

6. November 2022

## Pray for the expansion of the Word of the Lord

2 Th 2:16-3:5

*May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who has given us his love and, through his grace, such ceaseless encouragement and such sure hope, encourage you and strengthen you in every good word and deed. Finally, brothers, pray for us that the Lord's message may spread quickly, and be received with honour as it was among you; and pray that we may be preserved from bigoted and evil people, for not everyone has faith. You can rely on the Lord, who will give you strength and guard you from the evil One, and we, in the Lord, have every confidence in you, that you are doing and will go on doing all that we tell you. May the Lord turn your hearts towards the love of God and the perseverance of Christ.*

From today's reading we want to focus on the words that exhort us to pray for the expansion of the Word of the Lord. Unfortunately we have to note that in many parts of the world the proclamation of the Gospel is becoming weaker and weaker. And if the proclamation of the Word of God no longer challenges people or calls them to conversion, if it no longer instructs them or gives them direction, it loses its power. Then there is a growing danger that the Word will be exploited, instead of correcting the state of the world, to validate it. But then, who will embrace the faith? God's Holy Word is abused if reduced to a mere human word, which can become an obstacle to His speaking to us and which does not lead us to Him.

We, as people of faith, must not overlook the unhealthy adaptation to the spirit of the world that is taking place in our Church. This is indeed a great danger to the spread of the Gospel. If the spirit of discernment is not sufficiently applied, we run the risk of adapting to the mentality of the world, thus considerably weakening the impact of the Word of God.

Today we face the growing danger that, following the modernist tendencies that have become present in the Church for some time now, it will no longer be the Church that penetrates this world like leaven into the dough, but rather the world which permeates

the Church with its frequent deviations from the truth. However, such deviations are totally contrary to the teachings of Sacred Scripture: *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God"* (Rom 12:2).

Let us take as an example an essential affirmation of the Gospel, which makes us see very clearly what the mission of the Church is, for which the Lord sent his disciples into the whole world to proclaim precisely this message to all people: *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life"* (Jn 14:6).

No one can change these words of the Lord! They are so essential that everything else must be governed by them. If we were to relativize these words, we would be adulterating the Word of God and depriving people of the salvation offered to them in the Person of Christ.

When we enter into dialogue with non-believers, we are called to try to proclaim to them the message of salvation in the wisdom of the Lord. We can count on the help of the Holy Spirit in this!

When people are trapped in certain ideologies, our mission to them is the same, and we may be able to make them see the errors into which they have fallen.

When we meet people of other religions, we can try to recognize what has already been touched by the Spirit of God in their lives, and find a hook that can serve as a starting point to transmit the Gospel to them. However, we would fall into a great deception if we began to believe that all religions by themselves are a path that leads to God.

The Word of God, as well as the authentic doctrine of the Church, preserve us from such errors which, on an objective level, if not corrected, can lead to a betrayal of the true faith. Every person is invited to know God's way; and we, the faithful, have been commissioned by the Lord to make it known to the world in every possible way. No one can change this!

If we want to take to heart the exhortation that St. Paul addresses to the Thessalonian community, asking them to pray for the Word of the Lord to advance with speed, we

should, today, emphasize that the Word of God be proclaimed in its unadulterated form and with all its meaning and dimensions.