

# Tenth Sunday after Trinity

St. Luke 19:41-48

August 8, 2021

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*"From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead."* Thus the Apostles' Creed summarizes what God's Word says about the end of the world, the Day of Judgment.

Be not deceived: The judgment of Jesus is coming. On that day, your thoughts will be revealed. The things done in darkness will be brought to light; there is nothing secret that will not be exposed.

As Jesus approaches Jerusalem in today's Gospel, He anticipates the coming judgment on that city. In less than four decades, Jerusalem would be burned, her stones toppled, the temple looted and razed, blood running through the streets as water. Jesus' prophecy came to pass in the year 70 when Titus conquered Jerusalem.

All this Jesus sees, and weeps. Judgment gives Him no joy.

Jesus mourns the judgment coming upon Jerusalem. He also laments the world's looming judgment. That's one reason the judgment is so long delayed. God loves the world.

God loves humanity. He still wishes for all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, to come to the resurrection to life. The Creed into which we are baptized gives us a particular view of time. Our lives should be measured by new birth, the coming judgment, and the coming resurrection.

But we are bombarded by false messages regarding time. There is one idea that everything is cyclical, repeating over and over. "All this has happened before. And it will all happen again." There is another idea of constant progress, a persistently upward evolution only held back by ignorant

bigots. We could create heaven on earth if only you would get rid of your antiquated morals and unenlightened religious superstitions!

At the same time there is the persistent fear of an apocalypse, and not only from false prophets predicting a rapture. Overpopulation, climate change, depletion of resources – there is no shortage of secular prophets crying out that the end is near. *at Poltergeist*

How are we Christians to view time? The early chapters of Genesis tell us a story, and it is an interesting story, but also a **history** of who we are as the human race, where we have been – and where we are going.

In brief, God made our first parents, and in them was the entire human race. They fell, they rebelled, and we fell and rebelled in them. Things have gotten technologically better, but morally worse. Culturally, there is a worldwide decline from our apex. Our athletes are stronger and faster, but music, painting, sculpture, literature, and poetry are trite and banal, brutal, lacking all beauty. When the *Augsburg Confession* explained why priests should be allowed to marry, the reformers said to the emperor, "*Seeing that man's nature is gradually growing weaker as the world grows older, it is good to be on guard to make sure no more vices work their way into Germany.*"

In our Republic, every day new vices not only appear but are embraced and soon mandated. The end of America as a free country is near. Every past empire lies in ruins, and the day is coming when these walls, as the walls of the Jerusalem Temple, will crumble. For this, for you, there will be a judgment. Christ Jesus ascended into heaven, and "*from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.*"

That God will judge you means you are a responsible being; your actions in time mean something, they have eternal repercussions. (Peter Elliot) The Lord sees and knows your idolatry, how you have not, just this week, feared, loved, trusted Him as you should. How you misused His name, forgot about His Word, dishonored authorities, disregarded your neighbor, neglected your marriage vows, did not think and act chastely; He knows

how you were not a good steward with what He put into your hand, how you grumbled and complained, and were not content.

There is a judgment coming. This is your warning. But with the warning comes also this message: the Jesus who foresees the judgment weeps over it and earnestly desires that it would not come upon you. The warnings of the coming judgment tell us that God is a personal God who takes you, your life, your thoughts personally, seriously, and loves you as a Father loves His children.

This view of time means that your life has meaning and purpose. God has made you and all creatures. God the Son has redeemed you with His own blood. God the Holy Spirit has called you by the Gospel. You are the bearer of His image, and your life has significance beyond the fatalistic cycle of seasons, and far beyond the atheistic lie that you came from unexplained sludge by the action of no intelligence, as an accident, for no meaning or purpose, and at the final exhale of your breath there is nothing for you but a dark, eternal emptiness.

When Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, He laments that the people did not know the time of their visitation. "The visitation" refers to the time of help, of grace and pardon, of forgiveness. When there is a disaster, the governor or president will fly over the area surveying the damage, then talk with the people. He promises them help, aid and comfort. He consoles those who mourn. All this, in a much greater, divine sense, is what Jesus is doing in the incarnation. The King visits His creation, and surveys the damage. He heals the sick, cleanses the lepers, restores sight to the blind, makes the deaf to hear and the lame to run, raises the dead, feeds the hungry, comforts those who mourn over their sins with the Gospel of forgiveness. And in response, the people said, "We do not want what you offer. You are upsetting our priorities." Thus they rejected the One who visited them.

In cleansing the temple, Jesus announced that the church is not a money-making enterprise, but a place of charity, a house of prayer for all people, where the forgiveness of sins is freely dispensed.

Today that forgiveness was poured over Eva and made her own. Today the day of visitation dawned for Eva. The day of visitation ~~has~~ came upon you at your baptism, and continues each Divine Service. Through the means of grace the Lord is reorienting your sense of time, saying to you, "What chiefly matters is not your next mortgage payment or the next election, but repentance. Know the time of your visitation. Know that the end of all things is at hand. Know that the judgment is coming. Know your life may this night be demanded of you. What then will come of all your possessions? What then will all your worrying and anxiety matter? Repent and believe the Gospel. Know the time of your visitation. Prepare for the judgment. Confess your sins. Live by the Lord's Prayer, live from the Eucharist, get ready for death, prepare for the resurrection."

That is our Christian sense of time. We live in view of the day of judgment. We live in hope and joyful expectation of the resurrection. We live in love toward our neighbor, for they can take nothing that our Lord does not Himself supply. From where He ascended, our Lord will come again in judgment. From there we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. +INJ+

*The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

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