



Scripture Nugget – Precious metals and priceless stones in my hands

According to the grace of God given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But each one must be careful how he builds upon it, for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, the work of each will come to light, for the Day will disclose it. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire [itself] will test the quality of each one's work (1 Corinthians 3:10-13).

Through our Baptism, each of us has been anointed priest, prophet and king for God's Kingdom. God has given each of His children a unique role in Christ's mission of salvation. A priest offers prayers and sacrifices for the people of God. A prophet spreads the message of God's Word to others. A king of God's Kingdom helps win over souls for Christ. Each of us is given gifts to be used for the building up of God's Kingdom, and each role is unique. Acknowledging his role in God's plan of salvation, St Paul said: *Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of His Body, which is the Church (Colossians 1:24).* Christ's redemption is perfect and complete (cf. Ephesians 5:27) and what is "lacking" in the afflictions of Christ as referred to by St Paul in this instance is to be fulfilled by our role given by God in His plan of salvation.

Jesus says: *Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me scatters (Matthew 12:30).* Jesus tells us that the battle in the spiritual world comprises a battle between Him and the arch-enemy of our salvation, Satan. There is no other protagonist as there is only one true God. Thus, we either accept or reject Christ. Through our thoughts, words and deeds in our daily life, we either help build up God's Kingdom or draw away from it. What we do with our lives will be evaluated as gold, or silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw built on the divine foundation that is Jesus Christ, as seen in the eyes of God. God's value system is vastly different from that of the world. All our talents and opportunities are but gifts from God, and He expects from us a commensurate fruitful response. To those given much, more will be expected. God is not impressed with the amount of money we earn, or the human recognition and esteem that we have attained. More importantly, we will be judged in accordance to our adherence to His commandments, His will. Holy love which is the embodiment of all God's commandments, teachings and divine will is the yardstick to evaluate the fruits of our time on earth.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, thank You for giving me a role to build up Your glorious Kingdom. Help me discern the difference between God's calling and the calling of the world, the things that are of eternal value and those that detract from my true goal. Come, O Lord and overflow me with Your love, that I may love what You love. Come, O Lord and overflow me with Your peace so that I can always open my heart to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Come, O Lord and overflow me with Your wisdom so that I may seek the things that please You and that I may become Your instrument to build up Your Kingdom. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.