

28C 2019 SML  
LK 17:11-19

Our Blessed Lord curing the ten lepers with only one returning to thank Him is a Gospel story that has been repeated in every century and every circumstance.

Thankfulness is rare; ingratitude is common. That nine of them did not return to express their gratitude for the exact same reason is unlikely; because generally speaking, ingratitude can be broken down into seven excuses:

1. Taking the favor for granted, like the spouse who never thanks the other spouse for the happiness they give;
2. Envy, like the one, regardless of the favor, who sees others with greater health or greater wealth;
3. Cowardice, like the teenager who received the favor from someone who was not as popular and fearing friends would associate the two;
4. Fear, like the one who received a favor with strings attached; the strings would be cut if the gift wasn't acknowledged;
5. Gregariousness, like the one who is incapable of doing anything alone; since the majority weren't grateful, neither was he;

6. Procrastination, like the man who puts off his thanks until tomorrow, but tomorrow never comes; and lastly,
7. Pride, like the man who, if he were to acknowledge his gratitude, would in his mind, have to also acknowledge that he was inferior to the giver.

Pride is one of the seven deadly sins and the seven deadly sins are:

1. Lust
2. Gluttony
3. Greed
4. Sloth
5. Wrath
6. Envy
7. Pride

Now there are three kinds of pride:

1. Economic pride, which is pride in what one has,
2. Intellectual pride, which is pride in what one knows; and
3. Social pride, which is pride in who one is.

First, to counteract economic pride and the pursuit of wealth as the be all and end all of man and indulging in all that he owns, Our Blessed Lord became economically poor. He chose His Mother from among the poorer classes who could afford to offer doves when the Christ Child was presented in the Temple, and a foster father from the village tradesmen; and He

who owned all the earth and it contained, chose for His birthplace a deserted shepherd's cave.

He was poor in His mission to the poor, as He explained at Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor."

He was poor in His public life. "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no where to lay His head."

He was poor in the eyes of government, for when asked to pay the tax, He had no money.

He was poor in His death; as He was:

- ✓ stripped of His garments,
- ✓ executed on a cross erected at public expense,
- ✓ and buried in a stranger's grave.

Thus He atoned for the economically proud, by having nothing.

Second, Our Blessed Lord atoned for the intellectually proud, for all those who think they know, and who rely on human knowledge without faith.

At His Birth, there were two classes who visited Him, the Shepherds who knew they knew nothing, and the Wise Men Who knew they did not know everything. During His public life,

Our Blessed Lord rejoiced that the truths of the Kingdom of Heaven were hidden from the wise and the learned, but revealed to children.

Third, reparation had to be made for stuck up snobs who think they are better than everybody else.

These Our Blessed Lord atoned for by social abandonment. The very beginning of his life bears the record. "He came unto His own, but His own did not receive Him." Cities abandoned Him.

- ✓ Bethlehem refused Him an inn;
- ✓ Nazareth drove to throw him off a cliff;
- ✓ Jerusalem crucified Him.

Truly He could say, "A prophet is not honored in his own country, in his own house, and among his own kindred."

Men abandoned Him.

- ✓ When He spoke of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, the saying was too hard for them, so they walked with Him no more.
- ✓ Teachers of the Law abandoned Him, calling Him "a glutton, a drunk, and a friend of sinners."
- ✓ In today's gospel, nine lepers who He helped abandoned Him.
- ✓ Judas abandoned Him for thirty pieces of silver,

- ✓ Peter for shame at the word of a maid servant,
- ✓ Peter, James and John abandoned Him for a nap.
- ✓ And at the end of His life, the Roman governor said, “Your own nation has delivered you up to me.”

So yes, the King of Kings became socially poor and was abandoned by the socially proud and the snobs of the earth.

Let’s go one step further, to the seeming abandonment of God on the cross. “My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?”

While the cry may have been one of abandonment, it was not one of despair. A soul that despairs never cries to God. It was less difficult to make reparation for the economically proud. It was less difficult to make reparation for the self-wise, the intelligent and the conceited snobs.

But it was more difficult to make reparation:

- ✓ for those who refuse to bow their heads to the wisdom of God,
- ✓ for the atheists who live without God,
- ✓ and for the godless who blot His name from the history books and current social mediums.

For the words, “My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?” speaks of how much mental agony there must be in the world in those minds, hearts and souls who are without God.

Jesus knew for that one moment what it was to be without God. He knew something of the loneliness and misery of godlessness, for it was the one moment in which He suffered its desolation, that we might have the consolation of never being without Him. By feeling without God, He redeemed those who live without Him.

Rather than being economically proud, intellectually proud and socially proud is being poor, poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.