

GOSPEL PEARLS

A thousand excuses

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Jesus said to the Jews: 'Were I to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid; but there is another witness who can speak on my behalf, and I know that his testimony is valid. You sent messengers to John, and he gave his testimony to the truth: not that I depend on human testimony; no, it is for your salvation that I speak of this. John was a lamp alight and shining and for a time you were content to enjoy the light that he gave. But my testimony is greater than John's: the works my Father has given me to carry out, these same works of mine testify that the Father has sent me. Besides, the Father who sent me bears witness to me himself. You have never heard his voice, you have never seen his shape, and his word finds no home in you because you do not believe in the one he has sent.' You study the scriptures, believing that in them you have eternal life; now these same scriptures testify to me, and yet you refuse to come to me for life! As for human approval, this means nothing to me. Besides, I know you too well: you have no love of God in you. I have come in the name of my Father and you refuse to accept me; if someone else comes in his own name you will accept him. How can you believe, since you look to one another for approval and are not concerned with the approval that comes from the one God? Do not imagine that I am going to accuse you before the Father: you place your hopes on Moses, and Moses will be your accuser. If you really believed him you would believe me too, since it was I that he was writing about; but if you refuse to believe what he wrote, how can you believe what I say?'. (John 5, 31-47)

Jesus warns us against the risk of not believing in Him. He does it for our own good because He knows that the grace of having received the word of God involves a grave responsibility. Indeed, God's freely accepted Grace is an indispensable gift for our

eternal salvation, but if it is rejected it will become the reason for our eternal condemnation. Do you tend to justify yourself in the face of the teaching of the Gospel by finding endless excuses or do you want to start taking the teachings of Jesus seriously?