

***The Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost***  
***November 8, 2020***

*“There is no better teaching than the teacher’s own example.” (Saint John Chrysostom)*

In his letter to the church of Philippi, Saint Paul encourages the Christians to take the Lord Jesus as their model and guide. They should direct their lives in accord with the life of Jesus. Saint Paul would even go as far as to remind them of what he had gone through to prove to them that his words and his life were an imitation of the life of Christ. An imitation that we are all called to realize in our lives. And one aspect of the life of Jesus that we can focus upon today is detachment.

For many, the word detachment calls to mind images of people who could be viewed as separated from society or family. It may even seem that to be detached from worldly cares is found only when we remain aloof from these cares. I would rather we view detachment along the same lines as we viewed purgation from last weekend’s teaching. To detach ourselves from the cares of the world can only be accomplished by the act of purging these things from our consciousness. The problem we all encounter in this process is we do not know which things we should be detaching ourselves from and how certain things we thing important, needing to be purged, may in-fact be minor inconveniences in our spiritual lives. So how do we know the difference and where should we begin?

The answer to this question is actually quite simple. Instead of you or I trying to figure out what areas of our lives need purging or what things are there that we need to detach from, we need only give God permission to detach from us those things He knows we need to be detached from. Secondly, we also need to realize that by giving God permission to work within our lives, we are also giving Him permission to work at His pace and on His time. Allow me to conclude with a story to highlight this point. Two men packed their boats and left to go deep sea fishing. Once upon the water, one realized that he had overloaded his boat and decided to throw overboard those things he felt he would not need. The other, after coming to the same realization, decided rather to let God choose what we needed because he might cast overboard something he would need in the future. He was of the belief that God would either wash overboard the items which caused the excessive weight or God would provide him with the knowledge to make good, practical decisions as to what items needed to be kept or not. In essence, one looks at the items in his boat more than God, while the other focuses his attention upon God more than his boat. In doing so, he is able to detach himself from the world and follow God where He calls.