



In the first reading (Wis 7:7-11) the author, writing in the person of Solomon, states that he prayed and pleaded for wisdom and prudence, preferring them over scepter, throne and riches. He chose wisdom over health and comeliness. He preferred her to light as she never sleeps. As a result, all good things and riches came to him through her hands.

Something to Think About

1. The Book of Wisdom was written only a century or so before the time of Christ in Alexandria Egypt. After Alexander the Great had conquered the Near East he introduced Greek philosophy to the region, resulting in many Jews abandoning their values. The author here attempts to counterbalance trend by placing the praise of Wisdom on the mouth of Solomon, the purported wisest of all men, in order to celebrate Jewish values. He notes that Divine wisdom that is communicated to mankind is beyond price. Jesus is the Word of God and the fulfillment of Divine Wisdom itself. Therefore, if we value wisdom, we should be inclined to follow the commands that Jesus has given us. Today the “wisdom of the world” is attempting to lead us away from the values Jesus has tried to instill in us. These worldly values are before us constantly while we consider the values of Jesus only a few hours in the week. I consciously must choose between worldly values and Jesus’ values.

2. Solomon did not approach God with a shopping list of wants that he would like God to give him. Instead he was open to God’s will and God’s ways. He prayed with patience and trust. He also prayed without a timeline for his prayers to be answered. He knew that God loved him completely, forgave him freely and still choose to be in relationship with him. When we pray the same disposition would well suit us. God created us to be with Him for all eternity. Jesus became one of us and died for us in order to

bring us to eternal life with Him. There is nothing that He would not do for each of us now in order to assure that we will reach our eternal destiny. We need only trust Him and choose to follow His will in all things.

In the second reading (Heb 4:12-13) the author states that the Word of God is living and effective. Sharper than a sword, it penetrates between soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It discerns the reflections of the heart. Every creature and thing are exposed before the One to whom we must render an account.

Something to Think About

1. The Word of God has the power in itself to accomplish what it states. It is effective. It can transform the unwilling or mediocre soul into an ardent follower of Christ. It can transform me, if I but allow it to do so. By the choice of my free will I can either prevent its effect on my soul or I can give God the permission to use me to accomplish His divine purposes by working them through me. When I hear and understand the Word of God on Sunday or read it in scriptures, I must make a choice. I must either follow what He has said or face the consequences if I do not. The choice is always there and I must choose.

2. The fact that God’s Word is a two-edged sword means that it opens my soul for judgement. God in His goodness has given me all that I will ever need to do His work and obtain my salvation. If I choose not to listen or if I choose to approach it minimally there will be consequences. These consequences come not because God has chosen to punish me but rather because I did not avail myself of the opportunity to use the graces that He wanted to give me.

In the gospel (Mk 10:17-30) as Jesus was about to set out on a journey, a man runs up and kneels down before Him. He asked, “Good teacher, what must I do

to inherit eternal life?” Jesus asked him why he had called Him “good” as God alone is good. Then He states that the man should know the commandments: you shall not kill, steal, bear false witness or defraud but should also honor your father and mother. The man replied that he had observes all these things from his youth. Jesus looked at him with love and said, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor ... then come follow me.” The man went away sad because he had many possessions. Jesus told His disciples that it is hard to enter the kingdom of God. In fact it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom. They were exceedingly astonished and asked, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus responded, “For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God.” Peter noted that they had given up everything to follow Jesus. Jesus said that no one who gives up house or brothers, sisters, mother or father or land for His sake will not receive 100 times more in the present age along with persecutions and eternal life in the age to come.

Something to Think About

1. The young man humbly comes up to Jesus, kneels before Him and asks a most important question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” It is basically the first question in the Baltimore Catechism: “Why did God make me?” If God made me to know Him, love Him and serve Him in this life and to be with Him in eternal life, how do I get there? Jesus responds with the minimal answer, “Obey the commandments.” However, the young man wanted more. He was willing to pay the price but was not willing to assume the cost of discipleship. Most probably God is not asking me to sell all that I have and give it to the poor but He is asking me to be “all in” as one might say in Texas holdem. What has Jesus asked me to give up that I might be unwilling to relinquish? If I truly knew it was the one thing that could cause me to miss out on eternal life, would I change my mind?

2. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that her aged cousin Elizabeth was pregnant he added “For nothing is impossible for God.” In today’s gospel Jesus explains to His disciples how difficult it is for a wealthy person to attain heaven to their amazement but then He notes that nothing is impossible for God. Heaven is God’s gift to each person. Only those whose arms are empty of self are able to receive what He wants to give. No amount of wealth can buy a

seat in the kingdom of God. It is God’s free gift to those who love Him. No temptation to gain wealth improperly and no temptation to spend wealth miserly are too much to be overcome by the grace of God. Every person is in His hand.

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