26/01/2020

“The way of Salvation” by His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim of Holy Archbishopric of Zimbabwe



The way of Salvation

BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP SERAPHIM OF

HOLY ARCHBISHOPRIC OF ZIMBABWE

The Gospel extract from the Gospel of the Evangelist Luke (19,1-10) refers to the sincere repentance of man as a means of driving himself, with the Grace of God, to his salvation through Christ.

The special reference of the Evangelist Luke, to Zacchaeus, we have a living example, which we are obliged to emulate if we also truly want to be saved from our sins and become benefactors of the Kingdom of God.

Zacchaeus, even though he was a great sinner, was nevertheless saved, when he showed sincere repentance.

It is well known that in Christ's era, in the first century, in order to have their conscience clear, instead of collecting the taxes themselves from the people that they had enslaved through the power of weapons, would give this privilege to whoever would give them the most taxes. These were the well-known customs officers, who in their turn tried to gain double what they would pay their Roman oppressors. One can understand thus the unfair exploitation that was taking place to the people's cost, because even the great customs-officers, the leading custom-officers, had to give the right of tax collection to their other fellow district tax collectors and they in their turn saw to it again to gain more money to the people's cost. The result was that poverty, social injustice and misery existed everywhere. They would sell the property and houses of the poor people for insignificant amounts, and even for small and insignificant debts, many would lose their freedom and became slaves. Despair and ignorance reigned everywhere. The ruling nation supported and fed every social injustice because their carriers were corrupt people who behaved inhumanly .The few wealthy lived at the cost of the poor. This social injustice was condemned without reservation and with clarity by Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Luke considered that the event with the leading customs officer Zacchaeus also has to do with our salvation. This is why he recorded it in his Gospel.

We see in the person of Zacchaeus, a great sinner, the possibility for salvation. This means three things for us:

Firstly, if we consider that one among us is a great sinner, as were the Chief Tax Collectors, we have to pray or his repentance and salvation.

This is why Saint James, the Brother of the Lord, stresses in his relevant epistle "a majority of sins are covered by our efforts to bring someone closer to Christ"

Secondly, if we feel that we ourselves are sinners we must show the same repentance, which Zacchaeus showed, and we must be sure that we can be saved with the grace of Christ just like Zacchaeus.

Thirdly, Repentance (metanoia) means to change our mind and to work for restoration of social justice by sharing all the things we have with the suffering people.

It is up to us to come with genuine repentance to our clergy in order to confess our sins, our injustices and our faults supporting wherever we can the philanthropic and missionary work of our Church.

Our church is waiting to protect all of us with much love because we are her beloved children. And if there are some people, who make us bitter, like those who objected, because Jesus Christ went to the house of a sinner, this will not intimidate us from continuing with faith in God, our pastoral work which is well-pleasing to God, for the good of all as much in this world as in the future one, the eternal Kingdom of Heaven

— Source: Greek Orthodox Archbishopric of Zimbabwe / Facebook