

The Festival of All Saints
St. Matthew 5:1-12
November 1st, 2025
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

Rejoice and Be Exceeding Glad

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, + open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

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

My dear friends, one might wonder what the Beatitudes have to do with a Festival for all the saints in heaven. What our Lord + Jesus is preaching to the multitudes on this day is the benefits that belong to all those who trust in Him. The faithful get all the blessings that our Lord preaches about in this Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew. Each of these Beatitudes have two parts there is an aspect that belongs to the saints on earth—the Church Militant—and there is a part that belongs to the saints in heaven—the Church Triumphant.

We in this place, as the saints on earth, endure the hardships that our Lord preaches about. In this life and on this earth, we are poor in spirit. We mourn. Our hardships in this life cause us to be meek. In this life we both hunger and thirst. On account of faith having been gifted to us by the Holy Ghost, we also hunger and thirst after righteousness. We desire to be without sin. We desire to be holy, that is, we desire to be righteous. In this life, on account of sin, our hearts are impure, and through faith, we seek to have pure hearts. This life and world is full of wars and rumors of wars. We desire peace, to walk in unity with our fellowman. But more than worldly peace, we desire the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that only comes from the Lord God. The peace that declares us to be reconciled with the Lord God. We are no longer at war with the Lord God.

Because we desire to be without sin, this world, and the sinful flesh of mankind wars against us and our righteousness. We live under persecution in this life. We are reproach, persecuted, men say all sorts of evil and false things about us, because we have made the Lord + Jesus, our Savior. These are the hardships that we endure for confessing the Christ in this life.

The Lord + Jesus also declares to us in the Beatitudes that we will have blessings because of these hardships. That is what “beatitudes” means, it means “blessings.” Our blessings are mingled with the hardships of this life. Therefore, our rejoicing and gladness are tempered because we have to endure these things in this life. When the Lord grants us grace to experience and receive the blessings that He promises, while we are in this life, we should take the opportunity to rejoice and be exceeding

glad, for the Lord has granted us a reprieve from the hardships of this life, and has given us a foretaste of the joys that will be ours when we get to heaven.

And this is why the preaching of the Beatitudes by our Lord + Jesus in the Gospel is the read for us on this Festival of All Saints. For the saints receive the full weight of the blessings promised by our Lord Christ in this Sermon on the Mount. They are no longer poor in spirit, they no longer mourn, or are persecuted, ridiculed, or have all sorts of false things said about them. Those blessings which in this life we only receive a foretaste of, the saints in heaven enjoy them fully and completely.

The Apostle and Evangelist St. John in the Book of Revelation, our Epistle for today, tells us all the joys of heaven that he saw in his vision while he was on the island of Patmos in exile. St. John tells us that he saw a great multitude which could not be numbered. And make note that this phrase comes just after the listing of the 144,000 of the those from the tribes of Israel. Meaning, that the number of 144,000 is a symbolic and figurative number. It is full of tens and twelves. Completeness abounds in that 144,000 number. It has to be a figurative number, otherwise St. John cannot say that the multitudes were unable to be numbered, contrary to those who would read 144,000 as a literal number.

But the truly remarkable thing for us is what the multitude that could not be numbered were doing. They were standing before the throne of the Lamb of God, arrayed in white robes, and holding palm branches in their hands. Behold, this host arrayed in white was crying with a great voice, "Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb." And then they fell down on their knees with their faces to the ground and worshipped the Lamb of God in His Kingdom. They worshipped the Lord God by saying, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."

St. John is then asked by one of the twenty-four elders who this host arrayed in white was, and St. John said to the elder that the elder could explain who they were to us. These were those who had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb—that is, they were baptized into the death of the Christ, + Jesus—they had come out of the great tribulation and hardship of this life. They had remained faithful unto death. For they in this life had looked forward to the blessings that would be theirs in heaven. The blessings that our Lord + Jesus promises to us, and all the saints, in the Sermon on the Mount. Those who have come out of the great tribulation serve the Lord night and day in His temple, and He spreads His dwelling place over them all. They are no longer hungry or thirsty. The sun does not beat down upon them. For the Lamb of the Lord God is our light and our stay. He is our Good Shepherd Who leads us beside the still waters. He leads us to the River of Life where we can drink freely of life and salvation. And the tears of joy that the saints in heaven have at the bliss that is theirs having come out of the hardships of this life, our Lord + Jesus wipes away from their eyes.

These are the blessings that will be ours after we have finished our race in this life. These are the joys that will make us rejoice and be exceeding glad, because we know that the persecutions, hardships, and mourning and crying that we do in this life will be over when we given the crown of eternal life. This is why the hardships that we endure in this life do not seem like such a burden when compared against the joys in heaven that we will receive.

These are the joys that our loved ones who have died in the faith now enjoy for all eternity. We will one day join them in heaven. We will join them and sing with them of the bountiful goodness of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end. We will be clothed with white robes, just as they are robed in white, and we will carry palm branches in our hands, the symbol of victory. Our victory over sin and death will be complete. Our victory over sin and death will be an eternal victory. No longer will hardship and pain bring us to tears and pain. All of our suffering will be over and gone. This is what those who have gone before us in the faith now enjoy. They are enjoying now their eternal Sabbath rest. They are enjoying being with the Lord + Jesus for all eternity. Knowing this causes us to rejoice and be exceeding

glad, for the hardships that we endure in this life, are no longer theirs. They enjoy eternal rejoicing and happiness.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us on this Festival of All Saints, give thanks unto the Lord God for all of His benefits to us. Let us give Him thanks that He promises grace and every blessing to us in this life, and He promises that those who remain faithful unto death will receive the crown of eternal life. We can give our Lord + Jesus thanks that He has taken to Himself, out of this harsh and cruel life, all those who clung to Him in faith in this life, into His loving arms. We will one day be in that great, glorious, and golden city of Jerusalem. There we will forever rejoice and be exceeding glad, for the Lamb in His Kingdom has won for us the victory over sin and death, and promises that we will enjoy with Him the eternal victory celebration. May the Lord God Almighty grant this unto us all. 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 the 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!