

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to John (John 14:22-23)

Judas, not the Iscariot, said to Him, “Master, then what happened that You will reveal Yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Whoever loves Me will keep My Word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him. “ The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Christ’s promise: God reveals Himself to and dwells in those who keep His Word

Master, then what happened that You will reveal Yourself to us and not to the world? (John 14:22). St Jude (not Judas Iscariot), one of the Apostles was concerned that Jesus did not appear to reveal Himself to the rest of the world. This concern of St Jude brought forth the wondrous promise of Christ that those who have no opportunity to meet Him in the flesh would not be at a spiritual disadvantage as He and God the Father will personally come and make Their dwelling in their hearts if they love God truly and keep His Word. St Paul explains that the sexual impurity and the wickedness of the world came about as a direct result of mankind’s rejection of God. Outside of God’s blessings, the sinful desires of their hearts were given free reign. *Ever since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what He has made. As a result, they have no excuse; for although they knew God they did not accord Him glory as God or give Him thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless minds were darkened. While claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the likeness of an image of mortal man or of birds or of four-legged animals or of snakes. Therefore, God handed them over to impurity through the lusts of their hearts for the mutual degradation of their bodies (Romans 1: 20-24).*

Whoever loves Me will keep My Word (cf. John 14:23). We cannot love someone whom we do not know. In our modern era we probably have much more knowledge of God than people of the Old Testament era. However, this does not automatically translate into us loving God more. Love of God in our hearts is a direct result of the action of the Holy Spirit in our souls. *The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (Romans 5:5).* It is not meaningful for us to command anyone to love us. But, not so for God for He, alone is our Highest Good. Loving God foremost is not only for His eternal glory but ours as well for we are made to glorify God and not ourselves or anyone else. Thus, loving God foremost is our true, pure nature in which we are originally created. Loving another thing or person above God is a result of our corrupted nature due to sin. The solid proof of our love for God is our obedience to His Word, His teachings, His Commandments. It is as simple as that. God has not asked us to be famous or to be admired, or successful or wealthy, or to climb the highest mountain to prove our love for Him. He merely asks us to be faithful, to be obedient to His commandments. *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments (John 14:15).* And He is telling us His commandments are not too difficult to keep. *And His commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3).*

God reveals Himself to those who love Him and who are devoid of any ego in their souls (cf. Matthew 11:25). God condescended to reveal Himself to Abraham through whom God made His covenant with the Jewish people. God promised to make Abraham the father of a great nation and said that Abraham and his descendants must obey God. For His part, God would guide and protect them and give them the Promised Land. God promised to bless Abraham and the families of the earth through him. Abraham was called by God to uproot himself and his family from his own country to travel to an unknown destination at the age of 75. Later, God called him to sacrifice Isaac, the son of his old age. Though what God had called Abraham to do was extremely difficult, he did not question God’s motives but simply obeyed. Abraham was humble and acknowledged to God that he was only “dust and ashes” (cf. Genesis 18:27). Through his actions, Abraham taught us that it is more important to obey God than to question His ways and motives. God is not man, and our relationship with Him must reflect that God is our Highest Good in Whom we can place our absolute trust and obedience.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, thank You for Your wondrous promise to reveal Yourself and come with the Heavenly Father to make Your dwelling within us if we love You truly and keep Your Word. Open my heart and through Your Holy Spirit pour Your love into my poor heart in order that I may love You with all my heart, my mind, my soul and with all my strength so that You and our Heavenly Father can be enthroned in my soul. Give me the wisdom to see Your Hand at work in my daily life. Keep my soul pure so that it can be a suitable throne for the Most High. Use me as Your instrument and direct me to do whatever that is needed for Your Kingdom. My role is never to question Your ways but simply to accept it. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk