

The Kingdom of God



Part 4

There are none so blind as those who do not want to see

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us the Our Father prayer at the request of one of His disciples who asked Him how we should pray to God the Father. The phrase "*Thy kingdom come*" is not the first, but it is at the beginning of this beautiful yet simple prayer. Later, in Luke 11:20, Jesus tells the crowds that a sure sign that this kingdom He preaches has come upon them is the miracles He performs for the benefit of the people. Miracles like casting out devils in the name of God. The multitudes followed Him. They called Him blessed, but He corrected them: "*Yea, rather Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it*" To hear, we must put ourselves in the disposition to listen to others. We must voluntarily give

the time that God has given us on this earth to listen to something or to someone. It is an act of generosity on our part because it forces us to go out of ourselves to receive something we do not know because it is in the future. But God always rewards those who listen to Him and do His will.

The Pharisees have a hard time listening. They struggle to arrive at the conclusion that Jesus has put before them. They wonder about Him. Why does He not follow the custom of washing His hands before eating? He answered: *"Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools! Did not the maker of the outside also make the inside?"* Jesus boldly exposes the intentions of these unhappy men (the Pharisees, the scribes, the wealthy, the doctors, and the rulers of the temple) who were using this outward display of religion and piety as a means of furthering their wicked agendas and oppressing their own people. The lawyers and scribes also wondered: *"How can he reproach us?"* and Jesus fixed His eyes on them: *"Woe also to you scholars of the law! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them. Woe to you! You build the memorials of the prophets whom your ancestors killed [...] Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter."*

Certainly there is a lot of personal discernment we can do during this Lenten season regarding our state as Catholics. How are we living our Faith? Have we asked ourselves how others might perceive us as Christians? Do our outward attitudes truly reflect a desire to imitate Jesus?

Jesus gives us a threefold warning and instruction. First, He warns us against hypocrisy; the pretense of having moral standards or beliefs that do not match one's own behavior. He warns us against the fear of the world: *"He that shall deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God"*. He warns us about covetousness; *"[...] For a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses [...] You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?"*

St. Robert Bellarmine, in his book *The Art of Dying Well*, teaches us that *"Every rich man of this world must acknowledge that the riches he possesses, whether justly or unjustly acquired, are not his; That if justly acquired, he is only the steward of them, if unjustly, that he is nothing but a thief, a robber. And since the rich man is not the master of the wealth he*

possesses, it follows that, when accused of injustice before God, God removes him from his stewardship either by death or by want."

Finally, Jesus, Our Lord, gives us advice. Advice that leads to a plan with strategies and tactics to accomplish the mission: *"Instead, seek his kingdom, and these other things will be given you besides [...] Sell your belongings and give alms, Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in Heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival".*

And St. Robert continues to interpret Our Lord's admonition: *"Therefore, let it be a fixed rule for living well and dying well, often to consider and seriously to ponder on the account that must be given to God of our luxury (in property, in food, in clothing) in hoarding up riches, in unnecessary expenses, which injure a great multitude of the poor and sick, who stand in need of our superfluities; and who now cry to God, and in the day of judgment will not cease crying out until we together with the rich man, shall be condemned to eternal flames".*

In summary, Jesus calls us to build the kingdom of His Father. That the basis for building this kingdom is mercy and compassion for the spiritual and material oppression that people suffer. And that in building this kingdom we will find true joy; the joy that comes from liberating people from their infirmities. However, the struggle to build His Kingdom throughout history is real and it reveals a structure that opposes it and perpetuates SIN and the effects of SIN. We call this the kingdom of the "anti-God" or the "anti-reign." This structure takes different forms throughout history and different oligarchies, elites to run it. It constantly wages war against the Will of God. This anti-reign is maintained and nourished by the "prince of this world". It is his pearl and a sign of perdition for us. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not leave us alone in this enterprise, but gave us a precise visible and hierarchical structure: the Church. Especially in its militant dimension. But that will be in the next chapter.

Make this a fruitful Lent. Let it transform you!

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Ad majorem Dei glóriam



Traditionalist Carlist Circle
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