

Reflections

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The Will of the Father

Prayer for Christ is much more than the breathing of his soul. It is the visible sign of permanent contact with the One who sent Him. Precisely, all of the important moments of Jesus are marked by this communication with the Father.

But it is about something even more deeper than prayer. The essence of the life of Jesus is centered on the fulfillment of the plans previously established by his Father. Religion, in the mind of Jesus, is simply an exercise of obedience. Today we do not like this word, but without it, not one single phrase of the life of Jesus can be understood. Throughout his life, He will scrutinize the Will of God, like someone who consults the map for a journey and will rise toward it, although steep and painful.

All his life will be under that sign: He will go to the Jordan so that justice may be fulfilled (MT 3, 15). *And once the Spirit made him go into the desert* (MK 1, 12). He will reject the devil in the name of all the words that come from the mouth of God (MT 4, 4). When someone asks him to stay in Capernaum, He will say that He has to preach in other villages because that is why I came (MT 1, 38). One day He will affirm that his food is to obey the will of the one who sent him and to finish the work he gave him to do (JN 4, 34). The Will of God is for Him delicious food. He is hungry for that will, like the starving are for his good fortune (blessing, beatitude).

There is a moment in which the weight of this Will seems disproportionate. It is that in which they tell Him that when He preaches, his mother and his brethren are there. And He, seeming to deny all human kinship, responds: Look! Here are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does what God wants is my brother, my sister, my mother (MK 3, 32). That fulfillment is for Him greater than the bonds of blood which unite Him with his mother.

That Will is, in reality, the only thing which interests Him. He does not doubt in abandoning his own – first for three days in the temple, then his mother for three years – to fulfill that will. Before it, all other interests disappear.

The golden chains of riches do not captivate Him, earthly honors do not worry Him, He flees applause. He even avoids speaking of his miracles because He knows that these only have meaning in regard to the realization of that Will.

But in the life of Christ there is a central obedience: that of his death which does not only last during the hours of Calvary, but all the years of his existence. In all the history of the world, not one man has existed who has had so clearly present during all of his time the horizon of death. Jesus knows perfectly... *I have a baptism to receive, and how distressed I am until it is over!* (LK 12, 50). Jesus lives in that waiting with serene certainty.

He will live under the sign of this threatening hour. And it will not be simple to enter that narrow door pointed out by the Will of the Father. The agony in the garden is a testimony that that obedience is not simple. The Son would want to escape it and only enters death because the Will of the Father thus indicates it, categorical and imperative, not removing the bitter chalice from his lips.

But we would be mistaken if we only saw the Cross in that obedience. In reality, the Will of the Father is the love of the Father. Jesus is open to that love of which blood is a part. And He is open with true joy because all is love. *As the Father loved me, I have also loved you; remain in my love, as I keep the precepts of my Father and remain in his love.*

When Jesus puts his life in balance in the Holy Thursday discourse, He feels satisfied much more for having fulfilled the Will of the Father than for the fruitfulness obtained: *I have shown your glory on earth* – He says with legitimate pride – *I have finished the work you gave me to do* (JN 17, 4). And then He will add on the background of the mystery: *I pray that they may all be one, just as you are in me and I am in you* (JN 17, 20).

Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask that the Lord also gives to each one of us that profound unity of life, love and Will with the Father.

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