

Bible Study for All Saints Sunday November 1, 2020

Our texts for this Sunday are:

- Revelation 7:9-17
- John 11:32-44

Opening Question: It is common to think about “saints” as holier-than-thou and as the rare few. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called toward being saints. Do you think of yourself as called to be a saint? Why or why not? What difference would it make if you thought of yourself as a saint?

Revelation 7:9-17

7:9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10 They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." 13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" 14 I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. 16 They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; 17 for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Do you like the book of Revelation? Why, or why not?

How might this text be a good All Saints Sunday text? What does it tell you? Does it sound hopeful?

How would washing robes “in the blood of the Lamb” (v. 14) make their robes white? (It wouldn’t! It is just another hint that throughout the book John is using symbolism to convey

his message.) Blood, as indicated in Leviticus, represents life. These “saints,” as represented by their clothing, are those who have “put on” Jesus to use the apostle Paul’s words.

- What might it mean to put on Christ?
- What might it look like to live as those who “wear white robes” in our everyday lives today?

As we approach All Saints Sunday, who do you remember who put on Christ for you or displayed the life of Christ?

Read John 11:32-44

32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34 He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 Jesus began to weep. 36 So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” 38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” 40 Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

How do you think Mary and Martha felt waiting for Jesus and watching their brother die?

Have you ever shared in Mary and Martha’s question, “God, where were You?”

- How might the promise that Jesus has defeated death and the devil be more reassuring than a simple answer to our questions?
- Or is it?

Jesus tells the crowd to unbind Lazarus and send him home. Why?

- Why didn’t Jesus unbind him?
- Who have been the “unbinders” in your life?
- How might we be “unbinders” for others in their time of need?
- What does this say about the role we play in Kingdom work?

