



Scripture nugget - Fill our hearts with grace by sincere prayers and detachment from self and worldly allurements

If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with Him in glory (Colossians 3: 1-4).

God has the grace for us to deal with any difficult situation in our life. Christ, by His life, death and resurrection merited for us all the graces we need to live a holy life on earth and for sanctification in preparation for an eternal life in heaven with our Heavenly Father. God's grace is a free gift. However, we need to want it and be ready to receive it. God's grace is given only to deal with the present moment. Thus, God advises us not to worry about the future or to be stuck in regrets about the past. When we worry about the future or trapped in regret about the past, we lose the graces for the present moment. Jesus says: *"Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they?" (Matthew 6:26).*

God is calling everyone to holiness (cf. Matthew 5:48). To be holy we need to be able to receive graces in order to overcome the obstacles and temptations against holiness. A great obstacle to holiness is an attachment to ourselves. Our fallen human nature will naturally assert our own self-interest ahead that of others. We need to know this weak inclination and actively resist it in order to curb our pride and develop humility. If we do not seek to overcome our natural selfish nature, we will be strident in demanding our rights and will immediately seek redress for any injustice done to us. If we do not work actively on our humility as our Lord exhorts us (cf. Matthew 11:29), we will be led unconsciously by our pride. We need to cultivate a holy, reverent fear of God so that sin will not take a hold in our lives. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (cf. Proverb 9:10). *Sin directs the heart of the wicked man; his eyes are closed to the fear of God (Psalm 36:2).* In particular, we need to protect our hearts against harboring hatred, unforgiveness, bitterness, grudges, and other negative feelings so that it does not become hardened and closed to God's grace. The world is another great tempter. Many souls are enslaved to money, power, beauty, popularity, creature comforts, carnal pleasures, and other earthly attractions. The world also lures with its constant activities and busyness. The parable of the great banquet (Luke 14:15-24) teaches us to place our priorities right so that we will not be swept away by endless earthly activities and have no time for and lose sight of our heavenly mission. *Teach us to count our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart (Psalm 90:12).*

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, You said to the crowds that looked for You after they had their fill of bread and fish: *Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you (John 6:27).* Jesus, You are the Bread of Life that will satisfy my inner hunger and my inner thirst (cf. John 6:35). Purify me and teach me to deepen my loving relationship with You. I offer my life to You. Teach me to pray with my whole heart. Teach me to involve You in my present moments and daily decisions in my life. Open my heart to receive Your graces. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.