October 19, 2019

Scripture

**Luke 12:8-12**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I tell you,
everyone who acknowledges me before others
the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God.
But whoever denies me before others
will be denied before the angels of God.
"Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven,
but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit
will not be forgiven.
When they take you before synagogues and before rulers and authorities,
do not worry about how or what your defense will be
or about what you are to say.
For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you should say."

Our Scripture Reflection

What did Our Lord mean when He said: “the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.” But didn’t He come to “take away the sins of the world”? (John 1:29) His statement about blaspheming the Holy Spirit is not about Jesus’ inability to forgive sins. No, it’s about our unwillingness to accept God, fully, and completely as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Here’s how this works, concretely:

A person rejects God the Father through sin. They can be forgiven if the repent. But what if they don’t?
That same person rejects Jesus, the Son of Man. They can be forgiven if they repent of this sin. But what if they don’t?
Finally, that person rejects the fullness of God as the Holy Spirit. If they don’t repent, what choice does God have but to honor their horrible decision leaving the person totally shut out of the Kingdom by virtue of his/her OWN, FREE, CHOICE.

We must pray for those who have turned completely from God. May they wake up and change.

**Food for your Journey**

The first time Jesus appears, in the first gospel, the first instruction he gives is "Repent." From then on, it's his most consistent message. In all times and every situation, his advice is to repent. Not just the scribes and Pharisees, not just the powerful -- he tells even the poor and oppressed that repentance is the key to eternal life. ...

Talk of repentance makes modern-day Christians nervous. We are embarrassed by the stereotype of old-fashioned preachers hammering on sin and making people feel guilty. We rush to assert that Jesus isn't really like that, he came out of love, he wants to help us. He knows us deep inside and feels our every pain, and his healing love sets us free.

This is one of those truths that run out of gas halfway home. The question is, what do we need to be healed of? Subjectively, we think we need sympathy and comfort, because our felt experience is of loneliness and unease. Objectively, our hearts are eaten through with rottenness. A hug and a smile aren't enough. ...

Repentance is the doorway to the spiritual life, the only way to begin. It is also the path itself, the only way to continue. Anything else is foolishness and self-delusion. Only repentance is both brute-honest enough, and joyous enough, to bring us all the way home.


**A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear Jesus, I repent this day for the many times that I have rejected Your love for me through my sins. You do not deserve my disrespect and arrogance. With the help of Your Grace, keep me from playing God by going my own way rather than working to follow Your way. Amen