

## SERMON FOR EVENING PRAYER

Whitsunday<sup>1</sup>

Lessons:<sup>2</sup>

**The First Lesson:** Here beginneth the eleventh Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.<sup>3</sup>

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”

*Or,*

Here beginneth the twenty-second Verse of the thirty-sixth Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.<sup>4</sup>

“... Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith [SETH] the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my

great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith **[SETH]** the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith **[SETH]** the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith **[SETH]** the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.”

Here endeth the First Lesson.

titude must become a part of us. We should not have to be reminded to “At all times and in all places, give thanks and praise to God, the Father Almighty.”

I will be forever indebted, though to the Early Church and liturgists that have so wonderfully added this reminder many times throughout the Divine Liturgies. It is by these things that we can be assured that Jesus will tell us, also to “Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”<sup>7</sup>

To Him be all honor and glory, world without end.  
Amen.

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The Rev'd George Parrish<sup>8</sup>  
September 25, 2011

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<sup>1</sup> This sermon was originally written on the Epistle at Mass on the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> *An Alternative Table of Lessons (The Table of 1922, As Revised in 1928)*, THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, WITH THE ADDITIONS AND DEVIATIONS PROPOSED IN 1928 38 (Canterbury Press 2008); *The Table of Lessons (The Table of 1922, As Revised In 1928)*, A BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER xxxi (South Africa 1954); *A Table of Lessons (authorized by the Episcopal Synod)*, THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER xxix (CIPBC 1963).

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 11:1-9 (KJV).

<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel 36:22-36 (KJV).

<sup>5</sup> Galatians 5:13-end (KJV).

<sup>6</sup> St. Luke 17:12-18.

<sup>7</sup> St. Luke 17:19 (KJV).

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**The Second Lesson:** Here beginneth the thirteenth Verse of the fifth Chapter of the Epistle of Blessed Paul the Apostle to the Galatians.<sup>5</sup>

“... For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

### **Homily:**

This week, I received many emails that were humorous in nature, but this one struck me as being true.

*“Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered*

*as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; Why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and Maybe it was my fault.*

*“Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies, didn't spend more than he could earn, and and knew that adults, not children, are in charge. His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, of teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch, and of a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.*

*“Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault. Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement. Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, by his wife Discretion, his daughter Responsibility, and his son, Reason. He is survived by his 5 mean brothers, I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame, I'm A Victim, and Don't Tell Me What to Do. Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, do nothing—it's O.K., you never knew him anyway.”*

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart; be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.”

Today, St. Paul advises the Church of the Galatians of the gifts that we are granted to those that walk in the Spirit. He tells them about the things that are offensive to God as well and is rather vivid in his description.

The email that I read to you brings the same description to light in a more modern way. Either description is just as true in our world today as it was in Paul's time. Our world is morally, socially and spiritually bankrupt. The New Testament is the Good News and in this letter Paul most assuredly brings us good news. The corruption and decay of this world is not necessary for us. We have been admonished to “Walk in the Spirit” to avoid these corrupt things.

We are capable of doing this because we have been baptized into Christ our Savior and it is He that gives us this ability. As we've talked about in weeks past, we are not able to do this alone. We need to recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the world around us. We must participate in the life of the Church around us. By participate, I mean supporting the good work of the Church. We absolutely must not participate in things that will and do destroy the Church from within. The negative descriptors that St. Paul gives us will accomplish that.

We are reminded that when we “walk in the Spirit,” we will know that we are doing what our Lord Jesus tells us. We are reminded that, following the example of the lives of the Saints and the teachings of the Church, we will experience everlasting life.

St. Luke's account of Our Lord's healing of the ten lepers<sup>6</sup> reminds us of what most of us were taught as children and that is to be grateful for what we have been given, especially for such great gifts as God's sending to us of the Holy Spirit and the examples of faith and perseverance we have been given by the Saints. As young children, just as new Christians, we need to be reminded to say “Thank you,” but at some point, that gra-