



The Hillside Messenger

A Message from the Rector:

The Effects of Christ's Light Shining into the Soul

In this month's article, I turn to the Lord Jesus Christ's sayings about the lamp of the body:

No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a can-

dle doth give thee light.

St. Luke 11:33-36, KJV

This passage follows our Lord's declaration that no sign other than the sign of Jonah, who was a sign to the Ninevites, would be given to the evil generation that was seeking a sign from Him in



order to prove His identity (*St. Luke 11:30*). He warns that both the queen of the south and the people of Nineveh will judge this generation, firstly because the former came a great distance to hear the wisdom of King Solomon and the latter repented at the preaching of Jonah but most im-

portantly because He was in their midst and He is greater than either King Solomon or the prophet Jonah (*St. Luke 11:31-32*).

In a dark house in ancient times and in the centuries before gas lamps and electricity, olive oil lamps and candles provided light. Candles would always be put in candlesticks and lamps on lampstands to shine the light as widely as possible so that people might see their way around a dark room. Jesus applies this image of a lamp and its light to the eye of the body. The eye is a lamp to the body, showing the body what is in front of it and around it. If

one's eye is diseased, there is distortion, and possibly near-blindness, and this affects the body's perception of the world around it. In verse 35, Jesus warns His listeners to take care that the light in them is not darkness. At this point,

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The Effects of Christ's Light shining into the Soul

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He speaks of the soul, rather than the physical eye of the body. We must ensure that the light of the Lord Jesus Christ in our perception is not obscured by the darkness of our soul. Of course, the eternal light of the Word of God, the Son of God, can never be quenched but always shines on in the darkness of the world (*St. John 1:4-5*). The reason why so many do not accept Jesus as Lord and Christ is that they have allowed their souls to become darkened by sin so that they do not perceive who He is; this leads them to request a sign, or proof, that He is who He is. Every Christian has a responsibility to see that their soul—and consequently their body and their whole life—is full of light, since the soul is the lamp of the body.

What are the implications of this message for Christians today? The soul, as the lamp of our lives, must be filled with the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world (*St. John 8:12*). This is in contrast to the thinking of many people today, who often allow the customs and pressures of contemporary culture, ideologies, or philosophies to influence their way of life. What many Christians often do, for example, when it comes to expressing an opinion on a political issue, is to argue ei-

ther along Republican or Democratic lines, without either considering the ethics of an issue from all sides or attempting to find out what the Lord would have us believe as loyal members of His kingdom first. Not only must we think for ourselves, and not simply believe what others say or write, but we must pray and seek out the will of the Lord and what is pleasing to Him. Instead of reflecting current opinion or popular views, our minds and thinking must be formed by Christ. For example, instead of adopting xenophobia as if it were a solution to the problem of keeping America safe, we must look first at what God's attitude to aliens is as recorded in the Bible. We read that God loves aliens and that He gave Israel special laws to provide for their welfare (see *Exodus 22:21-23; Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:9-10, 33-34; Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Deuteronomy 24:17-22*, for example). Since God loves the poor, the aliens, the orphans, and the widows, Christians must love them, too. Xenophobic attitudes, therefore, are inadmissible for Christians, just as racism is, since the power of the Lord Jesus Christ's death on the cross destroyed the division between Jew and Gentile as well as all division on the basis of race or nationality (*Ephesians 2:11-19*).

The light of Christ that has shone into our

souls must shine out in every part of our lives so that we look at everyone and everything in a fundamentally new way: with the love of Christ. St. Paul expresses this insight in a different way in these words:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1-2, KJV

The mind is renewed by the continual, prayerful reading, study, and application of the Bible, which is God's word. This fact in itself indicates that we must spend enough time reading and studying the Bible. Facebook may be a helpful tool to keep track of friends and their activities, but we must really ask ourselves how much of the Bible is in it and whether it is right to spend so much time on Facebook. One can say the same of many other

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The Effects of Christ's Light shining into the Soul

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activities. Since the light of Christ is shining into our lives, even our use of time comes under His spotlight. Therefore we must submit all our use of time to the Lord, praying that He will guide us in the use of the time that we have available for recreation and leisure just as we pray He will guide us in the use of our time at work.

One of the deepest levels at which the light of Christ shines into our lives is the level of our motivation to think, speak, or act in the ways that we do. We must ask ourselves, "How do I view people? My family? Friends? Strangers? Enemies? Do I realize that, because God created them all, they are all precious to Him and I should therefore treat them all kindly and try to live at peace with everyone (*Romans 12:18; Hebrews 12:14*)?" If we regard anyone as someone to be exploited, then we are not showing him the love of Christ nor even loving that person as we love ourselves (*Leviticus 19:18*). Exploitation and oppression go hand-in-glove and result from greed of one kind or another.

All of us must pray for the grace not to think, speak, or act in ways which express or somehow convey any hurt we may have suffered from others in the past. The best way to deal with

such wounds of the past is to forgive all who have offended or wounded us, to repent of anger and resentment, and to love all as Christ does. All of us, also, must be willing to apologize to all whom we have wronged in any way, so that we may be forgiven and so that healing may come to all our relationships. Two great consequences of the death of our Lord on the cross were the forgiveness of sins and deliverance from the power of sin.

Another way in which the light of Christ illuminates our lives is by renewing our attitude to created things. Nothing must become such a priority that the Lord God ceases to be the greatest priority in our lives. Nothing must be worshiped besides God (*Exodus 20:3-5*), nor should we be greedy for anything (*Exodus 20:15, 17*), nor lust after anyone (*Exodus 20:14, 17; Leviticus 20:13*).

What risk do Christians take by not being transformed by renewing their minds according to the word of God? They risk allowing themselves to be conformed to the world, acquiring the mindset of sinful contemporary culture and the wickedness of the present age in which we live. In fact, many Christians belie their profession by showing ignorance of the Bible, the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and even the history of the Church. This has led to

the phenomenon of "Christians in name only". In view of this, Christians are called by God to fortify themselves in their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and keeping themselves in the love of God (*St. Jude 20, 21*).

This must be our response to the degenerating culture in which Christianity is no longer dominant. Rod Dreher in his book *The Benedict Option* expounds this tendency in detail and proposes that Christians start small communities in which the Christian faith is properly taught, lived, and modeled in a daily rhythm of prayer, work, and study such as that proposed by the Benedictine Rule. The Very Rev. Michael Penfield, Vicar-General of our Convocation of the West, recommended in the last Convocation newsletter that we all read this book. After reading it, I commend it to you for its clarity in analyzing the theological and philosophical history that led to the ignorance of Christianity prevalent in the Church today and to the secularism of Western society today.

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

***O LORD,
we beseech Thee
mercifully
to receive
the prayers
of Thy
faithful people
who call upon Thee;
and grant
that they may
both perceive
and know
what things
they ought to do,
and also
may have
grace and power
faithfully
to fulfil the same;
through
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.***

Our Chapel Family Prayer List

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call



themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop Foley Beach;
Bishop Bill Ilgenfritz;
Canon Michael Penfield,
our Vicar-General;
Father Chris Parrish;
Deacon Peter Vogel; and

Deacon Linda Bracken;
also all those who serve
as Thy ministers in gov-
erning our nation and
state, particularly:

President Donald Trump;
and

Governor Jerry Brown;
as well as all those who
are any ways afflicted, or
distressed, in mind, body,
or estate; especially those
for whom our prayers are
desired:

the soldiers, sailors,
marines, airmen,
police officers,
firefighters, and pilots
who protect us every day;

our persecuted Christian
brothers and sisters
throughout the world;

all refugees;

all who have suffered
loss or injury
in the wakes of
Hurricanes
Harvey and Irma;

the nation of Venezuela;

Estelle Wilson;

Julia McNeely;

Joya de Rossett;

Sharon De Souza;

Debbie;

Scott;

Brittany;

Chuck;

Don Cottam;

James and Tanya Theiler;

Christian McKagan
and his parents;

Lois Martins;

Dale Quinn;

Lisa;

Ben;

Marion;

Max;

Bishop Richard Boyce;

Dorian;

Kate Ward;

Kendra, Dan,
Emmalyn, and Dayna
Pack;

Ernst Hernandez;

Ray and Elodia Boreham;

Jan Martins;

Louanne Norman;

Reagan and
the Stanko family;

Kim Vogel;

Jim and Edna Davis;

the life and
continuing longevity of
St. Luke's
Chapel in the Hills;

and for all those
who are in our hearts,

that it may please Thee to
comfort and relieve them,
according to their several
necessities; giving them
patience under their suf-
ferings, and a happy issue
out of all their afflictions.
And this we beg for Jesus
Christ's sake. Amen.

Please note: This prayer
list was current as of
September 6th.
Please contact Father
Parrish to make cor-
rections.

Book Review: The Benedict Option

The *Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* is Rod Dreher's name for Christians' increasingly necessary separation of themselves from the conventions and norms of most of society to find new ways of living in community to retain and consolidate their Christian faith. The author proposes that a simplified Rule of St. Benedict adapted to each small community's needs would guide the communal life of each small community according to the rhythm of prayer, study, and work. Dreher wrote this book to awaken the Church to fortify itself while it still has the time to do so. Christians will only survive in the West, he warns, if they return to the roots of their faith in thought and practice (page 3).

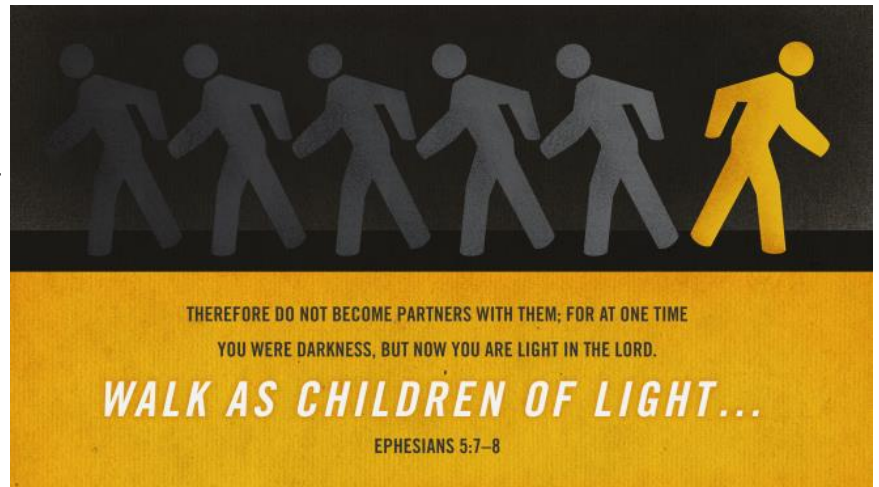
Dreher adroitly sketches the background to contemporary culture's growing opposition to the Christian faith in terms of the history of scholastic theology and philosophy from the time of William of Occam and his nominalism through Descartes' rationalism expressed, for example, in his dictum, "I think, therefore I am." This paved the way for the Enlightenment and the supremacy of human reason in discerning reality. The Enlightenment replaced Christianity with

Deism, which believes that God created the universe but allows it to run by itself without involving Himself in it. Deism heavily influenced the American Founding Fathers, leading to the idea of the separation of church and state in the Constitution. When religion was made a private matter, the probability of culture becoming pagan instead of Christian became more certain. Beyond these phenomena, other movements and historical events contributed both to the Church's loss of its own sense of identity and to the loss of a pervasive Christian culture in society.

Implied in this book is the idea that traditional catechesis, or instruction in the Christian faith, in general has ceased to be effective. What is needed now is for Christians to form small groups or communities into which it would be easy for newcomers to assimilate and learn from the example of others what it means to live the Christian life, including prayer and Bible study. The author gives contemporary examples of meaningful Christian communities living according to some shared rule of life such as the Benedictine Rule. The idea is not for all Chris-

tians to become monks, but that the Benedictine Rule can be an effective model for communal Christian living because of its disciplined rhythm of daily prayer, Bible study, and work, as well as the fostering of love of each member of the community for God, for one another, and for all.

Now not all will agree that the Benedictine Option is the only way for the Church to present an authentic Christian witness to the contempo-



rary world, but no one can deny the crisis of existence faced by the Church in the West today or the increasing hostility to Christians in today's society. This book is a very helpful guide to understanding how we arrived at this crisis and a timely warning that the Church must renew and strengthen itself and its witness to Christ in a post-Christian age.

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

Parish Postings

Thanks to everyone who came to pray for St. Luke's in August. Please join us again on September 10th at 11:30 AM in the Chapel. The more the better, so if you didn't have a chance to join us yet, please do so then.

"Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance..."

Ephesians 6:18



St. Luke's will celebrate its annual International Day on Sunday, September 17th, with a potluck meal after the 10:00 AM worship service.



Joanna's Circle will meet on Saturday, September 23rd, at 10:00 AM for a time of prayer, fellowship, and mutual support in living according to Christian principles. Any interested woman is invited to join us! August's meeting will be at Le Boulanger, 301 Main Street in Los Altos.



The Vestry will meet on Sunday, October 1st, immediately following the worship service. The meeting is open to all.

Vestry

Father Parrish is seeking Lay Readers to assist him with our 10:00 AM and noon worship services. Any confirmed parishioner is eligible to serve, and

training will be provided. Please prayerfully consider joining this important ministry.



Please remember the hungry when you do your grocery shopping. Bring donations of non-perishable foodstuffs to church with you any Sunday and place them in the large wicker basket in the Narthex for transport to the Downtown Palo Alto Emergency Food Closet. Thank you!



Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 3rd

The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Bible Study: Jonah

9:15 AM

Holy Communion with Healing Service

10:00 AM

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Upcoming Events

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Sunday, September 10th

The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Bible Study: Colossians

9:15 AM

Office of Morning Prayer

10:00 AM

Parish Prayer Meeting

11:30 AM

Holy Communion

noon

Sunday, September 17th

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Bible Study: Colossians

9:15 AM

Holy Communion

10:00 AM

International Day Potluck Luncheon
immediately following the worship service

Saturday, September 23rd

Joanna's Circle

meeting at Le Boulanger

301 Main Street

Los Altos

10:00 AM

Sunday, September 24th

The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Bible Study: Colossians

9:15 AM

Office of Morning Prayer

10:00 AM

Holy Communion

noon

Sunday, October 1st

The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Bible Study: Colossians

9:15 AM

Holy Communion with Healing Service

10:00 AM

Vestry Meeting

immediately following the worship service





The Hillside Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF
ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF
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IN NORTH AMERICA

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Worship Schedule

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

*"A place
where the Bible is taught."*



Biblical in teaching.
Liturgical in worship.
Loving in practice.

First Sunday of each month

Holy Communion with Healing Service
10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion
noon

Please note that both services on Feast Days occurring on these Sundays will be Holy Communion.

Third and fifth Sunday each month and Feast Days

Holy Communion
10:00 AM