

GOSPEL PEARLS

Body and soul

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Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'The disciple is not superior to his teacher, nor the slave to his master. It is enough for the disciple that he should grow to be like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, what will they not say of his household? 'Do not be afraid of them therefore. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.' Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.' So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.' (Matthew 10,24-33)

The Lord's disciples have always been and always will be persecuted. But no persecution has ever stopped the proclamation of the Gospel. Jesus' disciples are told not be afraid of those who can kill their body but only of those who can prevent them from doing God's will. God who is the Father is concerned for His children. What matters is to be faithful witnesses of Christ because in this way He will recognise us before the Father as His true disciples. Are you more afraid of Jesus' judgment or of how others judge you?