

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 11:27-30*)

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For My yoke is easy, and My burden light.” The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – True surrender submits to God’s will, is without preconditions and accepts the outcome

Following the unruly passions of our heart and meaningless dictates of the world lead to heavy burdens on our heart and soul. Jesus prayed to God the Father for His disciples: *I do not ask that You take them out of the world but that You keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world (John 17:15-16)*. The world allures us in many subtle but powerful ways. It defines constantly for us what is success, beauty, socially acceptable and politically correct; promotes falsehoods and untruths and presents them as good and noble; disdains and rejects the truths of our faith with increasing vehemence and intolerance. Consequently, many false gods are created, the most popular of which are the false gods of money, wealth and success, of beauty and vanity, of power, corruption and selfish ambition, of sensual pleasure and impurity, of pride, self-absorption and egoism, of materialism and secularism, etc. A false god is anything which consumes us through the inordinate amount of time, devotion or resources indulged on it, is always a merciless slave-driver who is never satisfied but who leads us deeper into restlessness, disillusionment, unfulfillment, temptation and sin, weighing down the heart and soul with impossible burdens, burdens which are not given by God, but by our pride and disorderly self-love.

Breaking the bondage of living in the sad past or fear of the future. God’s grace is only for dealing with the present moment. Thus, Satan’s strategy is to tempt souls to live in the sad past or in fear of the future. Such souls have either fallen into the temptation of having weak faith in God’s forgiveness of past sins or God’s providence and protection for the future. Thus, graces that are provided to deal with the present situation are wasted. God does not want us to dwell in the unhappy past but to surrender all of it to Him, and be strengthened to deal victoriously with the present. *Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the wilderness I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers (Isaiah 43:18-19)*. Only God has the power to take the burdens and sins from us. How much God can help us in this depends on how much we can truly surrender to Him all our burdens and difficulties.

Learning to be meek and humble of heart. One of the key virtues, Jesus greatly desires us to have is holy humility. Without humility, we cannot submit whole-heartedly to God. Without humility, we cannot find the path to true joy which comes from Jesus. True joy is within our reach when we remain in God’s love. We can only remain in God’s love when we adhere to His commandments. *If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is My commandment: love one another as I love you (John 15:10-12)*. Humility is needed to surrender all our burdens to God and accept in its place Christ’s yoke which He promises will give us inner peace and rest for our souls.

Surrendering and taking the yoke from Christ. Christ’s yoke comprises God’s commandments, His will, His plan for us, all of which comes with His graces, His Providence, His help, His support. Unlike ourselves, God does not force heavy burdens on us. His commandments are not burdensome (cf. 1 John 5:3). Whatever God commands, He provides the corresponding graces to fulfill it. Thus, if we strive to fulfill God’s commandments daily, we would not be labored or burdened, but will find peace within our reach. However, if we follow the dictates of our passions and the sinful nature of the flesh, we will place unduly heavy burdens on our heart and soul. It takes faith and humility to truly surrender: to pass over our cares and worries to God in complete trust with no preconditions, with the assurance that we are doing our best on our part, and that God will take care of the part that is outside our control. True surrender is to accept God is in charge of the outcome of the situation. We can always repeat the act of surrender whenever negative feelings and doubt return, glorifying God every time we do this.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, thank You for being such a great friend in offering to shoulder all my cares and worries. By the power of Your grace, break all bondages that tie me down to this earth. I surrender to You my will, my heart and mind so that all my burdens and worries are given over to You. Give me all the graces I need to always trust in Your mercy. Without Your grace, I cannot even pronounce Your Name. Therefore, keep me humble in spirit so that I can have complete confidence in Your love, Your mercy and Your power so that I do not carry unnecessary heavy burdens. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk