



Daily Reflections

September 21, 2018

Scripture

Matthew 9: 9-13

As Jesus passed by,
he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post.
He said to him, "Follow me."
And he got up and followed him.
While he was at table in his house,
many tax collectors and sinners came
and sat with Jesus and his disciples.
The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples,
"Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"
He heard this and said,
"Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do.
Go and learn the meaning of the words,
I desire mercy, not sacrifice.
I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Our Scripture Reflection

Why did Jesus sit at table with people who were considered traitors and notorious sinners, especially when the religious leaders and teachers were watching Him? Because He wanted to correct their arrogant and very narrow understanding of the mercy of God. God wants ALL of His children to be saved. As St. Pope John Paul II said many times during his pontificate: "God

has a bias towards our salvation." Jesus lived His Father's bias each day, and especially on Calvary.

Food for your Journey

Why can we not come to terms with our being transformed into the likeness of Christ until Christ lives within us? M. Scott Peck, in his recent book, tells of a conference where he and Harvey Cox both spoke.

[Cox] told the story of Jesus' being called to resuscitate the daughter of a wealthy Roman. As Jesus is going to the Roman's house, a woman who has been hemorrhaging for years reaches out from the crowd and touches his robe. He feels her touch and turns around and asks, "Who touched me?" The woman comes forward and begs him to cure her and he does, and then goes on to the house of the Roman whose daughter had died.

After telling the story, Cox asked this audience of 600 mostly Christian professionals whom they identified with. When he asked who identified with the bleeding woman, about a hundred raised their hands. When he asked who identified with the anxious Roman father, more of the rest raised their hands. When he asked who identified with the curious crowd, most raised their hands. But when he asked who identified with Jesus, only six people raised their hands.

Something is very wrong here. Of 600 more or less professional Christians, only one out of a hundred identified with Jesus. Maybe more actually did but were afraid to raise their hands lest that seem arrogant. But again, something is wrong with our concept of Christianity if it seems arrogant to identify with Jesus. That is exactly what we are supposed to do! We're supposed to identify with Jesus, act like Jesus, be like Jesus. That is what Christianity is supposed to be about -- the imitation of Christ.

--M. Scott Peck, *Further Along the Road Less*

Traveled: The Unending Journey Toward Spiritual Growth

(Simon & Schuster, 1993), 210.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Your love is without limit. You reached out to outcasts and sinners time and time again. You love and forgive...even me. Thank You, Lord, for Your kindness. May I show my gratitude by loving the outcast whom I encounter today. Amen