

Delight in the law of the Lord and prosper!

Jeremiah 17:5-8

Psalm 1: 1-4, 6

1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20

Luke 6:17, 20-26

In the first reading Jeremiah distinguishes between those who trust in humans and lead empty spiritual lives, and those who trust in the Lord and will bear fruit through all difficulties. The first group may enjoy ephemeral benefits but the second is blessed forever and shows wisdom from above.

The psalmist tells us that the man who delights in and meditates upon the Lord's law will be as an ever-fruitful tree planted alongside running water. He will even be watched over by the Lord in times of danger but the way of the wicked leads to doom.

In the second reading Paul tells the Corinthians, who entertain the possibility of no resurrection, that such belief is worthless and empty. Our hope and faith is not limited to this life only since Christ is raised from the dead. Without the resurrection this life is truly a dead end.

The people crowd around Jesus who preaches the word of God and heals the sick. Jesus blesses the poor, the hungry, the weeping, and those insulted, hated, and ostracized because of Him. On the other hand those who have so much, are self-indulgent, and well spoken of by all, are being treated as were the false prophets of ages past. God's prophets of old were treated harshly, just as Jesus was, even though they all preached God's word.



**The Father blesses those
Who trust that the Son was resurrected.
The Holy Spirit guides us in this truth.**

The theme of our readings emphasizes that people are better off to make wise and honest choices. We can rebuke the deceitful words of the wicked, refuse to walk in the way of sinners, and ignore invitations from the insolent. The believers, who trust and hope in Jesus and delight in his ways are ever fruitful and protected, even blessed, and will receive great rewards in heaven.

Paul tells the Corinthians that the resurrection of Christ is the pillar of our faith. While we need live in the present moment we cannot simply live for the present time; our direction, guided by the resurrection, must be pointed towards heaven and eternal life. Once we recognize this and take aim we need to order our life accordingly. Every mode of thinking or judging that does not increase our faith in this important aspect can be rejected. This does not mean we need to have a mania for analyzing our every turn and become so involved in scruples that we are reduced to inaction. We have what we need to walk forward with the Lord and this is spiritual common sense guided by our consciences. If we are pure, **simple**, and steadfast of spirit we will not be distracted by the multitude of our daily responsibilities.

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Simplicity

*'Who is simple? Let him come this way.'
To the fool she says, 'Come and eat my bread,
drink the wine which I have drawn!
Leave foolishness behind and you will live,
go forwards in the ways of perception.('Proverbs 9:4-6)*

Simplicity is a state of mind that shows itself in my primary intentions. I am being simple when my primary concern is *to do what is good, and what the LORD requires of me: Only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with my God (Micah 6:8).*

My life can be somewhat compared to basic raw materials and these matter less as to what they are as to how they are put together. The work of a master and that of a dilettante may share the same common elements. As I go through the world I am graced with spiritual gifts and my task is to cooperate with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as they guide me in using and perfecting these gifts.

*The revelation of your words sheds light,
gives understanding to the simple.(Psalm 119:130)*

Just as every picture has a frame to enhance it I can look upon my spiritual life as the picture and the worldly concerns as the frame. In this way I can emphasize that my spirituality is at life's center and not to be smothered by the deluge of secondary things that are constantly bombarding me, and not enhance the frame while I neglect the picture.

I remember when I was a young boy my father bringing home this oil painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which he bought from someone during an evening social hour. While it was unsigned it was done by an artist who stretched his own canvas. The point is that I always recall the picture being there as I would exit the house. After being away for a number of years, my father passed on, the house was being demolished on one of my hometown visits and there thrown on an outside scrap pile was the picture so I picked it up and stored it at an in-laws house where I was visiting. For a number of years it remained thrown into the corner of a closet but when I began to experience conversion it quickly came into my possession again. The frame was in poor condition so I bought the materials to repair it but after further thought I decided to leave the frame as is as a reminder of what is of central importance and now I always see it as the first thing upon entering the front door of my home.



As I contemplate His Sacred Heart I can meditate upon the secrets of my own heart and ask myself what keeps me from loving God and neighbor as I know I should. Jesus once said we must become like little children, meaning simplicity in trust and an undivided heart.

A spiritual writer once advised this simple prayer:

Father of truth,
I desire to be simple,
unassuming, unpretentious in my daily life.
In this way I can prove myself to be
a true child of yours.

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*The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The decree of the LORD is trustworthy,
giving wisdom to the simple. (Psalm 19:8)*

*It is from the fullness of the heart
that the mouth speaks. (Matt 12:34b)*

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