

Tuesday 28 April 2020

1Chr.22,19: *"Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD you God."*

1Cor.9,24: *"So run that you may obtain the prize."*

1Chr.22 are words of David to Israel's leaders enjoining them to help Solomon build the temple. The context of this word is this, in my words: "After all that God has done for you, having made sure you have peace on every side, it is now time for you to do this for Him – to seek Him with heart and mind."

But what David said has wider application and goes beyond its immediate context. It is relevant not only with regard to building the house of God but in regard to the use of it. Because surely here too the attitude should be to set one's heart and mind to seek the LORD.

What does this word want to guard us from? The same, I think, as 1Cor.9: It wants to guard us from making God's house, and the time of worship (and faith, it being all of one thing), a place of seeking ourselves and of the prospering of our own ways.

This is surely not said without reason, for we are likely to do just that and to do it without questioning, yes even thinking that it pleases God. But of all of us the words of Ps.14 are true: *"The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one."*

And therefore, we ought to take great care that when we are in God's house, at worship, that in all our faith, we set out heart and mind not to seek ourselves but to seek the Lord. And the only way in which we will do that is by awareness of our inclination not to! Everything else, I fear, is a Pharisee's game. Otherwise Ps.14 is not true, nor is Rom.3, and the cross of Christ would not be necessary.

So we do not seek ourselves, even like Pharisees, only when we are before God as those who know we need our heart and minds turned towards Him in truth and seize upon that which God gives us in Christ. And Christ gives grace, but also brothers and sisters!