

The Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity

September 26, 2021

“For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost- Amen

Last week we thought together upon the Lord’s power and mercy as He raised to life the son of the widow of Nain! We heard in the Gospel of the power of our Blessed Lord to be the victor over all of the powers of death and hell, and how that for that young man and his dear sorrowing mother, even the darkest situation can and will be transformed into light and life when the Eternal Word made flesh speaks a word of light and mercy! For them everything changed! For them life and hope was restored abundantly, and joy replaced the sorrow of loss and hopelessness.

So it is for each of us dear friends- we can trust that where the Lord Jesus Christ is, there is truth and grace, healing and new life. Today on this Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, we hear in the words of the Gospel and the Epistle of the nature and necessity of humility-that blessed spiritual quality that is so very necessary for each of us as we seek to follow our Lord Jesus on the Royal Road that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Gospel opens with the Lord Jesus sitting and eating with a group of the religious elite of the day! The Pharisees were well versed in the Law of God and so watched our Lord to see if perhaps they might find a reason to condemn Him for His words and works! It was the Sabbath, a day upon which according to the Pharisees, no work could be performed, including even works of Charity and Mercy. But suddenly a man appears before them who needed the healing touch of the Lord of Glory! Here was someone in a desperate state that longed to be free- free from pain and disease, free from the dreadful consequences of his illness! In seeing this poor man’s situation, the Lord Jesus uses this occasion to both bring healing and broaden the Pharisees understanding of the nature of the Divine Compassion. The poor sufferer is healed, and the other guests at the table that day are awestruck, and unable to answer, but they are surely reminded that mercy is the end of the law and humility of heart should be our inward attitude of soul as we grow in our love and devotion to the things of God!

To emphasise this, Christ teaches the assembled guests by means of a parable about a wedding. He is trying to teach these men who were so full of their own importance to seek a humble and teachable heart over their sense of religious superiority and their lack of charity and compassion. The words of our Lord must have come as a strong rebuke to the dinner guests, and they surely must have the same affect on us if we take them seriously.

Every Christian soul is called to seek the kind of humble and lowly heart that the Lord Jesus is talking about in today’s Gospel reading, and so we would do well, each of us to examine our

hearts to discover if we are walking together with the Lord with this precious attitude of humility or if perhaps we have fallen prey to the world's insistence that the only way to live successfully is to seek to be number one-to want to be "top dog" and to find our security in seeking our own wills rather than humbly and quietly seeking to be faithful to the Divine call of Christ!

This humility of heart is not an easy thing to acquire-it is not something that we can learn to develop through some self-help book, or by the power of positive thinking! No dear friends, true humility of heart is a Divine Gift-it is a holy endowment that flows from the very heart of the Holy and Life giving Trinity!

For the Christian believer-for you and I-we must seek this gift of humility from the one who so lovingly and humbly ministered to us in our need. Humility flows from the Sacred Heart of Jesus-from that Heart that was pierced for us on the Holy Cross of Calvary, and that is always open to receive everyone that will approach Him in sorrow and love.

When we understand this, then we will be able to withstand the illusions and seductions of the world, and it's misunderstanding of the grace and beauty of true humility of heart. By keeping our inward eyes firmly fixed on the Lord Jesus, we will hunger and thirst for that humble attitude of heart that will draw the soul to live ever more closely to her Lord and Saviour!

The Epistle assigned for this Sunday speaks with wonderful clarity about the nature of this humble walk with the Lord of Glory! St Paul calls us to "walk worthy of our vocation" to cultivate those heavenly attitudes of lowliness, meekness, patience and forbearance. In other words, we need to be seeking to more and more closely walk as Christ walked, and to be becoming, little by little, more and more conformed to the Blessed Jesus!

True humility of heart will lead us to lovingly and compassionately seek the spiritual and temporal good of all those with whom we come into contact! This will be especially true of our dear fellow believers- the dear children of our Father in Heaven who have been redeemed and brought to new and abundant life by the shed blood of Christ. As we strive to walk in true lowliness of heart, seeking to do all for the Glory of God, we will want to build each other up into greater unity of purpose for the work and witness of the church. Humility of heart will give us a holy hunger to give ourselves more and more fully to the blessed work of becoming living images of the one who is our King and our Lord.

Dear friends, our Holy Mother the Church is facing many dangers! All is not well in many parts of the church, and so it is so very easy to fall into the devilish trap of desiring to see the church adopt the ways of the world to accomplish her mission! But we must resist this temptation and seek to re-establish the "good old way" of prayer, humility of heart, and divine Charity as the blessed means of bringing the message of Christ to our culture and to those confused and despairing men and women who are walking in such darkness and hopelessness all around us!

We need to remember that there is one Lord and one Faith-this Holy faith that we confess before the world and before heaven each and every Sunday! It is this Faith that can change lives and that is so very precious to us all. Every one of us can play a role in causing the light of the Gospel to enter into the darkest parts of our world, and it is humility of heart that our Blessed Lord requires of us if we are to truly worship, adore, and serve Him in this world, and find our eternal rest with Him in the next!

May each of us pray this day for a truly humble and believing heart, and may each of us know that our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ stands ready to grant us this gift if we will only come before Him in Penitence, Faith, and with a hunger and thirst for a holy and loving Heart. May we allow Him to have His Blessed Way in our lives today and for ever!

Glory be to God for All Things! Amen.