



Lord Have Mercy

During the Divine Liturgy and the other services of the Church there are series of petitions directed to God. In these petitions we find prayers for all of God's creation. Many times, however, we forget to take notice of the response to most of these petitions.

Each of these things that we ask God is followed by the phrase, "Lord have mercy." When we hear this, we can then ask the questions, what does this phrase mean and why do we say it so many times?

In asking God to have mercy on us we are asking Him to express how much he loves us. We acknowledge that we sin and do not always do the things that God wants us to do. With these words we ask Him to look past such sinful things and to forgive us.

In saying, "Lord have mercy," we are recognizing God's greatness. We cannot forget that He is our creator and that He has power over us. A way to understand this is to think of a king in medieval times. When a member of his kingdom had done something wrong, he was brought before the king. The person was either granted a pardon by the king, or he heard the words, "off with his head."

We know God loves us and that if we ask Him, He will forgive us when we sin. We must realize, however, that He still has the power to say, "off with their heads." This makes God's mercy for us so much more meaningful and important in our lives. For this reason we continually ask Him to, "Lord have mercy."