

Humans can get to know God, but only in a limited human way. To time-bound Christians an eternal God can stupefy the mind. The idea of putting on Christ, as one would clothes, enamors Saint Paul and the first Christians. Once Christians get the idea they are the mirror image of God, a problem arises from self-righteous Christians who sometimes attack those who have a more humble approach to 'a mirror image of God' as the Lectionary puts it. Accepting the cross, then, functions to both dampen and enhance the image of being Godlike.

On earth, humans are unable to see God directly. God is only visible through refractions such as Jesus Christ, who said that he is the "truth." The Bishops cite Colossians in the Catechism section about the Eighth Commandment, concerning lying and telling the truth. The Bishops write nothing about "mental reservation," which is deliberate selection of facts designed to mislead.

When the Bishops write about truth in their Catechism, the only concern is the truth about what the Magisterium proclaims. Within such a context, the Faithful must remember that Magisterial proclamation does not create truth. The historically misguided approach of the Magisterium to astronomy and the findings of Galileo is a case in point. This is an appropriate time for the Faithful to examine their conscience as individual members and as Church. The ramifications of juxtaposing church politics and truth extends to such issues as abortion, birth control, and stem-cell research.

The Bishops, in the midst of their cover-up sexual scandal, have the audacity to hold up Our Sunday Visitor as the exemplar of truth telling. Yet, they say nothing about The National Catholic Reporter, which, for over twenty-five years, has been urging and warning the Bishops to tell the truth and accept accountability for their responsibilities. The scandal belongs to the Bishops, rather than psychologically ill priests, suffering from pedophilia.

Telling the truth is not the same as acting on the truth. Moving a pedophile priest from one parish to another, without letting the Faithful know of the difficulty, violates integrity. Stealing from parishes in order to pay for the range of various court costs, including settlements, of pedophilia is another violation of integrity. This, therefore, is the Sunday that enables the Church to focus on permitting truth to determine Church politics, rather than Church politics determine truth.

At a more philosophical level, the traditional Church Magisterium is more comfortable using deductive reasoning to move from principles to facts. Modern thinking is more comfortable using inductive reasoning to move from facts to principles. The problem arises from lack of integrity, either denying facts which do not suit principles or denying principles that do not suit facts. The Catechism is very much about denouncing those who would deny principles, which do not suit facts.

Annotated Bibliography

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those who are not interested in scholarly details may stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some of the fun stuff scholars are digging up.

First Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 2:21-23

Vanity extends to the Church trying to protect herself through a misguided hierarchy, covering up scandalous behavior.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14-17

Pastoral Care of the Sick includes this Psalm.¹

Wilma Ann Bailey, "The Sorrow Songs: Laments from Ancient Israel and the African American Diaspora"²

Psalm 90 is a communal lamentation.

Psalm 90:1-10

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy³

Barker draws out a sense of astronomical cosmology, reflected at verse 4, *for a thousand years in your sight are as yesterday*. The Psalmist is making a point of vanity for short-term gains when placed against the reality of eternity.

Psalm 90:11-13

John Paul Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13"⁴

I do not see relevance to the Lectionary readings today.

Psalm 90:12 ...*wisdom of heart* ...

Stephen J. Binz does not use psalm 90 in the Sacred Heart Bible Study.⁵

¹ The Roman Ritual: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum: Approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See: Prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy: a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. 1983) 294.

² in Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation, Randall C. Bailey, ed., (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 64.

³ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 283.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2006) 75.

⁵ Stephen J. Binz, Threshold Bible Study: The Sacred Heart of Jesus (New London Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 2006).

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

The Lectionary also uses Colossians 3:1-4 at Reading 42 C, for Easter.

Col 3:1-3

Bernardin Schneider, O.F.M., "The Corporate Meaning and Background of 1 Cor 15,45b—*O Eschatos Adam eis Pneuma Zoiopoioun*"^{6 7}

Paul thinks of putting on Christ as one might put on a coat. Schneider explains,

Now we still externally—"the outer man"—wear the form of the first man, who is of dust, of the earth, earthly, and so shall die, unless prevented by the *parousia* [second coming of Jesus], though the effect as far as the "old man" is concerned will be the same. However, even now already as one Spirit with Christ inwardly—"the inner man," "the new man"—we have already "died" in Christ and "risen" with him, though our new "life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:1-3). Only at the *parousia*, when Christ our life appears, shall we too appear in glory and be completely conformed to his image as the Son of God and firstborn among many brethren (Col 3:4; Rom 8:29).

Col 3:1

Frank J. Matera, "Christ in the Theologies of Paul and John: A Study in the Diverse Unity of New Testament Theology"⁸

Matera compares Paul and John:

... Paul's eschatology looks to the future. It is interesting to note, however, that whereas the Johannine letters begin to emphasize a future eschatology (1 John 2:18, 28; 3:2), the Deuteropauline letters begin to move in the direction of a more realized eschatology, viewing the baptized as not only buried with Christ into death, as Paul writes in Rom 6:4, but raised up with him (Col 2:12; 3:1) and even "seated with him in the heavens" (Eph 2:6).

⁶ as found at http://63.136.1.22/pls/eli/ashow?ishid=n0008-7912_029_03&lcookie=2792486&npage=450-467 070115.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 3 (July 1967) 458.

⁸ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 2 (June 2006) 255.

Col 3:1

Jerry L. Sumney, "I Fill Up What Is Lacking in the Afflictions of Christ: Paul's Vicarious Suffering in Colossians"⁹

Sumney observes that *raised with Christ* is "an expression that alludes to ... death with Christ (3:1)."

Colossians 3:1

Richard Clifford, S.J. and Khaled Anatolois, "Christian Salvation: Biblical and Theological Perspectives"¹⁰

Clifford and Anatolois write,

... Christ's Resurrection is a model of our future resurrection and a sacrament of the posture of "seeking the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father" (Colossians 3:1). Thus, Christ's death and Resurrection provide us with saving knowledge by manifesting the reality of our situation of death and the reality of God's victory over death but also by enabling and exemplifying the way to deal with this death and the way to attain to that victory.

Colossians 3:2

Christopher Grasso, [A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut](#)¹¹

July 17, 1724, toward the beginning of the Great Awakening (1740),¹² Elisha Williams preached an evangelical Calvinism with a sermon on Colossians 3:2 on the necessity of the new birth. The Bishops seem unaware of the efforts of our Protestant forbearers to combine the relationship between church and state. The Bishops do not mind moralizing about what the legislature is doing, without ever taking into consideration the history of past attempts to do so in the United States. Both the Great Awakening and the Second Great Awakening, a century later, were attempts to do just that. As I see it, the issue for both Protestants and Catholics before legislatures in the United States is the extent to which Church politics determines what the Church identifies as moral and the extent to which truth, especially so-called *scientific truth*, determines what the Church identifies as moral.

⁹ [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 675.

¹⁰ [Theological Studies](#), Vol. 66, No. 4 (December 2005) 766.

¹¹ Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999 46-47, fn. 29.

¹² [http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/papers/vol1/501117-An Appraisal of the Great Awakening.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/papers/vol1/501117-An%20Appraisal%20of%20the%20Great%20Awakening.htm) 070701.

Col. 3:9

Khaled Anatolios, "Oppositional Pairs and Christological Synthesis: Rereading Augustine's *De Trinitate*"¹³

Colossians 3:9 refers to the renewal and reformation of the image of God through Christ. This article is the source of the incomprehensibility of God mentioned at the beginning of these reflections.

Colossians 3:9

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁴

The Bishops quote Saint Paul, "Stop Lying to one another." The Bishops go on, "Much of what passes for truth is the effort to justify individual behavior." The Bishops are telling the Faithful all about specks in the eyes of others, all the while ignoring the beam of stealing from the parishes to cover the legal costs of the sexual cover up.

Col 3:10

Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, "Sanctifying Grace in a `Methodical Theology'"¹⁵

Jacobs-Vandegeer is struggling with the renewal in verse 10 that Elisha Williams struggles with in verse 2. Verse 10, *put on the new self* is more explicit than verse 2, *think of what is above, not what is on earth*. The esteemed theologian Bernard J. F. Lonergan, whom Jacobs-Vandegeer quotes, referred to faith as "knowledge born of religious love."

Col 3:9-10

Robert H. Gundry, review of Jung Hoon Kim, The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus¹⁶

Of Kim, Gundry writes, "The Spirit's being clothed with certain people in the OT helped Paul conceive of a person's being clothed with another person." Clothed in the person of Christ enables the Faithful to accept all truth (distinct from politics) free from the fear that paralyzes political action.

¹³ Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 2 (June 2007) 251.

¹⁴ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 432, 436.

¹⁵ Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2007) 69.

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2006) 147.

Colossians 3:10

The English translation is difficult. *For knowledge* in English connotes *for the purpose of knowledge* or *leading to knowledge* in the Greek. Max Zerwick, S.J., explains, “a knowledge resulting in likeness to its object.”¹⁷ In other words, Christians become *like* or *images of God*.

Colossians 3:11

Demetrius K. Williams, “The Bible and Models of Liberation in the African American Experience”¹⁸

Williams writes,

... Col 3:11 says: “There is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all in all.” It is interesting that while the saying is expanded to enlarge the category of race/ethnicity, the aspect related to sex/gender—“no longer male and female”—is missing, as in 1 Cor 12:13 [which the Lectionary uses in reading 69C, the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time]. The reason for its omission in Colossians has to do with the development of the household codes (3:18—4:1) [the Lectionary uses verses 3:18-21, about wives being subordinate to their husbands, in readings 17ABC, Holy Family], which sought to reinstitute the patriarchal order of man over woman, curtailing women’s freedom. The very fact that the “neither male and female” pair was eliminated from the baptismal confession’s liberative litany in 1 Cor 12:13, and later in Colossians, is a subtle indication of its potential for revolutionary social implications for women and slaves.

Alleluia: Matthew 5:3

¹⁷ Max Zerwick, S.J. and Mary Grosvenor, A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament unabridged, 5th, revised edition (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico 1996) 609.

¹⁸ in Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation, Randall C. Bailey, ed., (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 49.

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Luke 12:16-21

Craig L. Blomberg, "Interpreting the Parables of Jesus: Where Are We and Where Do We Go from Here?"¹⁹

Scholars are questioning the exemplary nature of parables, such as the man with the full barn. The parable is not about barns but about an eye on the prize, heaven above, with God the Father.

Luke 12:16-20

F. Gerald Downing, "In Quest of First-Century C.E. Galilee"²⁰

Downing writes,

... the ... peasant does not calculate or aggressively plan ahead; it is enough to keep seed-corn and a small reserve. Any long-term future is in God's hands to decide and make known, a point made bluntly to the foolish barn builder of Luke 12:16-20 (cf. Luke 12:33-34).

Luke 2:19

Basil S. Davis, "Severianus of Gabala and Galatians 6:6-10"²¹

Good things has the meaning of material goods, including food. Looking back to this verse and using a double negative, Davis writes, "It is not inconceivable that Paul should have demanded 'pupils' to 'reward or pay their teachers.'" Scholars struggle with the relationship between Paul and the collection basket.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. Personal Notes are on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes.

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 53, No. 1 (January 1991) 55, 74.

²⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 1 (January 2004) 94, 95.

²¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (April 2007) 296.