



St Symeon the New Theologian on The Heresy of Weakness

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There was a conflict between abbot Symeon and some of the brothers at the monastery. In actuality, these brothers were jealous, and wanted to be rid of their saintly abbot. They would not obey his teachings which lead to a God-pleasing, perfect monastic life.

St Symeon says of them: *“Here are those of whom I speak and who are called heretics by me. They are the ones who say that in our present age there is no one in our midst who is able to observe the commandments and be like the holy fathers.... Those who declare this is impossible have fallen not into one particular heresy but into all of them, so to speak – a heresy surpassing all others in its impiety and greatest blasphemy. They are buried underneath it.... The one who speaks in such a manner turns all of Scripture upside down.... These antichrists affirm, “It is impossible, impossible”. Why then is it impossible? Tell me. In what other way did the saints shine on earth and did they become lamps of the world? If it were impossible, they would never have succeeded in it. For they were men like us, and possessed no more than we do except a will directed toward the good. They had zeal, patience, humility, and love for God. Therefore, acquire all this and your soul which today is as hard as rock shall become a fountain of tears inside you. However, if you refuse to suffer such anguish and affliction, at least do not say that all this is impossible.”* **St Symeon the New Theologian, The Discourses. Discourse XXIX: The Heresy of Pusillanimity.**

And what do our modern “Orthodox” pastors teach? “It is impossible”, they say, “to keep the fasts....for monks to be monks....” The lazy and indifferent people eagerly take up this new teaching of the pseudo-bishops, because it caters to their flesh.

“It is not necessary”, say they, “to confess sins to a priest... to enter monasteries....to pray according to the “long-winded” service books.... to deny women the Priesthood....to deny sodomites marriage...”

When the people have been taught to abandon Orthodox practices altogether, they have no more care for Orthodox doctrine either. This is the point at which we stand today. In this way, the people are made ready to accept the Antichrist, who teaches a different faith, and an easier practice, than the Apostolic way, while preserving the outward form, vestments, chanting, and glory of Orthodoxy....