

Third Meditation: That those who teach the young are cooperators with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls

First Point

Although Jesus Christ died for everyone, the benefit of his death is, nevertheless, not effected in everyone, because all do not make the effort to apply it to themselves. The response of our will is necessary on our part in order to make it effective. Although the death of Jesus Christ was more than sufficient to wipe out the sins of all, and be complete reparation for them, since God has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, nevertheless the grace that Jesus merited for us effects our salvation only insofar as our will is brought to correspond with it. It is up to each of us to achieve and complete the work of our own redemption.

This is what made Saint Paul say very well, speaking of himself, I accomplish what is lacking in the passion of Christ. Is there something lacking, then, in the passion of Christ? Nothing, certainly, on the part of Jesus Christ, but on the part of this holy Apostle, as well as everyone else, what was lacking was the acceptance of his will, the union of his sufferings with those of Jesus Christ as one of his members suffering in him and for him.

Since you are obliged to help your disciples to save themselves, you must engage them to unite all their actions to those of Jesus Christ, our Lord, so that their actions, made holy by his merits and by his consecration, are able to be pleasing to God and a means of salvation for them. This is how you must teach them to benefit from the death of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to make effective in them the advantages and merits of his death.

Second Point

Since you are ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ in the work that you do, you must act as representing Jesus Christ himself. He wants your disciples to see him in you and receive your instructions as if he were giving them to them. They must be convinced that your instructions are the truth of Jesus Christ who speaks with your mouth, that it is only in his name that you teach, and that it is he who has given you authority over them.

They must also be convinced that they themselves are a letter which Jesus Christ dictates to you, which you write each day in their hearts, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God, who acts in you and by you through the power of Jesus Christ. He helps you triumph over all the obstacles that oppose the salvation of these children, enlightening them in the person of Jesus Christ in order to make them avoid all that could be displeasing to him.

In order for you to fulfill this duty with as much perfection and exactness as God requires of you, frequently give yourselves to the Spirit of our Lord to act in your work only under his influence, so that your own spirit may have no part in it. This Holy Spirit, then, will come upon them generously, so that they will be able to possess fully the Christian spirit.

Third Point

All your care for the children entrusted to you would be useless if Christ himself did not give the quality, the power, and the efficacy that is needed to make your care useful. As the branch of the vine cannot bear fruit of itself (our Lord says), unless it remains attached to the stem, so neither can you bear fruit, if you do not remain in me. This will be the glory of my Father, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

What Jesus Christ says to his holy apostles he also says to you that you may understand that all the good you are able to do in your work for those entrusted to you will be true and effective only insofar as Jesus Christ gives it his blessing and as you remain united with him. It is the same for you as it is for the branch of the vine, which can bear fruit only if it remains attached to the stem and draws its sap and strength from the vine. This is also the source of all the goodness of the fruit.

Jesus Christ wants you to understand from this comparison that the more your work for the good of your disciples is given life by him and draws its power from him, the more it will produce good in them. This is why you must ask him earnestly that all your instructions be given life by his Spirit and draw all their power from him. Just as he is the one who enlightens everyone coming into the world, he also is the one who enlightens the minds of your students and leads

them to love and to practice the good that you teach them.