

LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

November 22 2020

Isaiah 65:17-25

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:1-13

Standing...

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

Our focus this morning is yet again, on the Last Day—
the Day that everyone ever born will experience and remember
for the rest of eternity.

Let us pray. These are Your words Holy Father. Sanctify us in the truth. Your Word is
truth. Amen.

Sitting...

Beloved, the Bridegroom will return. *This is most certainly true.*

But, how do we know for sure?

Well, He said He would—saying so numerous times.

This Bridegroom does not lie,

He does not exaggerate,

nor does He mislead.

This Bridegroom keeps His promises.

Sure—His return might not be at the normal time,

the expected time,

or the convenient time,

but you can bank on the fact

that He will indeed return.

And when He does,

all the dead will be raised from their sleep. The dead won't miss a thing.

All the living will be changed in a moment,

in the twinkling of an eye,

and all creation will bow before Him.

For those gathered on His right,

they enter a new earth under new heavens

wherein righteousness dwells.

They will sing with all the angels and talk with all the saints,
rejoicing in the presence of God our Savior,
doing so with glorified bodies.

Then, His children are
welcomed into His eternal kingdom with,
"Well done good and faithful servant."

This Day is coming.
It's not a fairy tale.
And when it finally arrives,
a spectacular party
will be thrown.

This is what we yearn for, long for and look for, yet until then we—the Church—waits.

It's hard to wait. But while we wait, we experience many wonderful things:

Good friends, good memories...so much more.

But along with those wonderful things come
temptation and sickness, difficulty and sorrow.

We suffer and we mourn—all the while,
hoping the Bridegroom returns
sooner than later.

My guess is, most of you
are ready for the Last Day to come now.
Ready to attend this grand party.
But that's probably because,
you've experienced everything
this world has to offer.

You know, our sin is doubting that what God has in store for us on that new earth under
those new heavens with glorified bodies in His presence...

is somehow...not all that great. Meh...

That what you have here and now—in Topeka of all places...

is better than what is to come when the Last Day arrives.

Repent of those thoughts—drive them far from you.

For what the Lord has in store for His own

is infinitely better than anything this life

can ever provide or we can ever experience.

My main point this morning is waiting for the Bridegroom to return requires oil.

We must have oil for our lamps.

For this is what separates the wise from the foolish in our Lord's parable.
 The wise, or the prudent,
 know they need a continual supply of oil—
 they're not going to run the risk of running out.
 And our Lord's admonition is that that you
 would be among the wise, and not among the foolish.

So, where does one get this oil—
 oil so lamps stay lit in the darkness until the Bridegroom returns?
 Oil that keeps faith's lamp burning bright,
 and does not grow dark and cold?

I'm so glad you asked...
 Rest assured; you've come to the right place.
 Because what you receive here—is the forgiveness of all of your sins,
 which is oil for your lamp.
 What you receive here—is the Lord's Word,
 which is more oil for your lamp.
 What you receive here—is the very body and blood of Christ Jesus,
 on that altar for you, even more oil for your lamp.
 The oil is here—more than you need—all for you, today.
 Which means if you arrived this morning,
 running low on oil for your lamp, (*which you did*),
 you won't leave here that way.
 You leave with your lamp full...
 burning bright
 in these gray and latter days,
 as you await the return
 of the Bridegroom.

Both the wise and foolish know this.
 This is not any secret knowledge.
 Both the wise and the foolish were taught—
 catechized repeatedly that waiting requires oil.
 Moreover, they were told where to get more.
 But the foolish don't believe it.
 They don't realize how long the Bridegroom will tarry,
 and how quickly these lamps run out.
 And really at the end of the day, they don't care.
 It doesn't matter to them that the flame of faith

has long been extinguished—until it's too late.
 Don't be among the foolish!
 For the consequences are dreadful.

So know, when the oil in your lamp starts getting low...
 say about by this coming Saturday,
 and if the Bridegroom continues to tarry,
 you know precisely where to receive more oil.
 You receive it wherever the Gospel is rightly preached
 and the Sacraments are rightly administered.
 That is where Christ Jesus is found—
 the One who lived for you,
 died for you,
 rose for you,
 ascended for you,
 and is returning for you.
 And it is He who joyfully gives
 the oil you need, for free.

But I'll tell you right now, if the Bridegroom returns before we meet again,
 don't come here looking for oil here—Shop's Closed—
 there's a party Pr. Bruss and I have to attend,
 one that I trust you will be attending as well.

And so, at the close of yet another Church Year,
 a very trying year indeed, like a hula-hoop made out of barbed-wire,
 we join with all the churches on earth and all the saints in heaven
 saying, "MARNATHA"—Come quickly Lord Jesus, Amen.

Standing...

And now may the peace of God which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and
 minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.