

All Saints Day  
““The Greatest Victory Celebration! Forever and Ever! Amen!”  
(Revelation 7:9-12)  
November 5, 2023  
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for All Saints Day is from our first reading – Revelation 7:9-12.

**“9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:  
“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,  
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,  
Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”**

So far the text...

What happens after the final out in the World Series of Baseball? Or after the final second ticks off in the Super Bowl? A lot of cheering, right? Loud music... usually confetti is dropped on the winning players, a Gatorade bucket is poured on the head coach, all the players get a t-shirt and cap that says they're the World Champions. After a trophy presentation there's the locker room victory celebration where everyone puts on goggles and sprays champagne on each other. That's about as good as it gets in this world.

Now compare this victory celebration with the victory celebration that we have been hearing about in our All Saints Day readings. There is no comparison. The magnitude of the number of saints celebrating is too great to count as we hear in St. John's vision from Revelation. There is praising with a loud voice, but the saints are not praising themselves. They are worshipping their God who sits on the throne and the Lamb.

After John takes in this amazing sight, he is asked a most important question. **“Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”** Who is this winning team? And John urges the elder to explain. **“Sir, you know. So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”**

Yes, there was a great battle. Blood was shed to achieve victory. Whose blood? The blood of the great multitude of people? No – the blood of the Lamb. The great multitude does not take any credit for the victory. Who does salvation belong to? The great multitude sings out with absolute clarity. **“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”** They can now stand in God’s very presence without fear or cowering because they wear the robe of righteousness won for them by the blood of the Lamb. What a celebration that their sin is no more!

And the angels who are unseen in this world are now seen and fully affirm and champion this truth as they fall on their faces before the throne with seven-fold adoration their God and the Lamb, **“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”**

Victory was achieved by God’s wisdom, power and might. He alone deserves all blessing, glory, thanks and honor. The angels and elders bookend their praises with Amen. It is so. This is most certainly true! This celebration is assured. And the praises are never ending. The victory celebration is forever and ever. There is no comparison with anything that is seen or heard in this present world.

And the amazing truth that God’s Word tells you, baptized believer in Jesus the Lamb of God, is that this is your victory celebration! This is your future! Who are these arrayed in white celebrating with palm branches of victory in their hands? They are the just who live by faith and those who have kept the faith and now are in glory in heaven. They are you and me and all believers on earth and all believers who lived by faith in Christ and died to receive their eternal gain.

Yes, it seems too unbelievable that you and I, elect of God, are numbered with this great multitude even now. And that is because we are in the midst of the great tribulation right now. Are souls are fighting the battle with the evil one with God’s

Word of truth. We see our failings all too easily. We mourn them as we heard in the beatitudes of Matthew 5. We see our poorness of spirit because we are sinful. We see our humbleness, our great hunger and thirst for righteousness that we cannot manufacture by the keeping of the law. We experience the persecutions of the world that trods on anything godly and exalts all that is sinful and evil as being worthy of adoration. Right is wrong. And wrong is right. This is the battle that appears to be going to the enemy.

And in the midst of the battle, your battle and mine, our Captain opens His mouth and speaks. So important is what Jesus, the Word made flesh, says that our Gospel literally records these very words, **“He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:”**

Blessed, blessed, blessed are you repentant, poor in spirit, humble in soul, persecuted by the world. Take heart child of God, sons of God, for that is who you are by your faith in Me. Take heart that yours is the kingdom of heaven...you will be comforted...you will see God standing in the purity of your robe of righteousness... you shall be filled with righteousness, My righteousness...you shall be comforted...you shall inherit the earth. In summary... you are already victors, My saints, My holy ones, My blessed ones. When persecution comes, and it will, rejoice because yours is the kingdom of heaven.

What manner of conversation is this that Jesus speaks to you this day? It is not frivolous or filled with platitudes or the nonsense that we so often hear in our daily lives. But it is God speaking His truths to all believers who have been given faith to confess Jesus as Lord. And Jesus speaks directly to you this day.

**“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.”**

In heaven... your day is coming where there will be no more persecution or evil or hunger or thirst or tears or heat of day. The victory is yours now for salvation belongs to Jesus and He gives it to you through faith in Him!

So we hear God speak to you and me poor sinful beings with greatest of accolades in our epistle reading from 1 John 3.

**‘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.’**

We shall be like Him, purified by His shed blood. That is our sure hope for it is founded on the One who is pure. He kept the law perfectly for us. And sacrificed His blood on the cross to achieve victory for all people. He rose again to show the world that He won this victory over sin, death and the devil. This is our hope that He revealed to the apostles. He is risen. And through faith in Jesus we are now children of God, on the winning team! And we will be like Him, resurrected pure and holy and see Him face to face!

This is what we celebrate this All Saints Day and every day. God’s great love for us...that He has bestowed on us...that we should be called children of God.

Jesus opens His mouth and speaks of your salvation today through His Word. He tells you that your victory is assured. **“16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16)**

And Jesus opens His mouth and speaks to you at His table this day.

**Luke 22:19**

**And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”**

And again in Matthew 26 Jesus opens His mouth and proclaims His truth to us.

**“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.**

So Luther explains: “ These words, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins” shows us that in the sacrament forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation” ... “whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: Forgiveness of sins”.

For this reason, we believers in Jesus gather this day to praise and honor and give thanks to God for the salvation He bestows on us through the Lord's Supper. Salvation belongs to God and he graciously gives it to you through this sacrament. So that you too can hear Jesus call you blessed child of God. The victory is yours and the celebration begins now and most gloriously in eternity with all the saints and angels in heaven. Forever and ever Amen!

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