

OCTOBER 10, 2021
Sunday of the 28th Week in Ordinary Time
Mark 10: 17-30

“GIVE, AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN.”

“A story is told of a poor beggar who lived on alms he received from begging. One day on his begging rounds, he came upon a holy man, who was lost in prayer, sitting in seclusion in the forest. Approaching the holy man the beggar asked for alms. Without a second thought the holy man put his hand into his pocket took out a large precious stone and gave it to the beggar. The beggar could not believe his eyes. Before the holy man could change his mind the beggar disappeared from the scene holding on to the jewel for dear life. He clutched it so tightly his hands hurt. All along the way, he was suspicious of every one and reached his shelter tense and worried. Once inside, he locked himself and was sure that some would come to attack him. He could not sleep at night for a moment for fear of losing the stone. He got up in the morning a mental wreck, exhausted, tense and worried. What was he going to do with this precious stone? He could not mix with others even of his own family lest they ask for it. Finally, he hurried to the holy man in the forest and quickly gave back the stone. The Holy man asked him why he was returning the precious stone. The beggar replied. "I don't want the stone it is ruining my life. But I want something else from you. When I asked you for alms, without a second thought you parted with that precious stone. Can you give me that spirit of detachment? Then I will be happy whether I have or don't have anything!"¹

The Word of God always challenges us, invites us to reflect, and apply it into our lives. The Word of God is not just to read it or to listen to but it must be practiced after we heard and listened to it. It is nothing without putting life on it, the Word of God must be alive in our lives. This is the what our readings for this Sunday is telling us: what is in

¹ stories4homilies.blogspot.com

our heart, where is our security, or makes our lives useful, effective, valuable and worthwhile?

Here comes the advice of God's word and wisdom as early as the Old Testament and here comes Jesus' warning: Do not put your heart in possessions for they will become your masters. Let God be your Lord. Let it be Jesus whom we follow.

In our First Reading, the Book of Wisdom gives us insights what is best and necessary in this life. It is not what I have but what I am that is essential. Wisdom is more precious than any material things. It presents the question: "Do we desire wisdom, and how much do we value it? It also reminds us in the very first verse that God is ready to give us this gift. 'I prayed and understanding was given to me; I entreated and the spirit of wisdom came upon me.' The reading also reminds us that wisdom is priceless, to be valued more than silver and gold. If God were to ask us to name one thing that he could grant us, what would we ask for? A good job, a beautiful house, a lucrative career, to be number one, to be healthy? All these are good and perhaps necessary. But is it what I have that is important or what I am that is important to me?"² What the earth gives is nothing compared to the knowledge, wisdom and love of God whom we can have without limit, we just need to have an open hands and hearts. We can not possess all things of the earth but with and in God, He is willing to be all for us because for Him you are all to Him.

While the Gospel of today from St. Mark, it tells us of the encounter of the rich young man who asked Jesus: "'What should I do with my life? What should I do to be happy?' Questions we have often asked in the silence of our hearts. Jesus gives the young man the expected answer of his times. 'Keep the commandments and you will be happy.' But this good young man really wanted more. He had kept all the laws, and yet he was

² ibid

not happy. Maybe we have sometimes experienced the same in our lives, we have been law-abiding citizens, but there seems to be something missing in our lives. The Gospel tells us that Jesus looked at the man with love, he appreciated what he had been doing, then he went to the heart of the matter, he confronted him with what was really missing in his life. 'There is one thing you lack. Go sell all you have and come follow me.' What is Jesus challenging him to do? To be really happy he invites the young man to forget the minimum - keeping the law, and go for the maximum- go for it! Is not keeping the commandments and living a good moral life enough? Yes, it is good but not good enough! To merely keep the law is a negative approach to life."³ We need not just to follow the law but to keep and live it. We must not only followers of the law but share the spirit of the law, the spirit of sharing, compassion, forgiveness, and love. Are we like the young man, shocked, sad and went away grieving because he had many possessions that he can not let go? Is our treasure hinders us to be with God because of attachment?

My sisters and brothers, like the young man, Jesus Christ is inviting us to live in love! He is challenging us to go beyond the law, the requirements or dictates of the law and do the demands of love, faithful service and take an extra mile for our brothers and sisters. When we give, we build up treasures in heaven. So, do not stop giving and you will inherit the heaven, the Kingdom of God.

Let this be our prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, you have seized my heart and open up the treasures of heaven to us. May I make you always my treasure, joy and happiness and may nothing else keep me from giving you my all so that I may possess heaven and eternal life. Amen."

³ ibid