

The Way of Jesus

Week 4

*A 12 Week Seminar for Students of Jesus
St Stephens/Sewickley
January-March 2010*

The Breastplate of St Patrick

I arise today

Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through the belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness
Of the Creator of Creation.

I arise today

Through the strength of Christ's birth with his baptism,
Through the strength of his crucifixion with his burial,
Through the strength of his resurrection with his ascension,
Through the strength of his descent for the judgment of Doom.

I arise today

Through the strength of the love of Cherubim,
In obedience of angels,
In the service of archangels,
In hope of resurrection to meet with reward,
In prayers of patriarchs,
In predictions of prophets,
In preaching of apostles,
In faith of confessors,
In innocence of holy virgins,
In deeds of righteous men.

I arise today

Through the strength of heaven:
Light of sun,
Radiance of moon,
Splendor of fire,
Speed of lightning,
Swiftness of wind,
Depth of sea,
Stability of earth,
Firmness of rock.

I arise today

Through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,

God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me
From snares of devils,
From temptations of vices,
From everyone who shall wish me ill,
Afar and anear,
Alone and in multitude.

I summon today all these powers between me and those evils,
Against every cruel merciless power that may oppose my body and soul,
Against incantations of false prophets,
Against black laws of pagandom
Against false laws of heretics,
Against craft of idolatry,
Against spells of witches and smiths and wizards,
Against every knowledge that corrupts man's body and soul.

Christ to shield me today
Against poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against wounding,
So that there may come to me abundance of reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness,
Of the Creator of Creation.

The "Golden Triangle" of Spiritual Growth

Dallas Willard, "The Divine Conspiracy", p.347ff



Top: The Action of the Holy Spirit

John 3.5; Rom 8.10-13; Gal 5.22-26

"The function of the Holy Spirit is, first, to move within our souls, and especially our minds, to present the person of Jesus and the reality of his kingdom." (348)

"The Spirit continues to move upon us and within us to enable us to do the kinds of work Jesus did (through 'gifts' of the Spirit) and to grow the kind of inward character that manifests itself in the 'fruit' or outcome of the Spirit..." (Dallas Willard, Divine Conspiracy)

Lower Left: Ordinary Events of Life: 'Tests', 'Trials' and 'Temptations

James 1.2-4; Rom 5.1-5

“We must accept the circumstances we constantly find ourselves in as the place of God’s kingdom and blessing. God has yet to bless anyone except where they actually are, and if we faithlessly discard situation after situation...as not being ‘right,’ we will simply have no place to receive his kingdom into our life.... We are not to try to get in a position avoid trials...We are to see every event as an occasion in which the competence and faithfulness of God will be confirmed to us.” (Dallas Willard, Divine Conspiracy)

Lower Right: Planned Disciplines to Put on a New Heart

Col 3.12-17; 2 Peter 1.5-10; 1 Cor 9.24-27

“The main task is, by engaging in ways of using the body differently, to disrupt and conquer habits of thought, feeling, and action that govern our lives as if we or someone other than God were God and as if his kingdom were irrelevant or inaccessible to us... Appropriate disciplines for developing new habits, kingdom habits, are practiced. A further help in understanding what spiritual disciplines are for the disciples of Jesus is to recognize them as simply a matter of following him into his own practices, appropriately modified to suit our own condition.” (Dallas Willard, Divine Conspiracy)

Middle: Centered in the Mind of Christ

Phil 2.5,12-15; Romans 13.14; Romans 12.1-3

We ‘work out’ what God has ‘worked in’ to our lives by Christ’s truth and presence. His attitude and mind progressively dominate and transform our own thinking, influencing our actions and behavior from the ‘inside out’.

Some Disciplines of Abstinence

<u>Solitude</u>	<u>Silence</u>
Fasting	Frugality
Chastity	Secrecy
Sacrifice	Confession

Some Disciplines of Engagement

<u>Study</u>	<u>Worship</u>
Service	Celebration
Prayer	Fellowship
Submission	Extra Giving

The top disciplines (boldfaced and underlined) are primary in importance. *See Richard Foster, The Celebration of Discipline or Dallas Willard, The Spirit of the Disciplines for much helpful information on these. For further reading on Spiritual Formation, see Willard’s books, Renovation of the Heart and The Divine Conspiracy. Slow reading, but rewarding! See also John Ortberg’s The Life You’ve Always Wanted or Willard and Simpson’s Revolution of Character for a more accessible but identical treatment of the issues.*

Homework for Week 4

- Read Philippians 4 this week, devotionally
- Read Luke 19-24 this week, devotionally
- Which of the four areas of the Golden Triangle are strongest for you? Weakest?
- Which of the disciplines listed above might hold the most promise for you as we approach Lent?