

**DAILY SCRIPTURE
READINGS & MEDITATIONS
YEAR A**

By **DON SCHWAGER**
Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

SUNDAY 7 OCTOBER 2023 – 27th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Our Lady of the Rosary, Memorial

Scripture: Luke 10:17-24

17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" 18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." 21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. 22 All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." 23 Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Your Names Are Written in Heaven

Meditation: Do you know and experience in your personal life the *joy of the Lord*? The Scriptures tell us that "*the joy of the Lord is our strength*" (Nehemiah 8:10). Why does Jesus tell his disciples to not take joy in their own successes, even spiritual ones? Jesus makes clear that the true source of our joy is God himself, and God alone. Regardless of the circumstances, in good times and bad times, in success or loss, God always assures us of victory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus assures his disciples that he has all power over all evil, including the power of Satan and the evil spirits (demons) - the fallen angels who rebelled against God and who hate men and women who have been created in God's image and likeness

(Genesis 1:29). Jesus told his disciples that he came into the world to overthrow the evil one (John 12:31). That is why Jesus gave his disciples power over Satan and his legion of demons (rebellious angels). We, too, as disciples of Jesus have been given spiritual authority and power for overcoming the works of darkness and evil (1 John 2:13-14).

Self-centered pride closes the mind to God's revelation and wisdom

Jesus thanks the Father in heaven for revealing to his disciples the wisdom and knowledge of God. What does Jesus' prayer tell us about God and about ourselves? First, it tells us that God is both Father and Lord of earth as well as heaven. He is both Creator and Author of all that he has made, the first origin of everything and transcendent authority, and at the same time, goodness and loving care for all his children. All fatherhood and motherhood is derived from him (Ephesians 3:14-15).

Jesus' prayer also contains a warning that pride can keep us from the love and knowledge of God. What makes us ignorant and blind to the things of God? Sinful pride springs from being self-centered and holding an exaggerated view of oneself. Pride closes the mind to God's truth and wisdom for our lives. Lucifer, who was once the prince of angels, fell into pride because he did not want to serve God but wanted to be equal with God. Through his arrogant pride he led a whole host of angels to rebel against God. That is why the rebellious angels (whom Scripture calls *evil spirits*, *devils*, and *demons*) were cast out of heaven and thrown down to the earth. They seek to lead us away from God through pride and rebellion.

How can we guard our hearts from sinful pride and rebellion? The virtue of humility teaches us to put our trust in God and not in ourselves. God gives strength and help to those who put their trust in him. Humility is the only true remedy against sinful pride. True humility, which is very different from the feelings of inferiority or low self-esteem, leads us to a true recognition of who we are in the sight of God and of our dependence on God.

Humility is the only soil where God's grace and truth can take root

Jesus contrasts intellectual pride with child-like simplicity and humility. The simple of heart are like "babes" or "little children" in the sense that they see purely without pretense or falsehood and acknowledge their dependence and trust in one who is greater, wiser, and more trustworthy. They seek one thing - the "summum bonum" or "greatest good" who is God himself. Simplicity of heart is wedded with

humility, the queen of virtues, because humility inclines the heart towards grace and truth.

Just as pride is the root of every sin and evil inclination, so humility is the only soil in which the grace of God can take root. It alone takes the right attitude before God and allows him as God to do all. *God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble* (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6). The grace of Christ-like humility inclines us towards God and disposes us to receive God's wisdom and help. Allow the Lord Jesus to heal the wounds of pride in your heart and to fill you with the joy of the Holy Spirit who transforms us into the likeness of Christ himself - who is meek and humble of heart (Matthew 11:29).

Nothing can give us greater joy than the knowledge that we are God's beloved and that our names are written in heaven. The Lord Jesus has ransomed us from slavery to sin, Satan, and death and has adopted us as God's beloved sons and daughters. That is why we no longer belong to ourselves - but to God alone. Do you seek to be like Jesus Christ in humility and simplicity of heart?

The Lord Jesus wants us to know him personally – experientially

Jesus makes a claim which no one would have dared to make: He is the perfect revelation of God - he and the Father are perfectly united in a bond of unbreakable love and fidelity. One of the greatest truths of the Christian faith is that we can know the living God. Our knowledge of God is not simply limited to knowing something about God, but we can know God personally. The essence of Christianity, and what makes it distinct from Judaism and other religions, is the knowledge of God as our Father. Jesus makes it possible for each of us to personally know God as our Father. Saint Augustine of Hippo wrote: "God loves each of us as if there were only one of us to love."

Seek God with expectant faith and trust

To see Jesus is to see what God is like. In Jesus we see the perfect love of God - a God who yearns over men and women, who cares intensely for them and who shows them unceasing kindness, mercy, and forgiveness. That is why the Father sent his only begotten Son who laid down his life for us on the cross. Jesus taught his followers to confidently pray to the Father with expectant faith, "Our Father who art in heaven ...give us this day our daily bread." Do you believe in your heavenly Father's care and love for you and do you pray with confident trust and hope that he will give you what you need to live as his son or daughter?

Most High and glorious God, enlighten the darkness of our hearts and give us a true faith, a certain hope and a perfect love. Give us a sense of the divine and knowledge of yourself, so that we may do everything in fulfillment of your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Prayer of Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226)

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

The power of the Kingdom of God

by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD)

"He also gave the holy apostles power and might even to raise the dead, cleanse lepers, heal the sick, and by the laying on of hands to call down from heaven the Holy Spirit on anyone they wanted. He gave them power to bind and to loose people's sins. His words are 'I say to you, whatever you will bind on earth, will be bound in heaven (Matthew 18:18). Whatever you will loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.' These are the things we see ourselves possessing. Blessed are our eyes and the eyes of those of all who love him. We have heard his wonderful teaching. He has given us the knowledge of God the Father, and he has shown him to us in his own nature. The things that were by Moses were only types and symbols. Christ has revealed the truth to us. He has taught us that not by blood and smoke, but rather by spiritual sacrifices, we must honor him who is spiritual, immaterial and above all understanding."(excerpt from COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 67)