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The Deification of Man: St. Gregory Palamas and the Orthodox Tradition (Contemporary Greek Theologians Series , No 2)

Georgios I. Mantzaridis

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Focusing on the 'new man'; in Christ, this excellent study sets forth the theological and anthropological basis for the doctrine of deification as expounded by St. Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), the greatest theologian of the later Byzantine period. Professor Mantzaridis states: Man's true life springs from his participation in the life of God and his communion with Him. As the spirit of man infuses life into the body through its life-giving virtue, so the Spirit of God endows man with godlike existence through His grace and glory. He explains that for Palamas and the Fathers, The term 'spiritual' does not denote an abstraction, but characterizes the new man, born through the regenerative grace of the Holy Spirit. As the man is called rational who is endowed with reason, so the man who is enriched by the grace of the Holy Spirit is described as spiritual. This grace constitutes the chief aspect of the existence of the spiritual man and it bestows on him true life. By exploring the sacramental, ecclesiological and moral implications of deification in Palamas' works, Mantzaridis relates this essential theological concept in a concrete way to the life of each person in the Church.

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