

Sunday 20th January 2019

Epiphany 3

Gold or White



Collect

God our creator, who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people, and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 English Standard Version (ESV)

Spiritual Gifts

12¹ Now concerning^[a] spiritual gifts,^[b] brothers,^[c] I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. ⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Footnotes: a. The expression *Now concerning* introduces a reply to a question in the Corinthians’ letter; see 7:1. b. Or *spiritual persons*. c. Or *brothers and sisters*

COMMENT: Paul had many difficulties teaching the new converts in Corinth just what it meant to believe in Jesus as Lord and follow his way of life. A major disagreement had arisen as to which of the gifts of the Spirit were the more important. Here Paul points out that all gifts come from the same Spirit of God, serve different purposes in the Christian community, and yet contribute to the common good. The issue still has relevance for our modern congregations. Each member may have a different role to play depending on his or her particular talents.

John 2:1-11 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Wedding at Cana

2¹ On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2² Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3³ When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4⁴ And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” 5⁵ His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” 6⁶ Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.^[a] 7⁷ Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. 8⁸ And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. 9⁹ When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10¹⁰ and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” 11¹¹ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Footnotes: a. Greek *two or three measures (metrētas)*; a *metrētēs* was about 10 gallons or 35 litres

COMMENT: John’s Gospel took its shape from a series of signs revealing Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God, and Saviour of the world. This miracle story is the first of these signs. In the New Testament, a sign designated an outward manifestation of a hidden and usually divine purpose. Jesus himself was a sign that, as in the past, God had again taken redemptive initiative in Israel’s history. We meet this concept first in the birth narratives (Luke 2:12, 34). So also the miracles of Jesus were themselves signs that the dynamic reign of divine love was in process of being fulfilled in human affairs. Not only the

person of Jesus and all his works, but also his death and resurrection were signs that the prophesied Day of the Lord when all history would be consummated was at hand. There is in this passage our Lord's curious reluctance to follow his mother's off-hand information that the ordinary wine for the wedding feast had run out. Immediately, she told the servants standing-by to do whatever he told them. This almost insignificant aside can be seen as the way for Jesus to differentiate himself from his closest human relationships. He appeared to reject his mother's counsel and yet also as indicated that she did believe in him as the Messiah. The steward supervising the serving of the feast and the bridegroom were quite ignorant of what had happened. Our post-Enlightenment Age minds have yet to grasp that biblical miracles cannot be explained in terms that exclude the supernatural. John and his contemporaries had no difficulty combining such spiritual and material realities of divine initiatives in ordinary human affairs. This was especially true of the Hebrew minds who penned the Old and New Testaments, because spiritual realities were as obvious to them as the water with which they washed and the wine they drank at their festivals or ordinary meals.

Psalm 36: 6-11 *Domine, in caelo misericordia tua* Grail Psalter

℟ In your light we see light.

6 Your love, Lord, reaches to heaven;
your truth to the skies.

7 Your justice is like God's mountain,
your judgments like the deep. ℟

To both man and beast you give protection.

O Lord, 8 how precious is your love.

My God, the sons of men
find refuge in the shelter of your wings. ℟

9 They feast on the riches of your house;
they drink from the stream of your delight.

10 In you is the source of life
and in your light we see light. ℟

11 Keep on loving those who know you,
doing justice for upright hearts.

12 Let the foot of the proud not crush me
nor the hand of the wicked cast me out. ℟

13 See how the evildoers fall!
Flung down, they shall never arise. ℟

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. **

COMMENT: The steadfast love of God for Israel and for the whole of creation brings praise to the lips of the faithful and a prayer that this love with continue for “the upright of heart.”

Short Preface

And now we give you thanks because, in the incarnation of the Word, a new light has dawned upon the world, that all the nations may be brought out of darkness to see the radiance of your glory.

Post Communion

Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**

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Post Communion

Generous Lord, in word and Eucharist we have proclaimed the mystery of your love: help us so to live out our days that we may be signs of your wonders in the world; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**

Blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**