

Morning Prayer

Soren Kierkegaard

Teacher and Philosopher, 1855

September 8, 2021

Opening Sentence

Officiant Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. *Psalm 19:14*

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.

People ***And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.***

Officiant and People ***Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.***

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting:
Come let us adore him.

Venite *Psalm 95:1-7*

**Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth,
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands have molded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!**

The Psalm Appointed (*appointed for the day*) Psalm 145: 10-13

**All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your faithful shall bless you.**

**They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,**

**to make known to all people your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.**

**The LORD is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

The Lessons

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Colossians

Colossians 3: 1-11

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 10 The Second Song of Isaiah

Isaiah 55: 6-11

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;
call upon him when he draws near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts;

And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion,
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
***so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.***

For as rain and snow fall from the heavens
and return not again, but water the earth,

Bringing forth life and giving growth,
seed for sowing and bread for eating,

So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;
it will not return to me empty;

But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,
and prosper in that for which I sent it.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Gospel

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. *Luke 6: 20-26*

People ***Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Reflection

One of the most influential philosophers of the nineteenth century, Søren Kierkegaard, the son of a devout Lutheran, spent most of his life in Copenhagen. As a young man, he studied Latin, history, and theology, though he was particularly drawn to philosophy and literature, and his works are remarkable in part for his deft blending and treatment of theological, literary, and philosophical themes.

In 1841 he proposed to Regine Olsen, but self-doubt about his suitability for marriage led him to break off the engagement. The event was greatly influential on his life and his works. From 1843 until his death in 1855, Kierkegaard was a prolific writer. Sometimes referred to as the “Father of Existentialism,” Kierkegaard is known for his concept of “the leap of faith,” his understanding of how a person’s beliefs and actions are based not on evidence, of which there can never be enough, but on the willingness to take the leap despite that lack of evidence. He explored this theme in works such as *Fear and Trembling*, *Repetition*, and *Stages on Life’s Way*.

For most of his life, Kierkegaard was critical of established religion, which he felt substituted human desire for God’s law. In 1854, he published several articles which attacked what he saw as the selfishness of many leaders of the institutional church. His criticism of the church as an institution, however, should not be confused with the absence of faith or the lack of trust in the ethical teachings of the Christian Gospel.

His religious and theological works, such as *Practice in Christianity* and *Christian Discourses*, though sometimes overlooked, show his profound understanding of the significance of the teaching and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and of the human call to live in imitation of the selfless, sacrificial life of Jesus. His work was influential on philosophers such as Martin Heidegger and on theologians such as Karl Barth. His challenges to the Church remain powerful reminders of the institution’s call to pattern its common life according the teaching of its founder, Jesus Christ.

The Apostles’ Creed

Officiant and People

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

*the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Officiant Let us pray.

***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.***

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

R. ***And grant us your salvation.***

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

R. ***Let your people sing with joy.***

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

R. ***For only in you can we live in safety.***

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. ***And guide us in the way of justice and truth.***

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

R. ***Your saving health among all nations.***

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

R. ***Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.***

V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;

R. ***And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.***

The Collect of the Day

Officiant Heavenly Father, whose beloved Son Jesus Christ felt sorrow and dread in the Garden of Gethsemane: Help us to remember that though we walk through the valley of the shadow, you are always with us, that with your philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, we may believe what we have not seen and trust where we cannot test, and so come at length to the

eternal joy which you have prepared for those who love you; through the same Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving

Officiant Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Spiritual Communion

Let us pray together a prayer for Spiritual Communion:

Blessed Jesus, I believe that we are fed with the spiritual food of your Body and Blood. Since I cannot receive You physically today, I now desire to receive you spiritually into my soul. Unite my heart with those of my community gathered to celebrate the great meal of thanksgiving and make us all one with you. May this spiritual communion strengthen my faith and grant me confidence in your loving care now and forever. Amen.

The General Thanksgiving

Officiant

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up ourselves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. **Amen.**

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God.***

Officiant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. ***Amen.***

Bible Study

Gospel: Mark 8:27-38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Reflection on Mark 8:27-38

On this Sunday, Jesus and his disciples set out to journey to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking along, Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" Perhaps he also was curious to know what people thought and said about him. The disciples replied: "Some say John the Baptist. Others say you are Elijah or one of the prophets." Jesus then shifted the focus. He asked: "But who do you say that I am?" Naturally, it was Peter who answered his question. He simply said: "You are the Christ."

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples. However, the words he spoke must have been shocking to the disciples. He told them that the Son of Man would suffer and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes. He then would be killed. Yet he would rise after three days! Imagine what was going through the disciples' minds and hearts as they listened to

Jesus. They must have been shocked, dismayed and afraid. And what did Jesus mean when he said: "He would rise on the third day?"

Peter could not tolerate hearing all of this. He took Jesus aside and rebuked him for saying all these wild things. Jesus looked directly at his disciples and then he turned back to Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are not thinking as God thinks but as human beings think!"

Jesus said to the disciples: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny him/herself. Then take up their cross and follow me! If you strive to save your life, you will lose it. However, if you lose your life for my sake and for that of the Gospel, you will save your life."

Today Jesus asks us: "Who do you say that I am?" Take a few moments and seriously ask yourself: Who do I say Jesus is? Who is he to me? Is he simply a man that lived over 2,000 years ago? Or is Jesus real to me? Ask yourself: How does Jesus and his teaching and example of self-sacrificing love, affect my daily choices and actions? Is the impact significant? Or is it minor?

Answering Jesus' question may clarify for us who Jesus is for us today! Hopefully we will reiterate Peter's response: "You are the Christ."