

## **The Last Day Will Be A Day Of Joy For All True Christians.**

Text: Luke 21:25-36

Suggested Hymns:

1, 4, 11, 17, 486

- 1) Why All True Christians Look Forward  
To The Last Day As A Day Of Joy For Them
- 2) What They Must Do So As Not To Be Deceived  
In Their Joyful Expectation

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 21:25–36, <sup>25</sup> *“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; <sup>26</sup> men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

<sup>27</sup> *Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”*

<sup>29</sup> *Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. <sup>30</sup> When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. <sup>31</sup> So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.*

<sup>32</sup> *Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. <sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. <sup>34</sup> “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup> For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

<sup>36</sup> *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Our Gospel treats of a very serious matter, of the last day which is the day of judgement.

Jesus tells us that this world will not last forever, but will come to a sudden, abrupt end; and that this end shall be accompanied by the most fearful signs in the planets above us, and upon the earth, and among the nations.

He says, <sup>25</sup> *“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; <sup>26</sup> men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*

And still more distinctly Jesus predicts the end when He says in plain language, not to be misunderstood, <sup>33</sup> *“Heaven and earth will pass away.”* Pass away, that is, be utterly destroyed, burned up.

Now, is not this a terrible thing to think of, that heaven and earth will pass away, pass away as surely as they were called into being by the spoken word, and that this catastrophe may come at any time, even today?

As St. Peter says in 2 Peter 3:10, *the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

The children of this world can not bear to hear this. It is disagreeable to them. It is too fearful. And for this reason they oppose the doctrine of the day of judgement, ridicule it, and treat it with contempt.

Yet this doctrine of the Last Day does not stand in contradiction to human reason. For even human reason must admit not merely the possibility, but even the probability that there will be an end of this world.

But human imagination finds it hard to picture to itself this tremendous collapse, this altogether unparalleled catastrophe, after the passage of centuries during which the world has pursued its accustomed course. The mind can not conceive, amid the well-ordered facts of our daily life, so sublime and terrific an

interruption, so overwhelming a conclusion of all that we see and are familiar with.

The day of judgement, as described in the Holy Scriptures, must be viewed by all the children of this world with fear and trembling. It is to them a day of terror, a day depriving them at once of all their joys and pleasures and plunging them into the greatest imaginable misery.

But what does Jesus say to His disciples, to the true Christians, about that day? Should they fear the day of judgement? No; He says, “*when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.*”

It is not a day of terror, but a day of joy for all the true followers of Christ. And this shall be the subject of our meditation, with the help of God’s Holy Spirit, *The Last Day A Day Of Joy For All True Christians*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. Why All True Christians Look Forward To The Last Day As A Day Of Joy For Them**

True Christians are often worried about the last day. The thought sometimes troubles them, *What if that day would suddenly come upon you?* How would you feel, if you would have to witness those terrible signs in heaven above and upon earth below? Would not your heart fail you for fear?

And when the Supreme Judge appears in the clouds, can you face Him? Must you not hide your face in shame because you have sinned? Does not the word of God say, “*the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever?*” How then can you expect to abide forever while the earth is passing away? Are you not an unprofitable servant, a frivolous transgressor, who does almost everything else, but not the will of God?

These thoughts come to true Christians. They are not entertained by godless people. These people do not believe Christ’s prediction, and when the thought of judgement day fastens upon their mind, they quickly dismiss that thought, thinking, *What is the use of worrying over such an uncertain thing?*

When, therefore, at times you feel frightened about the Last Day, let it be because you are earnestly concerned about your eternal welfare. But you must

get beyond such fear and fright. For Jesus says to all His followers, “*when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.*” You must look forward to the Last Day as a day of joy.

Why? Because that day is the day of your redemption, as Jesus says, the day in which you shall be redeemed from each and every trouble, from everything that is hurtful to body and soul.

In the first place, why should you feel frightened when those *signs* [occur] *in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and ... , the sea and the waves roaring; [and] the powers of the heavens [are] shaken?*

For godless people, for the children of this world, these are indeed signs forecasting distress and misery, so that “*men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth.*”

For godless people these terrible signs are the tolling of the bell of eternal death, the rap of the angry Judge at the door of the tottering world.

But for the true Christians these signs are the melodious chimes of the eternal Sabbath, the gentle breezes of the everlasting spring. When they see these signs, they must picture in their minds Jesus standing before them and saying, “*Fear not, my beloved children, I am here, I have come to destroy the prison in which you are being held, and to set you free.*”

The Lord illustrates this by a beautiful parable. He says, “*Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.*”<sup>30</sup> *When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.* <sup>31</sup> *So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.*”

Is the sprouting of the trees and the blooming of the flowers in spring something frightening? Does not the entire creation, and man above all, rejoice when the winter season has ended and beautiful spring is ushered in amid the songs of birds and the blooming of the flowers?

Look then, as to how those signs which are so terrible for the children of this world are to be viewed by the true Christians. They are not to be looked upon as dismal prophecies, but as the most pleasing indications of the coming of God’s kingdom, which is peace, joy, happiness, and bliss for ever and ever.

Furthermore, why should you feel frightened when you see “*the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*” True, those who have not been waiting for the Lord and do not care, they shall be terrified when most unexpectedly, like a flash of lightning in a clear sky, the Lord appears in the clouds.

They shall perceive at once Jesus Christ whom they pierced by their unbelief, and all their sins, especially their enmity against Him and His divine Word, will come home to them, and fill them with unspeakable fear, so that in utter despair they will say *to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”*<sup>1</sup>

But what cause has a true Christian to be afraid of Jesus, even in that great moment when as the Judge of the world He shall descend from heaven? Jesus is his Friend, his best Friend, and his truest Friend. Even if he now thinks that the sight of Jesus in the clouds will frighten him, he shall find it otherwise.

Even the weakest believer who puts his trust in Christ shall find himself transformed in a moment, when Christ comes, and his heart filled with ineffable joy. For then his faith shall at once be changed into sight and all those weaknesses by which faith is hampered in this world shall be gone.

And also this is true that the destruction of this visible world shall be a terrible thing for those who love the world, and the things of this world, and know of no other joy than earthly joy and earthly pleasure. For Jesus says, “*Heaven and earth will pass away.*” But what does He add? He says, “*but My words will by no means pass away.*”

Why does Jesus add this? He is telling us, ‘*Fear not, my beloved Christians; let the visible world pass away, my words shall come true. Did I not promise you new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells?*<sup>2</sup> *If you believe my words, you shall find a new creation coming forth, immediately after this world has been consumed by fire; and triumphantly you shall enter into life eternal.*’

O, my friends, what a joyful day, then, must the Last Day of this world be for every true Christian! It is the day of perfect redemption, the day in which we shall be made rid of our sins, our frailties, our natural depravity, our fears, our sobs, our tears, our pains, our misfortunes, our anxieties, and all our crosses, and tribulations.

It is the day in which the gates of Paradise will be opened to us, and in our flesh we shall see God, and in Him be ineffably happy, experiencing those things which *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*<sup>3</sup>

O, let us not wish for that day to be long coming and far away, but beseech our divine Lord to come, to come soon, and to redeem us from this vain world by His glorious advent in the clouds.

## **2. What They Must Do So As Not To Be Deceived In Their Joyful Expectation.**

And now, in the second place, let us consider what we must do, so as not to be deceived in our joyful anticipation.

St. John says in his first epistle, *“little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”*<sup>4</sup> So the one and only thing we must do, not to be deceived in our joyful anticipation, is to abide with Jesus, that is, to remain with Him in true faith, not to leave Him, and always to come back to Him when we have gone astray.

And what must we do to remain with Jesus? He says, *“<sup>34</sup> But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup> For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.”*

*Carousing* and *drunkenness* are not human, they are worse than beastly. *Carousing* means over indulging, revelry, a noisy feast or drinking party. The greediest beast knows when it has enough and will stop eating and drinking when the craving of its appetite has been satisfied. Debaucheries and drunken carousals are unmanly wrongs even from a heathen’s moral point of view, how much the more from the Christian’s moral standpoint.

Does not God say distinctly that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God?<sup>5</sup> Must he not himself admit that he could not face the Lord Jesus in one of his drunken revelries?

Take heed then, this is the Lord’s warning, *“<sup>34</sup> But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness.”*

And the cares of this life are not less dangerous than *carousing* and *drunkenness*. How shall a person be duly prepared to meet God when his thoughts are never with God, when he never sets his affection on things above, when he never seeks the kingdom of God and His righteousness; but has his mind fixed on this world and nothing but this world, when the craving for and hankering after wealth, earthly goods, earthly pleasures and enjoyments is the one sole aim and object of his earthly existence?

Here is where many people make a serious mistake. They make a pretence of religion. They run along with the true followers of Christ. They do so as if they were striving for heaven. But their religion is nothing more than a show and a sham.

It is not heaven they are after, but the earth. Their hearts are overcharged with the cares of life, and this they show by their neglect to come up to the duties of a Christian, by shunning the house of God and neglecting prayer.

O, how can you expect Jesus to confess you before His Father in heaven when suddenly He shall come, if you refuse to confess Him before men? How can you expect to be received into heaven, if your heart clings to this world and you do not sincerely seek the kingdom of God?

Take heed then, beware of the cares of this life, do not let these take possession of your soul and lead you away from Jesus, and on the last day you shall not be deceived in the joyful anticipation of true Christians.

Finally Jesus says, <sup>36</sup> ***Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.***”

Look then, if you do not want to be deceived in your joyful anticipation on the last day, if you want to remain in the faith and be duly prepared to meet Christ when He comes to judge the living and the dead, you must also watch and pray.

We must watch our sinful heart, which is always prone to evil, watch our thoughts, which easily become vain, watch our words that our lips speak no guile, watch our walk and conversation that we always remain in the path of true Christians and that we take as our rule and guide the Word of God.

We must watch all the foes of our eternal salvation, the devil, the world and our own flesh, that they do not lead us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice.

And to watchfulness we must add prayer. For *“with might of ours can nought be done.”* All that we do is utterly useless and will accomplish nothing. God must do everything and all.

Therefore we must pray without ceasing and call upon God, saying, *“Lord, I admit that I am a damnable sinner, not worthy to stand before You. But Your grace is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear You. You have given me Your only begotten Son and He has atoned for all my sins and made me acceptable in Your sight. O, keep me in the blessed faith of Your dear Son. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Let me remain Your dear child, and endure to the end, and receive the crown of life.”*

Yes, blessed is the person who in this way entrusts himself to the grace and mercy of God in Jesus the Saviour! Let death come, or let the Last Day come, he shall not be deceived, for he shall be found worthy to stand before the Son of man and enter into eternal glory. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 23:30

<sup>2</sup> 2 Peter 3:13

<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:9

<sup>4</sup> 1 John 2:28

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:10