



ADVENT HOUSTON

VESPERS SERVICE

October 24, 2021

Reflective Quotes

The Issue of the Eyes

It's a terrible thing to see and have no vision – **Helen Keller**

Now imagine yourself as the blind man. We all have something, by no means necessarily a physical ailment, that we know is getting in the way of our being the people we believe God wants us to be and made us to be. Sit by the roadside and listen to the crowd. Examine your own feelings when you discover it's Jesus coming by. Call out to him, and when he summons you, put everything aside and go to him. And when he asks you what you want him to do, go for it. Don't look back at the small, selfish comforts of victimhood. Ask for freedom, for salvation. And when you get it, be prepared to follow Jesus wherever he goes next. – **N.T. Wright, *Mark for Everyone***

The Issue of the Tongue

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.
– **William Shakespeare, *Othello***

You are not only responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say.
– **Martin Luther**

*Call to Worship – From Psalm 126

Leader: When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
“The LORD has done great things for them.”

**People: The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad.**

*Song – Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning
our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy,
merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons,
blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy!
All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns
around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim
falling down before Thee,
Who wert and art and
ever more shall be.

Holy, holy, holy!
Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy;
there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power,
in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy;
merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons,
blessed Trinity!

Prayer of Adoration

Leader: Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself: We praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors. And as a community gathered together, we give you thanks for all of the gifts that you have freely bestowed upon us.

Leader continues to give thanks

Leader: For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea.

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For the communion of saints, in all times and places,

People: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

People: To him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

First Scripture Lesson

Jeremiah 31:7-9

For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Leader: The Word of the LORD

People: Thanks be to God.

Song – Jesus Cast A Look

Jesus cast a look on me,
Give me sweet simplicity
Make me poor and keep me low,
Seeking only Thee to know

All that feeds my busy pride,
Cast it evermore aside
Bid my will to Thine submit,
Lay me humbly at Thy feet

Make me like a little child,
Of my strength and wisdom spoiled
Seeing only in Thy light,
Walking only in Thy might

Leaning on Thy loving breast,
Where a weary soul can rest
Feeling well the peace of God,
Flowing from His precious blood

In this posture let me live,
And hosannas daily give
In this temper let me die,
And hosannas ever cry!

Prayers of the People

Leader: O God and Father of all, whom the whole heavens adore: Let the whole earth worship you, all nations obey you, all tongues confess and bless you, and men, women, and children everywhere love you and serve you in peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader continues to intercede on behalf of the community

Leader: We pray all of this in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray, saying...

**People: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be Your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Second Scripture Lesson

Hebrews 7:21-28

But this one [Jesus] was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:

“The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind,
‘You are a priest forever.’”

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of

the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God!

Song – Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with thee one

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art

High King of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Gospel Lesson

Mark 10:46-52

[46] And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. [47] And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" [48] And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" [49] And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." [50] And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. [51] And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." [52] And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You Lord Christ!

Homily

Rev. Taylor Leachman

*Affirmation of Faith

Westminster Larger Catechism

Leader: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment, “you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor?”

People: **The duties required in the ninth commandment are the following:**

- **preserving and promoting truth between one person and another;**
- **upholding the good name of our neighbor as much as our own;**
- **appearing and standing for the truth, from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully;**
- **speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice and in all other things;**
- **a charitable esteem of our neighbors, loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name and sorrowing for and covering their infirmities, freely acknowledging their gifts and graces, defending their innocence, readily receiving a good report, and unwillingly admitting an evil report concerning them;**
- **discouraging tale-bearers, flatterers, and slanderers;**
- **love and care of our own good name and defending it when need requires;**
- **keeping lawful promises;**
- **pursuing and practicing of whatever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.**

Confession of Sin

People: **Most merciful God,
We confess that we have sinned against you
In thought, word, and deed,
By what we have done,
And by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
Have mercy on us and forgive us;
That we may delight in your will,
And walk in your ways
To the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

1 John 4:9-10

Leader: In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (ESV)

Celebration of Holy Communion

People: We do not presume to come to this, Your Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your Table. But you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Leader: The LORD be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up unto the LORD.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the LORD, our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Leader: It is very good and right, our duty and privilege, to at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify your glorious Name; evermore praising you, and saying...

**People: Holy, holy, holy, LORD,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the LORD.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Chris will come again.**

Leader: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the LORD, our God.

*All of the communion packets contain grape juice.
Gluten free crackers are available (not included in the communion packets).*

Communion Song – Psalm 34 (Taste & See)

I sought the Lord
And He answered me
And delivered me
From every fear

Those who look on Him
Are radiant
They'll never be ashamed
They'll never be ashamed

This poor man cried
And the Lord heard me
And saved me from
My enemies

The Son of God
Surrounds His saints
He will deliver them
He will deliver them

REFRAIN:

Magnify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name together
Glorify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name forever

Oh, taste and see
That the Lord is good
Oh, bless us here
Who hides in Him

Oh, fear the Lord
Oh, all you saints
He'll give you everything
He'll give you everything

Magnify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name together
Glorify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name forever

Let us bless the Lord
Every day and night
Neverending praise
May our incense rise
(Repeat 3x)

REFRAIN

*Song – He Will Hold Me Fast

When I fear my faith will fail
Christ will hold me fast
When the tempter would prevail
He will hold me fast

I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path
For my love is often cold
He must hold me fast

REFRAIN:

He will hold me fast
He will hold me fast
For my Savior loves me so
He will hold me fast

Those He saves are His delight
Christ will hold me fast
Precious in His holy sight
He will hold me fast
He'll not let my soul be lost
His promises shall last
Bought by Him at such a cost
He will hold me fast

REFRAIN

For my life He bled and died
Christ will hold me fast
Justice has been satisfied
He will hold me fast

Raised with Him to endless life
He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight
When he comes at last

REFRAIN (2X)

*Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Benediction

Leader: Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

People: Amen

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