BCP Holy Communion 19th after Trinity 10.x.21

Last week I spoke about keeping the main thing the main thing. We had those magnificent words from Our Lord – like a standard mast at the heart of our lives – the Two Commandments of the New Covenant, which contain and proclaim all the ancient Law and Prophets.

This Sunday’s readings continue, beautifully, to unpack keeping the main thing the main thing. What does that actually look like, we ask? St Paul tells us in the Epistle, and Jesus lays it out in the Gospel. What’s the main thing here? That we are invited to be forgiven and made whole, and live that out in every part of how we live. ‘Live in this light all the days of your life’ we say at Baptism.

It’s all about coming to life.
St Paul talks about the old man and the new man in today’s epistle.

In the collect – the prayer given for today and this week – we pray that the Holy Spirit might rule in our hearts – guide us and bring us to life.

In the Gospel, Jesus restores the man to full health, and even more drastically He restores him to a state of grace.

Some Christians talk about being born again. In baptism we are made inheritors of heaven. Through grace, through incorporation into Jesus’ life, death and resurrection (and by no other means than God’s free grace in this way) can we be restored to endless life and love.
And we, we spend our lives drifting back.
Collecting crud, moss, barnacles.
We spend our lives picking up and being ruled, being inheritors and sharers not of Christ’s endless gift...but of fear, of wordly ways of thinking, selfish desires, petty nonsense, and idols of every kind.
We are reminded by today’s collect and readings that life, to seek true life, is a constant process of turning back. Conversion is nothing weird. It’s turning back home.

Of scraping off all that clings and mars and turning back to true freedom.
Weekly Eucharist. Confession. In prayer. Even in prayer our minds wander, so we turn back. That turning back to focus on God. That is prayer. And that is life.
Perhaps it sounds like hard work?

Well... it takes application, but really its about getting out of the way. We cannot make ourselves more alive. We cannot make ourselves more Christian. Our part is simply to get out of the way and let God get busy. Our job – our life – is simply a matter of giving God’s Holy Spirit as many opportunities as possible to get at us. He is inviting us to dance, but everytime we come near we either run away in fear, or we try and lead the steps clumsy and unhearing as we are.
We just need, day by day, year by year, to give God the chance in little ways and large – in Sacrament and prayer and Bible and every other foundation we live on - to teach us how to dance. To bring us to life, just as we pray He will once and for all on the great Day itself. To get out of the way, and let Him get at us.