

Beloved in Christ, today we are meditating on ‘**what good must we do to inherit the Kingdom of God?**’ In today’s Gospel, an unnamed rich young man approaches Jesus and inquires about what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered him, “You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.” The man replied, “Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth.” Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me” (Mk.10:19-22). At that statement, the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, and Mark tells us that this is because he had many possessions.

Our Lord treats the young rich man so affectionately and invites him to greater intimacy with God, because our Lord knows that this young man has a generous heart. Jesus explains to him that to enter into heaven demands **renunciation**- leaving his wealth behind so as to give his whole heart entirely to God. The reaction of the rich young man gives our Lord Jesus Christ another opportunity to say something about the way to use material things. Material things in themselves are good but excessive attachment to things is what makes them an occasion of sin (Col.3:5; 1 Tim.6:10; Lk.12:15).

God is calling everyone to holiness, but holiness is reached by making some sacrifices. That is why Jesus makes two demands of the rich man who approaches him, namely: the **detachment of worldly things and follow him as a disciple**. To his disciples, Jesus laments the challenges faced by those who are rich in following him and entering the Kingdom of God. In reply to the disciples’ astonishment at the strictness of the standard that Jesus speaks about today, Jesus reminds his disciples that nothing is impossible with God. Salvation is determined by our ability to rely completely upon God. Just like any expert doctor and through the Wisdom of God, Christ searched and diagnosed him of only “**one thing**,” attachment to his wealth. It was the “**dark spot**” of his life. According to his testimony, he had done “**all things well**.” However, he must allow the Word and Wisdom of God to penetrate and transform his life. Though Jesus’ instruction was “*a tough and harsh one*,” Jesus knew that was the only obstacle the man had.

We can learn a very important lesson from today’s readings, which includes that: Each one of us might have a dark spot unknown to us, which only the wisdom of God could help us illuminate. At times we too do “all things well” yet, something might still be lacking. So the word of God must convict, convince and transform us. Also, we must not always assure ourselves or be confident that we are running a perfect race. Every day we must ask God to shed the light of His Wisdom on our ignorance. His wisdom will help us understand who we really are. It also helps us to be who He really wants us to be.

Similarly, we must not allow wealth to become an obstacle between us and God. By using the example of the Camel and the needle, Christ intends to teach us that **attachment to wealth is the easiest way of losing focus on God**. This is because attachment **to wealth, sexual pleasures, drugs and bad behaviors** over burdens us to the extent that the spiritual journey becomes very difficult, if not practically impossible. Therefore, we must not allow what we possess in this world to possess our soul. Instead, we must seek the wisdom and understanding that comes from God in order to be truly wise in dealing with the things of this world without losing our friendship with God, the Ultimate Wisdom (Wis.7:8).

Finally, brothers and sisters, how willing are we to hand over everything to God? What are we holding back? In our own minds and hearts, at times, we can even hear ourselves saying: “Anything that God wants, I will give—except for this one thing!” If we have one thing that we are keeping back, then we cannot give ourselves entirely to God. Let us ask God’s grace that we may be able to overcome all obstacles in our spiritual struggles. Let us pray for God’s grace that we may be able to trust totally in God who has given His love to us and invites us to share His life. Let us continue in the struggle with total trust in God! May God’s Word, as a two-edged sword, free us from all that holds us back, so that we can give him a heart-felt devotion. Amen!