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Uncomplicating the Coronation

By Revd Jack Dunion

....a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:27

This morning, while reading the Word of God, I occasionally stopped, as I often do, to talk to Jesus and contemplate some of the wonderful words I was reading. Anyone who loves the Lord and wishes to love Him more will know what I mean when I say I was yearning within myself as I read, not only to know what His words meant, but also to find ways in which I might bring them into my daily living. Afterwards, while still in a contemplative mood, I fired up my laptop and opened YouTube, as is often my Saturday morning habit. I then spotted a thumbnail introducing a video titled "*King Charles cuts off the roots of the Monarchy from Jesus, at his peril*". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br6d6YZexCU> After watching the video I then went back to reading the Word, as I wanted to recapture what I was feeling within myself prior to watching the video.

In hindsight, it feels providential that Dr Gavin Ashenden should appear in the video talking about

who Jesus was, and what it is that is most important when it comes to having Jesus in our lives. However, as I listened carefully to him speaking, I couldn't help thinking that it was over-complicating what I had just been reading in the Word. To sum up the whole experience in a nutshell: it felt like I was speaking to Jesus when a man appeared between us and in front of me. He spoke some words which I struggled to understand, then he left, and I continued to talk to Jesus.

It seems to me that there is a very simple and straightforward remedy to "uncomplicating" any personal translation of the Word, i.e. we can simply do what Jesus says! As we do what Jesus says, His words move from our heads into our hearts. Once the words are in our hearts, and combined with His love there, it produces more light in our understanding. That light, which is the light of truth, then gets shed on the other things we read in the Word. *

As the Coronation of King Charles III approaches, no doubt there will be various debates and even arguments arising through the expressed views of the various theologians and intellectual scholars. Differences of opinion will arise regarding what the Scriptures are saying and this may well cause division and schisms. There may be folk in our own Church who enjoy engaging in such debate and feel that these are very important issues that need mulling over. Not having the greatest intellectual capacity for understanding or tolerating complicated debates, I celebrate the fact that there are others among us who do have that capacity, and who can present a strong theological argument when it comes to stating our own Church's position. In the same way, I celebrate the wide variety of other approaches in understanding and sharing our faith in the Lord.

However, to those who love the Lord and wish to love Him more, there is always a very simple solution to fall back on, and with which there is no need for debate. That solution is to simply "do as Jesus says" according to sound doctrine and how we understand what the Lord is asking us to do. All said and done, I hope you can relax and just enjoy the Coronation!

"...a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:27

*Ref:

True Christian Religion (TCR) par. 397

New Jerusalem & it's Heavenly Doctrine (aka The New Jerusalem and Heaven's Teaching for it) par. 28.



Hands

By Pauline Grimshaw

READINGS:

PSALM 24

LUKE 6:1-10

AC 10130

Perhaps, more than most of our many body parts, we take our hands and our arms for granted. They don't usually require medical attention or checkups like eyes and ears and

teeth. They don't need blood tests or monitors. They don't usually need spare-part replacement surgery like knees and hips. They work ceaselessly throughout the day in all weathers and in all situations, and need little or no maintenance or protection, apart from the odd application of hand cream and the use of rubber gloves for particularly dirty work. They are so little bother, that all in all, we just never think of them. Until perhaps we have an accident and are unable to use them.

Some time ago I was listening to, and watching, some of the cycling events in the last couple of days in the Paralympics and was amazed at how some of the cyclists managed with only one hand. I expect most of us would find it extremely difficult to put into practice some of the things that we want to do with the use of only one hand. Until watching these races I had never given a thought to hands, but then it really brought home to me how important they are. In this world they act as tools to help us perform the thousand and one tasks that we need to do each day just to exist. Handling and touching and feeling things helps us to make sense of the three-dimensional nature of the world. All babies feel objects to discover their properties – for example, whether the objects they touch are hard or soft, or spiky or smooth, the shape and the three-dimensional concept of objects.

However hands have another function, a deeper function and, we might say, more spiritual function. They act as channels expressing and communicating our innermost feelings and emotions to others. The very words – feeling and touching – have both literal and the abstract meanings for us adults.

Throughout our lives we convey deeper messages through the touch of our hands. Hands heal and comfort in times of sickness. One of the first things that a mother does with a new-born baby is to touch it, to stroke it, to feel it and to gently unfold each tiny finger to check that all is well. This touching and feeling isn't just a physical thing, it is an emotional thing, a channeling of love. As a child grows older we hold its hand as a protection from dangers such as traffic, but also for the sense of loving security that flows through the touch of a hand.

IN a church baptismal-service the water is applied with the touch of the hand and the hand is used in the blessing. When we reach adulthood and embark on loving relationships, perhaps the first touch of a relationship is in the holding of hands, and in a marriage ceremony the placing of rings on fingers is a linking together and a channeling of love. At the end of life too, when speech has gone, it is often the touch or the holding of a hand that sees us safely make the transition into the spiritual world.

The Lord himself, whilst on earth, used his hands to heal people, as in our second reading this morning from the Word. It was through his hands that the Divine healing power of love was transmitted. He used his hands as a practical teaching lesson in the same story when he healed the man and ate the ears of corn on that same Sabbath day. He showed that the practical doing of good with the hands was far more important than the literal observance of keeping the Sabbath day holy.

It is through the hands that the mind is able to put into action the wishes of its will, the will in this case being the things that we really want to do. It is our hands that give our minds the power to act. Hopefully our hands will be used to put into action good and true things. In the spiritual world the will and the inner wishes of angels correspond to

and match their actions. It is impossible for them to believe one thing and do another as is often the case in this world. Our hands give us real power, the power to do good BUT conversely they can give us the power to do evil and wicked things. Sadly there are many people in this world, as we have seen constantly on TV this past week, who use the power of their hands to take things that are not theirs to take, to hurt and to kill and to destroy – sometimes in the name but not in the spirit of religion – to belittle and to bully others, and ultimately to gain power over others.

In our reading from Psalm 24 the psalmist poses the question ‘Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord or who shall stand in his holy place?’ and provides the answer ‘He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.’ Clean hands – not literally of course – but hands that have done actions inspired by love from the Lord. The psalms themselves are full of references to the hands of the Lord holding us safely within his arms, in particular perhaps with the familiar words of the funeral service ‘Into thy hands I commit my spirit.’

In our earthly lives we should remember that the Lord is always there, seeking to touch our lives and to bring comfort and hope in to them. In our turn too we should use our hands and arms to do good to others and not to harm them, and try to be those loving channels through which the Lord works in this world.