THOUGHTS ON TODAY'S COLLECT

Posted on December 1, 2013 by Eddie

Category: Observations

> *Almighty God*
>
> *as your kingdom dawns,*
>
> *turn us from the darkness of sin*
>
> *to the light of holiness,*
>
> *that we may be ready to meet you*
>
> *in our Lord and Saviour,*
>
> *Jesus Christ.*

I'll be the first to admit that I really don't get the whole liturgical year thing and I struggle to see why advent is such a big deal. However, leaving aside my non-conformist-bah-humbug tendencies, today's collect (above) for the first Sunday in Advent, did strike me as being odd.

Why would we pray to be made holy so that we can be ready to meet Jesus Christ?

I'm not against praying to be made holy; I need as much of that as I can get. But the thing is, it is only when we meet Christ that we can actually be made holy. The whole Christian message revolves around the notion that it is the death and resurrection of Jesus that makes us acceptable to God; nothing more and nothing less. If you haven't already met Christ, you can't *turn from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness*; end of story.

I suppose that I could be missing the point and this is a special prayer for extra holiness for the Christmas season, but this simply begs the question, why? What's so special about this time of year that we need to be extra holy now? If we have to be extra holy at Christmas, does this mean that we can let standards slip once we get to epiphany?

It's probably just me, but though this collect sounds lovely, I'm not sure it actually makes a lot of sense. I'm happy to be convinced otherwise by someone less liturgically challenged!