



1. September 2019 “Humility as Mother of Virtues”

Sir 3,17-18.20.28-29

My child, be gentle in carrying out your business, and you will be better loved than a lavish giver. The greater you are, the more humbly you should behave, and then you will find favour with the Lord; for great though the power of the Lord is, he accepts the homage of the humble. For the disease of the proud there is no cure, since an evil growth has taken root there. The heart of the sensible will reflect on parables, an attentive ear is the sage's dream.

Humility is a basis of all virtues, and it is so valuable because it shows the greatness of God in us, while pride diminishes and takes into account one's own greatness and peculiarity.

A valuable way to obtain true humility - which has nothing to do with false subservience - is modesty. It is a question of doing what is assigned to us without making a special fuss about it. The false self-concentration, i.e. always putting oneself in relation to what we are doing, leads away from modesty. Likewise, when we look at people in our actions and look out for their recognition. We then fail to recognize that we are simply workers in the Lord's vineyard who carry out their mission.

Let us think, for example, of how a mother performs her ministry. She does it simply out of love for her family. It would be absurd for her to constantly underline what she is doing all the good.

There is a wonderful word of the Lord that can greatly help us to grow in true humility:

*"So shall it be with you: If you have done all that has been commanded you, you shall say; we are useless servants; we have only done our duty."
(Lk 17:10)*

This is what our Lord says to His disciples, and if we internalize it, it will serve us to remain humble even in the face of great tasks that may find much recognition in front of people.

What we do, and when it leads to the devotion of our lives, is simply the right answer to God's love. To seek and fulfill God's will in all things is the task given to us as creatures and children of God. If we were to ask an angel who has remained faithful to the Lord and has not participated in the rebellion of Lucifer, he would not make any fuss about his fidelity to God. He would answer in all humility and love that he did only what corresponds to the honor of God and the truth.

This is how our response and inner attitude should become. Let us leave to God to honor us when we have found His goodwill and do what is commanded us day by day. On the other hand let us be careful that God is given the glory and that we do not try to steal from Him what belongs to him.

Pride, on the other hand, makes man small, even though a pride person wants to appear as great in front of other people. The wise Augustine says: Humility makes us great, because the greatness of God works in us. The pride makes us little because we look at ourselves highly.

There are various forms of pride. The satanic pride of man wants to have his greatness at the expense of other people, often connected with the rejection of God or even in the conscious turmoil against him.

There are also forms of pride that are less aggressive, sometimes even more self-protection.

But all forms of pride are a major obstacle, because an evil plant sits in the heart and wants to spread and poison everything. It can contaminate almost all actions and therefore requires permanent control and overcoming.

We should earnestly ask the Lord and make us our pride aware, because as an Arabic proverb rightly puts it: "It is more difficult to discover pride in one's heart than a black beetle on a black stone in a black night."

The Scriptures also know, "*Who knows his own mistakes?*" (Ps. 19:13) The answer would be that God can make us notice the pride in our hearts. When we notice this pride, we should consciously carry the pride to God and ask for humility.

When we experience situations in which we are humiliated (e.g. if we always have a tendency to know everything better than other people and to realize

that we have been deceived) these are great aids, so that we do not close ourselves.

However, we should not let pass such possibilities without drawing spiritual benefits from them because to grow in humility is a great grace.