

23. September 2020

“Good advice”

*Prov 30,5-9*

*Every word of God is unalloyed, a shield to those who take refuge in him. To his words make no addition, lest he reprove you and account you a liar. Two things I beg of you, do not grudge me them before I die: keep falsehood and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches, grant me only my share of food, for fear that, surrounded by plenty, I should fall away and say, 'Yahweh-who is Yahweh?' or else, in destitution, take to stealing and profane the name of my God.*

The Word of God gives us protection, - a shield for all - because it conceals us in the truth and therefore in God himself!

To live in the truth therefore not only makes us free (*cf. Jn 8,32*), but in a certain way indestructible! Every attack against the truth may seem to be successful from the outside, but in reality it has an inner rottenness which in due course makes everything collapse!

Let us think, for example, of ideologies that want to offer solutions to many problems but then are exposed in their errors and leave a trail of destruction behind!

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church it is said that before the Second Coming of Christ a religious spirit of lies will take hold of people and offer them apparent solutions to their problems, but in reality this will lead them into apostasy (*see CCCn. 675*)! But this can only succeed if we are not sufficiently rooted in the word of the Lord, if the light of his truth has not penetrated us enough!

The Word of God can be explained and absorbed by us, but it does not need to be improved; “*to his words make no addition, lest he reprove you and account you a liar.*”

Nor should the Word be interpreted in a way that is agreeable to us! Saint Paul warns us: “*The time is sure to come when people will not accept sound teaching, but their ears will be itching for anything new and they will collect themselves a*

*whole series of teachers according to their own tastes; and then they will shut their ears to the truth and will turn to myths.” (2Tim 4,3-4)*

If we reinterpret or relativize the Word of God and, as a consequence, the authentic teaching of the Church, then we leave the shelter that the Word of God gives us! We offer ourselves to the enemy unprotected, so to speak!

In some very questionable developments after the Second Vatican Council, people have optimistically believed that it is possible to approach the world, virtually without protection, to discover its values, to enter into dialogue with everything and everyone, to embrace everything and open the Church to all kinds of influences!

Bishop Schneider writes about this on pages 197 and 198 of his book “*Christus vincit*”:

*“The phrase about 'opening the windows' before and during the Council was a misleading illusion and caused confusion. The people understood it to mean that the spirit of an obviously unbelieving society was capable of transmitting values for the life of Christians. In the course of the post-conciliar years, the partially opened floodgate gave way to a devastating tidal wave that caused enormous damage to doctrine, morals and liturgy. Today, the floods have reached a dangerous level. We are living at the height of a flood catastrophe.”*

It is true that we have to proclaim the Gospel to the world. On this way we can also appreciate what is realised or aspired of good in other religions. But not to come in irritations about other religions this is only possible if we are deeply rooted in the Word of God.

Therefore, we cannot approach and approach this world in an unrealistic and human optimism, but only in the mandate and mission of the Lord and with the spiritual armament, as recommended to us in the letter of the apostle Paul to the Ephesians in chapter 6.

If, for example, modern and unrealistic currents in the Church want to whisper to us that the Church and her teaching are not a bunker behind which one must hide, the answer is that if you approach the world without sufficient protection you are playing with fire and will burn yourself!

To put on a protective garment does not mean to isolate oneself anxiously, but to become aware of the situation in order to adequately fulfil the mission in the world! The Holy Scriptures admonish us not to adapt to the world (*cf. Rom 12,2*), but to overcome it (*cf. Jn 16,33*).

Therefore, we must take refuge in the truth of God's word, and beware of the “siren songs” of untruth and half-truth!