

Community of Grace

Daily Walk for the week of November 2, 2020

All Saints Sunday

Written by Pastor Matt Henning

November 2nd Being Blessed

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecuted you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:11. This verse concludes the beatitudes in Matthew’s Gospel story where Jesus transforms what being blessed is all about. Jesus is shifting the concern of religion from self toward neighbor. He is showing that the poor, mourning, hungry, merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers all have a place in the kingdom of God. That the blessings of God are found in our care for the people around us and that true blessing will grow in tangible acts of love for our neighbors. Prayer: “Help me take your blessing out into the world this day, Oh Lord, Amen.”

November 3rd We are One!

“But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house, I will bow down toward your holy temple in awe of you. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me.” Psalm 5: 7-8. Today is election day, and there will be a sense of tension and division in the air. Our faith teaches us differently, in that, we are one in the

steadfast love of God. We are one in the house of worship of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are one in the God we worship and bow down toward in love. We are one in the direction of love, grace, and empathy we are called to share with our neighbors. We are called to remember that we are more than the labels of our politics and society because we are all children of God. Prayer: “Draw us together as one people, O God, even in the midst of division, help us see that we are one in you. Amen.”

Justice...Be Watchful

Written by Kerri Lawton

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

Amos 5:18-20 “Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord! Why do you want the day of the Lord? It is darkness, not light; as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake. Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?” We begin this week’s theme: “Justice...Be Watchful,” with the words of Amos dismantling hope in God’s future deliverance. The Israelites had lost sight of God’s righteous gifts. Not that their rituals were improper but seemed meaningless. They established rituals in God’s name, but they lacked godly justice and righteousness for all. This only angered God. Priest were overseeing rules concerning individual sacrifices, prayers, and

offerings; being their own judge of sorts. We should take heed of this ourselves. God's gift of righteousness and justice are always present. It is how mankind perceives and responds to his judgment. The justice God offers can become an ongoing lesson in life. Respecting his will to represent all of creation, being watchful of God's presence and judgement. Prayer: Dear Lord, be with us as we choose our paths of righteousness. Let us learn from the past, to prepare for our future. Amen

Thursday, November 5, 2020

Amos 5:23-24 "Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." As a person who enjoys a good celebration with song and dance, this stings a bit. God is angry over the lack of His recognition, by the Israelites, and their disregard for others. They celebrate for their own benefit regardless of the suffering around them. (Remember Noah's neighbors didn't realize anything was wrong until after the ark was built and they couldn't control the flooding). Here, again, the use of flowing water to represent the strength of justice and ever-flowing righteousness should renew us in faith and mercy. God's law, "love one another as I also love you," is the basis of his righteousness and good will for all. Once this is established, good justice will prevail. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we celebrate you and re-

member the sacrifices you made for our salvation. We give thanks and praise, while being watchful for the coming of the Lord! Alleluia!

Friday, November 6, 2020

Psalm 70:1-3 "Be pleased, oh God, to deliver me. Oh Lord, make haste to help me! Let those be put to shame and confusion who seek my life. Let those be turn back and brought to dishonor who desire to hurt me. Let those who say 'Aha, Aha!' turn back because of their shame." This is a prayer for deliverance from enemies. Relating this to our theme this week, being watchful for judgment, we hear outcry for righteous judgment. We hear an urgency for help against their enemies. At times we feel surrounded by unfair people or events. We see and hear things that are holy unjust. Some people fight back, but a pray for deliverance, asking for God's intervention, is a more healing (and safe) moral way to live. We live seeking God, but in reality our God is ever present and we are to be watchful for his goodness and mercy. We ask for God to be pleased with us. Having that comforting love gives us hope for righteous judgment in days to come. Prayer: God of justice, we pray for your comfort and guidance. Deliver us from our enemies and have mercy on them. We give you thanks. Amen

Saturday, November 7, 2020

1 Thessalonians 4:13-15 "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sis-

ters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means proceed those who have died." Paul is speaking to the Thessalonians, responding to their concerns. For them the idea of an afterlife was never considered. It was especially hard for them to accept this message. Their concern was for their loved ones, who had lived in Jesus's light but had passed away, prior to the coming of the Lord. Paul is reassuring them that God would call upon them before others. Through the belief in Jesus being raised from the dead, God will raise him to be with the Lord forever. Paul is encouraging them to always be aware and watchful for God's presence. And to know, in His presence, He is also watchful. We will be judged by the Almighty, for the life we are gifted. God's judgement will be upon us, in life and death, and we must carry a true heart, being tuned to God. He will call upon his righteous believers to rise to him and live "with the Lord forever." Prayer: God of grace, Paul's words of encouragement are a reminder of the Lord's promised second coming. We should be watchful and prepared for such a day. We pray for your grace, mercy and justice always and forever. Amen

Sunday, November 8, 2020

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 "For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are loved, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words." These are words of warning, words of preparedness, and words of encouragement. These verses speak to many through generations of time. The coming of the Lord has been promised and all the true believers, alive or dead, will be lifted to the Lord for final judgment. It is our responsibility to be watchful for signs of the Lord's presence, caring for neighbors as he would have us do. Be aware and watchful for the Day of the Lord could be upon us and we will praise his worth and glory. There will be judgment upon us and Paul's words should encourage us to always be enlightening to others. Spread the love and acceptance for all to see. Leave the judging of others to the Lord. Prayer: God of mercy, we praise you and worship you. You instill hope and encouragement for an everlasting life in the Heavenly kingdom you have prepared. We give you thanks. Amen