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CHRISTIAN ETHICS  
VOLUME ONE

INTRODUCTION - GENERAL PRINCIPLES  
AND MODERN CHALLENGES

TRANSLATION  
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HOLY GREAT MONASTERY OF VATOPAIDI  
MOUNT ATHOS

Originally published in Greek under the title:  
Χριστιανική Ἠθική, Εἰσαγωγή - Γενικὲς Ἀρχές - Σύγχρονη Προβληματική

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& THE HOLY AND GREAT MONASTERY OF VATOPAIDI

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Christian Ethics. First volume  
First edition 2019

ISBN set: 978-618-5314-21-7  
ISBN: 978-618-5314-22-4

Layout and typesetting by AH Graphic Design  
<https://aharperdesign.myportfolio.com>  
Printed by Open Line

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## *FOREWORD*

Christian Ethics as a branch of learning that refers to man's moral life, differs greatly from the ethics of the ancient Greek Philosophers or the ethics of other cultures and civilizations. Christian Ethics is based on the person and ethos of Christ. The God-Man Christ displayed the perfect God and the perfect man in His Person. The perfect man activates the highest charismatic recognition of his nature, which is theosis. Christ Himself showed the world the way that leads to theosis. He lived on the earth in a way that was an example to us, or, as the Apostle Paul points out, "leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps" (see 1 Peter 2:21).

The orders, the commandments of God are not articles of law or dry moral provisions. They are the word of God, which was set out by the incarnate Word of God. The moral life of Christians is developed through the keeping of the divine commandments. God's commandments express His perfect will, they indicated the selfless life in Christ, they are uncreated energies of God. As Saint Maximos the Confessor writes, "Christ is hidden within His commandments". Consequently, the keeping of the commandments, the ethics of Christ, bears witness to a Theophany. Christ speak of this quite clearly when he says, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (John 14:21) There is, therefore, a direct relationship between ethos and doctrine. These two things are not separated in Orthodoxy, but are two sides of the same coin. If moral life does not lead to theosis, or if doctrine does not ensure the believer's

ethos, it either means that ethics and doctrine are fake, or that it is not being lived out correctly.

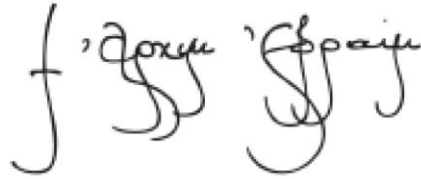
For the Christian it is very easy to recognize what is morally right in his life. His relationship with God who is personal, perfect and absolute reveals to him through experience that God's will is what is morally correct. Today, man is experiencing a deep crisis on all levels of life, but mainly a moral crisis, despite having advanced technology and a wealth of material goods. With the rapid development of biology and the discovery of the human genome some people thought that human morality is determined by our genes and wanted to change ethics into biology.

This ethics, which is usually promoted in the guise of "bioethics", has expanded into the whole area of ethics and is presented as the principal form of contemporary ethics. It is a globalized form of ethics, which promotes general and impersonal principles, so that, through generalizations and ambiguity, it can secure manifold selfish interests. This secular ethics finds fertile ground in societies that have strayed from Christian tradition and often gives support to immoral solutions. This is why an Orthodox Bioethics needs to be formed, which will give correct and truly moral solutions to contemporary problems. This is a demand of the times.

It is with great joy that we proceed to the publication of the two revised versions of Christian Ethics of our dear Professor George Mantzarides. His teaching of the subject of Christian Ethics for 35 years at the Aristoteleian University of Thessaloniki, as well as other other Universities, his deep concern for contemporary man, with his multitude of moral problems and dilemmas, but also his experience of safeguarding the writings of the Fathers of the Church and contemporary grace-filled Elders is a guarantee of the authentic writing of this monumental work. I pray that Christ will give the students, and all those that read these volumes on

Christian Ethics, His outlook and ethos, which leads to salvation and theosis.

The Abbot of the Monastery of Vatopedi  
+Archimandrite Ephraim

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'f' followed by 'Ephraim' written twice in a cursive style.