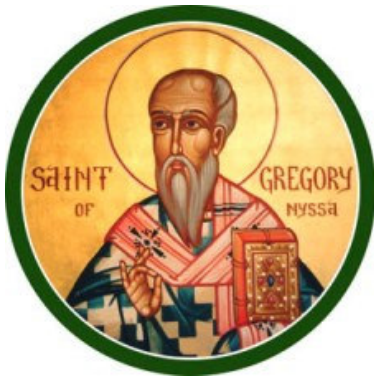




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## ***Fight the Good Fight of Faith***

***St. Gregory of Nyssa***



*Whoever is in Christ is a new creation; the old has passed away. Now by the "new creation" Paul means the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a heart that is pure and blameless, free of all malice, wickedness or shamefulness. For when a soul has come to hate sin and has delivered itself as far as it can to the power of virtue, it undergoes a transformation by receiving the grace of the Spirit. Then it is healed, restored and made wholly new. Indeed the two texts: *Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new one,* and: *Let us celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth,* support those passages which speak about the new*

creation.

Yet the tempter spreads many a snare to trap the soul, and of itself human nature is too weak to defeat him. This is why the Apostle bids us to arm ourselves with heavenly weapons, when he says: *Put on the breastplate of righteousness and have your feet shod with the gospel of peace and have truth around your waist as a belt. Can you not see how many forms of salvation the Apostle indicates, all leading to the same path and the same goal? Following them to the heights of God's commandments, we easily complete the race of life. For elsewhere the Apostle says: Let us run with fidelity the race that has been set before us, with our eyes on Jesus, the origin and the goal of our faith.*

So a man who openly despises the accolades of this world and rejects all earthly glory must also practice self-denial. Such self-denial means that you never seek your own will but God's, using God's will as a sure guide; it also means possessing nothing apart from what is held in common. In this way it will be easier for you to carry out your superior's commands promptly, in joy and in hope; this is required of Christ's servants who are redeemed for service to the brethren. For this is what the Lord wants when he says: *Whoever wishes to be first and great among you must be the last of all and a servant to all.*

Our service of mankind must be given freely. One who is in such a position must be subject to everyone and serve his brothers as if he were paying off a debt. Moreover, those who are in charge should work harder than the others and conduct themselves with greater submission than their own subjects. Their lives should serve as a visible

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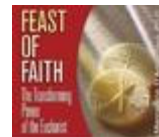
example of what service means, and they should remember that those who are committed to their trust are held in trust from God.

Those, then, who are in a position of authority must look after their brothers as conscientious teachers look after the young children who have been handed over to them by their parents. If both disciples and masters have this loving relationship, then subjects will be happy to obey whatever is commanded, while superiors will be delighted to lead their brothers to perfection. If you try to outdo one another in showing respect, your life on earth will be like that of the angels.

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### **Feast of Faith DVD & Workbook**

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