



Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Sunday Report

Today we celebrated the Seventh Sunday after Trinity Sunday. Summer is here, but more pleasant than last week with a sunrise temperature on Mount Olympus of 64°F, by the time church ended the mercury had climbed to 87°F, all under clear skies. The Langstaffs made it back from their road trip to Las Vegas and Grand Canyon. Eve was ill, but we still ended up with 6 people present and one listening from a distance for the service.

Gathering Song

Jack Arnold played *Amazing Grace* for the gathering song.

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.

As everyone knows, we love *Amazing Grace!* It is a favorite among sinners.

On Point

Someone asked, where do the quotes come from? The answer is from the people who uttered them. But, how did you find them? Oh, that. Most are from Rev Bryan Dabney, a few from other places,



but overall mostly from Bryan. He always has a few great ones to share. So, on to the On Point quotes –

It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for a bird to learn to fly while remaining an egg.

We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.

CS Lewis
~Mere Christianity

I tremble for my country when I hear of confidence expressed in me. I know too well my weakness, that our only hope is in God.

We have fought this fight as long, and as well as we know how. We have been defeated. For us as a Christian people, there is now but one course to pursue. We must return home and cultivate our virtues.

Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more, you should never wish to do less.

Robert E. Lee

In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress.

John Adams

If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.

Mark Twain

Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But then I repeat myself.

Mark Twain

I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle.

Winston Churchill

A liberal is someone who feels a great debt to his fellow man, which debt he proposes to pay off with your money.

G. Gordon Liddy

Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys.

P. J. O'Rourke, Civil Libertarian

Government is the great fiction, through which everybody endeavors to live at the expense of everybody else.

Frederic Bastiat
French economist (1801-1850)

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.

Will Rogers

In general, the art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one party of the citizens to give to the other.

Voltaire
1764

A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have.

Thomas Jefferson

We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.

Aesop

The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else.

When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work, because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that is the beginning of the end of any nation!

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. . .

St. Matthew 7:15-16

It is a contradiction to say that a man is like God, or is a partaker of his nature, who does not love what God loves, and avoid what he hates.

Rev. Dr. Charles Hodge
19th century American theologian and author

Death is... a return from exile, a going home to the many mansions where the loved ones already dwell. The distance between glorified spirits in heaven and militant saints on earth seems great; but it is not so. We are not far from home— a moment will bring us there... When the eyes close on earth they open in heaven.

Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon
19th century English pastor and author
(Morning and Evening, p. 222)

The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the law of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence.

John Adams
Founding Father and 2nd president of the United States

A nation can survive its fools, and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and he carries his banners openly. But the traitor moves among those within the gate freely, his sly whispers... heard in the very hall of government itself. For the traitor appears not a traitor— he speaks in the accents familiar to his victims, and wears their face and their garment, and he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation— he works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of a city—he infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to be feared.

Marcus Tullius Cicero
1st century BC Roman statesman.

The contest is not over, the strife is not ended. It has entered upon a new and enlarged arena; there the champions of constitutional liberty must fight until government of the United States is brought back to its constitutional limits.

Jefferson Davis

President of the Confederate States of America, statesman and war hero
(The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, Vol. II, p. 294)

When the state has the capability to know everything except the difference between right and wrong, it won't end well.

Mark Steyn

20th and 21st century Canadian author and commentator

A dying culture invariably exhibits personal rudeness. Bad manners. Lack of consideration for others in minor matters. A loss of politeness, of gentle manners, is more significant than is a riot.

Robert A. Heinlein

20th century American science fiction author

Propers

Each Sunday there are Propers: special prayers and readings from the Bible. There is a Collect for the Day; that is a single thought prayer, most written either before the re-founding of the Church of England in the 1540s or written by Bishop Thomas Cranmer, the first Archbishop of Canterbury after the re-founding.

The Collect for the Day is to be read on Sunday and during Morning and Evening Prayer until the next Sunday. The Epistle is normally a reading from one of the various Epistles, or letters, in the New Testament. The Gospel is a reading from one of the Holy Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Collect is said by the minister as a prayer, the Epistle can be read by either a designated reader (as we do in our church) or by one of the ministers and the Holy Gospel, which during the church service is read by an ordained minister.

The propers are the same each year, except if a Red Letter Feast, that is one with propers in the prayerbook, falls on a Sunday, then those propers are to be read instead, except in a White Season, where it is put off. Red Letter Feasts, so called because in the Altar Prayerbooks the titles are in red, are special days. Most of the Red Letter Feasts are dedicated to early saints instrumental in the development of the church, others to special events. Some days are particularly special and the Collect for that day is to be used for an octave (eight days) or an entire season, like Advent or Lent.

The Propers for today are found on Page 198-199, with the Collect first:

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

The Collect.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Dru Arnold read the Epistle, which was letter to the Romans beginning at the Nineteenth Verse. Paul reminds us when we strive above all else for the things of this world, we gain nothing we can take with us to the next. "For, when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." Conversely, if we will be servants of God (righteousness) we can be free from the devil sin). "... the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. If we will follow God, we will live, not only forever in the next world, but better in this world. We must put aside what we did and do what He would have us do. Actions are the key to everything. Talk is nice. Action is what counts.



I SPEAK after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rev Deacon Jack Arnold read today's Holy Gospel which was written in the Eighth Chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Mark beginning at the First Verse. Jesus had been in the wilderness teaching a multitude, some four thousand in number. In those pre-restaurant on every corner days, the people had been without food and were hungry. Jesus was concerned and inventoried their supplies, seven loaves and a few small fishes. He gave thanks to God, and commanded the food to be set out before the people. When they had eaten their fill, the scraps gathered up from the seven loaves filled seven baskets.



Many speculated over the years as to just how He did it. The answer is simple, He did it. He did not talk about feeding the multitude and sit down to His own meal. He acted and they were fed. Does this story recall the words from the Last Supper used in Holy Communion at the Consecration? "he took Bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me." Those few words produced The Word, which has satisfied so many over millenniums.

IN those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far. And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people. And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them. So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.



Sermon – Reverend Deacon Jack Arnold - Time and Action

Today's sermon tied the Epistle and Gospel together talked as is oft the case of the need for action, not simply diction, the general content is in forewords above.



Consider the words from the Collect, ... author and giver of all good things; Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same (that is to say keep us in goodness)...

To get anywhere, we must acknowledge in our hearts that all good is of and comes from God. Once we acknowledge that, we are in a position to ask God to put in to our hearts love of Him and all that is His. This will help us to appreciate and act in goodness. Without His love our efforts will ultimately be of no avail. We cannot do anything without His help, and with it, it will be easier. There will be times where we fail, but if we turn back to Him, then we shall succeed. I find personally when I turn to Him nowadays for help with stuff, that I do far better than if I do not.

So, pretty clearly we need to be of God. Thus, when Paul wrote to the people of Rome, he was writing to all of us; for there truly is nothing new in the world. Before we are of God, we are of this world. Our life is here, our end is here. Once we are of God, then we are merely sojourners here; our life is not really here and certainly does not end here. The only way to be of God is through God, that is His Son, our Lord.

If we will follow God, we will live, not only forever in the next world, but better in this world. We must put aside what we did and do what He would have us do. Actions are the key to everything. Talk is nice. Action is what counts. We have to act upon our beliefs, which can be very hard sometimes but must be done. I struggle with this myself, but I find that returning to God helps with this, and He cleans the slate, so I can try again a new.

Saint Mark tells us of action. Jesus had been in the wilderness teaching a multitude, some four thousand in number. In those pre-restaurant on every corner days, the people had been without food and were hungry. Jesus was concerned and inventoried their supplies, seven loaves and a few small fishes. He gave thanks to God, and commanded the food to be set out before the people. When they had eaten their fill, the scraps gathered up from the seven loaves filled seven baskets.

Many speculated over the years as to just how He did it. The answer is simple, He did it. He did not talk about feeding the multitude and then sit down to His own meal. He acted and they were fed. The clear moral of this story is that He acted, not just talked, but he actually acted and fed the people. Does this story recall the words from the Last Supper used in Holy Communion at the Consecration? "he took Bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me." Those few words produced The Word, which has satisfied so many over millenniums.

Heaven is at the end of an uphill trail. The easy downhill trail does not lead to the summit.

The time is now, not tomorrow. The time has come, indeed. How will you ACT?

It is by our actions we are known.

Be of God - Live of God - Act of God

Bishop Ogles' Sermon

We are off fortunate to get copies of Bishop Jerry's sermon notes. Today is one of those Sundays. Today's sermon starts off with the collect, and like always, it will give you a lot to consider in your heart.

Sermon Notes

Seventh Sunday after Trinity
Saint Andrew's Anglican Orthodox Church
14 July 2013, Anno Domini

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

The Collect.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. 16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. 17 These things I command you, that ye love one another. 18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. 23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. 26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: 27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. (John 15:12-27)

We all have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of us are locked in a relationship of belligerence and war with Christ. Some are in a very casual and ineffectual relationship. But these kinds of relationships do not gain for us the favor and grace of God. Our relationship with Christ must be that of a friend, a brother or sister, a servant, and a soldier under His High Command.

What relationship do you enjoy with Christ? Is it effectual and worthy of His favor and love? This is the most important questions of life. Do we not just know of Christ, but do we know Him as a friend, brother, Lord, and Savior?

In the 12th Chapter of the Gospel of St Matthew, we see Jesus preaching and teaching the multitudes when His mother, brothers and sisters came and stood without the gate to speak with Christ. *46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. 47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.* (Matthew 12:46-47) There is some suggestion in this incident to shed light on the spiritual relationship that the immediately family, including His mother, had with Jesus. Yes, He was their brother and her Son in a corporeal sense, but not necessarily a spiritual affinity to all that Christ taught. We do not see His mother, Mary, following hard after the disciples to hear the preaching of her Son. She was more concerned, as a mother, for His physical welfare than the seemingly troublesome Gospel He was preaching.

The next actions of Christ reveal a great deal about the proper spiritual relationship we should have with Him: *48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50 For whosoever*

shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matt 12:48-50) The close relationships of Christ are those who hear and do the will of the Father – PERIOD. By implication, the immediate corporeal family of Jesus did not fit into this scenario. It may have been after the crucifixion and resurrection before His mother, Mary, came to know the full magnitude of who her Son truly was. The appearing of the Great Angel Gabriel seemed almost like a dream of ages past to poor Mary.

Now we come to the occasion of the text for today. We are given three factors of the work of God that are relevant to the text – The conditions of Relationship in Christ, The Comfort to be enjoyed even under the World’s Persecution, and the Work of the Holy ghost and of the Apostles.

I. The Condition that must be met:

Jesus lays out the one condition that establishes our Election in Christ and sustains that Election: it is the simple four-letter word – LOVE! It bears such a heavy weight as His royal Commandment that it is the one Commandment upon which all others have their foundation. It is, in brief, a **Circle of Love**: God loved us before we loved Him. *“We love him, because he first loved us.”* (1 John 4:19) We owe God a DEBT of Love. Now, to qualify that love that we have reciprocated to the Father, we must love those others who likewise love the Lord. It is the very BANNER of Love under which the people of God march, and there must be a mutual love of all who march under that BANNER. **12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*** **13 *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.***

We use the term love a bit too casually in our day. We claim to love chocolate ice cream, dogs, horses, roses, etc.; but that is not love. Who would die for an ice cream (though I am tempted)? Or a dog? Or a rose? Love is an overruling sentiment that dictates all else of our being. We certainly WILL die for that which we love. Christ did, and so should we if the circumstances warrant. If we say we love our fellow Christians, do we? Do we love them as we are commanded to do by Jesus? And how does Jesus say we should love each other? Just as He has loved us and gave His life for us. That is not a casual love, is it? He tells us of that great love in verse 13 - ***Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*** This is the standard of love required. Do you have it?

II. The Comfort to be had even in the Persecution of the World: The athlete who survives a particularly bruising game of football, or the ballerina who suffers a ruined performance that deprived her of the crown, may take a particular pride in duty well performed as God has given them the Light to do so. Persecution of the world takes an even more somber aspect of injustice. Though we may have conducted our lives with greater righteousness than can be humanly expected, yet we suffer an injustice of being punished for doing good. Such an injustice can be overwhelming to those of little faith; but to those whose faith is grounded on the solid Rock, there is an immense consolation in being unjustly tortured and beaten. The satisfaction comes from the sure knowledge that we have, indeed, taken up our cross and followed Christ – **all of the way!** Christ’s counsel rings loud and clear: ***18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute***

you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. 23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

It is interesting to note the reciprocity of sentiment expressed by Christ in His discourse. God loved us first; therefore, we are able to love Him. On the other hand, the world hated Christ first; therefore the world hates us as well. There is unity of both camps. The hate of the world is united against Christ and His people while the Kingdom of God is united under that banner of love discussed earlier. All of the work of a servant is truly the work of his master. It is the will of the master that is operative in the labors of the many servants of the household. If the master is well loved among the community, the servants will be identified with that love as well. If the master is treacherous, his servants will be treated as treacherous. Whatever praise or ridicule belongs to the master will be visited on the servant. But one wayward servant does not cast dispersions on the master. Christ is our Master. It is His Person represented by every member of His household. But the estate is called by His name and not ours.

The enemy on the battlefield neither knows, nor desires to know, the name of the common soldier of the line; but you can be assured that they desire to know, and DO know, the name of their Field Commander against whose mind they plan their assaults. Christ is the Captain of our Soul. Wherever He is hated, you will be hated too. If they show no mercy to our Leader, do you suppose they will be more respectful of his followers? To be hated by the world without a cause may bring no comfort at all; however, when we are persecuted for Christ's sake, we can know that He is aware and loves us the more.

III. The work of the Holy Spirit, and of the Apostles: The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, is sent to open our eyes to the Beauty of the Lord. He reveals truth to us that we may know in our heads, but NOT in our hearts. You will note that the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to “*testify*” of Christ. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* (John 14:26) The Lord has given us a reading assignment that will be our food for learning by way of the Holy Ghost. We note that the Holy Ghost is sent by the Father in the name of Christ. We further note that the Holy Ghost will teach us all things of which we may have read in Scripture, but not understood. We also note that the Holy Ghost will “*bring all things to our REMEMBRANCE.*” How can we be reminded of something in Holy Scripture if we have not even taken the trouble to have read or studied it in the first place? We have a somber duty here to perform. As good soldiers, we must take our training, bear our weapons, and don our armor. Dare any of us to go into the heat of battle bearing no arms or wearing no armor of defense?

We must reconsider our relationship to Christ. Are we His friend as He is our friend? Do we love Him as He first loved us? Are we the ones who hear and obey the Commandments of the Christ? “*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*” Have we done? Without grace, we could not have chosen Christ, for it was He who chose us long before we even knew Him. If we are the children of God, and God is

the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, are we not likewise brothers and sisters of Jesus? *"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."* Now, once more, please ask yourself the question: What is MY relationship to Jesus Christ?

Note from Hap – I am reminded of a quote from then General Eisenhower the night before the invasion at Normandy when asked by a reporter if God was on our side. The answer, "It is not that God is on our side, but rather that we are on God's side."

Bishop Dennis Campbell's Sermon

Bishop Dennis is a brilliant speaker. He is able to take biblical precepts and make them perfectly understandable, even to me. Oft he provides the text of his sermons and I take the utmost pleasure in passing them on:



Christians Answer

Continuing to talk about what Christians do, today's sermon title is, "Christians Answer." Of course that makes us ask, "answer what?" Christians answer the call of God. Or, to put it another way, Christians devote themselves to the call of God. For today let us divide the call of God into three parts. First there is the call to faith, to believe and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Writing of this, the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:14, God "called you by the Gospel." Next is the call to holy living and growing in the faith. Paul wrote about this in many places, but one of the Church's favourites has always been Philippians 3:13 and 14; "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ." Next, there are ministries and vocations to which we are called, and God has given us gifts to equip us for these tasks. The Bible sometimes talks about being equipped by the gifts of the Spirit. This is the area I want to talk about today.

How can I discover and use my spiritual gifts? Believe it or not, that is a burning question in the minds of many today. Bible studies, sermons, churches, even whole denominations have developed around this question. Of course this question does not stand alone. It is naturally joined with other questions, such as, what does it mean to have the Holy Spirit? How can I know I have the Spirit? And, what are the gifts of the Holy Spirit? I want to offer a few brief remarks about these issues, then I hope to address to subject of discovering and using your spiritual gifts.

First, what does it mean to have the Holy Spirit? It means you have come to Christ in Biblical faith. It means He has cleansed you of your sins and restored you to fellowship with God. Now, rather than living apart from God, you live in and with God, and He lives in and with you. The Bible uses many phrases and images to express this. St. Paul, for example, refers to the Church, meaning the people, not the buildings, as the Temple of the Holy Spirit. He means the Church is the home of the Holy Spirit. Yes, the Holy Spirit indwells individual believers, but He indwells us as we are a part of the Church. Christ dwells in us and we dwell in Christ, and the Holy Spirit is the means by which God accomplishes this.

Who has the Holy Spirit? All real Christians have the Holy Spirit. We have been brought into the Church through the work of the Spirit. It is He who called us to believe in Christ, enabled us to understand the Bible message of grace through Jesus Christ, and even enabled us to believe in Christ in Biblical faith. It is the Holy Spirit in us who enables us to keep believing and following Christ. If you are a Christian, you have the Spirit. Remember 2 Thessalonians 2:14, which I quoted just a few moments ago? It tells us God called us by His Gospel. The Holy Spirit is the One who does the calling. It is He who accomplishes our calling through the Gospel.

How do you know you have the Spirit? Two ways; first, the Bible says you do. Second, your life shows the fruit of the Spirit; love, joy, peace. Note that I did not say you know you have the Spirit because of ecstatic experiences, speaking in tongues, or supernatural abilities, such as healing the sick or telling the future. You know you have the Holy Spirit when you have Biblical faith in Christ, and when your faith leads you to act and love like Jesus.

Now I want to talk about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Most “Christians” today are on a quest to find their spiritual gifts and use them to the glory of God. Such quests are misguided. I say this for several reasons. First, they are based on an erroneous understanding of the ministry and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Second, they are essentially self-centered, rather than God centered. Third, they are asking the wrong questions. Instead of asking, what are my gifts and how can I use them? Christians should be asking, “what are my God-given callings in life, and how can I devote myself to them with God’s help? Christians answer their calling.

We don’t have to go on some great quest to find our callings in life. We don’t have to go on some great spiritual retreat. We don’t have to go to conferences held by famous TV and radio preachers or para-church organizations. We don’t have to read the books about finding our spiritual gifts written by the celebrity preachers and entertainers of pop-christianity. All we have to do is look into the Bible to see how God wants us to live and what He wants us to do. Then, trust Him to enable us to do it. And most of that is right in front of us.

For example, are you a father? If yes, then being a father is one of your most important callings in life. Are you a mother? Are you a wife, husband, daughter, son, in-law, Church member? If yes, these are your callings in life. Accept these callings, and seek to fulfill them as God teaches in the Bible.

Now, here is the point, and it is so simple most of us don’t even notice it, the gifts of the Spirit are the attitudes and abilities you need to fulfill your calling. Do you need love, joy, and longsuffering (patience) to fulfill these callings? Seek these things as gifts from God. Do you need wisdom, humility, self-giving, and the ability to endure a few hurts and being misunderstood and unappreciated along the way? Seek these things as gifts from God. But understand this; God will probably not give these things to you in their mature form. Rather, He will plant them in you, like seeds in a garden, and develop them in you over the years. Like a garden, you will experience rains and storms and winds and droughts, as God develops these gifts in you through a long, long process of learning and experience. Think of it the same way you think about growing in your understanding of the Bible. God does not just pour it into your brain. You have to read and study for years. As I look back over my life, I wish I had known then what I know now. I know if I could do it over again, I would be a far better husband and father, and

son and brother, and minister. But there aren't any practice rounds in life, and we learn our most important tasks through On the Job Training, and we make many, many mistakes. But that is part of the way God develops your gifts. Expect it.

The same is true of spiritual gifts in the Church. Yes, being a member of a Biblical Church is part of every Christian's calling. Therefore, God obviously wants to help us fulfill this calling well. So He gives gifts to us to enable us. Enable us to what? Build up the body in love. But these gifts, too, take time to develop, for we mature into them. We grow into them and they grow in us. For example, the Bible talks about the gift of encouragement. I think God expects us all to be encouragers in the Church, and has given that gift to each of us. But that gift matures in us as we grow in Christ, and as we exercise it. The more we encourage, the better we become at encouraging.

But I am straying from my point, which is, don't waste time worrying about spiritual gifts. Look for your callings in life and apply yourself to them. Ask and expect God's help. Then you will be using your gifts for His glory.

--

+Dennis Campbell

Bishop, Anglican Orthodox Church Diocese of Virginia
Rector, Holy Trinity Anglican Orthodox Church
Powhatan, Virginia
www.HolyTrinityAnglicanOrthodoxChurch.org
www.lifeinthescrptures.blogspot.com

Rev Rick Reid of Saint Peter's Sunday Sermon

We are happy to have a sermon from Reverend Rick Reid, minister of Saint Peter's, whose congregation is right at the Worldwide Headquarters of the Anglican Orthodox Church. Rev Rick has all the resources and challenges right at hand. I think you will enjoy this sermon.



Feeding the Four Thousand (Mark 8:1-10) Trinity VII

During His earthly ministry, Jesus ministered mostly to the Jews as He also commanded the Apostles when he first sent them out in St. Matthew's Gospel. *Matthew 10:5-6*

⁵ *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans."* ⁶ *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

And as He explained to the Syro-Phoenician woman also in Matthew's gospel 15:24:

²⁴ But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Even so, there were occasions when Gentiles benefited from His physical presence. The Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter was healed and there were also healings in the area of Decapolis, including the deaf mute.

In this morning's gospel we hear of Jesus' feeding of the four thousand.

We find a great multitude, who had been with Jesus three days in a wilderness region, without food, and were far from their homes.

Jesus had compassion for the multitude and using only seven loaves and a few small fish Jesus proceeds to perform this miracle.

First He commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them.

And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.

So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left... seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

Like the feeding of the 5,000 Matthew describes in the previous chapter, the feeding of the 4,000 has implications of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

Jesus took the bread; and after giving thanks he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples.

Many students of the Bible have been intrigued by the numerical symbolism of the feeding miracles; in the first miracle Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves and ended up with 12 baskets of leftovers; in today's Gospel miracle, Jesus fed 4,000 people with seven loaves and finished with seven baskets of leftovers.

Some scholars believe that the feeding of the 5,000 symbolizes the Eucharist of the Jews ...with the 12 baskets of leftovers corresponding to the 12 tribes of Israel.

And that the feeding of the 4,000 symbolizes the more inclusive Eucharist of the Gentileswith the 7 baskets of leftovers corresponding to a number that throughout the Hebrew Scriptures is associated with perfection and completeness.

In John's Gospel (chapter 6), as the multitudes continued to follow Him in order to receive more food, He revealed to them the true purpose for the miracle.

He declared, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you...I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

This was an answer that many of the Jews who had been following Christ up to this point did not find rational at all.

In fact, on three separate occasions the people objected that His words made no sense, and each time they did so, Christ replied with even bolder statements.

He declared, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

As the people were appalled by this statement, Christ then made what must have seemed the most outrageous claim of all saying, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day".

Many of the thousands of people who had been following Jesus up until this moment suddenly turned away and left Him over those words, they simply would not accept what He had said.

Today there are many Christians today who will not accept Christ's words, but rather than abruptly leave Him, they simply *reinterpret, that is to say, give their own meaning to what would otherwise be a clear meaning they do not like*, what He said to derive a meaning much more in accord with what they want, then term it rational thought.

The early church understood the plain meaning of the miracle of the feeding of the 5000 pointed directly to the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

Just as the loaves of bread were multiplied at the hands of His disciples to feed everyone present with basketsful left over, so even today loaves of *bread are* multiplied at the hands of His ministers in churches across the world to feed millionswith the Body and Blood of Christ.

In the world today, many Christians have set a very poor example of respect for this holy sacrament. A large percentage do not prepare properly, if at all, to take communion. Many do not even think about the prayers we pray before Holy Communion.

Is it any wonder then that so many of churches lack spiritual vitality, and that so many of our young people leave the faith at their first opportunity, and that Orthodox Christianity seems to have so little an impact on American culture and religion?

We must do our part to overcome Satan by approaching this sacrament with the fear of God, and with faith charity, and with love for our neighbors. Only then will we be able to receive all the benefits that Christ promised us.

Rev Bryan Dabney of Saint John's Sunday Sermon

We are fortunate to have Bryan's Sunday Sermon. If you want people to come to The Truth, you have to speak the truth, expound the truth and live the truth. This is really a good piece and I commend it to your careful reading.



Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Today we celebrate the sixth anniversary of St. John's Church as an organized Anglican Orthodox body. Along the way, we have experienced many joys, as well as our share of heartaches. Nevertheless, the guiding hand of our good and gracious God has sustained us through the intercessory work of his most blessed Spirit. There is an old Baptist hymn entitled Count Your Blessings which is apropos as it calls on Christians to look at the things they have and to give God the credit for them. Too often we will focus on those things we do not have. That is human nature. But God has called us out of the bondage of our natural state into a new and more fulfilling life through his only begotten Son. And so today we celebrate this anniversary of our church's founding, giving God the glory for all the good that is found therein.

The scriptures are replete with examples of God's provision for his own. Consider our gospel lesson for today (St. Mark 8:1-9) wherein our Lord exercised his creative powers to feed his hearers both physically and spiritually. They had come into a desolate region to hear him teach and our Lord had compassion on them for their apparent lack of sustenance. God does not lead his people into the wilderness to die. In Psalm 37 we find the following: The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him

with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread (vv.23-25).

Consider also Genesis 1:1 as it speaks of God's sovereign power in calling forth ex nihilo the whole of the Creation. I once heard a fellow Christian refer to it as "In-Your-Face Theology" because it gives the reader no recourse but to either accept or reject God based upon that solemn pronouncement. It also sets the tone for the rest of Scripture as it reveals the unimaginable and sovereign ability of the Godhead to act within our frame of reference. God has created for a purpose, and he will sustain his creation to complete that purpose. As long as we remain within God's purposeful will, we will be preserved and empowered in our service.

Returning to our gospel lesson, we read where our Lord exercised that same capacity when he took five barley loaves and two fish and fed a multitude with food to spare. Examine the text of the 23rd Psalm: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley and the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

God's supply is more than sufficient. It is more than adequate. It is more than mere subsistence. To use the psalmist's words: it runneth over. All creation is his, from the cattle on a thousand hills to the myriads of edible sea creatures, to all the elements, both mineral and metal which are found within the earth itself. And so it follows that regardless of whether it is bread and fish, or the gift of grace, we should understand that everything we have came from God. Therefore, we ought to give him thanks and praise, not only for what we are and what we have; but for what we will yet receive through the atoning work of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. God the Father sent his only begotten Son to bring us more than the mere bread of physical sustenance. He came to make us whole spiritually that we might be redeemed: cleansed from all unrighteousness and made fit members of his body and joint heirs with him in God's heavenly kingdom.

The church was established to provide for the spiritual, and at times, the material, well-being of its members. And the Godhead continues to sustain all who are true believers by means of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Think for a moment about the witness of St. Paul. He had been sent on an evangelical mission to physically establish and spiritually feed the various flocks of our Lord within the Roman Empire under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Generally, though not always, he came, he set in order, he followed up as an overseer of the faith and he appointed just men to serve in like capacity prior to his departure for another locale. And those churches which he established were not left spiritually impoverished when the apostle moved on because they were nourished and enriched by the teaching and instruction of those whom the Lord had called into his service.

God sustains. God strengthens. God increases. It is all due to his efforts, his will, his choosing. We are but his servants whom he has called out of darkness into the glorious light of his gospel. We are to work within this church to materially assist any member of

the body of Christ whom God has brought to our attention for such ministrations. It is the church's duty to look after its own— not the state, and certainly not the unregenerate of this world. Consider the words of the apostle James from his epistle who wrote, What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed, and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (2:14-17).

And let no able-bodied man think that he can lay back and become a burden on others for it is written ... this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat (II Thessalonians 3:10). There is no room in Christ's church for the slothful and the lazy, neither is there room for the willfully unrepentant. If that seems harsh, those were not my words but those of the Holy Ghost who inspired the apostle Paul to command of his listeners that, ... if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed (II Thessalonians 3:14). In closing, we learned from the Scriptures that the Godhead is our Creator, our Sustainer as well as our Redeemer. He will not lead us into a permanent state of privation and want, but into provision and abundance. And though at times we might experience hardship and tribulation; nevertheless we trust that our gracious and loving God will see us through the days of darkness, and will lead us to green pastures and still waters. He will turn our hunger into satisfaction and our lack into more than what we could ask or imagine, and all because he loves us.

But we cannot know the fullness of his grace, or the height and depth of his love without being obedient to his word. That is why churches like this one are so important to the born-again Christian because we teach what the Bible commands, and we encourage our members to properly recognize who God is, and what our relationship should be with him. If you have not been made right with God for whatever reason, ask him to turn your heart and mind unto him today in the name of his only begotten Son. Confess your sins and trespasses to him, for he is ready to forgive and to forget them. If you will do so, you will experience that peace which only he can give; that love which is beyond all else; and that joy which comes with the blessed assurance of your salvation unto eternal life. Make that your prayer today, and may God bless this church and the whole Anglican Orthodox Communion and keep it faithful unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let us pray,

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who has blessed us with this church which bears the name of thy servant, St. John the Revelator; we mostly humbly thank thee for its preservation and continuation as a body of faithful Christians: where thy pure word is taught, preached and lived; that through our obedience to thy word written, we might be received as citizens of thine everlasting kingdom; and this we ask in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Have a blessed week, Bryan+

After Church Hospitality

Sadly, no after church snacks. The same story every week, is it not? The fact is that we are supposed to be on a low carb diet and there really aren't any low carb snacks that

appeal to us. So, with no fatted dog nut in sight, we were out of luck! Please someone, between now and next Sunday invent some no-carb dog nuts.

After church goodies providers as currently signed up:

Date	Name
14 July 2012	Opportunity Available – Seventh Sunday after Trinity
21 July 2012	Opportunity Available – Eighth Sunday after Trinity
28 July 2012	Opportunity Available – Ninth Sunday after Trinity
4 August 2012	Opportunity Available – Tenth Sunday after Trinity
14 August 2012	Opportunity Available – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity
18 August 2012	Opportunity Available – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity
25 August 2012	Opportunity Available – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity
1 September 2012	Opportunity Available – Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

People in our Prayers - <http://faithfulcenturionprayerteam.blogspot.com/>

Why? Prayer is an extremely important activity.

It is not that God knows not our needs, for He surely does. Yet, Jesus commanded us to ask God for those same needs. In addition to the obvious of asking God for help, offering thanksgiving and the like, prayer helps us focus our thoughts on how we might do God's work.

The Prayer Team of the Church of the Faithful Centurion was established to help our members and fellow Christians pray for those in need and to give thanks as well for the blessings we have been granted.

Who can be on the list? Do I have to be a member of the Church of the Faithful Centurion to be prayed for?

No! The only qualification to be on the list is that you want our prayer team to pray for you. We are Christians and are happy to pray for you, no matter who you are. If you want help from God, you are our kind of people.

What is the commitment from the prayer team?

Each member of the team will pray for the desired outcome at last once per day.

How do I get myself or someone else on the prayer list?

You can email one of the prayer team leaders: Jack - jack@faithfulcenturion.org or Dru - dru@faithfulcenturion.org, or call the church office at (619) 659-3608 or fill out a prayer card at church.

What should I ask for?

Depends on what you want. Some people merely want God to be asked to heal their ills and be mentioned by their first name, others want a specific outcome and / or have more of their personal information known to the team. Ask for what you want. It is your desire and need for prayer the team is attempting to meet. For typical examples, see the list below.

Updating the Team

If you are on our prayer list, or if you have submitted a person that you have asked us to pray for, please update one of the team members or Hap in person, by telephone or email. It helps to be able to pray specifically for these individuals including their specific needs; plus if they get better, it is nice to give thanks!

Please note that on the yellow (maybe green or orange if you get an old one) cards at church, you can ask that those to be prayed for have their names disseminated to the prayer team. Those names will be said in church and appear here. Or, you can ask that their names and purpose be kept confidential, then only Hap will know to pray for them.

Prayer List Notice – If you have someone on the prayer list and their needs have changed, please let us know. We'd like to update our prayers to reflect the need and most important to give thanks!

Travel

The entire Langstaff family from Perth is on an *Around the World in 90 Days* tour. Right now they are RIGHT HERE! Details here:

<http://langytravel.blogspot.com>

Hap – Jack L – Emma – Eve – Jack A – Dru – Paul



Birthday

Ryan Hopkins celebrated his 22nd birthday 14 July 2013.

Sara Simmons celebrated her 61st birthday 2 July 2013.

Zachary Gray celebrated his 12th birthday today, 23 June 2013!

Laurel Bessesen celebrated her 90th birthday on 26 April 2013.

Loss of Home

Sarah who lost her home and all the contents when her house caught fire and burned to the ground near the end of January 2013. Her beloved dog was taken in the fire. Please pray for Sarah as she has many decisions at this time and help her to know Jesus will be with her to help to make the "crooked road straight."

Move

Jason Naylor and his lovely wife Marla are currently stationed in Southwest Asia, probably through the end of 2013. Pray for their continued safety and a reasonably tolerable stay in that part of the world.

Ryan Hopkins has moved to Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, to study Dressage Riding through June 2014. Please pray for God's guidance in his life as he works and studies. Help him to see where God would like him to go from here and how he should get there.

The Thomas Family is on a short tour assignment in Guam through August 2013 and about to leave for Okinawa for a second short tour. Please pray for this new assignment to go well for Kurt and for Mary and the kids to make new friends. In particular pray that Kristyna and Mitchell will develop good friends and schoolmates there so as to further their development as both Christians and citizens. Things seem to be going well where the sun rises on the United States, so keep praying! Give thanks and ask for continued good developments.

Departed

Reba left for home about 0500 on 12 July 2013, after time with her family in particular for her daughter Lynn with whom she lived and her son in law Bill. Please give thanks for her time on earth and pray for the love of God to stay foremost in their hearts.

Pat had a massive heart attack on Sunday 7 July 2103, and died enroute to the hospital. Pat was the president of the Royal Canadian Legion. He was a true "officer and a gentleman." It was a privilege getting to know him in my role as Chaplain. He recently shared with me that he was reading through the Old Testament. Pat had connections with the Mormons and Free Masons. Please pray his surviving family members will look to the Lord for their salvation and comfort in the midst of sorrow.

Rev David

John Bylo passed away the evening of 27 June 2013 after a brief fight with pneumonia after radiation treatment then surgery for esophageal cancer. Please give thanks for his time here on earth and pray in particular for his wife Debe and their family.

John was a Rev Canon in the Anglican Episcopal Church on the staff of St. George's Anglican Church, Ventura, CA. He also has worked diligently in theological education and church planting in the Southwest, and so was appointed Missionary Canon with Special Responsibility for the States of California, Nevada, and Alaska in December 2010.

Bishop George Connor, AEC

Thelma Sperber passed away the afternoon of 23 June 2103 after a long downhill existence. Please give thanks for her time here on earth and pray for Hal her husband of many years and son Roger who has been taking care of her, as well as the rest of the family.

Cleve passed way the week of 16 June 2013. Please pray for comfort for his family and friends who miss their wonderful husband, father, uncle, combat veteran and faithful servant of the Lord.

Nearing the end of their time here on earth

Saundra is in ICU with congestive heart failure after a heart operation. She is aged and frail. *Saundra* is near the end of her tom hear on earth. Please pray for comfort, understanding, strength and guidance for *Saundra* and her family who will of necessity remain behind. Pray for the love of God to stay foremost in their hearts.

Hal Sperber has been getting closer to leaving for his true home for some time, his loving wife passed away the afternoon of 23 June 2103 after a long downhill existence. Please help *Hal* to adjust to the temporary separation and give him strength to deal with her passing. Pray in particular for strength and guidance for *Hal's* son *Roger* who is the primary person taking care of *Hal*, as well as the rest of his family who will of necessity remain behind. Pray for the love of God to stay foremost in their hearts.

Polly is in hospice care with dementia and spinal stenosis. Please pray for her as she prepares to go home to be with her family who have gone before her. Pray for the faith of her family to build and the transition to be good.

Homebound or Infirm

Lou has aspiration pneumonia. Please pray for the infection to be knocked down and for her continued recovery.

Frank has been coping with various ailments from older age. He is in his 90s and it has been a difficult year. Pray he will find comfort in God, that those who provide care to him will pay attention to him, do their best and give him the love we all desire. Pray that the coming year will provide relief to him.

Norma, Sara's mother is in a state of deteriorating health, both physically and mentally, with both onset dementia and Alzheimer's. She is slowly drifting away, though she still recognizes *Sara* and prayer gives her a sense of peace. Please pray for both *Sara* and her mother to put their cares and worries on God's shoulders so they can deal with the many problems involved.

In need of a miracle or understanding of God's Plan

Beth recently underwent another craniotomy for brain cancer and follow up of progress of the past treatment and surgery; 81 new metastasizes were found. The family and treatment staff is gathered around *Beth* and family. She is strong in spirit. Let us all pray for God's mercy, grace and God's will to be done for all. It would appear there is no viable treatment at this time. Please pray for a miraculous remission; that her remaining time here on earth might be good. Help *Beth* and her family put their trust in the Lord and let Him carry their worry. *Beth* is grateful for all who pray for her and asks you continue to pray for her remaining time here on earth.

Pat has been under treatment for colon cancer for sometime. He has had major complications the last few days and your prayers will be appreciated by family and friends.

Sasha a young lady with a husband and two children had diagnosed with breast cancer whose cells have spread. It would appear there is no viable treatment at this

time. Please pray for a miraculous remission; that her remaining time here on earth might be good. Help Sasha and her family, particularly her husband, put their trust in the Lord and let Him carry their worry. Right now she is "comfortable on borrowed time." Sasha is grateful for all who pray for her and asks you continue to pray for her remaining time here on earth.

Dorothy had pneumonia, on checking her lungs they found tumors which permeated the lung area. Further investigation found a primary site in the colon, with the lung being secondary. It would appear there is no viable treatment at this time. Please pray for a miraculous remission; that her remaining time here on earth might be good. Help Dorothy and her family put their trust in the Lord and let Him carry their worry.

Scott, one of our Lord's ministers who collapsed a week ago and is in the ICU of a Medical Center since he had a pulmonary embolism, with a concurrent infection of several bacterial agents. He has stopped breathing on several occasions, and may have undergone brain damage. He currently is on DNR. Please pray for recovery so that he will continue to do his Lord's calling.

Becky has fourth stage metastasized lung cancer and is not doing well with chemotherapy treatments. Please pray for Becky and her husband as they are together during this difficult time in their lives.

Larry Howes suffered a fairly severe stroke. 4 December 2012, doctors replaced a valve in a shunt that had been put in about two weeks before, and Larry responded very well. He was able to go home.

Please pray for the medical team treating him to pay attention and do their very best; that the many medical/surgical procedures he will need may succeed, that Larry be given strength and peace in these trials and he may succeed in providing himself with the resources to afford the care he will need.

Pray also for confidence in our Lord for Larry and his family. Larry needs a miracle, pray for one. Please.

Colleen has been battling pancreatic cancer over the last year and it has now spread to one of her lungs. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.

Christine has cancer of the colon, which spread to her liver; she is receiving chemotherapy and is having difficulty eating. Please pray for the medical team treating her to pay attention and do their very best; pray also for confidence in our Lord for Christine and her family.

Todd and *Kenny* have both been fighting osteocarcinoma for over five years and have been told their time here on earth is nearing its end, absent a miracle from God. Both are ready to go home and leave the pain, but would like to stay. Please pray for them and their families.

Colonel Bud Day's cancer has returned. But, there is good news; Bud has gained some weight, up to 120 now from 110 just a few weeks ago. He is stronger, able to walk around the house using his cane, and has even attended some court hearings. He is in remarkably good spirits, his voice is stronger, and he remains the most inspirational warrior I have ever known. We talked continuously for several hours each visit, and I had the pleasure of listening to a number of great stories about his remarkable life. My dear old Marine friend, Jim Harrison, joined me for the visits. Our friendship goes back to 1961, and Jim arranged to

escort me home from Hanoi, meeting me at Gia Lam on March 4, 1973. He has known Bud for many years.

Bud is receiving first class attention from the medical team at Eglin, and they marvel (still after all these years) at how tough and courageous this man is. Bud & Doris' beautiful granddaughter, Bethany, had just arrived for an extended summer visit during her summer college break, and you can see the delight in that in the eyes of Bud.

Always present when you visit Bud is his wonderful sense of humor. As usual, when I come away from visiting Bud, I am again inspired.

He enjoys hearing from friends and sends his regards. He has frequent visitors. Time Ayers had just visited. I took some pictures Angie made during our recent POW reunion at the Nixon Library, and he thoroughly enjoyed seeing and hearing about old friends.

We are blessed to have Bud Day as our leader, our friend and our fellow warrior -- what an amazing warrior and patriot. I know he would like to hear from you. He gets on the computer occasionally, but answering all will be difficult --- and, that is ok. He needs to hear from us regularly.

God Bless Bud and Doris Day, how rich they have made our lives with their friendship. Bud has been an inspiration to all of us for years, this changes nothing. He is well at peace with our Lord and we all hope he stays with us for a while longer.

- Orson Swindle

New Member!

Trent Joseph Hofmann has joined the world and mother Gabby is doing well. The whole family thanks you for your prayers.

Surgery

John will have a Vitrectomy; to address what seems a macular pucker, suck out some "gel" and thereby to marginally improve his vision in his left eye. This will be done on Friday 21 June 2013. He and his family will appreciate your prayers.

John will undergo surgery on Friday 31 May 2013. It is anticipated he will spend an additional 10-12 days at the hospital and then 6 weeks in recovery at home. Please pray for the surgical team to pay attention and to their best and for a good outcome. Pray also that John and family will be able to put their worry on God's shoulders.



Dave Pressey, a bishop with the Anglican Episcopal Church, one of our close fellow jurisdictions, had cataract surgery; his retina tore and he had emergency surgery on Memorial Day. He still has only very blurred in his eye. Please pray for healing for his retina and for peace of mind for Dave and his family.

Eddie has upcoming bladder surgery. Please pray for the surgical team to pay attention and to their best and for a good outcome. Pray also that *Eddie* and family will be able to put their worry on God's shoulders.

Testing and Treatment

Lana's doctor found something on her lymph nodes and ovaries. Pray for God's guidance for the medical people treating her that they might find out the source of the problem and best course of treatment. Pray also for peace of mind and trust in God for *Lana* and her family.

Sarah wife of Rev *Geordie* (AOC – UK) had a cat scan and biopsy which found Stage 3 cancer in her ovaries which appears to have spread to her stomach. She will undergo several weeks of chemotherapy, which prayerfully will allow major surgery to take place.

She is now in her third segment of chemotherapy the pain relief medication seems to be working pretty well. Please pray the chemotherapy will work, the pain medication will also work and *Sarah* can tolerate the treatment. They trust all will work out in the end and ask God's help for the interim. They ask He guide them and the medical team treating *Sarah* and that the team pay attention and do their very best. They both ask you pray they will be able to let God carry all their worry.

Healing

Eve Langstaff has developed a rash which may be Chicken Pox. She would appreciate your prayers for rapid healing so she can continue her round the world trip with her family!

Bud and his wife for their continued welfare and enthusiasm. *Bud* has been advised of an aneurism in his heart of a size not mandating immediate surgery. This comes at a time when he has sole care of his wife who recently broke two vertebrae and thereafter sustained pneumonia.

Virginia has Sinus and Allergy problems giving her severe problems. Pray that the Doctor will discover why it continues and find a cure.

Steve Thornell had a brain aneurysm which was found before it burst. He is home from the hospital and working hard on recovery. He lacks energy from seven days in the hospital. His doctor told him he has to make serious life changes. One of the two main arteries in the back of the head is now completely closed. He must take blood thinners, he has thick blood and recent chemotherapy made it worse. *Steve* has always operated at 110 percent, he needs help to slow down. Please pray for trust in the Lord and a full and rapid recovery. Pray for peace of mind for *Steve* and his family.

Ester Whidett (Wilson), *Mark Wilson's* mother, has congestive heart failure and has not been doing well. She was in the hospital due to excessive fluid buildup, which seems to have been controlled and is now home. Pray she will be able to keep her medications under control and continue to do well at home. Please pray for her to place all her trust in God and let Him carry her concerns. Pray also for her daughters who are now taking over her care.

Arlen is receiving treatment for lung cancer and recently experienced a ruptured colon during treatment. She is alone in Oregon but does have a friend who has traveled

a great distance to be at her side. Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating her and for strength and trust for Arlen.

Oscar discovered some time ago he had blood clots in his leg and lung. He has been treated for them and has not been cured. He now will be facing surgery. Please keep him in your prayers.

Angela had an ischemic stroke (clot). Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating her and for strength and trust for Angela. Please pray also that she and her family might put their worries on our Lord's back so she can work hard towards recovery.

Nora had a stroke mid February 2013. Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating her and for strength and trust for Nora. Please pray also that she and her family might put their worries on our Lord's back so she can work hard towards recovery.

Linda has been hospitalized for several days with a gastrointestinal problem. Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating her and for strength and trust for Linda.

Dester is suffering from unknown skin and diseases. Please guide the medical team treating him to find out what the problem is and cure it. Pray also for Dester to trust in the Lord.

Lee has Arterial Fibrillation; the medical people are not sure how to help her. Please pray for guidance for the team treating her and for Lee and her family to make the right decisions regarding treatment..

Nell recently adopted two children and has just been diagnosed with multiple myeloma.

Sarah is recovering from a stroke, but fell and broke bones. Please pray for her peace of mind and rapid and full recovery. Pray for trust in God for her and her family.

Mary Lou has been suffering with seizures. She was in the hospital with a 24 hour monitor and is being sent home from the hospital with two medications and orders to return in 2 months for another MRI to review whatever is going on in her brain. Please pray for guidance for the medical people treating her, as well as peace of mind and trust in God for her and her family.

Kathleen has spent the last two weeks in the hospital. She has been diagnosed with colitis, shingles and possibly colon cancer. Pray she will be comfortable and begin to heal.

Rachel has Mitochondrial Myopathy. This is a hereditary disease of the muscles and they do not have a cure for it. Part of her pain is her family does not believe she is indeed ill, as she appears to be just fine. Please pray her family will learn the truth and be supportive of her; pray also the medical people treating her will find the right measures to minimize the disease. Most particularly pray for Rachel's trust in God.

Nicolas is in the hospital with serious symptoms of a heart disorder. Please pray for peace of mind for him and guidance for the medical team looking for the cause and cure.

Mrs. Baek an elderly women fell and injured her spine. Doctors cannot repair the spinal injury due to her age. She fell again the morning of 12 December 2012, breaking

her collar bone which is also untreatable. Mrs. Baek is in severe pain and will appreciate your prayers.

Juanita is a young girl who was in a coma because of a blood disease. She has not come out and is gaining strength. They are awaiting results from blood samples. Her family thanks you for your prayers and asks that you continue.

Barbara had an accident while cooking and the pressure cooker blew up in her face, causing second and third degree burns over her face and upper body. Because of this she has incurred kidney problems and may need a transplant.

George had foot surgery. Please give thanks for the surgery and pray for a full and rapid recovery.

Nellie is in the emergency room of a hospital in a great deal of pain. Please pray for peace of mind for her and guidance for the medical team looking for the cause and cure.

Lauralee Meade underwent a lumpectomy on Friday after Thanksgiving. A further anomaly has been discovered and she had additional preventative radiation treatment. Please pray for a complete remission of the cancer. Pray also Lauralee will maintain her great attitude and trust in God.

Kevin Gerhart discovered cancer on his neck. He underwent radiation and chemotherapy. Please pray for the medical team treating Kevin that they might pay attention, do their very best and find the source; that the treatment might be successful and he might live a long and healthy life to His honor and glory. Pray also for trust in God and peace of mind for Kevin, his wife and family.

Bill, Sara's husband, had a third abdominal surgery on 22 November 2011, to remove a tumor. Bill is doing better keeping the doctor's instructions, for which we are all grateful, including taking chemotherapy once a day for two more years. He has radically decreased the consumption of alcohol and eating at least mostly properly. Please pray for help for him to continue do all this. Please pray also that Bill might turn his heart outward to help those around him, as well as live a long and healthy life to the honor and glory of God. Pray also for peace of mind for Bill and his wife Sara.

Kay Denton (Mrs. Kay) has had a chest infection, perhaps viral, but seems to be getting better. She actually sent an iMessage last week, but did not hang around for a response a minute later! Please pray for continued peace of mind for Mrs. Kay and her family. Give thanks for her trust in the Lord and her positive attitude.

Matt Alcantara, age 15, has Osteosarcoma (bone cancer), a very rare and often lethal form of cancer with limited treatment options. This is a disease that is about 90 percent fatal in a couple of years. He has no hip joint on one side, but he walks and swims! Courage? Guts? You bet! Please also give thanks for the great faith of Matt and his entire family. Their faith and trust is a wonderful example for each and every one of us. But, now is not the time to stop praying. Actually, it never is the time to stop praying!

Judith Clingwall, is afflicted with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). She is currently in Laurel Place, an extended care facility in Surrey, British Columbia. Judith's condition has worsened recently. Please pray for her to take an active part in her own life, for her strength, peace of mind, trust in God and remission of the disease so she

might return home to her family. Pray also for strength for her husband Martin as he deals with all the problems and stress of Judith's situation.

Vince (age 15), reoccurrence of Osteosarcoma, recent testing found a nickel sized tumor in his lungs. The doctors are consulting with a specialist in Houston. Please pray for guidance for the medical team and for peace of mind for Vince and his family.

Obra Gray continues to take day by day. Please continue to keep Obra in your prayers, and give him the strength of knowing the Lord is with him and will never forsake him. Obra needs security of what lies ahead of him, and only the Lord can grant the solace to answer his prayer.

Thanksgiving and Continued Healing

Bill had malignant mole removed. He gives thanks for the successful surgery and asks for prayers for the upcoming plastic surgery that is required.

Mike was very ill in hospital. He is doing much better now and his family asks you to give thanks for the miraculous recovery. Mike is a veteran who has served his country when she called. Please pray he will open his heart to God so He can make Mike's crooked road straight and pull him towards the summit rather than to the pit.

Pastor Roy underwent full knee replacement surgery Monday 10 June 2013. Please give thanks for a successful surgery and pray for a full and rapid recovery.

Jo an elderly woman has had a spinal disk infection and been on antibiotics for a long time. Jo was getting better but had a downward spiral. She has now recovered to the point she has been able to get out of the hospital. Please give thanks for this wonderful development.

Mike Wysocki returned home from once in a life time fly-cruise-fly Around the World in 41 Days trip that almost turned into a end of life time trip. Mike caught pneumonia and his left eye has been identified with a highly contagious infection. He is out of the hospital, home and working on recovery. After a hard hitting drug course, Mike has vision back in his eye and the pneumonia is almost gone. Please give thanks for the great progress and pray for a full and rapid recovery.

Eden (2) is doing much better now and seeing a specialist for her stomach problem. Please give thanks for the progress and pray for peace of mind and trust in God for her and her family as well as guidance for the medical team treating her.

Jim's infected blister on the bottom of his foot has apparently healed without the infection getting into his blood stream or compromising his lungs or heart. Please give thanks for the great result and pray he will be able to come home soon.

James had surgery the morning of 4 April 2013 at Cancer Treatment Centers of America which appears to have gone well. The pathology report found the high grade carcinoma cancer was confined to the bladder. There was no sign of cancer in surrounding areas, tissues, organs, etc. The Sovereign King of heaven and earth has blessed Jim immensely; he will not have to endure chemo or radiation, he will continue with various tests and see the physicians. Please give thanks for the good result and the work of the surgical team paying attention and doing their very best. Pray for James' continued recovery and for him and his wife Dawn to be able to put their worry and concern on His Back.

Brian has now finished the chemotherapy and final radiation treatment for his upper lung and bronchial area cancer, which seems to have gone well; the burning is almost gone which is very good. The best news is a CT Scan on Monday of Holy Week found no indication of the cancer followed by what seems to be good CT and PET Scans on 15 May 2013. Please give thanks for this great news and pray for continued good things to go on. Brian's throat seems to be healing better and he can eat some again. Brian is gaining strength, please give thanks for this. Please also pray Brian will rest and not over extend himself. Please pray for peace of mind and trust in God for Brian and his fiancé Mel, so he can rest and gain strength; pray for the medical team treating him to continue to pay close attention and do their very best; pray also he can quit smoking by the end of July 2013.

Jeff had successful surgery on Monday 4 March 2013, at Vanderbilt Medical Center to remove his esophagus as the doctors felt this is the only remedy for pre-cancerous and cancerous cells in his esophagus and stomach. Please give thanks for the successful surgery and pray that his pain level will go down and he will recover quickly. Pray for Jeff and his family to keep their faith in God and let him carry their worries.

Rick is recovering from hip replacement surgery in the middle of February 2013.

Buzz Baron had C5-6 surgery the morning of 3 March 2013, which went well. Please give thanks for the surgical team paying attention and doing their best and for a good result; pray also for a full and rapid recovery.

Karen had surgery the afternoon of 1 March 2013 to remove a spot on her lung; the surgery went well and the spot was benign. Please give thanks for the great result. Pray also for continued trust in God and peace of mind for Karen, as well as a rapid recovery.

Dick's left arm was amputated after treating for Merkel Cell carcinoma over a year. He is now believed to be cancer free and is waiting to be fitted with an artificial arm. Please join Dick and his family in giving thanks to Our Lord Jesus Christ for his recovery as well as for their trust in God.

Traci had surgery colon cancer on 27 December 2012. The surgery went very well and she appears to be cancer free. But, she had a pulmonary embolism and another clot in the artery to the spleen which will keep her in the hospital for at least several days. Traci is beginning to be weary of her medical situation. Please pray that she will not become despondent. Pray that she will open her heart to God's Grace that He might enter in to her heart and strengthen her.

Bob Smouse had shoulder surgery on 28 November 2012. He would appreciate your thanksgiving prayers. While the surgery apparently went well, he is still in pain and would also appreciate prayers for continued healing and the pain to subside. He promises to work very hard on recovery therapy.

Carol Stone, the sweet wife of Mike Stone, seems to have recovered far better than expected from a severe brain bleed. She thinks she can walk, etc., even though she cannot. She has improved and is nearly able to stand up by herself; this makes it almost certain that she will have another fall. Presently she can stand and walk a little with a great deal of assistance. Hopefully this means she will ultimately be able to walk, at least with the aid of a walker or cane. What's holding her back at the moment is her cognitive deficits and they are trying to

find a place to get her more therapy

Please pray for peace of mind and trust in God for Mike, guidance for the medical team treating Carol and strength for Carol as well as faith and trust. No one can ever understand the why of these things here on earth. Sara who passed this request on asks that you pray in both faith and hope.

Business

Mark's business is in difficulty. He works in a shrinking field, of which he is one of the country's true masters, but there is little work available. He asks that you pray that he can find a way to survive in his industry, which he loves and needs his talents. Pray he can find new sources of business and new ways of doing things, perhaps someone to partner with to better use his talents. Pray also for those who work for and with him that they might do their best to help.

Employment

Doug recently became unemployed from his job of 18 years. He has been applying for jobs, but unable to get one at this time. His wife is working; this is not enough for the family. Please pray he will find employment with a firm that will be able to use his considerable skill and hard work to benefit both the firm and the family.

Catherine and Lewis are at a low ebb due to a struggle for employment. Your fervent prayers will be appreciated.

Lori is considering a potential change in her employment. Please pray for God's guidance in considering all aspect of her potential work.

Rodriguez Family are looking for work. It seems many obstacles have been put in their way of finding employment. Please pray they will find employment with a firm that will be able to use their considerable skill and hard work to benefit both the firm and the family.

Sarah is concerned about the future with her company. She would appreciate prayers for her continued employment and that her firm might find more and better ways to use her considerable skills.

Financial Guidance and Healing

David and Lorna are having financial problems. They are trying to find a smaller home which may be more affordable. *Lorna* has had an ongoing battle with brain cancer, her trips back and forth to the hospital have drained their finances to the point they sometimes struggle to have enough food in the house. Please pray for *Lorna's* healing and guidance on how they might handle the financial difficulties in which they have found themselves.

Guidance

Brandon a young man from a Christian family who married a year ago and almost immediately became estranged from his family. As a result he has had a serious problem with keeping the civil law. Please pray for *Brandon* that he will return to the Lord and the many problems will be eventually settled. Pray the hurt he has caused so many will be helped with our Lord's care and love.

Dennis has some decisions to make and will appreciate our Lord's guidance.

Earl to read and understand Scriptures he has been given.

Steve Sundberg had a heart attack after Easter 2011, then a five-way heart by-pass. In

addition to the bypass surgery, he has been through a horrible divorce and lost his job after some 30 years service. Steve is very thrifty and a good investor so he is reasonably ok financially. The best thing is that he has trust in the Lord.

Jeanette has had many members of her family die from diabetes and several are near death now. Jeanette does not know the Lord and is despondent and perplexed about her family and herself. Please pray she can open her heart to allow the Holy Ghost in to bring her knowledge and understanding.

Christy just lost her sister in an automobile accident; this follows closely the loss of two family. Please pray she can let our Lord Jesus Christ carry all her sorry, worry and care at this extremely difficult and stressful time.

Dr. Elizabeth Raj is teaching a biblical approach to the psychological problems facing many in our society today. She is battling against the growing influence of worldly psychology adopted by the churches themselves. Elizabeth constantly stresses answers are found between the covers of that precious Book, the Holy Bible. Please pray for encouragement, strength, fortitude and courage for her.

Daniel and Danielle are experiencing family strife as a result of custodial issues with a daughter. Please pray they and those they strive with might look to the child's best interests in their time of difficulty and disagreement; to work for her best interests and not use her as a weapon amongst themselves.

Abigail is a teenager who has behavior problems. She feels she is in an area of mental darkness. Please pray that she might look to God for help and not within herself.

Sara asks that you pray for guidance for her as she deals with the stresses of her family and life. Pray that she can separate those things which she can affect from those things which she cannot and give her grace to accept that she cannot do everything and can only change those things within her control. She asks for God's help to grow her business while keeping up with the needs of her mother and husband and healing her own problems.

Jacquie to open her heart to God and accept His Love and Grace.

Hap asks you to pray he might be able to trust God will help him make the right decisions at the right time and not to worry uselessly, to change those things he can change, accept those things he cannot change, sleep well to be able to do the correct things with a clear head and that he will open his heart to the Holy Ghost.

Thanksgiving

Please give thanks for *Robert* who seemed moribund returning back to his family and pray for his complete recovery

The people in and near Calgary, Alberta, Canada give thanks for your prayers. The city and a dozen towns west and south of there, were hit with torrential rains for almost a week causing the banks of the Bow River to overflow; over 75,000 people were evacuated from their homes. Things are getting back to normal, though it will be a long time for all to be rebuilt.

Betsy has fully recovered from her sprained ankle and give thanks for the rapid recovery, she asks you do likewise.

David has been able to return to the ministry after a heart attack mid February 2013, and stent insertion, he is now home. Please join David in giving thanks for his

survival and recovery.

AOC Congregations

Saint Joseph of Arimathea Anglican Orthodox Church is under a lot of stress. We all are, but they need even more prayer. Rev Roger Jessup, their wonderful minister, is pressed by the duties of a primary care giver, in addition to all the worries of this world. They have one of their family's primary breadwinners who will be soon unemployed, absent His intervention. Roger's niece will lose her job at the end of the year when her tech center shuts down. As Rev Roger said so eloquently, "We must pray for those who mean us harm and deprive us of our property are our enemies: Our LORD has so commanded us." We must pray they will see light and cleave to it while turning their backs on the Prince of this World. Equally important, we must pray that the Lord will raise up a political leader from among us as He has done in the past. Pray also for trust in God for each member of the parish and for them to find economic relief.

Rev Rick Reid is the minister of the new AOC congregation in Newton, North Carolina, Saint Andrews Anglican Church. Their first Sunday was 5 May 2013. Please pray Rick will be able to bring God's Word to the people in and near Newton.

Reverend Wilson Menoia has one of the new congregations in the Solomon Islands. The Rev. Menoia and his members in the Temotu Province were recently hit by the tsunami and you all prayed for and helped the members then. Now they are facing a tsunami of human beings (works of the Devil) and ask that you pray for them. They are in the Eastern end of the Islands and a ways away from the established congregations in these islands. Please pray for them as they bring souls to Christ as they establish His Church.

Guidance for Ministers

Rev LTC Al Ryan has been appointed Deacon-In-Charge of the mission parish of St. Augustine of Canterbury Anglican Church, Anglican Church in America (ACA) parish in Old Orchard Beach, Maine. It is a small but growing mission, which has been plagued by clergy change. Al, the diocesan pilot, has been appointed for one year, during which time he is to help them identify what their needs are for a vicar. He has done this before and asks you to pray for God's help one more time; not only for himself, but for the parish.

Armed Forces & Contractors

Airman Donny Patton (Bagram AB, Afghanistan), Jordan (USMC – Fleet Marine Force - Pacific), Trevor (USAF - KC-10 Boom Operator – New Jersey), Trevor (USN – Whidbey Island, EF-18 Pilot), Kurt Thomas (USN – Guam)

Persecuted

Around the world, Christians are under attack, not only in the Muslim world, but from Hindus and others in India. Also, they are under continual attack in the name of "Separation of Church and State" in the western world, as it becomes actively atheist or pro-devil buddy. Please pray for God's guidance and protection for all persecuted Christians and those around them.

Various Special Requests

We ask that you pray, please ask God that the Holy Ghost might give you insight into how you might make the lives of your friends and family better. Remember helping others is not just those who you don't know!

Please join us in praying that the *Free Teen Guitar Class* will be continue to be an

opportunity for God to work in the lives of the kids and their families. Please ask God to guide the class to new opportunities to make Him known to others. Help us to let the love of our Lord shine through us into their lives, putting Him first, so that He might enter in to their hearts and lives.

Question that only you can ask

What would you like to know about our history, what we believe, what we do or how we operate? Hap is looking for material for the continuing education class and *Thought for the Day* material. Help us help you. Please send your question to Hap so we all can get an answer. Just because you don't know the answer to your question doesn't mean you are the only one who doesn't know. But, if you don't ask, no one will know.

What about Baptism?

First, let us review the applicable article:

XVII. Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New-Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.



Regeneration And Baptism Church Association Tract 193

John Charles Ryle
Bishop Of Liverpool

1. What is Baptism?

It is a holy ordinance or sacrament appointed by Christ, for the continual admission of new members into His Church. Every Christian begins his Church membership by being solemnly baptized with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Baptism, also, is a sign of regeneration or new birth, and has a most wholesome effect, as the Twenty-fifth Article says, in those who receive it worthily. Moreover, St. Paul says, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. iii. 27.)

2. Do all baptized persons receive inward spiritual benefit from the outward ordinance of baptism with water?

Most certainly not, to all appearance. Myriads are outwardly baptized every year, who, from the font to the coffin, and from their births to their deaths, never give the slightest

evidence that they have grace in their hearts, or have received any inward spiritual benefit at their baptism. They live and die apparently without knowledge, faith, repentance, obedience to God, or meetness for heaven. In fact, notwithstanding their baptism, they exhibit no more Christianity in their lives and characters than many heathens.

Judas Iscariot, Simon Magus, Ananias and Sapphira, and others mentioned in Scripture, were baptized but certainly not regenerate.

3. What is regeneration?

It is that complete change of heart and character which the Holy Spirit works in a person when he becomes a real Christian. The Church Catechism calls it "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." It is the same thing as being "born again," or "born of God," or "born of the Spirit."

"Except a man be born again" means "except a man be regenerate." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" that is, he is "born again, or regenerate." (John iii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 17.)

4. What are the marks and evidences of regeneration?

They are laid down for us so clearly and plainly in the First Epistle of St. John, that he who runs may read them. It is written there, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," —"Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him," —"Every one that loveth is born of God," —"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world," —"He that is begotten of God keepeth himself." (1 John iii. 9; 1 John v. 1; 1 John ii. 29; 1 John iv. 7; 1 John v. 4; 1 John v. 18.) If plain English words have any meaning, these texts mean that he who has these marks is "born again" or "regenerate," and he who has them not is not regenerate.

5. Have all regenerate persons these marks of regeneration in the same degree of depth, strength, clearness, and distinctness?

Most certainly not. There is a wide difference between the highest and lowest measure of grace possessed by those who are "born again." There are real and true Christians who are only "babes" in spiritual attainments, and there are others who are "strong," and vigorous, and able to do great things for Christ. (1 John ii. 12-14.) The Scripture speaks of little faith and great faith, of little strength and great strength. One thing only is certain, —every regenerate person has more or less the marks of regeneration, and he who has none of them is not born again. (Matt. xiv. 31, xv. 28; Rev. iii. 8; Rom. xv. 1.)

6. But are not all baptized persons regenerate, and does not regeneration always accompany baptism?

Certainly not. Myriads of baptized persons have not a single scriptural mark of regeneration about them, and never had in their lives. They know nothing whatever of "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness." On the contrary, they too often live in sin, and are enemies of all righteousness. To say that such persons are "regenerate" on account of their baptism, is to say that which seems flatly contrary to the First Epistle of St. John. The Church Catechism says that baptism contains two parts,

—the outward and visible sign, and the inward and spiritual grace. But the Catechism nowhere says that the sign and the grace always go together.

7. But does not the Baptismal Service of the Church Prayer Book say of every baptized child, "this child is regenerate," and does it not tell us to thank God that it hath "pleased Him to regenerate the infant?" What can this mean? How can it be explained?

The Baptismal Service uses these expressions in the charitable supposition that those who use the service, and bring their children to be baptized, are really what they profess to be. As Bishop Carleton says, "All this is the charity of the Church; and what more can you make of it?"—As Bishop Downname says, "We are to distinguish between the judgment of charity and the judgment of certainty."

8. But is this explanation of the language of the Baptismal Service honest, natural, and just? Is it the real meaning which ought to be put on the words?

It is the only meaning which is consistent with the whole spirit of the Prayer Book. From first to last the Prayer Book charitably assumes that all who use it are real, thorough Christians. This is the only sense in which the Burial Service can be interpreted, or the Service for Adult Baptism, or for the Churching of Women. This is the only sense in which we can teach children the Church Catechism. We bid them say, "The Holy Ghost sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God." Yet no man in his senses would say that all children who say the Catechism are really "sanctified" or really "elect," because they use these words. On the contrary, large numbers of children never show the slightest evidence of sanctification or election.

9. But ought we not to believe that all who use Christ's ordinances receive a blessing as a matter of course?

Certainly not. The benefit of Christ's ordinances depends entirely on the spirit and manner in which they are used. The Scripture expressly says that a man may receive the Lord's Supper, "unworthily," and eat and drink "to his own condemnation." The Articles of the Church of England declare that in such only as receive sacraments "rightly, worthily, and with faith," they have a wholesome effect and operation. The famous Hooker teaches that "all receive not the grace of God which receive the sacraments of His grace." To maintain that every child who is baptized with water is at once regenerated and born again, appears to turn the sacrament of baptism into a mere form, and to contradict both Scripture and Articles.

10. But do not all infants receive baptism worthily, since they offer no obstacle to the grace of baptism? and are they not consequently all regenerated, as a matter of course, the moment they are baptized?

Certainly not. No infant is of itself worthy to receive grace, because, as the Catechism says, it is "born in sin and a child of wrath." It can only be received into the Church and baptized on the faith and profession of its parents or sponsors. No true missionary thinks of baptizing heathen children without friends or sponsors. The Church Catechism asks the question, "Why are Infants baptized?" But it does not give as an answer, "Because they offer no obstacle to grace," —but "because they promise repentance and faith by their sureties." Let us always remember that an infant has no

title to baptism but the profession of its sureties. Surely when these sureties know nothing of repentance or faith, or of what they are promising, common sense points out that the infant is not likely to get much inward benefit from the sacrament. In plain words, if parents or sponsors bring an infant to baptism in utter ignorance, without faith or prayer or knowledge, it is monstrous to suppose that this infant must, nevertheless, receive regeneration. At this rate it would matter nothing in what way sacraments are used, whether with ignorance or with knowledge, and it would signify nothing whether those who use them were godly or ungodly. The children of believing and of unbelieving parents would receive precisely the same benefit from baptism. Such a conclusion seems unreasonable and absurd.

11. But does not St. Paul say in his Epistles that Christians are "buried with Christ in baptism;" and that baptized persons have "put on Christ"? (Gal. iii. 27; Col. ii. 12.)

No doubt St. Paul says so. But the persons of whom he said this, in all human probability, were not baptized in infancy, but when they were grown up, and in days too when faith and baptism were so closely connected that the moment a man believed he confessed his faith publicly by baptism. But there is not a single passage in the New Testament which describes at length the effect of baptism on an infant, nor a single text which says that all infants are born again, or regenerated, or buried with Christ in baptism. As Canon Mozley says, "Scripture nowhere asserts, either explicitly or implicitly, the regeneration of infants in baptism." (Mozley's Baptismal Controversy, p. 34.) Beside this, we are expressly told that Simon the sorcerer, after his baptism, had "no part" in Christ, and his "heart was not right in the sight of God." Simon, therefore, could not have been regenerated, or born again in baptism. (Acts viii. 21.)

12. But does not St. Peter say, "Baptism doth also save us?" and if it saves us, must it not also regenerate us? (1 Pet. iii. 21.)

No doubt St. Peter says so. But those who quote this text should not stop at the words "save us," but read carefully on to the end of the sentence. They will then see that St. Peter distinctly fences and guards his statement by saying that the baptism which "saves" is not the mere outward application of water to the body, but the baptism which is accompanied by the "answer of a good conscience toward God." Moreover, it is a curious fact that St. Peter, who uses the expression "baptism saves," is the very same apostle who told Simon after baptism that he was "in the bond of iniquity," and his "heart was not right in the sight of God." (Acts viii. 21.)

13. But does not our Lord Jesus say to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"? (John iii. 5.) Does not that prove that all who are baptized with water are regenerate?

Certainly not. It proves nothing of the kind. The utmost that can be made of this famous and often quoted text is, that it shows the necessity of being "born of water and the Spirit" if we would be saved. But it does not say that all who are baptized, or "born of water," are at the same time "born of the Spirit." It may prove that there is a connection sometimes between baptism and regeneration, but it does not supply the slightest proof that an invariable connection always exists.

14. But may it not be true that all baptized persons receive the grace of regeneration in baptism, and that it remains within them like a dormant seed, alive, though at

present bearing no fruit?

Certainly not. The Apostle St. John expressly forbids us to suppose that there can be such a thing as dormant, or sleeping grace. He says, "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." (1 John iii. 9.) This witness is true. When there can be light which cannot be seen, and fire without heat, then, and not till then, there may be grace that is dormant and inactive. The well-known words, "Stir up the gift of God that is in thee" (2 Tim. i. 6), are far too often addressed to the baptized, as if they referred to some gift received in baptism.

Yet common sense will tell any one who refers to his Bible that these words were not used at all about baptism, but about ordination. (1 Tim. iv. 14.)

15. But does not this view of regeneration, according to which many baptized persons are not regenerate at all, and receive no benefit whatever from their baptism, do great dishonour to one of Christ's sacraments, and tend to bring it into contempt?

Not at all. The truth is exactly the other way. To say that infant baptism confers grace mechanically, as a chemical solution produces an effect on a photographic plate, and that if water and certain words are used by a thoughtless, careless clergyman over the child of thoughtless, ignorant parents, the child is at once born again, —to say, furthermore, that an immense spiritual effect is produced by baptism when no effect whatever can be seen, all this, to many thinking persons, seems calculated to degrade baptism. It tends to make observers suppose that baptism is useless, or that regeneration means nothing at all.

He that would do honour to baptism should maintain that it is a high and holy ordinance, which, like every ordinance appointed by Christ, ought not to be used without solemn reverence; and that no blessing can be expected unless it is used with heart, and knowledge, and faith, and prayer, and followed by godly training of the child baptized. Above all, he should maintain that when baptism does good, the good will be seen in the life and ways of the baptized. Those who do not feel satisfied about this matter will do well to study attentively the strong language which God uses about His own ordinances, when used formally and carelessly, in the prophet Isaiah. (Isa. i. 11, 12.) What did the prophet mean when he wrote these words: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs." He evidently meant that God's own ordinances may be made perfectly useless by man's misuse of them.

16. But may we not believe that regeneration means nothing more than a change of state, and does not mean a moral and spiritual change at all? May we not believe that it is a mere ecclesiastical word, signifying nothing more than admission to a state of Church privilege? And may we not then say that every person baptized is regenerated in baptism.

Of course we may say and believe anything we please in a free country like England, and this idea of an ecclesiastical regeneration cuts the knot of some difficulties, and has always satisfied some minds. But it is an insuperable difficulty that the word "regeneration" is never once used in this sense in the New Testament. Moreover, the parallel expression "born of God," in St. John's First Epistle, most certainly means a

great deal more than being admitted into a state of ecclesiastical privilege! To say, for instance, "Whosoever is baptized doth not commit sin, —and overcometh the world," would be ridiculous, because untrue. Moreover, the Church Catechism distinctly teaches that the inward and spiritual grace in baptism is not a mere ecclesiastical change, but "a, death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." Moreover, the Homily for Whitsunday expressly describes regeneration as an inward and spiritual change. One thing is very certain, no plain reader of the Bible ever seems to understand how a person can be "regenerate" and yet not saved.

The poor and simple-minded cannot take in the idea of ecclesiastical regeneration.

Tell me about Holy Communion and the AOC – From Bishop Jerry Ogles

Dear Friends: there has been a continuing interest in the nature of the Lord's Supper - its nature, how it represents a Communion of the Body of Christ with the Lord, how it must be individually prepared for, and precisely what blessings ensue therefrom. Bishop JC Ryle was a courageous defender of the faith and has many published works on the Holy Communion - one of which I include below. I include the below in view of some serious questions regarding this matter that have increasingly arising of late.

First, let us review the applicable articles:

XVIII. *Of the Lord's Supper.*

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

XXIX. *Of the Wicked, which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of the Lord's Supper.*

The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Saint Augustine saith) the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

Any postulation that exceeds the clear definition of Scripture and the Thirty-Nine Articles is to be discounted. This will represent the position of the AOC on the Lord's Supper.



Here is the paper by Bishop Ryle:

The Lord's Supper
by JC Ryle

“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.”
1 Corinthians 11:28.

The words which form the title of this paper refer to the subject of vast importance. That subject is the Lord's Supper.

Perhaps no part of the Christian religion is so thoroughly misunderstood as the Lord's Supper. On no point have there been so many disputes, strifes, and controversies for almost 1800 years. On no point have mistakes done so much harm. The very ordinance which was meant for our peace and profit has become the cause of discord and the occasion of sin. These things ought not to be!

I make no excuse for including the Lord's Supper among the leading points of “practical” Christianity. I firmly believe that ignorant views or false doctrine about this ordinance lie at the root of some of the present divisions of professing Christians. Some neglect it altogether; some completely misunderstand it; some exalt it to a position it was never meant to occupy, and turn it into an idol. If I can throw a little light on it, and clear up the doubts in some minds, I will feel very thankful. It is hopeless, I fear, to expect that the controversy about the Lord's Supper will ever be finally closed until the Lord comes. But it is not too much to hope that the fog and mystery and obscurity with which it is surrounded in some minds, may be cleared away by plain Bible truth.

In examining the Lord's Supper I will be content with asking four practical questions, and offering answers to them.

- I. Why was the Lord's Supper ordained?
- II. Who ought to go to the Table and be communicants?
- III. What may communicants expect from the Lord's Supper?
- IV. Why do many so-called Christians never go to the Lord's Table?

I think it will be impossible to handle these four questions fairly, honestly, and impartially, without seeing the subject of this paper more clearly, and getting some distinct and practical ideas about some leading errors of our day. I say “practical” emphatically. My chief aim in this volume is to promote practical Christianity.

I. In the first place, “why was the Lord’s Supper ordained?” It was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we thereby receive. The *bread* which in the Lord’s Supper is broken, given, and eaten, is meant to remind us of Christ’s body given on the cross for our sins. The *wine* which is poured out and received, is meant to remind us of Christ’s blood shed on the cross for our sins. He who eats that bread and drinks that wine is reminded, in the most striking and forcible manner—of the benefits Christ has obtained for his soul, and of the death of Christ as the hinge and turning point on which all those benefits depend.

Now, is the view here stated the doctrine of the New Testament? If it is not, forever let it be rejected, cast aside, and refused by men. If it is, let us never be ashamed to hold it close, profess our belief in it, pin our faith on it, and steadfastly refuse to hold any other view, no matter who teaches it.

In subjects like this we must call no man master. It matters little what great theologians and learned preachers have thought fit to put forth about the Lord’s Supper. If they teach more than the Word of God contains—they are not to be believed. I take up my Bible and turn to the New Testament. There I find no less than four separate accounts of the first appointment of the Lord’s Supper. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul, all four describe it: all four agree in telling us what our Lord did on this memorable occasion. Only two tell us the reason why our Lord commanded that His disciples were to eat the bread and drink the cup. Paul and Luke both record the remarkable words, “*Do this in remembrance of me.*” Paul adds his own inspired comment: “*For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.*” (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:25-26). When Scripture speaks so clearly, why can’t men be content with it? Why should we mystify and confuse a subject which in the New Testament is so simple?

The “continual remembrance of Christ’s death” was the one grand object for which the Lord’s Supper was ordained. He who goes further than this is adding to God’s Word, and does so to the great peril of his soul.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose that our Lord would appoint an ordinance for so simple a purpose as “remembering His death?” It most certainly is! Of all the facts in His earthly ministry none are equal in importance to that of His death. It was the great settlement for man’s sin, which had been appointed in God’s promise from the foundation of the world. It was the great redemption of almighty power, to which every sacrifice of animals, from the fall of man, continually pointed. It was the grand end and purpose for which the Messiah came into the world. It was the cornerstone and foundation of all man’s hopes of pardon and peace with God. In short, Christ would have lived, and taught, and preached, and prophesied, and performed miracles in vain, if He had not *crowned it all by dying for our sins as our Substitute on the Cross!* His death was our life. His death was the payment of our sin-debt to God. Without His death we would have been the most miserable of all creatures!

No wonder that an ordinance was specially appointed to remind us of our Savior’s death. It is the one thing which poor, weak, sinful man needs to be continually reminded. Does the New Testament authorize men to say that the Lord’s Supper was ordained to be a *sacrifice*, and that in it Christ’s *literal* body and blood are present under

the forms of bread and wine? Most certainly not! When the Lord Jesus said to the disciples, "This is my Body," and "this is my Blood," He clearly meant, "This *bread* in my hand is a symbol of my Body, and this cup of *wine* in my hand contains a symbol of my Blood." The disciples were accustomed to hear Him use such language. They remembered His saying, "The *field* is the world, and the *good seed* stands for the sons of the kingdom. The *weeds* are the sons of the evil one" (Matthew 13:38). It never entered into their minds that He meant to say He was holding His own body and His own blood in His hands, and literally giving them His literal body and blood to eat and drink! Not one of the writers of the New Testament ever speaks of the Lord's Supper as a *sacrifice*, or calls the Lord's Table an *altar*, or even hints that a Christian minister is a *sacrificing priest*. The universal doctrine of the New Testament is that after the *one* offering of Christ on the cross, there remains no more need of sacrifice.

If anyone believes that Paul's words to the Hebrews, "We have an altar" (Hebrews 13:10), are a proof that the Lord's table is an altar, I remind him "Christians have an altar where they partake. That altar is Christ our Lord—who is Altar, Priest, and Sacrifice, all in One." Throughout the Communion Service the one idea of the ordinance continually pressed on our attention is that of a "remembrance" of Christ's death. As to any *presence of Christ's natural body* and blood under the forms of bread and wine, the clear answer is that "the natural body and blood of Christ are in heaven, and not here." Those Roman Catholics who delight in talking of the "altar," the "sacrifice," the "priest," and the "real presence" in the Lord's Supper—would do well to remember that they are using language which is entirely non-Biblical.

The point before us is one of vast importance. Let us lay hold upon it firmly, and never let it go. It is the very point on which our Reformers had their sharpest controversy with the Roman Catholics, and went to the stake, rather than give way. Sooner than admit that the Lord's Supper was a sacrifice, they cheerfully laid down their lives. To bring back the doctrine of the "real presence," and to turn the communion into the Roman Catholic "mass," is to pour contempt on our Martyrs, and to upset the first principles of the Protestant Reformation. No, rather, it is to ignore the plain teaching of God's Word, and do dishonor to the priestly office of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Bible teaches expressly that the Lord's Supper was ordained to be "a remembrance of Christ's body and blood," and not a sacrificial offering. The Bible teaches that Christ's substituted death on the cross was the *perfect* sacrifice for sin, which never needs to be *repeated*. Let us stand firm in these two great principles of the Christian faith. A clear understanding of the intention of the Lord's Supper is one of the soul's best safeguards against the delusions of false doctrine.

II. In the second place, let me try to show "WHO ought to receive the Lord's Supper?" What kind of people were meant to go to the Table and receive the Lord's Supper?

I will first show, **who ought NOT to be partakers of this ordinance**. The ignorance which prevails on this, as well as on every part of the subject, is vast, lamentable, and appalling. If I can contribute anything that may throw light upon it, I will feel very thankful. The principal giants whom John Bunyan describes, in "Pilgrim's Progress," as dangerous to Christian pilgrims, were two, *Pope* and *Pagan*. If the good old Puritan had foreseen the times we live in, he would have said something about the giant *Ignorance*!

(a) It is *not* right to urge **all professing Christians** to go to the Lord's Table. There is such a thing as fitness and preparedness for the ordinance. It does not work like a medicine, independently of the state of mind of those who receive it. The teaching of those who urge all their congregation to come to the Lord's Table, as if the coming must

necessarily do everyone good—is entirely without warrant of Scripture. No, rather, it is a teaching which is calculated to do immense harm to men’s souls, and to turn the reception of the Lord’s Supper into a mere *religious form*. Ignorance can never be the mother of acceptable worship, and an ignorant communicant who comes to the Lord’s Table without knowing *why* he comes—is altogether in the wrong place!

“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.” “Recognizing the body of the Lord,”—that is to understand what the elements of bread and wine represent, and why they are appointed, and what is the particular use of remembering Christ’s death—is an essential qualification of a true communicant. God commands *all* people everywhere to *repent* and *believe* the Gospel (Acts 17:30), but He does not in the same way, or in the same manner, command everybody to come to the Lord’s Table. No! this thing is not to be taken lightly, or carelessly! It is a solemn ordinance, and solemnly it ought to be used!

(b) But this is not all. **Sinners living in open sin**, and determined not to give it up, ought never to come to the Lord’s Table. To do so is a positive insult to Christ, and to pour contempt on His Gospel. It is nonsense to profess we desire to remember Christ’s death, while we cling to sin—the accursed thing which made it needful for Christ to die! The mere fact that a man is continuing in sin is clear evidence that he does not care for Christ, and feels no gratitude for the offer of redemption. The ignorant Roman Catholic who goes to the priest’s confessional and receives absolution, may think he is fit to go to the Roman Catholic mass—and after mass may return to his sins. He never reads the Bible—and knows no better! But the professing Christian who habitually breaks any of God’s commandments, and yet goes to the Lord’s Table, as if it would do him good and wipe away his sins—is very guilty indeed. So long as he chooses to continue his wicked habits—he cannot receive the slightest benefit from the Lord’s Table—and is only adding sin to sin! To carry unrepented sin to the Lord’s Table, and there receive the bread and wine, knowing in our own hearts that we and wickedness are yet friends—is one of the worst things man can do, and one of the most hardening to the conscience. If a man must have his sins, and can’t give them up, let him by all means stay away from the Lord’s Supper! There is such a thing as “eating and drinking in an unworthy manner” and to our own “judgment.” To no one do these words apply so thoroughly, as to an unrepentant sinner.

(c) **Self-righteous people** who think that they will be saved by their own works, have no business to come to the Lord’s Table. Strange as it may sound at first, these people are the *least* qualified of all to receive the Lord’s table. They may be outwardly correct, moral and respectable in their lives, but so long as they trust in their own goodness for salvation they are entirely in the wrong place at the Lord’s Supper. For what do we declare at the Lord’s Supper? We publicly profess that we have no goodness, righteousness, or worthiness of our own, and that all our hope is in Christ. We publicly profess that we are guilty, sinful, corrupt—and naturally deserve God’s wrath and condemnation. We publicly profess that Christ’s *merit* and not ours; Christ’s *righteousness* and not ours—is the only cause why we look for acceptance with God. Now what has a self-righteous man to do with an ordinance like this? Clearly nothing at all.

One thing at any rate, is very clear: a self-righteous man has no business to receive the Lord’s Supper. The Communion Service of the Church bids all communicants declare that “they do not presume to come to the Table trusting in their own righteousness, but in God’s numerous and great mercies.” It tells them to say, “We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Your table,” “the memory of our

sins is grievous to us; the burden of them is intolerable." How many self-righteous professing Christians can ever go to the Lord's Table, and take these words into his mouth—is beyond my understanding! It only shows that many professing Christians use the "forms" of worship without taking the trouble to consider what they mean.

The plain truth is that the Lord's Supper was not meant for dead souls, but for living ones. The *careless*, the *ignorant*, the *willfully wicked*, the *self-righteous*, are no more fit to come to the Lord's Table than a dead corpse is fit to sit down at a king's feast! To enjoy a spiritual feast we must have a spiritual heart, and taste, and appetite. To suppose that the Lord's Table can do any good to an unspiritual man—is as foolish as to put bread and wine into the mouth of a dead person! The *careless*, the *ignorant*, and the *willfully wicked*, so long as they continue in that state, are utterly unfit to come to the Lord's Supper. To urge them to partake is not to do them good, but harm.

The Lord's Supper is not a *converting* or *justifying* ordinance. If a man goes to the Table unconverted or unforgiven, he will be *no better* when he comes away (actually *worse* due to the associated judgments for coming unworthily).

But, after all, the ground having been cleared of error, the question still remains to be answered, **Who are the sort of people who ought to receive the Lord's Supper?** I answer that by saying, people who have "examined themselves to see whether they have truly repented of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life—have a true faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death—they are in love with all men."

In a word, I find that a worthy communicant is one who possesses three simple marks and qualifications—repentance, faith, and love. Does a man truly *repent* of sin and hate it? Does a man put his *trust* in Jesus Christ as his only hope of salvation? Does a man live in *love* towards others? He who can truly answer each of these questions, "I do," he is a man that is Scripturally qualified for the Lord's Supper. Let him come boldly. Let no barrier be put in his way. He comes up to the Bible standard of communicants. He may draw near with confidence, and feel assured that the great Master of the banquet is not displeased.

Such a man's **repentance** may be very much *imperfect*. Never mind! Is it real? Is he *truly* repentant? His **faith** in Christ may be very weak. Never mind! Is it real? A penny is as much true currency as is a one hundred dollar bill. His **love** may be very defective in quantity and degree. Never mind! Is it genuine? The grand test of a man's Christianity is not the *quantity* of holiness he has, but whether he has any true holiness all. The first twelve communicants, when Christ Himself gave the bread and wine, were weak indeed—weak in knowledge, weak in faith, weak in courage, weak in patience, weak in love! But eleven of them had something about them which outweighed all defects—they were real, genuine, sincere, and true!

Forever let this great principle be rooted in our minds—that the only worthy communicant is the man who has demonstrated *repentance* toward God, *faith* toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and practical *love* toward others. Are you that man? Then you may draw near to the table, and take the ordinance to your comfort. Anything less than this I dare not change in my standard of a communicant. I will never encourage someone to receive the Lord's Supper—who is *careless*, *ignorant*, and *self-righteous*! I will never tell anyone to keep away until he is perfect, and to wait until his heart is as holy as an angel's. I will not do so, because I believe that neither my Master nor His Apostles would have done so. Show me a man that really feels his sins, really leans on Christ, really struggles to be holy—and I will welcome him in My Master's name. He

may feel weak, erring, empty, feeble, doubting, wretched, and poor. But what does that matter? Paul, I believe, would have received him as a right communicant, and I will do likewise.

III. In the third place, let us consider “what BENEFIT communicants may expect to get by receiving the Lord’s Supper.” This is a point of grave importance, and one on which many mistakes abound. On no point, perhaps, connected with this ordinance are the views of Christians so vague and indistinct and undefined. One common idea among men is that “receiving the Lord’s Supper must do them some good.” Why, they can’t explain. What good, they can’t exactly say. But they have a loose general notion that it is the right thing to be a communicant, and that somehow or other it is of value to their souls! This is of course nothing better than ignorance. It is unreasonable to suppose that such communicants can please Christ, or receive any real benefit from what they do.

If there is any principle clearly laid down in the Bible about any act of religious worship, it is this that it must be with *understanding*. The worshiper must at least understand *something* about what he is doing. Mere bodily worship, unaccompanied by mind or heart—is utterly worthless. The man who eats the bread and drinks the wine, as a mere matter of form, because it is the “right” thing to do, without any clear idea of what it all means, derives no benefit. He might just as well stay at home!

Another common idea among men is that, “taking the Lord’s Supper will help them get to heaven, and take away their sins.” To this false idea you may trace up the habit in some churches of going to the Lord’s Table once a year, in order, as an old farmer once said, “to wipe off the year’s sins.” To this idea again, you may trace the too common practice of *sending for a minister in time of sickness*, in order to receive the ordinance before death. Yes, how many take comfort about their relatives, after they have lived a most ungodly life, for no better reason than this, that they took the Lord’s Supper when they were dying! Whether they repented and believed and had new hearts—they neither seem to know or care. All they know is that “they took the Lord’s Supper before they died.”

My heart sinks within me when I hear people resting on such evidence as this. Ideas like these are sad proofs of the ignorance which fills the minds of men about the Lord’s Supper. They are ideas for which there is not the slightest warrant in Scripture. The sooner they are cast aside and given up—the better for the Church and the world. Let us settle it firmly in our minds—that the Lord’s Supper was not given to be a means either of *justification* or of *conversion*. It was never meant to give grace—where there is no grace already; or to provide pardon—when pardon is not already enjoyed. It cannot possibly provide what is lacking, with the absence of repentance to God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an ordinance for the penitent, not for the impenitent; for the believing, not for the unbelieving; for the converted, not for the unconverted.

The unconverted man, who fancies that he can find a “shortcut” to heaven by taking the Lord’s Supper, without treading the well-worn steps of *repentance* and faith—will find to his cost one day, that he is totally deceived! The Lord’s Supper was meant to *increase* and help the grace that a man has—but not to *impart* the grace that he does not have. It was certainly never intended to make our peace with God, to justify, or to convert. The simplest statement of the benefit which a truehearted communicant may expect to receive from the Lord’s Supper, is the strengthening and refreshing of our souls—clearer views of Christ and His atonement, clearer views of all the offices which

Christ fills, as our Mediator and Advocate, clearer views of the complete redemption Christ has obtained for us by His substituted death on the cross, clearer views of our full and perfect acceptance in Christ before God, fresh reasons for deep repentance for sin, fresh reasons for lively faith—these are among the leading returns which a believer may confidently expect to get from his attendance at the Lord’s Table. He who eats the bread and drinks the wine in a right spirit—will find himself drawn into closer communion with Christ, and will feel to know Him more, and understand Him better.

(a) Right reception of the Lord’s Supper has a “**humbling**” effect on the soul. The sight of the bread and wine as emblems of Christ’s body and blood, reminds us how sinful sin must be, if nothing less than the death of God’s own Son could make satisfaction for it, or redeem us from its guilt. Never should we be so “clothed with humility,” as when we receive the Lord’s Supper.

(b) Right reception of the Lord’s Supper has a “**cheering**” effect on the soul. The sight of the bread broken, and the wine poured out, reminds us how full, perfect, and complete is our salvation! Those vivid emblems remind us what an enormous price has been paid for our redemption. They press on us the mighty truth—that believing on Christ, we have nothing to fear, because a sufficient payment has been made for our debt. The “precious blood of Christ” answers every charge that can be brought against us. God can be “just and the one who justifies, those who have faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).

(c) Right reception of the Lord’s Supper has a “**sanctifying**” effect on the soul. The bread and wine remind us how great is our debt of gratitude to our Lord, and how thoroughly we are bound to live for Him who died for our sins. They seem to say to us, “Remember what Christ has done for you—and ask yourself whether there is anything too great to do for Him!”

(d) Right reception of the Lord’s Supper into hearts, has a “**restraining**” effect on the soul. Every time a believer receives the bread and the wine, he is reminded what a serious thing it is to be a Christian, and what an obligation is laid on him to lead a consistent life. Bought with such a price as that which the bread and wine call to his recollection, ought he not to glorify Christ in body and spirit, which are His? The man that goes regularly and intelligently to the Lord’s Table finds it increasingly hard to yield to sin and conform to the world.

Such is a brief account of the benefits which a right-hearted communicant may expect to receive from the Lord’s Supper. In eating that bread and drinking that cup, such a man will have his *repentance* deepened, his *faith* increased, his *knowledge* enlarged, his habit of *holy living* strengthened. He will realize more of the “real presence” of Christ in his heart. Eating, that bread by faith, he will feel closer communion with the body of Christ. Drinking that wine by faith, he will feel closer communion with the blood of Christ. *He will see more clearly what Christ is to him, and what he is to Christ.* He will understand more thoroughly what it is to be “one with Christ, and Christ one with him.” He will feel the roots of his soul’s spiritual life watered, and the work of grace in his heart established, built up, and carried forward.

All these things may seem and sound like foolishness to a natural man, but to a true Christian these things are light, and health, and life, and peace. No wonder that a true Christian finds the Lord’s Supper a source of blessing! Remember, I do not pretend to say that all Christians experience the full blessing of the Lord’s Supper, which I have just attempted to describe. Nor do I say that the same believer will always find his soul in the same spiritual frame, and always receive the same amount of benefit from the

ordinance. But I boldly say this: you will rarely find a true believer who will not say that he believes the Lord's Supper is one of his best helps and highest privileges. He will tell you that if he were deprived of the Lord's Supper on a regular basis he would find the loss of it a great detriment to his soul. There are some things of which we never know the value of, until they are taken from us. So I believe it is with the Lord's Supper. The weakest and humblest of God's children gets a blessing from this ordinance, to an extent of which he is not aware.

IV. In the last place, I have to consider "why it is that so many so-called Christians never come to the Lord's Supper." It is a simple matter of fact, that myriads of people who *call* themselves Christians never come to the Table of the Lord. They would not endure to be told that they deny the faith, and are not in communion with Christ. When they worship, they attend a place of Christian worship; when they hear religious teaching, it is the teaching of Christianity; when they are married, they use a Christian service. Yet all this time they never come to the Lord's Supper! They often live on in this state of mind for many years, and to all appearance are not ashamed. They often die in this condition without ever having received the ordinance, and yet profess to feel hope at the last, and their friends express a hope about them. And yet they live and die in open disobedience to a plain command of Christ! These are simple facts. Let anyone look around him, and deny them if he can.

Now why is this? What explanation can we give? Our Lord Jesus Christ's last injunctions to His disciples are clear, plain, and unmistakable. He says to all, "Eat, drink: do this in remembrance of Me." Did He leave it to our discretion whether we would obey His injunction or not? Did He mean that it was not significant whether His disciples did or did not keep up the ordinance He had just established? Certainly not! The very idea is absurd, and one certainly never dreamed of in apostolic times. Paul evidently takes it for granted that every Christian would go to the Lord's Table when it was available. A class of Christian worshipers who never came to the Table, was a class whose existence was unknown to him.

What, then, are we to say of that number which fail to receive the Lord's Supper, unabashed, unhumbled, not afraid, not the least ashamed? Why is it? How is it? What does it all mean? Let us look these questions fairly in the face, and endeavor to give an answer to them.

(1) For one thing, many fail to go to the Table because they are utterly careless and thoughtless about true religion, and ignorant of very first principles of Christianity. They go to church, as a matter of form—but they neither know, nor care anything about what is done at church! Christianity has no place either in their hearts, or heads, or consciences, or wills, or understandings. It is a mere affair of "words and names," about which they know little—and have little concern. There were very few such false Christians in Paul's times, if indeed there were any. There are far too many in these last days of the world. They are the dead-weights of the Churches, and the scandal of Christianity. What such people need is light, knowledge, grace, a renewed conscience, a changed heart. In their present state they have no part of Christ; and dying in this state they are thrown into hell. Do I wish them to come to the Lord's Supper? Certainly not, till they are converted. No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again.

(2) For another thing, many professing Christians do not receive the Lord's Supper because they know they are living in the habitual practice of some sin, or in the neglect of some Christian duty. Their conscience tells them so long as they live in this state, and do not turn away from their sins, they are unfit to come to the Table of the Lord. Well, they are so far quite right! I wish no man to be a communicant if he cannot

give up his sins. But I warn these people not to forget that if they are unfit for the Lord's Supper in that condition, they will be lost eternally. The same sins which disqualify them for the ordinance, most certainly disqualify them for heaven. Do I want them to come to the Lord's Supper as they are? Certainly not! But I do want them to repent and be converted, to cease to do evil, and to break off from their sins. Forever let it be remembered, that the man who is unfit for the Lord's Supper—is unfit to die!

(3) For another thing, some are not communicant because they imagine that it will add to their responsibility. They are not, as many, ignorant and careless about religion. They even attend church regularly and listen to the preaching of the gospel. But they say they dread coming to the Lord's Table and making a confession and a profession. They fear that they might afterwards fall away, and bring scandal on the cause of Christianity. They think it wisest to be on the *safe* side, and not commit themselves at all. Such people would do well to remember, that if they avoid responsibility of one kind by not coming to the Lord's Table, they incur responsibility of another kind, quite as grave, and quite as injurious to the soul. They are responsible for *open disobedience* to a command from of Christ. They are shrinking from doing that which their Master continually commands His disciples—confessing Him before men.

No doubt it is a serious step to come to the Lord's Table and receive the bread and the wine. It is a step that none should take lightly and without self-examination. But it is "no less a serious step to walk away and refuse the ordinance," when we remember Who invites us to receive it, and for what purpose it was appointed! I warn the people I am now dealing with—to be careful what they are doing. Let them not flatter themselves that *it can ever be a wise, a prudent, a safe line of conduct to neglect a plain command of Christ!* They may find at length, to their cost, that they have only increased their guilt and forsaken their mercies!

(4) For another thing, some false Christians stay away from the Lord's Supper because they believe they are not yet worthy. They wait and stand still, under the mistaken notion that no one is qualified for the Lord's Supper unless he feels within him, something like perfection. They pitch their idea of a communicant so high that they despair of attaining to it. Waiting for inward perfection they live, and waiting for it they die. Now such people would do well to understand that they are completely mistaken in their estimate of what "worthiness" really is.

They are forgetting that the Lord's Supper was not intended for *unsinning angels*, but for men and women subject to weakness, living in a world full of temptations, and needing mercy and grace every day they live! *A sense of our own utter unworthiness is the best worthiness that we can bring to the Lord's Table.* A deep feeling of our own entire indebtedness to Christ for all we have and hope for, is the best feeling we can bring with us. The people I now have in view, ought to consider seriously whether the ground they have taken up is defensible. If they are waiting until they feel in themselves perfect hearts, perfect motives, perfect feelings, perfect repentance, perfect love, perfect faith—they will wait forever. There never were such communicants in any age—certainly not in the days of our Lord and of the Apostles—there never will be as long as the world stands. No, rather, the very thought that we feel literally worthy, is a symptom of secret self-righteousness, and proves us unfit for the Lord's Table in God's sight. Sinners we are, when we first are saved—sinners we will be—until we die! Converted, changed, renewed, sanctified—but sinners still (though not like before—sin is not the *pattern* of a believer's new life). In short, no man is really worthy to receive the Lord's Supper who does not deeply feel that he is a "miserable sinner."

(5) In the last place, some object going to the Lord's Table because they see others

partaking who are not worthy, and not in a right state of mind. Because others eat and drink unworthily, they refuse to eat and drink at all. Of all the reasons taken up by those refusing to come to the Lord's Supper to justify their own neglect of Christ's ordinance, I must plainly say—I know none which seems to me so foolish, so weak, so unreasonable, and so unscriptural as this. It is as good as saying that we will never receive the Lord's Supper at all! When will we ever find a body of communicants on earth, of which all the members are converted and living perfect lives? It is setting up ourselves in the most unhealthy attitude of judging others. "Who are you, that you judge another person?" "What is that to you? You must follow me" (John 21:22). It is depriving ourselves of a great privilege, because others profane it and make a bad use of it. It is pretending to be wiser than our Master Himself. It is taking up ground for which there is no warrant in Scripture.

Paul rebukes the Corinthians sharply, for the irreverent behavior of some of the communicants; but I cannot find him giving a single hint that when some came to the Table unworthily, others ought to draw back or stay away. Let me advise the non-communicants I have now in view, to beware of being wise above that which was written. Let them study the parable of the Wheat and Tares, and mark how both were to "grow together *until* the harvest" (Matthew 13:30). Perfect Churches, perfect congregations, perfect bodies of communicants, are all unattainable in this world of confusion and sin. Let us covet the best gifts, and do all we can to check sin in others; but let us not starve our own selves, because others are ignorant sinners, and turn their food into poison. If others are foolish enough to eat and drink unworthily, let us not turn our backs on Christ's ordinance, and refuse to eat and drink at all.

Such are the five common excuses why myriads in the present day, though *professing* themselves Christians, never come to the Lord's Supper. One common remark may be made about them—there is not a single *reason* among the five, which deserves to be called "good," and which does not condemn the man who gives it. I challenge anyone to deny this. I have said repeatedly that I want no one to come to the Lord's Table who is not properly qualified. But I ask those who stay away never to forget that the very reasons they assign for their conduct, are their condemnation. I tell them that they stand convicted before God of either being very ignorant of what a communicant is, and what the Lord's Supper is; or else of being people who are not *living* right—and are unfit to *die*.

In short, to say, I am a noncommunicant, is as good as saying one of three things—

I am living in sin—and cannot come;

I know Christ commands me—but I will not obey Him;

I am an ignorant man—and do not understand what the Lord's Supper means.

I know not in what state of mind this book may find the reader of this paper, or what his opinions may be about the Lord's Supper. But I will *conclude* the whole subject by offering to all some **WARNINGS**, which I venture to think are highly required by the times.

(1) In the first place, "do not neglect" the Lord's Supper. The man who coolly and deliberately refuses to use an ordinance which the Lord Jesus Christ appointed for his profit—may be very sure that his soul is in a very wrong state. There is a judgment to come; there is an account to be rendered of all our conduct on earth. How anyone can look forward to that judgment day, and expect to meet Christ with comfort and in peace, if he has refused all his life to commune with Christ at His Table, is a thing that I cannot understand. Does this hit home to you? Be careful what you are doing!

(2) In the second place, do not receive the Lord's Supper "carelessly, irreverently, and as a matter of form." The man who goes to the Lord's Table, and eats the bread and drinks the wine, while his heart is far away—is committing a great sin, and robbing himself of a great blessing. In receiving the Lord's Table, as in every other means of grace, everything depends on the state of mind and heart, in which the ordinance is used. He who draws near without repentance, faith, and love—and with a heart full of sin and the world—will certainly be nothing better, but rather worse! Does this hit home to you? Be careful what you are doing!

(3) In the third place, "do not make an idol" of the Lord's Supper. The man who tells you that it is the first, foremost, chief, and principal precept in Christianity, is telling you that which he will find it hard to prove. In the great majority of the books of the New Testament the Lord's Supper is not even named. In the letter to Timothy and Titus, about a minister's duties, the subject is not even mentioned. To repent and be converted, to believe and be holy, to be born again and have grace in our hearts—all these things are of far more importance than to be a communicant. Without them we cannot be saved. Without the Lord's Supper we can be saved. Are you tempted to make the Lord's Supper override and overshadow everything in Christianity, and place it above prayer and preaching? Be careful. Pay attention what you are doing!

(4) In the fourth place, "do not use the Lord's Supper irregularly." Never be absent when the Lord's Supper is administered. Make every effort to be in attendance. Regular habits are essential to the maintenance of the health of our bodies. Regular use of the Lord's Supper is essential to the well-being of our souls. The man who finds it a burden to attend on every occasion when the Lord's Table is spread, may well doubt whether all is right within him, and whether he is ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. If Thomas had not been absent when the Lord appeared the first time to the assembled disciples, he would not have said the foolish things he did. Absence made him miss a blessing. Does this hit home to you? Be careful what you are doing!

(5) In the fifth place, "do not do anything to bring discredit" on your profession as a communicant. The man who after attending the Lord's Table runs into sin—does more harm perhaps than any unsaved sinner. *He is a walking sermon on behalf of the devil!* He gives opportunity to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. He helps to keep people away from Christ. Lying, drinking, immoral, dishonest, selfish communicants—are the helpers of the devil, and the worst enemies of the Gospel. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age!" Titus 2:11-12. Does this hit home to you? Be careful what you are doing!

(6) In the last place, "do not despair" and be cast down, if with all your desires you do not feel that you get a lot of good from the Lord's Supper. Very likely you are expecting too much. Very likely you are a poor judge of your own state. Your soul's *roots* may be strengthening and growing—while you *think* that you are not growing. Very likely you are forgetting that earth is not heaven, and that here we walk by *faith* and not by *sight*, and must expect nothing perfect. Lay these things to heart. Do not think harsh things about yourself without cause.

To every reader into whose hands this paper may fall, I commend the whole subject of it as deserving of serious and solemn consideration. I am nothing better than a poor or fallible man myself. But if I have made up my mind on any point it is this—that there is no truth which demands such plain speaking, as truth about the Lord's Supper!

I'd like to get a different point across or announce something

If you have a different point of view, I would be happy to give you room to get your point across. While this publication is my perspective on events, I recognize not everyone may agree and that some people would like to express their own opinion. If you want to write something, please forward your item to Hap (with a note as to whether or not you would like editing help) to: hap@faithfulcenturion.org.

Epistleers

We post the list of Epistle Readers in the Sunday Report each week so you can either plan your attendance or your pre-reading as the spirit so moves you.

Date	Reader
21 July 2012	Dru Arnold – Eighth Sunday after Trinity
28 July 2012	Dru Arnold – Ninth Sunday after Trinity
4 August 2012	Dru Arnold – Tenth Sunday after Trinity
11 August 2012	Dru Arnold – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity
18 August 2012	Dru Arnold – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity
25 August 2012	Dru Arnold – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

The near future, as well as Next Sunday

21 July 2012 – Eighth Sunday after Trinity – Holy Communion - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

28 July 2012 – Ninth Sunday after Trinity – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

4 August 2012 – Tenth Sunday after Trinity – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

11 August 2012 – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

18 August 2012 – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity – Holy Communion - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

25 August 2012 – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**