

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Follow Jesus' Voice Fourth Week of Lent Wednesday, April 2, 2014 8:15 AM
Is 49:8-15; **Jn 5:17-30** (St. Francis of Paola, hermit) (The Father that Jesus reveals is the true God, but very different from what people usually mean by God.)

“I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.”

This is a rather long discourse; and the point of it is that Jesus has no agenda of his own, but he is simply sent from the Father to do what he sees the Father doing. This is a teaching about the divinity of Jesus. **His humanity is totally submissive to his divine mission.** He has no will of his own—he does have a will, a human will, but **it's voluntarily surrendered to the Father.**

This is something that we need to think about and pray about, because what Jesus really indicates in his life, and more even in his death, his choosing to die the way he did, is that the Father is very different from what people usually think of God. That's the key. **The Father that Jesus reveals is the true God, but very different from what people usually mean by God.** That's what we have to pray about. What do we really think we mean when we say “God” all the time? What did the Jews mean by God? What do the Muslims mean by God? And what did Jesus mean by the “Father”?—not always the same, usually not the same. And shamefully, **too often, what Christians mean by God is more similar to maybe what the Jews or the Muslims mean rather than what Jesus means.** Why? Well, because what Jesus means is something very deep, not so simple to grasp.

The Father is not a God of power. One might get that idea reading Exodus, for example, or many other books of the Old Testament or the Qur'an. But that's not what Jesus says. This we have to note and make our own. Is God the one who rewards the good and punishes the evil? Well, not according to what Jesus says. **The Father judges no one.** In a way, the impression is **people have to judge themselves, and they can't lie.** Yes, there is

resurrection for the good. Those who are faithful, for them there is eternal life. And for the faithless there's eternal death. But it's not as if God is doing the condemning. It's they themselves who do the condemning because there is a point where **truth is truth**. It's not arbitrary. **It's objective. What is, is.** God is not judging. It just is. So we are the ones who judge every day whether we are going to be good or bad, do good or do bad. That's our judgment. Then what is, is.

And all through this, of course, **Jesus** is offering something. He **is offering life to anyone who hears him**. It is so simple to live according to Jesus. All you have to do is listen to the voice of the Son. He is doing as he sees the Father doing. Now all we have to do is what we see the Son doing. **We have to follow his voice**. He is the Good Shepherd. All we have to do is follow his voice. That is actually very simple. So in these various ways **Jesus is trying to get people ready to change the way they think about God**, especially people who really do have faith but not in the right way.