

Summer History & Heritage -- #5 (July 9)

This week's entries come exclusively from *Christian Almanac* and *Tabletalk* readings. The *Almanac* articles for July are 3 & 5, 10 & 12, 17 & 19, 24 & 26, & 31.

The Rich and the Poor --- (Almanac, June 12)

"God's intent in endowing any person with more substance than he needs is that he may have the pleasurable office, or rather the delightful privilege, of relieving want and woe. Alas, how many there are who consider that store which God has put into their hands on purpose for the poor and needy, to be only so much provision for their excessive luxury, a luxury which pampers them but yields them neither benefit nor pleasure. . ."

The excerpt is from the pen of **Charles Spurgeon (1834--1892)**, Baptist minister at London's Metropolitan Tabernacle and reputedly the greatest preacher of the Victorian Age. Spurgeon's spellbinding homilies are legendary, but his equally feverish labors on behalf of the destitute and deprived are less well known.

Louis XVII --- (Almanac, June 19)

The fate of **this little lad**, the last of the Bourbon dynasty of France, has now come fully to light after 200 years of rumor and speculation? Some had assumed that a ten-year-old boy who died in 1795 in the cold, dark Temple prison of the revolutionary regime was, in fact, the royal heir. Certainty, however, was beyond the grasp of researchers until complex DNA tests (on the child's preserved heart and his mother Marie Antoinette's hair strands) came along.

Christopher Wren --- (Almanac, June 21)

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice---If you would see his monument, look around. The inscription appears on a commemorative stone in London's St. Paul's Cathedral for **this architect (1632--1723)**, the genius who directed the Anglican cathedral's reconstruction after the great fire of 1666? He had no formal training in architecture, but that proved no impediment to his artistic contributions to several public works, above all St. Paul's, one of England's many magnificent churches.

Sinking of the Titanic --- (Almanac, June 26)

It's been a hundred years since **this tragic event**, "both the darkest and brightest night in modern maritime history" declared Charles Linden in a notable June 1912 sermon? Linden, pastor of Yarborough Presbyterian Church in N.Y., highlighted the chivalry of the ship's male crew and passengers who, with few exceptions, gave up their lives for women and children. Curiously, many suffragettes of the day decried the patriarchal attitude of Linden and others as an obstacle to women's rights and progress.

Woodrow Wilson --- (Almanac, June 28)

Months after the Great War, as it was called at the time, ended in November 1918, **this U.S. president** took his fourteen point treaty proposal to the Paris Peace Conference? His innovative idealism was reflected in numerous articles, none more so than in calling for the formation of a worldwide security body, the League of Nations. The president's strenuous efforts to sell his peace package and his league to Americans generally and the U.S. Senate particularly failed in 1920.

Faith --- (Tabletalk, June 19)

The Protestant Reformers used the Latin words *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia* to define the makeup of **this theological virtue**, in classical thought one of three such virtues? It first requires a person, they said, to know the basic facts about Jesus and His saving acts and, secondly, to affirm or consent wholeheartedly to the facts. Lastly, one must lean upon or entrust oneself to the One of whom the facts speak and keep up such trust, not perfectly or without lapse but truly, through the course of life.

Remission of Sins --- (Tabletalk, June 22)

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us (Ps. 103:12). The biblical passage, one of many touching on the same theme, speaks of **this spiritual reality or benefit**, the key concept of which comes from a Latin root meaning "to send away"? The undeserved benefit, belonging only to the people of God for whom Christ shed His blood, is at the very heart of justification by faith alone according to French Reformer John Calvin (1509--1564).

Decalogue --- (Mark Ross; Tabletalk, June 2012)

Derived from Greek and Latin roots meaning "ten words or sayings," **this term** denotes the biblical Ten Commandments? The commandments are divided roughly in half into "two tables," the first of which describes what love for God requires beginning with a prohibition of idolatry ("Thou shalt have no other gods before Me"). The second table, headed by an exhortation to "Honor thy father and mother," describes love for one's neighbor.

High Priestly Prayer --- (R.C. Sproul; Tabletalk, June 2012)

Jesus, in **this New Testament prayer** detailed in *John 17*, intercedes with His Father for His commissioned followers and all who will believe their testimony about Himself? Christ's prayer appeals especially for the unity of His people (His Church), going so far as to ask that they may be one even as the Father and the Son are one. Such unity, the prayer's content stresses, is fruit of purity, which in turn comes from embracing by faith the truth of the Word of God (Jn. 17:17).