

Wait for the Lord!

Isaiah 8:23-9:3

Psalm 27:1, 4:13-14

1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17

Matthew 4:12-23

In the first reading we hear of the Israelites brought from darkness to light, from gloom to abundant joy and great rejoicing. The yoke that once burdened them is now broken and they experience a new hope as they are released from oppression.

The Psalmist speaks of how the Lord is now his light, salvation, refuge, and he will firmly trust under all hardships. He requests life in the Lord's house and anticipates the sweetness of beholding the temple as he is confident of the Lord's goodness. He hopes! He holds firm! He takes heart!

In the second reading Paul warns against factions developing in the Corinthian community. They are to be united in mind and judgment and understand that all belong to Christ. In the meantime Paul will continue to preach the gospel that places primary importance on the cross of Christ as the only true wisdom. The gospel must unite and not divide.

In the Gospel Jesus proclaims to the people that they are to repent and reform their lives as the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to become his disciples and travels about proclaiming the good news and healing people of every sickness and disease and casting out evil spirits. The disciples are becoming fishers of men.



**The Father turns darkness into light, and
The good news of the Son
is illuminated by the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit.**

The Cross

Paul was called to preach the gospel that shows the true value of the cross of Christ. He asks the faithful to dispel any factions that may arise so that they may be united in mind and heart, otherwise worldly values will weaken their community. Paul followed the lead of Jesus who preached of the importance in reforming our lives and to be aware that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This gives refuge and direction and our path will open up in light. For our part we can express appreciation with gladness and be unifiers in our church community.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Matt 16:24-25)

Why then do you fear to take up your cross that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven? In the cross is eternal life and protection from those who would harm you.

No matter how well you can order your life something will occur that makes you suffer, either willingly or unwillingly, and a cross will always attach itself to you. Carry it willingly and it will carry you and eventually bring you to the place where suffering is no more. If you carry it unwillingly it will only become more of a burden, and it will remain with you. If you cast the cross away then most likely a heavier one will find its way to you.

(Adapted from Thomas of Kempis, Book 2, Chapt12)

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