

The Three Answers of Patriarch Jeremiah II

A Commentary on Modern Ecumenical Dialogue With the Heterodox

What follows after these introductory remarks are excerpts from the famous correspondence between Jeremiah II, Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Lutheran scholars in Tübingen, Germany regarding their "Augsburg Confession." The *The Three Answers of Patriarch Jeremiah II to the Lutheran Scholars in Tübingen (1576-1581)* enjoy the status of "symbolic books" in the Orthodox Church. That is, they are not of the same authority as the Symbols, esp. that of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. However, they are, with many other symbolic texts, "pending *probable* acceptance and ratification by an Orthodox Ecumenical Synod" (Mastrantonis, xvii). Thus, they are of great value and importance to the Church.

I have chosen these excerpts because they show how Orthodox "ecumenical dialogue" has proceeded in the past. What you will read is in sharp contrast to much of what passes for "Orthodox dialogue" with the heterodox today. There are many lessons to be learned herein. Note especially the continual appeal of this wise and venerable Patriarch to the Tradition of the Church as expressed by the Scriptures, the God-bearing Fathers, and the Ecumenical Synods. Note the clarity of thought, the firmness regarding the truth, yet also the kindness and condescension which he shows towards these Lutheran scholars. And finally, note in contrast to today's endless "dialogues of love," that the Patriarch cut off the correspondence after the third reply when it became clear that the issues had been exhausted and the heretics were unrepentant. In this he was faithful to the Scriptures: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, abandon" (Titus 3:10).

+ + +

Introductory Remarks. Numerous Orthodox traditionalists have written on the modern ecumenical problem of "dialogue with the heterodox." Constantine Cavarnos gives a penetrating critical analysis of the fruit of this type of dialogue in his outstanding book *Ecumenism Examined* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1996, emphases his):

The question arises: Why such a strenuous opposition to participation [in ecumenical dialogue]? A major part of the answer is briefly this: participation involved repeated "dialogues" with the heterodox, especially with Roman Catholic prelates; and history has taught the Orthodox, especially the Greeks, that such dialogues end for the Orthodox disastrously. (p. 44)

Those Orthodox who know well the history of their Church and the origin and evolution of the other forms of Christianity, and its diachronic relations with them, are quite aware of the great dangers in which Orthodox hierarchs involve the Church when they engage in "Ecumenical dialogues." (p. 45)

Further, so far as dialogues with various Protestant denominations are concerned, history teaches us that they are destined to failure. The Orthodox Church has had many contacts with the Protestants through the centuries. But these have not resulted in Protestant denominations becoming Orthodox. The chances of success of dialogues with Protestant denominations were small in the past; today they appear to be nil. Conversion is a matter of individual spiritual maturation and choice, not a product of Ecumenical dialogues. (p. 46)

A very important fact to be noted ... is that exposure again and again through dialogues to this minimalistic, relativistic mentality [of typical modern dialogue] has a blunting effect on the Orthodox phronema or mindset. One becomes infected by the virus—or venom (ois) as the Orthodox Church Fathers call it—of heresy. (p. 47-48)

The reason why St. Paul and the other holy men whom I have mentioned advise avoiding repeated religious dialogues with the heterodox is clearly the danger of being infected spiritually by heretical ideas—it is not to teach hatred towards the heterodox. Such ideas are compared to poison, the venom of snakes, causing spiritual death. (p. 52).

Also, in *Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement* (Etna: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1997, forthcoming), Archimandrite Cyprian offers these brilliant and penetrating insights:

6. The [WCC] "Commentary" from Geneva also asserts that "ecumenism is not an entirely new phenomenon," because it has, supposedly, "always been part of the Church's life" (3).

This position of Father George Tsetsis is generally accepted by the entire spectrum of Orthodox ecumenists, and, indeed, was given collective expression at the so-called Third Pan-Orthodox Pre-Synodal Consultation (Chambesy, Geneva, 1986). [1] The attitude of this Consultation was certainly influenced directly by the findings of a "Symposium" of some thirty Orthodox ecumenists at the Valamo Monastery in Finland, which was organized by the WCC's "Orthodox Working Group," under the presidency of Father Tsetsis. [2]

a. *The confusion here, however, is obvious, when we take into consideration the fundamental truth that the ecumenical movement is not just a question of "dialogues"; it quite simply includes "dialogues" which, conducted as they are in the context of the ecclesiological presuppositions of the ecumenical movement, are totally unacceptable from an Orthodox standpoint. Let us explain this in more detail.*

The Holy Fathers, with purely Orthodox presuppositions, conducted dialogues with the heterodox—certainly not, as Father Tsetsis writes, "in order to achieve Christian unity," or "to achieve their visible unity," or "to give a common witness to the world" (3 and 4), but in order to return those outside the Orthodox Church to the "Unity of the Faith." It is dialogues of precisely this kind that have truly always existed "at the epicenter of the pastoral concerns of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church from the very first days of her formation" (3).

On this account, it is inconceivable that the charismatic dialogues of the Saints of the Orthodox Church should be equated with the "dialogues" of the ecumenical movement:

It would undoubtedly be rash to assert that dialogue between the churches today has the same characteristics as it did in times past.... The external features of contemporary inter-church dialogue are completely new, since contemporary reality presents new characteristics in a revolutionary way...[and]..., consequently, of necessity today's dialogue has not only a different form, but also different theological content. [3]

But there is an additional reason why the dialogues of old differ from the "dialogues" of our day:

Contemporary ecumenical dialogue, perhaps for the first time in the history of Christianity, is adopting almost the same principles as Greek dialogue, in terms of both method and goals.... [4]

That is to say, it has adopted the principles of Socratic dialectic and Platonic dialogue; and in this way, contemporary ecumenical "dialogues" are clearly differentiated from the preaching and

Finally, I include these wise words from Metropolitan PHILARET's "[Protest to Patriarch Athenagoras on the Lifting of the Anathemas of 1054](#)":

The Tradition of the Church and the example of the Holy Fathers teach us that the Church holds no dialogue with those who have separated themselves from Orthodoxy. Rather than that, the Church addresses to them a monologue inviting them to return to its fold through rejection of any dissenting doctrines.

A true dialogue implies an exchange of views with a possibility of persuading the participants to attain an agreement. As one can perceive from the Encyclical "Ecclesiam Suam," Pope Paul VI understands the dialogue as a plan for our union with Rome with the help of some formula which would, however, leave unaltered its doctrines, and particularly its dogmatic doctrine about the position of the Pope in the Church. However, any compromise with error is foreign to the history of the Orthodox Church and to the essence of the Church. It could not bring a harmony in the confessions of the Faith, but only an illusory outward unity similar to the conciliation of dissident Protestant communities in the ecumenical movement.

Endnotes

1. "Completed Texts—Resolutions of the Third Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Consultation (October 28-November 6, 1986)" [in Greek], *Episkepsis*, No. 369 (December 15, 1986), p. 14 (4. The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement [3]).

2. See *Episkepsis*, No. 176 (October 15, 1977), p. 4 [in Greek]: "Symposium of Orthodox Theologians in Valamo, Finland"; and pp. 9-15: "The Ecumenical Nature of the Orthodox Witness': Findings of the Orthodox Symposium in Valamo, Finland."

- Apart from other things, the "Symposium" approached the question of "the way in which the ecclesiology" of the Orthodox "is being accommodated to the context of this [i.e., the ecumenical] movement, both in the programs and in the activities which the WCC has undertaken." In its reply, the "Symposium" emphasized that "participation...does not in principle constitute a revolution in the history of Orthodoxy," but essentially contradicted itself by advocating the following idea: "What is, in some way, new today is the fact that this endeavor [viz., of applying the Apostolic Faith to new historical circumstances] is taking place jointly with other Christian bodies, with which there is not full communion"! (*op.cit.*, p. 12).

3. Nicholas A. Matsoukas, *The Ecumenical Movement: History and Theology* [in Greek] (Philosophical and Theological Library, No. 4; Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras Publications, 1991), pp. 11-12 (Introduction).

4. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

+ + +

The excerpts that now follow are from *Augsburg and Constantinople*, by Fr. George Mastrantonis (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Press, 1982). Though most of the theological discussion centers around the *filioque*, there were many other subjects covered. The book is highly recommended, and costs only \$5.00.

The First Answer of Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople, Concerning the Augsburg Confession, Sent to Tübingen [May 15] 1576

[p. 31] We received the letters which your love sent us and the booklet which contains the articles of your

faith. We accept your love, and in compliance with your request we shall endeavor to clear the issues in which we agree and those in which we disagree. The expression of love is the fulfillment of the Law and Prophets [cf. Rom 13:10]. Indeed, it is fulfilled, we may say, not only by mere words, but proven by the very facts themselves and by deeds. Even as the most precious stones that need no words of praise, yet they are looked upon with admiration because of their own intrinsic worth by those who know their value. You have displayed such a love, most wise German men, bereft of pride in those matters which you have communicated to us.

In responding, then, we shall say nothing originating of ourselves, but (what is pertinent) from the holy seven Ecumenical Synods with which, as you write, you acquiesce and you accept. We shall further speak in accordance with the opinion of the divine teachers and exegetes of the divinely inspired Scripture, whom the catholic Church of Christ has received in common accord, for their words and miracles illuminated the universe like another sun [cf. Mt 13:43]. Because the Holy Spirit breathed on them and spoke through them. Indeed, their statements shall remain unshaken forever because they are founded on the Word of the Lord.

The Church of Christ, according to Saint Paul, is the "pillar and bulwark of the truth" [I Tim 3:15]. And according to the divine promise of the Lord, the gates of Hades "shall not prevail against it" [Mt 16:18]. And although some are carried away by portentous thoughts nevertheless, this Church stands secure and steadfast, solidly supported on the rock and on those other teachings on which the truth has been established [cf. Eph 2:20]. For those who are of the Church of Christ, are wholly of the truth; but those who are not wholly of the truth, are also not of the Church of Christ. Therefore, we follow in the path of truth and offer the sound word for the upbuilding of the true faith. And with this we beseech the prayers of those who love the Lord, so that our mind may be guided by His divine grace in the path of peace [cf. Lk 1:79]...

[29. An Invitation To Follow the Holy Synods, pp. 102-3]

All these things which we have spoken, beloved, are founded, as you very well know, upon the inspired Scriptures, according to the interpretation and the sound teaching and explanation of our wise and holy theologians [the Fathers of the Church]. For we may not rely upon our own interpretation and understand and interpret any of the words of the inspired Scripture except in accord with the theologizing Fathers who have been approved by the Holy Synods, [inspired] by the Holy Spirit for a pious purpose, lest our thought, like that of Proteus move around here and there, deviating from the correct evangelical teaching, from true wisdom and from prudence. But someone will say, how can these things be corrected? In this way: with the help of God.

Let no one undertake or think anything contrary to the decisions of the Holy Apostles and the Holy Synods. He who uprightly keeps this principle will be a partner with us in our rejoicing, a member of our community and one who holds the same faith. But what communion would one have with us, who rejects the aforementioned canons and opposes the Apostles and shamelessly turns himself against the Holy Apostles? What part could he have with us? Somewhere one of the teachers [of the Church] says to those who strive to be pious: "One who speaks contrary to the things which have been decided—even though he is trustworthy [cf. I Cor 4:2; 9:1], lives as a virgin, does wonders, and prophesies—is a wolf in sheep's clothing, who causes the ruin of the sheep." Another teacher says: "It shakes loose something that seemed good to the God-bearing Fathers, that cannot be called administration, but violation and betrayal of the dogma." Still another teacher [Saint Basil] says:

One who has the judgment of Christ before his eyes, who has seen the great danger that threatens those who dare to subtract from or add to those things which have been handed down by the Spirit, must not be ambitious to innovate, but must content himself with those things which have been proclaimed by the saints. [Against Eunomius 2, PG 29.573-652]

Therefore, since so many and such important of our theologizing Fathers forbid thinking otherwise, there is only one correction: conform to the Holy Synod and follow the canons of the Apostles and, thus, follow Christ in all things.

[30. Closing Salutations]

O most wise German men and beloved children of our humble self, since, as sensible men, you wish with your whole heart to enter our most Holy Church, we, as affectionate fathers, willingly accept your love and friendliness, if you will follow the Apostolic and Synodal decrees in harmony with us and will submit to them. For then you will indeed be in communion with us, and having openly submitted to our holy and catholic church of Christ, you will be praised by all prudent men. In this way the two churches will become one by the grace of God, we shall live together hereafter and we will exist together in a God-pleasing way until we attain the heavenly kingdom. May all of us attain it in Christ Jesus, to whom belongs glory unto the ages. Amen.

Written with the help of God, in Constantinople, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1576, 15 May, at the venerable Patriarchal Monastery of the Pammakaristos [All-Blessed Ever-Virgin Mary].

Jeremiah, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch

The Second Answer of Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople to Tübingen, 1579, Sent to the Most Wise Theologians, Residents of the Famous City of Tübingen

[pp. 151-4] Jeremiah, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch.

Our Humble Self received your sagacious second letters which you have sent concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit and other theological questions. We might have answered earlier had we not been traveling in the West and the Peloponnesos. We, therefore, thank God, the giver of all good things, and rejoice over the many other benefits, not the least of which is that you, for the most part, agree with our Church. So may it be also in the matters in which we disagree, that we may piously agree, by the will of God, who perfects all things for what is most beneficial.

Concerning the Procession of the Holy Spirit

The first matter, then, in which we disagree is the procession of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, my beloved [spiritual] sons, although this matter was brought to the fore many times, and accurately examined by every related canon of the Church, and by every spiritual Lydian stone, it was obviously analyzed and clarified so much so that it has no further need of research.

And yet, even though we are preoccupied with many and continuing responsibilities, we are condescending to you in [Christian] love, no less than a father would, and abundantly as in the myth of [armed] Athena, who will deliberate still further with you for your edification, supporting our position with holy testimonies as the God-inspired Fathers received them.

For it is a stipulation of the holy and Sixth Ecumenical Synod directing that the Holy Scriptures be understood as the tried and proved teachers of the Church have interpreted them and not as those who, by their own sophistry, wish to interpret such matters superfluously. Read also the stipulation of the 19th canon:

And if any controversy in regard to Scripture shall have been raised, let them not interpret it otherwise than as the luminaries and doctors of the Church have expounded it. And in these let them glory rather than in composing things out of their own heads lest, through their lack of skill,

[1. Distinction between Procession and Sending]

Let us hearken, I entreat you, to what will be said with good will and in the fear of God. The procession of the Holy Spirit is one thing, while the sending is another. For on the one hand, the procession is the natural existence of the Holy Spirit, directly alone from the Father, who is the cause. On the other hand, the sending is a sending forth on a mission in time in which the Son also sends the Spirit, as is the case here, and the Spirit also sends the Son, as it is said, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor" [Is 61:1; cf. Lk 4:18]. How then and why do you innovate and say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son? If the Spirit did not proceed from the Father alone, then the Lord would have said concerning the Paraclete, whom I and the Father sent forth just as He frequently said "whom I shall send" [Jn 15:26]. To begin with, then, the undeceiving mouth of Christ declares that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father [cf. Jn 15:26]. Second, even Paul himself in the Epistle to Titus reiterates: "Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior" [3:5-6]. What is more explicit than this? The Lord has said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" [Lk 24:49; cf. Acts 2:14; Jn 14:26; 20:21-23]. Paul subsequently asserts: "which he poured out upon us richly" [Tit 3:6]...

[4. Difference between 'Ek' and 'Dia']

... Moreover, we have previously mentioned that here is a very great difference between the sending to the created world and the procession which is timeless and eternal, in which He alone directly proceeds from the Father, as we said, and as we will more fully explain with the help of God in the course of our exposition. Consequently, the great Athanasios, whom you presented as your advocate, does not help you. Instead, he argues against you for he allies himself with the Lord and with all the God-filled and wise theologians of the Church. Therefore, he ridicules those of contrary opinion, that is, against these pneumatomachs [adversaries of the Spirit], by directing this jest at them: "If the Holy Spirit is not a creature, then He is a son; thus, there will be found to be two sons and brothers, or rather, the Logos will be a son, the Spirit will be a grandson, and the Father will be a grandfather." These are their nonsensical prattlings, and that is why he ridicules them.

[5. The Interpretation by the Theologians of 'Ek' and 'Dia' Is Incorrect]

In spite of these things, our humble self is greatly astonished at your sagacity. When you write in your second reply, and we quote: "If there is one who believes that the Holy Spirit alone is from the Father, and through the Son, but does not proceed from the Son, let him know that he believes the impossible; for these are contradictory to each other, and cancel one the other." However, those things which we profess are not impossible, nor do they contradict each other, nor do they cancel one the other, as you say. For the truth never conflicts with the truth. And although not fully treated, this much is sufficient for the present concerning these matters. However, I diligently researched the matter and found but two main differences between us on the subject. First, that you understand the sending and the procession to be one and the same things. And for this reason you say incorrectly: "If the Spirit is sent by the Son, then it follows that He also proceeds from him." ...

[13. Irrational Results from the Filioque, pp. 162-4]

See how many absurd conclusions from every side trail those who say that the Spirit proceeds both from the Father and the Son! Do not desire to think incorrectly concerning the Lord. For if the Latins, that is, the Church of Rome, and others can produce witnesses who are acceptable such as Augustine, Ambrose,

Jerome, and some others, we also can produce many more and even more trustworthy Fathers to speak up for the truth. Who are they? They are the God-bearing Fathers who distinguished themselves in the holy Synods, who deified the earth, and who through miracles and good works shined brighter than the sun and declared that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. They ordered heavy penalties against those who might think otherwise following the anathema of the Apostle Paul who explicitly declared: "If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" [Gal 1:9].

[14. The Ecumenical Synods Would Not Remain Silent]

If the Son was the emitter and the cause of the Spirit, how could the Ecumenical Synods have remained silent concerning such a most necessary dogma? It is very clear, therefore, from this that some persons gave way to their own wills and affixed this addition after the holy synods had made their definition. For if this had not happened, there would not have been a consensus of all present, since the most reverend primates of Rome were present in the seven holy Synods.

[15. Scriptural Proofs and Not Human Wisdom]

Even though those who spoke before us had devised some manner in which to overthrow sophisms, as we said, by resounding a wooden peg on wooden pegs, nevertheless, we cannot order our own thinking by persuasion of human wisdom. But rather we would hold to the consistency of scriptural proofs. For Paul says: "Let no one make a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit" [Col 2:8]. From this truly divine saying we are taught that true philosophy never contradicts theology. For truth can never contradict truth. This is obvious from the following: "and empty deceit" [Col 2:8]. Consequently, the wisdom which is not empty serves, rather than opposes, theology. And you, then, O my beloved children in Christ, by the grace of God, having no empty wisdom, are constrained to advocate a theology whose leader is not an angel nor a man but totally the Lord himself. And, as a consequence, [leaders are] the divine shepherds and teachers of the Church who are in agreement with Him [the Lord]. Of these [Fathers], among others, the Fathers, also, of the holy Seventh Ecumenical Synod have declared this, too: "we anathematize those who add or eliminate anything."

Again, neither should this be overlooked, beloved, that from the time of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod seventy-five years had passed when, during the sovereignty of Basil the Macedonian, a local synod had convened in Constantinople. The reason this holy synod was summoned at that particular time was, for which everything was wrought by the will of the pope and the urging of the emperor: [1] to install the most holy Photios on the throne of the Queen City [of Constantinople], and [2] to banish those who under some kind of guile dared to claim that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, also. At least, then, in this synod the most holy Pope John, through a bishop and cardinal named Peter, and also Paul and Eugene, his bishops and locum tenens [authorized representatives mutually agreed and pronounced anathema on those who would dare in the future to add to or delete [anything from the Creed]. But further, this same Pope John, following this, sent a letter to Photios himself saying:

Again I make this clear to Your Reverence in reference to this article, concerning which the scandals took place among the churches of Christ; be on notice from us that we do not simply say this, but we also say that those who originally took courage by their own folly to do this, we pronounce as being transgressors of the divine words and perverters of the theology of the Master Christ and of the Holy Fathers, and we rank them together with Judas."

Furthermore, we are reassured by the fact that from that time up to the time of Christopher, 130 years have passed during which all the most reverend primates of Rome have agreed with us.

[16. The Utterances of the Ecumenical Synods]

But why would anyone repeat these things if the concept of the truth which is sought concerning the Spirit

is made admirably clearer: [1] by the utterances of the holy Seven Ecumenical Synods in which the Holy Fathers, who numbered about two thousand, struggled which is more than sufficient evidence; and [2] by the utterances of the Lord himself. Indeed, it is right to respect the doctrines and the laws of those saints, to marvel at and cleave unto them. For no less were they [the Fathers] renowned for their illustrious lives or the power of their preaching than as shining stars who enkindled the piety not only of one nation, but, indeed, of as many nations as the visible sun entirely illuminates... .

[37. Filioque Not Decreed by Synods, pp. 172-4]

This, however, is a fact, as we have said, that the two thousand participants of the seven [Ecumenical] Synods did not formulate the opinion that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, also. Among these, indeed, were the primates and luminaries of the Roman Church, who without contradiction voted in support of the definition of the faith [i.e., that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone]. And I believe that the three, whom we mentioned above, had also truly acquiesced. But also, a mutual doctrinaire agreement was adopted by them to neither eliminate from the definitions of the faith, nor, indeed, to add to them. And this definition, that is, the Creed proclaims: [I believe] "and in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father," etc.

[38. Pope Gregory the Great Author of the *Dialogues* as Pope (A.D. 590-604)]

Also, Saint Gregory [the Great], the *Dialogos* [A.D. 590-604], who lived not long after the Sixth [Ecumenical] Synod, theologized in the Latin language and in writings that the Holy Spirit proceeds alone from the Father.

[39. Pope Zacharias (A.D. 741-752) Stressed the Procession from the Father]

Also, Pope Zacharias one hundred fifteen years later, translating this Gregory's writings into the Greek language, says: "the Paraclete Spirit proceeds from the Father and abides in the Son," having learned this from [John] the Forerunner, who [at the time of our Lord's baptism] saw the Spirit descend as a dove and rest on Him.

[40. Popes Leo III (A.D. 795-816) and Benedict III (A.D. 855-858) Decreed That Creed Should Be Recited in Greek—without the Filioque]

Moreover, Leo and Benedict, who later became great hierarchs of Rome, decreed that the Symbol of Faith should be recited in Greek during the Divine Liturgy in Rome and in other churches under their jurisdiction, so that the limitations of dialect, as it is claimed, furnishes no pretext for error. Indeed, it was the creed of the Second Ecumenical Synod [A.D. 381] in which this belief was clarified by the Holy Fathers:

And [I believe] in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets; in one holy catholic and apostolic Church;... I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the ages to come. Amen.

Moreover, this same [Pope] Leo opened the treasury of the apostolic church of the Romans and drew forth two plaques which were stored in the treasury together with the sacred "treasures. These plaques have inscribed on them the holy edition of faith [Creed] in Greek letters and words. Pope Leo sanctioned them to be recited before the Roman multitude.

[41. Newly Elected Popes Reaffirm Creed without Filioque]

Moreover, up to the time of the pious Sergios I, Patriarch of Constantinople [A.D. 610-638], the hierarchs of Rome, upon assuming their hierarchical ministry when they sent forth enthronement letters of introduction expressing their own religious beliefs to all the patriarchs, also included in them the Symbol of Faith [Creed] without any change in its original form. Is it necessary to further say more?

The Son and Master, Christ, rules and mystically ordains that the Holy Spirit will proceed from the Father, but absolutely not from himself [Son]. I deem it worthy that no one, then will seek another more excellent teacher unless he desires to offend and to pursue the argument to no useful purpose; for he will never come to a definite conclusion even if he will invent many other subtleties expressing, perhaps, these and similar sayings from the Holy Gospels, such as: "but when the Counselor comes" [Jn 15:26], "he will take what is mine" [Jn 16:14]; "He breathed on them, and said to them" [Jn 20:22]; "God has sent the Spirit of his Son" [Gal 4:6]; and "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" [Lk 4:18]. For they are far from attaining such an aim, having been interpreted differently by the great and divine Ecumenical Teachers, as we have witnesses and have been informed. And all these, to state it briefly, express association and relationships, but are not manifestations of procession. Therefore, it follows that the unity and the equality among the three hypostases is proven.

[42. Plea to Theologians To Keep the Truths of the Creed Undefined]

Therefore, for the sake of God let it be; cease to utter words about that which are remote from the truth, and accept the holy doctrine, as we have made clear knowing full well that the Spirit proceeds from the Father. And, thus, concerning this subject, let us continue to be friends and brothers in Christ, abiding in Orthodoxy together, keeping the Confession of Faith unfragmented, unshakable, and steadfast, respecting the Holy Fathers and [keeping] in respectful awe of Christ himself, who has, thus, specifically dogmatized concerning the Holy Spirit, as we have said. Do not, for the sake of human glory, perhaps as pious persons, betray piety and your salvation after being taught by the preaching of so many and great saints concerning the truth of this doctrine. Indeed, we have reminded your esteemed selves of these matters not in the spirit of argument and not with ambiguity, but in a devout manner with the help of God. Indeed, may the Paraclete himself, the Spirit who proceeds from the Father, strengthen the thoughts according to His will in hope and in faith for the fulfillment of the commandments of Christ, and lead us to think correctly about this matter of procession of the Holy Spirit and about all other matters. Thus, by pleasing the Trinity, the cause of all things, through upright thinking and good deeds, you may achieve the blessedness which is reserved for the Orthodox faithful by the grace of Christ to whom belong all glory, power and majesty forever and ever, amen.

[E, 14. Hold the Traditions of the Church, pp. 197-8]

Therefore, brethren, let us stand on the rock of faith and on the tradition of the Church, and not remove the boundaries which our Holy Fathers have set. Thus, we will not give the opportunity to those who wish to innovate and destroy the edifice of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church of God. For if permission is granted to everyone who wants it, little by little the whole body of the Church will be destroyed. Do not, brethren, do not, oh Christ-loving children of the Church of God; rather let us worship and adore the founder and creator, God, who due to His nature alone is to be worshipped. Let us venerate the Holy Theotokos not as God, but as the Mother of God, according to the flesh. And let us also venerate the saints as the chosen friends of God who have greater access to Him [God]. For if men venerate mortal kinds who frequently are impious as well as sinners, also rulers and others, and according to the Divine Apostle: "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient" [Tit 3:1], "pay all of them their dues," etc. [Rom 13:7], how much more is it necessary to worship the King of Kings who alone is master over nature and also over the passions of His servants and kings? David, also, in Ps 44 says: "Thou didst make [me] them head of nations" [17:43; cf. Ps 18:43 RSV]. They [the saints] were given power over demons and sicknesses, and they shall reign together with Christ. Even their shadow alone drove away demons and sicknesses [cf. Acts 5:15-16]. Therefore, we should not consider the icon weaker and less honored than the shadow. For [the icon] truly is a sketch of the original. Brethren, the Christian is a

person of faith. He who comes in faith gains much. But he who separates himself [from faith] is like a raging sea churned by the wind and blown about and who will receive nothing. All the saints by faith have pleased God: they who confirm it [faith] and prove it to everyone by good works.

[15. Accept Traditions of Church with Sincerity of Heart]

Let us accept, then, the tradition of the Church with a sincere heart and not a multitude of rationalizations. For God created man to be [morally] upright; instead they [humans] sought after diverse ways of rationalizing. Let us not allow ourselves to learn a new kind of faith which is condemned by the tradition of the Holy Fathers. For the Divine Apostle says, "if anyone is preaching to you a Gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" [Gal 1:9].

[G. CONCLUSION: 1. Invitation to Accept Orthodox Faith without Innovations, p. 210]

Finally, having understood [Greek] Orthodoxy from the Holy Scriptures, come enter into it with all your souls, O wise and sagacious men, and put far away from you every irrational innovation, which the host of Ecumenical Teachers and of the Church has not accepted. For thus, both you and we will be worthy of blessings. You, as obeying your leaders and submitting to them [cf. Heb 13:17] and not "disputing about words which does no good" [2 Tim 2:14]. And we, as having spoken in the ears of those who have listened and sowing in the good soil [cf. Lk 8:8]. And since we have agreed on almost all of the main subjects, it is not necessary for you to interpret and understand some of the passages of the Scripture in any other way than that in which the luminaries of the Church and Ecumenical Teachers have interpreted. They themselves interpreted Scripture according to Christ our God, who is truth itself. And we, that is, our Church, keep these truths and uphold them. For nothing else is the cause of dissension than this and only this, which when you correct it, we will be, with the grace of God, in agreement; and we will become one in the Faith, the glory of God. For having researched diligently some of the passages of Holy Scripture, which you referred to in your first and second letters which you sent to us, we saw clearly that you had misinterpreted them, perhaps in following your new teachers. For this reason we again entreat you to understand the passages as the Ecumenical Teachers of the Church have interpreted them and which interpretations the seven ecumenical synods and the other regional ones have ratified. For as we have already said, it is not necessary to rise up and remove everlasting boundaries which the Fathers have established, so that we will not violate the definition which was mentioned at the beginning of the Sixth Synod and be subject to penalties. Therefore, if up to the present something has been violated, you who are prudent may correct it from now, and you will be worthy of praise by God, as well as by men and by us. For to err is human, but the correction is angelic and salvific. May you take care of this, also, so that the grace and the mercy of God be with you.

In the month of May, Indiction 7, 1579.

Jeremiah [Archbishop of Constantinople]

The Third Answer of Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople to Tübingen, 1581

Jeremiah, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch...

[pp. 289-90] O most wise German men, the book you sent to us has arrived. In it you again set forth supposedly plausible reasons and evidence, saying that you have not completely received satisfaction from our answers sent in response to your previous letters. You also say that somehow not even your thinking has been set straight not only from Holy Scripture, but neither from the Holy Fathers of the Church each after having been taught the truer and the better.

[A. CONCERNING THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT]

But after saying this you bring in Saint Augustine in book 2, *On the Trinity*, and you strongly maintain that

the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son himself. And you decide that the Holy Greek Fathers agree with you in the matter of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son, even though they differ in literal expressions. They are Athanasios in his treatise, *The Incarnation of the Word*; Cyril [of Alexandria] in his *First Treatise to Palladios*, Epiphanius in the Homily *Ancoratos*; Basil the Great in his fifteenth epistle *Against Eunomios*, who agrees with them; [Gregory] Nazianzos in the *Fourth Theological Oration*, which is the *Second Concerning the Son*; Cyril [of Alexandria] again in *Thesaurus*, and Athanasios again in his *Letters to Serapion*. We wonder, then, if indeed by abandoning the obvious and explicit passages of Scripture and the Fathers, which distinctly state and submit that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, which may have another meaning and have been understood by them [the Fathers] in another way, you might have changed to serve your own purpose! Accordingly, indeed, is also the matter of sending forth, which according to Augustine, as well as to the truth of the matter, has nothing in common with the procession. And the same is true concerning the many other passages which these Fathers have of necessity and fittingly used in speaking against those who alienated the Spirit from the essence of the Son. They surely did not use them with the intention of showing that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also. For this reason we had purposed to remain absolutely silent in response to your replies and give no answer to you. For you have quite plainly altered Holy Scripture as well as the interpretation of the above-mentioned holy men according to your own will. We have Paul to exhort us: "a man who is factitious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him" [Titus 3:10]. However, since by silence it might appear that we agree with you and that perhaps you correctly hold and understand these matters, we run the risk of having it thought that Holy Scripture and these holy men [Fathers] agree with you on this subject. By defending them we reiterate these matters again, although we have been well informed by your letters that you will never be able to agree with us or rather, we should say, with the truth... .

[C. CONCERNING THE SACRAMENTS, pp. 305-6]

But since you are content with some of the sacraments, even though you have dangerously distorted and changed the written teachings of the Old and New [Testament] to your own purpose, you further say that some of them are not sacraments, but only traditions, not having been established in Holy [scriptural] Texts. But you oppose them in every way, just as chrismation, which was accepted even by Saint John Chrysostom. Some others you drag along as does a torrent. And then you call yourself theologians!

[D. CONCERNING THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS]

[Confession and the Monastic Life]

You reckon the invocation of the saints, their icons, and their sacred relics as futile. You reject their veneration, taking as a pretext the Hebrew source. Moreover, you also reject confession to one another. In addition, you reject the angelic, monastic life. And about these matters we say that the Holy [Scripture] passages concerning them have not been interpreted by such theologians as you are, for neither Saint Chrysostom nor any other of the blessed and true theologians interpreted as if they were dragged along by a torrent. But, indeed, he [Chrysostom] and the holy man after him, being full of the Holy Spirit who performed supernatural miracles while they were living and after they died, interpreted [the Holy Scriptures] as they did; and they received such traditions, and they handed them down successively and gave them to us as indispensable and pious [sacraments]. Some of these even Old Rome also keeps and acquiesces with us. From whence have you reckoned better than Old and New Rome? Indeed, have you forsaken the interpretations of the true theologians and considered your own as more preferable? From the source of the Hebrew tradition we learn from history that contempt for the holy icons and sacred relics had its origin from the Hebrews. The schisms of the Lutherans there, which are many and various, were indeed caused and spread by some Hebrews, as it has been broached abroad feigning piety. And already, as you see, they have taken root and have opened the way for more evil as day by day they grow worse. Being completely not in communion with them [the Hebrews], we covet and, indeed, unshakably, the sacraments of our Church. We closely adhere to the teachings which have been uttered by the successors of the God-

preaching Holy Apostles. We consider their interpretations as more precious than all the gold and gems. Indeed, we invoke the all-holy saints not as saviors and redeemers, God forbid, for only One is the Savior and Redeemer, the Christ; but we who are sinners and in the midst of evils hold them forth as intermediaries who have completed the journey of life in a holy and satisfactory manner and have departed to God, and who richly intercede for us. And of course, we are not committing sin by continually pursuing this aim. For by venerating their holy icons and their relics which cause thousands of healings to those who on occasion approach in faith, we reap extraordinary beneficences from them, and we are illumined in soul and body. We confess also to one another, according to the Holy Scriptures. We revere the monastic and angelic life. We pray that those who lift up these burdens do not turn back at all, if indeed they would choose to be properly prepared for the kingdom of heaven.

[E. EPILOGUE]

Therefore, we request that from henceforth you do not cause us more grief, nor write to us on the same subject if you should wish to treat these luminaries and theologians of the Church in a different manner. You honor and exalt them in words, but you reject them in deeds. For you try to prove our weapons which are their holy and divine discourses as unsuitable. And it is with these documents that we would have to write and contradict you. Thus, as for you, please release us from these cares. Therefore, going about your own ways, write no longer concerning dogmas; but if you do, write only for friendship's sake. Farewell.

Jeremiah, Patriarch of Constantinople
Issued in the year 1581, June 6
Protonotarios Theodosios

+ + +

The following is from "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled," by Igumen Luke. *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42., no. 4, July-August, 1992, pp. 9-10:

Speaking to a large group of Orthodox hierarchy gathered at the Phanar in 1992, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Diodoros I, said the following: "Likewise, we must also make a decision about cutting off the Theological Dialogue with the Roman Catholics and the heterodox in general. Otherwise, the Orthodox people will have doubts about the assumptions and aims of the present Assembly. With good reason the Orthodox faithful will say: 'Why do we condemn certain Orthodox groups [those in resistance to ecumenism] bluntly and make no mention at all of a dialogue of love with them, at the same time that the Orthodox Church engages in dialogues with the heretics?' How do we justify the expression that we must abstain from communion with such groups, when we embrace the heterodox, whether opportunely or inopportunely?"