

Devotion for Pentecost 26
Last Sunday of End Time: Christ the King

Psalm 93

The Lord reigns; He is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed; He has put on strength as His belt.

Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.

Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their roaring.

**Mightier than the thunders of many waters,
mightier than the waves of the sea, the Lord on high is mighty!**

Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Revelation 21:1-27

All Things Made New

When did God previously dwell with humans?

What will be the greatest blessing and benefit of dwelling with God?

Why will there be no places of worship in the New Jerusalem?

Mark 13:14-37

Watching for Jesus' Return

How can we discern between a false Christ and the real Christ?

How can we prepare for tribulation and what should be our response?

What can we do to remain watchful for Christ's return?

“Stay Awake”

What I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

The theme of the last Sundays of the church year is the return of Christ and the fulfillment of salvation. Jesus spoke about His return often and at length during the last week of His earthly ministry. Jesus spoke of signs that would precede His second coming, saying, “*The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven.*” The odd thing about Jesus’ words relating to the last days leading up to His return, is that while they are fearful and sometimes terrifying, Jesus needs to warn us to watch and stay awake! The collapse of the physical universe is fearful to contemplate. It’s beyond our ability to comprehend what it would be like to experience. It’s hard to imagine sleeping through it!

I don’t imagine anyone will sleep through, or otherwise fail to notice the dissolution of the physical universe. However, the other events that will precede Jesus’ return, occur regularly and frequently. Wars and earthquakes happen every day. We are so used to them that we just turn the page, or change the channel. The general public has a very short attention span, even when a natural disaster or act of violence is in our own backyard. Most people and many Christians, may not even associate such occurrences with the return of Christ. That’s the problem. It’s so easy to get so involved in our daily routines that we don’t even think of Christ’s return.

It’s been two thousand years! We’ve been hearing about it all our lives. When you hear about something so often and have waited so long, it’s easy to fall asleep at the switch. Like a player in an orchestra, who only has to clash his cymbals or blow her trumpet every 20 minutes, we have to work to make sure we don’t fall asleep in our faith, so that we are ready to receive our King when He comes, or be received by Him when He calls us to come.

Really, it’s all the same whether He comes to us on the clouds, or He calls us to Himself through death. We want to be ready, not out of fear of missing the boat, but in anticipation of a joy we cannot imagine and a gladness that has no end. We watch, wait and keep ourselves awake by treasuring Christ in our hearts as Saviour, seeking His grace in the sacraments, speaking with Him in prayer, gathering for fellowship and worship with other believers, searching and studying the scriptures. When we are in the word we are in Christ. When we are in Christ, we always ready to receive Him when He comes, or be received by Him when He says, “Come!”

Rejoice, the Lord is King (Public Domain)
Rejoice the Lord is King! Your Lord and God adore;
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing, and triumph evermore:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; Rejoice; again I say, Rejoice!

Our Saviour Jesus reigns, The God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains, He took His seat above:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; Rejoice; again I say, Rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail; He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; Rejoice; again I say, Rejoice!

He sits at God's right hand, Till all His foes submit
And bow to His command and fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; Rejoice; again I say, Rejoice!

Prayer

Saviour Jesus as we come to the close of another year of the church, we remember with thanksgiving your many gifts of grace. Thankyou for your word in our hearts, in our homes and in our studies. Thankyou for the nourishment of our faith and the forgiveness of sins in your Holy Sacrament. Thankyou for the daily and constant refreshing and renewal of our spirits in the water of our baptism into your death and resurrection. Keep us in your grace in the coming year and through all the years of the church. Bring us with all believers to share in your resurrection and dwell in your Father's presence forevermore. In your Name we pray. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Benediction

Revelation 22:4-5

"They will see His face and His name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

Bible Knowledge Quiz

When John bowed to worship the angel that led him through Revelation, what did the angel say?

What will the sky do when Christ returns?

What will every knee and tongue do in heaven, on earth and under the earth, when Jesus returns?

Answers to Last Week's Quiz

Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).

They were all tent makers (Acts 18:1-3).

He refused to assist Saul's death by laying his sword on him (1 Samuel 31:1-4).