

Pursuing Truth

June 6, 2009

The loss of truth is a hallmark of modern times. People seem to believe either that truth does not exist ("What is truth?" asked Pontius Pilate), or that it exists but is not important, or that it exists and is important, but cannot be discovered by the human mind. Whichever way, let us eat, drink and be merry, because if falsehood is as good as truth, then wrong is as good as right, which makes me free to do as I like.

What is truth? Truth is the matching of mind and reality. There is truth in my mind when what is in my mind matches or corresponds to what is outside it, in reality. For nobody seriously believes that there is no reality outside his mind (unless he is mad), because for instance nobody whose car-engine stops does not lift the hood (or bonnet) to find out the cause. Then truth for me exists whenever what is in my mind matches external reality.

Is this truth important? Of course it is. My survival in this life depends from minute to minute on knowing what air is really breathable, from day to day on knowing what food and drink are really consumable, and my happiness for eternity depends upon knowing if God really exists, if he really is the granter of that happiness, and if he really lays down certain conditions for me to obtain it. If on any of these points there is falsehood and not truth in my mind, either I die in a few minutes, or in a few days, or I miss happiness for all eternity. Of course it matters whether what is in my mind corresponds to the reality outside it!

But can the human mind always know the truth? Indeed sometimes it cannot. But usually in pursuit of the truth, "Where there's a will, there's a way." Often if men do not find the truth, it is not because it cannot be found, but because there is not a real will to find it. Take for instance the present difficult

and expensive hunt for the evidence which will tell why the French airliner crashed between Rio de Janeiro and Paris. They may or may not finally tell us the truth, but find it they will, because the safety of future flights may, as far as we know, depend on it.

Let nobody pretend that any truth could not be found when there was a way to find it. He merely demonstrates his lack of will to find it. There is a great lack of such will in what is still called "Western civilization." That is why it is Satanic (Jn.VIII,44).

Kyrie eleison.