

Thirty-Second Sunday Year A. How are we preparing for Heaven. 12th November 2023.

Someone was asked, if he would want to go to heaven, his response was “Yes”. He was asked again, how was he preparing for the kingdom? He said, I was not preparing, I don’t need preparation when the time comes, I will go to heaven.

The thought of this fellow who said, he doesn’t need preparation, is the way many people are thinking. It is no wonder that many people don’t make any effort to live a fruitful and holy life.

For many, a fruitful life entails acquiring knowledge, amassed wealth and being famous in the world. In the first letter of John 2:17 “the world and everything in it that people desire is passing away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.” All shall pass away except the word of God.

In our first reading, the Word of God is personified as Wisdom. It shines like a bride, does not dim; so that whoever searches for her could easily find her, she is quick to make herself known to everyone who desires her. That Wisdom is God himself, if we seek wisdom we will find a perfect understanding, the peace of mind we need. It is that wisdom that prepares us to the kingdom of God. To be there, we all need to seek wisdom.

In our gospel reading, we are presented in the parable with the example of ten virgins who were invited to the wedding feast (kingdom of heaven). The bridegroom represented Jesus and the virgins represent two categories of Christians. The five wise were those who prepared and were ready for the coming of Jesus and have genuine faith. They spent ample time preparing to fix their lamps and getting extra oil for the journey. These are the categories of Christians, who do not only pray or read their bibles but also live it, these are the people who make extra effort to connect themselves with Jesus during every Eucharistic celebration. They not only show up at mass, but they tried to go separate the Good News of Christ when the Priest dismisses them at the end of the mass. These are people who though are struggling with sin, but always acknowledged their sin and confess them as often as they realize their mistakes.

The second category were the five foolish virgins who were unprepared for the journey, and did not bring enough oil for their lamps, they used their time on material pleasure, they are afraid of challenges, and they want to escape suffering. They did not fix their lamps well, not to think of bringing a reasonable quantity of oil. These categories of people are those who will always say, we don’t need preparation before we go to heaven. When the time comes, we go to heaven. They make no effort in their journey of faith; they want to reap where they did not sow. They were busy asleep when Wisdom was calling, therefore, missed opportunity.

Education can help us to be knowledgeable, wealth can give us temporal happiness, attaining to a higher position can make us famous but they can’t give us eternal life. Wisdom is the virtue that can inform us to be awake and always prepares since we do not know the day nor the hour the Son of God will come.

At the end of our journey, the door will be open only to those who accepted wisdom and those who rejected will say open the door, and the Lord will say, I do not know you. Reading the Bible, praying and coming to the Church only are not enough to gain us heaven, but genuine faith. May God give us the grace to start our heavenly race and preparation today. Amen.

Peace,
Jingbe Simon