

July 26, 2020

1 Kgs 3:5,7-12; Rom 8:28-30, Mt 13:44-52 (44-46)

So I know this person who is constantly frustrated. Always trying to figure out “why,” always frustrated because he can’t make sense out of the crazy things that happen. If you are sometimes feeling like this person you have to remember two things: (1) Not everything has a reason behind it that will satisfy us, and (2) not everything can be understood by human wisdom.

Let’s look at how our readings today can give us a path to take through these confusions. First, look at the belief “I should be able to understand everything.” Says who? We all hit dead ends when trying to figure things out and need to put our faith for ultimate answers somewhere - so we look for a person who has the right answer. When the question is technical we look for an “expert,” or trust “science.” When it is a matter of the workings of God, somehow everyone acts like an expert. But all these people contradicting themselves can’t be right, and many of the answers given are really just personal opinion. God is in many ways mysterious and works differently than we do (God says through Isaiah: *My ways are not your ways, my thoughts are not your thoughts*). In the first reading Solomon knew he didn’t really understand all he needed to, and didn’t think that all his advisors were always right either. So he turned to the one who knows all, and speaks to God: *Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong.*

The truthful answers about God and God’s ways will not satisfy us unless your mind is open to the true wisdom of God, and can set aside human demands and expectations. It is not the measure of the truth of a thing that it resolves our doubts, or even that we like it. Jesus’ discussion of the sorting of the fish, the realities of heaven and hell, or the need to give up things in a radical way and follow Jesus may not be to our liking. We don’t always understand everything, and things aren’t always going to satisfy us - only when we conform our mind to God’s wisdom do the truthful answers of God make sense and satisfy. Too often people suppose to speak for God, but often they are just expressing their personal opinions. To think that any one person, on their own, and unplugged from the 2000 year Christian tradition can always be right is not sensible. It takes a lot more than any one person’s belief - it needs a combined wisdom passed down by the Lord through the ages to begin to understand the mysterious workings of God without reducing them to mere human sentiment.

So where does that leave us? The real solution is a letting go of that need to find a human understanding to be the answer, and just open to the wisdom of God which is sometimes different than we would expect (for an example, look at the quote in the bulletin: “Sometimes we pray for God to change a situation when God wants the situation to change us”). If we ever think “well God is just wrong” ... maybe we should rethink. If it is a choice between God is right or I am right, and I pick me - I may be a little off. Solomon surrendered to God’s wisdom and looked to that over the wisdom of the world. God gave him the wisdom he sought and also all the things that he didn’t ask for. St. Paul says in the second reading calls us to go all in with God and let God take care of the things we don;t understand: *all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose*. The ultimate good is not that we understand things in a way that is comfortable to us, or that things line up so that we have this world the way we want it to be (which is impossible anyway) - unless you search for the good through God and according to God’s purposes, you will always be missing something.

To accept the mystery of God’s ways, let go of those human-based thoughts and goals that we hold on to - it’s hard to accept, but Jesus speaks about this over and over. If the man in the parable was too squeamish to sell the worldly things he had to buy the field, or if the jeweler failed to part with things he treasured to get the pearl of great price - they would have missed the treasure. There is a wisdom that Jesus entrusted to the Church and which has been speaking with the voice of the Holy Spirit through the centuries and is available to us today. The Lord speaks in the Gospel of a great treasure that awaits those who can surrender worldly thoughts and goals to be in union with God.

Jesus provides for us the Eucharist today as a means to that unity - it is mysterious and not able to be fully understood. Trying to fit this mystery into our limited minds, doesn’t work - surrendering to the truths God has transmitted allows you to be at peace with this great gift, this great treasure. The treasure of the Eucharist - even if it does not make sense to the world - brings us closer to the greatest treasure of all: an eternal life in that Kingdom where it all makes sense in a way it will never in this world. In that Kingdom all will be revealed, and in that place, God with great wisdom has made all things work out for the good.