

Lessons for Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

November 13, 2022

Psalm 96 ~ *An invitation to all the earth to sing praise for God's glory and majesty.*

Malachi 4:1–6 ~ *On the Day of the Lord, God's righteousness will consume the wicked and heal His people.*

2 Thessalonians 3:(1–5) 6–13 ~ *Believers are encouraged to work at doing good to show the love of Christ.*

Luke 21:5–28 (29–36) ~ *All kinds of disasters warn that this world will give way to God's eternal kingdom.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Waiting Patiently

We become impatient when we see that evildoers prosper and no distinctions are made between the wicked and the righteous; we long for the triumph of good over evil, just as God's messenger, Malachi declared. While we wait for Jesus, our Lord, to return, we are to do our duty to God and our neighbors, and not grow weary of doing good. God's righteousness will be revealed and those who suffer for Jesus' name will be vindicated through trials and tribulations when God's kingdom is established with Christ as King.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: When there is little time, Lord, give me patience. Where there is injustice, grant me understanding. Then as I try to live my life according to your Word, I will await your judgment on sin and your fulfillment of the Kingdom in glory. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Even though it seems God is so slow to establish His righteous rule, there are plenty signs to remind us we should use the goods He has placed in our control to show His love to those who do not yet know His mercy in Christ Jesus.

OFFERING PRAYER: Disasters in this world, O Lord, are sure to terrify,
And bring a lot of suffering – loss of life and property.
They also show us that our goods are worthless when we die
And give us loving deeds to do and opportunity. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We are impatient for justice when we see evil prevail. We don't trust God's plan because we don't know what it is. We can't wait for God's time table because we don't know how long it will take. But God has given us enough to do while we wait; we are to work hard to alleviate suffering and show the oppressed God's love in our actions. We can rejoice that God has overcome evil and impatience, even in our own lives, by the cross of His Son. He is the One who will come, at God's right time, to establish God's righteous rule.

Questions to Consider: When you are meeting someone, would you rather wait or be waited for?

- Why is it important to remember God's commands especially when evil seems to prevail?
- When are you most likely to get tired of doing the right thing?
- Would it be easier to wait for Christ's return if we had it marked on our calendar?
- What good can come from persecution?

Bonus on next page: A contemporary illustration of the importance of patience as we wait for God's blessings.

Windows in the Sky

O Lord, I'm not complaining!
I know we prayed for weeks
 without an end,
and prayers are surely answered
 in Your time.

Now when my old computer
 won't respond
although I click an icon
 several times,
I start to comprehend
when there upon the screen
one application opens
 up three times!

Lord, can't you sort of shut those
 windows down,
because the land is flooding
and still it keeps on raining
 all the time!

– Gilbert A Franke, 7/8/08.