

Please contemplate the following excerpt from The Sinners Guide by Venerable Louis of Granada:

*Of those who Continue in Sin, trusting in the Mercy of God*

Besides those who defer their conversion till the hour of death, there are others who persevere in sin, trusting in the mercy of God and the merits of His Passion. We must now disabuse them of this illusion.

You say that God's mercy is great, since he died on the cross for the salvation of sinners. It is indeed great, and a striking proof of its greatness is the fact that He bears with the blasphemy and malice of those who so presume upon the merits of His death as to make His cross, which was intended to destroy the kingdom of evil, a reason for multiplying sin. Had you a thousand lives you would owe them all to Him, yet you rob Him of that one life which you have and for which He died. This crime was more bitter to Our Saviour than death itself. For it He reproaches us by the mouth of His prophet, though He does not complain of His sufferings: "The wicked have wrought upon my back; they have extended their iniquity. (Ps. 128:3)

Who taught you to reason that because God was good you could sin with impunity? Such is not the teachings of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, those who listen to His voice reason thus: God is good therefore, I must serve Him, obey Him, and love Him above all things. God is good; therefore, I will turn to Him with all my heart; I will hope for pardon, notwithstanding the number and enormity of my sins. God is good; therefore, I must be good if I would imitate Him. God is good; therefore, it would be base ingratitude in me to offend Him by sin.

Thus, the greater you represent God's goodness the more heinous are your crimes against Him. Nor will these offenses remain unpunished, for God's justice, which protects His mercy, cannot permit your sinful abuse of it to remain unavenged.

This is not a new pretext; the world has long made use of it. In ancient times it distinguished the false from the true prophets. While the latter announced to the people, in God's name, the justice with which He would punish their iniquities, the former, speaking in their own name, promised them mercy which was but a false peace and security.

You say God's mercy is great; but if you presume upon it you show that you have never studied the greatness of His justice. Had you done so you would cry out to the Lord with the psalmist: "Who knoweth the power of thy anger, and for thy fear who can number thy wrath?" (Ps. 89:11-12).

But to dissipate your illusion, let me ask you to contemplate this justice in the only way in which we may have any knowledge of it-that is, in its effects here below.

Besides the result we are seeking, we shall reap another excellent advantage by exciting in our hearts the fear of God, which, in the opinion of the saints, is the treasure and defence of the soul. Without the fear of God the soul is like a ship without ballast; the winds of human or divine favor may sweep it to destruction. Notwithstanding that she may be richly laden with virtue, she is in continual danger of being wrecked on the rocks of temptation, if she be not stayed by this ballast of the fear of God. Therefore, not only those who have just entered God's service, but those who have long been of His household, should continue in this salutary fear; the former by reason of their past transgressions, the latter on account of their weakness, which exposes them to danger at every moment.

God Bless,

Fr. Jim