nathanael. See John 1:38-39, 46 We too are expected to invite people to come and see. See Matthew 28:19-20
- The Sunday of Orthodoxy is the first Sunday of Lent and is devoted to the triumph of the use of icons and their place of veneration on our church.
- Can we be like Martha? She took the bold step of faith after her brother Lazarus had died and proclaimed, "I believe You are the Christ!" See John 11:25-27
- How will people know Christ if we do not step out in faith and tell them? See Romans 10:14-17

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### Questions

1. How would you define faith? Does the verse of scripture from **Hebrews 11:1** resonate with you? What do people put their faith in?
2. When you recite the Creed and receive Holy Communion, do you do so casually or with conviction? Have you ever considered how you can be more convicted in reciting the Creed and receiving Holy Communion?
3. Think of believing in the purpose of a parachute, yet not having the faith to jump out of a plane with one on your back. How can we use this example to explain this disconnect between our faith and how we act?
4. Do you talk about your personal faith in Jesus Christ with others? Is it difficult for you to explain our Orthodox faith to others? Has the Great Commission **Matthew 28:19-20** ever spoken to you in a personal way?

## The Nicene Creed

I believe...

in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through Whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.

He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried.

And He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.

His kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of Life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets.

In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.

I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the age to come. Amen.

### Prayers in Preparation for Holy Communion

I believe, Lord, and confess, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who did come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your most pure Body and that this is truly Your most precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and in deed, known and unknown. And make me worthy without condemnation to partake of Your Pure Mysteries unto the remission of my sins and for life everlasting. Amen.

Behold my Maker, I approach Holy Communion. Burn me not as I partake, for You are a fire, which consumes the unworthy. But cleanse me from every stain.

Receive me today, Son of God, as a partaker of Your Mystical Supper. I will not reveal Your mystery to Your adversaries. Nor will I give You a kiss as did Judas. But as the thief I will confess to You: Lord, remember me in Your kingdom.

Tremble, O mortal, at the sight of the Divine Blood, for it is like a live coal which burns the unworthy. The Body of God deifies and nourishes me. It deifies my soul and wondrously nourishes my mind.

You have smitten me with yearning, O Christ and by Your divine love You have transformed me. Consume my sins with spiritual fire and make me worthy to be filled with Your joy, that rejoicing in Your goodness, I may magnify Your two presences.

How shall I, who am unworthy, enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my clothing will accuse me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I will be cast out by the angels. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul and save me.

Loving Master, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these Holy Gifts be to my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and sanctification of my soul and body and the pledge of the future life and kingdom. It is good for me to cling to God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.

Receive me today, Son of God, as a partaker of Your Mystical Supper. I will not reveal Your mystery to Your adversaries. Nor will I give You a kiss as did Judas. But as the thief I will confess to You: Lord, remember me in Your kingdom. Master, remember me in Your kingdom. Holy One, remember me in Your kingdom.

## Scripture References

<b>Hebrews 11:1</b>	<i>Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.</i>
<b>Romans 3:3</b>	<i>What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?</i>
<b>Genesis 1:1-3</b>	<i><sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.</i>
<b>John 3:16</b>	<i>For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.</i>
<b>John 14:26</b>	<i>But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.</i>
<b>Acts 16:5</b>	<i>So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.</i>
<b>Matthew 25:46</b>	<i>And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.</i>
<b>Daniel 3:17-18</b>	<i><sup>17</sup>If it be so, our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. <sup>18</sup>But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."</i>
<b>2 Corinthians 9:7</b>	<i>Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.</i>
<b>Romans 1:12</b>	<i>that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.</i>
<b>1 Corinthians 11:26</b>	<i>For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.</i>
<b>1 Peter 3:15</b>	<i>but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence;</i>
<b>John 1:38-39, 46</b>	<i><sup>38</sup>Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to Him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are You staying?" <sup>39</sup>He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. <sup>46</sup>Nathan'a-el said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."</i>
<b>Matthew 28:19-20</b>	<i><sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."</i>
<b>John 11:25-27</b>	<i><sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, <sup>26</sup>and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup>She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, He who is coming into the world."</i>
<b>Romans 10:14-17</b>	<i><sup>14</sup>But how are men to call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? <sup>15</sup>And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!" <sup>16</sup>But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" <sup>17</sup>So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.</i>