

Populus Sion  
St. Luke 21:25-36  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church  
Greenville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## They Will See 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:**

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.

Not too many Sundays back we had the Gospel where our Lord + Jesus talked about the “abomination of desolation”—the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, and ultimately, He was talking about the destruction of His Body—the true Temple wherein we find hope and salvation. Today’s Gospel is a continuation of that narrative. Only now, our Lord’s focus has turned to the Last Day—the Day of Judgment; when all men will be judged according to their works, whether they cling to their own works, or cling in faith to the works and merits of the Lord + Jesus Christ.

As I have said before, the Last Day evokes a certain fear in mankind. Even our Lord + Jesus admits this. Listen to some of His descriptions of the days leading up to the Last Day: signs in the sun, moon and stars; distress among the nations of Earth; perplexity among the nations of the Earth; the sea and the waves will roar; and men’s hearts failing them from fear and expectation of those things happening that are signs leading up to the Last Day. People know that the Last Day is a day to be feared, because it is a day when their deeds will be judged.

This is why we need not fear the Last Day. For, we have a Savior Who fulfilled the Law and will of God for us. We know our lost and sinful condition. We know that on account of our sin, we deserve God’s eternal wrath and displeasure—we deserve Hell. But our Lord has come to us, and took upon Himself our flesh; He took upon Himself everything about us, but not our sin. The Lord + Jesus, Who is the creator of all things, Who is the second Person of the Godhead, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might fulfill the Law of God for us, and having fulfilled it, He chose to suffer our punishment on the cross. This is why we—who cling to our Lord’s works in faith—need not fear the Last Day, because our Lord has taken away every reason for our fear.

He has opened up our ears to hear His holy Word. He has done this by giving us His Holy Ghost through the means of grace. We received the Holy Ghost at our Holy Baptism. There our ears were opened up, so that we might throughout our lives hear the holy Word of God. So that, by His Word we might continually be called to repentance and faith. We are daily in contrition, that is, sorrow over our sins, longing with great tears to be free from sin; to be free from the bondage of the devil, the world, and our flesh. This is why the Last Day is not a day of fear for us, but a day of joy. For, it is the day when we will finally be free from sin, death and the power of the devil. The Last Day—the Day of Judgment—is the day when we will see the Son of Man coming with great power, and know that we no

longer have to battle with our conscience and with our sin. We will no longer have to endure temptation and trial. The battle will be over, the victory will be ours, we will finally get to enjoy the eternal rewards prepared for us by our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Just as we sang in the Hymn of the Day, "In mansions fair and spacious Will God the feast prepare And, ever kind and gracious, Bid us its riches share."

Being without sin sounds great to us, because we struggle with it daily. We know how much we fail at following our Lord's Commandments, and it bothers us greatly. We do not want to be sinners! But, we realize that we are, and so we wait with eager expectation the day when our Lord will remove this burden from us. But, I believe this is also why men fear the Last Day. For, they do NOT want to be without sin; they want to continue doing whatever sinful acts they enjoy doing. If the Last Day means no more sin, then for many people that means they cannot continue in whatever sin that pleases them. Their sin has become their god. This is why they fear the Last Day, because they know deep down that it is the day when their false god will be removed from them, and they will suffer the punishment for all eternity the consequence of having a god which is not the true God.

This is why we should not cling to our own works as a means of our salvation. For, remaining in one's sins is a work. It is not a good work. But, many people do not see their behavior that is contrary to the Law of God has sinful or evil. It is this false notion prevalent in our society that everyone is basically a good person. No. Everyone is a sinful and bad person. There are just some of us, who do not want to remain that way. And, there are those who do want to remain in their sin. Or, at least they live their lives as if that is the case. Even among many who call themselves Christian. Among us Christians there are those of us, who live their sinful lives as if there is always time to repent of our behavior later.

This is why the Lord warns us in the Gospel to not get weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. If we cling to our sins—if we remain impenitent—the Last Day will come upon us unexpectedly. This is why we must always prepare for the Last Day with daily contrition and faith—with daily repentance. We must daily acknowledge our sins, and cling to our Lord + Jesus Christ and His merits of salvation for us.

When we cling to the Lord + Jesus and His works daily. When we daily deny our sins; daily deny Satan to tempt us into sin; daily deny the world to lure us into its traps, then we are daily prepared to receive our Lord + Jesus and His saving works for us. Then we are truly prepared each day for the Last Day. For, we know that the Last Day is the day when we will be free from sin, and it no longer becomes for us a day of fear, but a day we wait with eager expectation—a day when we will be free from the bonds of sin and Satan. It will be a day of joy. It will be a day of great rejoicing. We will be free from sin, and finally get to meet our Savior—the Lord + Jesus Christ.

This is why this Gospel from the Evangelist St. Luke is the perfect Gospel for this season of Advent. For, Advent is a penitential season—a season where we reflect upon our works and come to the realization that we fail miserably in keeping the Law of God. But, Advent is also a season that looks ahead. Certainly, we are looking ahead and preparing for the day when our Savior—the Lord God—will come to us bearing our flesh—to the day of Christmas. But, in Advent we are also looking ahead to the Last Day—to the day when the daughter of Zion—the Populus Sion—the Church and all her children—will be free from sin. That will be a great and glorious day!

But until then, our Lord does not leave us without comfort. He gives us His Word and Sacraments so that we might continuously be drawn to Him. In His Word and Sacraments, He is always reminding us that we are indeed poor, miserable sinners in desperate need of a Savior. And in these means of grace He is always reminding us that He is the Savior that we desperately need. He opens our ears to hear His holy Word, and gives us Himself. His works, His redemption, His fulfilling of the Law, His

sacrifice on the cross for us He daily gives to us. He will continue to do this for us until the Last Day, when the trumpet will sound loud and long, and the Earth will be shaken, and all those who are in their graves, will be awakened, and those who clung to the Lord + Jesus in faith will be freed from their bondage of sin, and live with Him for all eternity in the mansions of Heaven. And, those who clung in faith to their works and to their sin, will be delivered over to Satan and Hell.

So then, let us put off our sins. Let us cling to our Lord and Savior + Jesus and let us pray diligently for that great day when we will be free from sin, and live with our Lord and Savior forever. There will be great rejoicing on that day. And our Lord + Jesus Christ will wipe away every tear of joy from our face. Lord, come quickly with Thy Kingdom and set us free from sin. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

**The Votum:**

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