

Populus Sion
St. Luke 21:25-36
December 10th, 2023
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
All Saints Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Pawleys Island, SC
St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Ormond Beach, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Then Shall They See the Son of Man

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Cleanse our conscience, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, by the daily visitation of Thy grace, that, when Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall come, He may find us fit for His appearing, and ready to meet Him without spot, in the company of all His saints; 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.

My dear friends, we should really have only one goal in this life. That goal is told us by our Lord + Jesus, the Christ in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke. We are once again given a text that records the words of our Lord from the week before His crucifixion. This sermon by our Lord + Jesus is from during the days which we celebrate as “Holy Week.” This text follows after last week’s Gospel wherein we heard of our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of Holy Week. This is how the Church’s year begins. It does not begin with a Baby boy in a manger, that is, it does not begin at the *beginning* of our Lord’s life. The Church’s year begins at the *end* of our Lord’s life. The Church’s year begins with our Lord + Jesus heading to the cross; with our Lord + Jesus heading to a tree to pay for the sins of the whole world with His innocent suffering and death.

This is why we should really have only one goal in life. Our Lord tells us that goal is to “stand before the Son of Man.” Our goal in this life is only to stand before the Son of Man, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, and see Him in all of His glory, power, and majesty. For when we see the Son of Man coming on the clouds in power and great glory, when we hear the blast of the trumpet, and see the whole host of Heaven standing before the throne of our Lord God welcoming us into the eternal realms of Heaven, then we know that time of our redemption is at hand. Our Lord + Jesus won our redemption on the tree of the holy cross. He gives us that redemption through the means of grace. But on that Last and great day—the Day of the Lord—our redemption will be complete.

Think about that great and glorious day, my friends! A day where we will no longer be plagued by sin, death, and the power of the devil. We will no longer feel the daily—hourly—pull of temptation to

do what our own conscience feels like doing, instead of what the Law of God demands. We will no longer see our loved ones die and pass on. We will no longer endure the consequences of sin, the ailments and diseases, the broken minds and bodies, the corruption of the earth and society. We will no longer see death. We will not have to watch as our loved ones slowly fade in vigor and end up buried in the ground in a casket. We will not have to watch our own bodies slowly succumb to the realities of this sin-filled life, as we slowly march towards our own death. No, my dear friends, on that day we will be rescued from all of the pain and misery of this life that is caused by sin, both our own and that which exists in every person on earth.

That day will be a joyous day for us! It will be a day when we will see our Savior—our Redeemer—coming to us in power and great glory on the clouds, just as it was promised in holy Scripture when He ascended to sit on the right hand of the Father to come and judge the quick and the dead. This day will be so wonderful and great that we will not want to miss it. This is why we should really have only one goal in this life. Our goal should and always be to stand before the Son of Man on the Last Day and be welcomed into our eternal home in Heaven.

But if this is the case, why does our Lord give warning in this Gospel pericope? Why is there distress of nations, and perplexity over the roaring of the seas and billows? Why are men fainting for fear and expectation of the things that are coming upon the world? Simply because our Lord knows that we are tempted to cling to this world and life too much. Much of the world does not believe there is an afterlife—a Heaven, or a Hell—they live their lives as if this world is the only life that matters. Even though all evidence to the contrary shows that even if we live a life that this world would praise, we still end up buried in the ground in a casket; we still end up dead and buried even after the most praiseworthy life. For this is the consequences and wages of sin. We will die because we sin, and we are filled with sin. Our very nature and flesh is corrupted with sin. We cannot shake it off. We cannot undue it by our way of life; by living a good life.

And because we are such poor, miserable sinners, we tend to look for the answers to these problems in every other source than the one, true source. Our Lord + Jesus lists some of the things to which we turn to in our sufferings and stress when we should really be relying on Him and His Word. Our Lord warns us about surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares and anxieties of this life. All of these things involve over-indulgence. Surfeiting is synonymous with gluttony. It is over-indulging in food. It is eating so much that you over fill yourself. Drunkenness is the same thing. It is over enjoying too much of a good thing; partaking of too much wine, beer or cocktails. The same is true of the cares and anxieties of this life. We worry ourselves too much about little things and big things. We try to solve these issues on our own instead of turning in faith and trust to our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ.

This is how the world handles the problems of this life. We overeat, or we drown our sorrows in alcohol, or we worry and stress about the things of this life. In all of these so-called “solutions” the world, and at times we find ourselves doing these same things, never once thinks to find the solution to our problems in our Lord + Jesus. He has given us His holy Word. He has given us His gracious means of grace—His Blessed Sacraments—so that we might be reminded whenever we use these things that He has never left us nor abandoned us. His Word tells us today that we should keep watch in every season. We keep watch, our Lord tells us, by supplication, that is, through constant prayer to the source of Life and Redemption. For through daily prayer—daily supplication—we will prevail our Lord tells us.

The treasures of Heaven are not found in the treasures of this world. The treasures of Heaven are found in the means by which our Lord gives us the gifts He won for us on the tree of the holy cross. In the Blessed Word and Sacraments, we have forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation. In these precious means we have our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. He gives Himself to us in these precious means. Our Lord + Jesus is the One Who rescues us from all the cares, worries, and stress-eating and drinking-moments this world throws at us. For He promises us a life that is much different from the one in which

we find ourselves living now. This life is filled with pain, misery, sin and death. This is why our Lord tells us that men will faint with fear and expectation because of the pains of this life, because they do not cling in hope to a life after this one. If this life is the only life that matters, and it is filled with pain and misery, what good can this life really be?

This is why, my dear friends, we do not shake in fear and trembling when we see the signs of the world to come, when we see the signs of the Last Day. For our Lord + Jesus tells us today that these signs do not signal eternal destruction like they do for those who refuse to cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus, but these signs of the end times reveal to us that our redemption draws near. For the terrible signs that are happening in this world today which reveal that our Lord's Advent is quickly approaching, are meant to bring us hope in a rescue from the pain and misery of this world filled with sin and death. For our one goal in this life is to stand before the Son of Man on the Last Day, and hear the glorious proclamation that we may enter into the wedding hall and enjoy the eternal rewards that our Lord + Jesus has prepared for us.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us not be weighed down with surfeiting, drunkenness, and cares of this world, but rather look with hope and longing to the life of the world to come. For we have been promised through the innocent blood of our Lord and Redeemer's sacrifice on the tree of the holy cross that He has bought and paid for us, so that we might join Him forever in Heaven. There we will see the Son of Man in power and great glory coming upon the clouds and surrounded by the whole host of Heaven. We will join the heavenly host, which includes all of our loved ones who have gone before us in the faith. We will stand with them on that Last Day, and for all of eternity before the throne of the Lamb of God, and we will see the Son of Man and stand before Him and bow down and worship Him as we join in the eternal Liturgy of the Lamb in His Kingdom.

This, my friends, is our one and only goal in this life. Let us therefore do everything we can to find ourselves standing in that great white host of the heavenly band. Let us shake off the cares of this life, and in supplication and prayer, petition our Lord + Jesus to not look at our sins, nor cast us aside on account of them, but rather that He would welcome us into His eternal heavenly realm. There we will have joy and gladness forevermore. Soon the Bridegroom will call us, behold, the day is surely drawing near, therefore, rise up, watch and pray, for this life holds no delicacies that will last, but in Heaven we will have joy everlasting. May the Lord + Jesus grant this to us all quickly. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same 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!