

Day Twelve: No Time for God

1. Place yourself in God's presence

2. Ask Him for the grace you seek: to be emptied of all worldliness and to order our lives toward God and our salvation

3. Today's Meditation:

As it was in the days of Noah (likewise as it was in the days of Lot), so will it be in the days of the Son of man...they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built... (Lk 17:26-28).

Before the Flood in Noah's times and before the destruction of Sodom in Lot's days, what were the people doing? Simple things. They ate. They drank. They bought. They sold. They planted. They built. What's so startling about this observation?

Before they were destroyed by the Flood and before they were destroyed by fire and brimstone, people were not necessarily living in grave sin. So why were they lost in the flood or the fire and brimstone? Because of their worldliness.

“When Our Blessed Lord describes the days before the Flood and again those which shall precede the end of the world,” writes Fr. Faber, “He portrays them rather as times of worldliness than of open sin. Men were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage: and He says no more. Now none of these things are wrong in themselves. We can eat and drink, as the apostle teaches us, to the glory of God, and marriage was a divine institution at the time of the Flood, and is now a Christian sacrament...The malice of it all is in its worldliness, in the fact that this was all or nearly all the lives of those before the flood, of those before the days of anti-Christ...Life began and ended in worldliness. There was nothing for God” (*The Creator and the Creature*, 324).

Fr. Faber continues, “Thus the outward aspect of worldliness is not a sin. Its character is negative. It abounds in omissions. Yet throughout the Gospels our Savior seems purposely to point to it rather than to open sin...It is a life without God in the world. It is a continual ignoring of God, a continual quiet contempt of His rights, an insolent abatement in the service which He claims from His creatures. Self is set up instead of God” (*Ibid*, 326).

After eleven days of meditating on our need to be emptied of worldliness, we finally come to its core: forgetfulness of God to the point of replacing Him with ourselves. We become our own standard of living in place of God. Through worldliness our lives become self-seeking rather than God-seeking. And yet, our one goal in life is to seek God. As St. Ignatius says at the beginning of the Spiritual Exercises, the Principle and Foundation of our life is that we were created to “praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save” our soul (23). And this God calls us to do in the midst of the world.

But let's be honest with Fr. Faber, “it is hard to live in a place and avoid the spirit of it. It is hard to live in the world and avoid worldliness.” “Yet this is what we have to do” he concludes.

“The world we cannot leave till God summons us; but worldliness, which is the spirit of the world should not be allowed to infect us.” It did not infect Our Immaculate Mother. It was utterly rejected

by Her Son. It cannot be a part of the lives of Her children and slaves of love that we will profess to be.

Questions to guide your meditation:

Where might I still be secretly and yet conscientiously ignoring God? Where might I still be refusing to give Him utter freedom over my life and my future? Where might I be holding onto a quiet contempt of His rights as my Lord and God? Where in my life might I be forgetting that I am a creature and not the Creator? Is there a happiness I still hope for outside of Him?

Recalling the words of Our Blessed Mother, am I so rich in the things (aspirations, fads, mentality, comforts, etc) of this world that at my judgment I risking being sent away from His Presence empty? (*He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and the rich He has sent away empty.*)

“This world and the world to come are two enemies. We cannot therefore be friends to both; but we must decide which we will forsake and which we will enjoy.”

– Pope St. Clement I

- Today's Prayer -

O search me, God, and know my heart.

O test me and know my thoughts.

See that I follow not the wrong path

And lead me in the path of life eternal.

-Psalm 139:24