

27th September 2020

Aprons

“And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.”

Bible, Genesis 3:7

The *Geneva Bible* appeared at the beginning of The Reformation in the 1560s. When we're told that Adam and Eve “made themselves aprons” as quoted above, it was rendered as “made themselves breeches”. So, from the quirkiness of this image, it became “The Breeches Bible”.

But today, I'll stick to aprons ... My wife complains that, when I'm cooking, I splash or spill things on my shirt or sweater. “A messy cook,” she calls me, and points to the collection of aprons in a cupboard. Aprons are useful, she tells me. But they also signify that work is being done. A blacksmith or a farrier will wear a leather apron. A nurse will wear a plastic apron. Waiting- and bar-staff wear aprons of varying kinds. And *now* I wear an apron in our new kitchen! Aprons are important.

My Granny was a dairymaid in her younger years, a kitchen-maid later in life, and a cleaner of shops and homes well into her seventies. She was used to wearing an apron – or a *pinny* as it was called in Scots. And this profoundly Christian woman believed that any act of service, however menial, should be done well, because it was a service to her Lord.

In John's Gospel we have a story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet.

*He riseth from supper and laid aside his garments;
and he took a towel and girded himself.*

There was no apron handy to wrap around him, so he took a towel as a substitute, and knelt before every one of his friends to wash and wipe their feet. Here was the ultimate example of willing, loving, humble service.

For my granny, as with her Lord, an apron was a not a protection, but a symbol of diligence and self-giving, a badge of office to be worn with pride. So, let us wear our service with commitment, humility, love and pride today. Never mind fig-leaves or breeches ... Wrap your apron around you, as a symbol that you are serving your Lord and all of His people.

A prayer for today

Loving God, in humble service feet were washed; in loving awareness care was shown; help me today, in tender self-giving, to serve others as I am served. Amen

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

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