

Scripture Reading

Reading of the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 11:25*)

At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children." The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Intellectualising our faith will lead to cold hearts and loss of faith

A virtue that Jesus untiringly teaches and strongly emphasizes – simplicity and humility of the heart. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the only school that teaches virtues that will help us to attain our full potential in the eyes of God. Jesus has shown Himself to be a good teacher. He knows that only with a simple and open heart can His disciples be able to absorb His divine teachings, emulate His ways and become His instruments in spreading His eternal, saving Truth. *Jesus said: Learn of Me for I am humble and meek of heart (cf. Matthew 11:29).* Those who responded positively to His calling were simple and lowly people. They were mostly fishermen who left their families and livelihood to follow Jesus unconditionally.

The clever and learned cannot recognize the visitation of Jesus and even plotted to kill Him. The religious leaders, scribes and Pharisees were the respected, clever and learned of the Jewish community. Due to their religious knowledge and training, they should be able to recognize the visitation of the long-awaited Saviour when He came in the flesh. Yet, not only did they not recognize Him, they accused Him of terrible crimes such as blasphemy! They did not recognize Jesus because they were not sincerely seeking Him. Instead, they were busy seeking their own interest, respect and esteem from their own people. They had no room for Him in their hearts because they were full of pride and self-interest. They cannot accept the Truth when it was shown to them because it went against their self-interest, their intellectual pride, their set way of thinking, their entrenched opinions. They were unable to correct themselves because they were self-righteous.

Through intellectual pride and lack of real faith, it is a great temptation to explain away God's miracles and ways through rational thinking. Throughout history, man has tried in vain to explain the actions of God through Science. Science is a gift from God to help us understand the physical world He has created for us. Science gets out of depth when it is evoked to explain something for which it was never created to explain – the actions of the Creator. Thus, intellectualizing our faith will inevitably lead to cold hearts and loss of faith. The prideful clever and learned will never understand God's ways because the mysteries of God were hidden from them as explained by Jesus (cf. Matthew 11:25). Thus, the miracles performed by Jesus were lost on them as they were blinded by their intellectual pride, using the earthly to explain the heavenly.

A simple and unassuming heart is pleasing to God. Man judges by external appearances and criteria but God judges by how much love and humility the human heart holds. A simple heart is easily filled by the Holy Spirit with God's holy love. It has room for God as it leads a simple life. It is not overwhelmed by earthly desires generated by self-love and self-pride. A simple heart is able to accept without self-pity whatever trials or adversities God sends its way without losing faith. A simple heart has the grace to forgive and forget without grudges or bitterness. A simple heart does everything out of love for God remembering always: *Whatever you do to the least of My brothers, you do to Me. (Matthew 25:40).*

God uses only simple and humble hearts as His instruments. God in His infinite wisdom used the poor simple shepherds to herald the good news of the incarnate birth of His Son, Jesus. The shepherds carried out their mission joyfully and with haste. They did not question why the Saviour as told to them by the angels had to be born in such poor surroundings. They spread the good news without thinking about what other people will say. Throughout Scripture, we see that the people God used as His instruments have a common trait: their hearts are simple and humble.

Conversation with Jesus Precious Lord, cast out from my heart all forms of pride and disorderly self-love so that my heart can be filled with holy and divine love. Let my heart embrace all Your teachings and saving Truth. You are all wisdom and all love. Let me place all my trust in You. Mold my open heart to be more like Yours. May I become more childlike and trusting so that I can feel Your Presence, recognize Your works of grace and miracles in my life and become Your instrument of victory over evil in this world. Mary, Mother of Salvation pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.