

# Daily Prayer

*Richard Hooker*

*Wednesday, November 3, 2021*

*We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God. Today we hold in our prayers the ordinary moments in life—the trials and the joys—and remember Richard Hooker, Priest and Theologian, 1600.*

*We begin by saying*

Those who wait upon the Lord shall possess the land; they will  
delight in abundance of peace.

*Psalms 37.10b, 12b*

## The First Reading

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written,

'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,

nor the human heart conceived,

what God has prepared for those who love him'—

these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are discerned spiritually. Those who are spiritual

discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

'For who has known the mind of the Lord  
so as to instruct him?'

But we have the mind of Christ.

*1 Corinthians 2,6-10, 13-16*

## **The Psalm**

Trust in the Lord and be doing good; ♦  
dwell in the land and be nourished with truth.

Let your delight be in the Lord ♦  
and he will give you your heart's desire.

Commit your way to the Lord and put your trust in him, ♦  
and he will bring it to pass.

He will make your righteousness as clear as the light ♦  
and your just dealing as the noonday.

The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, ♦  
and their tongue speaks the thing that is right.

The law of their God is in their heart ♦  
and their footsteps shall not slide.

*Psalm 37,3-6, 32-33*

## **The Gospel Reading**

As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so

that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

*John 17.18-23*

*We continue with the reflection that follows. In silence, we ask what the reading has to say to us today. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?*

## **The Reflection**

*Nate Wall*

Today Anglicans remember Richard Hooker (1554–1600). Hooker was an English priest and theologian best known for writing a multi-volume tome addressing his day's hotly debated controversies, called *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie*. His massive books made a case for what the Church of England's songs, prayers, rituals, God-talk, and decision-making ought to look like. The whole thing is shot through with a single question: How do Christians know what God wants for us?

Maybe it's no surprise, then, that each of the Scripture texts selected for today—a day that nods to Richard Hooker—says something specifically *Christian knowledge, or wisdom*.

Near the beginning of his first letter to the Christians in Corinth, St. Paul scrawled a big question-mark over all the Things We All Think We Know For Sure. That question-mark over the world's so-called wisdom simply was the cross of Jesus. “None of the rulers of this age understood” God's secret wisdom, wrote Paul, “for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor 2:8). The execution of Jesus Christ on a Roman cross represented the joint project of the era's best educated minds, the empire's most sophisticated political bureaucracy, and Jerusalem's most learned

religious authorities. And Jesus' death was the considered result of risk management. It resulted from flawless cost-benefit analysis.

So when Jesus' tomb proved empty on Sunday morning, conventional wisdom—the Things We All Think We Know—turned out to be just as empty.

Genuinely spiritual wisdom, Paul insists, means having “the mind of Christ.” What a riddle of a phrase! But what Paul seems to mean is something like this: Jesus Christ—crucified by our best intentions, raised by God's anarchic love—is the shape of Truth itself. The bloodied and living Jesus reveals the deepest, and ultimate Truth about the Way Things Are and Will Be.

Christians, at their best, then, are people who know the secret wisdom of the cross. The cross of Jesus still sideswipes the conventional wisdom of ivory tower research, of parliamentary back channel dealing, of board room stratagem, and the clarity of social-media moral crusades. Having “the mind of Christ” means seeing the world radically differently than either a well-adjusted first-century Roman citizen in cosmopolitan Corinth or a well-adjusted twenty-first century Canadian in cosmopolitan Toronto.

But differently *how*? Perhaps there's no more vivid portrait of “the mind of Christ” than today's Gospel reading. Here, in Jesus' impassioned final prayer, minutes before “the rulers of this age” arrive to arrest him, he begs his Father to sanctify his follower “in truth.” In other words, Jesus asks God to *set his followers apart*, to make them cut a distinctly truthful figure across the world's so-called wisdom (John 17:19). And what does such truth look like? Like crucified love. Listen in again as Jesus prays for you, me and all Christians across the centuries (17:20b–23), asking

*that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us ... so that they may be one, as we*

*are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*

Whenever Christians fail to stick together, to cling to one another come-what-may, the way that families stick together, we resist the gravitational force of Jesus' prayer. There are always ways to play Judas and betray our Lord by siding with prevailing wisdom.

Protestants, for example, refuse to associate with Catholics. Or self-styled progressive Christians like many of us demonize our fellow baptized as "fundamentalist" to make sure our friends know we're not 'one of them.' Or circle-the-wagons conservative Christians write off their progressive siblings and break away into new churches. Heck, we Anglicans have been known to carve up our own dioceses into liturgical and theological factions, and even our own parishes

And the thing is (however hard to hear) that *all* of that runs counter to the mind of Christ. It's just not how Jesus thought, or thinks. Jesus lovingly took Judas' feet in his hands at the table before he prayed the prayer of unity. Jesus let himself be strung up beside a couple right-wing insurrectionists, even confused with him, tarred-and-feathered as one of them. Jesus let the crowds trade his life for the life of a guy who murdered someone during a riot/protest.

Every step of the way, Jesus overcomes our betrayals by moving closer to us, not distancing himself from us. His love is fiercer than prudent self-preservation. "The mind of Christ" saw fit to befriend *sinners*—not just the unfairly marginalized, but the genuinely guilty.

How do Christians *know* what's true, *know* what God wants of us?

We ask one question: Does our life together look like the crucifiable Love of Jesus Christ?

*When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle*

## **The Canticle ~ A Song of Wisdom**

*Send Wisdom forth from your holy heavens;  
from the throne of your glory  
send what is pleasing to you.*

O God of our ancestors and Lord of mercy, ♦  
you have made all things by your word.

By your wisdom you have formed us ♦  
to have dominion over the creatures you have made;

To rule the world in holiness and righteousness ♦  
and to pronounce judgement in uprightness of soul.

Give us the Wisdom that sits by your throne; ♦  
do not reject us from among your servants,

For we are your servants, ♦  
with little understanding of judgement and laws.

Even one who is perfect among us ♦  
will be regarded as nothing  
without the wisdom that comes from you.

With you is Wisdom, she who knows your works, ♦  
and was present when you made the world.

She understands what is pleasing in your sight ♦  
and what is right according to your commandments.

Send her forth from the holy heavens, ♦  
from the throne of your glory send her.

That she may labour at our side ♦  
and that we may learn what is pleasing to you.

For she knows and understands all things, ♦  
she will guide us wisely in our actions  
and guard us with her glory.

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

*Send Wisdom forth from your holy heavens;  
from the throne of your glory  
send what is pleasing to you.*

*Wisdom 9.1-5a,c,6,9-11*

*We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions)  
and continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.*

## **The Intercessions**

We pray for the flourishing of God's gifts to God's Church, saying:  
Holy One,  
in your mercy hear us.

God our Creator, you give us gifts that we may work together  
in the service of your Son:  
bless the leaders of your Church,  
that they may be firm in faith,  
and humble before you.  
Holy One,  
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who teach,  
that they may increase our understanding,  
and be open to your word for them.  
Holy One,  
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who minister healing,  
that they may bring wholeness to others,  
yet know your healing in themselves.

Holy One  
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those through whom you speak,  
that they may proclaim your word in power,  
yet open their ears to your gentle whisper.

Holy One  
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who work in your world today,  
that in the complexity of their daily lives  
they may live for you, fulfil your purposes,  
and seek your kingdom first.

Holy One  
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who are uncertain of their gifts  
and those who are powerless in this world's eyes,  
that they may be made strong in your gift of the Holy Spirit.

Holy One  
hear our prayer,  
and make us one in heart and mind  
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.

*Our prayers conclude*

Grant to us, O God Most High,  
the gifts of wisdom and understanding,  
that following the teaching of your servant Richard Hooker,  
we may cleave without compromise to those saving doctrines  
on which the faith of your Church is founded,  
and order all else most fittingly



by the rule of love and the bond of peace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*[let us pray as our Saviour taught us,]*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen

*We conclude*

Let us pursue all that makes for peace  
and builds up our common life.  
Amen.

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