

THE TWENTY SEVENTH FLOWER: TRUST IN THE LORD

I am set on the road to salvation. My accusers have condemned me but my judges found that I am innocent.¹ I am not a blasphemer, but my appeal to Caesar has to be observed. I am following the proceedings for I strongly believe that I am proclaiming the true God. The earthly judges can only judge and harm my flesh but my spirit is supported and uplifted by you, O my Lord.

In this trial, this voyage, this pilgrimage to the destination that you have revealed to me, I find myself a savior in your name. I am in a ship; this ship could be symbolically life, the world, the Church, my very being. I am in your name, the indirect captain of this ship. I am placed with others to travel and to reach a destination. As a Christian and a minister of your word, I am entrusted with the people that are traveling with me even though, I am going as a prisoner, as a blasphemer. I am in this ship, this life, this world, this church and any place a leader, directly or indirectly, leading people to their salvation. You have entrusted these people to my care for I am a caretaker in your name. I followed you and you appointed me through the Holy Spirit a captain, a gardener, a pilot, a shepherd of your flock.

The people surrounding me on this ship do not trust me, for I am a prisoner. Yes indeed, O Lord, I am a prisoner. But, they do not know that I am a prisoner of your word, of your revelation, of your relationship and experience. I imprisoned myself to you freely and by my full will. I want to be jailed in your Mercy and Love. I want to endure everything to glorify you. Even though I am chained to my sins, my passions and my desires, my acceptance of receiving your word and engraving it in me will allow me to become a free person. I am free because I trust in you and in your word. I am free because I chose freedom in you and not in myself. My own sense of freedom would only oppress my will and ultimately, the freedom of others.

I might, while pursuing this voyage, not convince² the people around me from the first opportune time. They have their own sense of reason. But the opportunities do not cease and I should be vigilant to each one of them for every minute is an opportunity to

¹ Acts, 26:31

² Acts 27: 11.

either; salvation or condemnation. Their refusals to my suggestions³ are not but stations for me to solidify my trust and to voyage with the wind⁴ of life that will direct this journey. I accept the different situations, because I trust in your promise.⁵ Your promise is the salvation of my whole being and not only my physical condition. You care for me to be with you at the end. My end is with your end, which has no end. You want me to be in your glory. This, I understand, and my ministry as a Christian is to reflect this care and love, and direct your travelers to your safe land.

The wind is very dangerous. The wind of my earthly passions and desires is treacherous. The temptations are as the tempestuous headwind⁶ that can shipwreck and risk my life, both earthly and eternal life. I will lose control. I will be driven away from safe harbor. But, O Lord, my faith is in you as the anchor of this ship. My faith in you is my safety net that I hold on to while facing the most tempestuous wind. You are the one who can calm this wind. When I direct myself towards you, the wind is controlled and my life becomes safe. All the winds will not stir my peace.

My control over the direction towards you begins by realizing that you are the Captain of this ship. This confession has to be preceded by enlightening⁷ this ship, my life. This will save me and the others around me. This enlightenment is my repentance. It is the emptying of me and replacing it by You, so that I may once again gain control and become the visible captain. In this manner, I will become your prisoner rather than the prisoner of the wind or the prisoner of my sins. Which one is better? Which one is the most secure one? Which one can lead me safely to the secure land of your Kingdom?

The terror of my fellow passengers, who feared for their lives⁸ because they do not believe in you, O Lord, gave me another opportunity. My calmness, because of my faith in you, has given me the occasion to stand up and proclaim to them, indirectly and without condemnation, your superiority.⁹ My trust in your promise has inspired me to assure them of their safety. My presence with them, even as a prisoner, became the

³ Acts 27: 9.

⁴ Acts 27: 15.

⁵ Acts 23: 11.

⁶ Acts 27: 14.

⁷ Acts 27: 18.

⁸ Acts 27: 20.

⁹ Acts 27: 21-26.

turning point of their life: from fear to hope, from distrust to trust and from scepticism to belief.

Throughout the course of my life, I have learned that I can become the vessel of your word in any situation and any condition. I can transform the course of the lives of those around me. I can be a vessel of their security and salvation. Even for myself, my situation can be changed and I have to use this change to draw myself and the others to you, to your grace, that we may glorify you.

Now, these travelers began trusting in me.¹⁰ I proclaimed your authority, power and love. They started to listen to me. They were lost but they found their direction through my counsel. They become obedient to your word in me.¹¹ They secured themselves with four anchors and prayers.¹² They used the inspiration of your four evangelists who wrote your epiphanies for the light to come.

Amidst all these tribulations and the winds of sin, your Book is the security of all the words that were said and written. It is the checklist, the ruler by which everything else is measured. It is the stability and the concrete foundation of life. In this book we hear and we know you. My role was to gain the trust of my people and direct them to you through your word in your book. Now, the ship is safe and cannot move until the light enlightens the sailors' eyes.

At this time, while waiting for the light, I encouraged the people by being a pious example myself. I urged them to eat so they would have hope in life. I urged them to live in fellowship with one another. I urged them all to stay on the ship. Even though the ship was wrecked, it was still safer than the sea. I urged them to lighten up the heavy load they were carrying so that they would be able to move to a safer place.

Yes indeed, O lord, we have to empty ourselves from the heavy load of sins that we carry in order to travel safely to your Kingdom.

My ministry in this life, O Lord, is like my role on this ship. My ministry is to direct and drive your people to safe harbor. During this pilgrimage, I will be encountered with my chains of sin but I freely imprison myself to your word instead that I will be liberated from my chains. The people of the ship will not recognize me because of my chains. This will

¹⁰ Acts 27: 28.

¹¹ Acts 27: 31-36.

¹² Acts 27: 29.

not diminish my role and my ministry. I continue sailing with them until we come across disastrous tribulations, the winds. My confidence in you indirectly gives me the leadership to guide this ship. The acceptance and listening to your word will nurture and encourage them to continue sailing by repenting and praying that they may reach safe land. And this will be granted to us all.