



All Saints Day

The Collect

O ALMIGHTY God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Twenty-First Sunday after Trinity

The Collect.

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood (Rev 1:5)

14 "..... These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;" (Rev 3:14)

A witness, to be believed, must have credibility. A profligate liar and gossip will not be accepted as a credible witness in a court of law. From whence cometh this credibility that makes our words believable? 1) It springs

from an unblemished reputation of dealing fairly and speaking the truth over one's complete lifetime. 2) It derives from an acquired character and change of heart that has resulted from some significant event in one's life that is, in its fundamental definition, life-changing. An example of the first instance would be the example of Job – an upright man who remained so even under the most trying of circumstances. The second example would be the Samaritan Woman who came to Jesus as an adulteress, and without credibility, seeking plain water and left as credible witness possessing, and professing, the Water of Life! Under most normal circumstances, present day politics excluded, the higher the position of responsibility, the greater the credibility. But there is an **ACQUIRED** credibility made available in Christ – the ultimate Possessor of Truth and True Witness.

Paul was a faithful witness through his newfound, and acquired, faith in Christ. He had been a fervent persecutor of the Church until struck by the Light of Christ on the Road to Damascus. From that time forward, he was a valiant witness for Christ even unto martyrdom; in fact, the Greek word for 'witness' is the same as that for 'martyr.' There can be no greater seal for truth than one's own blood. In this respect, Christ is the greatest Witness of Truth for He shed His last drop of blood to seal that truth of Salvation in Himself. *Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.* (Isaiah 55:4)

Another characteristic that suggests credibility for a witness is his knowledge and understanding of the thing to which he is attesting. If a witness was not present to observe the scene of a crime, he cannot be a witness to its commission. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of Witnesses. (Rev 1:8) He is the complete word starting with the first letter of the Greek alphabet all the way through to the last. He is the same in the English alphabet. (Luke 11:50, 51) He is the **COMPLETE WORD** and the **COMPLETE TRUTH**. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..... 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, 14) You can see that Christ was a Witness FULL of grace and **TRUTH**. When a vessel is full, it can hold nothing else. Christ held nothing else but Truth!

We are not called to be witnesses except in circumstances in which there is a need. We know many things that we have seen and heard that do not require our witness, or testimony, to the events. But important issue may require our witness, and certainly the faith we have in Christ requires our witness. But, Friends, there was never a greater need or cause for the Witness of Christ. The world was steeped in darkness, error, and sin. It was deemed by God to be essential that One should come knowing all truth of the Father to bear witness – that Witness was Christ! Had we not had this all-necessary Witness, we would yet be dead in trespasses and sins. He came to tell us all that we needed to hear of the Father's love, His plan and purpose, that we might be redeemed through that same Witness – the only Begotten Son, Jesus.

A witness does not offer 'opinion' – only known facts that he has observed. *I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.* (John 8:18) A witness does not leave out any detail of his

knowledge. Neither did Christ fail to make a complete revelation of His Father and Himself. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.* (John 5:19)

A witness in this life has but a short duty, and is then forgotten. That Witness which is Christ has a witness and testimony of eternal import and duration. Christ is a Witness whose testimony is not once, or a thousand times, but ongoing in the lives of those who love and follow Him.

Christ, as the Great Witness of Truth, calls upon each of us who are privileged to that Truth to share liberally with all who will listen. Soon the Trial will end, and the witnesses will either have spoken, or held their piece. Of what heavenly good is a witness who will not testify? Have you testified today of Christ and His Mercy, Reader?