



Scripture nugget – Familiarity breeds irreverence

Now when Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to Him with an alabaster jar of costly perfumed oil, and poured it on His head while He was reclining at table. When the disciples saw this, they were indignant and said, “Why this waste? It could have been sold for much, and the money given to the poor.” Since Jesus knew this, He said to them, “Why do you make trouble for the woman? She has done a good thing for Me. The poor you will always have with you; but you will not always have Me. In pouring this perfumed oil upon My Body, she did it to prepare Me for burial (Matthew 26:6-12).

Irreverence begins when we forget our place before God. In the above incident, the disciples were indignant at what they perceived to be a waste when a woman anointed and poured a jar of costly perfumed oil on the head of Jesus. Their reason seemed to be righteous i.e. the money obtained from the selling of the oil could be given to the poor. However, on a higher level, they failed to understand that the woman’s act of honor to Jesus, Who is the only begotten Son of the Most High, could not be equated to any act of kindness to any human person. In their familiarity with Christ, they forgot that they are creatures of Christ, Son of Almighty God on Whom they depend on for their very breath. Erroneously, they applied their human judgement on Jesus as if He was another human person. It is so easy for us in our ever present human pride to forget our place before God sometimes. In truth, we are nothing but dust and ashes (cf. Genesis 18:27) if the grace of God is withdrawn from us. We cannot see God but Scripture tells of His splendor and power which will do us well to recall frequently lest we lose our awe and reverence of God. *Splendor and power go before Him; power and grandeur are in His holy place (Psalm 96:6). Bow down to the LORD, splendid in holiness. Tremble before Him, all the earth (Psalm 96:9).*

When we put on equal footing our obligation to God with obligation to people, we err and are guilty of irreverence to God. God is not man. Once we use our human yardstick to apply to God e.g. in the above example: “why this waste”, we err. Everything belongs to God Who alone has dominion and sovereignty over all. *The earth is the LORD’s and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it (Psalm 24:1). Mine is the silver and mine the gold, says the LORD of hosts (Haggai 2:8).* To be reverent to God is to render to God what is due to Him. What is due to God, more important than the treasures of the earth, are our allegiance, ardent love, steadfast faith, true devotion, unquestioning obedience and first priority in everything important. God calls us “friends” but we must remember that He is God first and foremost, and holy reverence is due to Him. Reverence to God which flows naturally from our love of and faith in God, starts in the heart and mind. It flows into our relationship with God which is above all other relationships. Reverence naturally flows into the externals, e.g. behaviour, attitude, posture etc. especially when in church.

Conversation with JESUS: Precious Lord, magnify my love for and faith in You and open my eyes to see Your power working in my life. May my heart and mind always hold You in ardent love, holy reverence and awe. Yours alone are the splendor, power, glory, majesty, grandeur and highest honour! I join my Blessed Mother Mary and all the saints and angels in heaven in praising and exalting Your holy Name. May Your praise be always in my heart and on my lips. Mary, Mother of Salvation, teach me holy reverence to God. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.