

“I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to little ones.”

Jesus makes a particularly strong point here. He speaks these words in a special, unique way; addressing them as a prayer to the Father, but expressed in our language so that we can hear it. It must be very important to him. Why is it so important?

Over the centuries, many different people have tried to simplify the Gospel for the common man. Some of them would edit the Gospel to remove “unnecessary” or “too difficult” concepts. Others would insert popular commentary, for example the idea that the “little ones” are simply the poor, economically deprived and somehow neglected by political systems. There were even scholars who thought that the Gospel should be purged of all things that cannot be explained by immediate human experience. All of these propositions, at first glance, seem very attractive. Who wouldn’t want a simple, familiar, easy to understand path to God? At the end, however, all of them lead to the same catastrophic conclusion. Once human beings try to correct the Gospel, inevitably, they edit out God. They might actually provide some psychological comfort to the reader or present more or less original social perspective, but what they miss is the encounter with the living Jesus Christ.

So let me repeat the question: Why does Christ want us to hear his prayer? Christ knows better than anybody else, that for us weak human beings the only way not to lose our fragile humanity, the only way to protect our dignity from constant attacks of the fruits of our own inventions, is direct encounter with the Father. When God became man, in Jesus Christ, it was not to simplify himself so that He can be easily reduced to the sum of human invention and experience. God became man because the Father initiated a divine work of lifting human beings from the delusion of freely elected sin to the glory of freely offered love. This process cannot happen by human effort. The wise or the learned are those who attempt to develop a vaccine for sin, a method of caring for those afflicted by evil, treating it like a human disease. Real liberation can only happen by the free surrender of the sinner into the hands of God. These are the little ones of the Gospel: those who are like children who gratefully receive everything their parents give to them, who never doubt that everything that their parents bring to them is a life-giving gift of love. They cannot even imagine that it could be any other way. That’s the invitation of Christ. “Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will.”

This image also explains the unexpected promise from the second part of the Gospel: the Creator himself undertakes the ungrateful work of teaching us, who are stubborn and blind, to see the love of God. By entrusting all of those things that we discover in us

into the hands of God's love, the toil of our life is made not only possible, but easy. We are truly free only when our freedom reconnects with the great wind of the Father's will.

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