

The Last Sunday of the Church Year
Year of the Lord 2019

**“Holy Spirit, Light Divine, shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day!”
“Let me see my Savior’s face; let me all HIS beauties trace!
Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to
Thee!”**

Luke 23:27–43 27And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. 28But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ 30Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ 31For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

32Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” 36The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” 38There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

39One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” **40But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” 43And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”**

In the Name of Jesus the King:

KEEP SINNING, dear Christians! Then you are fit for the King's beautiful garden: Paradise! The Pleasant Park of Heaven's King; the King of the Jews.

Many dear saints have been pleading with me over the years to simplify my Sunday morning Bible book-report. And I truly appreciate the pleading and understand it. (Don't even try to imagine living in the lumber-room that is your poor pastor's head!)

And I have also heard the pleas of those who love to hear 'practical' book-reports from the Bible. 'Pastor delivers his assignment for the day—then what am I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH IS?!'

Therefore, lemme tell you:

Just keep sinning; just keep sinning; sinning, sinning, sinning.

Ah! My dear brothers and sisters! THAT is not...at all...ease-y!

Oh, I know you aren't all that much better than I am: and I am MASTER of indicting the next poor fellow for offending MY majesty! NOTHING comes as naturally; at least to me. But when does THIS confession hit me?:

'WE are under the same condemnation; the difference is: WE are getting what WE deserve!'

Well I am certainly NOT getting paid back for my sinful life when the worst things happen to me: my spot in line taken, by a body, or a car; a word or a look comes MY WAY, that I CAN interpret in the worst way. And has THIS ever happened to YOU?!

The marching and band and cheerleaders forgot—AGAIN!—to follow me around all day and praise my every move!

How can such injuries be compared to what that man admitted That Day, to the other fellow, two crosses over?! ‘WE are getting what WE deserve!’

All HE had to put up with was being beaten half to death all morning; then forced to carry his own instrument of execution to a place where the best and worst of the world join hands for fun; stripped and nailed up for all to see and mock, until a painful death by suffocation many hours later. (Oh, THIS lucky man had that cut short, by having his legs broken!)

(On SUNDAY morning! And THAT is how our pastor chooses to talk! Well—Saint Luke and the Holy Spirit too! Still, it’s pretty rough. As I clutch my pearls!)

Rough; ugly; hateful: dying, and death. Being one who is blessed to spend half his life with corpses, or soon-to-be corpses, I have no time to waste on the pretty pictures men paint of our dark and gloomy end.

‘It’s all for the better.’

‘Now their pain is over.’

‘He was ready.’

‘It was time.’

That's for those who make money off men assuming room temperature.

That man was at the End: of his sin-filled plans; end of excuses; end of hiding, from men, from his God.

But then....

But then, there was a Man—ONE cross over from him!—a Man Who was clearly, That Day, the Center of attention, of mocking, of hatred. The one Jesus promised Paradise—if he could say what WE REFUSE to say, daily and much: that death-by-torture is what all men deserve...

Then that man knew what was behind the cruelty of the soldiers who nailed them up; cruelty that The Center Man forgave.

And he knew what was behind the far worse cruelty of the mocking ones; the pretend-holy crowd. (Will they be forgiven in this world or the next? Lord, have mercy!)

FEAR! 'Unless I DISTINGUISH myself in this rough and ugly world, by being rougher and uglier, what chance do I have?!' THAT is what the praying man knew about each child of Adam.

But then...

Is it real? Is there such a Kingdom, where such a one is King? What KING has ever assigned to his kingdom those whose daily rote is cruelty? 'Father, forgive these me; all they've done is

crucify your Son; we, of course, will not hold THAT against them!’

Dare we listen-in to this man’s prayer? The Holy Spirit does it for us. THAT is our EXCUSE!

‘That YOU are King of a Kingdom this world cannot imagine means one thing: I am a subject fit for you to rule; fit to occupy your mind. Remember me.’

My dear ones: what hope do you and I have that God will allow us to pray those words, put our confidence in those words?

Hear the Word of the Lord:

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

¹

Got THAT going for us! THAT must make something of OUR Baptism too! More than just a cute ceremony!

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 3:21–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” ²

Good! Good! The WHOLE Word of God is fulfilled by Him!

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.” ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” ³¹ And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” ³

THAT’S the banner over the entrance to Paradise! I’m starting to see a THEM here!

¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” ²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this. ⁴

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 4:18–21). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 5:27–32). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:19–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Pardon my joy and laughter, my dear ones! We are NOT even supposed to despair about the condition of the CHURCH! A quick read of the apostles and THEIR mind is enough to tell us the Church could not be in better hands! Well, of course, then there's THIS, right after:

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵ And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶ But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷ For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves. ⁵

He serves Peter, and the rest.

He serves those who murder Him.

He serves a man whom even this WORLD cannot stand. (How bad do you hafta be, to make the ROMANS hate your very existence! Or, the New York Times?! The Times hates you and me, my dear Christians!)

Christ came to serve....

Here we are, where pardon is given y'all by a man inarguably FARTHEST from heaven! That pardon MUST be certain, if I CAN give it away to you!

Here we are, hearing about all our hopes of life after THIS—and the Lord even puts up with all our worldly, idolatrous ideas about That Life. 'Let's say—it's like the nicest PARK and GARDEN a luxurious King of Persia might build!'

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:24–27). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Y'know what? HEEEE....He MAY make it even BETTER than what you and I hope for! Imagine THAT!

Here we are—and all signs point to Christ feeding US today with His Body and His Blood. So that we can jostle and position to find out who among us is superior to the other; and STILL be served by Him.

My dear ones: there is only ONE THING that the Law, that men, that religion, that superiority rages against to the point of goofiness! It's the prayer of that man on the cross, to the Man on the cross one over, despite what the man on the cross two over blasphemes. To the devil, the world and our sinful nature, NOTHING is a greater SIN—than YOU...having hope...DESPITE YOU!!!!

So, I say to you with all the authority the Holy Spirit can muster this morning:

Just keep sinning; just keep sinning; sinning, sinning, in the Name of Jesus. Amen.