



The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

*The Collect.*

**L**ORD, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*1. Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)*

Christ is not only the Ambassador of Heaven, but the Sovereign Himself! As Ambassador, He comes from distant shores to represent the interest of His Heavenly Kingdom. He has all of the authority to act on His own behalf, and that of His Father, for they are of One Mind in all things. The Ambassador of Heaven, and of nations of the world, does not travel to His post seeking permanent abode, but comes in a temporary capacity to arrange a closer liaison with those to whom He comes. Christ came for the duration of thirty three years and delivered all of the intent and pleasure of His Father, the great King. He came to arrange a covenant alliance between those whom He would choose, His Father, and His Kingdom. He is, as Malachi avers, the Messenger of the Covenant.

Nations do not send vulgar representatives of the realm as ambassadors. They send honorable men of high regard. God could send no greater than His only Begotten Son in the station of Ambassador. God the Father sent that Man who is in direct line to claim the Crown of Heaven: *Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords* (1 Timothy 6:15)

A national ambassador must be a man of great ability, well-trained and informed for the task ahead. The Lord Jesus Christ meets all requirements for the mission for which He was chosen by the Father. In fact, Jesus Christ is the ONLY ONE qualified for

the role. He must also be a person of great wisdom, and the greatest loyalty to His ordering authority. Christ is all-wise, all-knowing, and bears total loyalty to His Father.

An ambassador cannot be posted to a foreign field unless he is ready and willing to go there. Christ was ready and willing to come to us from before the foundations of the earth were formed. Not only was He willing, but the sending authority was willing as well.

It is never the purpose of an ambassador to negotiate the terms of war. He always comes to resolve differences and, hopefully, to make peace with powers that may presently be belligerent. Though Christ comes to wage peace, His sword of war is at the ready for those who will not agree to peace with Heaven.

An ambassador has the LEGAL power to conclude treaties and agreements on behalf of his government. So does Christ have that innate power to conclude treaties and agreements between Heaven and those who accept His Ambassadorship. He acts on behalf of His Father: *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.* (John 12:48-49)

Once commissioned by the Sovereign power, the ambassador must leave the comforts and familiar faces of his homeland and venture to a far country in order to reconcile affairs that are not well between his country and that far country to which he is posted. Christ left the delights and joys of Heaven, and the face of His Father, to come into a strange and hostile world for us. *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law* (Galatians 4:4) He came with clear orders as well: *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* (Galatians 4:4-5)

When posted to a distant station, an ambassador of the world has strict instructions and guidelines that will satisfy the issuing authority. Christ, too, came bearing the exact and inalterable commandments of His Father. The terms of reconciliation with the belligerent (which we were) cannot be abrogated. All things must be sealed in truth and sacrifice! *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* (John 7:16)

Ambassadors are often sent to end war and resolve a peaceful settlement. The old Treaty of the Covenant had been violated and the world was in a state of war with God. Christ came to provide a better covenant, not of Commandments written on Tables of Stone, but in love on the tender sinews of the heart. *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation* (2 Corinthians 5:19)

An Ambassador of tender heart will suffer grief when the weaker parties to which he is posted reject offers of peace, for He knows that the mighty Power which He represents shall crush all rebellion to orderly peace and rule. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, *Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee*

*even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* (Luke 19:41-44)

An ambassador has a great staff, loyal to His government, who labors on His behalf. Christ has ministers and servants who are His choice agents to execute His will.

Ambassadors of this world, though of respectable and honorable class, are not equal in power to the Authority that posts them to their station. But Christ, being God, is equal in authority to the Power that He represents. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* (Philippians 2:6-11 (KJV))

Ambassadors of the world are received with much ceremony and celebration; however, the Lord Jesus Christ came as a baby, born among animals and laid in a manger. The sleepy little town of Bethlehem paid little heed to His Coming.

The terms and treaties effected by ambassadors of the world are not lasting. The sands of time and dust of centuries cover their labors and the nations return to a state of war or unrest. But the peace and salvation of Christ is, by no means, temporary, but eternal. He has sealed the terms – not with the blood of His enemies – but with His own precious blood.

What great reverence and trust do we owe this Ambassador, Savior, Lord and King! If you are in enmity with that great King, perhaps it is time to `stack arms and sue for peace! Have you done so, Reader?