Daily Office Devotional, Friday, September 4, 2026
Proper 17, the week of the fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.

There Must Be a Place Where All Is Light

Key phrases for reflection from today's Gospel reading:
26 One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.. . . . 34They answered him, `You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, `Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 36He answered, `And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' 37Jesus said to him, `You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' 38He said, `Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped him.

39 Jesus said, `I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' 40Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, `Surely we are not blind, are we?' 41Jesus said to them, `If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see," your sin remains.

You will find the full text of today's Gospel reading at the end of this reflection.

Daily Office Lectionary Readings
AM Psalm 31; PM Psalm 35
Job 19:1-7,14-27; Acts 13:13-25; John 9:18-41

Today we celebrate the Feast of Albert Schweitzer . (See below.)

David's Reflections

Poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti begins and ends his poem "Laughing and Crying" with these words:

I laugh to hear me say what I am saying
Walking in my cave of flesh

There must be a place
Where all is light*

The healing of the blind man in today's reading from John 9, though a physical healing reported by John, symbolizes all of us in our struggles to see. (See verse 39 above.) For John's Gospel to see is to believe, so the struggle to see is the struggle to exercise faith. Those of us who have come to faith in Christ can lapse into believing that we have believed and that's that. To lapse into that space is to return to a place of darkness and nonseeing. Belief, trust, commitment remains an ongoing, dynamic experience and a challenge. A close reading of John 9 will show the blind man coming to progressively better sight about Jesus' identity and Jesus' detractors becoming more obdurate and less open.

This blind person found his healing being questioned by those who persisted in disbelief. Have you ever felt like others did not take your faith seriously, that they did not respect or accept your ongoing journey into a deeper trust in Christ? This blind person met just such skepticism. His response was to trust his experience, not their interpretation of it. He responded with the words in verse 26, "One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

When you find others taking you with less than full seriousness, or when you find yourself questioning your own faith or wondering about its genuineness, this man's story offers guidance about how to respond. Revert to your previous experience. Like him, you may not have much of a theological understanding, but you can know that once you were blind and now you see. Trust your own experience.

I do not have a dramatic conversion experience to which I can revert. I was baptized at age nine in the Baptist Church but Jesus had been a real presence in my life for at least two or three years. What I do have is a lifetime of hungering for God and a series of moments of encouragement, confirmation and transformation. Look into your experience and find the nuggets that reaffirm your trust in Christ. Understand that faith, trust, commitment require ongoing updating and deepening in the face of new challenges, new woundings, or new questions.

As Ferlinghetti put it "There must be a place where all is light." That place actually is within the spirit of the believing person. Within us there is light, the light of Jesus' loving and saving presence. Yes, there is darkness pushing against it, but the light prevails always, like a candle in a dark room chases the light before it.

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* Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *Endless Life: Selected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1981), pp. 127-128.

Collect of the Day, Proper 17, the fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost
Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*. (BCP, 233)

Today we celebrate the Feast of Albert Schweitzer, theologian, organist, physician (died 4 Sep 1965 CE).
http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/albert_schweitzer.html
https://www.britannica.com/biography/Albert-Schweitzer

Collect of the Feast of Albert Schweitzer
O God, who endowed your servant Albert Schweitzer with a multitude of gifts for learning, beauty, and service: Inspire your Church that we, following his example, may be utterly dedicated to you that all our works might be done to your glory and the welfare of your people; through Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. *Amen.*

A Collect for Fridays
Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, 97)

A Prayer for Light
Grant us, Lord, the lamp of charity which never fails, that it may burn in us and shed its light on those around us, and that by its brightness we may have a vision of that holy City, where dwells the true and never-failing Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*. (BCP, 110)

A Collect for Mission

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, 280)

Daily Office Gospel, John 9:18-41

18The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight 19and asked them, `Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' 20His parents answered, `We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' 22His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. 23Therefore his parents said, `He is of age; ask him.' 24So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, `Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' 25He answered, `I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' 26They said to him, `What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' 27He answered them, `I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' 28Then they reviled him, saying, `You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' 30The man answered, `Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. 31We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' 34They answered him, `You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, `Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 36He answered, `And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' 37Jesus said to him, You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' 38He said, `Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped him.

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Daily Offices in the Book of Common Prayer
Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, *The Book of Common Prayer*
Noonday Prayer, page 103, *Book of Common Prayer*
Order of Worship for Evening (Vespers), p 109, *Book of Common Prayer*
Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, *Book of Common Prayer*
Compline (Night Prayer), page 127, *Book of Common Prayer*
Daily Devotionals, page 136, *Book of Common Prayer*