

All Saints Day
November 6, 2022
“Children of God, through faith alone,
rejoicing in tribulation, seeing Jesus in glory!” (1 John 3:1-3)
By Rev. Ed Weber

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

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this All Saints Day Sunday is from
our epistle reading, 1 John 3:1-3.

**“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should
be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it
did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet
been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we
shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this
hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

Here ends our text.

I. Children of God

There’s a saying attributed to Mark Twain, the great American writer who of
course wrote “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” and “The Adventures of
Huckleberry Finn”.

*“THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT DAYS IN YOUR LIFE ARE THE DAY YOU ARE
BORN AND THE DAY YOU FIND OUT WHY.” (MARK TWAIN)*

The annual celebrating of our birthdays shows the importance of the day we were
born, take our first breath and are held by our mother and loved ones for the first
time.

The last abortion clinic in the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, Whole Women’s
Health, which took away this important day from so many unborn lives is now
closed thanks to the overturning of Roe vs. Wade and the strong prolife leadership
in Texas. The building was unknowingly sold to prolife leaders who have now
changed the name to McAllen Pregnancy Center. It exists to now lead women to

cherish the life in the womb and protect their unborn so that the first important day of birth takes place.

But is life just to merely exist? Does every life not also have a purpose, something to be born to do? Was it Dusty Baker's purpose in life to finally win a World Series as a manager? Or Jeremy Peña's purpose to be the MVP of the series? What purpose or purposes do you believe you have to do in life?

Mark Twain believed that the next most important day after being born was discovering the "why?" of being born. One's profession or vocation comes quickly to mind, as does the important roles of motherhood and fatherhood.

Yet, as Christians, we know that there is a purpose for our living that goes beyond our daily vocations and that comes to light especially on All Saints Day. For there is a spiritual aspect in our lives that begins on the most important day of our coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

A Christian's rebirth, your rebirth by water and the Spirit as we know from John chapter 3 is the most important day of your life.

"5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"

This day, your baptism, your rebirth, is so important, that without it, there is no entrance into God's kingdom of grace, and thus no final entrance into God's kingdom of eternal glory in heaven with all the saints.

And yet, this important day is not something that we can achieve or grasp on our own! The Holy Spirit has to make this possible. One doesn't birth oneself into God's kingdom. One is born into God's Kingdom by the power of the Holy Spirit. God does all the work. And that is what our text is telling us.

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!"

Take a moment to behold, how great the love of the Father is that He has given us – entrance into His Holy family, a new name that you are called – a child of God!!!

It is a gift. It is a pure gift of grace lavished upon you that God bestows on you faith in His Son Jesus so that you become a holy child of God. Your sins are

washed away in your baptism! You are arrayed in white, having made your robes white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14)

This purity is not something that the world is born with. As the Apostle John tells us in our text.

“Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

The purity that is bestowed on us comes only through Jesus who alone **“is pure.”** (1 John 3:3). And verse 5 of 1 John 3 says, **“5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.”**

Because you know Him, your Savior Jesus Christ through faith, you have now been given a special right. Listen to the Gospel of John chapter 1.

“12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Through the gift of faith you believe and have been given the right to become a child of God. And to make sure you know this, John repeats this most amazing truth in his epistle.

“2 Beloved, now we are children of God;”

Paul says these beautiful words to us in Galatians 3.

“26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:26-29)

II. Rejoicing in tribulation

Yet this great possession that you have, the inheritance of heaven itself, is not fully revealed to you right now. We live by faith as John says in our text.

“and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be,”

You live with a sure hope John says in our text.

“And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

In fact, as a child of God, the unbelieving world doesn't know you because it doesn't know Jesus. And the world will persecute you because of your hope in Jesus.

As you purify yourself in daily repentance, recognizing your poorness of spirit, and receiving daily the washing of your sins through the forgiveness of your baptism, you strive to live the new life in Jesus. Your life will be at odds with the world's goals and beliefs.

Your blessed life will be one of meekness, of being merciful, a peacemaker for you are called sons of God. And as we heard in our Gospel reading from Matthew 5,

**“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Yes as John says in Revelation 7, **“These are those who are coming out of the great tribulation” (Revelation 7:14)**

This is your purpose in life, your highest purpose to live as a child of God - follow Jesus all the days of your life even as you are reviled and persecuted. And in the midst of this persecution, God promises you joy and happiness and your great reward in heaven.

III. You shall see Jesus

Yes, there is a 3rd most important day in the lives of a Christian. It is the day of entrance into eternal glory.

“and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Psalm 116:15 beautifully tells us how God views our last day in this life on earth. **“Precious in the sight of the Lord Is the death of His saints.”**

It is the day that all sin of this life is removed completely and life begins in the very presence of God.

As our first reading from Revelation 7 beautifully tells us:

“16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

We celebrate today the victory of our beloved brothers and sisters, children of God, saints in Christ who now see Jesus in glory. And we who are children of God still in the great tribulation press on in faith. You are blessed beyond measure. The Father has bestowed on you His righteousness through faith in His Son Jesus.

To love is your purpose as you have been loved.

“18 My little children,” John says in verse 18 of 1 John 3. **“let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”**

How can we know how to love? Well John says it beautifully in the verse 16 of 1 John 3.

“16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

You have been loved by God and called a redeemed child of God through faith in Jesus. And that makes all your days important, purposeful and an adventure - not of Tom Sawyer or Huck Finn, but as a child of God! And you await the greatest adventure – entrance into glory with all the saints! Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)