

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to John (*John 3:19-20*)

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Self Knowledge, the Key to Holiness

Everyone has hidden faults. *But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults (Psalm 19:12).* Jesus said: Be holy as your Heavenly Father is holy (cf. Matthew 5:48). To be holy is to be in communion with God in a loyal, committed and loving relationship with Him, acknowledging Him as the Most High deserving first priority of our love and loyalty for His infinite goodness to us. Throughout His life Jesus shows us how to be holy. To increase in holiness one needs to be aware of one's hidden faults. Do I wish to have my faults revealed to me or do I rather avoid the revelation for the discomfort it will bring me?

Fear of Change. *Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed (John 3:20).* People who do their deeds in darkness may prefer to continue to do so as they fear the pain of change. They do not have the life-changing knowledge of the everlasting, eternal Truth which is Jesus Christ (cf. John 14:6). The non-believers short change themselves by focussing on their short term earthly comfort and shut themselves up from the glorious promise of eternal life held out by Jesus Christ to everyone. As St. Paul puts it: our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (cf. Romans 8:18). In Christ, we need not worry unduly about painful change for in every suffering or trial, the Lord provides a corresponding amount of grace to help us endure or overcome it (cf. Philippians 4:13) according to His will.

Every heart is deceived to a degree. *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9).* Where the heart is the body and soul will follow. The heart takes the lead. Scripture tells us: *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it (Proverb 4:23).* Pride opens the heart to more deception. St. Paul reminds us: *For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself (Galatians 6:3).* Conversely, true humility opens the door to self-knowledge, accepts it and works upon the revealed deficiencies. Denial of revealed faults due to pride or ignorance do not render them less sinful. What is needed is the eternal unchanging Truth which lights up all darkness.

The truth will set us free (cf. John 8:32). The eternal Truth is Jesus (cf. John 14:6) and all that He stands for, His values and teachings. Our hidden faults can remain hidden and unacknowledged by us if we judge them according to our own self-serving standards based on our pride and self love. Thus, for our conveniences and to fit in with the secular world that we live in, we made compromises and we live with half truths. But Jesus said that once we know the truth, it will set us free: freedom from unhealthy attachments and addictions, freedom from restlessness and despair, freedom from hard heartedness, freedom to love without counting cost, freedom to go into healthy and loving relationship with God and others, freedom to face our future without anxiety. In Jesus, the unchanging Truth, we can find answers to all our earthly problems.

A close relationship with the Lord reveals inner darkness. Saints have shown this to be true. Without exceptions the saints lamented very much over their sins and failings, made many sacrifices and atonement and went for frequent Confessions. Having a deep insight into the merciful love and passion God holds in His heart for every one of His children, the saints understood with clarity how sins offend against the infinite goodness and love of God. Jesus says: *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12).* Let us visit the Lord more frequently in the Blessed Sacrament so that He can reveal to us our hidden faults and lead us into a closer relationship with Him.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for Your great patience with me. Today I want to be set free by Your Truth of all that opposes holy truth in my heart or mind. In Your merciful love, reveal to me my hidden faults, and give me the honesty and strength to accept this illumination of my conscience and to work on my shortcomings. I consecrate my heart and mind to You so that You may guard it always with holy truth and holy love. May this be my benchmark in my thoughts, words and actions. Teach me how to overcome my self love and pride. Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.