

27<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday  
October 4, 2020  
“Pseudogods or Godlike?”

Is 5:1-7  
Phil 4:6-9  
Mt 21:33-43

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

The tragic thing about the human race is that we don't readily learn from our mistakes. Year after year, generation after generation, we continue to do things which are destructive to ourselves and to untold masses of people.

Yes, we have made progress – In some areas we have made great progress – like those in technology and medicine. However, in furthering the good of everyone – and in the area of moral development – we are disastrously slow. There are, probably, many reasons for this, but one of the most serious of them has to be human selfishness with the pride that undergirds it.

We always want more – We continue to want the best – Often we resent and envy those who are better off – who seem to have more. And we take advantage of weaker folks in order to promote and increase our own wealth and power.

At the root of our selfishness and pride is our secret desire to be God! We want things our way – We want no one to question our motives – And we want others to serve us and do what we expect! Unfortunately, when leaders do this, eventually there is civil war and war between nations.

World War I was the “war to end all wars”. And then came World War II that was also to end all wars – But it did not. Because human selfishness always seems to become rampant after a generation or two. Thus, we continually repeat the same disastrous mistakes!

The scriptures for today teach us how important it is to serve the Lord God and not try to be gods ourselves.

God created the human race, and yet, we rebelled from the beginning. He established the Chosen People to prepare the world for the restoration of what had been lost. Unfortunately, those Chosen People failed to become all that God expected them to be.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that the vineyard of God, which was Israel, did not live according to God's plan. That vineyard produced only rotten grapes. Consequently, God let it be destroyed. This destruction happened during the time of Isaiah – and it happened again after the time of Jesus!

Jesus was sent, through God's mercy and love, to restore what was lost through our sinfulness. However, the leaders – the scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, and the elders – were selfish and prideful. They had become self-righteous – and, unknowingly, had set themselves up above God Himself. Their attitude toward Jesus and their behavior proved this.

The Gospel parable, again, refers to the vineyard of Israel and the prophets whom God sent to collect the fruits of goodness and justice that God expected. Yet, they rejected the prophets – they did them harm – and even killed some of them. And when God sent His Son, as the last resort, they killed him so that they could have everything they wanted!

Unfortunately, they lost everything! Jerusalem was conquered by Titus in 70 ACE. During the siege and bloodbath which followed, over one million Jews were killed – mostly non-combatants – The city and temple were reduced to rubble – And the survivors were enslaved or sold into the slavery of other nations.

Fortunately, that remnant of the Chosen People who had remained faithful to God, and who had become Christians, escaped before the destructive siege!

Brothers and Sisters, we can never be God. We can only become godlike with God's grace through Jesus. However, we can survive all the harmful machinations of the world by living the life that St. Paul describes. We can dispel anxiety during these troubled times, by acquiring the peace of God which surpasses our human understanding. This peace will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

The way to bring this about is through prayer and petition. We make our requests to our heavenly Father. And we look to model those around us who are true and authentic; who are honorable, just and pure; lovely in their hearts and souls; and have a real graciousness about themselves and in their interactions with others. These are the ones we can imitate to become all that God wants us to be. So, let us pray, today, that we can attain God's peace by living this way – the way of Jesus himself!

Amen.

October 4, 2020

Msgr. Russell G. Terra