

## Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Oct 14th 2012

What must I do?

What must I do or what are we to do? This is a question that is repeated in the Bible. We see many examples for this in the Bible. 1) Lk 3:10 - The people asked John the Baptist - What are we to do? 2) Acts 2: 37 - the people ask Peter. 3) Acts 6: 30 - the question by the jailer to Paul and Silas. 4) Acts 22: 10 - the question of Saul to the Lord. In all these we see a clear answer and the people who asked accepted the response.

Once upon a time a housewife was going around with the house chores. As she passed by the door she noticed that there are 3 old men sitting near her door. She keenly observed them and she understood that they are travellers because she had never seen them before in the area. So she went out and invited them to the house to have some food before they proceed further. They asked the lady "Is your husband around?" She replied "No". Then they said we will come in once the husband is there. As soon as the husband reached home the lady told the man there are 3 people at the door steps waiting to come in if he permits. The man agreed and she went to call them in for the supper. Then one of them replied, we are called Love, Wealth and Success and only one of us can be inside at a time. The lady went back and told the husband the condition.

The husband said let us invite the Success that all our business will be successful. The women said why should we work if we have Wealth with us and so let us invite the Wealth. As they were discussing the daughter in law came from the room hearing the discussion and said, let us invite the Love and if there is Love there will success and wealth in our life. She said what is most important in their life at that time was love as there was sufficient wealth and success in their family. So they agreed with the daughter in law.

The wife went out and told the visitors, the one who is called Love can come with me and suddenly all the three got up. The lady was surprised and she asked, you told me that only one will come at a time and now all three are coming. How is it? Then Love replied. It is true if you had invited either success or wealth only he would have come in, since you have invited me they will also come with me.

Many are trying to become rich and powerful, trying to achieve ones desires by all means possible. Many think that having money or possessions is the yardstick for having a happy life. Often we forget that happiness is not just in wealth or having everything that we wish. We need to know that if there is love all other things will follow. There are times in our lives, when like the young man of the Gospel, we look for the happiness (eternal happiness) but are not ready to give up that which, exactly, is contrary or blocking us from achieving it.

As we continue to read the today's Gospel we see that Jesus telling his disciple about the wealth and the possibilities or challenges with it. In the Old Testament riches were considered as a favour from God (Job 1:10; Psalm 128:1-2; Isaiah 3:10). The words of Jesus (23-25) provoke astonishment among the disciples because of their apparent contradiction with the Old Testament concept (Mark 10:24,26). Since wealth, power, and merit generate false security, Jesus rejects them utterly as a claim to enter the

kingdom. He also attests the special power of possessions to hinder Christian discipleship. Jesus uses the rich man's departure as a teaching moment to instruct his disciples about the dangerous snare that earthly possessions, success and prosperity can have. Total detachment from one's possessions is required of every authentic disciple. Jesus saw the danger of material possessions. They can fix our heart to the world and make us think of everything in terms of price rather than value.

Today as we reflect on the Gospel, let us answer the question of the young man, what must I do? Let us be sincere to us. If the word of God challenges, as it is more powerful than double edged sword, let us transform ourselves as Jesus wants and let us not be sad but look for eternal life.

Fr. George Vayaliparampil, cmf