My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

What is the most important thing in our life during the time we have here? As we develop and mature, it is likely that the most important thing will be modified in some way or even change. Certainly, children, teens, and young adults become increasingly more aware and focused upon what is most important to them as they experience more and understand more.

For some, relationships and family are the most important thing – For some, it is their education and, then, their profession – For some, it is their position in the community and the influence that this gives them. Sadly, for some, it is their egos which must be satisfied no matter what the cost. Finally, for some, it is to possess God by being possessed by God Himself.

Fortunately, God can be the most important thing in everyone’s life without sacrificing family, education, occupation, or position and influence. However, this is true provided that we focus upon and pursue those things according to God’s will and plan for us. In fact, God expects us to be the best we can be regarding those things which make up our time while we are here on Earth!

In the Book of Kings, Solomon was given the tremendous responsibility of ruling the Chosen People at a very young age. He had absolutely no experience at leadership. But he was God’s choice and he loved God. So, God came to Solomon and asked him what he wanted as he began his reign. Solomon asked for wisdom – for an understanding heart! He asked for the gift to be able to judge between right and wrong – between good and evil – so that he could better serve the nation.

Solomon put all selfishness aside, seeking to be God’s servant – And for this, God blessed him with all those other things for which he did not ask: a long life, wealth, and honor above all the kings of the surrounding nations.
Jesus takes up this same unflinching focus on what is, truly, most important in today’s passage from St. Matthew. A man finds a long-forgotten hidden treasure. He sells everything he has to purchase the land that holds the treasure – The gem merchant finds a pearl of exquisite beauty with an astronomical price. Nevertheless, he sells everything else just to be able to possess it and admire it!

What Jesus is teaching us is that God must be our hidden treasure and priceless pearl. We must be willing to sacrifice anything else that keeps us from God. Each of us is called to serve God in our own particular way. Our education, our job, our profession, our position, our family should each help us to serve and to love God. But like Solomon, we must have an understanding heart undergirded with humility. We must be able to judge between right and wrong, between the just and the unjust, between the truly good and the pseudo-good of evil.

The temptation we face will be to make small compromises which, in turn, lead to greater ones. Then it is not far from relegating God to a lesser place and inferior status in our hearts and lives!

At times, we will be asked to make great sacrifices. We will also be faced with great suffering and pain. Sometimes, this will be from the hands of others who would deter us, or derail us, in our efforts to serve God and keep Him first!

However, St. Paul has words of great encouragement for us in his verses from Romans. All things that happen to us – even the painful things and events – work together for the good of those who truly love God! God has a plan for us that will bring us, ultimately, to the same resurrection and the glory of Jesus in the eternal presence of God!

What we must do is remain steadfast and undeterred in our quest for the possession of God Himself!

So let us pray, that each of us attain all that God can be for us – both in this life and in the next!

Amen.

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