

## 12. September 2019 "God' s way"

**Lk 6:26-38**

***But I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To anyone who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek as well; to anyone who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from someone who takes it. Treat others as you would like people to treat you. If you love those who love you, what credit can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to get money back, what credit can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.***

***Be compassionate just as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap; because the standard you use will be the standard used for you.'***

Today, the gospel takes us to the "High School" of the Faith and we quickly realize - if we want to follow the words of the Lord - that this is only possible through the grace of God. Here we transcend the possibilities of our human nature, which is also weakened and incapable of such steps.

But the Lord does not expect something from us, for which he does not give us the possibilities. It is therefore necessary to listen to what is said at the entrance to this passage of the Sermon of the mountains. If we listen carefully the Lord will give us the key to these challenges, which are the words of the Lord: *"Be merciful as your Father is merciful."*

It is about the concrete realization of the word of the Lord that we should be perfect as our Father in heaven (*cf Mt 5:48*). Jesus shows us the way, how we come to a supernatural way of thinking and acting. Only by the grace of God it becomes possible to love the enemies. But this grace is not just related to specific moments in which we can make such great steps of faith and transcend our human limitations. No, such a grace can work permanently in us and transform our whole being. The perfection of God, his mercy, are not transitory attitudes but belong to the nature of God. So it should be with us. To all that the Lord calls us here in the Sermon to be fulfilled are modes of concrete divine love.

So the key to practicing this love is the love of God, which enables us to act like God. So we are called to be like God, but not in the sense that we want the omnipotence of God, as Lucifer searched, but we should love like God, his way should live in us.

This is the task of the Holy Spirit, the love between Father and Son, which is poured into us.

When we live in the state of grace and truly follow the Lord, we allow the Spirit of God to transform us. He, the Spirit of God, will teach us to love as God loves and empowers us.

The Holy Spirit will help us not only to look at the enemy in the sense what he is doing to us and what evil attitude is visible; He will lead us beyond this view and let us think of his eternal salvation. If evil is done to us without that we gave an objective reason, then the one who does evil is in a hopeless state, and his eternal salvation may even be endangered. When we think about it and perceive how the Lord gives his life so that people may be saved, he still prays on the cross for those who were responsible for his death, then the Holy Ghost will lead us to pray for our enemies, to bless those who hate us.

We must not fall into the error that we can do such steps on an emotional level, so we are called to possibly have warm and good feelings for our enemies. No, that is probably rarely, if ever, possible. They are acts of the Spirit of the Lord that empower us with supernatural love and we follow with our will. These acts are fruits of the spiritual life, listening to the Lord, whose words the Spirit of God reminds us and helps us to do the steps in the concrete situation.

Such marvelous acts will hardly our daily behaviour, because we usually have to overcome inner resistance: An enemy threatens us, someone who hates us wants to harm us, who insults us attacks our honor, who beats or robs us invades our personal sphere ...

This is not simply to overcome in a religious act of our will, and we feel the effects of such acts against us and do not make ourselves stoically insensitive. But through prayer, through a struggle in prayer, it becomes possible to pay more attention to and follow the work of the Spirit than to remain in our sensations. It becomes possible for us to bear the suffering in the Lord, and to give the answer the Lord wants from us. In this way we overcome the limitations of our human nature and the grace of God makes it possible for us to act in God' s way.