**Luke 7:**

Jesus and John the Baptist: A short History of Christ ministry up until the medieval time

 So80 he answered them,81 “Go tell82 John what you have seen and heard:83 The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the84 deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news proclaimed to them. 7:23 Blessed is anyone85 who takes no offense at me.”

7:24 When86 John’s messengers had gone, Jesus87 began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness88 to see? A reed shaken by the wind?89 7:25 What90 did you go out to see? A man dressed in fancy91 clothes?92 Look, those who wear fancy clothes and live in luxury93 are in kings’ courts!94 7:26 What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more95 than a prophet. 7:27 This is the one about whom it is written, ‘***Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,***96 ***who will prepare your way before you***.’97 7:28 I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater98 than John.99 Yet the one who is least100 in the kingdom of God101 is greater than he is.”

Jesus Christ is saying one who is holier than anyone on earth (John the Baptist) is no greater than the least in heaven. That must be from Jesus view; we are appreciated way past any worth or value that can be ascribe to our lives. If Jesus is our savior than his love for us is unfathomable. This gives me a great relief because in my insane reverie my importance is unbounded. I can now rest easy in the glow of Christ love.

 It bears repeating our human efforts are puny our holiest thoughts impudent. Nobody owes their life to anyone as much as we owe our life to God. Jesus in the abstract is God because in Friday’s Gospel he says you can only go to him through him. But I’m saying literally we owe a debt of gratitude for Jesus sacrifice on the cross because it was that sacrifice that made us relevant to God the Father.

 Jesus, come what may, has expanded that tiny base in heaven to include the just dead of his prior descent into the realm of the dead and the billions of saints after his ascension into heaven. Looking over his ministry we can see this expansion as he gets increasingly more popular through his miracles in the Judaic region and the expansion after his Resurrection into gentile regions by the Apostles.

 It’s the expansion into the known world that gets its impetus on the feast of the Pentecost. Here disciples are assembled to get the gifts of the Holy Spirit and are awarded with the gift of tongues and are therefore enabled to preach the Gospel in any of the gentile listeners languages.

 It may be pithy to say this but God’s plan for redemption looks like a carefully orchestrated military plan. From a small guerilla cell in Galilee to a large pincer movement in Asia Minor; the total scope of which is just masterful. Western Culture remains the most stable and long lasting culture on this earth. The position I’m mapping out is that it’s psychologically more beneficial to be opened to a God that redeems. Redemption is the salve that heals a wounded aspirant in his road to survival. Survival, both cultural and individual, is what this is all about. Surviving a serious mental illness cannot be emphasized enough as a goal for me.

 Except for psychology no other meditative art could have succeeded to bring passivity and purpose to people as did the Church did in the Middle Ages. I say this while reflecting on my practice in Franciscan Philosophy and its impact on the thirteenth century. The most progressive Century in all humanity; one noted for economic expansion without much conflict. This was done by willful sacrifice on the part of many poor people who took the brunt of the capitalization necessary for this mercantile expansion. As Franciscans extolled perfect charity the lives of poor people were ennobled by concepts of true poverty of spirit and poor in spirit.

 True poverty of Spirit differs from financial distress; it is a deliberate choice by which we moderate our attitudes toward the good things the world offers, and the means by which we gain them.

 To be poor in spirit, St. Thomas teaches, is to cultivate the habits of simplicity and moderation that allow us to look beyond what will satisfy us for a short time today, in order to lay claim to a satisfaction without end in the future.

The poor will always be here as Jesus Christ said but now with the need for capitalizing for the merchants and then the industrialists they (the poor) are the necessary effluent of a modern economy. They must fill a purposeful existence or be flushed down the proverbial sewer.

 It is my belief that the poor have given so much of their capital and value added labor {Labor that has increased in appreciation from the past} that they were an integral part of the mercantile expansion that erupted in Europe in the thirteenth century. This market economy, the first of its kind in European History could of only been sustained to this day by people willing to take the economic hit in an a general atmosphere of moral purpose sustained by the Church. The key to any successful model of capitalization is that the overwhelming wealth of the economy would have to belong to the few while most people would be impoverished. Even to the point of being poor.

 Being poor should not be a condition of distress. If the proper social welfare programs are in place it can be a humbling but ascetic existence. At the time of St. Francis the poor were brought into the church and as a result the people rewarded the princes and merchants the economy they wanted. By simply not challenging or robbing the massive amount of wealth generated in their respective market economies the whole of Western Civilization benefited from the Franciscan’s.

 As for myself the ascetic or appreciation of a non-materialistic life has allowed me to look for God for something more. What this is, I don’t know but the search for my shepherd has already yielded some gold. I can never thank God enough for the sensibility to worship him with my prayers. The actual commission of prayers from morning to night has given me renewed purposefulness in my distracted ponderings. Slowly my infested mind is coming together. I have achieved a state of normalcy that bellows wellness although the jury is out on that one.