

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Aug 16th 2016

Reflecting on today's reading, Ezekiel 28:1-10, it is important to understand the context of where this passage comes from. This was a prophecy of the destruction of the prince of Tyre. The prophet attempted to explain to the Prince of Tyre the cause of his ruin, which was his pride on account of his accumulation of wisdom and riches, which caused the prince to think of himself as God. The prophet warns the prince of the doom that would come against Tyre, forewarning him that death will come upon the people.

Okay, so this is not a message of hope, right? None of today's readings bring out a message of hope. These are messages to remind us of the doom and gloom we can expect if we look inward to ourselves as being successful through our own works, and build up treasures for ourselves here on this earth. God warns us of the snare of riches, haughtiness and pride. I'm reminded of a saying, "Pride goes before the fall." You know, the type of pride that puts "I" right in the middle and in control of everything. And, what is in the middle of

sin? "I" is in the middle of sin. Putting the "I" first can separate us from our God.

Pride will kill you. Pride is the sin most likely to keep you from needing a Savior. The comfortable moments when I tell myself how awesome I am and the need to pat myself on the back, taking credit for all things good, that's when I am truly in trouble!!! All of us have pride resting inside of our hearts, lying dormant, waiting for that opportunity to belittle the struggles of others, or to take the credit for things. It's insidious how pride can be lurking just around the corner, when we become all too comfortable with how well things are going along in our lives, but fail to thank and recognize the one from whom all blessings flow, our God and Savior.

It's important to be aware of a self-centered spirit, those times when we are far more focused on what others might think of us, those outward perceptions of us, other than the reality of what might live within our hearts. We have great success in the areas of holiness that have highly visible accountability. But what about those disciplines that happen in secret? You know, the things you hope no one will ever find out about the real you? If only they could read my mind, then they would have a different opinion about the person I am.

Why even worry about the opinion of others? What about the opinion of God? Those who stand in the strength of Christ alone find a confident hiding place from the attacks of men and Satan alike. Humility is not tested. A person is not thrown into a defensive mode, but continues to trust in God. Those who

are humble, approach God with humility...they have a trust that is stronger than any 6 figure income. Even though the pride beast might be laying in wait, we can walk boldly in the name of God and not forget from whom all things flow.

In my family's journey, we have learned to trust God, to look to Him in EVERY situation. Our journey has been one of humility, and I pray to continue in this journey no different than where we are today. God knows all things hiding within our hearts, even those embarrassing situations of prideful nature. We might think we can hide it from others, but God knows well what we need and where we need to be at every single moment. He has taught us to realize the innate need to not overlook those who are weak in spirit, to share with them the strength they can find in God, and the saving grace of His son, Jesus Christ.

Maybe more of us struggle with pride than we know. Only when the Spirit moves within us, humbling us as we trudge through life here on earth, can we remove the blindness of pride and see all who are sick and seeking the cure only God can provide. We might not like the journey, and we might question why. I just know that getting rid of the pride is the first step in being able to see the many opportunities in our world where need is ever present. Our richness rests in our God. How truly blessed are those who can fully grasp this understanding. So, when you find yourself not looking at others with a critical eye, but looking outward to understand how you can make the difference for others, thank God for these opportunities. He will guide us on our journeys and shine His light on our paths.

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