



### The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

*The Collect.*

**A**LMIGHTY and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.* (Rev 22:16)

In His very own words, Christ compares Himself, and His nature, to that of the Bright and Morning Star. My soul is always lifted high to consider Him so in so many ways. Of course, there are two stars with which we must concern ourselves in looking unto Christ, the True and Brightly burning star, and its opposite, that star that fell from Heaven, along with one-third of all the angels, in the Dawn of Creation. *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* (Luke 10:18) and *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth* (Rev 12:3-4) Who was this great Red Dragon? *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him* (Rev 12:7-9) That great deceiver Angel, Lucifer, or Satan, has a counterfeit for every true manifestation of God. His anti-Christ has deceived millions, and he is doing so to the great profit of evil today.

*The ancient Greeks and Egyptians thought that Venus was actually two separate objects, a morning star and an evening star. The Greeks called the morning star Phosphoros, the bringer of light; and they called the evening star Hesperos, the star of the evening. A few hundred years later, the Hellenistic Greeks realized that Venus was actually a single object.* Fraser Cain, Universe Today, 2008.

The Morning Star truly depicts Christ as our closest Light. He is unflickering and steady in His radiance. He will appear the same tomorrow as He appears today. He is unchanging in His qualities of love, mercy, forbearance, and grace. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* (Heb 13:8) Because Christ is constant, and always in His place, we will not confuse some lesser light for Him. The Scriptures are our chart of the heavens to know Him and to find Him.

The Morning Star is the same as our Evening Star. He appears first when the shadows fall, He is with us throughout the dark night as a promise of coming day, and He is last to abandon the skies of early dawn. He is there as the promise of the coming glory of the Sun of Righteousness which shall surely arise. (Malachi 4:2). At the Last Day, He shall appear as that Day Star described by the Apostle Peter: *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts* (2 Peter 1:19)

The Morning Star is beautiful with hope and love. It is a wonder to behold in a purple canopied sky. Christ is beautiful and wonderful to behold for the sinner lost in the dark night of the soul, who has been found in the grace of Christ.

The Morning Star is the most lovely light of the evening which constantly reminds us that God is nigh in all darkness. It becomes its brightest at the longest threshold of night – the pre-dawn morning. It is also a means of navigation on the dark seas. The marine navigator fixes his sextant on that star and all the ship's cargo and passengers are guided to safe harbor. Christ, too, is our great Searchlight whose searching beams crest the flood and inform us of the place of security.

In brightness, the Morning Star is classified by astronomers as a Light of the First Magnitude. So is Christ the Light of the World and the Sun of Righteousness. Its growing light with the coming dawn signals the end of the dark night, a joy to the righteous and a terror to thieves and robbers as they scurry for cover. The wicked have no power to stop its light from reaching earth.

The very name of the Morning Star means Beauty, Venus in ancient folklore. Christ is known as the Beautiful Savior in both hymnody and life. It is of a special pristine beauty in the time of winter just as Christ is of special comfort and beauty to those in the winter of their years.

We have so far dwelt upon those qualities of the Morning Star that also describe Christ, but how is the Morning Star and Christ different? First of all, the Morning Star of the common heavens was created and not eternally existent as is Christ! *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.* (Psalms 102:25) The physical Star of the Morning is not as bright as the Sun, but Christ is both the Star of the Morning and the Sun as well – only brighter. The Morning Star only gives light to the outward man – Christ gives both outward light to the eyes and inward light to the soul. *I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life* (John 8:12)

Secondly, the Morning Star gives his light only during the short space of the night, but the Light of Christ is an eternally gleaming Light. *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* (John 1:5) Of course, there is NO darkness in the presence of Christ. The day is light because the Sun is present. Our souls are full of Light if Christ is the Light of it.

The beautiful Morning Star of Creation shall be consumed with that same fervent heat that shall consume the world and all heavenly bodies. But the Morning Star of Heaven shall burn eternally bright. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure:*

*yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end; Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* (Psalms 102:25-27, Heb 13:8)

We may not behold the Morning Star by looking down upon the cursed earth, but must cast our vision upward to the source of our blessings. We must know that even in the dark valleys, even of the shadow of death. Christ remains in His place and is there to comfort us in our journey through that valley. There would be no low valleys if there were no mountain heights. The day comes as promised. The Morning Star points to that promise, and as we keep our night vigil, we are heartened by the promise of that coming day of Eternity in which we shall see Christ appear in Glory. Do you look for that day?