

SIN & FORGIVENESS

Lk 17: 1-4 - Millstone and repeated forgiveness

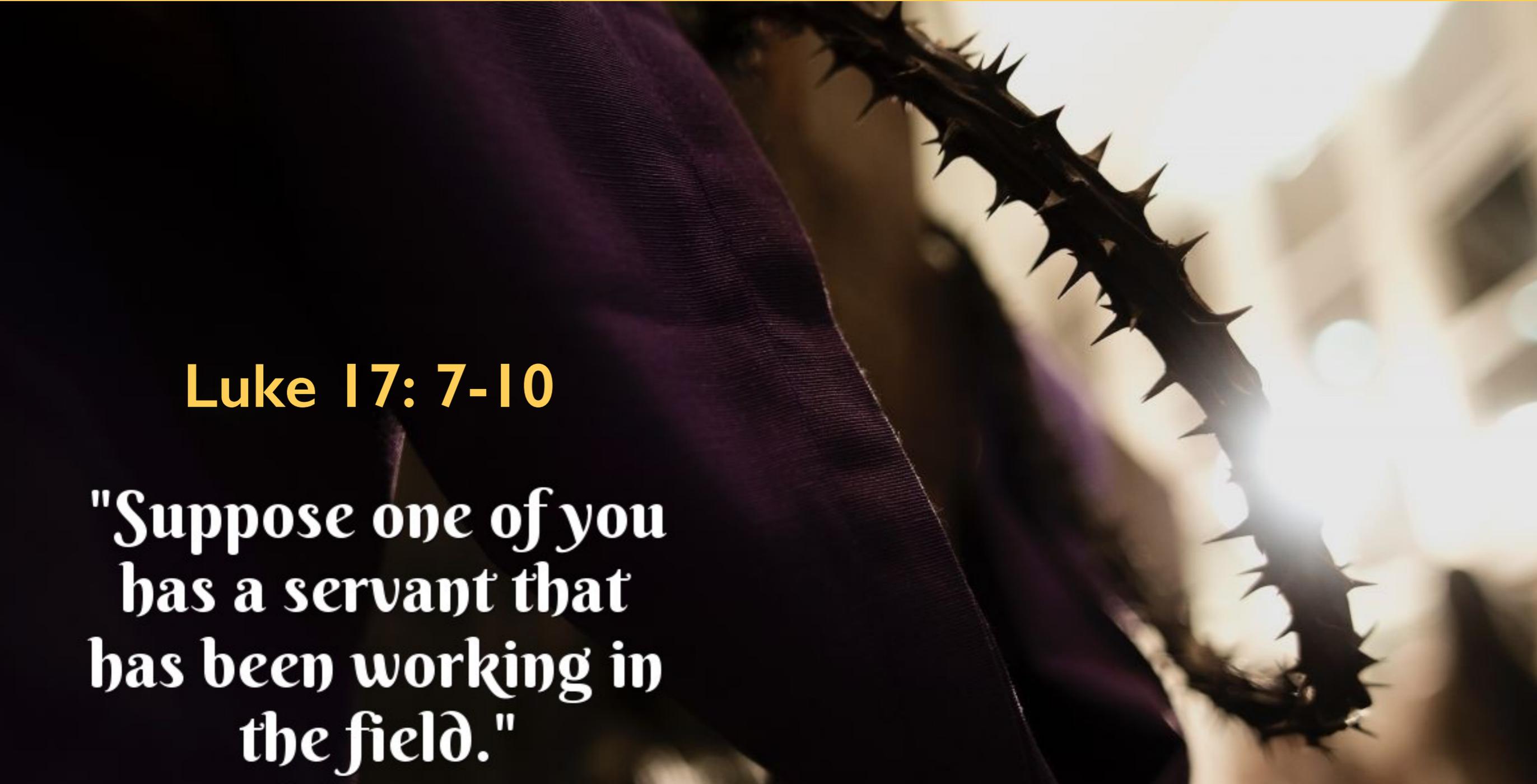


- There is a special caution regarding those who cause little ones to sin.
- Jesus says forgive 7 times, **but for Peter?**
 - **Mt 18: 21-23**

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

Luke 17: 7-10

**"Suppose one of you
has a servant that
has been working in
the field."**



ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

- Jesus is not approving this master's perceived abusive and arbitrary behavior. He is using an example very familiar to his audience to show **the attitude a person should have towards his Creator: everything, from our very existence to the eternal happiness promised us, is a gift from God.**
- **Man is always in debt to God; no matter what service he renders him.**
- Saint Luke's Gospel. (2005). (p. 148). Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers.

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

- The design and end of this parable is to show that, rigorously speaking, we are servants with regard to God.
- This sovereign Master has a right to exact of us every kind of service, and to *make us apply ourselves to any task he may think proper*, without our having any reason to complain either of the difficulty, trouble, or length of our labors; We are entirely his, and he is master of our persons, time, and talents.
- Haydock, G. L. (1859). Haydock's Catholic Bible Commentary (Lk 17:7). New York: Edward Dunigan and Brother.

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

- Because faith makes its possessor a keeper of God's commandments, and adorns him with wonderful works; it would seem from thence that a man might thereby fall into the sin of pride.
- Our Lord therefore forewarned His Apostles by a fit example, not to boast themselves in their virtues, saying: *But which of you having a servant plowing, or tending sheep.*
- Thomas Aquinas. (1843). *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected out of the Works of the Fathers: St. Luke.* (J. H. Newman, Ed.) (Vol. 3, p. 582). Oxford: John Henry Parker.

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

- **Cyril of Alexandria.**

Our Lord teaches us that it is no more than the just and proper right of a master to require, as their duty, subjection from servants, adding, does he need to thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I say not.

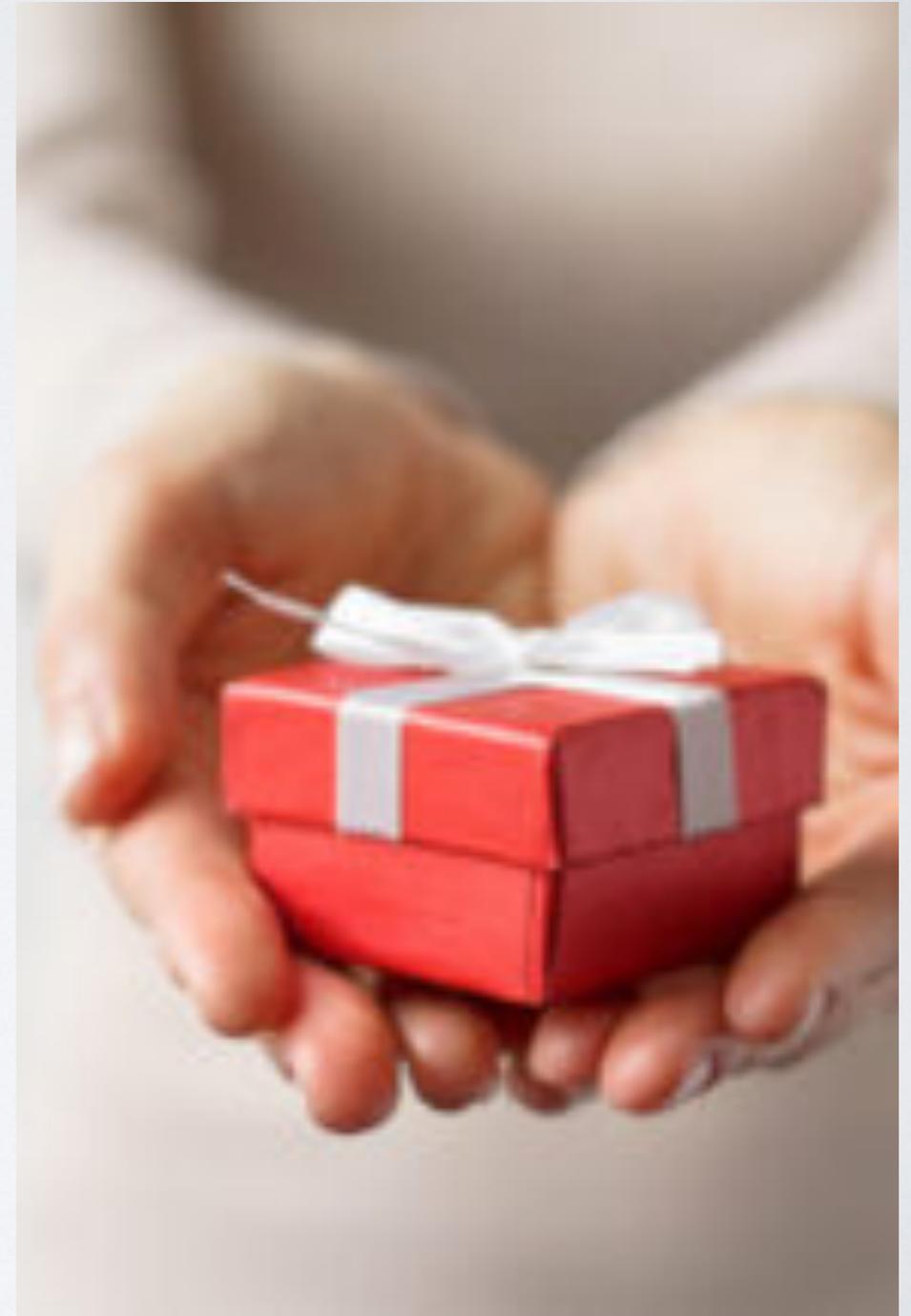
- **Here then is the disease of pride cut away. Why servant do you then boast of yourself? Do you not know that if you do not pay your debt that danger is at hand, *but if you do pay, you have nothing to be thanked for?***

MORAL OF THE PARABLE

- Putting Lk 17: 5-6 and Lk 17: 7-10 together, Jesus taught that His followers have responsibilities toward God.
- **The first responsibility is to have faith.** The disciples needed not more faith but the right kind of faith. One that could do amazingly miraculous things, such as uprooting a mulberry tree, a tree with deep roots.
- **The disciples' second responsibility toward God was humble service.** They should not expect special praise for doing things they were expected to do. A servant does not get special praise from his master for doing his job. Likewise His disciples have certain responsibilities which they are to fulfill in humility as God's unworthy servants.

MORAL OF THE PARABLE

- **Salvation is a gift.**
The Master does not owe it even to a faithful servant, because it can't not be earned.
- Therefore the Servant should not be proud of his service, so much as obedient to it. After all, he is already privileged to even be a worker in the Master's field.
- When we **love** our Master and **serve**, then as Jesus teaches "*we have done what we are obliged to do.*"



OBLIGATION VERSUS CHOICE

When is something a **precept**
(obligation),

and

When is something a **counsel**
(an encouraged choice)

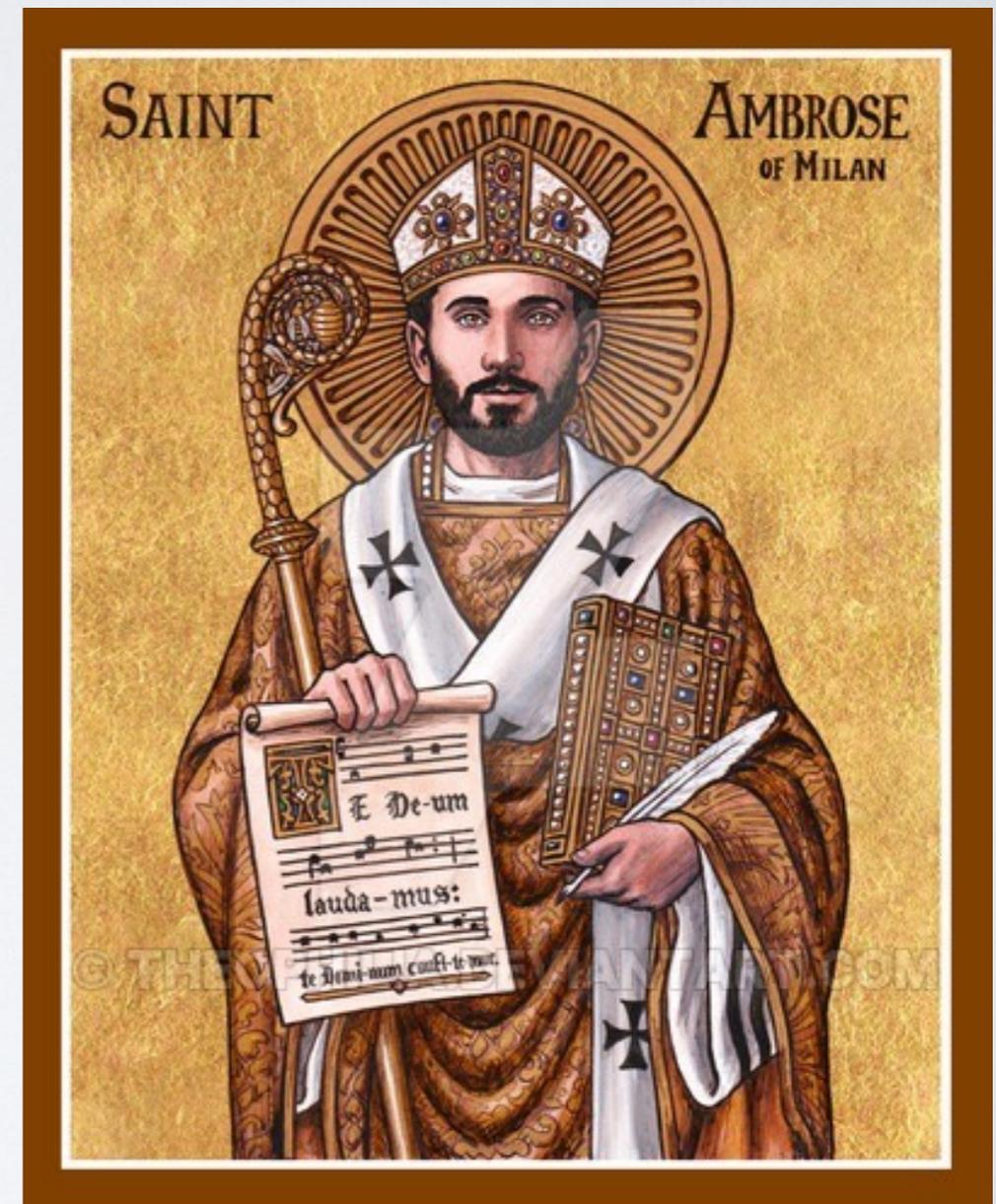


ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

- St Ambrose illustrates the concept in this Parable to inform us further in differentiating between

PRECEPT and COUNSEL.

- St Ambrose, Bishop of Milan died in 397 AD.
- He helped kill Arianism and is also remembered as the Bishop who baptized St Augustine.

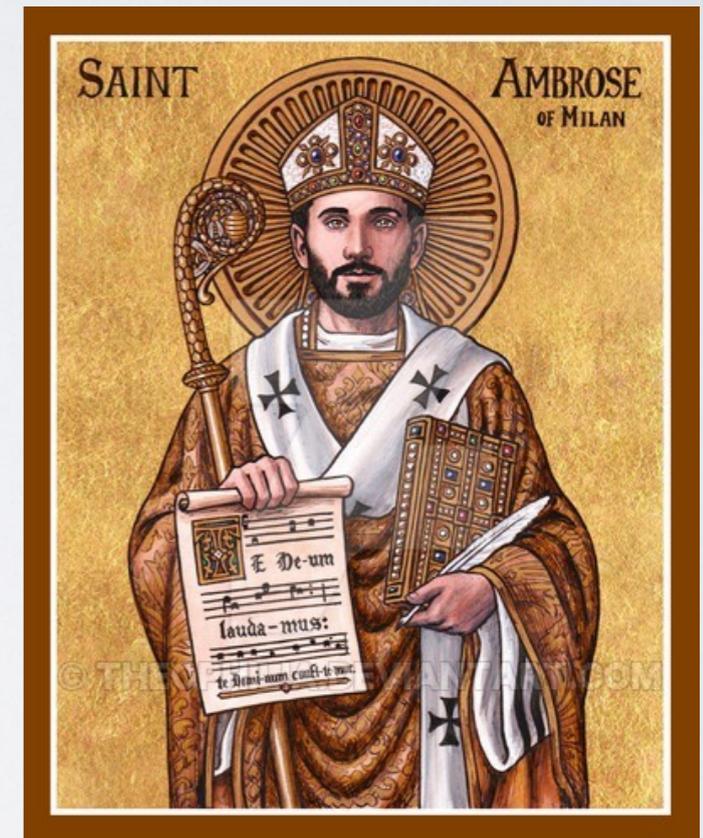


ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

The difference between matters of **precept** and of **counsel** is treated as shown in the case of the **young richman** in the Gospel, and the difference of the rewards set forth both for counsels and precepts is spoken of.

72. ...**Where there is a commandment, there is a law; where counsel, there is grace.** A Commandment is given to enforce what is according to nature, a counsel to incite us to follow grace.

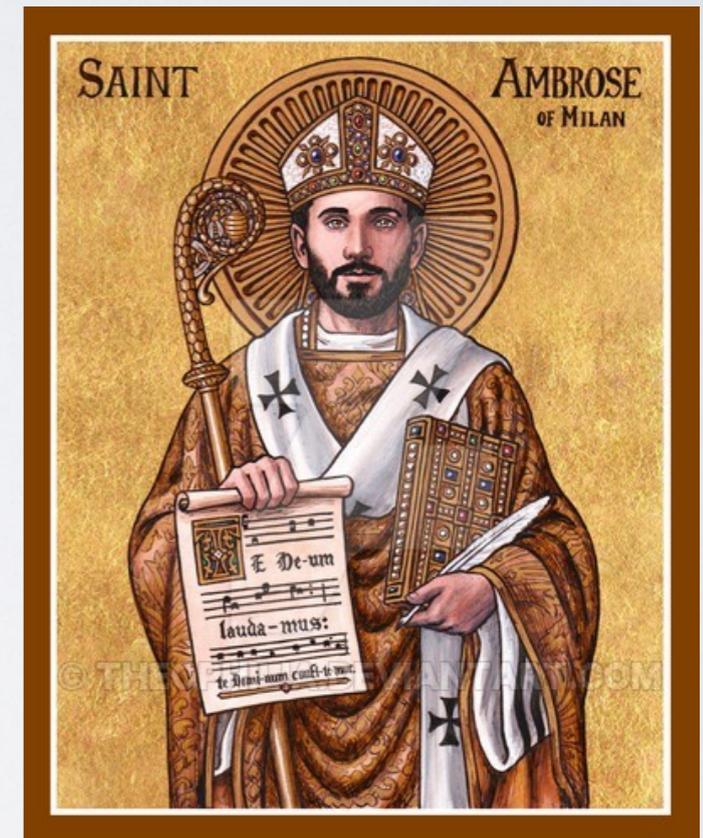
The Law was given that, through fear of punishment, it might recall those who were wandering beyond the limits of nature, to their observance, but grace to incite the elect both by the desire of good things, and also by the promised rewards.



ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

73. You will see the difference between precept and counsel, if you remember the case of him, the rich young man in the Gospel, to whom it is first commanded to do no murder, not to commit adultery, not to bear false witness; for that is a commandment which has a penalty for its transgression.

But when he said that he had fulfilled all the commandments of the Law, there is given to him a counsel that he should sell all that he had, give it to the poor and follow the Lord, for these things are not imposed as commands, but are offered as counsels.

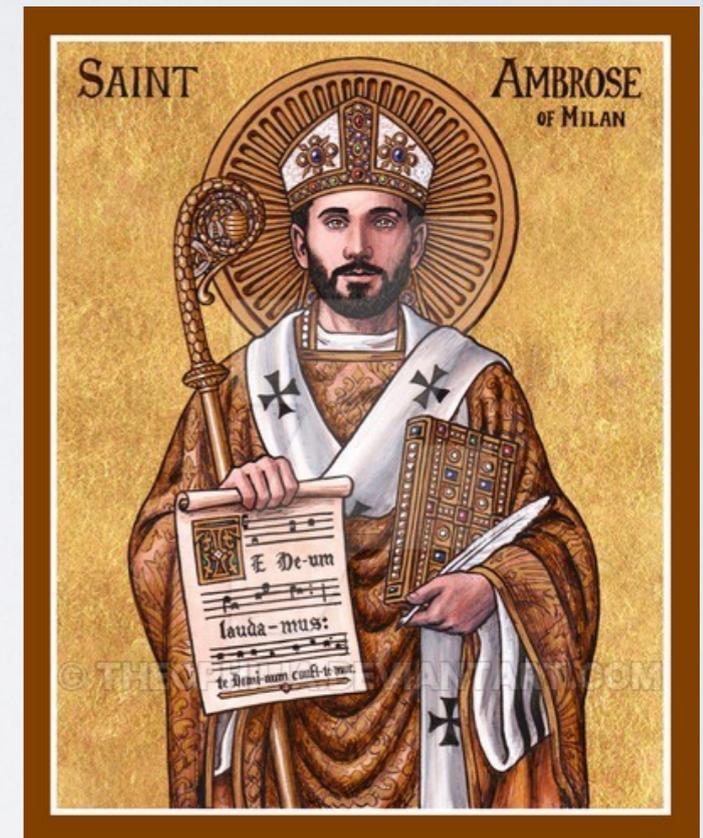


ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

For there are two ways of commanding things, one by way of precept, the other by way of counsel. And so the Lord in one way says: “Thou shalt not kill,” where He gives a commandment; in the other He says: “If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast.” He is, then, not bound by a commandment to whom the choice is left.

74. And so they who have fulfilled commandments are able to say: “We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.”

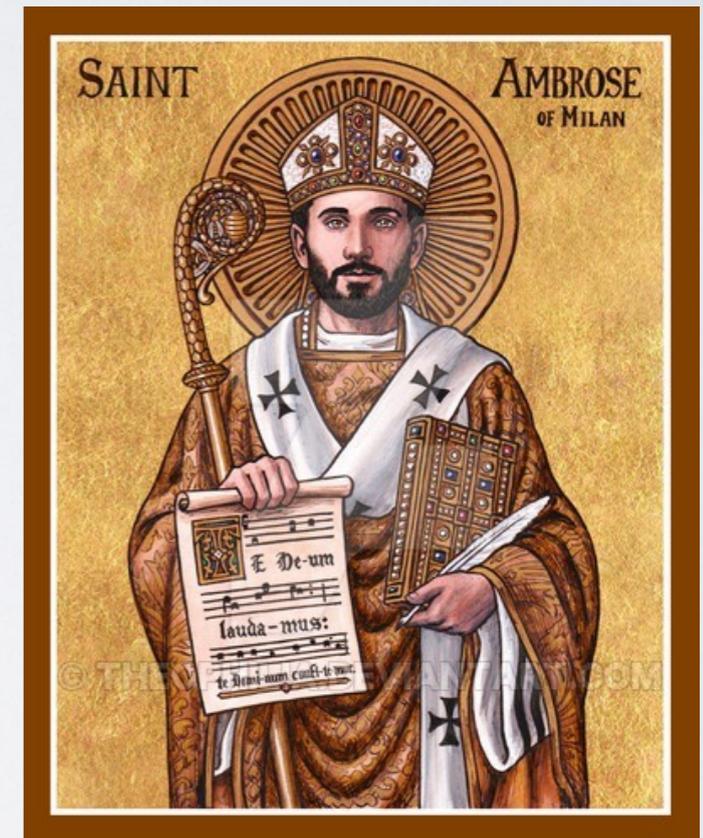
But the man who by choice gives away all his goods, would not say this - but rather await the stored-up rewards like the Peter who says: “Behold we have forsaken all and followed you, what shall we have therefore?” The reply is a future reward: “You shalt sit upon twelve thrones, judging the tribes of Israel.”



ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

And to servants who faithfully preserved their Lord's talents, He also promises rewards indeed, saying: "Because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things."

He who has kept good faith (*doing his obligation even better than expected*) has merited that good faith should be kept with him; for has made good profit for his Lord, because he has not sought his own benefit, (*exceeded the demands of the precepts*) and has thereby gained a claim of mercy as a friend, rather than a servant, and therefore the privilege of receiving a smaller heavenly reward.



Ambrose of Milan. (1896). [Concerning Widows](#). In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin, & H. T. F. Duckworth (Trans.), *St. Ambrose: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 10, pp. 403–404). New York: Christian Literature Company.

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT

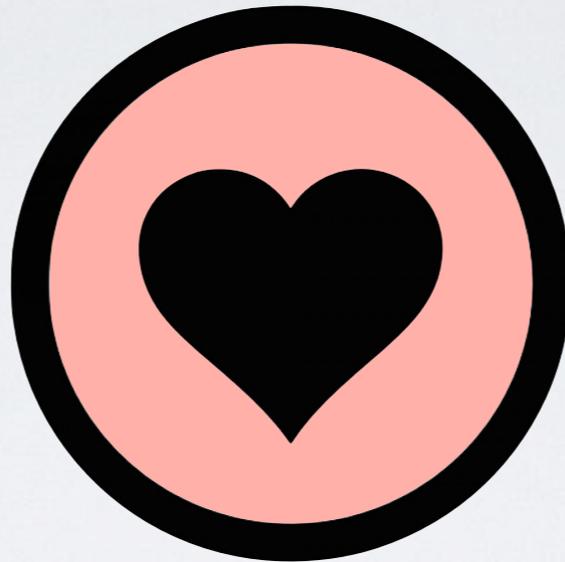


The difference between a **precept** and a **counsel** lies in this:

that the **precept** is a matter of necessity:

while the **counsel** is left to the free choice of the person to whom it is proposed.

ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT



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An obligation (*precept*) done *beyond* expectation, can still merit a *smaller* reward than a freely chosen counsel, because like the counsel, it is the result of love.

A SIDE NOTE

- The propriety of applause during Liturgy (ie.: Mass)
- Three Popes speak, perhaps even when words would not have appeared to be necessary



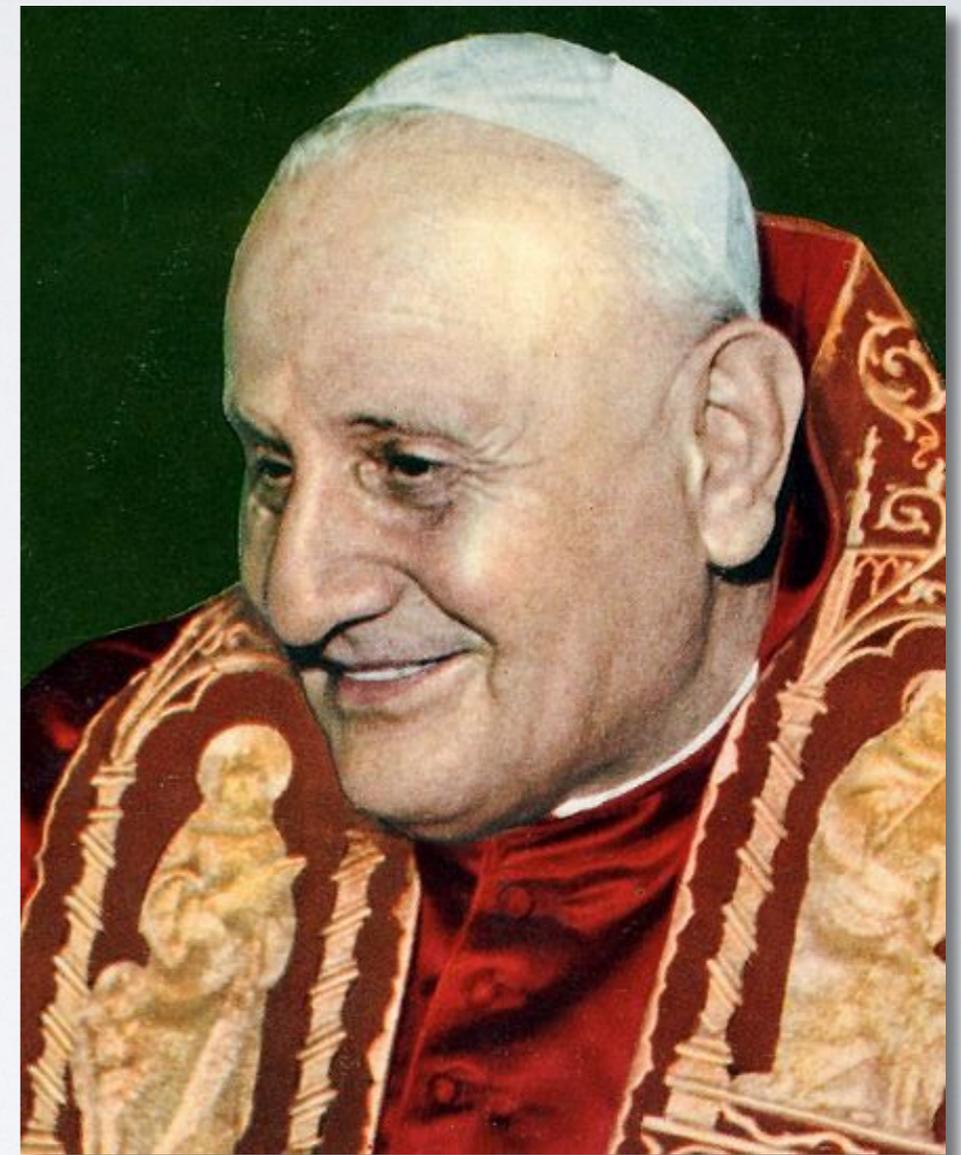
APPLAUSE

- **Pope Benedict XVI:** “Wherever **applause** breaks out in the liturgy because of some human achievement, it is **a sure sign that the essence of liturgy has totally disappeared and been replaced by a kind of religious entertainment.**
- Such attraction fades quickly – it cannot compete in the market of leisure pursuits, incorporating as it increasingly does various forms of religious titillation.
(The Spirit of the Liturgy)



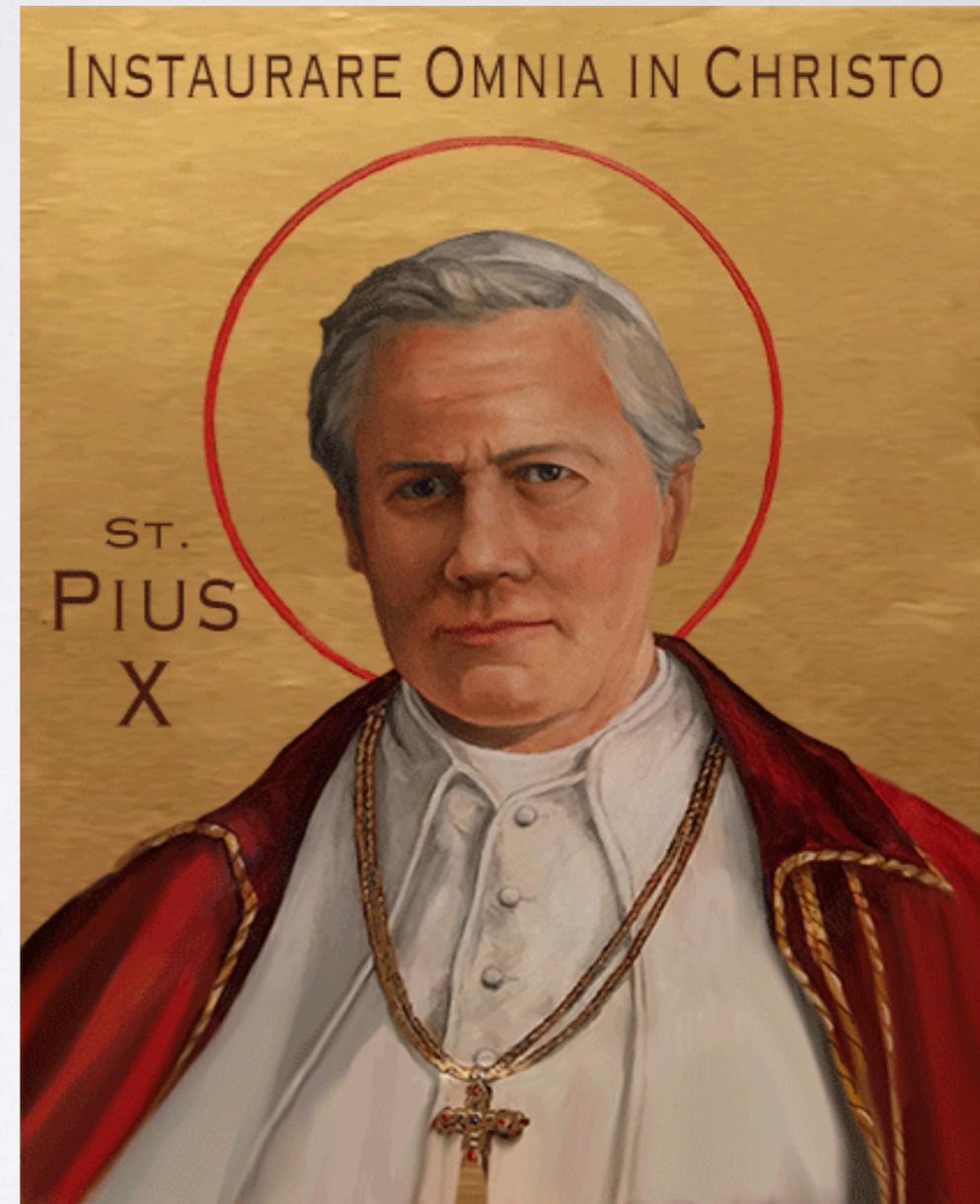
APPLAUSE

- **Pope Saint John XXIII** also said as people waited for him to arrive to a church outside of Rome after some delay,
- “I am very glad to have come here. **But if I must express a wish, it is that in church you not shout out, that you not clap your hands, and that you not, even to greet the Pope, because ‘templum Dei, templum Dei.’** (‘The temple of God is the temple of God.’)



APPLAUSE

- *Apparently this is not a “new” problem.*
- In a very powerful quote, **Pope Saint Pius X** said,
- “It is not fitting that the servant should be applauded in his Master’s house.” cf: Lk 17:7-10
 - Instaurare Omnia in Christo
To restore all things in Christ
- **St Pius X** - *The chief warrior against Modernism. (Pope 1903-1914).*



FRATERNAL APPROACHES



- What might be **some possible solutions** to this growing trend in our churches?
- Thoughts?



I HEAL LEPERS... LEPERS NOT LEOPARDS

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS



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CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

Lk 17: 11-19 Cleansing of the Lepers in Samaria - An account found only in Luke's gospel.



- Impact of Leprosy on an individual at the time of Jesus
- The response of the Samaritan
 - St Ambrose again?

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

- Notice how a Samaritan was in the company of Jews. There was no love lost between Jews and Samaritans, (Jn 4:9*) but shared pain, as in the case of these lepers, *overcame prejudice*.



- The **Law of Moses** decreed that lepers should live away from other people and should let it be known that they were “unclean” - suffering from this disease, to prevent its spread.
(see. Lev 13:45–46)*

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

- In the Old Testament, a person who was **unclean** could not participate in the mandatory festivals or even partake of communal meals - such as the Passover.



- The **renting** of one's garments was an expression of deep sorrow or unconsolable suffering such as the death of a family member.
- *Lepers were dead to their community* and therefore lived outside.



LAW OF MOSES

- **Lev 13: 1-3***
- **Lev 13: 9-11***
- **Glance at rest of Ch 13** Note that the priest examines all persons and even garments to ensure no leprosy disease spreads to the community by virtue of a quarantine.
- **Lev 14:2*** **Purification** for a person healed from Leprosy.
- **The importance of these passages is the inability to remain or rejoin the community except by approval of the Priest - and after the appropriate Purification and Sacrifices**

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

- Being **Unclean** explains why the Lepers did not come right up to Jesus and his group, but instead begged his help by shouting from a distance.
- **Before curing them** our Lord orders them to **go to the priests to have their cure certified, and to perform the rites laid down by the Priest. (cf. Lev 14:2)**
 - **Lk 5: 12-16*** - The cure of these 10 lepers is the second cure of Lepers in Luke's Gospel. *Similarly, the prior leper from Galilee - was also directed to show himself to a priest.*

These ten lepers had faith. They called on Jesus to have pity on them, and **without seeing their cure nonetheless left obediently** to show themselves to the priest.

**FAITH IMPELS US
TO OBEY**

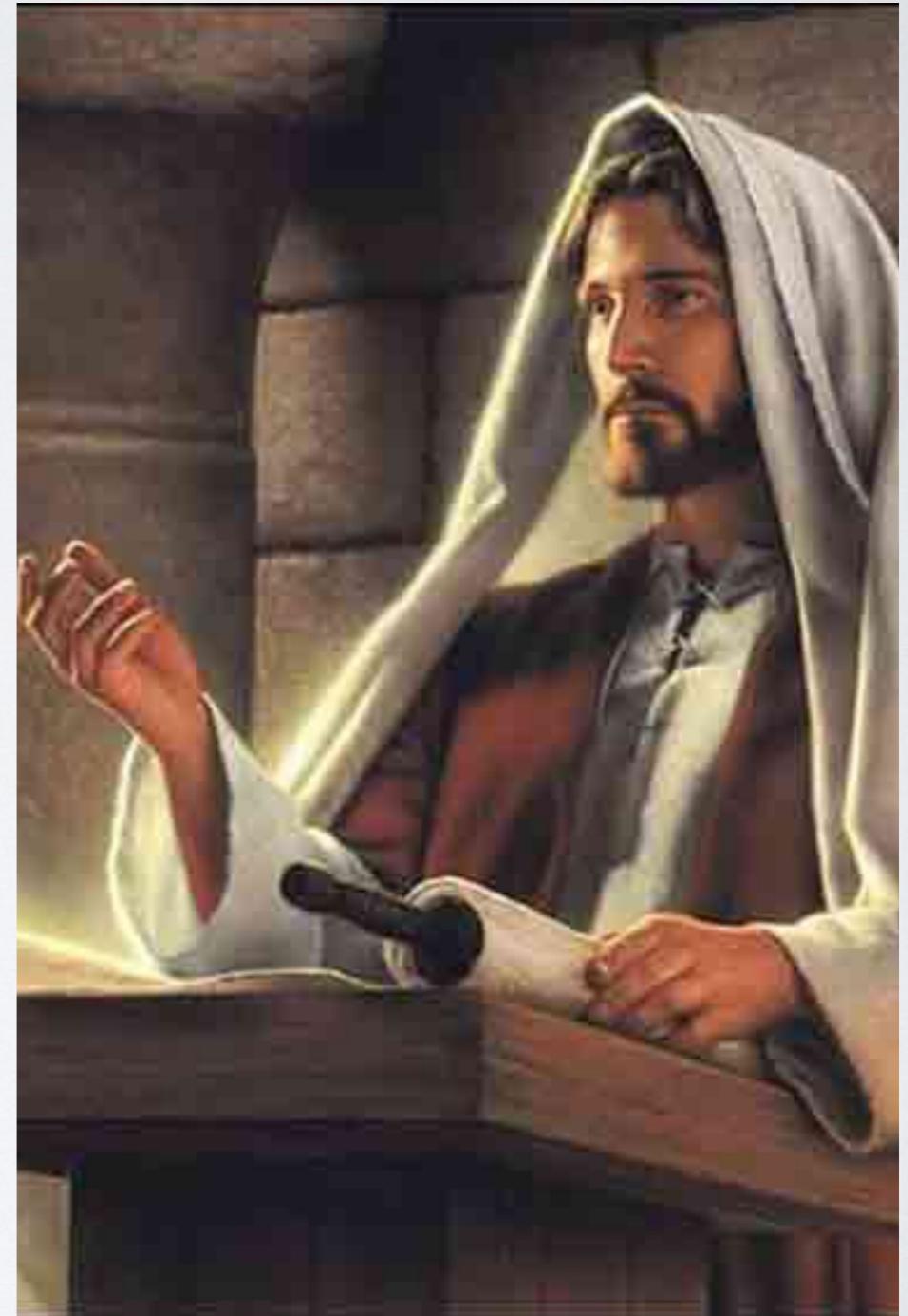
BEFORE

**WE SEE THE FULL
EVIDENCE OF GOD'S
WORK WITHIN US.**

JESUS MASTER

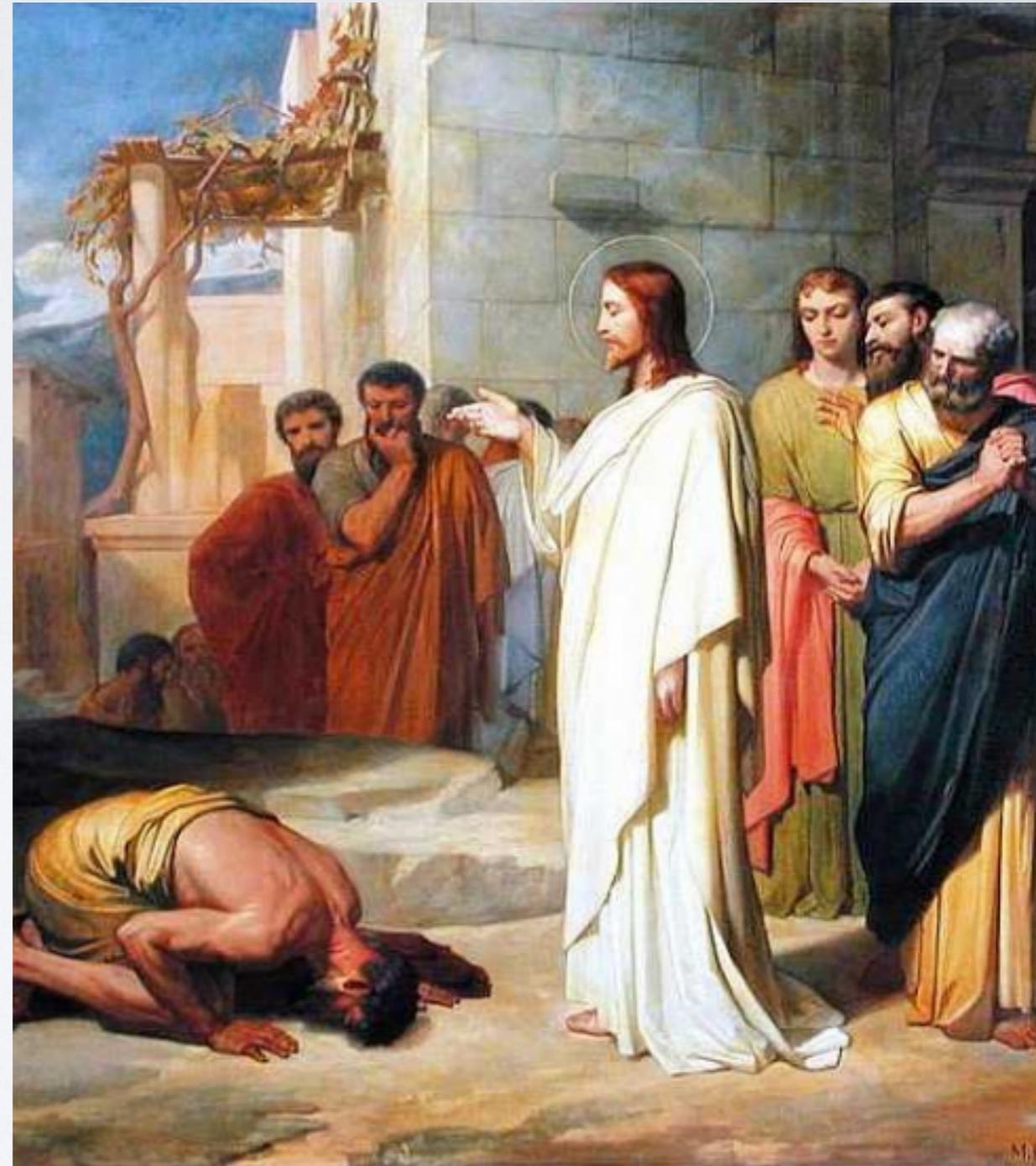
- “**Jesus Master!** Have pity on us!”
 - In **Luke**, and only in Luke the word Master is rendered from the Aramaic/Hebrew as **ἐπιστάτης** (*epistatēs*), a person of high status or authority.

Matthew and Mark record simply that He taught as one who had authority. See *ie: Mk 1:22, Mt 7:29*



CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

- Only one of the Lepers, **the Samaritan**, returns -*Glorifying God in a Loud Voice* - showing his *gratitude* for the miracle,
- He fell at the feet of Jesus, and for such, is **given a much greater gift than the cure of leprosy.**
- Jesus declares: **“Your faith has made you well”**
(Lk 17: 19)



CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS



- What - is the **difference in the outcome** of this story regarding the **Samaritan** versus the *other nine lepers*?
- Why - the difference?

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS



- What - is the **difference in the outcome** of this story regarding the **Samaritan** versus the *other nine lepers*?
- Why - the difference?
 - Think back to St Ambrose's comment on the Attitude of a Servant story

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smaller reward than a freely chosen counsel,
because like the counsel, it is the result of love.

- Here, all ten lepers followed the “**commandment**” or **precept** as ordered by Jesus - Obligation, is the role of a servant which requires nothing more and no greater reward is due. Justice gave them the promised cure.
- The **Samaritan**, validated the inward prompting that he should come back and thank Jesus. In showing his love, and gratefulness, he did more than the precept required and therefore received more than what justice required: – a heavenly reward. God’s Mercy saved him.

CLEANSING - TEN LEPERS

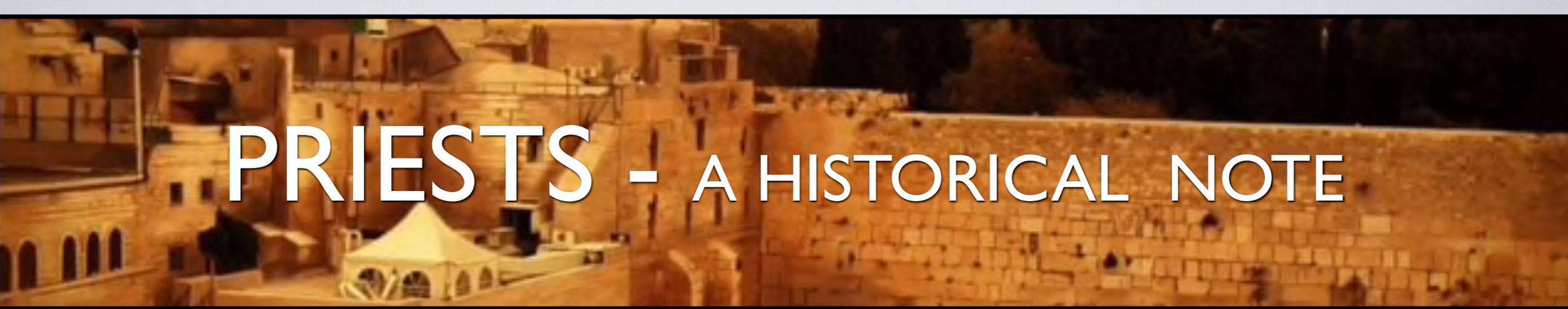
- Jesus' command for the lepers to see the Priest had a tri-fold purpose:
 - Convince the lepers of their cure, and His power over sin represented by their disease, by being declared Clean by the Priest,
 - Permit the benefits of their cure by being re-admitted to their communities, and
 - Confirm that re-entry into the community, would still be require the action of the priest as representative of the community.

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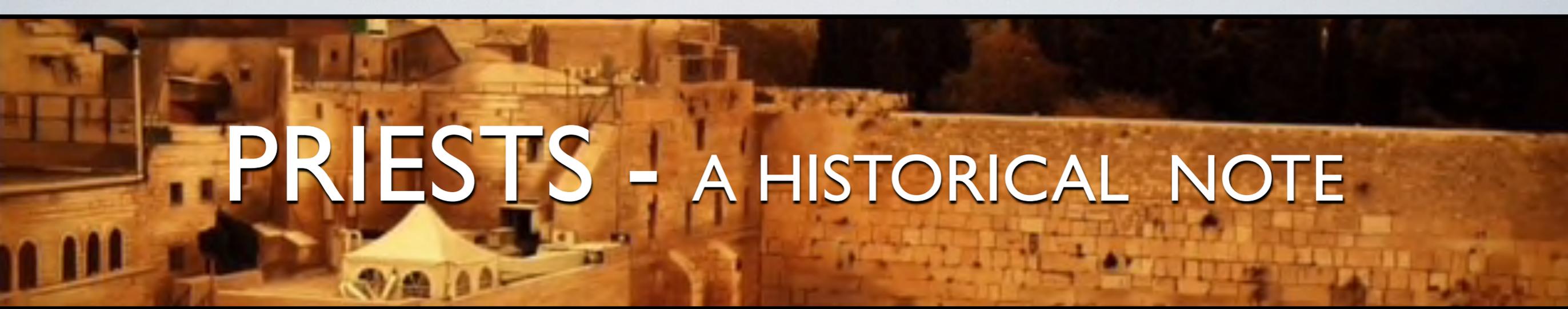
- Convince the lepers of their cure, and His power over sin represented by their disease, by being declared Clean by the Priest,
- Permit **the benefits** of their cure by **being re-admitted to their communities**, and
- Confirm that **re-entry** into the community, would still be require the action of the priest as representative of the community.

- **Once spiritually removed from the community**
- **Repent asking for mercy**
- **See the Priest**
- **Be examined by the Priest**
- **Be Received back into the community**



PRIESTS - A HISTORICAL NOTE

- A **schism** - gives light to a story behind the story.
 - ◆ The Samaritans were in schism with the Jewish faith. Recall John 4 - So, did Jesus send the Samaritan to a Samaritan Priest or a Jewish Priest?
- It is said by some, that, as our Lord could not recognize Samaritan priests— since they were priests of a false faith and worship. He must have meant, therefore, that even the Samaritan would need to show himself to Jewish priests.



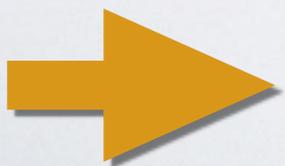
PRIESTS - A HISTORICAL NOTE

- Others say, that “**priests**” meant, those belonging to each one’s religion. The Jewish priests, for the Jews; the Samaritan priest, for the Samaritan leper.
- Without raising any question as to our Lord’s sending the Samaritan to his own priest, as a minister of a schismatical worship, the advocates of this second opinion suggest, he was sent merely for a certificate of his restoration to health, which likely the Jewish priests would not give; and even if given by Jewish priests, it would not help him when he returned to Samaria.

MacEvilly, J. (1887). An Exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke (p. 193).

PRIESTS - A HISTORICAL NOTE

- **Cyril of Alexandria** reflects that, given the Jewish priests were jealous of Jesus' glory, having to receive the cured lepers, they then might **know** that it was by Jesus that the lepers were suddenly and miraculously healed.
- **Finally**, though Christ sent them to the priests, to be inspected by them, **He did not tell them positively that they would be cured**. This was a trial of obedience, not unlike in Naaman's case: 'Go wash in Jordan.'
- **Note: Those who pray for Christ's favors must take them how He directs and when He chooses.**



COMING KINGDOM

Lk 17: 20-21, 22-37

The Kingdom and Day of the Son of Man



We will study this
along with our
review of
Matthew 24: 1-31
(Olivet Discourse)

THE GOSPELS

A Scholarly Biblical Study

