



**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.

*28. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29. And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? (Matt 6:28-30(KJV))*

*31. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, **behold, a greater than Solomon is here.** (Luke 11:31)*

*45. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; 46. Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. 47. But Solomon built him an house. 48. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, 49. Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? 50. Hath not my hand made all these things? (Acts 7:45-50)*

The types and metaphors of the Bible are much like the parables – they mix the excellent qualities of Christ with the inept and weakly characteristics of his creation (including, most prominently, Man). You may think that you could never attain to become a Type of Christ, but you are already if you follow and love Him. You are even called after His own precious and royal Name – **Christian!** "But," you say, "I am weak and constantly failing in my diligence to follow and obey perfectly!" That being true, we must acknowledge a great truth, buried in the very heart of the Gospel that goes unnoticed by many - just as the Stone whom the Builders rejected was constantly in the way, and a stumbling block, for those who built with the hands of men and not of God. That great truth is this: We can never attain to Heaven by our own good works regardless of their commendability. We can only attain Heaven through the

righteousness of Christ. When Christ sees us walking on the lonely road of life, cumbered down with worry, care, and a troubling conscience, He does not see our terrible failures of the present. He sees only what excellent perfection we may obtain in Him as the darling of His own heart. These Types we are studying all fall short of the glory of God just as we do. Those Types can never attain to His perfect righteousness and glory; however, Christ uses them, as He uses us who are called Christians, to give example and testimony of the riches made available in that beautiful and awe-inspiring Person and Work of Christ.

Our typical example of Christ in this devotion is King Solomon, a true son of David in the flesh. Christ, too, was the Son of David in a spiritual and legal sense. This is only part of the story, for Christ was born of a precious Virgin, and Solomon was the direct descendant of an adulterer (David) and an adulteress (Bathsheba). Christ, in fact is not a true Son of David according to the flesh, for His Father was God.

There was no man born of woman who possessed greater wisdom or wealth than Solomon. He was wealthy beyond measure, not because he placed a greater premium on wealth than wisdom; but, to the contrary, he placed a greater premium on wisdom than on wealth – so God gave Solomon BOTH! *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore* (1 Kings 4:29) *So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.* (1 Kings 10:23) *And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.* (2 Chron 1:11-12) Being great in wisdom, judgment, and wealth (as gifts of God) Solomon failed in the stewardship of those gifts. Christ, being King of Kings and Lord of Creation, did not fail – even in the slightest and greatest of attributes of His Godhead.

Do you remember those edifying words of the opening Collect for Holy Communion in which we acknowledge that there is no hidden thing under the sun, even of the heart, that is not known by Christ? "**Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid...**" This is a summary of Gospel truth by which we open our understanding to God at the special moment of Holy Communion. Christ knows our hearts better than we ourselves. He is all-wise and all-knowing. *That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* (Col 2:2-3) What better time to collect our thoughts and understanding to center them on Christ than at the Communion Hour?

Solomon was wise in his words and writing. He is author of the Book of Proverbs and other great wisdom works of the Bible. Yet, in spite of his great wisdom, Solomon did not know the secrets of men's hearts. He did not even know the secrets of his own heart else he would not have married prolifically (and women of strange gods). Christ DID! Having written much of God's truth, Solomon fell short of Christ for Christ is the very Word of God in its entirety. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made..... And*

*the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-3, 14)*

Solomon was a Type of Christ in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, but Christ is, Himself, the Temple. He builds the Church by truth and love. ".....upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt 16:18) You will recall that Jesus told the Jewish leaders, regarding His own death and resurrection: **Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up** (John 2:19)

Solomon dedicated the Temple and consecrated it to the worship of God. So does Christ dedicate His Church and consecrate its worship and works to God. Christ, like Solomon, established the means and methods of honorable reverence to God through sacrament and practice. He instituted Baptism as the means of reception, and the Holy Communion as the means of continuing grace in acknowledgment of His death, burial, and resurrection. Christ is that Bread of Heaven which we consume, symbolically and spiritually, to our comfort and deep understanding.

Solomon established orders of servants in the Temple to conduct the ceremonials of worship. Christ, too, has ordered the servants of His Church and established the means of reverent observance of those things pertaining to worship. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teacher ...."(1 Cor 12:27-28) *Let all things be done decently and in order. (1 Cor 14:40) ".....let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."* (Heb 12:28-29)

Solomon was a Type of Christ in his wise administration of justice. *Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment. (1 Kings 3:16-28)* I apologize for quoting such a large block of Scripture in devotion, but this story cannot be told with profit, like the baby, without the whole of it. Of course, we must also bear in mind the source of Solomon's wisdom. It was not his wisdom, but God's – vv28 above.

Christ is the very Source and Fountain of wisdom. He commands us, too, to judge – not with our own judgment – but with that righteous judgment that comes from God: *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.* (John 7:24) *And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.* (John 8:16)

Solomon was, indeed, a vivid Type of Christ in many things; yet, in many things he, like us, fell very short of that high standard of righteousness. Have you realized your inadequacies to gain salvation by your feeble attempts at righteousness? Have you fallen at the feet of the One who is able to endure your sentence of death, and lift you up at the Last Day to great heights of glory? My prayer goes out to the Readers of these devotions that God will touch your heart, first, with His love and wisdom, and, secondly, your tongue to speak and share those things with others.