



Daily Reflections

July 16, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 12:14-21

The Pharisees went out and took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

When Jesus realized this, he withdrew from that place.

Many people followed him, and he cured them all, but he warned them not to make him known.

This was to fulfill what had been spoken through Isaiah the prophet:

Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,
my beloved in whom I delight;

I shall place my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

He will not contend or cry out,
nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

A bruised reed he will not break,
a smoldering wick he will not quench,
until he brings justice to victory.

And in his name the Gentiles will hope.

Our Scripture Reflection

You can feel the tension mounting as Jesus heads towards Jerusalem while the religious leaders plot to kill Him. Jesus' response? He "withdraws" to other areas. This does not mean Jesus is in retreat. His time has not yet come. Jesus moves to more hospitable areas so that He can continue the Father's work of mercy. Nothing nor anyone will keep Jesus away from loving.

Food for your Journey

A young boy in the neighborhood lost his father last winter. This spring, as father-and-son teams hit the front yards to pitch and hit the baseball, he felt alone. Not to be outdone, however, he took his bat and ball to the old familiar spot in the front yard and started his own game. With a chipper spirit, he threw the ball into the air and swung with all his might. The bat cut only air, and a watching neighbor boy yelled, "Strike one!" The lad hastily retrieved the ball, threw it into the air and swung again. "Strike two!" echoed from across the way. With a tinge of fear and a ton of resolve, he flipped the ball for the final swing. "Strike three, you're out!" screamed the unwanted umpire, along with the cruel words, "You're a lousy hitter!" The undaunted boy sucked up his chest, marched over to the fence and yelled back, "I'm not a lousy hitter; I'm a great pitcher! I just struck myself out!"

--Michael R. Avery, "Try the Uplook!" *God's Revivalist* 107 (October 1995), 9.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, please help me to use each day that You give me of life to do Your good work. May I always show compassion and love, especially to those who so desperately need it. Amen.