

Wednesday's Gospel: A Right Intention

Gospel for Wednesday in the 28th Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 11:42-46*)

“But woe to you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and salutations in the market places. Woe to you! for you are like graves which are not seen, and men walk over them without knowing it.”

One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, in saying this you reproach us also.” And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.”

Commentary

The Gospel according to Saint John tells us that Jesus saw into the hearts of the people who praised Him, and knew whether they really believed in Him or not. In all our actions there is something that is seen and something that is not seen, hidden from the eyes of others: our intentions and desires, what truly moves us and what we are really seeking. Therefore we can all understand what Jesus is talking about in today's Gospel passage. We

can't say that his words are directed to the person next door, but not to us. Because, despite having great and noble desires, don't we all have to admit that sometimes we have acted simply in order to look good in the eyes of others?

Jesus speaks here about neglecting justice and the love of God. They seem like simple and clear words. But the realities they refer to are very deep. Because God's justice is not reduced to what we men understand by justice. Not even God's love is like our love, so fragile and limited. Jesus reproached those "wise" men who did not know the Law, the essence of which is justice and love for God, since they failed to live these truths themselves.

Would that our works always stemmed from a heart that truly seeks justice and is filled with love for God! For the works that truly

transform the world are those that come from a heart desiring to be holy. God's justice is constancy in his promises, perseverance in his Love, eternal Mercy. Our Lord is encouraging us here to be humble, to manifest what we are and how we are, in order to be healed; to love as we would like to be loved; and not to demand from others something that we are not willing to give. Pride and pretense are like a wall that repels grace. Furthermore, it will be of no use to us in the next life to have appeared blameless before men if we have not truly desired and striven to be such. For what Christ looks at and weighs, who is the One who will judge us on that day, is our heart.

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