



The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

The Collect.

LORD, we pray thee that thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. (Matt 9:12)

They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Mark 2:17)

20 *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. 21 For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.* (Isaiah 26:20-21)

7 *Thou art my **hiding place**: thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. 8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* (Psalms 32:7-8)

Just as the Lord said to Noah: "*Come thou and all thy house into the ark*" (Gen 7:1) The Lord does not choose His Words randomly, but wittingly. He told Noah to "come" into the Ark rather than "go into the Ark" because the Lord is the place of safety and security. The Lord precedes us into the place of safety (for wherever He is, there is security) and calls us there to come unto Himself. Jesus is OUR place of safety. He is OUR Ark of Salvation. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Matt 11:28) Pursued from pillar to post by that old Deceiver and Roaring Lion, we must seek cover and concealment – this we find in Christ. We flee to Him and hide our souls in the cleft of that Great Rock that is Christ, and the same that followed the Children in the Wilderness. We cannot rest when we are in full flight from the enemy of our souls, but we do find complete security in our Hiding Place, and then only may we rest. Oh, did I mention? Christ is also our Rest, or Sabbath!

As our Hiding Place, Jesus is not commonly accessed. Not all will find that place of security for they do not even seek His Sheltering Wings. They stumble as drunk men who grope and labor for the high places of the earth and not the high places of our Lord. To them who perish: *The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit. 12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.* (Prov 18:11-12) But to those who seek and find their Hiding Place in Christ: *The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* (Prov 18:10)

Our Hiding Place in Christ is an invincible defense against the enemy. First, the enemy cannot find this Hiding Place for he does not seek for safety but for war. Secondly, if the enemy would peradventure find this Hiding Place, he cannot access it by penetrating the defenses and perimeter guards.

Our Hiding Place is not only for protection, but for comfort from the heat of battle. His protecting walls and stones of cover afford a cool repast from the noonday sun of worldly struggle. The springs of Living Water are there, and emerge cold and pure from the Fountain of Life Itself.

We may forget the fears that have obsessed our hearts in the Wilderness of Sin, and focus our hearts on love and devotion to our Lord and His own when we have found our security in Him.

Rather than affording rest and comfort, our Hiding Place is a frustration and troubling reality to our enemy. He expends time, effort, and much confused thinking on trying to locate our souls to destroy them – but he cannot.

When do men seek a Hiding Place – when they already feel worthy and secure? When they have enriched themselves on the ill-gotten possessions of others? I think not. They seek a Hiding Place when the enemy is in hot pursuit; when no other maneuver will suffice; and when they have no other resort for salvation. Men often ONLY seek Christ when their defense have fallen and crumbled, when trouble is their daily fare, and no other rest can be found.

Men seek their Hiding Place – not because they are strong – but because they are weak against a powerful enemy. They seek the Hiding Place because it is stronger than

themselves and their enemy. Christ is a strong and safe Hiding Place.

Our Hiding Place is a perpetual security – it has become our Eternal Abode!
Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. (John 15:4-7)