

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Feb 26th 2015

This can be a hard gospel to read for those who don't think about it deeply enough: we ask God for something and don't receive it, so we draw the conclusion that the first lines of this passage are either incorrect or an outright lie. And if we read the rest of this passage in that same way, the text seems to go along with that: God will not always give us what we ask for.

What Jesus adds, however, about not giving a stone when our children ask for bread actually explains and justifies this seeming inconsistency. Too often we ask our Father for the wrong things --- stones, snakes, scorpions --- and are convinced that they are good for us. We think that when God doesn't give them to us it is because He doesn't really love us.

The problem here does not lie with God but with us, for if we believe that God only loves us when He is obedient to our immature understanding and misguided desires, we have a very childish view of God indeed.

Jesus calls us to look exclusively to the Father for all our needs and to trust that He will find ways to delight us --- even if it takes years for us to appreciate how apt and rich a gift He gives us in every circumstance. And Jesus asks us to trust in the Holy Spirit as well, praying as best we can that our desires match God's, that we seek only the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in all that we yearn for and do.

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