

## Children

### Children

What is being smart? There are two kinds of smart: school smarts the person who gets good grade and street smarts a person who know what to do out in the world. Your parents try to give you both

What is wisdom? There are two kinds of wisdom, humanity's wisdom and God's wisdom. People would think that wisdom is being smart and getting a good education and having a successful life. God's wisdom is knowing God and what His Word tells us how to live a life that pleases Him. Having God's wisdom brings true peace and satisfaction.

King David knew that his son Solomon would be Israel's next king. Before he died David instructed Solomon what he should do as he reigned as king. "And you my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever."

Then we have today's first reading After King David died his son Solomon became king over Israel. "Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the statues of his father David..." (1Kings 3:3a)

It is a gift to have family members who teach us to love and obey God. Just as Solomon heard what his father taught him, more importantly he showed his love for God by obeying what his Dad taught him about God.

One night while Solomon was sleeping, God spoke to him in a dream. Solomon recognized that the job to be king over God's people would require God's wisdom. Solomon's response to the question pleased God. Why do you think this request pleased God? (Solomon's focus was on being the kind of king that could lead God's people and not focused on being famous or important. His focus was God-centered and not self-centered.) What would Solomon's answer have been if he was focused on himself? (Allow responses. To be a powerful king conquering all the lands, lots of money etc.)

Can you give an example of a God-centered prayer for a kid your age? Allow students to respond. If they are quiet you can share an example to give them an idea. (Lord, help me to love the student in our class who is always mean. Help me to show kindness to him/her even though I don't feel like it.) What is an example of a self-centered prayer? (Lord, would you cause the mean student's family to move away so we don't have to see him/her again.)

Our prayers tell us what kind of wisdom we are asking God for, either for others or for ourselves.

In the next verses we get to see an example that shows us how God answered Solomon's prayer to have wisdom.

Two women came to Solomon with a very big problem. They both lived in the same house and both had infant sons. In the night one of the women rolled over on her baby while she slept and the baby died. She got out of bed and carried her son into the room of the other woman with a baby son. As the other woman slept, the woman with the dead son took the living son and replaced him with her dead son. When the woman woke up and looked at the dead baby she knew this was not her son. The other woman

would not give her son back and said it was her baby.

As Solomon looked at the two women he needed wisdom to solve this problem. Solomon told them to cut the baby in half so each would have one. Solomon knew the love that mother's have for their children and a normal mother would do anything they could to protect their child.

see how the mothers respond to this very strange command about this living baby. Solomon knew that the mother who wanted to spare her son's life was the true mother and commanded that the child be returned to her.

The same wisdom that God gave Solomon is available to anyone who asks. (James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.) If we ask God for wisdom we can make wise decisions and help others to see Jesus in our lives

## I King Duncan

There was a news story on AOL.com earlier this year about an unnamed U.S. Air Force veteran who bought a Rolex watch in 1974 through the Air Force base exchange while stationed in Thailand. He bought the watch, a Rolex Oyster Cosmograph after hearing it was good for scuba diving. When he received the Rolex, he decided it was too nice to wear in saltwater and decided to lock it away in a safe deposit box. There it remained for nearly five decades

At the time he bought it, the watch cost \$345.97, which was a lot of money to pay for a watch in 1974, especially for a military man whose salary was between \$300 and \$400 a month. But it turned out to be quite a good investment.

While appearing on an episode of "Antiques Roadshow" filmed in Fargo, N.D., this veteran learned his watch, which was unworn and came with its original box, certification and a guarantee could fetch between \$500,000 and \$700,000 at auction.  
(1)

Upon learning the value of the rare, pristine watch, this battle-tested veteran collapsed to the ground. I think I would too. Some people have all the luck. Of course, most of us would never spend a small fortune for a Rolex. For some of us it would take everything we have.

Which reminds me of a story that Jesus once told. Listen to these words of our Lord: "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

Jesus is telling about two discoveries that were worth selling everything their owners had—nothing held back—in order to acquire those treasures. That sounds sort of like investing in a Rolex for some of us of limited means.

Jesus is reminding us that there are some things in life that are priceless. These things are worth much more than a luxury watch. For example, how much would you take for your health? Let's face it. Some of us are selling our precious health quite cheaply, aren't we?

Or how much would you take for one of your children? Some of you are thinking, "Which one?" Just kidding, of course.

How much would you take for your good mind? Many of us do not appreciate the really important things in life until we lose them. There are some things that are priceless, though we may not realize their worth at the time. We need to sit down from time to time and enumerate those priceless things in our life and ask whether our day-to-date priorities reflect the things that matter most. Let me tell you about someone who learned that the hard way.

A fifty-year-old man named Michael was visiting the one-hundred-year-old Victoria Falls Bridge linking Zimbabwe and Zambia. This bridge is nearly as long as a football field. It offers a spectacular view of a large chasm below. Unfortunately, a continuous spray from a massive waterfall makes the rocks and vegetation along the lip of that chasm as slippery as a slide at a water park, but far less tolerant of error.

While taking pictures at the falls with his girlfriend on New Year's Eve, Michael dropped his glasses over the rim. For some strange reason he decided to retrieve them.

A headmaster at Summit College in Johannesburg and a highly regarded lecturer in geography, Michael was certainly aware of the risk. Nevertheless, he slowly edged his way to the rim. But then it happened. His foot slipped—and he fell more than 100 feet to his death. (2)

Michael lost his life trying to retrieve a pair of glasses! I believe you will agree there are no glasses in the world worth the loss of your life. Some things are priceless, they cannot be measured in dollars. Your life is one of those. Your family is another. Your health is another. But most important is your soul.

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

The kingdom of heaven, he added, is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. Finding one of great value, he went away and he also sold everything he had and bought that pearl.

Note that both of the precious finds were worth everything these men had! In other words, no matter how much you may own, no matter how glamorous you may be, no

matter how high on the I. Q. scale you register, if you have missed out on the kingdom of heaven, you have missed out on the one thing in life whose value exceeds all others. Nod your head if you understand that! I should have had you raise your hand. You could be nodding off to sleep for all I know. I hope not because, according to Jesus' teachings, this is the most important thing I can say to you.

*If it is true that the kingdom of God is worth more than everything else we own, don't you think that you and I should know more about this kingdom that Christ is describing, and furthermore, don't you think that this should be our foremost vocation—to appropriate that kingdom for ourselves? What can we say this morning about the kingdom of heaven that will help us see how precious it is?*

By the way, as we have noted before, the terms “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” are considered by scholars to be interchangeable. Sometimes writers of the New Testament say “kingdom of heaven” and other times they say “kingdom of God.” They mean the same thing.

As we've noted before, a good Jew considered the name of God so sacred that he or she would not even write God's name. Perhaps that is the reason that Matthew, who was writing for a Jewish audience, was hesitant to write “kingdom of God” for fear of violating the holiness of God's name. So he used the term “kingdom of heaven.” But they mean same thing.

What is this kingdom that Christ spent most of his ministry proclaiming and how can we go about appropriating this treasure for ourselves? It's interesting to me that even though “the Kingdom of Heaven” was the primary content of Jesus' teachings, it is almost an unknown entity to many Christians. So, let's try to get our minds around this important kingdom that Jesus talked so much about.

Here's the main thing we need to remember: the kingdom of God exists anywhere that God rules. Does God rule in your life? Then you are already experiencing the kingdom of God. Wherever God is, there is His kingdom. This is to say that wherever God is there is love, joy, peace, and total contentment. What would it be worth to you to have love, peace, joy and contentment in your life?

There was an interesting story online recently about the world's third richest man, Warren Buffett. Buffett has an estimated net worth of \$83.3 billion. That's a great deal of money. Somehow, with all that money, Buffett has managed to maintain many of his Midwestern values as well as a wonderful sense of compassion.

Buffett is a wise man when it comes to money. People pay small fortunes to solicit his advice. So he has been dubbed “the Oracle of Omaha.” How much would it be worth to you to have lunch with Warren Buffett?

It's interesting. Each year Buffett auctions off the chance for someone to have a personal meal with him and he gives the proceeds to charity. For the past two decades, he has donated the proceeds from those auctions to the GLIDE Memorial foundation, a ministry of San Francisco's Glide Memorial church. Glide Memorial is a remarkable

multicultural church committed to helping the poor, the homeless, and the most vulnerable among us.

Since its inception, the auctions of these lunches with Warren Buffett have raised more than \$30 million for that ministry. (3) You heard me right—30 million dollars for a series of simple lunches with the Oracle of Omaha.

Would you like to know how much the most expensive of these lunches sold for? This year's winner paid \$4.6 million to have lunch with Warren Buffett. Even if I could afford it, I wouldn't pay \$4.6 million for lunch with anyone, except for Jesus Christ—and he would insist that I give the money to the poor.

Which brings me to say this: Lunch with Warren Buffett is one thing, but how much would you and I pay to live in the Kingdom of God continuously? In other words, what would it be worth to have God totally rule over our life? That's what it means to live in God's kingdom. Or more literally, how much would it be worth to us to have the kingdom of God live in us? That is the option that Jesus is offering us.

And that, of course, is the option that we resist. Why do we resist it? Is it because we think we can do a better job than God in ordering our life? We love to be in control, don't we? Even if being in control offers us a mediocre life at best. We miss so much in life because we refuse to turn over complete control of our lives to God.

There is a fascinating story in *God's Little Devotional Book for Women* taken from the Los Angeles *Times* some years ago. According to this news story, a screaming woman was trapped for a time in a car dangling from a freeway transition road in East Los Angeles. "A half dozen passing motorists stopped, grabbed some ropes from one of their vehicles, tied the ropes to the back of the woman's car, and hung on until the fire units arrived. A ladder was extended from below to help stabilize the car while firefighters tied the vehicle to tow trucks with cables and chains.

"Every time we would move the car,' said one rescuer, 'she'd yell and scream. She was in pain.'

"It took almost 2 1/2 hours for the passers-by, California Highway Patrol officers, tow truck drivers, and firefighters—about 25 people in all to secure the car and pull the woman to safety.

"It was kinda funny.' LA County Fire Capt. Ross Marshall recalled later. 'She kept saying, 'I'll do it myself.'" (4)

That's us, isn't it? We want to be in control of our own lives—even if we sometimes mess up our lives, even if we are not too satisfied with our lives. Yet Jesus says to us that we will never find the abundant life that God offers us until we put ourselves completely under His control.

That's a lesson that the late Catherine Marshall learned. Some of you remember this splendid author, Catherine Marshall. At one time she was married to an outstanding

young pastor, the Rev. Peter Marshall. In the late 1940s he was chaplain of the U.S. Senate. During that time, after only 13 years of marriage and while he was the chaplain of the U. S. Senate, Peter Marshall died quite unexpectedly of a heart attack. Later Catherine wrote a book about his life titled *A Man Called Peter* which became a best seller and was made into a popular movie.

Catherine Marshall was an accomplished author. I read somewhere that she sold more than 16 million books. Her best-selling book was a novel titled *Christy*. It was based on her mother's girlhood in the southern mountains. It was turned into a CBS television series and a television movie. Catherine Marshall was a remarkable woman, but like us all, she didn't get through life unscathed.

In 1961 she wrote an inspirational autobiography titled *Beyond Our Selves*. In that autobiography she tells of a dark time in her life even before Peter's sudden death. After their son's birth in 1940, Catherine was homebound with tuberculosis for nearly three years. She was ordered to bed 24 hours a day for an indefinite period. It was a devastating time. Her husband and young son needed her—and she was confined to her bed. And yet, after a year and a half, she was no better.

She wondered—was God punishing her for some secret sin from her past? She tried confessing every wrong that surfaced to her consciousness. For example, once in high school she had cheated on an algebra test. There were other minor transgressions that troubled her mind, though none as bad as you and I have perhaps committed. She wrote letters to everyone she could think of that she had wronged, including her husband, asking their forgiveness for any sin she had unknowingly committed. Still, she grew no better.

Ultimately her search for health became a search for a new relationship with God. Prior to this time, she had been a conventionally religious person, but now she longed for something more. The question was what was blocking that relationship? Finally, she admitted to herself that she had never put herself completely under God's control.

And so she took that critical step that changed her life forever. One sunshiny June morning she made a quiet pledge to God. Here is that pledge she made: "It is twelve a. m. on the twenty-second of June 1944. From this moment I promise that I'll try to do whatever you tell me for the rest of my life, insofar as you'll make it clear to me what your wishes are. I'm weak and many times I'll probably renege on this. But Lord, you'll have to help me with that too." (5) That was Catherine Marshall's pledge.

Within six weeks the difference showed. She was out of her bed, taking walks, participating in activities with her family. In her words, suddenly "life was good, so good." That did not mean that she no longer faced adversities. Remember, this was but a short time before her beloved Peter had his fatal heart attack. Life still had its challenges, but with God ruling her life—living, as it were, in the kingdom of God—she was able to face life's challenges with the knowledge that she could always count on God to bring her through.

Wouldn't you love to have that assurance? Wouldn't you like to know complete fulfillment, complete love, complete peace, complete joy? You can, you know. Give your life completely over to God. A good start would be to pray the same prayer that Catherine Marshall prayed. "[Dear God,] From this moment I promise that I'll try to do whatever you tell me for the rest of my life, insofar as you'll make it clear to me what your wishes are." Give your all to God and you will possess a treasure that is priceless.

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1. "Veteran collapses upon learning value of his old watch: 'You've gotta be kidding me,'" In The Know, Alex Lasker, AOL.com, Feb 1st, 2020.
  2. Mail & Guardian Wendy Northcutt, *The Darwin Awards 4: Intelligent Design* (New York, NY: Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 2006, p. 82). Darwin Award: A Closer Look at Victoria Falls, Confirmed By Darwin, 31 December 2004, Zimbabwe.
  3. Michael J. Coren, May 24, 2019. Quartz.com/. <https://qz.com/1627772/what-is-lunch-with-warren-buffett-worth-3300100/>.
  4. *My Daily Dose of Inspiration*, <http://www.quietstones.com/mydailydose>. Cited by WITandWISDOM(tm), May 16, 2005, [witandwisdom-on@lists.tagnet.org](mailto:witandwisdom-on@lists.tagnet.org).
  5. (New York: Avon Books).

## Il King Duncan

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale tells about walking by a tattoo parlor along one of Hong Kong's narrow streets. In the shop window there was a display of decorations that could be imprinted on your skin--flags, slogans, anchors, daggers, skulls, cross-bones, and mermaids--but the one which caught Dr. Peale's eye was the phrase: "Born to Lose." This made him curious, and he went into the shop. Luckily, the proprietor spoke a little English, and so Dr. Peale asked him if people really did have that message permanently imprinted on themselves. The answer was yes. The last customer who wanted it had it emblazoned across his chest.

"Why on earth would anyone want to be branded with a gloomy slogan like that?" Dr. Peale asked.

The Chinese man shrugged his shoulders and said, "Before tattoo on chest, tattoo on mind." (1)

Now there is a profound idea: There is a tattoo on our minds long before one appears in our lives. "As a man thinks in his heart," says the Scriptures, "so is he." What a difference it would make for us if we just had the right tattoo on our minds.

And Jesus understood that. That is why he taught that the Kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man finds and covers up again; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Living in the Kingdom of God is the most important opportunity in this world. This is what Jesus is telling us! If you are living the Kingdom life, you have a tattoo on your

mind--a tattoo on your heart--that tells you that you belong to God, that God is with you, and that nothing in this world can defeat you!

"Born to win!"--that is the tattoo of the Kingdom life. "Born to win!"--that is what it means to be a child of the king. "Born to win!"

The Kingdom life is not simply the good life--it is the best life available to us. So let's look for a moment at what it means to live in the Kingdom of God.

In the Old Testament the path to the good life was called wisdom. Later parts of the Old Testament, and particularly the book of Proverbs, give high tribute to this virtue. Do you remember how King Solomon is praised for his love of wisdom? Every child in our Sunday School is taught the story of how the Lord came to the newly anointed king and offered to give him anything he desired. Solomon replied, "Give thy servant. . . an understanding mind. . . that I may discern between good and evil." (v. 9)

We usually associate the Greeks with the love of wisdom and knowledge, but the Hebrews prized wisdom as well, along with many other culturally advanced peoples.

In the third century B.C, Chin Shih Huang-ti, the first emperor of the Chin Dynasty, built two walls--the famous Great Wall of China and, at the same time, an "unseen wall."

The Great Wall, with its 26,000 watch towers, stretched over 1500 miles of land, and for nearly 2,000 years it prevented the barbarians from coming in. But at the same time it kept the world's oldest civilization, with its advanced knowledge and culture, from getting out. This was the "unseen wall."

In the third century B.C. China was self-sufficient; it didn't need the rest of the world. But the rest of the world needed what China had to share with it: the art of printing, the use of coal, water clocks, bronze casting, gunpowder, astronomical instruments, the naval compass, drugs, spices . . . and more.

As the centuries passed, however, the barbarians outside the wall gained inspiration, knowledge, and know-how, and eventually advanced so far beyond the civilization of Chin Shih Huang Ti, that China today is almost primitive by comparison.

For, just like the leaders of nations today who fear the freedom of religion, education, and the press, and have built intangible walls around their peoples, the Emperor stifled progress by destroying whatever literature did not correspond to his ideas, concepts, and philosophy. (2)

Here we see the chief limitation of wisdom as the key to the good life. No person or people is perfect in its wisdom. Certainly Solomon was not. He made several grievous errors as the leader of his people. For one thing, he married 900 wives. Now that might simply seem like too much of a good thing to some of you, but it was more than that. Each of his wives brought with her her own gods, and soon the land of Yahweh was filled with pagan temples. Not long after Solomon's death, his nation, which had once been so prosperous, lay in ruins.



Nor can we always tell the difference between wisdom and foolishness. See how little our own national leaders can agree on the wise course to take with regard to such vital issues as terrorism, the environment, health care, foreign trade, and so on. Who can truly be wise in such matters? No wonder that St. Paul cries out that God has made the wisdom of this world to be foolishness. (I Cor. 1:20).

But in the end, it is not wisdom that saves us, Paul declares, but faith! We must have faith that God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. Faith that God is with us in the power of the Holy Spirit. Faith that in all things God works to the good for those who love him.

Author Robert Dale relates the story of a country church that is located by a clear spring. Community leaders claim that the spring originated years ago when a slave woman and her children were dying of thirst during a drought. In despair of finding water, the slave woman prayed. Then she found the spring. From that day the spring has never dried up, even during the longest droughts. The community members interpret the spring as a sign of the presence and provision of God. And, interestingly enough, this church has never had a major conflict involving the entire congregation during its nearly two hundred years of service. (3)

Mr. Dale speculates that the story of the spring with its moral of God's constant care has helped keep this church's history healthy. Their faith keeps them that way. That is kingdom living! They have a tattoo on their brains that says God cares for us! If I can go about my daily tasks with the conviction that God is with me--that somehow God will take the messed up parts of my life and turn them into something, and if I can believe that I am born to win--not because of my own abilities, but because there is One who takes my tiny efforts and blesses them and multiplies them and uses them in a greater way than I can possibly comprehend--then my life will take on a new meaning, a new dynamism, and a new vitality.

In his Book, *Tough Times Never Last, Tough People Do!* Robert Schuller tells the story of Florence Nightingale.

It is a little known fact that Florence Nightingale was born to wealth and social prominence. She lived in London. In 1851, at the age of 31, this brilliant woman wrote these words in her journal: "I see nothing that I desire today, other than death." She was burned out and ready to give up. But she renewed herself. She reviewed her life and realized that money and social position didn't matter to her. Then she looked at the possibilities and decided that she wanted to help people. She wanted to become a nurse. Her mother and father said this was beneath their dignity, but she was willing to be ostracized by both her parents and society to follow her conviction. And so she became a nurse. At one point her mother wrote, "We are two ducks, my husband and I, and we've given birth to a wild swan." But Florence Nightingale's biographer thought differently. She wrote, "The mother was so wrong, for Florence was not a wild swan but an eagle."

Then the Crimean War broke out, and Florence decided to go and see if she could help. Her family said that she was either possessed by demons or had suffered a nervous

breakdown. She was criticized and considered insane. But for three years she worked among the dying men. She wiped away their blood and bandaged their amputated legs. But she didn't stop there. When she came home in 1859 she began to write and publish her notes on how hospitals should be operated. Today, more than a century later, you and I still benefit from her works. (4)

Florence Nightingale learned what it was to live in the Kingdom. You see, the Kingdom of God is not something we build. There is nowhere in the Scriptures that we are told to build the Kingdom of God. We are told to "see" the Kingdom, to "enter" the Kingdom, to "receive" the Kingdom, and to "proclaim" the Kingdom, but never to "build" the Kingdom. (5) It is God who builds the Kingdom. It is we who see it, enter it, receive it, and proclaim it. We can begin living the Kingdom life today--and not by wisdom, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

A missionary to the African Country of Chad tells of a most unusual offering he received in the native church where he was serving. In the prayer he said just before the plate was passed, he spoke of total dedication and thankfulness, of giving back in some measure to the Lord, with great joy, that which had been bestowed on each member of the congregation. One new young Christian woman had nothing to give--she had no money and no belongings, yet she knew that she had been blessed with a new life and a sense of worth since becoming a Christian. So as the offering plate came to her, she silently set it on the floor, got up, and stood in it. (6)

She was ready to live the Kingdom life. How about you? You won't find the best in life by relying on your own intelligence or wisdom or resources. It takes something more. Call it faith; call it trust or confidence--not in yourself but in the One who created you. It has something to do with having a couple of tatoos on your heart and on your brain. One says, "Child of God;" the other says, "Born to win." it has nothing to do with our merit. It has everything to do with our faith in Christ who has made it possible for us to enter the Kingdom of God.

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(1) Norman Vincent Peale in Positive Imaging.

(2) W. Clement Stone, The Success System That Never Fails (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1962).

(3) Robert D. Dale, to Dream Again (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981).

(4) Robert H. Schuller, Tough Times Never Last, but Tough People Do! (New York: Bantam Books, 1983).

(5) E. Stanley Jones, Is the Kingdomof God Realism? (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1940).

(6) From a sermon by David G. Rogne, Los Angeles, California.

### III Desiano

I used the word “ambicioso” in Spanish once and was surprised at the reaction. “You don’t say that word, Father,” my friends said. “It has a bad connotation—someone is in it for himself.” Wow, I thought, in English ambitious can often mean a good quality, a desire to get ahead, a desire to make something of oneself. Sometimes it can mean a person who will walk all over you. But not too often.

“Ambitious” is the word that comes to me when I hear these short images, parables, of Jesus in the Gospel. One man finds a jewel that will be forever valuable. He doesn’t sit there. He moves ahead. He will do anything to get that pearl because of what it means for him. Similarly, the man who finds the treasure will move heaven and earth to buy that field.

Jesus uses the image to task us what kind of energy, what kind of commitment, we are willing to put into seeking and living in the Kingdom. Because if something is important to us then we go out of our way to get it or preserve it. Jesus is hinting that if we do not find energy for the Kingdom inside us then maybe we haven’t begun to enter it. Maybe the Kingdom isn’t that real for us.

We have the fascinating figure of Solomon in the first reading. Here is he, just after he is made king of Israel. He is young and he certainly is ambitious. It’s his plan to fulfill his father, King David’s dream of a Temple in Jerusalem. And he will work to situate himself among the powers of the Middle East at the time. But what is his first act? To ask for wisdom, for what he knows he will need. Before Solomon is ambitious for things or power, Solomon is ambitious for the good of his people. He wants for things himself, but he mostly wants what’s best for others, for his people.

There’s a whole part of our Catholic faith that wants to make us ambitious for what good we can do for others. It says that the best spirituality we have does not revolve around ourselves and our needs, but around what God wants for all of humankind. God sends his Son to show us how important we are; his Son shows us the way we are to care for each other. God loves us with divine ambition!

We see that in the second reading. Paul is telling his listeners why they should have confidence even in the midst of their struggles. His basic point is this: do you not know God is on your side? That God will move heaven and earth to give us the fullest life we will accept. The only limit on God’s plan for us is our refusal to be part of it.

Maybe we don’t want an expensive jewel or even a field we have to dig up. But what do we want? The Gospel is asking us if we want the Kingdom, and all that goes with it. And, if we do, then does it show in the way seek and the way we live?