

If I am your Father where is the honour due to Me?

Well we have dived into another year, the newness has worn off even with the passing of this month. One of my favourite verses is that His mercies are new every morning. So amazing , so fresh and ever so new. The grace of God never wears off, it's still new as this day's sunrise, the dew on the leaves and the clean, clear, cutting breeze of the morning. No wonder all the saints of yore have sung, "O Lord I will praise you in the morning." Every new morning comes to us like a wrapped present. Pity the present lies wrapped till the day is ended and we still wallow in our misery not even realizing that the new mercy of the day, the gift of God has passed us by without being recognized by us.

Am so so thankful of being born and brought up in a very traditional, orthodox Christian family, where every morning started with song and prayer and Sundays inevitably going to the house of God. This has stayed in my life, and am so glad the first thing of anyday of mine starts with prayer and Word. The gift of God comes sometimes so clearly and sometimes not so visible, yet the Word refreshes my soul.

Two weeks ago I was reading Malachi and I was so moved yet again by the passion of God towards His own children(though I've read it a number of times each time it is truly like an unopened gift). Passion is a strange word. It combines extreme love, anger, suffering and pain. That is one reason why Jesus's crucifixion is termed as the Passion of Christ.

In Malachi one can literally feel the sparks of God's anger , His hurt, His longing and His love, spilling all over. It is one of the most powerful books packed with explosive rhetoric questions. Please do take time to read the whole book. It's just 4 chapters.

The Questions God asks....(the relevance holds good even today)

1. If then I am a father where is my honour?
2. If I am a master where then is my fear?

These are days where the definition of honour is redefined based on what we feel is right. The clear distinction between sacred and profane is slowly being blurred. I can see this happening in all spheres. Some years ago in our communities father was addressed as 'ayya' (meaning sir), in our days we called fathers 'appa' or 'daddy' and yet we called them respectfully like vaanga, neenga and so on. Now we come into a new order where children even call their father by names and call vaa ,poo.

Breaking of such distances in relationships which were built on fear is good, but at the same time, it has also taken out the fear of children for their fathers. Fathers are treated more like their buddies and not like figures of authority teaching their children what is right and wrong. Strangely this morning I was thinking about my daddy (don't do it very often) and though he'd gone Home to the Lord, a decade ago, his influence is still so strong in my life. Seeing him live (he never preached) with values and principles, has now become part of my life too. I cannot compromise with certain things even if it means to lose treasured friendships around me. Sometimes when I feel too left out, I ask why did daddy live like that, because it is impossible for me to live otherwise. But most often am so thankful that he lived so and laid a time tested path for me to follow. I don't remember my daddy as my friend but I remember him with honour and love and a person whom I could trust for right directions in this journey of life. His very remembrance stops me from doing undesirable things even today.

The reason why I give such an illustration from my personal life, is to see how we treat God. Most often we revere God the way we regard our father or how we regard other relationships of our life. It may not be true for everyone. I've always seen those who love God and fear Him, treat all others with love and respect. The converse holds good too, when the love and reverence for God declines then the same person will treat others with curse and contempt.

Sadly today in almost all the new forms of worship, God is projected only as our equal.... a friend, a shoulder to weep, a mother who comforts and so naturally the component of fear and reverence towards God is totally missing. You may ask me what is the big difference between a father and a friend. Excuse this analogy. If you are a smoker, am speaking in the typical Indian context, would you smoke before your father or your friend? We normally do not fear friends and even if friends warn, you brush it aside and still smoke, but before fathers because of the respect due to him, you will not smoke. I know things are changing, but still you will understand this.

My friends we have to rethink our relationship with God. Ask yourselves this question. What is God to me?- A friend where I can always sin openly and say a simple sorry and walk away or is He a Father to be revered so that the very thought of God and His presence stops me from the impulse to sin? When sin comes calling, as it came for Joseph, do I think about God and call it quits (Genesis39,9)? It is time we redefine our relationship with God on the standpoint of the Word of God. The above question, 'If I am your Father where is My honour?' is not my question but it is God's question. Let us listen think and retrace our steps and live a life that pleases the heart of God. This

is a serious issue that you have to ask yourself and act on it. Do not brush aside God's call to reshape your life and get back to him.

I hope to continue the other question later.

HE HAS SHOWN YOU O MAN WHAT IS GOOD; AND WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU BUT TO DO JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD? MICAH 6, 8.

Dear Lord open our eyes to see your majesty and glory and make our hearts like children that we would stand in awe of you and revere you as a child should revere the father. Help us Lord to love you, revere you to humble ourselves and live our lives as a pleasing aroma in your presence. We need all your grace and mercy Lord. In Jesus Name. Amen.