

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Matthew 24:15-28  
November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## The Coming of the Son of Man

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we most heartily thank Thee that by Thy Word Thou hast brought us out of the darkness of Papacy into the light of Thy grace: We beseech Thee, mercifully help us to walk in that light, guard us from all error and false doctrine, and grant that we may not, as the Jews, become ungrateful and despise and persecute Thy Word, but receive it with all our heart, govern our lives according to it, and put all our trust in Thy grace through the merit of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

The English translation of the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew's Gospel says, "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." It is interesting to note that in the Greek language the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew uses the plural forms of east and west. From the "east" to the "west" shall be the coming of the Son of Man. Meaning, it His coming is not just from one point in the east to one point in the west, but everywhere at once. His coming will be like lightning that fills all points from the east to the west. There will be no mistaking our Lord + Jesus Christ's coming on the Last Day. His presence will be known by all. There are not going to be some people who do not know that He has come. Everyone will know that He has come to judge both the quick and the dead.

Like lightning, the harvest of all of men's souls from the beginning of time to the Last Day will bring them before the throne of the Lord + Jesus. There will be no rapture! There is not going to be some time on Earth where those who were not up to snuff get a second chance to do things differently. The thousand-year time spoken of in holy Scripture is now. This is the time for mankind to either remain faithful or be deceived by the devil, the world and their own sinful flesh. This is the time given to us to gather around the Word and the Sacraments and receive from our Lord's hands the good gifts that He desires to give to us. We are living in the thousand-year time now. Now is the time for the eagles to gather where the carcass is. Now is the time for us to gather around the Word of God; to gather around our Lord + Jesus and receive from Him forgiveness, life and salvation through faith in Him.

He sends out His Holy Ghost to create and sustain faith and life in us through the means of grace, so that we might remain faithful to Him; so that we may not be deceived by the devil, the world and our sinful flesh. Now is the time for all Christians to gather around the Lord's Body and Blood given in bread and wine, and receive from Him strengthening of our faith; to cling to Him and His promise of forgiveness of sins. The devil, by using the lies of the world and the deceptions of our own sinful thoughts, words and deeds, seeks to deceive us into shame and despair. Or if that does not work, he seeks to lead us into the other ditch: into pride and haughtiness. This is the back and forth of our

consciences. We are either in despair and feel shame because we broke the Law of God. Or, we live in pride thinking that we are really not that bad of person anyway. We are this way because we are always comparing ourselves to our fellowman. Some people are far better Christians, and people, than we are. Some people are far worse people, and Christians than we are. The truth of the matter is that none of us are worthy for any of the good things we possess, certainly not any of the spiritual things.

But this is the lie and deception of the devil and the world that leads us to believe we have some worth in ourselves; that we are deserving of good things. If this is the case, then we have no need for the Lord + Jesus. If we have works and merits deserving of reward, then the Christ's sacrifice on our behalf is irrelevant. The devil and the world want us looking inside ourselves for our salvation. They want us to trust in our works and merits. For if we are looking at ourselves, we are not looking at the Christ; we are not looking at our One and Only Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil.

This is why the devil plants his antichrists into the Church. If in the Church there exists false christs and false prophets, even the elect—the chosen of the Lord God—can be deceived. False christs are preached by false prophets. A false prophet gives those who are led astray a false christ into which to trust. They lead away from the One True Christ, our Lord + Jesus. This is why the Pope is the Antichrist. For he sits in the seat of the Church and leads men astray by teaching them that one is saved by their obedience to the Law of God. The Papacy takes away from Christians the pure message of the Gospel, that we are saved solely and alone by grace for the sake of Christ's works and merits. The Antichrist would have us go looking inside of ourselves—into our works and merits—for salvation. And if we are not up to snuff, then we can go chill in purgatory until we have bought or earned our way out of it, or someone else has on our behalf.

But it is not just the Papacy that leads men into their works. Indeed, the Reformed bodies also teach that now that Christ has done the hard work of atoning for your sins, now you must prove that you deserve it by your works. This is a teaching that has deceived many people because it has the feel and sound of Scriptural teaching. It sounds right to those who are not paying attention. It deceives even the elect. This false teaching deceives because there are basically two types of false prophets: those whose teachings are so far apart from holy Scripture that those who study and know the Scriptures can easily spot their falsehoods, such as the Mormons or Jehovah Witnesses. The second type of false prophet is the one who uses such a sound argument from holy Scripture that the lie sounds like the truth.

The purpose of these deceptions is to take away from us the glory of the Christ. They are designed to lead us away from our Lord's works and merits and into our working and doing. Their deceptions are wide spread and they have led many away—they have deceived even many of the elect. This is the persecution that must take place in this thousand-year time period. People must face persecution and temptation in order that our faithfulness may be proved. For the time of our Lord's return on the Last Day can come at any moment. Even as we will hear over the next two Sundays that we must remain vigilant—be watchful—for the Day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night when we are least expecting it.

This is why we are admonished and encouraged often in the readings throughout the Church's year to remain faithful; to continue to cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus. Today's pericope is no different. Our Lord is telling us about what to expect in this time of persecution, so that we might remain faithful to Him; that we might not be deceived by false prophets preaching false christ. But rather that we might only look and trust in the One True Christ, our Lord + Jesus. He is the One Who will come to us on the Last Day and take us out of this vale of tears to Himself in Heaven. He will come as lightning does from the easts to the wests and fill the whole world with His presence. There will be no one who will miss His coming. He will not come and surprise only a few. He will come with the sound of the trumpets blast, and call His faithful ones out of this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven, and those who

do not believe on Him will merit their eternal reward of punishments in Hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This is why we continue to gather together around our Lord + Jesus in this age of persecution and trial. We know that He will strengthen our faith, and feed our souls to cling to Him in faith and trust. The eagles know to gather around the carcass. The faithful people of the Lord God know to gather around our Lord + Jesus Christ. Indeed, we as the faithful people of the Lord God gather together around this altar and feed upon the Body and drink the Blood of our Lord and Savior given to us in bread and wine. Through this blessed meal He gives to us forgiveness, life and salvation. May this gift aid us into eternal life where we will gather around our Lord + Jesus Christ for all eternity with all of the saints and angels. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by Thy Holy Spirit, that, being ever mindful of the end of all things and the day of Thy just judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here, and dwell with Thee forever hereafter; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*