

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

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The Called and the Chosen

Many say that God is silent, that He is distant, that they cannot find Him. Nevertheless God, through all revelation, assures us that He speaks, calls, encourages man, but has seldom been listened to.

God says that He is, essentially, Father of all men. But it seems that men have only one ambition: to free themselves, to do without God. He also tells us that the hunger we may have of God is nothing in comparison to the hunger He has of us. Man can be without God, but God cannot be, does not want to be without man.

As St. Paul says: *“God wants all men to be saved.”* It is what the theologians call the salvific universal Will of God. His love as a Father does not know limits nor does it put up barriers. His greatest desire is that all human beings, proceeding from His creative hand, can some day participate with Him in the Heavenly Banquet. Therefore, He invites to His table, including sinners and pagans, if His own children refuse to come.

Many of us seek and find excuses when it has to do with God. We easily enclose ourselves with our own affairs: in some business or work which we value as more urgent, in a party we must attend or in a trip we have to make. We believe our case is legitimate, that our motives are perfectly valid. And thus we have a thousand and one pretexts for not attending the appointment.

Some may think: “it is already understood that I am a Christian, enough!, they need to leave me in peace.” Others may say: “I am a Christian in my own way, I do not need these external manifestations, I do not want them to bother me.” They are Christians in name only, with no coherence (harmony) between their life and what they say they believe.

There also exists those who will leave dealing with God for later: after I get married, when I have built my home or my fortune, when I do not have to work, when my children leave me in peace....or my husband....or my profession. Then we will be able to take care of God.

But this means that we cast God out of our life, that we corner Him in the temples, that we refuse to sanctify our state of life, that service to God and our daily life are judged as incompatible.

But God is a God of life. The Lord does not get discouraged and turns to us anew renewing His call. He makes use of those He has sent, His apostles, His Son Jesus Christ, His Church. Through the voice of His ministers, He reminds our sleeping and forgetful consciences of the eternal destiny He has reserved for us.

“He who created you without you will not save you without you,” says St. Augustine. God wants our free acceptance and collaboration. Otherwise, neither love nor access to the Heavenly Banquet would have merit.

Nevertheless, God’s patience and hope are limited. Therefore, TODAY we have to listen to His Word, to His call, His being among us. We have to give Him the personal response of our surrender and commitment, we have to attend His Banquet.

Dear brothers and sisters, if we harden our heart, if we do not pay attention to His invitation, if we turn our back to His call, then we are already *“outside in the darkness.”* As the Lord stresses at the conclusion of one of His many parables, *“many are called, but few are chosen.”*

Therefore, let us ask God to include us among the chosen and to permit us to participate in His Heavenly Banquet and that we may forever belong to His Heavenly Kingdom.

Questions for reflection

1. Is God someone close for me?
2. Do I feel I am an invitee of the Lord?
3. What is my response when I listen to an invitation of the Lord

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Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, La Feria, Texas USA 09042014
cantu_carlos@hotmail.com