

**THE EASTERN**  
**123: April 2020**

**ЦЕРКОВЬ СВТ. ИОАННА**  
**ST JOHN'S RUSSIAN**  
**Military Road, Colchester,**

**His Holiness Kyrill, Patriarch**  
**Russias**

**Most Rev. Metropolitan**  
**the Church Outside Russia**

**Rt. Rev. Bishop Irenei, Bishop of London and Western Europe**

**[www.orthodox-europe.org](http://www.orthodox-europe.org)**



**ORTHODOX No**

**ШАНХАЙСКОГО**  
**ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
**Essex CO1 2AN**

**of Moscow and All the**

**Hilarion, First Hierarch of**

The Church of St John of Shanghai, built in 1855, is the largest Russian Orthodox church building in the British Isles and is attended by 3,000 Orthodox of 24 nationalities, with some 100 baptisms per year. It is a parish of the East of England Orthodox Church Trust (Charity No: 1081707), part of the Russian Orthodox Church, comprising Colchester, Norwich, Wisbech and Bury St Edmunds, looking after faithful Orthodox in the East of England.

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**Youtube:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rE2T2sYTy8s>

**Website:** [www.orthodoxengland.org.uk](http://www.orthodoxengland.org.uk)

**Расписание Богослужений / Timetable of Services**

Ввиду кризиса мы пока ещё не знаем когда мы сможем служить нормально и ждём указа Владыки. В настоящее время клир служит за закрытыми дверьми. Можно исповедываться и причащаться дома. Священники приносят вам причастие.

Given the crisis we still do not know when we will be able to do the services normally and we are waiting for Vladyka's decree. At the moment the clergy are serving behind closed doors. You can have confession and communion at home. The priests will bring you holy communion.

**Dates for Your Diary / Важные Даты**  
**Patronal Feast: Saturday 4 July**

**Престольный праздник: Суббота 4 июля**

**Baptisms in March**

1 March: Maria Ichim

1 March: Igor Guscin

8 March: Theodore Gherorghiasa

**Church News – VERY IMPORTANT!**

On 4 July, which is our patronal feast, God willing, Vladyka together with an old friend, Bishop Alexander of Vevey, will consecrate our church – we have been waiting for this moment for ten years, so this is a very important event for us. Another new reader will also be tonsured and other events will also occur, God willing. We are expecting many guests from many places.

**PARALYZED ICONOGRAPHER SERGEI  
KOZLOV: “MY DISABILITY IS AN  
INVALUABLE GIFT FROM ABOVE”**

*Galina Minakovo*



## **An accident ...**

Sergei is totally paralyzed except for his head, neck and shoulders. By our hero's own admission, nothing remained for him but to learn how to do something with the muscles that still had some potential for movement. This desire proved to be enough to find his calling in life. His sole chance to maintain contact with the world was via the computer, and his old friend Igor Sitnikov, now living in Canada, encouraged him to paint icons. His friend's idea found a place in his heart, and besides, he had always drawn well, although, admittedly, it is hard to imagine with what difficulty Sergei could do this!

“With the help of my shoulder joint I can manage my disobedient right hand, laying it on my computer mouse.”

“To paint one icon takes between three and five weeks, with twelve to sixteen hours of work a day. My icons are painted with the help of special artistic programs, subject to, naturally, the Orthodox canons. Of course, I wouldn't be able to do all this on my own, if not for my partners from the guild. Besides me, there are a few other people, including a carpenter and graphic designer. We have worked together since 2008. People who order icons from us say they bear a special grace.”

“I want to emphasize that I have no merits in this, except for [patience](#),” says Sergei, sharing the secrets of his skill.

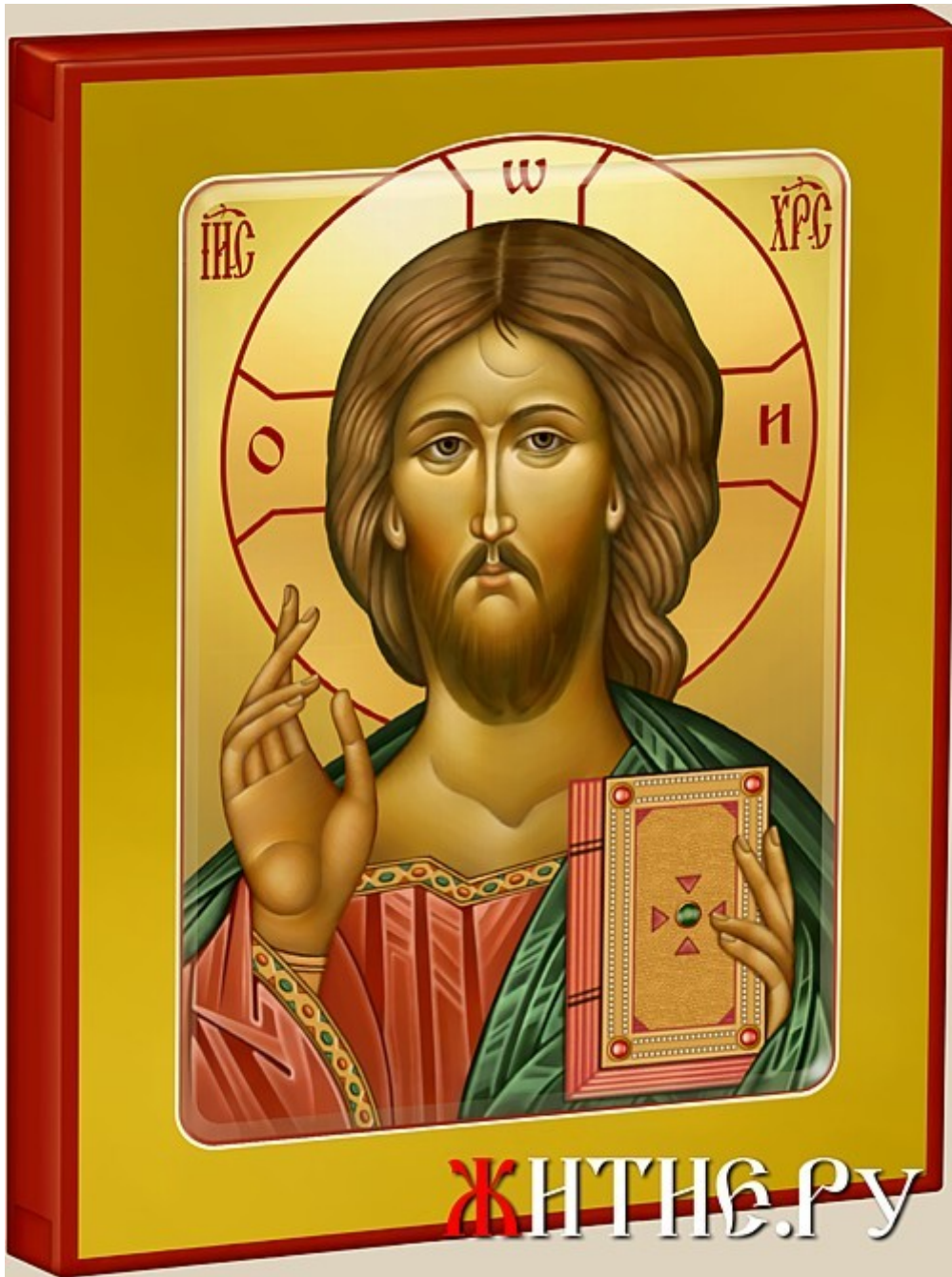
Another of Sergei's brainchildren is his own site, <http://gitie.ru/>, which has one of the highest ratings among Orthodox sites. If you ask Kozlov how he manages to do all this, he answers with the Russian saying: "When you're bored you can do all kinds of work!"<sup>[1]</sup>

## **Before and After**

Listening to Sergei's story, I caught myself thinking that his story shocked me to the depths of my soul. Of course it would seem so, with such a feeble body but such a powerful spirit! For us, the healthy and carefree, everything is different. It seems to me that this young man, entirely dependent on outside help and compassion, is truly an example for us all—an example of how to live, not feeling sorry for yourself; how not to whine, overcome daily pain, and to bless God for every trial sent to us. It's not Sergei who needed to talk to me but me who needed to communicate with him, to understand how it's possible to live and even create, being bedridden, when life itself seems to have lost all meaning. To live, and not grumble about your circumstances. To enjoy every day, do all within our power for our neighbors... But Sergei doesn't just live; he supports himself in life and also helps his neighbors. Caught in a difficult situation, he became a deeply believing man. After all, that he is even still alive is itself a true miracle. With such injuries as Sergei had you just don't survive. Seven cervical vertebrae were cracked into splinters, tearing up his spinal cord. It's the same as having your head torn off.

Here we need a small digression. I knew Sergei from school (we were in the same grade). Many of my girlfriends were in love with him. Tall, handsome, blue eyes... We girls sensed then nobility and a generous soul in him.

Not so long ago, unaware of the drama happening in Sergei's life, I asked a mutual friend: "How's Kozlov?" and I heard: "He's paralyzed. He had an accident diving into a river..."



*A sample of Sergei's work*

This is how his classmates remember him:

**Svetlana Andreeva:**

“In school Sergei was an active, happy, fun-loving guy. Incidentally, he also drew very well. Basically all the girls liked him. And of course! He was so handsome—tall and handsome. He got married very early, ahead of all our male classmates.”

### **Tatiana Lazareva (Prokopova):**

“I can say only good things about Sergei Kozlov. I remember his infectious laugh, how he ‘neighed’ to the whole class and everyone roared with laughter...”

### **The fateful fall...**

It happened in 2002, by some mystical confluence of circumstances, on July 7, the day of St. John the Baptist. Legend has it that on this day mermaids gather young men into their kingdom. On the same day the Orthodox Church celebrates the [Nativity of St. John the Forerunner](#) and Baptist of the Lord. And now it is Sergei Kozlov’s second birthday... Such sad thoughts were spinning around in my head when I spoke with Serezha. I sat and listened, and he daunted me with every phrase:

“God forbid that I should return to the state in which I lived for thirty years,” he said unexpectedly. “I am thankful to Him that this happened to me.”

“Serezha, do you remember that fateful day?”

“I remember it like it was yesterday. Some friends and I went to the Bityug River. As usual, it was noisy and fun—just some pleasant, non-committal hanging out. Of course, no one was thinking of anything bad. We were at the river for five or seven hours and were planning to leave when I decided one last time to dive from the shore, as I had done many times. The next second I felt impact with the bottom, and a loud crack ringing in my ears. At that moment I had the thought: ‘I need to swim to the top, and figure out everything up above.’ And then I realized—my body was not listening to me. Slowly sinking to the bottom of the river, I couldn’t help but admire the underwater life. Looking at the bright greens and the fish frolicking in them, I suddenly perceived that I needed to take a breath—and that breath is now the most important event in my miserable life. My friends were gathering their things to go home just then, and no one was watching after me. By the time they remembered me twenty minutes already had passed. By that time it was a blue corpse they took from the river. The spectacle, of course, was not for the fainthearted. At that moment my friends were panicking. No one knew exactly what to do. Just imagine—the human brain can go without

oxygen no more than five minutes, and after seven minutes it dies. In my case about twenty minutes went by. When finally they began to do CPR on me, trying to bring me back to life, no one suspected that anything was wrong with my body. Who knew that I had broken vertebra? And that to touch someone in such a situation is extremely dangerous? Frantically trying to save me from death, my friends were unaware that splinters from my vertebra were permanently mutilating my spinal cord.”

“You don’t blame your rescuers?”

“What?! It was God’s providence. No, I don’t blame those who saved me at all. Until the end of my life I will be grateful to them, because they forced the water out of my lungs, and I would now be living at the bottom of hell. From my first breath then I received a new birth. The Lord gave me another chance to reevaluate my life.”



*Photo: gitie.ru*

### **A premonition of trouble...**

“Many people say that just before some tragic event in their lives they have a premonition of trouble, experiencing inner discomfort and inexplicable anxiety. Such a feeling, that the soul feels something ahead of time, is very difficult to explain with words. Sergei Kozlov’s story is no exception. According to him, there was a horrible premonition. A sense of expectation of those terrible events did not leave the heart of Tatiana Ilychina—Sergei’s mother. She felt an inexplicable agitation; her soul was tossed about, not finding any rest, until they wrote to her that her son had had an accident. Sergei himself had a similar feeling. The day before they

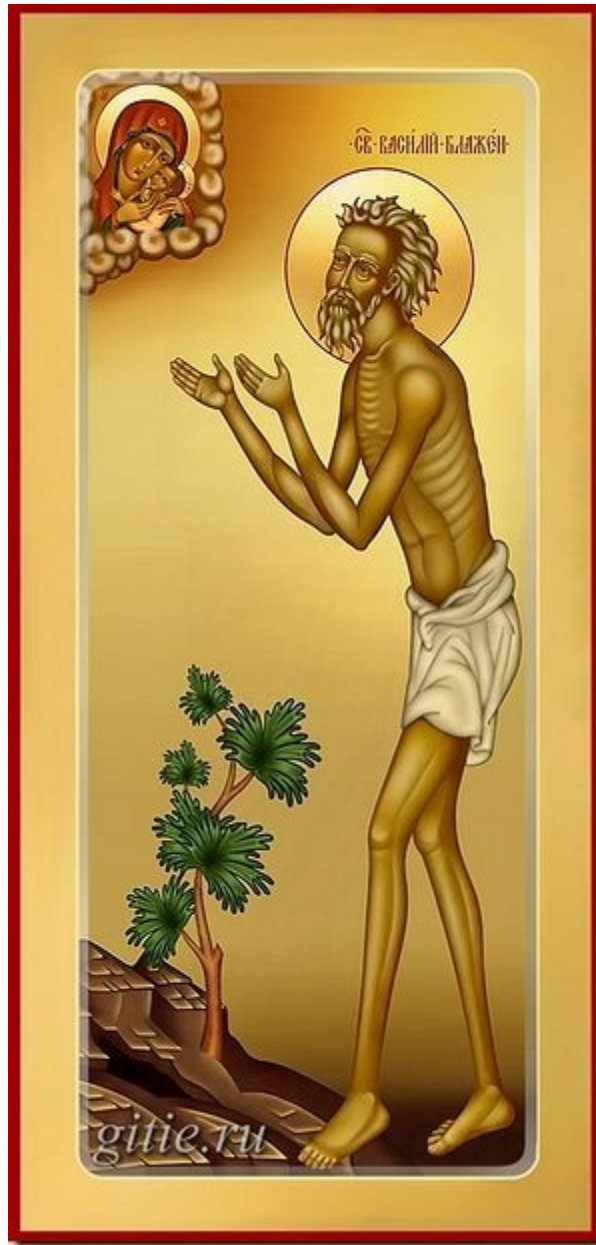
had buried his friend, and before this planned trip to the river Kozlov saw his departed friend in a dream.

“It was on the border between sleep and waking—I opened my eyes and I saw my friend Sergei’s huge face, who had tragically died in a car accident a few days before. For some reason Sergei smiles at me, and then suddenly rushes into some unknown distance, and, finally, disappears into the darkness. It was an amazing vision—I didn’t know what to make of it, but I felt that it’s somehow connected with the subject of death,” Sergei said, sharing his recollections.

He is convinced that death does not come abruptly—it always gives signs of itself, and man feels it. It’s a primal, inexplicable fear. A little later Sergei would again call to the lady in black, staring her in the eye more than once...

**“No electricity comes through a broken cable”**





*Sergei's icon of St. Basil the Fool-for-Christ*

After being miraculously saved, Sergei had to endure, in his expression, “real torments of hell in my own body,” as no one gave him any hope that he would live. When Kozlov was loaded unconscious into an ambulance, the doctors had no hope for a favorable outcome. On the road to the hospital he howled like a wild beast. The pain was unbearable. Even less comforting was the medics’ prognosis: “He has a few hours left to live.” They told Sergei’s mother right away that she should prepare for his funeral, explaining that such a trauma is fatal. But the night passed, and Sergei lived. They moved him to another hospital. He regained consciousness just as two young doctors were discussing his fatal trauma. “What happened to me?” Sergei asked with difficulty. Silence was the answer.

The first operation lasted seven hours. It seemed like an eternity to his family. And again—no encouraging prognoses. It stretched into horrible weeks and months. Literally every day he had to fight for his life, watching as people with similar traumas were dying.

“A month later, I turned into a mummy—at a height of 6’ 3””, my weight was eighty-eight pounds,” Sergei recalls about that time.

Then his attending doctor decided on another operation. It also lasted seven hours, only practically without anesthesia, because strong anesthesia would have led to cardiac arrest.

“I felt it as they hollowed out the damaged parts of my spine through my opened neck with a hammer and chisel and replaced them with new ones; how they carved the bone tissue out of my hip,” Sergei recalled.

The details are not for the fainthearted... Just imagine—Sergei clinically died three times during his operation! He kept dying and returning to life.

“It was like I left my body and saw myself from outside when they saved me again. I’ll remember this state of lightness and weightlessness my whole life. I was shown what man truly is, that in reality our bodies are just visible shells, temporary dwellings for the soul. [2] For me it was a kind of consolation, given by God.

Then there was another operation, and another, and another, but they didn’t change anything.

“For five years I worked hard on my body with a masseuse and a medical gymnast, but, as you know, no electricity comes through a broken cable. Then I came to the conclusion that a multifunctional bed is precisely what I’d been dreaming of all my life,” Sergei concluded, serious or joking.

He’s been lying in bed since then—his reckless youth, early marriage, and divorce remaining in his past. Now his mother is always with him, and his visitors, his beautiful daughter Yana, his comfort and joy, who gave him his beloved grandchildren Ilya and Ivan. Today these remarkable tots fight amongst themselves for the right to distract their young grandpa from his work.



*A happy couple ordered Sergei's icons for their wedding. Photo: gitie.ru*

### **“Health is a gift, but sickness is a priceless gift!”**

When everything is good and smooth like butter we barely remember the Most High; rather, we are more ready to believe in our own importance than in Him. But should any of us be faced with difficulties, stumble, lose our loved ones or become seriously ill, we immediately remember the higher powers, clumsily asking the Lord for a miraculous healing or comfort. Human nature is so ordered: We do not protect what we have, but we weep when it's lost...

According to Sergei, he always felt the presence of his guardian angel nearby:

“With delight and pride I told my friends about it. I loved to reflect upon [Holy Scripture](#), but in reality, I was in no rush to allow God into my heart. Only my accident spiritually healed me. I felt that the Lord is near.”

Every day in his prayers Sergei thanks God that He didn't allow him to drown, and saved his soul. Deeply believing, he, it seems, has acquired peace of soul.

“It is my air—now I breathe by Him. It is my path along which I walk, and I have no right to leave it,” he shared with me. Hope that his earthly sufferings will not be eternal, and that his soul, like an angel, will soar with ease into Heaven, gives him strength.

“And what now do you ask God for, Sergei?”

“I always ask Him for one thing—that He would forgive my sins. What else can I ask for? I don’t ask for a better lot. The meaning of my life is now to worthily exit into the other world. I do not fear death, as I have stared it in the face more than once. We are all mortal. But the question is, how will we die? There’s no other way for us but repentance. No *podvigs* are required from us—only to learn to gratefully accept all sorrows and sickness from God, which He sends us for the salvation of our souls.”

“How do you manage not to complain about your circumstances?”

“In general, despondency is a great sin. As I already said, it is necessary to thank the Lord for all sends us. Then everything will be seen to be relative. We complain that we have periods of throbbing back pain; but, thank God, the pain goes away. And I’m already accustomed to living with constant pain. I remember only twice being awakened because the pain had left, and even then it only lasted three minutes at the most. I woke up because I had no pain, do you understand? There was a moment when I thought, ‘Am I alive?’ That’s how unusual this feeling was—like in a dream where I am always healthy. In real life I just lie in bed, and in another—I’m running on my feet. Basically, I accept what happened to me as my due. It is my cross. I moved towards it my whole conscious life, not finding any peace in my former worldly life. I wanted to devote myself entirely to some beloved work, holding nothing back. But I found no such thing. My soul was tossed about until what happened happened. But I can’t just lie here. I realized that I had to somehow provide for myself, to at least earn money for my own medicine. I couldn’t just depend on my parents! I began to look on the internet for a way to occupy myself. And there the field is unplowed—just pick something and do it! I began with Photoshop. I took orders for touching up old photos. Here again you need artistic skill, and from childhood I had drawn pretty well, so I had to recall some nearly forgotten skills. They came in handy later when I began to explore a special program for drawing icons. I had finally found my beloved work. A wise man once said: ‘Health is a gift, but sickness is a priceless gift!’ The difference is unmatched—the feeling of spiritual peace instead of worldly vanity—the constant presence of God instead of the enemy of mankind.”

It seems Sergei has only one regret—the daily hassle he brings his mother. She is ready, together with her son, to walk this path to the end; for “where your heart is—there will be love.” Love, supported by their faith in God.

\* \* \*

The following video (in Russian) from [Sergei Kozlov’s site](#) gives a glimpse into his unique work process:

*Galina Minakovo*  
*Translated by Jesse Dominick*

*The Pier*

*1/17/2017*

[1] “на все руки от скуки.”

[2] What Sergei says here is true of man in his fallen state, in which the soul will eventually depart from the body and the body will die. However, this does not mean that the body is not an essential element of what it means to be human.

## КАК УСПОКОИТЬСЯ ВО ВРЕМЯ КОРОНАВИРУСА

*Дмитрий Семеник*

*История с коронавирусом конечна. Она в основном закончится через несколько месяцев или пару лет. Но за это время многие потеряют физическое или душевное здоровье не от вируса, а от паники, от чрезмерной тревоги, которой они поддались. Как не поддаться?*



## **Кто и почему паникует**

В этот период тревога становится опасно высокой у тех людей, у кого она и до этого была повышена. Если вы привыкли тревожиться о близких, о различных опасностях, если тревога доставляла вам много неприятных минут, значит, вы – тревожный человек.

Почему тревожных людей много, а универсального ответа на вопрос «как победить тревогу» нет?

Потому что тревога – это не какое-то самостоятельное заболевание. Подобно тому, как высокая температура – симптом множества различных заболеваний, тревога – симптом множества различных психологических проблем. Чтобы справиться с тревогой, необходимо диагностировать ту психологическую проблему, которая является источником тревоги именно у тебя, и дальше уже провести соответствующие этой проблеме психотерапевтические мероприятия.

Решить проблему повышенной тревожности в корне вполне реально, но, конечно, эта статья написана не для того, чтобы просто сказать вам: ищите психолога.

## **Тревога и бесы**

Лично мне очевидно, что территория психологии – это не какая-то параллельная реальность, свободная от действия обычных духовных законов. Если у человека повышена тревожность, это не значит, что он страдает только от психологических проблем, а сам безгрешен.

Конечно, нет! Все душевное тесно связано с духовным, и бесы никогда не упускают тех возможностей мучить человека, которые им открывает его психологическое несовершенство. Поэтому и в механизме тревоги они активно участвуют, атакуя человека теми самыми навязчивыми мыслями, которые так сильно беспокоят тревожных людей в этот период:

- Не заболею ли я в тяжелой форме?
- Не заболеют ли в тяжелой форме мои близкие?
- Не потеряю ли я работу?
- Смогу ли я покупать продукты?
- Смогу ли я выплачивать кредит?

### **Сопротивляться тревоге – значит не унижать себя подчинением обману бесовскому**

Поэтому сопротивляться тревоге стоит не только потому, что тревожиться – это мучительно и вредно для здоровья, но и для того, чтобы не унижать себя подчинением обману бесовскому и не злорадовать демонов. (Слово «радость» едва ли к ним применимо.)

Помните, что для навязчивых мыслей характерно то, что они всегда лживы. Ложь – орудие сатаны. Не доверяйте этим мыслям! Рассуждайте так: если лжецы внушают мне это, значит, скорее всего ничего такого не случится.

## **Тревога и неизвестность**

Любая тревога всегда опирается на неизвестность. Если бы мы сейчас могли прочитать в интернет-изданиях 2022 года всю статистику смертей и экономического ущерба от эпидемии, которая к тому времени закончится или будет угасать, мы бы сразу успокоились. Даже если окажется, что жертв в масштабах человечества будут миллионы, что вполне вероятно.

Но на данный момент возможны варианты, и поэтому воображение с помощью бесов рисует нам какие-то неясные, но почему-то очень-очень страшные угрозы.

В психологии есть такой прием борьбы со страхами – представить, что произошло самое худшее из того, что могло произойти. Этот способ можно применить и здесь. Постарайтесь определить, чего именно вы боитесь в связи с эпидемией, и представьте, что это произошло в самом-самом худшем варианте. Например.

- Эпидемия продлилась не полгода, а два года.
- На планете умерло 5 миллионов человек (в основном пожилых).
- Отошел к Богу кто-то из ваших пожилых родственников.
- Вы потеряли работу (потом нашли другую, менее оплачиваемую).
- Вам пришлось питаться только рисом и хлебом, и вы два года не ездили на море.
- Вы не смогли оплачивать кредит (но банк дал отсрочку).

И, представив все это, смиритесь с этим. Вам станет намного легче.

### **Информационная диета**

Но если после этого вы снова полезете в интернет смотреть очередные «новости эпидемии», вариться в этом котле фактов, слухов и паники, то здоровое, мирное состояние вновь покинет вас и вы снова начнете тревожиться.

Для людей с повышенной тревожностью в этот период абсолютно необходимо жесткое ограничение количества потребляемых новостей! Скажем, два раза в день, каждый раз не более 10 минут.

Поскольку соцсети переполнены этим, не получится себя ограничивать в новостях и слухах, если не ограничить себя в соцсетях. А для этого вам стоит найти себе другие занятия. Чтение книг, забота о близких или не очень, какие-то развивающие курсы... – есть масса полезных занятий, которые не только отвлекут вас от тревожащей суеты, но и принесут конкретную пользу и успокоят вас. И доставят удовольствие!

### **Смирение и доверие к Богу**

Во многих странах закрыты храмы, у нас введены профилактические меры на богослужениях. Нельзя исключить вероятности того, что даже у нас, в России, в случае расширения эпидемии посещение храмов может быть ограничено на некоторое время.



Значит ли это, что Бог побеждается какой-то злой силой, которая на наших глазах вопреки воле Божией овладевает планетой и человечеством? Подобно черному-черному покрывалу, которое окутывает голубую-голубую планету?

Конечно, нет! Все происходит и будет происходить по воле Божией. А значит, на благо человечеству.

В чем заключается это благо, мы с вами не знаем. Но можно не сомневаться, что, как обычно, когда Господь совершает что-то масштабное, польза будет многообразной.

Например, меня удивляло, почему Бог позволяет медицине совершать такие успехи. Хотя и отдельным болезням, например раку, Он тоже позволяет делать большие успехи, все-таки средняя продолжительность жизни в развитых странах увеличивается, что явно приводит к кичению атеистов, которые воображают, что власть над жизнью и смертью – в руках человеческих. И вот теперь данное заблуждение будет поколеблено, и некоторые вспомнят о Боге.

### **Смиренно переносить испытания легко - потому что так мы доверяем любви и всемогуществу Господа**

Так будем же смиряться перед этим бедствием как перед рукой Божией. Смиренно переносить все легко – гораздо легче, чем терпеть, потому что мы доверяем любви и всемогуществу Того, Кого видим источником этих событий.

Мы знаем, что, как бы ни был велик масштаб бедствия, внимания и силы нашего Отца достаточно для каждого из нас. А значит зло либо не коснется нас, либо те испытания, которые мы переживем, будут полезны для нас.

### **Каждый за себя?**

Часто людям с повышенной тревожностью свойственна некоторая враждебность – у этих явлений одни и те же корни. В этот период враждебность может выражаться в ощущении, что перед нами стоит задача выжить вопреки действиям окружающих людей. Вместо них. В магазинном бою урвать свой рулон туалетной бумаги или пачку риса. На работе не быть уволенным – пусть лучше уволят других. А если придется лечь в больницу, чтобы аппарат ИВЛ достался тебе (твоему родственнику), а не кому-то чужому.

Людей, имеющих шаткое материальное положение, может обуревать зависть к тем, у кого положение более стабильное, и ощущение, что ты самый уязвимый из всех, а потому должен действовать более решительно, агрессивно, а может быть, даже не

совсем честно, чтобы урвать свой кусок материального благополучия. Такие люди и являются двигателями паники.

У многих нервозность, связанная с ситуацией, проявляется во враждебном поведении в соцсетях.

Но враждебность, агрессия только усугубляют наше психологическое состояние и подогревают тревогу. А успокаивает нас, наоборот, здоровый коллективизм. То есть понимание, что все мы на одном корабле и каждый должен заботиться не только о себе, но и обо всех. Уверен, что людям, которые сейчас заботятся о бабушках в своем подъезде, хорошо и мирно на душе.

Сейчас самое время стать добрее и внимательнее к чужим людям. И вспомнить, что для нас, христиан, ближним является всякий человек, с которым мы соприкасаемся.

Нужно это в первую очередь нам самим.

### **Активная духовная жизнь**

У некоторых людей тревога может достигать до такой степени, что страдает даже духовная жизнь. Человек так погружен во все эти новости, их переживание и связанные с ними панические действия, что ему и молиться некогда.

Возможна и другая крайность: молитва вроде продолжается, но она превратилась в вопль тревоги: «Спаси!.. Помоги!.. Убереги!..»

**Вопль тревоги не является молитвой! Вспомним наставление:  
«Пребывай беспечальным при твоём Господе»**

Но вопль тревоги не является молитвой! Вспомним, что сказал кто-то из святых: «Пребывай беспечальным при твоём Господе». То есть когда мы действительно молимся, мы сознаем, с Кем говорим, доверяем Ему свою жизнь и жизни близких и помним о суетности всего земного. Поэтому, когда мы начинаем молиться, тревога, если и была, уходит.

Конечно, в это время не стоит терять свою духовную жизнь. Стоит, наоборот, ее усилить. И не забывать, что мир души – это признак и плод правильной духовной жизни.

Сейчас мы и наша духовная жизнь проходим испытание. Чего мы стоим, и чего стоит наша вера?

Отличный момент стать более полноценным христианином и более совершенным человеком!

*Дмитрий Семеник, психолог*

*30 марта 2020 г.*