

14. February 2021

**“Allow oneself to be moved by God's Word”**

*1 Cor 10:31-11:1*

*Whatever you eat, then, or drink, and whatever else you do, do it all for the glory of God. Never be a cause of offence, either to Jews or to Greeks or to the Church of God, just as I try to accommodate everybody in everything, not looking for my own advantage, but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved. Take me as your pattern, just as I take Christ for mine.*

They are just a few words and yet you can make a whole spiritual life out of them! It is indeed so! Often a single word from the Lord is enough and the whole life changes. We sometimes hear it from the life and conversion stories of saints. For example, St. Anthony, the father of the desert, was moved by the word:

*“If you wish to be perfect, go and sell your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” (Mt 19:21)*

Thereupon he went into the desert.

What is decisive is whether the word really reaches us and causes us to change our lives! Not everyone is called to go into the desert, but everyone is called to let the Word of God work in oneself in such a way that it brings forth abundant fruit. In fact, every sentence of St. Paul could become a maxim.

*“Do it all for the glory of God.”*

If we put this into practice, then we also realise the word of St Benedict that we should always be aware of the presence of the Lord. What all will be dropped and what will be gained! How much our life will change, be it in the vigilance to avoid everything that could displease the Lord (gift of fear of the Lord) or to seek everything that would please him (gift of piety).

It would be the way of inner detachment into the great freedom that the Lord wants to give to His children and the way of great attentiveness to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We can wake up with this thought, start the day and in the evening do our examination of conscience to see if we have found the thread of the day in this

sense or have lost it, forgotten it or perhaps neglected it because so much else has come to mind! It is not as easy as it may sound if we try to do this consciously!

*“I try to accommodate everybody in everything, not looking for my own advantage, but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved.”*

This sentence can also determine our whole life and what a detachment from our own ego takes place here! Paul is filled with the most important thing, namely to lead people to Christ! He subordinates everything to this. It becomes his guiding principle.

In this context it is also important that he draws our attention to what is essential. The fire burns in him because he wants to help people to be saved.

How would St. Paul assess the situation in not a few parts of the Church today? Has this zeal for the souls, which filled so many missionaries - even after him - diminished? Do we no longer take it so seriously today? Do people no longer need to be saved today? Can everyone be saved more or less in his own way, in his own religion and worldview? Sometimes it looks like this is now a strengthened direction in the church.

No, it remains the same: to proclaim the message of the Gospel authentically is, together with one's own sanctification, the central task of Christians. It serves to glorify God.

Therefore, within the framework that is given to us, it is important to look at the whole, as St. Paul recommends. The whole means: What helps the other person best to encounter the Gospel, what is my task in this?

Even if we certainly do not have to proclaim the Gospel in every situation of life because we fear that the other person might get lost, or even if we are too overzealous, an inner vigilance is required as to when the moment has come to pass on the word.

We should not forget: Even our good deeds, which undoubtedly have their value in themselves, are only completed when people know that God is the author of our good deeds and that He is praised for them, thus making the way to Him easier for man! Otherwise, there is a danger that man with his good deeds becomes the centre of attention and he no longer becomes a mediator towards God.

*“In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.” (Mt 5:16)*

Let us take with us from St. Paul to allow ourselves to be moved by the Word of God in such a way that we place ourselves completely at the service of God!