

21. January 2025

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

“Whatever the father does,
that the son does likewise”

Jn 5:19-30

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that he himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. “Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment. “I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Jesus is not intimidated by the deadly hostility He encounters, but speaks openly about the authority He has been given, especially to those of the Jewish people who should be best prepared to recognise Him. It was precisely to them - and there were some who believed in Him - that Jesus would have applied the words of Matthew's Gospel: *“Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old”*(Mt 13:52), or those other words of the Old Testament: *“those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the*

firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (Dan 12:3).

Jesus testifies that everything He does is not of Himself, but in harmony with the heavenly Father. All His authority comes from the Father, whom He wants to make known on earth. So He acts with the power of His Father and in everything He does the works of the Father are manifested.

It is important to understand that the Son of God was sent by the Father, and therefore His desire is that the Father be glorified through Him. No matter how great his authority, every true messenger wants the one who entrusted him with his mission to be honoured and recognised. It is the same with Jesus, who makes it clear that He can do nothing by Himself, but that the Heavenly Father is the starting point of everything and in everything.

Once this is understood, the correct spiritual order becomes clear: Jesus was sent to carry out the works that the Heavenly Father entrusted to Him. He is therefore the One who comes "in the name of the Lord" (cf. Mk 9:11). This is the message that Jesus wanted to make clear to His listeners, so that they might know both the Father and the Son better. If they understood the Lord's words and deeds in this light, they would recognise who Jesus is: He is the One sent by the Father to bring them salvation and redemption at His behest, the longed for Messiah.

By virtue of the power vested in Him, Jesus can raise the dead as the Father does, and all judgement over humanity has been given to Him, so that 'all may honour the Son as they honour the Father'.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 679) says this about the Last Judgement

"Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgement on the works and hearts of men belongs to him as redeemer of the world. He "acquired" this right by his cross. the Father has given "all judgement to the Son" (Jn 5:22; cf. Jn 5:27; Mt 25:31; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Tim 4:1). Yet the Son did not come to judge, but to save (cf. Jn 3, 17) and to give the life he has in himself (cf. Jn 5, 26). By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself (cf. Jn 3:18; 12:48), receives according to one's works (cf. 1 Cor 3:12- 15), and can

even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love (cf. Mt 12:32; Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-31)."

Jesus then goes on to describe the power He has received: whoever hears His word and believes in Him who sent Him will not be condemned but will have eternal life. The dead will hear His voice and live, because Jesus, like the Father, can give life. The judgement given to Him by the Father is also exercised by Him in full accordance with His will.

Tomorrow we will continue to listen to Jesus' further statements in chapter 5 of John's Gospel.