

## **LEVAN TKESHELASHVILI**

### **ON THE AUTOCEPHALY QUESTION OF THE GEORGIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH**

It is believed that apostles of Christ preached the Christian faith in Georgia in 40s-50s of the first century.

Since 468, during King Vakhtang Gorgasali, the Georgian Church has gained autocephaly.

The Georgian Church is mentioned in the ancient sources as “Saint Andrew’s chapel” that is why it is natural that when speaking about the roots of the Georgian Church it is of Jerusalem origin.

During His Holiness Archbishop Peter of Antioch the convention took resolution to declare the Iberia Church free and autocephalous, but only under the subordination of the Patriarch of Antioch. The Sixth World Religious Convention confirmed Georgian Church independence.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century the discussion between Theodosius, the Patriarch of Antioch, and Giorgi of Mtatsminda (Mtatsmindeli) seems strange and ambiguous. However, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli perfectly argued his position that as long as the Georgian Church had been established by Saint Andrew it was fair to “the called to be obedient to the namesgiver,” and as for the Antioch Church it was founded by Saint Peter.

The question of autocephaly of the Georgian Church is one of the most important issues in the history of our Church that deserves further investigation