

## **Day One**

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

Whenever folks talk about the end times, there will always be those who want to know precise times and dates (Mark 13:1-13). The reasons for that are many. It is a way to control the uncontrollable. If the time and date was known then one could make preparations in order to be ready when the end comes. It could also provide a license to sin because there would still be time to settle accounts before the end comes.

What we should really be concerned with is this: Where is your hope? Is it in the works of man? Is it in your ability to get ready – to make yourself worthy to receive the King or to be received by Him? If that's the case, then you will be left wanting. You will be left outside when the gate is closed.

The only true hope is in Jesus Christ and His saving work. He did all that had to be done to fulfill the Law of God. He died the death that sin deserves and demands. He died in our place so that we could live and He comes to us through His Word to make us worthy – to make the unlovable lovable. He has covered us with His righteousness. We have been dressed in clothing fit for children of the King. And so when He returns, He will welcome us into His house as the dearly loved children we are.

## **Day Two**

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Here in John 16:5-11, Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit's work. Jesus is going to send the Spirit to His disciples so that they aren't left as orphans. They will not be alone as they bear witness to Jesus and His saving work.

The Holy Spirit will work through the Word of God that they share to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. It's not our job to convince people that they are sinners, that their righteousness is nothing more than filthy rags and that they stand under judgment because of their unbelief. That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

We just need to be faithful to the task of bearing witness to the hope that is ours in Jesus Christ and the resurrection that He shares. We need to be faithful in sharing God's Word so that the Holy Spirit can do His work through that means of grace.

May God give us both the opportunity and the wisdom to share that Word with those we meet today.

## **Day Three**

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Too often in Lutheran circles, the Holy Spirit is the forgotten person of the Trinity. We know God the Father. We focus on God the Son – Jesus Christ. But the Holy Spirit doesn't get much attention – like an afterthought – of little significance.

Here in John 16:12-15, Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit's role is quite significant. In fact, we would be lost without the work of the Spirit in our lives. His primary role is to guide us into the truth – to make known to us what belongs to Christ – His person and work.

Luther puts it this way: "I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith." Without the work of the Holy Spirit, we would all be lost and still separated from God.

Thanks be to God that He sends the Holy Spirit to call us to faith and lead us into the truth who is Jesus Christ.

## **Day Four**

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Here in Deuteronomy 8:10, we are told that when we have eaten and are satisfied, we are to praise the Lord our God for the land that He has given to us.

The first point is to understand the relationship that God has established with us. He is our God and we are His people. Time and time again, God reminded His Old Testament people of that relationship that He had

established with them. And that needs to be a big part of our thanksgiving as well.

He has called us to be His own people. He has joined us together with Himself in His life and death. We have died with Christ and have been set free from sin so that we can also be united with Him in His life and dwell forever with Him.

The other part of our thanksgiving is to never forget our God who is the Giver of all good gifts. So when we are in need, we are to give thanks for God's love for us in Jesus. We are also to remember that when all is well – when we are satisfied. We are not to forsake the Giver and worship the gift.

## **Day Five**

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Here in John 17, Jesus is praying for those disciples that He will be leaving behind. He is going to the cross and then, after His resurrection, He will ascend into heaven. He is praying that they will be one – a community – united together in the gospel.

He is also praying for those who don't yet believe – who will believe because of the message of salvation through Jesus Christ that they will share. And by this prayer, He reveals the purpose for their being left behind. They (and we) are here to bear the message of salvation so that through the hearing of that message others may come to believe.