

Scripture Reading

A reading of the Gospel According to Matthew (*Matthew 7:22-23*)

Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name and in Your name drive out demons and in Your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ No amount of good deeds can save us if we do not repent of our sins

Presumption on God's mercy is a subtle and hidden sin that can bring damnation even to those who work actively for God's kingdom. Jesus tells us the above parable to warn us to look carefully at our own souls even if we are actively doing work for His Kingdom. The people in the above-mentioned parable expected to gain salvation because they had spent time in the mission of saving souls for God's Kingdom. However, they obviously did not live the message they preached. Presuming on God's mercy, they neglected their own souls and when they died, their souls were in the state of unrepented sin. They were so sure of the certainty of their own salvation that they did not take the time to examine their own souls and to seek repentance for the sins they committed. Without repentance how can they stand before the Lord? The good deeds they had done were useless for their salvation.

Repentance of sins is so important, it is Christ's first and last subject. *From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." (Matthew 4:17). And that repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His Name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). No one is saved by good works alone. If one can be saved by good works alone, one would have no need of a Saviour. All religions would have been the same. Jesus tells us clearly: I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me (John 14:6). Jesus preached repentance as a first step to faith in Himself. Repent and believe the good news (Mark 1:15). Repentance is not a mere feeling. Repentance is an active change of heart and a decisive turning away from our personal sins, and comes hand in hand with faith. Without repentance, there is no need for a Saviour. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Luke 5:32). Christ comes to call everyone. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).*

Without repentance we cannot claim salvation in the Name of Jesus. *Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin (John 8:34). Slavery to sin is broken by sincere repentance by the sinner and forgiveness by God. Repentance is so important Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) straight after His resurrection, giving divine power to His apostles to forgive sins. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21-23).*

Jesus Himself acts in our soul when we go to Confession. *Jesus said to St Faustina: Daughter when you go to Confession, to this foundation of My mercy, the Blood and Water which came forth from My heart always flows down upon your soul and ennobles it. Every time you go to Confession, immerse yourself entirely in My mercy with great trust so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul... I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul...Tell souls that from this fount of mercy, souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to my generosity... (St Faustina's Diary #1602).*

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You are my Divine Creator and You have placed Your divine laws in my heart and conscience since the beginning (cf. Romans 2:15). Repentance is necessary for my soul so that I can claim salvation in Your Name and be freed from slavery to my sins. Never let me take my salvation for granted and be tempted by the sin of presumption. Humble my spirit and help me heed the advice of St Paul to work at my salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). Let the light of Your Spirit of Truth show me all my hidden sins and pride. Bestow upon me and all poor sinners the holy wisdom to understand what a wondrous gift the Sacrament of Reconciliation is, and to immerse our souls with great trust often in this fount of Your mercy so that we keep our souls fit for the Kingdom of God at all times. Mother Mary, Mother of Salvation, through Your tears and mercy of Jesus, pray for all sinners the grace of great trust in God's mercy and repentance of sins. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.