

St. Gregorios Orthodox Church of Kansas City

2018 LENTEN STUDY SERIES

“THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT:
THIRTY STEPS TO HEAVEN”

Week 2 – February 28, 2018

Prayer Before Studying the Scriptures

O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of our hearts, that we may hear Your word, and understand and do Your will. Hide not Your commandments from us, but open our eyes, that we may perceive the wonders of Your law. Speak unto us, the hidden and secret things of Your wisdom. We set our hope on You. O God, enlighten our mind and understanding, with the light of Your knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them. We offer praise and thanksgiving to the Father, Son & Holy Spirit, now, always and forever. Amen.

Recap - Week 1

First Step to Heaven – Renunciation

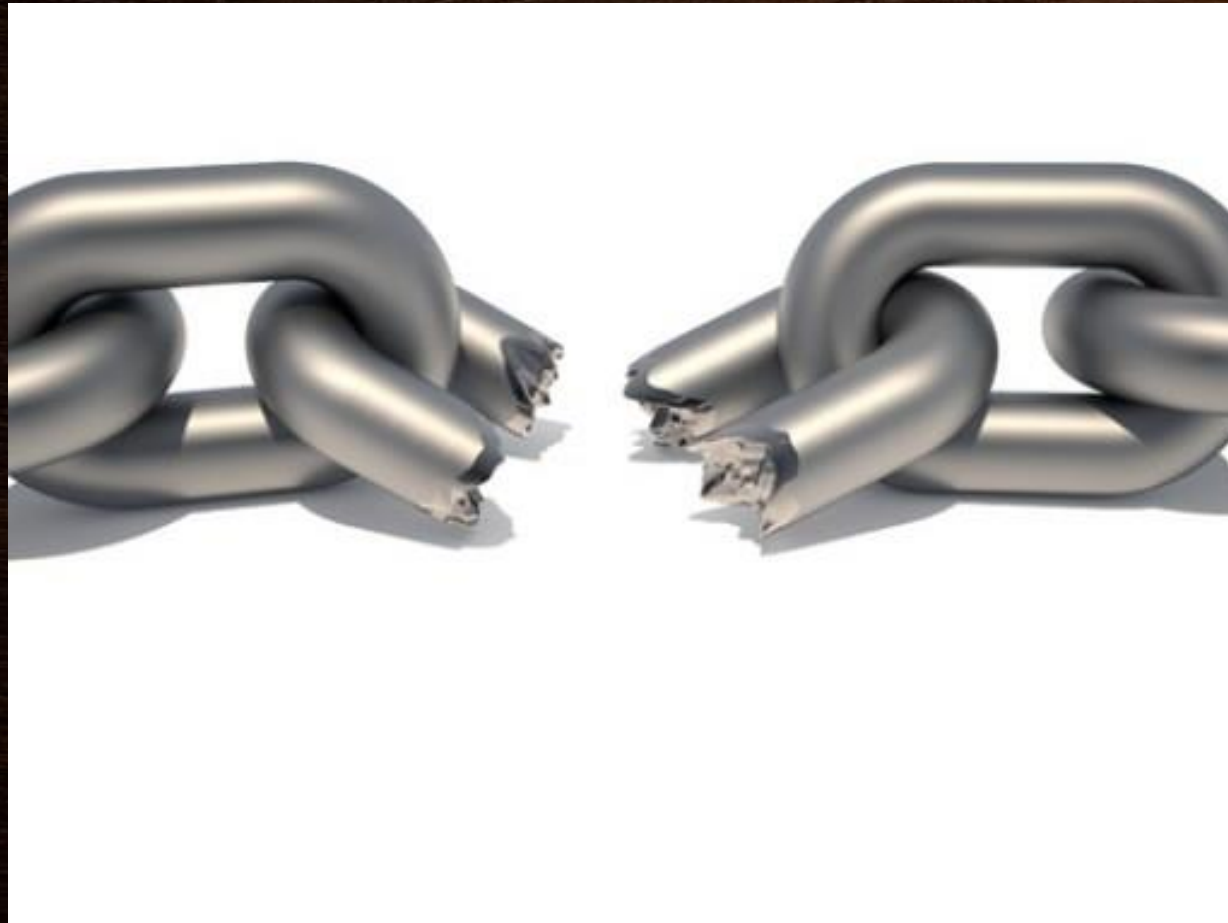
Christians **renounce** the world by living for something other than the world

World = All those things that are opposed to Christ and to our salvation

Focusing on being Christ-Centered vs. World-Centered

- 1) *Innocence:*
- 2) *Abstinence:*
- 3) *Temperance:*

Reflection Image



Consider the image and reflect on what comes to mind

Some reflections from attendees:

- A feeling of release from bondage (freedom)
- One small broken link breaks the entire chain despite how long it is
- One end can be seen as us and the other as God
- Disconnected
- Two opposing sides
- The chain can continue with no end unless ends are tied together

Reflect on the following two words:

Detach

- Separation
- Image of a House/Garage
- Sin/World
- Broken

Engage

- Spiritual
- Prayer
- To get involved

Both detachment and engagement involve guidance, determination, ACTION, EFFORT & DIRECTION.

*Reflection words shared by attendees

Second Step to Heaven – Detachment

Christians must guard their hearts against
yearning for what you have forsaken
(renounced – step 1)

Passages for Reflection

1) St. Luke 9: 62

62 But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Passages for Reflection

2) Ephesians 6:10-13

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

This Week...

- Re-read the passages we discussed today and continue to reflect on Christ's teaching and words on how to **be detached from the world and guard yourself against spiritual warfare.**
- Each day this week, reflect on those things you are **attached** to?
- Consider how you can begin to **detach** yourself from those things that are keeping you from being Christ-centered.