



Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Collect.

KEEP, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and, because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Epistle. Galatians vi. 11.

BRETHREN: YE see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

The Gospel. St. Matthew vi. 24.

AT THAT TIME: JESUS SAID UNTO THE MULTITUDE: NO man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

In the Epistle we continue in Paul's letter to the Galatians. And he addresses the issue of whether the Gentile converts have to be circumcised before becoming Christian or not. In other words – can only Jews become Christian? But also – CIRCUMCISION AS ADULTS. OUCH! He goes to the deeper meaning of it – and suggests that one becomes a new creature in Christ and circumcision has nothing to do with it.

In the Gospel we move over to Matthew's gospel – intended audience – Jews – as opposed to the Gentiles of Galatians. And it's part of the Sermon on the Mount. Last Chapter we had the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. And he's just laying it out. In fact he kind of trashes the Gentiles and holds them up as a foil. And he tells us not to be anxious. For it does not good – it does harm. It makes us smaller.

Questions:

1. In what way are we made a new creation by God each day? Or at least over time? Is Crucifixion the new Circumcision whereby we are Created?
2. When has anxiety made you smaller? How can we displace anxiety rather than let it take us over?

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