

February 16, 2025

Homily

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

18:15 – 25:10

Cursed is the man who trusts in other men, or “the flesh.”

Whoa! I thought we were supposed to build our lives on trust.

There’s a line that follows quickly that really tells us what Jeremiah is talking about: to trust in man and leave out the Lord. To ignore the Lord. To not let the Lord be the **first one** to trust.

That ties very well to the Gospel. The Gospel, which is trying to tell us something about how we are to live in the Lord’s trust.

This sounded familiar, the Gospel, did it not? It started off familiar. You know, “Blessed are the poor..” Oh yeah! I know this one. But the one we really know better is Matthew’s account. You know, the Beatitudes, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

This is Luke.

Now part of the difference between Matthew and Luke is for whom they were writing their Gospel, recalling the works and power and wonder of Jesus and how that addressed their lives. Matthew was written to a Jewish community, a Jewish Christian community. That’s why he emphasizes Jesus as the new Moses, the new Law-Giver. And in his three chapters on the mountain, similar to Sinai, he gives a lot of spiritual advice. Some of it is pretty lofty and challenging.

Luke, on the other hand, is writing to a community of Gentile Christians. He’s addressing them in their reality. Luke really focuses in on the basic human reality of the people throughout his Gospel. Thus, we hear four blessings and four woes. And they are counterparts to each other.

Blessed are the poor, for the Kingdom of God is theirs.

Blessed are those who hunger, they will be satisfied.

Blessed are those who mourn, they will laugh.

Blessed are those who are outcasts, for they will be part of the Kingdom.

Luke, through the words of Jesus, addresses very practical realities. We have the poor and the rich. We have those who are hungry and those who are satisfied. We have those who are mourning and those who laugh. We definitely have those who are outcast and those who are well-accepted.

Now Jesus does not say “Cursed are the rich. Cursed are those who laugh. Cursed are those who are well accepted.” That’s not his point.

He’s saying that where you are right now, there’s going to be a reversal at some point. You who are poor, you have the Kingdom of God coming towards you. You who are rich, you’ve already had what you were going to have.

Now, he doesn’t say that having riches is bad. Ultimately, it boils down to this: ***Whom do you trust first?*** (We’re back to Jeremiah.) Humans, or the Lord? Whom do you trust first?

That’s quite a question, isn’t it? Quite a question.

Perhaps you trust your job, your riches first. What’s that going to get you, ultimately? Perhaps you love to laugh. And in doing so, perhaps you kind of ignore the sadness around you. Perhaps you are part of the “In Crowd.” That’s a very ‘70’s term. The In Crowd. But what about those who are on the margins? And heaven knows, we’ve got a lot of folks on the margins right now.

Whom do you trust first? That’s the question for us to carry throughout this week.

Is it the Lord? Or the genius of humanity and what it can do?

I think it’s an easy choice, at least here (speaking).

But what about here? (pointing to his heart)

Whom do you trust first?