

## All Saints' Day

Sermon Road Map  
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Revelation 7:9-17  
November 1, 2020

### Saints long to be with Jesus

- We are all tired of this pandemic. Its precautions, restrictions, and interference with *normal life*. Does that mean we had a wonderful life, *Heaven on earth*?
- *Really? You had no frustrations, challenges, failings, and disappointments? No guilt, fears, worries, loneliness, limitations or feelings of inadequacy?*
- All of these things - pandemic included - lead us to face reality. **This world is lacking - then we die. Life to the full is not** found in the things of this world or its life. It's found in Jesus - for this life and beyond.
- What's beyond? What awaits us? God provides a glimpse in what John saw. This is your future - your eternity with Jesus.

#### ❖ Celebrate what's there

*I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing in front of the throne and of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palm branches in their hands.*

- Just as Yahweh promised Abraham & Jacob - so many you can't count them
- Just as Jesus said - the gospel would call, claim, and gather people worldwide
- Here are the **saints - God's holy people** - robed in Christ's righteousness
- Palm branches - celebrating their victorious king, who defeated death
  - ♦ An ancient practice: palm in the hands of those who died in Christ, confessing this one is now among Christ's faithful, participating in the victory celebration.

<sup>14</sup> *...These are the ones who are coming out of the great tribulation.*

*They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ...*

<sup>16</sup> *They will never be hungry or thirsty ever again.*

*The sun will never beat upon them, nor will any scorching heat,*

- **who are coming out** - adding to the number as John observed
- **the great tribulation** this life, **not** some unique period at the end of the world!
  - ♦ *We must go through many troubles on our way to the kingdom of God.* Acts 14:22
- *hungry, thirsty, sun scorched* - Can't identify? How blessed! Many have faced. Food insecure and homeless. Especially persecuted believers. What a promise!
- Any surprise the enslaved blacks sang, *Oh when the saints comes marchin' in, I want to be in that number...* right there standing in front of the Lamb - Jesus.

### Saints long to be with Jesus

#### ❖ Celebrate the how

- It's tempting to focus on the saints on All Saints' Day. **Look again.**
- Their focus is on God's throne and the Lamb - Jesus, for good reason.

*They called out with a loud voice and said:*

*Salvation comes from our God, who sits on the throne, and from the Lamb.*

*They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

<sup>15</sup> *Because of this they are in front of the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple.*

- Salvation is God's business - his expertise - he **alone** can rescue people from our sin, this world of sin & death, Satan's cruel crafts
- The powerful ***blood of Jesus - the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*** - is the only cleanser of both our guilt and sin imbedded in our DNA.
- Only ***because of this blood of the Lamb*** - can we stand in this perfect place, right there before and with our Creator and Savior God,
  - ◆ living in eternal life with the most glorious purpose: to serve such an awesome, kind, merciful, and gracious Lord. The highest honor ever!
- All the Saints standing there tell you, *Look to the Lamb for this new eternal life.*
  - ◆ Trust him. Listen to him. Rely on no other. Give him all honor and glory

### **Saints long to be with Jesus, their Savior**

#### ❖ **What makes Glory glorious? Jesus is there.**

- We often hear people long for their eternal reunion with their loved ones.
  - ◆ I too long to see my mother and others who led me to know Jesus.
- The blind hymn writer Fanny Crosby: ***The first one I want to see is Jesus.***
- ***Heaven itself were void and bare If you Lord, were not near me.*** CW 434
- What makes heaven heavenly? Being in intimate glorious fellowship with God the Father, our dear brother & Lord - Jesus Christ, & the Holy Spirit.
  - ◆ This is what humans were made for - in God's image to commune with God.
  - ◆ Sin separated us from God being our God. Sin separates us from our Source of Life. Sin is the source of our misery and emptiness.
  - ◆ In Jesus we find fullness of life, now in part, then in full - forever
  - ◆ We are rescued from hunger, thirst, & exposure ***for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water.***
  - ◆ ***He who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.*** We are enveloped in the Father's kingdom of care. We are home, where we belonged all along.
- Paul highlighted the chief characteristic of the Saints - those whom God gives the victors crown of righteousness: ***everyone who loved his appearing.*** 2 Tim 4:8
  - ◆ Love his appearing: Christmas, Epiphany, Resurrection - long for his Return
  - ◆ Do so because they delight to be with Jesus. Also love to be with him now.

### **Saints long to be with Jesus**

- ◆ Do you see the great warning to those who don't long to commune with Jesus?
  - All who have little time for Jesus now, don't want to be with him in glory.
  - John saw their reaction to Jesus' appearance: ***mountains fall on us.*** Rev 6:15

#### ❖ **Not a better place! The best place!**

- We hear: ***She's in a better place. - I'm glad he's out of pain - in a better place.***
  - ◆ Why so generic? Don't you know about the better place - the best place?
  - ◆ A common deception: ***Everyone goes to a better place. - What a lie!***
- Use these opportunities to ask, ***What do you know about heaven?***
  - ◆ ***May I tell you what Jesus did to prepare a place of us to live forever.***
  - ◆ There is no life apart from God. Jesus' forgiveness invites us to live with God.
  - ◆ Heaven is not just a better place. It's the best, as we await the resurrection and the fulfillment of his promises - living with him and his loving care in the new heaven and new earth - free from death, tears, sorrow - joy forever more.
- ***Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground? Where the angels singing With all his saints unite, Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light. Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!*** Now Sing We, Now Rejoice CW 34