

22C SML 2019
LK 14:1,7-14

There is a tremendous difference in points of view between those who have faith and those who do not have faith, between believers and unbelievers. Have you ever noticed when discussing important subjects, like:

Pain

Sorrow

Ethics

Happiness

Marriage

Children

Education

the purpose of life

the meaning of death,

the viewpoints between believers and unbelievers are miles apart!

Those of us who have faith have no common denominator with those who have no faith. Believers and unbelievers seem to be living in different worlds. You feel powerless to penetrate the natural mentality of the modern godless whom you meet on the street. It's like telling a blind man about color, a deaf man

about music. You are not talking the same language. Like the workmen building the Tower of Babel, there is no common understanding.

It was not so many years ago that those who rejected Christian truths were considered off the reservation:

- ✓ couples living like they are married without being married,
- ✓ the atheists,
- ✓ the pro-death/pro-choice,
- ✓ the enemies of the family,
- ✓ the relativistic

who hold there is no such thing as objective truth. Today, those of us who hold the objective truth is found in Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life, we are the ones considered off the reservation, and the rejectors are those who are on it.

Christians are on the defensive for no other reason than because we are the exception.

Some believers wrongly think the reason we see the truth so clearly is because we are intelligent and the reason the non-believers do not see it is due to their stupidity and stubbornness. And conversely, the unbelievers tell us we are stupid and stubborn, because we cannot think for ourselves. We need a Church to tell us right from wrong. Let's be clear

that faith is not due to wisdom, and the lack of faith is not due to stupidity; ignorance maybe, but not stupidity. Faith is solely a gift from God. "Flesh and blood has not revealed faith to you but my Father who is in heaven." (MT 16:17) So, no, intelligence is not the determining factor.

Education is not the condition of receiving this additional light of faith, although an educated person can understand faith better. Since the light of faith is a gift from God, we cannot supply it. So, no, an education is not the determining factor. Faith does not require an education. Faith is an education!

So if it is not a matter of intelligence or education, why this difference between those who have the faith, and those who do not have faith? It is due to the fact that those with faith has their intellect illumined, which enables it to perceive new truths which otherwise would be beyond its powers. Faith superhumanizes that which makes us human, namely, our intellect and our will, giving them the power of higher action. The intellect still continues to know truth, but by faith, the intellect knows higher truths than those of reason. And those operating on faith will rely on God and love Him more.

Let two minds with identically the same intellect and the same education, and the same judgment look at a Host

enthroned in the monstrance. One sees bread. The other sees Christ. Let them look at a patient on his deathbed. One life support as the last ditch effort. Another sees life support as possibly keeping God from doing what God wants to do, to bring His loved one home. The reason for the difference is one has a light which the other lacks, namely, the light of faith. As St. Augustine says, those who have found Truth know this light

The children who attended Vacation Bible School this year learned in every situation in life that "God is good." These children know more and are more profoundly educated than all the professors in colleges and universities the world over:

who blab about new ethics to fit unethical lives,
who negate all morality to suit their unmoral thinking,
who are ignorant that beyond time and space is the timeless and spaceless God who is Master of the universe.

No wonder Our Blessed Lord prayed:

"I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike." (LK 10:21)

This is why parents who live by the higher light of faith are so insistent their children be educated in religion. Unless one

knows WHY he lives, there is not much purpose in living. It is the convergence of:

- ✓ what you do,
- ✓ why you do it,
- ✓ and where you do it

that is the cure for the common life.

Though faith is a gift of God and though God will give faith to those who ask for it, there is one very human obstacle why more minds do not accept faith and that is pride. Pride is the most common of all sins, and yet the prideful are never conscious of it. People say, "I drink too much," or "I can get quite a temper," but you never hear someone say, "I'm really very conceited." The Pharisees were prideful, hence today's parable about pride and humility.

Pride is the exaltation of self as an absolute standard of truth, goodness and morality. The prideful man judges everything by himself, and for that reason everyone else is below him and a rival, especially God. Pride makes it impossible to know God. If I'm so prideful that I know everything, then not even God can teach me. If I am so full of myself, there is no place for God. Like the inns in Bethlehem, the prideful say to the Christ Child, "There is no room."

There are two kinds of pride. It is either pride of omniscience or the pride of nescience. Omniscience tries to convince your neighbor you know everything. Nescience tries to convince your neighbor he knows nothing.

If pride is the great obstacle to faith, it follows that the essential condition of receiving faith is humility. While pride is an overestimation of who we are, humility is not an underestimation of who we are. Humility is the plain truth of exactly who we are.

A lie is still a lie even if everyone is telling it. The truth is still the truth even if no one believes it. The humble man, obedient to the truth, speaks the truth.

Suppose a humble man went so far as not to say, "I will teach you Truth," but "I am the Truth." And suppose this man gave evidence by his works that what he said was true.

Knowing this world's tendency to relativism, indifference, fusing right and wrong, how do you suppose the world would react to that Truth? With hatred, verbal abuse, defiance, charges of intolerance, narrow mindedness, bigotry and crucifixion.

How do we know that? Because that's what happened to Christ. Crucifixion, because Our Blessed Lord was truth, and was obedient unto death. (PHIL 2:8)

Obedience goes hand and hand with humility.

Now that Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is in full swing here at St. Mary of the Lakes, I'll close this homily with a meditation on the humility and the obedience of Our Blessed Lord in the Blessed Sacrament:

St. Paul praises the obedience of Jesus Christ, saying, that He obeyed His Eternal Father even to death: becoming obedient to death. (Phil. 2,18.) But in the Blessed Sacrament He has gone still farther; for here He has been pleased to become obedient, not only to death, but as long as the world shall last; so that we can say: "He has become obedient even unto the consummation of the world." He, the King of Heaven, comes down from heaven in obedience to man, to a priest whenever he consecrates bread and wine into His Body and Blood, and then seems to dwell and converse there, in order to obey men: And He does not resist. (Isa. 50, 5.) There He remains without moving Himself; He allows Himself to be placed where men will, be it for exposition in the monstrance, or to be enclosed

in the tabernacle. He allows Himself to be carried wheresoever He is borne, be it into houses or through the streets: He allows Himself to be given in Communion to whomsoever He is administered, be they just or sinners. St. Luke says that while He dwelt on earth He obeyed the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph; but in this Sacrament He obeys as many creatures as there are on earth: and I do not resist.

Key take aways from this homily are: faith, truth, humility, obedience.