

27th Week After Pentecost – Monday

1Tim 5:1-5:10 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth¹. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel². Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man. Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

Luke 17:20-17:25 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you³. And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

1 This is reminiscent of (Mat 16:24-25) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. {25} For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

2 A popular, misunderstood aphorism is “Charity begins at home”. In popular use, some justify their own selfishness by citing this phrase.

Our Lord told us that makes it abundantly clear that even sinners are charitable to their families, and calls us to a higher level of accountability. Indeed, without charity at home, charity to those outside the home is an abomination to God, and likewise, to only give to our family and friends and be aloof to those outside our chosen circle.

(Luke 6:32-33) For if **ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?** for sinners also love those that love them. {33} And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

(Mat 7:9-12) **Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?** {10} Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? {11} If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? {12} Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

3 The Kingdom of Heaven is within you! What an impossible phrase, And yet, we are taught to pray “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done...” We do not ask that the Kingdom would *travel* to us or even that it appear to us. It is already here, within us. A man does not ask for what he already has. Our blessed hope is that we will change, so that we will experience what we already have in its fullness.

Our Lord spoke truth, but the Kingdom within us is unfortunately concealed from our understanding, just as his divinity was concealed until He appeared upon Mount Tabor to his three closest disciples. We know the reason – our own sins.

When we pray “Thy kingdom come”, is it not both an **affirmation, a plea and a promise?** The Christian prays with confidence that the Kingdom is already present, since our Lord does not lie, and simultaneously he weeps because his sins conceal this beauty from his spiritual eyes. Therefore, he begs the Lord for something that He will certainly give – grace to change, to become good, to follow the Lord's perfect commandments, and in the same breath, firmly promises that he will do all that is in his power to change.

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