

national hellenic FREE PRESS

VOL. 34

NO. 367

CHICAGO, IL.

FEBRUARY, 2016

Will the Real Christians Stand Up?

By: Louis A. Palivos

So let us go back to the early Christian Church to understand and to learn the beliefs and practices of the early Christians. Let us go back, say, from 95 A.D., to about 325 A.D. During this period of time, there were apologetic writings, writings against heresy and letters between churches. These Fathers/Writers were: Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, the Dedache (also called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles), the Epistle of Barnabas, Hermas, Papias, and Irenaeus (the disciple of Polycarp who was the disciple of the Apostle John). There were also the Apologists: Quadratus, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenogoras of Athens, Theophilus of Antioch and the Epistle of Dionysius.

These Fathers and Apologists wrote and lived based on the blueprint of Scripture. “Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” Acts 4:32.

First, the first worshippers sold lands and houses and brought the proceeds to the Apostles who distributed to anyone based on need. Acts 4:34-35. Barnabas had land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles’ feet. Acts 3:36. Jesus’ words were lived, “You cannot serve God and mammon.” Lk 16:13. Who are we serving today?

Second, these early worshippers believed that they were citizens of another kingdom and were separated from the world. In the words of Dionysios, “They dwell in their own countries as sojourners.” The early Christians were pilgrims and strangers in the world. Where are we today?

Third, they practiced unconditional love toward everyone, including their enemies. Justin Martyr wrote, “We used to hate and destroy one another and refused to associate with people of another race or country. Now, because of Christ, we live together with such people and pray for our enemies.” What *agape* do we practice?

Fourth, though they endured many forms of suffering, they persevered in their faith to the end. Polycarp had only to state, “Curse Jesus Christ,” and he would have been spared being torched alive. But he did not deny Jesus Christ.

Fifth, they believed in the nucleus of the family and they had a strong stance against abortion. What is now done with medical efficiency, the Romans and others practiced by strangling, abandoning or aborting. We need to pray for those who are making pro choice decisions.

Sixth, their strong belief in family did not sanction divorce; marriage was to the end of life.

Seventh, contrary to the Roman society, which used fashion and beauty aids, the worshippers were content with modest clothing. Clement remarked, “Luxurious clothing that cannot conceal, clinging close to the body is no covering at all. Such clothing, clinging close to the body, takes the body’s shape and adheres to the flesh. It outlines the woman’s figure, so that the whole shape of her body is visible to spectators, even though they cannot see the body itself... such clothing is meant for looking, not covering.” Do we change culture or has culture changed us?

Eighth, just what was proper leisure time and improper entertainment? Tertulian said, “How can it be right to *look* at things that are wrong to *do*?”

Ninth, the worshippers were ridiculed by the Romans for their belief in Divine Creation. What does the world think of Christians today who believe in Divine Creation? Do Christians today believe in Evolution, Creation or Theistic Evolution?

Tenth, the church leaders lived modestly and wore modest attire of the times. What do the church leaders wear today? Where do the church leaders live today? How do the church leaders live today? How blessed to have church leaders who **have gold crosses in their hearts and souls.**

Eleventh, the worshippers gained knowledge from the Old Testament Scripture, from the New Testament Writers (later canonized by the Church as the New Testament) and grace from the chain of the Apostles to their disciples and to their disciples. There were no seminaries, but life experience and living tradition.

(Continue p. 3)

THE BACK NINE

You know ... Time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is... The back nine of my life and it catches me by surprise....How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I was only on the first hole and the back nine was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting gray...they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change...Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we’d become.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it’s mandatory! Cause if I don’t on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!! But, at least I know, that though I’m on the back nine, and I’m not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it’s over on this earth...it’s over. A new adventure will begin! Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn’t done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I’m happy to have done. It’s all in a lifetime.

So, if you’re not on the back nine yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don’t put things off too long!! Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether you’re on the back nine or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!!

“Life” is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. LIVE IT WELL! ENJOY TODAY! DO SOMETHING FUN! BE HAPPY ! HAVE A GREAT DAY Remember “It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. LIVE HAPPY IN 2016!

LASTLY, CONSIDER THIS:

~Your kids are becoming you.....but your grandchildren are perfect!

~Going out is good.. Coming home is better!

~You forget names.... But it’s OK because some people forgot they even knew you!!!

~You realize you’re never going to be really good at anything like golf.

~The things you used to care to do, you aren’t as interested in anymore, but you really do care that you aren’t as interested.

~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV ‘ON’ than in bed. It’s called “pre-sleep”.

~You miss the days when everything worked with just an “ON” and “OFF” switch..

~You tend to use more 4 letter words ... “what?”...”when?”... ???

~Everybody whispers.

TODAY IS THE OLDEST YOU’VE EVER BEEN; YET THE YOUNGEST YOU’LL EVER BE, SO ENJOY THIS DAY WHILE IT LASTS

“Do Not Regret Growing Older. It is a Privilege Denied to Many.”

NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS

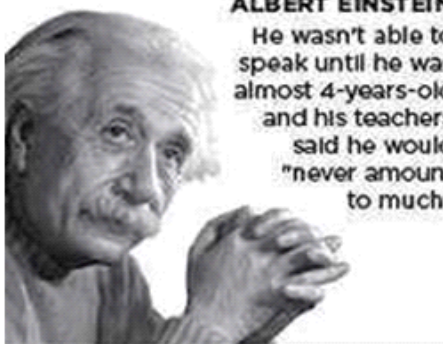
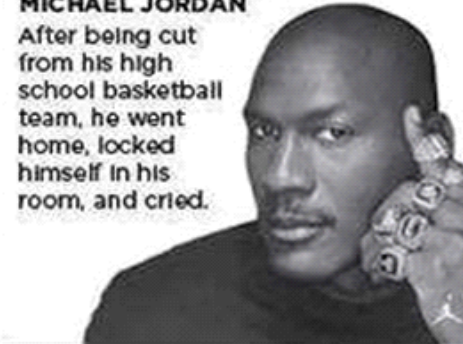

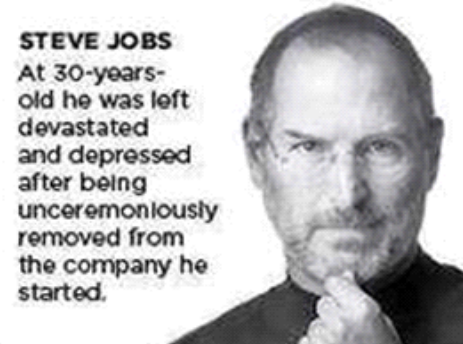


PUBLISHER
SOTIRIS REKOUMIS
EDITOR
DENISE REKOUMIS
LAYOUTS
JOHN REKOUMIS
CONTRIBUTORS

**DR. STAVROS BASSEAS, JOHN REKOUMIS,
DENISE REKOUMIS, DR JORDAN TSOLAKIDIS,
CHRIS MERENTITIS, CHARLES MOURATIDES**

THE PLATFORM OF THE GREEK PRESS

1. To applaud the achievements of our ethnic group
2. To support the ideas of the Hellenic-Christian tradition
3. To promote the preservation of the Greek language
4. To encourage all worthy Community causes
- 5 To assist all the Greek-American fraternal, cultural patriotic and religious organizations
6. To install Americanism in the Greek-American community
7. To advance the just causes of Hellenism.
8. To promote the ideals Greece has given to humanity.

FAMOUS FAILURES

 <p>ALBERT EINSTEIN He wasn't able to speak until he was almost 4-years-old and his teachers said he would "never amount to much"</p>	 <p>MICHAEL JORDAN After being cut from his high school basketball team, he went home, locked himself in his room, and cried.</p>
 <p>WALT DISNEY Fired from a newspaper for "lacking imagination" and "having no original ideas."</p>	 <p>STEVE JOBS At 30-years-old he was left devastated and depressed after being unceremoniously removed from the company he started.</p>
 <p>OPRAH WINFREY Was demoted from her job as a news anchor because she "wasn't fit for television."</p>	 <p>THE BEATLES Rejected by Decca Recording Studios, who said "We don't like their sound—they have no future in show business."</p>

**IF YOU'VE NEVER FAILED,
YOU'VE NEVER TRIED ANYTHING NEW**



Greek riot police fired tear gas on Sunday at demonstrators protesting against the development of a centre to house migrants on the tourist island of Kos, media reports said.

THE HELLENIC SOCIETY OF CONSTANTINOPLE



On January 24, 2016, The Hellenic Society of Constantinople in Chicago presented the film *The Cruel Night* to commemorate the 2015 60th anniversary of the Septemvriana. This powerful film directed and produced by Yorgos Mountevellis tells the story of the tragic events that led to and occurred on the fateful evening of September 6, 1955 into the early hours of September 7th in Istanbul, Turkey. With English narrative and black and white images from that night, the film explains how the Septemvriana brought on the last wave in a series of Greeks fleeing from their homeland of Constantinople to lands throughout the world.



The Hellenic Society of Constantinople was formed in Chicago in 1939 when a small group of women immigrants who had emigrated from Istanbul came to bind together in fellowship and to support those that they had left behind. The organization chose to remember the 60th anniversary of this pogrom because it is in keeping with their goal to support the religious freedoms of all people in Asia Minor including their Honorary member, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I. The President of the organization, Anna Harisiadis, welcomed the 125 in attendance at St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church in Niles, IL including Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos from the Metropolis of Chicago; Arlene Siavelis Kehl, National Philoptochos Society, First Vice President; Kathy Siavelis and Marilyn Tzakis, National Philoptochos Board Members; Pam Argiris, Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos President; and the many priests and Archons.



Corresponding Secretary for the organization, gave the opening remarks to preface the film and recounted the vivid, personal account of her mother who lived through that night. Before beginning the film, she reminded the

audience of the motto the Jewish community lives by, "Remember the past, Transform the future." Following the film presentation, His Grace, Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos offered a postscript to the film. He spoke of how far relations have come between the Turkish government and the Patriarchate since those days but of how much more progress still needs to be made.

Following the remarks, His Grace Bishop Demetrios blessed and served the Vasilopita and an impromptu chorus of Greek kalanda singing began with the chanters who were in attendance. The Hellenic Society of Constantinople welcomes everyone to learn about the Greeks who were from Constantinople and invites all to support those that remain in Istanbul including the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church. For more information or to join the organization, please check their website at www.hellenicsocietyofconstantinople.org.

**ΛΥΣΤΕ ΤΟ ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑ ΤΩΝ "ΠΑΡΑΣΙΤΩΝ" ΣΤΑ ΡΑΔΙΟΦΩΝΙΚΑ ΜΑΣ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΑ. ΑΚΟΥΣΤΕ ΜΑΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΚΟΜΠΙΟΥΤΕΡ ΣΑΣ ΠΕΝΤΑΚΑΘΑΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΛΙΣΤΑ 24 ΩΡΕΣ ΤΟ 24ΩΡΟ.
WWW.THECHICAGOGREEKHOURS.COM**

Debt of Governments Listed on Property Tax Bills, Treasurer Maria Pappas Says

The financial data and pension debt of every local government, school district or other taxing agency that taxes a home or other property in Cook County is listed on nearly 1.8 million bills mailed to property owners, County Treasurer Maria Pappas said today.

From seven to 20 taxing bodies levy taxes on a given property, and the bill for each property has a section called “Taxing District Debt and Financial Data.” In that section are four categories:

- * Money Owed by Your Taxing Districts
- * Pension and Healthcare Amounts Promised by Your Taxing Districts
- * Amount of Pension and Healthcare Shortage
- * Percentage of Pension and Healthcare Costs Taxing Districts Can Pay

Owners of taxable homes, businesses and land in the nation’s second-largest county can see the information on First Installment bills for Tax Year 2015 mailed by the Treasurer’s Office. The bills have a due date of March 1, 2016.

Pappas noted that even more financial information about local governments can be found by visiting her website, cookcountytreasurer.com, selecting “Want to see your local government debt?” and entering either the 14-digit Property Index Number for a piece of real estate or the name of a taxing district.

“Taxpayers have a right to know about the spending and debt incurred by those who tax them,” Pappas said. “We have designed a bill and website that do just that.”

The information comes from the county’s Debt Disclosure Ordinance (DDO), written by Pappas, which requires all primary local governments across Cook County to report their financial data yearly to the Treasurer’s Office.

To avoid late penalties of 1.5 percent monthly, Pappas said, taxpayers can pay on time before March 1 in four ways:

- * Online at cookcountytreasurer.com, from checking or savings accounts.
- * At 400 Chase Bank installations across Illinois.
- * By mail, in enclosed return envelopes postmarked no later than March 1.
- * Mortgage escrow (taxpayers should confirm payment with their mortgage-paying firm).

Will the Real Christians Stand Up?

(From page 1)

Twelfth, salvation had to be worked out in life until the end. Salvation was not a one-time matter. Only God saves but man must desire and continue to be saved.

How, then, did the early worshippers succeed, whereas today, we have problems that verge on apostasy? Basically, the answers are found in the above Father’s writings: there was a real supportive role of the Church; they lived the Scripture; they believed and practiced the message of the cross; and they understood that the path ahead was a synergistic effort of God and man.

We could learn more about the early practice of Koinonia, Liturgy (worship), baptism, church liturgia and the married life of worshippers and bishops, yes, the married life of bishops. “The bishop shall be the husband of one wife.” 1 Tim. 3:2. However, the Sixth Ecumenical Council, Canon XII, does not allow bishops to marry. So, which is the Holy Tradition?

Cyprian wrote, “Break a branch from a tree and when broke, it will not be able to bud. Cut off a stream of water from its source and it will soon dry up.” So, are we part of the tree? Are we part of the stream?

How challenging and humbling to contemplate the lives of the early Christians compared to our beliefs and practices today! Do we really stop to think of our brothers and sisters in Christ, today, this very moment, who are suffering, being beheaded, crucified, mutilated and raped? The Law slowly, like a vice, squeezing Christians worldwide and who suffered mass killings. Real martyrs who did not hurt a fly, going to eternity! What’s coming is not good, but let’s keep our faith to the end for eternal salvation far outweighs the suffering, pains and stings of this present life. The *Voice of the Martyrs* magazine continues to document thousands of horrific atrocities against Christians around the world, similar to the persecutions against the early Christians. The founder of *The Voice of the Martyrs*, Richard Wurmbrand, in his book, *Tortured for Christ*, wrote, “They (communist) broke four vertebrae in my back, and many other bones. They carved me in a dozen places. They burned and cut eighteen holes in my body.” Till he went to eternity, he suffered in joy. Why are Christians hated so much?

To the unbeliever(s) and to the backslider(s), please ask yourself, where will I be 122 years (outside the Bible, the longest living person on record) from now? To the believers, are we on the Way? Acts. 9:2. Guilty first.

PICTURES OF THE WORLD



Usually associated with a long-gone era, butlers are among Britain’s hottest commodities: half of those trained in the UK work abroad and the best easily earn \$150,000 or more.

When I Started Seeing Another Woman...

A little while ago I started seeing another woman. Actually, it was my wife’s idea.

“You know you love her” she told me one day, out of the blue.

“Life’s short, you should give her more of your time.”

“But I love you, dear.” I replied.

“I know, but you love her too...” she said.

This other woman my wife wanted me to see was my mother.

She has been a widow for a few years now, and because of work and my kids, I didn’t get to see her very often.

I called my mother that night and asked her to join me for a movie and some dinner.

“Did something happen? Is anything wrong?” she asked.

You see, my mother belongs to the generation that thinks that any phone call after 7pm can only mean bad news...

“I just wanted to invite you for dinner and a movie, just the two of us. What do you think?”

After a few second, my mother simply said: “I’d like that...”

I drove over the next evening after work to pick her up; it was a Friday night, and I had a feeling I haven’t had in a long time – the kind of nervousness you get before a first date.

When I got there, I saw that my mother was also excited and nervous.

She was waiting outside, wearing her beautiful old coat, her hair all done up and had the dress she wore for her and dad’s last anniversary on.

Her face was lit up with a bright smile.

“I told my girlfriends I’m going on a date with my son tonight and they were very excited for me!” She told me when she got in the car

The restaurant we went to was not the most fancy, but the staff was incredibly friendly.

My mother held my arm and looked like the first lady!

We sat down, and she asked me to read her the menu (“My eyes are not what they used to be” she said). Halfway through, I looked up and saw she was staring at me with a nostalgic smile on her face.

“When you were a child, I was the one who read you the menu.”

“Then allow me to return the favor, mom” I said.

We had a lovely conversation, not about anything in particular, just sharing what’s going on in our lives and eventually we spoke so much that the conversation just trailed off...

“I’ll go out with you again, but only if you let me pay next time!” my mother said.

When I dropped her at her house, I felt genuinely sorry to see her leave. I hugged and kissed her and told her how much I loved her.

When I came home later that night, my wife asked how the date went.

“It was wonderful, thank you for suggesting it!”

I looked at my wife and added “Much better than I could ever have imagined”.

A few days later, my dear mother passed away from a heart-attack. It was very quick and there was nothing anyone could do.

A short time afterwards, I got a letter from the restaurant we went to that last time.

“I’m quite sure that I won’t be able to make it to our next date, so you and your wife can enjoy each other’s company like I did with you. I paid for your next meal here in full and I want you to know just how much that night meant to me!

I love you,

Mother”

At that moment, I understood just how important it is that we let our loved ones know that we love them, and make sure we make time for them – we don’t know how long we’ll have them in our lives.

Nothing is more important in this life than family!

If your mother is still alive – appreciate her. If she isn’t – remember her.

You just might remind them to call their mother, because time is the one thing we can never get back...



"Happily Ever After"

- Located on Chicago's Beautiful North Shore • Accommodation for up 1000 guests
- 245 Hotel Guest Rooms • Chicago's famous Bar Louie onsite
- Professional Event Planners • Complimentary Parking & Valet Options
- On-site Catering • Private Bridal Rooms • Special Greek Packages



Locations in Skokie,
O'Hare, and Oakbrook

5300 W. Touhy Ave
Skokie, IL 60077
847-679-8900

sales@hiskokie.com
www.skokieconference.com

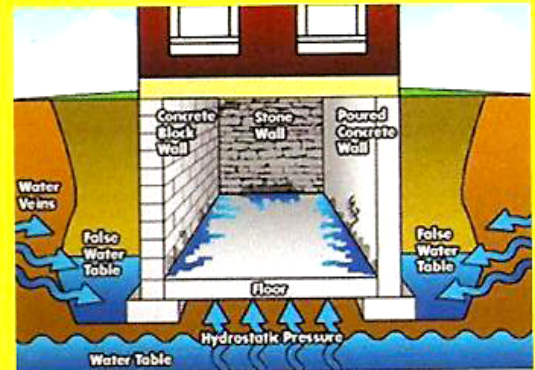
Basement Waterproofing Forever


basementdryforever.net basementdryforlife.com

- * FOUNDATION CRACK REPAIR EXTERIOR OR INTERIOR
- * DRAIN TILES INSTALATION
- * SUMP PUMPS & FLOOD CONTROL INSTALATION

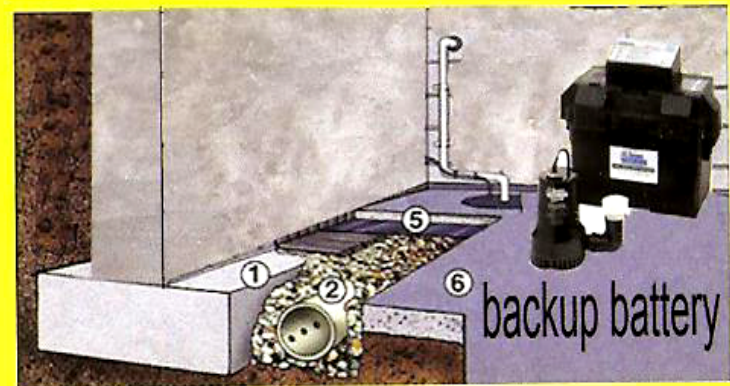
AVAILABLE MANY SATISFIED
CUSTOMER FOR REFERENCES

40 YEARS
EXPERIENCE



DRY QUICK 
773-878-5999

PUMPS, HUMIDEXS & BACK-UP
BATTERY SYSTEMS



Founded by Peter Parthenis Sr. in 1974 and still family-owned today, Grecian Delight Foods is proud of its rich Greek heritage. We manufacture and market top quality authentic Greek and specialty Mediterranean foods for the foodservice and retail industries. From the best gyro meats to Greek yogurt, hummus and fine pastries, people rely on Grecian Delight Foods' commitment to provide superior products made from the finest ingredients.

Grecian Delight Foods is always looking for candidates who strengthen our ability to grow and maintain the high standards of our customers. Our success is base on superior performance, competitive strategies, professional integrity, quality products and our people. We remain steeped in Greek tradition and encourage you to inquire about career opportunities. Please email your resume to jadelman@greciandelight.com

Ask for Grecian Delight Foods at your favorite Chicago restaurants and grocery stores!



**GYROS • HUMMUS • SPREADS • GREEK YOGURT • PITA • FLATBREADS
SHAWARMA • FALAFEL • MOUSAKA • PASTICHIO • BAKLAVA • AND MORE
847-364-1010 • www.greciandelight.com**

WE ARE 2.5% NEANDERTHAL

Thanks to a spot of prehistoric hanky-panky, many of us carry Neanderthal genes. I am 2.5% Neanderthal. That's according to a genetic analysis of snippets of my DNA. It is slightly less than the European average of 2.7%. I owe my part-Neanderthal nature to an accident of history. Thousands of years ago, modern humans ran into Neanderthals somewhere in Asia or Europe.



We don't know exactly what happened, but one way or another my ancestors had sex with members of another species. Quite possibly yours did too. We can see traces of these prehistoric

trysts in the DNA of everyone outside of Africa – and to a lesser extent, some people in Africa as well. We don't fully understand why Neanderthals went extinct, but in some of us small parts of them live on (Credit: Plailly/Daynes/SPL).The announcement that many of us have Neanderthal ancestry hit the headlines in 2010. The finding came as a surprise to many scientists. one of our ancestors not only got it on with a different species, they produced fertile offspring. We now know this happened more than once. What's more, the amount of Neanderthal DNA in Eurasians ranges from 1-4%. That means the fragments I carry may not be the same ones that you carry.

If we sequenced the genome of every living person, we might recover 30-40% of the Neanderthal genome. Because the Neanderthal DNA is scattered, we don't know much about what it is doing in any one individual. So my 2.5% doesn't mean all that much to me. But if we combine all our Neanderthal leftovers, we can start to see patterns, and that tells us what we can thank them for.

Neanderthal DNA was extracted out of this ancient fossil .

Some of our Neanderthal gene variants may predispose us to a collection of diseases and behaviours. For example, almost 80% of Eurasians have Neanderthal versions of the genes that create keratin filaments. Keratin is a protein used to strengthen our skin, hair and nails. We may have inherited so much because it could have helped toughen our skin as we adapted to the colder European environment.

Other Neanderthal genes that might be more significant. Some of our Neanderthal gene variants may predispose us to a collection of diseases and behaviours. These include lupus, Crohn's disease, type 2 diabetes and depression. Red hair may have been common among Neanderthals. However, this does not mean that modern humans with red hair have inherited it from Neanderthals.

Nowadays, people with red hair do have a mutation in the same gene, MCR1, but it's a different mutation.

It's conceivable that this predisposition to heavy smoking was passed down to me from a Neanderthal. But I don't have enough details to know this for sure.

Cosco aims to transform Piraeus into a key cruise port



Cosco Pacific is pushing for the inclusion of Piraeus in the plans of all major international cruise groups, and for its use as home port.

The aim of the Chinese company that won the tender for the acquisition of Piraeus Port Authority (OLP) is to swiftly develop the major potential of the Greek market and for Piraeus to emerge as one of the world's biggest cruise ports as early as next year.

To that end, as soon as it has undertaken OLP's management, Cosco will embark on infrastructure investments that will gradually reach up to (or even exceed) 135 million euros.

It is also beginning a consultation process with cruise groups such as Carnival, Royal Caribbean, MSC, Celestyal and others in mid-March in Florida, in the context of the industry's main annual exhibition, Cruise Shipping Miami.

Sources told Kathimerini that Cosco officials will be noting all of the cruise groups' remarks and demands that it is prepared to satisfy, with the aim of providing services and facilities that Piraeus has not supported to date. The consultation process is expected to be completed by July so that the foreign cruise operators will have all settled in Greece's main port over the course of 2017.

A Cosco source said, "Piraeus will roll out a red carpet to the groups which will support the project of turning the Greek cruise market into a giant." Market sources confirm the increased interest by foreign groups, and say the chances of them signing home porting agreements in the future are significant, although that will also depend on the state issuing the necessary licenses for local subsidiaries of the groups.

Ifantis Dental Care

John Ifantis, DDS, PC

9251 Waukegan Rd. Morton Grove, IL 60053

(847)663-0003

All that is good begins with a SMILE.

At Ifantis Dental Care, **your smile is our top priority!** Dr. Ifantis and his entire team of dental professionals is dedicated to providing you with the personalized, quality care that you deserve. When you visit Ifantis Dental Care you will experience all that modern dentistry has to offer , in one location. The dental care we provide includes a comprehensive list of general, restorative, cosmetic, orthodontic and periodontal services to meet the needs of the whole family, at an affordable price. Our goal is to assist each patient in achieving and maintaining long term dental health and a beautiful smile. Some of the services we provide include:

- Exams & Cleanings
- Extractions
- Fillings
- Root Canal Therapy
- Dental Implants
- Crowns & Bridges
- Braces
- Invisalign “clear braces”
- Veneers
- Teeth whitening
- Partial & Full Dentures
- Neuromuscular (jaw joint) treatment
- Snoring & Sleep Apnea treatment



Flexible financing options and easy pay plans are available. We cordially invite you to call for more information- (847) 663-0003 or send an email to whitenyourteethom@gmail.com

Visit us to find out why are patients refer us to their friends and family!

NEWS FROM GREECE

EU slows down on Greece aid as rule compliance trumps urgency

Greece’s next bite of bailout money may turn into a movable feast if Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras can’t convince euro-area authorities he’s making good on his promises.



“Everyone got used to the fact the reviews take longer,” Lithuanian Finance Minister Rimantas Sadzius said in an interview on Friday. “Everyone’s prepared to demand that agreements are implemented at 100 percent.”

European governments won’t rush through additional disbursements until Tsipras delivers on pledges to fix Greece’s pension system, update its labor markets and close fiscal gaps. A slow approach to resolving the nation’s financial needs has already pushed borrowing costs to levels not seen since last August and runs the risk of renewing last year’s conflict that nearly ended Greece’s membership in the euro area.

Greece may get 4 billion euros (\$4 billion) or more once the nation’s creditors complete a review of the most recent bailout, according to a euro-area official who asked not to be named because talks are ongoing. If Greece fails to unlock more funding it may face a cash crunch by the middle of the year.

Economic overhauls

The first evaluation of Greece’s 86-billion-euro aid program that was inked in August, which was supposed to conclude in February or early March, is now sitting in limbo. In an interview published Monday, ESM chief Klaus Regling told Le Figaro he thought the assessment could be “concluded before Easter” — without specifying whether he meant this year’s March 27 celebration in Rome or the Greek Orthodox Church’s May 1 observance.

Thousands of tractors have been blocking Greece’s motorways, bringing traffic to a halt, while the government said Monday that it will amend some of its proposed hikes to mandatory pension contributions, in an effort to stem social backlash. Officials representing creditor institutions have been assessing whether the debt-ridden country will deliver additional pension savings equal to 1 percent of its gross domestic product this year and achieve a primary budget surplus equal to 3.5 percent of its GDP by 2018.

Pension reform

For more money to flow, Greece needs to win support from both the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund before it can approach the euro area. The Brussels-based commission wants to keep chipping away at the incremental “milestones” the euro area has used to maintain day-to-day momentum, while the IMF has pressed for broader goals that will contribute to Greece earning a new bailout program from the Washington-based fund.

Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem said the IMF will come on board the new agreement, if “things are as they want it.” In an interview last week in Davos, Switzerland, he said creditors will look at how to manage “spikes” in Greece’s

repayment schedule as long as the nation delivers on its pension and other reform promises.

“The pension reform is one of the most important steps in the near term,” Sester said in an interview last week. “Its impact will be long term and it will certainly cause a lot of discussions in Greece. We can expect that.”

EU migration commissioner plays down threat of Schengen exit



European Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said on Friday that there is no possibility of any country being forced out of the Schengen area and declared himself confident that the Greek government would soon make the improvements needed to satisfy Brussels.

“The exit of a country from the Schengen zone has not been requested, nor discussed,” said Avramopoulos at a gala dinner in Athens organized by the Economist.

“The Schengen Evaluation Report carried out in November found a series of shortcomings that have to be addressed,” he added, referring to the results of inspections on two islands that concluded Greece was not keeping to its commitments as a member of the passport-free area. “The Greek authorities are taking the necessary action.”

The Commission has given Athens three months to rectify the failures in the screening of migrants and refugees.

Earlier on Friday, Alternate Migration Minister Yiannis Mouzalas said he believes there is a real possibility of Greece being excluded from Schengen.

Speaking to Kathimerini, Mouzalas stressed again the need for the flow of migrants from Turkey to be stemmed and for the EU’s refugee relocation scheme to improve.

The Infrastructure Ministry on Friday ordered 1,150 25-square meter prefabricated huts to house refugees and migrants at various points around the country. The structures will cost 14.1 million euros. Another 1.5 million will be spent on transporting them.

The new normal COMMENT

Tents pitched in Syntagma Square by protesting farmers, streets strewn with fruit, vegetables, rocks and broken glass, confused motorists trying to avoid road blockades and traffic jams, clashes with police, farmers shaking their crooks, threatening violence, smashing squad cars, shouts of rage and faces distorted by anger.

These are the scenes of “extreme polarization,” as the media described them, which unfolded Friday all around Athens, while in Parliament lawmakers discussed legislation on television licensing, voting the government’s proposal through with 154 votes in the 300-seat House.



“You are choosing the path of authoritarian practices, which alienate the country from the European principles of justice,” opposition New Democracy leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis said, chiding lawmakers who backed the bill.

Meanwhile, almost every day sees another protest flaring up over the social security overhaul or against the construction of screening centers for migrants and refugees entering Europe through Greece, as the threat of expulsion from the Schengen zone looms, despite government assurances that such a move is not allowed by the treaty.

“Welcome to the new abnormal,” said American economist Nouriel Roubini in a post on Project Syndicate earlier this month. Though Roubini was, of course, referring to growth, inflation and monetary policy, his quote is a perfect description of Greece today.

Greece is not the only country in Europe facing serious domestic challenges, but it is the only one that has not managed to restore some semblance of normality after six years of crisis. Time appeared to stop when the country declared bankruptcy and everything since then has been repetitions of the same, more or less.

The only means of coping — and this was a conscious choice — has been disconnecting from reality, but the more reality insists on making its presence felt, the more anger becomes the only response. Those who feel betrayed by a government they elected for other reasons and now see it doing every-

thing they vowed not to do are its most passionate detractors.

As time does go on, abnormality is becoming the new normality. Contradictory, autocratic, smug and violent, with blurred lines between authority and populism, between protest and bullying. And it is fed by that sense that we will never move forward, that exhausting feeling that a brighter tomorrow will never come.

Perhaps Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and other top government officials, who in past years went beyond the limits and aligned themselves with the most extreme elements during similar rallies, are coming to realize this now.

As we have already pointed out, and will continue to do so, the country again finds itself on a very dangerous path.

If things do not change, it will no longer matter who is governing the country or who is in the opposition, because it will be impossible to govern the country, let alone have the most necessary measures approved.

Greece’s lenders present new proposal

Greece’s lenders have suggested to the government that cutting existing pensions above 1,500 euros per month could lead to the conclusion of the first bailout review, Kathimerini understands.

When the mission chiefs from the institutions visited Athens earlier this month, but also in an op-ed written by the International Monetary Fund’s European director Poul Thomsen last week, it was made clear to Athens that avoiding cuts to basic pensions would not be possible.

The government’s pension proposals rely on a 1.5 percent increase in social security contributions to reach the target of 1.8 billion euros in savings agreed with the creditors. It also proposed cuts of 5 to 30 percent to pensions for those who retire from the start of this year.

However, sources say that the counter-proposal being made by the lenders is for the government to cut existing basic pensions above 1,500 euros per month. It is thought that if the Greek government agrees to this, it will not be required to take any other fiscal measures this year.

THE LAW OFFICE OF GEORGE C. XAMPLAS • 25 E WASHINGTON ST, SUITE 700, CHICAGO, IL 60602 • (312) 345-0510

Xamplas

Helping our clients navigate the labyrinth of Greek law

• GREEK REAL ESTATE

• GREEK TAX ISSUES

• GREEK INHERITANCE & WILLS

• IMMIGRATION & PASSPORT

• POWER OF ATTORNEY

• GREEK BUSINESS LAW

www.xamplaslaw.com

GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT CHICAGO
Presents

ZAFEIRIS MELAS



FRIDAY FEB 26TH
CHATEAU RITZ

9100 N MILWAUKEE, NILES, IL 60714

DOORS OPEN AT 8:30PM
FOR TICKETS: (312) 888-6950
WWW.GALAXYCHICAGO.COM

SPONSORED BY
ANT
SATELLITE