

# Eastern (Greek) Orthodox

Taken from the “Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America” goarch.org

## I. Infallible Folly

The Church, as a whole, is infallible, but it is not God-inspired to the extent that it has understood the entire depth of the truths and formulated and proclaimed them to the world. ([www.goarch.org/-/the-fundamental-teachings-of-the-eastern-orthodox-church](http://www.goarch.org/-/the-fundamental-teachings-of-the-eastern-orthodox-church), underlining added)<sup>1</sup>

First of all, Scripture teaches no such thing (Proverbs 30:5-6). Second, Paul's epistles and the letters to the churches in Revelation illustrate the complete opposite (e.g. 1 & 2 Corinthians; Rev. 3 & 4). Third, the church is made up of sinners (Romans 3:9-18). Sinners by nature are “evil” (Matthew 7:11), and not only fallible, but in continual need of correction. As it is written,

**For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life.** (Proverbs 6:23)

The way of life is being corrected (“reproofs of instruction”). In other words, anyone who is on the “way of life” (John 14:6) will continually be reproofed (found to be in error) and correct their way. As it is written,

**You are indeed angry, for we have sinned-- In these ways we continue; and we need to be saved.** (Isaiah 64:5)

“**We need to be saved**” is an ever on-going truth as long as the sinner is still in this sinful flesh, and God's Word, His Truth, saves the sinner from the error of his way. As it is written,

**I thought about my ways, and turned my feet to Your testimonies.** (Psalm 119:59)

**Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.** (Psalm 119:133)

**Let my soul live, and it shall praise You; and let Your judgments help me.** (Psalm 119:175)

**He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, but he who refuses correction goes astray.** (Proverbs 10:17)

31 **The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise.**

32 **He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.**

33 **The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.** (Proverbs 15:31-33)

**And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to**

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<sup>1</sup> They also claim,

The Orthodox Church, considered *the depository of infallible public worship*, has been entrusted with the power of God's Grace to gather all its members, to pray and be sanctioned together, to communicate with each other as a spiritual Ecclesia and to be in communion with God and one another. (underlining added)

**know.** (1 Corinthians 8:2)

The ungodly do not seek the correction and truth that comes via His Word and so they are lost. As it is written,

**Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek Your statutes.** (Psalm 119:155)

Therefore, the church being made up of fallible sinners is by no means an infallible entity. The Scriptures both teach and illustrate just the opposite.

## II. Fallible Tradition

The teachings and the practices of the Orthodox Church are to be found in the Scriptures and Sacred Apostolic Tradition, which have been handed down to the Church of Christ in the Revelation of God. (underlining added)

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, along with Sacred Apostolic Tradition are the divine Sources in which Almighty God revealed His Will and which the Church accepted as being the only depository for these truths. (underlining added)

As the two quotes above illustrate, Greek Orthodoxy finds “truth” in “**beyond what is written**” (1 Corinthians 4:6). Paul indeed spoke of “**tradition**” (2 Thessalonians 3:6) and “**traditions**” (1 Corinthians 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15). But, the New Testament does not reveal whether these traditions are all found in the New Testament or not.

Greek Orthodoxy assumes they are not, and thus *assumes* they have “Sacred Apostolic Tradition” in *addition* to “**what is written**” (Scripture). So, even though men are well known to “**have practiced deceit**” (Romans 3:13), Greek Orthodoxy trusts that hasn't happen “**with their tongues**” (Romans 3:13), and they supposedly have therefore reliable “Apostolic Tradition.”

**Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man . . . ."** (Jeremiah 17:5)

That's where this trust lies – in men. You must take their word for it that it actually came from the apostles. There are no apostles alive today to verify this claim (Ecclesiastes 1:11; 2:16), so that makes it easy for the simple-minded (Proverbs 14:15) to buy the lie. The false doctrine revealed herein demonstrates how the Greek Orthodox are not to be trusted.

They also write,

The Orthodox Church recognizes the Seven Ecumenical Synods (Councils) of the bishops of the One Undivided Ecumenical Church which took place between the 4th and 8th centuries.

The Orthodox Church obviously trusts man has not corrupted the history of these Synods, either at their conception or throughout the centuries. And so they write,

The Ecumenical Synod is considered infallible on matters of faith, but not in matters of administration and discipline.

So, their faith is based on the sandy ground of man's word in which they made decisions centuries ago "on matters of faith," and rather than being open to the correction of the Word of God, they consider these decisions "infallible." Therefore, this excludes any possible correction via Scripture. Thus, any error they may be in, they are hopelessly lost in that error. The Proverb well describes this state:

**He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life, but he who refuses correction goes astray.**  
(Pro 10:17)

They refuse correction by declaring such decisions "infallible."

They also claim,

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, Who proceeds from the Father only (cf. John 15:26). (underlining added)

It is evident from the Scripture that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father only; this was the belief from the very beginning of the One Undivided Church. (underlining added)

Neither John 15:26 nor anywhere else does Scripture declare the Holy Spirit only proceeds from the Father. John 15:26 simply says,

**the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, . . . .** (John 15:26)

That does not mean the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son. As we see it does in John 20.

**So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."** (John 20:21-22)

They claim,

Man's desire for salvation implies that man feels his inner emptiness and turns to God for forgiveness and redemption.

Scripture says the exact opposite.

**There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God.** (Romans 3:10-11)

**An evil *man* seeks only rebellion.** (Proverbs 17:11)

A "desire for salvation" and if one "turns to God" are good things. God says of man,

**There is none who does good.** (Psa 14:1, 3; 53:1, 3; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:12)

### **III. Eucharist**

The Holy Eucharist is the seal of the proclamation of the communion with God. It is the only

Sacrament offered by the Church in which the elements of bread and wine not only carry the Grace of God, as a *mysterion*, but are "changed" into and "are" the very Body and the very Blood of Christ, being a propitiatory sacrifice. (underlining added)<sup>2</sup>

Christ spoke of no “changed' into” on the night before He was crucified. This is “**the tradition of men**” (Colossians 2:8). Even when He did speak of eating His flesh and drinking His blood (John 6:48-58) He said,

**It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life.** (John 6:63)

Clearly, Jesus was not talking about eating His “very Body” and His “very Blood.” “**The flesh profits nothing.**” He was talking about spiritually feeding on Him. “**The words that I speak to you are spirit, . . .**” Jesus spoke of eating as Jeremiah and the Psalmist did.

**Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.** (Jeremiah 15:16)

**How sweet are Your words to my taste, *sweeter* than honey to my mouth!** (Psalm 119:103)

And as Isaiah wrote,

**Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, and your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you-- the sure mercies of David.** (Isaiah 55:1-3)

And as Proverbs declares,

**Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;**

<sup>2</sup> **She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.**

<sup>3</sup> **She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,**

<sup>4</sup> **"Whoever *is* simple, let him turn in here!" *As for* him who lacks understanding, she says to him,**

<sup>5</sup> **"Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.**

<sup>6</sup> **Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.** (Proverbs 9:1-6)

The Greek Orthodox claims their Eucharist is “a propitiatory sacrifice.” Scripture teaches no such thing. Paul wrote “**the bread and drink of the cup**” (1 Corinthians 11:28) was,

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<sup>2</sup> They also write,

*The highest pattern of worship* in the Orthodox Church is the Holy Eucharist, which is officiated as the Divine Liturgy. In the Divine Liturgy, the Grace of God is bestowed upon the communicants. The faithful partake of the very Body and Blood of Christ for their sanctification and remission of sins. All communicants participate with devotional life and spirit in the Divine Liturgy. The Holy Eucharist, the very Body and Blood of Christ, is considered by the Church divine nourishment for its members. The Holy Eucharist is the most essential service to the life of the *Ecclesia*. (underlining added)

**in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.** (1 Corinthians 11:25-26)

And Hebrews notes,

**Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.** (Hebrews 9:28)

There is but “**one sacrifice for sins**” (Hebrews 10:12). The Greek Orthodox call their Eucharist “a propitiatory sacrifice.” That speaks directly against Hebrews 9:28 and 10:12.

Rejection of the the Biblical sinful nature of man and Predestination:

. . . the Church fought against two extremes:

1. the theory that in the innate sinfulness of mankind, human nature is able to practice virtue by itself, making Christ's sacrifice only a moral example (Pelagianism);
2. the theory that the human soul is totally corrupted and man's salvation is God's work alone, predestining man to salvation or to perdition (Augustine). (underlining added)

Genesis 6:5; Psalm 14; 53; Proverbs 17:11; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Jeremiah 13:23; Romans 3:9-18; 11:32; etc., clearly teach “the human soul is totally corrupted.” Psalm 92:5-7; 139:16; Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 46:10; Romans 9:11-23; 11:36; Ephesians 1:3-11; 2 Timothy 1:9; etc., clearly teach God predestines man's eternal destiny.

An unbiblical priesthood:

The Orthodox write,

The faithful, clergy and laity, constitute the "royal priesthood," which means they are called upon by God to serve in Church.

But the Orthodox make an unbiblical distinction and also write,

The laymen of the Orthodox Church are especially prominent in the election of candidates to the Priesthood. (underlining added)

In the Bible in the new covenant there is no such thing as an “election of candidates to the Priesthood,” for all are kings and priests.

**To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.** (Rev 1:5-6)

So, the Orthodox have a priesthood of which the Bible does not. For example, on this same webpage they write,

Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, is the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of

America since 1999. He was born Demetrios Trakatellis in Thessaloniki, Greece on February 1, 1928. In 1950 he graduated with distinction from the University of Athens School of Theology. In 1960 he was ordained a deacon, and in 1964 a priest.

If they believed the Scripture, there would be no “ordained . . . a priest.”

Perpetual Virgin

To argue against Mary's perpetual virginity is to suggest something else that is greatly implausible, not to say unthinkable: that neither Mary nor her protector, Joseph, would have deemed it inappropriate to have sexual relations after the birth of God in the flesh.

([www.goarch.org/-/the-ever-virginity-of-the-mother-of-god](http://www.goarch.org/-/the-ever-virginity-of-the-mother-of-god))

Besides the fact that Scripture nowhere teaches Mary stayed a virgin, it explicitly says otherwise.

**Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son.**

(Matthew 1:24-25)

Jesus also had brothers and sisters.

**And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this *Man* get this wisdom and *these* mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?" So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." (Matthew 13:54-57)**