



# Who am I? Who Controls My Life?

Who we are, why we are here and what gives our lives meaning? How should we live our lives if we truly believe God to be its source?

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## PRAYERS

### OPENING PRAYER—FROM MY ORTHODOX PRAYER BOOK:

“The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation. This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. The Lord is God, and He has given us light. You are my God, and I will give thanks to You; O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His steadfast love endures forever!” (*My Orthodox Prayer Book*, p. 7)

### BAPTISMAL HYMN:

“Those who have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ for evermore. Alleluia.” (*Divine Liturgy Hymnal*, p. 109)

### CLOSING PRAYERS—PASCHA HYMN:

“A Pascha of Delight, a Pascha of the Lord: Pascha, an all-venerable Pascha has dawned for us; a Pascha on which let us embrace one another with joy. O Pascha, ransom from sorrow! From the tomb as from a bridal chamber Christ today shone forth, and filled the women with joy, saying: Proclaim ye to the Apostles.”

## PASSAGES

**Gen. 2:7:** Then the Lord God took some soil from the ground and formed a man out of it; he breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live.

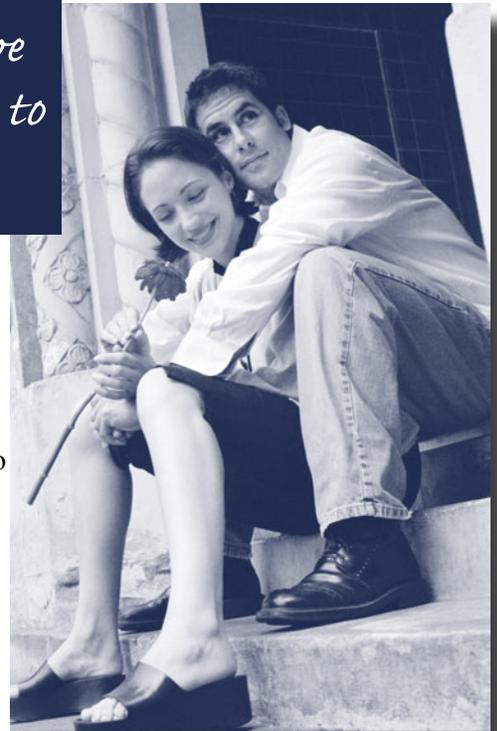
**John 11:20-27:** When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, “If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask him for.” “Your brother will rise to life,” Jesus told her. “I know,” she replied, “that he will rise to life on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die; and those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord!” she answered. “I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”

**John 6:47-51:** I am telling you the truth: he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died. But the bread that comes down from heaven is of such a kind that whoever eats it will not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If you eat this bread, you will live forever. The bread that I will give you is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live.

**Acts 17:24-28:** God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples made by human hands. Nor does he need anything that we can sup-

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ply by working for him, since it is he himself who gives life and breath and everything else to everyone. From one human being he created all races of people and made them live throughout the whole earth. He himself fixed beforehand the exact times and the limits of the places where they would live. He did this so that they would look for him, and perhaps find him as they felt around for him. Yet God is actually not far from any one of us; as someone has said, “In him we live and move and exist.” It is as some of your poets have said, “We too are his children.”



## PATRISTICS

**Origen:** “God is not part of existence; men take part in God.”

**St. Iranaeus:** “Fellowship with God is light and life ... separation from God is death.”

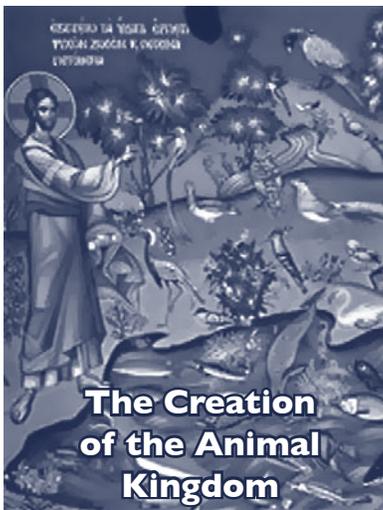
**The Didache:** “You shall not slay the child by abortions.”

**St. Basil the Great:** “The woman who purposely destroys her unborn child is guilty of murder. The hair-splitting difference between formed and unformed makes no difference to us. In this case it is not only the being about to be born who is vindicated, but the woman in her attack upon herself; because the woman who makes such attempts in most cases dies. The destruction of the embryo is an additional crime, a second murder, at all events if we regard it as done with intent. The punishment, however, of these women should not be for life, but for the term on ten years.”

## PRAXIS

Rejecting the kingdom of God *or* seeking the kingdom of God

The word “liturgy” literally means the work of the people: in other words, liturgy is what we, as Christians, are supposed to do.



The Orthodox faith differs from Western Christian traditions. Our faith is based upon participation in the energies of God, rather than upon our own knowledge of Him. Of course, we use the expression “knowing God”; however, what this means is something more than knowing about God, for “even the demons believe, and shudder.” (Jam. 2:19)

“It is not by faith that you will come to know Him, but by love, not by mere conviction, but by action. John the Evangelist is my authority for this statement. He tells us that ‘anyone who claims to know God without keeping His commandments is a liar.’ Consequently, the Lord immediately also adds: ‘As the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for My sheep.’ Clearly, He means that laying down His life for His sheep gives evidence of His knowledge of the Father, and the Father’s knowledge of Him. In other words, by the love with which

He dies for His sheep, He shows how greatly He loves the Father.” (St. Gregory the Dialogist of Rome)

## PARTICIPATION

Discuss important life issues with your parents.

Recognize the importance and presence of life issues in many of your daily and ongoing decisions.

Partake of the sacraments with an understanding of their life-giving purpose and meaning.

Visit the web sites for *Come Receive the Light* world-wide Orthodox radio program headquarters, Ft. Lauderdale, FL: <http://www.receive.org/>.

Read pertinent selections from the Bible.

Read pertinent selections from *My Orthodox Prayer Book*.

Read from books on Orthodox moral issues.



“Christ is risen from the dead,  
trampling down death by death,  
and upon those in the tombs  
bestowing life.”