

August 2, 2020

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Lord gives me assistance!

Isaiah 55:1-3

Psalm 145:8-9, 15-18

Romans 8:35,37-39

Matthew 14:13-21

In the first reading Isaiah speaks for the Lord God and calls out to those who thirst and hunger for spiritual food that will satisfy. This resembles the call to Wisdom in Proverbs 9 and Isaiah indicates this kind of Wisdom will come to those who heed his words as they will be renewed according to the everlasting covenant, the very promises given to David.

The Psalmist speaks of the mercy and compassion of the Lord and the hope we have in receiving our basic needs is due time. When we call upon the Lord in truth, he is near and ready to help with an open hand.

In the second reading Paul emphasizes the power of the love of Christ and lists seven dangers or troubles that have the potential to separate us from this love, but they will not be able to overcome this love even if they cause problems for us. The important point made is that we need to remain positive, firm, and confidently secure in Christ Jesus. No forces and/or powers can separate us from God's love that is available to us in Jesus, our Lord.

In the Gospel Jesus withdrew to a deserted place after hearing about Herod's actions but the crowds still followed him. After healing many of the sick, Jesus provides enough food for over five thousand people that likely included men, women, and children. This feeding might be viewed upon as an anticipation of the Last Supper.



The Father is the Source of Love,
The Son is Love Personified,
The Holy Spirit is the Love between Father and Son.



If you reach a point where troubles overwhelm your daily schedule do what Jesus did and go off to a quiet place, think about a loving action you can do for another person and do it so that it is visible to God's eyes only. When you can communicate and unite with another with some secret benefaction it will uplift your spirit as well as theirs and even strengthen faith in the Unseen as God's love grows stronger within you.

Love is swift, sincere, devoted, cheerful, strong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-suffering, manly, and never self-seeking. For when a man only seeks self-interest, then he falls from love. Love is cautious, humble, upright; not weak, not intent on vain things, nor is it fickle. It is sober, chaste, steadfast, tranquil, and safeguards all the senses. Love is submissive and obedient to superiors; in its own eyes mean and contemptible, towards God devout and thankful, always trusting and hoping in Him, even when times are difficult; for there is no living in love without some sorrow. I come with much baggage but only You can help me unpack it the right way.

(From Book 3, Chapter 5, Imitation of Christ)

Love of Jesus

Blessed is he who understands what it is to love Jesus, and to humble himself for the honor of our Savior. We must let go of what we find so attractive in this world and anyone that clings to creaturely things shall fall with their eventual failing; understand that our love of Jesus, our Beloved, is our guide. The love of created things is untrustworthy and changeable whereas the love of Jesus is true to life and lasting. *God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*¹

He that stands strong with Jesus shall stand firm forever; *for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ.*² Love him and keep him for your friend, who, when all else fades away, will not forsake you, nor allow you to perish at the end; *for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*³ Sooner or later you must leave all created things and in that there is no choice.

In life and in approaching death keep yourself close to Jesus, entrust yourself to His faithfulness; he alone will help you when all else fails. *Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*⁴ The nature of our Savior is such that he will not accept a divided heart; He will have your heart for Himself alone; invite Him there to reign as King.

If you could empty your heart of every creature Jesus would willingly make His dwelling with you. He says, *remain in me, as I remain in you.*⁵ Whatever dependence you place in men apart from the Lord, you will find to be immanently lost. Seek the words of one like John the Baptist *who was not a reed swayed by the wind;*⁶ otherwise trust not nor lean upon those who are reeds shaken by the wind. *All flesh is grass, and all their loyalty like the flower of the field.*⁷



You will soon be deceived if you regard only the outward appearance of men; follow Jesus so that you may have something to say to those who boast of external appearance rather than of the heart.⁸ Indeed, if you seek your comfort and your profit in others, you will too often meet with disappointment.

¹ 1 Corinthians 1:9

² 1 Corinthians 3:11

³ Romans 10:9

⁴ Philippians 4:7

⁵ John 15:4

⁶ Matt 11:7, Luke 7:24

⁷ Isaiah 40:6, Jb 8:12,14:2, Ps.37:2, Sir 14:18, Jas 1:10,1Pt 1:24

⁸ 2Corinthians 5:12

If in all things you seek Jesus, truly you will find Jesus; if you seek yourself, you shall find yourself also, but to your own eventual disappointment. If a man does not seek Jesus, the harm he will face is greater than what all his enemies can do to him. Therefore, continue your *pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus.*⁹

This article is based on Book 2, Chapter 7 of Thomas of Kempis' writing, "Imitation of Christ

<https://melkaplace.com>

⁹ Philippians 3:14