

## Column – As the World Turns

Many of a certain generation, especially women, will remember “As the World Turns”. I read somewhere that it was the fourth longest running soap opera on American television, airing from April 2, 1956, to Sept. 17, 2010.

As a boy, off from school in the summer, I remember walking through the house hearing the opening theme song. As a globe on the oval black and white screen rotated, there would come a rush of vibrato-filled organ music. If there was someone in the house wishing to watch it, as there often was, I would be told to go outside and play.

If you think about it, the sight of the globe rotating with precision and regularity has a spiritual dimension. It reminds us of God’s wise ordering of things. He is not only the Creator, but the Sustainer.

Paul in Colossians 1 actually attributes both activities – creation and sustaining -- to the Second Person of the Trinity. Speaking of the Son, he says: “For by him were all things created” (16). Then in the following verse adds: “and by him all things consist” (17). That word ‘consist’ means ‘holds together’.

There is something reassuring in knowing that that the Jesus who healed the sick and raised the dead had a hand in the creation of the world and is still active in its ordering. Words of a song often heard at Vacation Bible School come to mind: “He’s got the whole world in His hands.” That includes you and me. As the world turns, day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, we are not forgotten!

But there is another reassuring thought we can draw from this image of the world turning. That is: someone, somewhere, is praying. The 19<sup>th</sup> century hymn writer John Ellerton expresses this thought like this:

“As o’er each continent and island / the dawn leads on another day, / the voice of prayer is never silent, / Nor dies the strain of praise away.”

This “voice of prayer” no doubt includes the Lord’s Prayer. Every minute of the day – no matter what evil is afoot in the world, no matter what corrupt politicians are plotting, no matter how many people are blaspheming or committing adultery, no matter how much the fearmongers are plying their trade and trying to get people off balance – someone is pleading for God’s wise rule, for a better world.

It is comforting to be reminded that the prayers of the saints are going up as the world turns, as well as knowing that the thing for which they pray is coming. After all, we have the promise of the One whose word cannot fail.

But as there is comfort in the image of a rotating globe, so there is a call and a challenge in this image: we must do our part in bringing in the kingdom of God. God's work our hands, but also our lips.

“Hour by hour fresh lips are making thy wondrous doings heard on high,” continues John Ellerton in his hymn. Let's resolve that ours will be among these lips.

*ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we de sire or deserve; Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen. (Collect, the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity)*

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