

Brothers and sisters... Sometimes we think that to pray we just need to say beautiful words... or that to come close to God we must have everything in order, without mistakes, without wounds...

But today's Gospel reminds us of something deeply comforting... **God is not impressed by perfection... He is moved by what is true...**

He does not look for words, **He looks for hearts**... He does not expect speeches, **but sincerity**... He knows everything, He knows your heart, and He only desires your simplicity of spirit...

This is who God is, my dear friends... God has a special love for the humble and the simple...

The humble person, in this case, is not the one without money, but the one who knows that even in his virtues he still falls short of what God wants from him...

God does not favor anyone without reason... He is just with those who have been **hurt or ignored**, no matter their condition...

God is not impressed by appearances... He is not moved by titles or **by works done out of obligation**... **God looks at the heart**...

The tax collector in today's Gospel recognizes his condition as a sinner... He has no intention of disturbing the one who is praying... He knows he is unworthy...

He **does not even dare to lift his eyes to heaven**, because he knows he has nothing to show before God...

His humble attitude and his prayer show a heart wounded by the pain of having offended the Lord...

And yet, he dares **to believe, to trust, to surrender**, and to ask for **divine forgiveness... forgiveness that God, without doubt, grants him...**

This man does not justify his sin, but he recognizes that **without God there is no way, no salvation...**

Salvation does not depend on our works, but on a humble heart that allows itself to be loved and forgiven...

The Pharisee fulfilled everything, but his heart was closed... **closed in his perfection and his pride... closed to pointing fingers and looking down on others just to feel righteous before the law...**

The tax collector failed, but his heart was open...

How many times do we act like the Pharisee without even realizing it? We talk about God, **but we do not talk with God...** we compare, we judge, and we forget **that true prayer is born from inner truth...**

Today the Lord invites us to come before Him just as we are... with our wounds and our weaknesses...

Because only those who recognize their poverty can experience the richness of God's grace...

Let us ask the Lord for a humble heart, able to say with sincerity... Lord, I don't have much to offer You, but here I am... I want to love You; I want to return to You...

And like the tax collector, may we also return home justified, in peace, and with our souls filled with His mercy...

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