

Human enhancement from the Orthodox point of view

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The meaning of life in the Orthodox anthropology

- The life is a gift freely bestowed by the God of love
- *even life for evermore.*

Ps.133,3

- He has chosen us for life, of which the ultimate end is participation in the eternal glory of the Risen Christ
- ...Col 1:12,Eph 1:18
- **The transcendent destiny or telos of human existence is expected as theosis or deification**
- Man's primal vocation is to "ascent to the house of our Lord" where he shall enjoy eternal communion with the three persons of the Holy Trinity

- Human life finds its ultimate fulfillment beyond death, in the boundless communion of “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit” that constitutes the Kingdom of God
Rom.14:17.

The human body is a temple of the Holy spirit.
...Glorify God in your body (1Cor 6:20)

The quality of life is based on the sanctity of life

Acquisition of sanctity requires man’s “methexis” or cooperation with divine grace that involves “ putting off the old Adam and putting on the new”.

**Acquisition of sanctity means methexis in the
Cross of Christ**

- The cross of Christ ultimately means liberation: freedom from anxiety, sin, corruption and death.
- The cross means interior harmony and peace of the soul. It means real life, new life, new creation in Christ.
- “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal.2:20)

Every human being possesses the capacity for virtue,
holiness and ultimately theosis or deification by the
Grace of God

Attainment of the virtues of goodness, love, mercy
and justice requires discipline, an askesis, of
continued repentance and purification of the life, the
heart and the soul

All men are made in God's image, but to be in His
likeness is granted only to those who through great
love have brought their own freedom into subjection
of God (St Diadochus of Photiki)

Human personhood

- Man is truly “person” only insofar as he reflects the ultimate personhood of God

The divine personhood characterized by a total mutuality of love shared among Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- Fallen human nature must be restored to its original glory, a glory derived from its creation in the image of God

The orthodox concept of suffering

- Suffering can make us aware of our total dependence on the inexhaustible love and mercy of God
- Suffering can have the effect of purging and purifying the passions
- **Suffering offers the possibility to share in the life of the crucified and risen Lord**
- The suffering person take up his cross and follow the Lord to his own passion.
- **Pain and suffering must be surrendered into the loving and merciful hands of God**

The mercy of God is hidden in sufferings not of our choice.

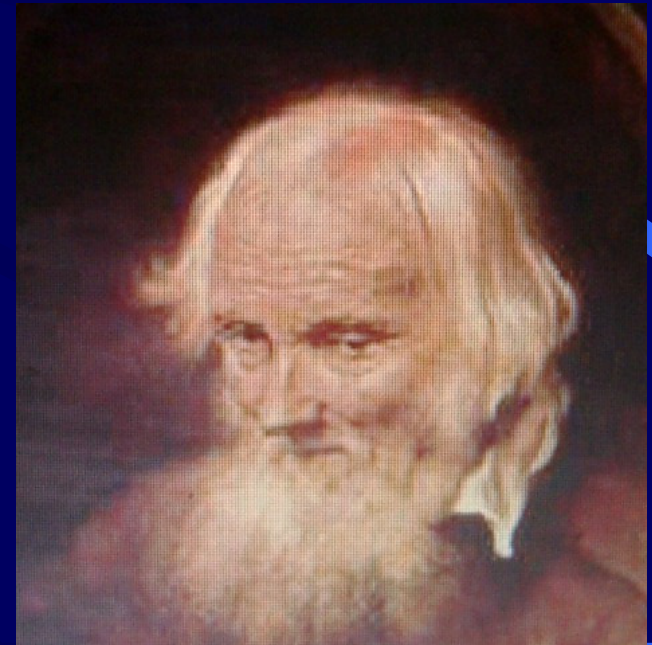
If we accept such sufferings patiently, they bring us to repentance and deliver us from the death.

(Mark the Hermit, Philokalia Vol.1,136,139)

According to the moral values the person must participate to the suffering and pain of every human being and the most personal feeling is the most universal

What is healing?

- Healing is more than physical health and psychological harmony
- Healing is a spiritual well being with harmonious metaphysical perspectives and expectations.



Moral decisions

Orthodox patristic teaching emphasizes the role of conscience and the virtue of diacrisis (discernment) in making moral decisions.

The critical ethical decisions that the man may be called upon to make should be made within the community of the Church

The most substantial decision, before making any other decision, is to surrender himself into the merciful hand of God.

*The Glory of God is a living
person*

*and the life of the person is the
vision of God*

St. Irenaeus of Lyon
(Adv.Hear IV.20.7)

