



Scripture nugget - Knowing and realizing our true worth

Because you are precious in My eyes and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you and nations in exchange for your life (Isaiah 43:4).

Outside the grace of God, we are no more than dust and ashes. *Abraham spoke up again: "See how I am presuming to speak to my Lord, though I am only dust and ashes!" (Genesis 18:27).* Abraham, our father in faith, in interceding with God for the people of Sodom has given us a good reminder that in truth, we are no more than dust and ashes especially when God's grace is withdrawn from us. At Baptism, when we are formally recognized as children of God by the Church, our souls are filled with sanctifying grace by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we are made a new creation in Christ. In order to make ourselves fit for heaven, our true home, we have to keep our souls, our "spiritual garment" unspotted by the world. In the parable on the wedding feast, the man who was not wearing the proper wedding garment was thrown out (cf. Matthew 22:11-13). Sanctifying grace, which makes our souls holy like God, is lost from our souls every time we sinned. *Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you maggot Israel; I will help you, the Holy One of Israel is your redeemer (Isaiah 41:14).* Yes, indeed, the Lord calls His sinful chosen people "worm" and "maggot". Look what happened to the angels who rebelled against the Lord and were cast out of heaven together with the head rebel angel, Lucifer (cf. Revelation 12:4). They turned into demons!

Our true worth is realized through our union with Christ. Our society tends to evaluate people by the usual social attributes: family stock, the colleges they attended, the salary they earned, the wealth they amassed, their position at work or in society, their power, their popularity, where they live, their vacation destinations, and even the clubs that they belong to. However, all these are but gifts from God Who does not judge according to society's criteria of success, but Who looks deep into hearts that are hidden to man. For example, in choosing the person to be the mother of His Christ, God chose Mother Mary, a young unknown girl who is not outstanding in any way to the human eye but whom God can see possesses a heart of pure gold. In choosing a foster father for His Christ, God chose St Joseph, a humble carpenter whose righteousness of heart is known to God alone. How pleasing we are to God depends on how our hearts resemble that of Christ. Our true worth is what God sees in our hearts which is known to Him alone. God calls us to be faithful in His eyes and not successful in the eyes of the world. Our true worth is due to God's love for every one of His sinful children which He demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt by sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ as sacrifice for the salvation of the world.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, in union with Your Sacred Heart, I render heartfelt thanksgiving to our Eternal Father for creating me in God's image for You and through You. I am wonderfully made to last forever like God, with the promise of an eternal life of joy. At Baptism, I become a holy and new creation in You. At Sacrament of Confession, I miraculously regain all the sanctifying grace lost when I sinned. I am precious to You Who redeem me with Your own Precious Blood. Keep my soul in sanctifying grace so that I can unite my heart to Yours and, thus, always be pleasing to our Heavenly Father. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.