

November 13, 2016
23rd Sunday After Pentecost

“Your Savior”

Luke 21:5-28

I must admit, I had to chuckle a bit to myself this week. The Chicago Cubs just won the World Series, Donald Trump has been elected president, and on Sunday we are assigned these words of Christ, *“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”*

Are we living in the End Times? Of course we are! We have been all our lives. Christians have been waiting for and expecting the return of Christ in glory ever since He ascended into heaven. Theological scholars disagree if Christ’s words here are exclusively about the fall of Jerusalem to happen not four decades after Jesus speaks them or if He is also referencing the Second Coming, but Holy Scripture is clear that Christ will come back on a day we do not know or expect and all of the faithful, living and dead, will be transformed and perfected in the holy glory of Jesus and bodily dwell before Him in paradise forever.

In light of this I want to draw on an image from the past week. I’m not getting political, but I think this is a great sign of a dangerous place we may be in our culture and especially as Christians. You’ve probably seen this image. It is a photo of some people, mostly younger people it seems, protesting Trump’s election and carrying signs that read, “NOT MY PRESIDENT”.

This is patently ridiculous. You may not like him. You may disagree with everything about him. You may bellow endlessly about the popular vote. But the election is done. Unless you’re renouncing your American citizenship and moving out of the country, come January he is the president. He is your president. Yet I am quite confident many in their anger and opposition to Trump have convinced themselves that somehow this is not true.

Lots of people today are doing this very same thing with God, with sin, and with death. The existence of God is quite clear in the majesty and intricacy of His creation. Our own consciences scream to us that there is a divine being and that we do not measure up to His standard. Yet so many today deny Him. They look to science, which really continually is revealing the divine genius of God, but in their own minds twist their ability to reason into them somehow being the pinnacle mind and power in the universe. They defiantly say to God, “NOT MY GOD!”

The wrongness of the decay and death of human beings is plain to our psyche. We fear it. We recoil from it. We know it’s just bad. But so many also convince themselves it’s natural and that there’s either nothing, or nothing to worry about on the other side. Our own insides tell us there is something to fear and Holy Scripture spells out the truth, but people defiantly say, “NOT MY ETERNITY!”

And of course there is sin. Sin is sin and we know it. The law of God is written on our hearts. Yet folks want to do what folks want to do. So we call wrong right, right wrong, and call anyone with the guts to point out this folly a “hater” who just needs to be silent. “NOT MY MORALITY!”

Of course God IS God. Evil death is evil death. And the law is the law thus sin IS sin. And y’all are probably thinking how wrong and tragic it is that so many people think this way,

and it is. But the fact is that Christians think this way, and we need to be on guard against our own selves.

That sin you have, you know the one I'm talking about, the lust, or greed, or gossiping, or pride, or covetousness, or whatever that you just keep on doing. Have you kind of made peace with it; just kind of accepted it as part of who you are? God's law says it's a horrible, awful offense to Him, but have you kind of squeezed your eye shut to it? "Not my morality."

Is your mind completely full of the trials and concerns of this earthly life, rarely thinking of the life to come, much less longing for it? When you consider your future is it only the next several years, your thoughts rarely reaching into the life promised by God? "Not my eternity."

When the trials of this ugly, fallen world come calling in the form of relationship strife, financial hardship, failing health or even impending death, are you looking exclusively to yourself or to the world for aid, losing hope and despairing if you, or the doctors, or the family can't fix things and make it right the way you want it right? Have you claimed the spot of authority to dictate how things should be? "Not my God!"

I want to make one thing very clear; when we push away God's law which defines sin and push out of our minds God's plan for sinless life beyond this life, and push ourselves into God's seat of authority, we're trying to seize a place for ourselves that we don't want. We are pushing ourselves right onto the cross instead of Christ. We're taking the law, salvation and authority unto ourselves...and we cannot bear it.

Jesus Christ crucified is God's law—the just wrath of God—perfect punishment for all sin—poured out on Christ. It is eternal damnation to death emptied into Jesus. It is the Son of God bowing to the will of the Father seizing all authority by defeating the foes of sin, death and Satan. And the Easter resurrection is confirmation there is no other Lord, no other righteousness, no other perfect eternity than Jesus Christ.

How supremely stupid are we when we proudly, defiantly and sinfully try to seize rulership over ourselves and thus say to that cross, "Not my Savior"?

"And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Your redemption is drawing near, and it comes in the person of the Son of Man with power and great glory, the glory gained by His perfect human life, His perfect sacrifice on the cross for you, His perfect resurrection from death which is the firstfruit of your own resurrection to holy life before God.

He comes to you in power and great glory daily in your Holy Baptism, bringing you through His death to sin and His resurrection to life that you may live blameless before God in blessedness and holiness.

He comes to you in power and great glory in His very body and blood in, with and under the bread and the wine conveying forgiveness, life and salvation. He comes to you in power and great glory in His Word of victory proclaimed—the word of damning law leading to the sweet, sweet Gospel Word of peace received by faith in the cross—Christ the King's cross and His empty tomb.

Presidents come and presidents go. But for four or eight or however many years, they're the president. It's kind of silly to deny that.

Only one man lived the perfect life, died the atoning death, and rose the victorious resurrection to save you today, tomorrow and days without end beyond this life. How supremely

stupid to deny Him! Believe in Him. Have faith in Him. Repent of all of your “Not my Savior” moments and beg Jesus’ forgiveness.

He is Lord. He is King. He is forgiveness and life. He is yours. And His is coming soon. Straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. He is your Savior.
Amen.