

Matthew 5:1-12

All Saint's Day (Observed)

November 2, 2008

Theme: All Saint's Day

Sermon Title: The Saint's Triumphant

Christ is Risen!

He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia. Amen.

In † Jesus name. Amen.

Easter and Pentecost, and the Last Sunday of the Church year rolled into one. That is All Saint's Day. On this Sunday we especially celebrate the Resurrection of the Dead, the drawing together of the Church, and the return of our heavenly King to raise the bodies of the Saints.

All Saint's Day (observed) recognizes the hope of the Christian: That our Lord Jesus, who died and rose again, is coming back, and will not abandon us to the grave. That promise is what makes this existence tolerable. That those described in the beatitudes will not always be meek, hungry, thirsty, poor, and mourning. There are better days ahead. In Christ they are blessed.

Those who have passed on in the faith are not dead. Their bodies sleep in the belly of the grave awaiting the second coming of the Savior Jesus Christ our Lord on the Last Day. Even now their souls dwell in the presence of Jesus Christ.

The souls of believers attend Christ at His throne in heaven. They enjoy the perfect bliss and joy that all Christians will enjoy on the Last Day. Soon we will all be joined with them in perfection. Soon God's Son will return and take those who bare His inscription, His image and draw them to perfect sinless union with Him in the new heaven and new earth. As St. John writes, **Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).**

Behold, I tell you a mystery! We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:51-53). Their sleeping bodies will be raised and reunited with their souls. Indeed, all the dead will rise and bend their knees at the Savior's name. Every tongue will confess Jesus Christ is Lord. Because Christ, who died on the cross and was swallowed up in the belly of the grave, rose again, is coming back, and He will not abandon His children.

Those saints have been transferred from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. From the Church still fighting, marching on, and suffering the attack of Satan. They have been transferred to the Church Triumphant, the Church at rest, the Church at peace, the Church glorified as they

celebrate with angels and archangels. While we miss them and we cry for them they no longer miss us. Though our vision of things eternal is still dim theirs is perfect and clear. They are in the great cloud of witnesses that have gone before us and now surround us. They have joined the great company of heaven with the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven and cry out as Isaiah the prophet heard, **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa. 6:3).**

The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant are still connected by the Ladder of Jacob, Jesus Christ. Our Lord is the one whom the angels ascend and descend upon, who bridges the gap between heaven and earth. This Ladder, this bridge is His body and blood to serve us His own life. This is the same God who was present in the form of the pillar of cloud and fire, who was present on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies of the Temple, who knocked down the walls in Jericho, who was transfigured on the mountain so that a glimmer of His glory shown, who raised up many to preach the Gospel and pronounce His forgiveness is the same who is placed upon your tongue in, with, and under the bread and wine. That precious blood that was poured out that washes the robes of the saints is placed on your lips. By this communion Christ unites Himself with you and unites you with all the saints in heaven and on earth.

If the reading of the names, if these texts for all Saint's Day, if "For All the Saint's" doesn't put a crack in your voice or a tear

down your cheek as we remember the loved ones who have passed on in the faith then you have either done a good job of hardening yourself or you might be napping. We should not be ashamed of the tears of sadness nor the tears of joy that we as Christians shed at the passing and remembrance of those that have gone on before. Don't stay away because of anger, depression, sadness, or hatred. Come to the Lord's house for comfort and peace. Evil, death, and anger surround us. Fathers who take the lives of their children. Famine and disease abound in the world. Weapons and drugs found in our schools. Quarreling in our churches and schools. There is much to weep about. Soon all weeping will cease. The Lord knows our sadness and distress as he cried over the death of his friend Lazarus. Soon all tears will be wiped away; soon there will be no more mourning. We will only know joy. We will be free from pain, and suffering and distress as the saints are now. They never have to endure the stories on the news anymore. They no longer have to live lives of sadness in families that are dysfunctional. They no longer cry. They are free from every losing a child or having their hearts broken by someone close to them. You too shall be free from that suffering. For Christ died and rose again for you.

Rejoice! For as we heard in St. John's Revelation, **After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice,**

“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Rev. 9:9-11)! In that multitude are not just Noah, Ezekiel, and Ruth. It is not only Peter, James, and John, it is not just Luther, Walther, and Barry, but the vision includes all the saints. And in that vision is your place along with the rest. There is a place for you. You are BAPTIZED! You belong to Him. Heaven is your true HOME! This promise is for you and your children. This is your hope and your destiny as His children. The peace that the saints enjoy is that peace that passes all understanding. It is peace with God. It is yours for in Christ, **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3).** This is the hope that we have: Our Lord Jesus Christ has died and rose again, is coming back, and will not abandon us to the grave.

Thanks be to God. Amen.