

Prayer of the Day:

Almighty God and Savior, you have set the final day and hour when we shall be delivered from this world of sin and death. Keep us ever watchful for the coming of your Son that we may sit with him and all your holy ones at the marriage feast in heaven; through Jesus Christ, your son, our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Verse of the Day:

Alleluia. They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple. Alleluia. (Revelation 7:15a cf. NIV)

Sermon Text:

“IT’S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY.” Do you believe that? Blue wave, red wave, real waves from hurricanes, trembling earth and crumbling buildings, the crack and pop of guns and the blasting bombs, sanctions and wars, failing finances and flailing families and we haven’t even tried to climb the mountain of death as loved ones are lost and tragedy seems to triumph. **“IT’S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY.”** Do you really believe that?

It can be so easy to buy into the lie. After all, we live in it day in and day out. It certainly looks as if I am the master of my own destiny and the choices which I make infinitely shape the world around me. And with that thought process comes the pressure, infinite pressure to be perfect, to make all the right choices and all the right moves because each step, each decision, each tiny little action can have infinite ripples, does have infinite ripples in the world around us.

It’s actually enough to make us want to just stay in bed and not deal with any of it sometimes, especially when we realize who we are. We just confessed it moments ago, so do you believe it? We are sinners, trapped in sin, controlled by sin, swimming in sin every moment of our lives. Isaiah once said even the good that we do is tainted by the Satanic stain of our sinfulness when he wrote, *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags* (Isaiah 64:6). My pride and arrogance, my lust and laziness, my greed and selfishness, my anger and my apathy, it all proves that I just won’t always make the right moves. In fact, if left to my own designs and desires I will always make the most selfish of moves, so if it all relies on me then I think we are sunk. This is exactly what God’s Word means when it says, *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins* (Ephesians 2:1).

But then that’s exactly where our lesson comes in today. I was dead and in need of a resurrection, so Jesus supplied it. *I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.* God’s voice is the driving power in this sentence, not you or me. He makes the impossible a reality, dead ears hear and life returns where there was only sin and death.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy ⁸ *So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,* ⁹ *who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his*

Text: John 5:25-29

²⁵ I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out— those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ¹⁰ *but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-10).*

Yes, in this world of ours there will be trouble and if we pin our hopes and dreams upon it well, we'll be in trouble too. But when we look again to the cross of Jesus Christ, there we see the one who truly was master of His destiny, who made all the right choices forever changing the world around Him. He gives that perfection to you, even as He goes to the cross to pay for everyone of our sins which stain even our righteousness. That's a message that allows us to crawl out of bed in the morning. It grants hope in a world of instability and sin as we focus on the cross and a God who holds all things in His hands for the sake of His church, for you and for me. It allows us to live in hope even as sin rages around us and makes sense of the senseless. Of course the world will be crazy, sin always is and you, you have been called to live in it because you have the only cure for it, the forgiveness that you need everyday and have freely received in Christ is the forgiveness it needs too.

But then, it's not just a little balm for the troubles of this world. God tells us through Paul, *If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men (1 Corinthians 15:19).* So Jesus reminds us, ²⁶ *For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.* ²⁷ *And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.* Jesus saving work is not just a little balm for the woes of this life. It has eternal ramifications for sinful human beings. The Judge of all things is the Savior of all things and the one who holds the power of life and death within His almighty hand. Perhaps that should change the way we see death, even as it changes the way we look at life.

²⁸ *Do not be amazed at this,* (Jesus continues) *for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice* ²⁹ *and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.* You see a time is going to come again, on that last day when the almighty voice of the Son of God will be clearly heard within the ears of all again. When it is, the impossible will once more become reality and dead ears will hear and respond. Bodies reunited with souls, we will stand in the presence of God for that public declaration of who practiced good (because their dead ears had heard this word and by God's grace and through His gift of faith, believed once before) and who had done evil (because dead to sin there was never any other option. In unbelief, they had rejected the only one who could ever make them good in God's sight).

It is at this moment that head and heart will meet up with hands and feet and we will finally witness the reality as Christ had always promised it, waves and earthquakes forever silenced, guns, bombs and the weapons of war beat into instruments of peace, finances and families forever whole, and death – death eternally defeated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, which He has freely given to you.

So brothers and sisters, I believe it, though someday I don't see it. Though someday the world rages against the truth and countless troubles slam against my heart and mind, **"IT'S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY."** God has promised and He doesn't lie. Though sin shows itself within and without the walls of the church though it rages within my own heart, **"IT'S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY."** For we live in the forgiveness won by Christ and regularly held out to us in Word and in Sacrament. Even though one day I will close my eyes in death, **"IT'S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY."** As astonishing as it sounds, *a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out.* Yes, the saints are triumphant, for the one who has made them saints has triumphed over all things, so that you can believe it. **"IT'S ALL GOING TO BE OKAY."** Amen.