

The Last Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Matthew 25:1-13  
November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

You Know Neither the Day nor the Hour

*In Nomine Iesu!*

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

**Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Almighty and Everlasting God, by Whose word the heavens and the earth which are now kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men: make us, we beseech Thee, to be such manner of persons in all holy conversation and godliness as they ought to be who look for such things, that, when this form of nature shall be dissolved, we may be counted worthy to behold and enjoy, according to Thy promise, the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; through the merits and mediation of Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One 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.

Despite the claims of some who distort the truth and make claims that one can determine the date of the Last Day, our Lord + Jesus, in the last week of His life on this Earth before His crucifixion and death, tells us that we can know neither the day nor the hour. We do not know the day nor hour of our death. We do not know the day nor hour of the Last Day—the Day of Judgment. We do not know the day nor hour of these things; nor can we know them. These things remain masked in mystery to us, and they should remain a mystery to us. We should avoid the liars who claim to know, and set days and hours when the world will end.

We do not know the day nor the hour of these things for our good, and for our benefit. Our Lord + Jesus also tells us today in the Gospel from the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew that we are to “watch.” We are always to be on the look out for the day and hour when the Son of Man comes to judge both the quick and the dead. Every day and hour of our lives should be lived knowing and expecting that this may be the last day and hour of our lives. This is what it means to watch for the coming of the Son of Man. We are to be aware continuously that this may be our last day and hour of living on this Earth. We are to live our lives in this way and manner. We are to live our lives everyday as if this may be our last day and hour; as if this is the day we die.

Now, my dear friends, living each day as if it is your last does not mean that we should “party like it’s 1999” as the song goes. St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica gives us insight into this. We are children of light. We are NOT children of darkness. This means that we do not live our lives in drunkenness and wastefulness. Certainly, living our lives physical drunkenness and wastefulness should be avoided as much as poor, sinful human beings can, but St. Paul is not just talking about physical drunkenness and physical sleep. He is speaking in spiritual terms.

A person who is drunk or asleep, is unaware of his surroundings at that moment. He does not know what is going on around him. This is especially true in spiritual matters—in the things of the Church; the things that have to do with our salvation.

Our Lord + Jesus tells us a parable today. This parable is the well-known parable of the ten virgins. There are five wise and five foolish virgins. These ten virgins represent all baptized Christians; all those who have been washed clean and free from their sins by the blood of the Lamb. In their Holy Baptisms—in our Holy Baptisms—they received the Light of the Christ. We have received the Light of Christ—we have been given a lamp that turns away the darkness. The Light of the Christ dispels all darkness. It shines in our hearts showing us the way to everlasting life. Our Lord + Jesus tells us in the parable that all ten virgins had lamps. All were given the Light of the Christ.

What sets these two groups apart, then? Why are some considered wise and some considered foolish? It has to do with how they all prepared for the day and hour of the coming of the Son of Man—of the coming of the Bridegroom. Some of them lived their lives in drunkenness and wastefulness, and some lived their lives sober and awake.

We as Christians in this world are to always be aware that this is not our world; this is not our home; this life that we live is just a journey that we are on to get to our eternal home in Heaven. Yes, there may be fun things to do on our way, just like we would stop and do fun things on any vacation. We would enjoy some good food; enjoy some good drink; and enjoy some good times with friends and family. But as we enjoy these things, we should never lose sight of the fact that our life and home is not of this world. We should stop and give thanks for all of the good gifts that our Lord God has given to us in this life, as we will do this Thursday, but we should also remember that at any day and hour we will be taken to our eternal home.

This is why we are to live our lives spiritually sober and awake, that is, we are to constantly be attending to the oil in our lamps, so that the Light of the Christ that has been gifted to us by the Holy Ghost through the waters of Holy Baptism, does not go out. This is done by attending to the things that make for our salvation, and not tending to the thrills of this world.

This is the mistake of the five foolish virgins. These five foolish virgins represent those Christians who are only Christian in name only. They claim to be Christian, but they do not read or listen to the Word of God. They do not attend the worship of the Lord with other Christians in the house of God. They neglect the use of the Sacraments. They do not live their lives as if they are baptized Christians. They only make the Church a priority when it suits their needs. They show up on Sunday morning, go through the motions of acting like a Christian, and then live the rest of their lives as if there is no Church; as if they have not been baptized.

This is why the five wise virgins mock the five foolish virgins by telling them to go to the market to buy more oil. Basically, the five wise virgins are telling the five foolish virgins that they should go back to the source of oil that they sought for in their earthly lives. They did not seek oil from the Church—from the means of grace—but they sought oil during their earthly lives from the pleasures and concerns of this world. The declaration of the five wise virgins that the five foolish virgins should go to the ones who sell it and buy oil is not advice; it's not telling them "Do this, and you might have a chance." No, they are saying this is how you lived your earthly lives by expecting the things of this world to give you oil for your lamps, but it did not. The five foolish virgins did not live each day and hour as if it was their last. They did not prepare for that day and hour when their earthly life would be taken from them. They only professed their Christianity when it suited them, the rest of their lives they lived as if the Christ and His Church did not matter.

Therefore, when all had fallen asleep into the sleep of death, and the cry went out that the

Bridegroom was coming to welcome them into the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom, the five foolish virgins found themselves without the Light of the Christ. They had no oil in their lamps. The five wise virgins, however, had prepared continuously for that day and hour. They did not live their lives in drunkenness or asleep. They lived their lives knowing that even though they did not know the day and hour of their death, they knew it was coming quickly, just as the Lord + Jesus promised His coming would be.

On this last Sunday of the Church's year, we are reminded every year that we do not know the day and hour of our death, therefore, we are to prepare for that day diligently. We are to remain sober and awake, watching for that day and expecting that day when we will no longer have to live in this vale of tears, but may be taken to our eternal home of joy. Scripture says of the saints in Heaven that they did not love their lives in this world. The five foolish virgins loved their lives in this world. They sought peace and comfort in the things of this world. They went continuously to those who sell, and bought their lies. In the end, they found themselves outside the closed doors in the darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The five wise virgins did not love their lives in this world, but rather loved, and diligently looked for, the life of the world to come. They found no true and lasting pleasure in this life. Their pleasure was found in the things of the Bridegroom. Their pleasure was found in the things of His Bride, the Church. There they sought comfort and peace in His Word preached—the Gospel that salvation is found in Him and His works alone. They found comfort and peace in the Blessed Sacraments, living in their Holy Baptism daily through contrition and faith, and joining in fellowship with other wise virgins by coming to this altar and receiving from the steward of the Lord the very Body and Blood of the Bridegroom in bread and wine for the remission of their sins. This was not just something that they did on Sundays, or when it was convenient, but they lived their whole lives as if this world did not matter, and the life of the world to come was the only life that truly mattered.

None of us can know the day nor the hour of the coming of the Son of Man, therefore, my dear friends, let us keep diligent watch awake and sober for that day and hour of which we do not know. For the life that is promised us is a greater life than this world will ever be. This life is filled with tears and sorrow. That life will be filled with joy and gladness. This life will soon pass away—it will pass away quickly, but that life will last forever and ever, there will be no end to that world. Therefore, let us not buy oil for our lamps from the sellers of this world, but let us receive the oil for our lamps as a gift from the Holy Ghost, who gives us more oil for our lamps than we will ever need through our faithful participation and use of the Blessed Word and Sacraments in this Church. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, we beseech Thee, grant us grace that we may wait with vigilance for the advent of Thy Son, our Lord, that, when He shall arise from Thy right hand to visit the Earth in righteousness and Thy people with salvation, He may find us, not sleeping in sin, but diligent in His service and rejoicing in His praise, that so we may enter in with Him unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb; through His merits, 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!*