



Scripture Nugget - Sentimentality can obscure the truth and lead to false mercy

From that time on, Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to You." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an obstacle to Me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after Me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me "(Matthew 16:21-24).

When we allow ourselves to be led solely by feelings we can blind ourselves to the truth.

Peter must have been stunned at this turn of conversation with our Lord (cf. Matthew 16:22-23). It would appear that the Lord had no appreciation of Peter's care and concern for Him. Peter was probably also speaking on behalf of the other apostles who loved Jesus. Their expectation of God's plan of salvation was that Jesus would establish God's Kingdom on earth through military power and force. Even when Jesus explained that God's way of salvation of the world is through the sufferings and shedding of the Blood of His only begotten Son, they failed to understand God's ways because of their entrenched way of thinking which is not based on the truths of God but on human logic, and thus, unwittingly, hindered Christ's mission. Jesus immediately put a stop to it. Jesus showed them the error of their thinking. Fulfilment of God's divine will should override all other concerns, and we can only do this when we remain in the truth. God wills the best for us for all eternity.

Outside of truth, sentimentality leads to false mercy. When truth is obscured from our sight, we become easy prey for the evil one. Leveraging on Peter's failure to understand God's ways, Satan used the concern of Peter for Jesus as an instrument to discourage Jesus from carrying out God's plan of salvation. Thus, outside of truth, acts of concern ultimately become false mercy in the eyes of God. Falsity endangers the salvation of souls won at great price by Christ. Satan is extremely cunning. Just as he used the misguided Peter to tempt Christ, he is using numerous souls who do not understand God's ways and commandments to tempt other souls to sin which he camouflages by an external veneer of goodness. Thus, euthanasia is justified as "mercy killing", abortion as "pro-choice", and outright rebellious rejection of God's gift of distinctive male and female human sexuality becomes dressed up as "gender ideology." No wonder the evil one is also called the Master Deceiver.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, St Paul speaks so aptly when he exhorts us to be led not by our feelings and senses but by our faith (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:7). How many times do we unknowingly let the evil one tempt and use us when we do not place God's truths first but our earthly concerns which are important, but must be relegated to second place to allegiance to God's will if we are to enjoy true security (cf. Matthew 6:33). You tell us that only by living in the truth, can we have freedom in the highest sense (cf. John 8:32). Thus, You give us Your Commandments and teachings so that we will have the divine light to walk on the path of truth which leads to Your glorious, eternal kingdom. Fortify our faith so that Your teachings will always be our light and strength. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for us. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.