

The Two Sons



In Mt 21:28-32, Jesus told the parable of the two sons to the chief priests and the elders. When the father asked his first son to go and work in the vineyard, he was disobedient said “no,” but later on, he regretted it, changed his mind, and went

to the vineyard to work. On the other hand, when the father asked his second son the same thing, he said “Yes, sir,” but did not do as his father had asked. Jesus asked the chief priests and the elders which of the two sons did his father’s will – they all answered “the first.” But Jesus told them, “Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you.” Then Jesus explained, “When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.”

In the parable, the first son represents the sinners – the tax collectors and the prostitutes; because they were disobedient towards God by their sinful way of life. However, when John the Baptist came and called them to repentance, they believed him, changed their minds and repented of their sins. In doing so, they did the will of the Father. On the other hand, the second son represents the chief priests and the elders – they appeared to be obedient to God by praying in public and showing everyone that they followed the Mosaic law; they were like the second son who said, “Yes, sir!” However, when John the Baptist came and called them to repentance, they did not believe him and they did not repent of their sins. In doing so, they did not do the will of the Father.

The primary lesson of this parable is that a person may be publicly seen as a sinner, but when that person believes the Word of God, changes his mind and repents of his sins, he is doing God’s will; rather than a person who may be publicly seen as a devout person, but doesn’t repent of his sins. People only see through outward actions, but God sees through a person’s heart. God favors a sincere change of heart more than outward appearances and an empty “Yes, Lord!”. Sinners who repent of their sins enter the Kingdom of God ahead of self-righteous hypocrites who do not repent.

This parable teaches us that we have to be sincere towards God and others. We cannot just say “Yes” and later on do not do what we said we would do. This kind of behavior disrespects God and others; it does not take them seriously, because there is no subsequent action to back up our words.

What are the common manifestations of insincerity in Christians towards God? (1) Inconsistency between one’s public and private life: a person lives a hidden life of sin while acting pious or righteous in public. This is hypocrisy because it makes a person appear to be someone he is not. (2) Worship as a performance: a person uses worship or comes to church regularly as a religious show, but deep inside does not have a loving heart. (3) Selective obedience: when a person puts religion over faith by observing church rules while ignoring the core teachings of Christ like humility,

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forgiveness, mercy and love. (4) Managing sin instead of real conversion: when a person confesses his sins but lacks commitment to make lifestyle changes.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The OCIA Period of Inquiry is now open: If you know anyone who has an interest in becoming Catholic, please ask them to contact Fr. Bill at info@hnojatl.org.

We are offering Chinese language classes next year in the Spring. On Saturdays from 2-4pm, we have a class for children ages 5-6 and another class for children ages 8 and above. On Sundays from 1-3pm, we have a class for adults. Spring Semester begins on January 9 and 10, 2027. The 2027 Spring Schedule have been posted in our church website: hnojatl.org.

If you would like to practice conversing in the English language, come and join us at our new English classes after the 10:30am Mass! Today, class will be held in the Choir Room.

The 2nd Floor of our Education Building is almost ready! We need to buy whiteboards, 50" TVs and other classroom equipment, a medium-size copier and printing supplies. Our initial budget is \$4,000. So far, we have collected \$2,120. We still need \$1,880 to meet our goal. Please use the Religious Education envelopes for this special donation.

Attention Chinese Cursillo members! We will have our monthly Ultreya meeting today in the Conference Room.

We have a volunteer opportunity at the Atlanta Food Bank on December 5, 2016. If you would like to volunteer, please sign up with Angela Ooi and Daisy Tsui.

Prayer List: Bian Cheng Zhang, Susan Lee, Michael Tan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.
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Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 6:30 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 6:30 PM (English)		