

Scripture Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 16:26)

What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ Our soul - our most precious possession

God made us to last forever to be members of His family. God places us on earth for a high purpose – for His own grand purpose. It is His will and pleasure to make us His children through adoption through Jesus Christ (cf. Ephesians 1:5). That was His great plan for us – to be members of His own family! *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9).* May we never cease to praise and thank God for creating us out of nothing and through no merits of our own, to share His love, joy and glory in His Kingdom. God made us to be His hands and feet to carry out good works to help establish His Kingdom on earth. *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).*

We are on pilgrimage on earth. Jesus prays to the Father for His disciples: *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your Word is truth (John 17:16-17).* Our present world is just part of our journey to our true home in heaven. Jesus did not ask the Father to take us out of the present world as God would like us to take on the good works that He has prepared for us in advance. *I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one (John 17:15).* We are to keep ourselves single-minded in our life's mission and purpose. Jesus said: *The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it (Matthew 13:44-46).* We are the blessed man that found the treasure hidden in the field, we are the blessed merchant that found the pearl of great value.

Seek the treasures that last. The weakness of human nature is attracted to the passing delights of this world. Large crowds followed Jesus after He multiplied a few loaves of bread and a couple of fishes to feed thousands of people. However, their motives for following Jesus were probably dubious, many of them were probably doing so to get a free meal out of Jesus. Thus, Jesus said gently to them: *Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval (John 6:27).*

Mankind's crying need – repentance before God. The world now is in a much graver state of sin than in the time of Jesus' visitation on earth. Multitudes of souls are in danger of not gaining the inheritance that God has planned for each and every one of His precious children. In many of His children on earth, the primacy of God has been replaced by primacy of self as the rightful place that God deserves is denied to Him, and the ever asserting self and pride take over. *Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them - do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish (Luke 13:1-5).* Our Lord emphasizes the need of repentance by repeating Himself to those present, this truth.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, when I was conceived in my mother's womb, You gave me a soul. When filled with Your sanctifying grace, my soul is like a tiny part of You. It is filled with Your life and Your light. There is nothing more beautiful on this earth than the soul God gives to each and every one of His children. It is my most priceless possession. It is my heavenly, glorious body. The origin, cause, guide, support, purpose, nourishment, joy, fulfillment and final destination of my soul is You. Bestow upon me holy wisdom that I may safeguard this priceless possession by a holy life lived out in imitation of You. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.