

Sermon: The meeting on the journey, 30.7.2023, Piotr Oskwarek

Matthew 11:28-30. 28 Come to me, all you who are troubled and weighted down with care, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke on you and become like me, for I am gentle and without pride, and you will have rest for your souls; 30 For my yoke is good, and the weight I take up is not hard.

Today, I would like to share with you something about the journey to the inside of the person. On my journey of knowing God's Love, I was struck by an encounter with Jesus through the image of Mary with the baby Jesus. I felt something warm as I prayed. I felt that I am loved by God. I started to seek something similar in my everyday life. I was invited not to seek for experiences, but for the source. I met spiritual teachers who taught me how to examine and take care of my inner world, so that I would always be on the way to the living God, who is in the heavens but at the same time "is in me".

I went to a spiritual two-week retreat for youth that was during a holiday. Every day they taught us about prayers. I remember very well the lecture on inner prayer. They showed us a scheme of the inner world of each person from a psychological point of view. This is how the scheme looked like. It was made from circles that are getting smaller towards the center.

1. FIRST CIRCLE - It is called "senses". There are people around us that are led only by their senses. For example, a newborn baby - first perceives the world with his senses, feels his mother, feels hunger, cold, heat, touch, perceives his mother's voice and smell.
2. SECOND CIRCLE - It is called "emotions". When teenagers fall in love they are driven by their emotions and they overlook everything else.
3. THIRD CIRCLE - It is called "mind"- Good example might be a highly educated professor who is guided by his mind.
4. FOURTH CIRCLE - It is called "depth/heart". Most people don't even notice the depth of life. They are so devoured in outer life that their desires revolve only around matters of the "senses, emotions or mind". They still feel an emptiness in their lives. A person who accepts God into his life and believes that he lives in him, recognizes that under the layers of "senses", "emotions" and "mind", he has within him a source of eternal love, unconditional acceptance.

Our will is also in this scheme. We place the will in the area we want.

- The will can be placed in the area of senses if we are guided by what we see on facebook.
- The will can be placed in the area of emotions if we are feared by the news we see on TV.
- The will can be placed in the area of mind if we are thinking about a lot of plans for our future life.
- When we place our will in the area of "depth/heart", we live a high quality life. We submit to God's will.

I believe that at the fateful moment when I felt God's love for me, my heart was awakened. I felt God's presence through a feeling of warmth in my chest. My "senses", "emotions" and "mind" recognized that in God's love my whole life finds meaning and I am happy. As we heard from the very

beginning - *"Come to me, all you who are troubled and weighted down with care, and I will give you rest."* I believe that Jesus has a very close connection with God. He submits to God. He honestly and lovingly calls God Father. Jesus himself found rest in the Father, he wished the same for us.

In the light of the scheme I have presented to you, we can understand that Jesus' call to rest does not only apply to our external duties. It is also a challenge to withdraw your will from clinging to what is superficial, shallow, ephemeral. It invites us to descend into the depths of the heart, where we can always find rest in God's love. We are all called to conscious submission to God in the name of Jesus. Jesus, who became a human and proved that each of us is a child of God. Our healing, our salvation, our rest, our vacation lies in the fact that we persistently submit through faith to His love for us. On the outside, we are still waiting to be in God's kingdom, but in the depths of our hearts, we can be there today, if only we decide. If only we believed and entered with trust. God wants to submit every area of our life with love. When we consciously receive it through faith, we call it prayer. Then it is necessary to dive deeply into the depths of the heart with love, to know God's will and surrender to it. So that our "senses", "emotions" and "mind" are subordinated to his will.

It's all abstract thinking. But this scheme has been helping me live a better and happier life for a long time. In addition to the joy that this thinking brings me, I am still examining whether my encounter with God within me is authentic. I know this by the love I give to those who are in need. I will learn this from those who are in need, as a feedback.