Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

September 8, 2019

**“The Beginnings of Faith”**

**I. Prince Rurik the Viking and the Origins of Rus**

In the 6th and 7th centuries, there were three major branches of \_\_\_\_\_\_ tribes. The East Slavs occupied much of the Russian heartland and Ukraine, together with parts of modern-day Belarus. The South Slavs occupied much of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ peninsula, while the West Slavs were based in what is now Poland. Consequently, the ethnic make-up of Russians today, while predominantly Slavic, also includes Finnish, Scandinavian, Turkic and Baltic elements. Slavs a term derived from slovo, meaning “\_\_\_\_\_\_,” denoting people who spoke the same language. The most important god in Eastern Slavic paganism was Perun, the God of Thunder, who may be most closely compared to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Norse mythology, or \_\_\_\_\_\_ in the Greek pantheon. Slavic pagans also thought spirits inhabited lakes, rivers, and forests. In the 9th century, the Slavic lands began to be subjected to raids from the north by Varangians, eastern \_\_\_\_\_\_ who sought to establish a route to Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. They petitioned a group of Varangians known as the \_\_\_\_\_\_ in the following manner: “Our land is great and rich, but there is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in it. Come to rule and reign over us.” The foundation of the Russian state is said to have taken place in \_\_\_\_\_\_ with the arrival of the Varangian prince Rurik (862-79) in Novgorod. Over time greater numbers of Varangians followed and settled in Kiev, mixing and integrating with the local Slavic population. When Rurik died in 879 AD, his son Igor was still a young child and unable to take power. He left his realm to Oleg (879-912); Oleg gained control of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He proclaimed that Kiev would be his capital and the mother of all Russian cities, relegating Novgorod to a subordinate tribute-paying role. Oleg’s decision to move his capital southwards had significant implications for the Russian state. Not only was the land more fertile, but the city of Kiev was strategically located on the River Dniepr, which flows into the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Oleg also moved his center of power closer to Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire. The relationship with the Byzantine Empire became a key factor in the foreign policy of the Kievan Rus. Over the years Kiev and Constantinople would form a close trading relationship. To seal the treaty, the Greeks swore an oath on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ while the pagan Russians swore on their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to the god Perun. In 912, after further strengthening relations with the Byzantine Empire, Oleg died and was succeeded by Igor (912-45), Rurik’s son.

**II. Olga and Vladimir the Great Bring Christianity to Russia**

Upon his death, Igor left behind a young son named Svyatoslav (945-72). He was three years old when he became the Grand Prince of Kiev. Igor’s widow \_\_\_\_\_\_ was named regent for her young son. The Drevlians planned to invite Olga to marry Prince Mal, informing her that he had been a good prince and was wronged by the capricious Igor. Having successfully subdued the Drevlians and extinguished any prospect of further rebellion, Olga returned to Kiev. In 955 she went to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ where she was met by the Emperor Constantine VII. The Emperor was impressed by her beauty and wisdom and wished to make her his empress. Olga replied that she was still \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and would only agree to be baptized if the Emperor himself were to preside over the ceremony. She was duly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the Patriarch and the Emperor and was happy she became a Christian. When Constantine proposed marriage, however, Olga answered that since he was her godfather, the proposed marriage was \_\_\_\_\_\_ under Christian law. Upon her return to Kiev, Olga hoped to persuade her son and his subjects to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Christianity. Svyatoslav replied to his mother that Christianity would encourage his warlike race to become meek and humble. Svyatoslav was a formidable warrior, the Byzantines begged him to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fighting and accept tribute instead. Eventually, the Nomads sabotaged and killed him, turning his skull into a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ vessel for their chieftain. Vladimir (Svyatoslav’s son) gathered supporters from his distant brethren in Norway and in 980 embarked on a campaign to reclaim Kiev. Vladimir (980-1015) emerged as Grand Prince of Kiev. Like his father, Vladimir was a committed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and celebrated his victory by erecting idols of pagan gods both in Kiev and throughout his cities. Vladimir hoped to forge an alliance with the Byzantine Emperor Basil II by marrying his sister Anna. In order to marry the Greek princess Vladimir agreed to become a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and was baptized in the city of Kherson, a Greek city recently conquered from the Byzantine Empire. In the process, Vladimir sought to establish Christianity as his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the Greeks sent Orthodox priests to evangelize the Russian people. As ruler of Rus both in name and in fact, Vladimir achieved what his grandmother Olga attempted and failed at. Vladimir ordered the pagan idols to be broken and churches to be built in their place. Vladimir fell ill and died in 1015 and was canonized as Saint Vladimir.

**III. History of the Orthodox Church**

For the first five centuries the Russian Church was subordinate to Patriarch of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who appointed the head of Russian Church (Metropolitan) from among the Greeks. In 1051 Ilarion became the first non-Greek Metropolitan of Kievan Rus. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ became centers of religious and cultural life where chronicles and books were written and icons were created. Until the 13th century, Kiev was Metropolitan’s residence, then the Golden Horde invasions caused the residence movement to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in 1325. The enhancement of Moscow statehood against the defeat of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 formed the concept that later was referred to as “Moscow the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”. Russian Church declared itself the sole heir to the true teachings of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. At the end of the 16th century the Metropolitan received the status of independent Patriarch. The Patriarch started to play a significant role in the country’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. During the 17th century Russian Church was very actively involved in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ activities in Siberia, Karelia, and Kazan region. In the middle of the 17th century Patriarch Nikon launched reforms that were mainly targeted at the revision of liturgical books. The reforms resulted in a split in the church, and appearance of the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” movement. All clergy virtually became \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ officials. In 1917 Russian Church took advantage of the complicated political situation in order to enhance its \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the society. The Holy Synod remained, and the Supreme Church Council was organized. Having won in the Civil war, the Bolsheviks aimed at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of religion. Initially they adopted the decree on the complete separation of church and state. But, in fact, any kind of activity performed by clergy was taken as an incitement to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. A lot of clergy were repressed: shot or sent to Gulag. By 1939 the structure of the church was almost destroyed; there was no centralized government. During World War II the Soviet government was looking for additional incentives, so religious activities were made \_\_\_\_\_\_; a lot of churches were restored. In October 1941 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ via his personal representative stated that the provision of assistance to the Soviet Union directly depended on the attitude of the state towards the church.  However, the state tried to control it and did not allow its mass expansion. Clergy sometimes had to pay as much as \_\_\_\_\_\_ in taxes from their income. Church structures were put into even more rigid tax and legal frames; mass media promoted the image of religion as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. After Khrushchev’s resignation and until the 1980s the relations between the state and church remained rather stable. During Perestroika for the first time in many years, the number of new churches increased; almost all limitations on religious activity were cancelled; financial responsibilities of the church were weakened. The celebration of the 1000 anniversary of the Christianization of Rus’ in 1988 became a pivotal moment. For the first time people in the USSR were able to see live \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of church services.  The fact that in 1989 about 300 clergymen became members of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at various levels was a significant sign.

**IV. Ivan IV (The Terrible) 1530-1584**

In 1547, upon reaching adulthood, Ivan was crowned \_\_\_\_ of All Russia. Ivan was the first to appoint himself tsar, "\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_," in the European tradition of "emperor,". Such a title gave Russia and its ruler significant weight in the eyes of European monarchs. Ivan the Terrible was recognized emperor by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II from the House of Habsburg. Ivan carried on a long correspondence with Elizabeth and even asked for her hand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She declined the proposal but it was precisely at that time that Russia and England first began trading with each other. Ivan spent all his rule warring, trying to expand the country's territory. He defeated the Khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan, uniting them with Russia. He also appropriated the Volga and Urals and began exploring the vast lands of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But on the other hand, Russia lost the Livonian War (1558-1583) against Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and could not gain access to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Ivan sincerely believed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and generously donated to monasteries, even though priests were also killed on his orders. Educated, a good orator, with the help of Danish book printers in Moscow Ivan IV established the first printing house in Russia and required the clergy to organize schools to teach \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ how to read and write. At the same time, he was extremely cruel and vindictive, personally giving orders for the most sophisticated executions. Ivan died from a stroke while \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Bogdan Belsky in 1584. Upon Ivan's death, the Russian throne was left to his unfit middle son Feodor. Feodor died childless in 1598, ushering in the Times of Troubles.

**9/15 “The Church in the Time of the Tsars”**