

EASTER 1

THE COLLECT

ALMIGHTY Father, who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; Grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that we may always serve thee in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



1. Why is the first Sunday after Easter sometimes called Low Sunday?
A. Because it was the custom of the ancients to repeat some part of the solemnity which was used on Easter Day, on the first Sunday after Easter. And because this feast was one of lower degree than that of Easter itself, it took the name of Low Sunday.
2. For what has God given his Son to die?
A. For our _____. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)
3. What did He rise again for?
A. For our _____. “Who was delivered for our offenses, and rose again for our justification.” (Romans 4:25)
4. What do we pray we may put away from us?
A. The _____ of malice and wickedness. “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.” (Ephesians 4:31)
5. In what do we pray we may always serve God?
A. In pureness of _____ and _____. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” (I John 3:2-3)



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INTRODUCTION.

1. If a man wants to run a race, will it do to start with a load on his back? If a girl wants to set about some needlework will it do to start with dirty hands? We think this Easter season about living a new life, but we cannot do this unless we start right. **The load and the dirt of sin must first be got rid of. That is *pardon*.**
2. Again, a man charged with a crime says he will make a new start; but he must first be *acquitted*. **We cannot live the new life till God has acquitted us. That is *justification*.**

I. OUR POSITION.

1. **We cannot start the new life until we are *right with God*.**
There is nothing so important in all life to settle as this question—How can I be right with God?
2. **Two things are needful.** Sin must be forgiven. God's favor must be restored, we must be in our right position as God's children. The one we call pardon, the other we call justification. Our pardon depends on Christ's death as we saw a fortnight ago. Our justification depends on His resurrection. Why? Christ had fulfilled all righteousness, and therefore death could not hold Him. For the sake of Christ, God acquitted man, restoring us to His favor, as adopted children.

II. OUR PROGRESS

1. **The Collect reminds of what this means.** A long time ago Easter was the great time for baptism. What does baptism mean? That we are forgiven, and that we are restored to our position as God's children. But what else? That we are to do just what the Collect prays—renounce, put away the leaven, &c.; believe—serve Thee in truth; keep God's commandments—serve Thee in pureness of living.
2. Some children are invited to a tea-party. Tickets are given them, but they must have clean hands and faces. One goes with his ticket, but with dirty hands and face. He cannot enter; he has not fulfilled the condition. Another goes with clean hands and face, but no ticket. He cannot enter; he has no claim. the ticket some one has bought and given—that is his claim. The clean hands and face, that is the condition. So Christ's righteousness is our claim; holiness (i.e. Christ's righteousness worked out in our lives) that is the condition.

III. OUR PERFECTION.

1. **Not all at once, but little by little we shall become like Christ,** so that the righteousness which God gave us credit for at first will at length be fulfilled and realized in us. The best way to live a life which is holy is to believe what is true. So we put ourselves by continual faith into God's hands, that Christ's life in us may fulfill what God purposes.

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