

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to John (*John 3:16*)

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – The true Calling of a Christian

Followers of Jesus Christ were first called “Christians” in Antioch (cf. Acts 11:26). Each Christian receives a very special calling. A calling that lifts them up above the physical world they found themselves in. A calling that empowers the Christian to live to the fullest potential of the life he/she has been given on earth. A calling that will lead the Christian to the fulfilment of the true purpose of his/her life. A calling that sets him/her apart from others. It is the highest calling of any person. It is an honour and privilege to respond to this calling. This calling comes from God Himself through His Son, Jesus. All are precious in God’s eyes. All are called but few are chosen (cf. Matthew 22:14, 1 Timothy 2:4).

Our Christian calling is to surrender all to God, living in total trust in Him in active faith and in abandonment, depending fully on His Divine Providence, love and power. Our true God is a radical God. No lukewarmness, no half measures come from God. He gives His all. He loves all equally with all His Heart. To grant us salvation and redemption from our sins, He was not afraid to send Jesus, His beloved Son as sacrificial offering for our sins, to die a shameful and agonizing death on the cross like a despicable criminal. As God does not hesitate to give us His all, He expects us to give Him our all. Thus, Jesus commands us: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39).* We are to put God first in our lives when we live out our noble calling. However, once we are willing to compromise our faith, we divert from the true path and our Christian calling, and end up with a mediocre life not worthy of a true Christian, risking the danger of not being one of the chosen ones.

Our Christian calling is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus sets a good example of how we are to live our lives in our earthly pilgrimage. He was borne incarnate not into a palace befitting His divine majesty but into poverty of simple parents that we may realize the beauty of a simple life and not be attached to earthly pleasures and comforts of a luxurious lifestyle which seem to be the life aim of many. Jesus proclaimed the truth and stood up for it, never wavering and giving in to the demands of the faithless ones even to the point of being persecuted for this. Jesus did this so that we too may have the courage and confidence to stand up and uphold the truth. It is the Truth that will set us free. Further He promised that those persecuted for His sake will gain great heavenly rewards (cf. Matthew 5:11-12). Jesus had no money, no property, not even His own grave for His death. However, God the Father provided. He inspired two good men, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus to help prepare the body of Jesus for burial and put Him in a new grave belonging to Joseph. The action of Jesus inspires our total faith and trust in God’s Providence to supply for all our needs.

Our Christian calling is to show others the unconditional love and mercy of God. *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters (1 John 3:16).* Before Christ ascended into heaven He commanded His apostles to spread the good news of the love of God for all people and His promise of an eternal life of joy and happiness (cf. John 14:2-3, Romans 14:17-18). And how are they to do this? The Lord’s command is clear: *By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35).* We have been equipped. God’s love is poured into our hearts by the action of the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 5:5) who is the first instalment of the inheritance God promised us (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:14).

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for calling me to be a Christian. A true Christian must stand up above others through his/her love as this is the only criteria that will distinguish the Christian from the non-believer. Holy love must be the foundation from which spring all my thoughts, desires, aspirations, words, actions and plans of my life. This must be so if I am to be the light of the world and salt of the earth You call me to be. Though I have no confidence in myself, I have great trust in Your power and mercy, that through Your grace You can mould me to be what You want me to be. What You need is just an open heart, one that is not afraid to let You guide me in every moment of my life, setting aside my own narrow ideas, agendas, and plans for Your greater and higher ones. Mary, Refuge of Holy Love, pray for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus. www.twohearts.hk