

Sermon for Sunday, Week 28 of Ordinary Time, Year B

2021

Gospel: Mark 10:17-30

First. *God is good.*

There are several things that strike me about today's gospel reading.

One of them is how, in response to the young man who called Him "good", Jesus says "**No one is good but God alone**".

Jesus, of course, is God.

So the young man was not wrong to call Him "good master", even by Jesus' way of reckoning.

But the Lord replied that way because He wanted him to begin to consider how **our greatest good, our true good, is God Himself.**

If we have God, we have everything.

If we don't have God, then, no matter what else we might have, we really have nothing.

Unfortunately, this lesson didn't fully sink in, because a few lines further on we hear about how the young man, who was very rich, found himself unable to exchange his earthly riches for heavenly ones and a chance to live in the close company of Jesus.

Second. *God's goodness in us.*

The second thing that really strikes me is that, when the young man states that he has kept the commandments since he was a boy, "**Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him**".

Let's put these two things together:

- Jesus taught us that "No one is good but God alone".
- And now we see Him loving this virtuous and faithful young man.

What is it that Jesus loves in this young man if not what is of God Himself?

This man has been mindful of God since he was very young.

He has believed in His word and kept His commandments, to please the Lord, because that is the right thing to do.

And that faith and goodwill has opened up his life to God.

- It is something of God's justice that shines out in the way he respects the rights of others.
- It is a spark of God's truth that can be seen in the young man's refusal to tell lies.
- He has acknowledged and honoured the sovereign kingship of God Himself when he honoured, for God's sake, his own parents.

Third. *God's love and His desire to be in our lives.*

So **Jesus' whole purpose is to draw us into relationship with Himself** because, being Goodness Itself, **He wants to share His life, His love, His truth, with us.**

That changes us.

That makes us great.

That is what *really* matters in life.

A life lived in such a way as to make this transformation – I mean, God’s life in us – happen, is a successful life, a triumph, a victory.

A life in which we say No to this transformation, is an unsuccessful one.

So let us be careful not to say No [to it].

Let’s guard against the temptation to prefer anything to God.

Let us avoid with all our strength doing anything that would amount to a rejection of the values that express God’s own qualities in our lives.

In all of this, **Mary** is our model and guide.

We can conclude with part of a prayer Pope Francis wrote to the Blessed Virgin:

“Mary, Virgin and Mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, **welcomed the word of life** in the depths of your humble faith: as **you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One**, help us to **say our own ‘yes’**” to God (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium / The Joy of the Gospel*, § 288).

Praised be Jesus and Mary!