Readings for Thursday, November 12, 2026

Charles Simeon – *Priest, 1836*

Psalm 145:8-13

8 The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 The LORD is loving to everyone *
and his compassion is over all his works.

10 All your works praise you, O LORD, *
and your faithful servants bless you.

11 They make known the glory of your kingdom *
and speak of your power;

12 That the peoples may know of your power *
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; *
your dominion endures throughout all ages.

Amos 6:1-7

Alas for those who are at ease in Zion,
and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,
the notables of the first of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel resorts!
Cross over to Calneh, and see;
from there go to Hamath the great;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is your territory greater than their territory,
O you that put far away the evil day,
and bring near a reign of violence?

Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;
who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;
who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

John 21:15-17

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.

Collect:

Loving God, whose unerring wisdom and unbounded love order all things: Grant us in all things to see your hand; that, following the example and teaching of your servant Charles Simeon, we may walk with Christ in all simplicity and serve you with a quiet and contented mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen***.

Charles Simeon

Priest, 1836

The historian Thomas Macaulay said about Charles Simeon, “If you knew what his authority and influence were, and how they extended from Cambridge to the most remote corners of England, you would allow that his real sway in the Church was far greater than that of any primate.”

Simeon’s conversion in 1779, while he was still a student, occurred as he was preparing himself to receive Holy Communion, an act required of undergraduates at the University. His first Communion had been a deeply depressing and discouraging experience because of his use of the popular devotional tract, The Whole Duty of Man, which emphasized law and obedience as the means of receiving the Sacrament worthily. When he was again preparing for Communion before Easter, he was given a copy of Bishop Thomas Wilson’s Instructions for the Lord’s Supper. Here was a very different approach, which recognized that the law could not make one righteous and that only the sacrifice of Christ, perceived by faith, could enable one to communicate worthily. This time, the experience of Holy Communion was one of peace and exhilaration, a new beginning in a Christian life whose influence would be difficult to exaggerate.

In 1782, the year of his graduation from King’s College, Cambridge, he was placed in charge of Trinity Church in that city, while still a deacon. He remained as rector there for 54 years, despite intense early opposition from the churchwardens and congregation over his evangelical preaching.

Simeon’s influence and authority developed slowly, but he eventually became the recognized leader of the evangelical movement in the Church of England. He helped to found the Church Missionary Society and was active in recruiting and supporting missionaries, including Henry Martyn. As a preacher, he ranks high in the history of Anglicanism. His sermons were unfailingly biblical, simple, and passionate.

The influence of Simeon and his friends was thus described by the historian William Edward Hartpole Lecky: “They gradually changed the whole spirit of the English Church. They infused into it a new fire and passion of devotion, kindled a spirit of fervent philanthropy, raised the standard of clerical duty, and completely altered the whole tone and tendency of the preaching of its ministers.”

Simeon died on November 13, 1836, in Cambridge, and was buried at King’s College.