



The Third Sunday after Easter.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who showest to them that are in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; Grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Even at the moment of the Resurrection of Christ, the spirit of anti-Christ was afoot. Roman guards were bribed to conceal the truth of what happened at the Garden Tomb before sunrise on Easter morning. Institutions, even the Churches, that draw their power and influence from political man, are a part and portion of that spirit of anti-Christ. The focus of our Collect for this week centers on a plea against error and darkness.

There is a church in Pensacola called the Brownsville Assembly of God Church at which the Korean preacher, Cho Yonggi, spoke in the 90's and predicted a great revival. Cho, not noted for his faithfulness to biblical truth, did correctly forecast an event that lasted a few years there and which was 'called' a revival by its adherents. There was a lot of spirit observed in their revival (at which it is estimated more than four million people attended) to the detriment of biblical truth. Men were being led about on all fours by a leash. Why? Because the Holy Spirit, they say, told them to act like a dog! On one occasion, a woman came to the microphone and said, "I know some of you will think I am crazy, but the Holy Spirit told me to do this." She then began to howl like a wolf into the microphone – I am NOT kidding, I have it on VHS tape. Certain men were assigned as blanketers. They would stand by with blankets to cover the modesty of women rolling about on the floor. It is clear that a spirit had moved these people to this state of delusional ecstasy, but it certainly was not the Holy Spirit of which I read in Holy Scripture. The so-called 'Brownsville Revival' has run its course and the men who initiated the false revival have moved on to the next nest of suckers who will believe their lies.

So is this phenomenon relegated to the past only? Not hardly. How many silly women and naïve men are being deceived today by books claiming that someone has gone to heaven or hell and returned to tell us about it? Paul gives profound warning of

this delusional aspect of error: *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* (2 Tim 3:1-7) The deception of those who read such light-headed drama is not innocent, but deliberate. They choose to believe a lie over and above the Word of God. This places their very souls in jeopardy. Did not Mother Eve do the same?

God does reveal to those who seek in earnest, His absolute Truth! He revealed it to Adam and Eve, and they disregarded that truth and brought death and sin upon – not only human race – but the world at large. *ALMIGHTY God, who showest to them that are in error the light of thy truth.* It is amazing to me, and even shocking, that those who are in error and claim to be sound Bible believers will accept the word of a fictional writer over that of clear biblical proofs. The reason is simple: they prefer to believe the fantasy before they will believe the truth. Beware, again, the words of St. Paul: *7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (2 Thess 2:7-12)

For what purpose does God reveal the Light of Truth to those who are in error? “.....to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness.” If deceitful men and books have led a man or woman away from the path of truth, surely they will believe once the error is pointed out to them, won’t they? Often they **do not** because they prefer the lie to the truth. To those who love truth to the exclusion of popular fantasies, that truth will always bring again to understanding truth.

There are two points of purpose that should govern the thoughts and actions of a Christian: 1) Possessing such knowledge and understanding of truth so as to recognize and AVOID error. *Grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ’s Religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession.* 2) Possessing such truth and wisdom of God’s Word in our hearts so that we order our lives in the very way of that righteousness in truth described by God in His Word. “....and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same.” Of course, we are enabled to do these things “...through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

How is it possible that we sit under Godly preaching and worship, Sunday after Sunday, repeating the prayers of the Collects and, yet, have no intention of being faithful to those prayers we have uttered collectively? Is this not taking the Name of the Lord in vain if we pray with false intention and motive? Do we really mean it when we pray the Lord’s Prayer? Do we REALLY desire **HIS** will to be done, or do we tenaciously hold to a lie and follow our own wills in deception of truth? Do we REALLY seek only our daily bread, or do we seek the bread of others to add to our own? Are we truly repentant in seeking His forgiveness of our sins? Have we turned

from them? If so, have we followed the corollary of the prayer to forgive others in like manner in which God has forgiven us? Do we truly glorify God with our minds, heart, body, and spirits? If we recognize the Lord as the awesome and almighty Savior that He is, why do we follow silly fantasies that add to, or take away, from the Word of God? I am becoming disillusioned, not so much by unbelievers of the world as, with professed believers who disregard the Word of God and live and believe with flippant disregard for that Word. But I recognize my obligation, and the obligation of every clergyman and laity to persist in teaching, in rebuking, and in edifying the Church.