



Daily Reflections

April 4, 2019

Scripture

John 5: 31-47

Jesus said to the Jews:

"If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is not true.

But there is another who testifies on my behalf,
and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true.

You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth.

I do not accept human testimony,
but I say this so that you may be saved.

He was a burning and shining lamp,
and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light.

But I have testimony greater than John's.

The works that the Father gave me to accomplish,
these works that I perform testify on my behalf
that the Father has sent me.

Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf.

But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form,
and you do not have his word remaining in you,
because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent.

You search the Scriptures,
because you think you have eternal life through them;
even they testify on my behalf.

But you do not want to come to me to have life.

"I do not accept human praise;

moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you.
I came in the name of my Father,
but you do not accept me;
yet if another comes in his own name,
you will accept him.

How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another
and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God?

Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father:

the one who will accuse you is Moses,
in whom you have placed your hope.

For if you had believed Moses,
you would have believed me,
because he wrote about me.

But if you do not believe his writings,
how will you believe my words?"

Our Scripture Reflection

I love the 12 steps of AA and the thing I love the most about them is how their author's were two out of control drunks, both professionals who thought they knew it all. And it wasn't until they lost everything and finally sobered up, that they realized what they in their arrogance would never accept before: There was a greater power and they needed that greater power. The Jewish authorities were so full of themselves and Jesus calls them on it. Rather than to be humble before the scriptures and Jesus' witness to them, they tried to control Him. And when they realized they couldn't, they attacked Him. Little did they know in their arrogance that they were shutting themselves out of salvation.

Food for your Journey

In the short story "Revelation," Flannery O'Connor describes a woman who thinks that she has it all figured out: culture, society, life itself.

Mrs. Turpin, a pig farmer living in the South during the 1950s, has developed a grid for rating and ranking humanity. At the bottom of her hierarchy are the blacks; slightly above them she places the white trash. On the top of the pyramid are people just like Mrs. Turpin. White people. Polite people. Christian people.

Mrs. Turpin's racism is surpassed only by her arrogance. Then, at the height of her certainty, this proud woman comes face to face with a college student who looks beyond polite manners and cheerful disposition to point to the corruption that lies at Mrs. Turpin's core.

With holy insight, this stranger calls Mrs. Turpin a "wart hog" and tells her to "go back to hell."

Suddenly seeing herself as a pig in another's eyes, Mrs. Turpin plunges to the bottom of the pile. This startling revelation overturns her world. The first has become last, the last, the first, and her tidy hierarchy is flipped upside down. Like Mrs. Turpin, we are not given the luxury of thinking that we have got it "all figured out" for very long.

—Scott Black Johnston, in *Theology for Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 199.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, I beg that You take away from my heart the arrogance that leads me to believe that I am in control of my life and everything else. Grant me the Grace of humility so that I may finally experience the peace that You desire for me to have. Amen