



Daily Reflections

November 26, 2017

Scripture

Matthew 25: 31-46

Jesus said to his disciples:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory,
and all the angels with him,
he will sit upon his glorious throne,
and all the nations will be assembled before him.
And he will separate them one from another,
as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.
Then the king will say to those on his right,
'Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me,
naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me,
in prison and you visited me.'
Then the righteous will answer him and say,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink?
When did we see you a stranger and welcome you,
or naked and clothe you?
When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'

And the king will say to them in reply,
'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did
for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.'
Then he will say to those on his left,
'Depart from me, you accursed,
into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
For I was hungry and you gave me no food,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
a stranger and you gave me no welcome,
naked and you gave me no clothing,
ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.'
Then they will answer and say,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty
or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison,
and not minister to your needs?'
He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you,
what you did not do for one of these least ones,
you did not do for me.'
And these will go off to eternal punishment,
but the righteous to eternal life."

Our Scripture Reflection

Today we close our Church calendar year with the magnificent feast of Christ the King. This feast needs to serve as a litmus test for all that we have done throughout the past year, both our thoughts and actions. When I review my life in 2017, have I allowed Jesus Christ to be my Lord and King? Has all of my energy been directed by that old but good question symbolized as WWJD: What would Jesus do? I need to realize that with all the stresses and strains in life, I could have made my load lighter had I only allowed my King to guide and direct me. We must not despair. This Sunday provides me the opportunity to repent and change, to plan my new year by walking in the footsteps of my Lord and King.

Food for your Journey

Many churches encourage tithing as a financial stewardship discipline: Giving 10 percent of income to Christ's work. Yet, how many go further and encourage disciples to give one-tenth of their time to God as well, in

ministries they may one day recognize as serving the risen Lord Jesus through service to others?

If we spend eight hours a day sleeping, that leaves 16 waking hours. One-tenth of that is 1.6 hours. Multiply that figure by seven, and you get just over 11 hours a week. Just think of what the typical congregation could accomplish, if it used all those hours to serve "the least of these" in their community!

The late Ernest Campbell, formerly pastor of Riverside Church in New York City, used to point out that there are two places where the strength of a Christian's commitment is recorded in writing: the checkbook and the calendar. Of the two, he went on to say, the calendar is probably the most revealing.

"When did we see you, Lord? Was it during the hours we spent in front of the TV -- or out shopping, just for fun? Was it during the time we spent cleaning the house, chasing the Martha Stewart ideal? Or was it those extra hours we put in at work, hoping to curry the boss's favor and get that promotion?"

There's nothing wrong with such pursuits, but if we allow them to crowd out Christian service, we just may be taking our place among the goats.

A Prayer from the Heart

Blessed Lord, Forgive me for the times this past year when I tried to go my own way. Make me humble, Lord, as I prepare to enter a new year. May I seek Your wisdom and Grace each day and follow You with courage and trust. Amen.