

Sermon Draft

Text: John 16:23–33

Sermon: “A New Day In Jesus”

This Thursday at 7pm we will celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord. The celebration of the resurrection of Jesus moves toward his ascension and the sending of the Spirit at Pentecost. Indeed, only on the foundation of his ascension and the gift of the Spirit was the reality of eternal life, gained and revealed in the Passion and resurrection, given to those who believe.

Pentecost is, therefore, the actualization of the “for us” inherent in the voluntary Passion of Jesus and his resurrection. The Second Reading (Revelation 21:9–14, 21–27) is a vivid depiction of the Pentecostal reality (Paschal marriage, new Jerusalem), predicated upon the ascension of the Lamb in Revelation 4–5. The Trinity season, which follows upon Pentecost, is dedicated to the patterns of life which instantiate the eternal life given through the Spirit.

It was, it is the day from which all days are counted, the day which gives all days meaning. That day changed everything; every day before was moving toward it; every day since lives it out. If not for that day, the sun would never come up on any day.

But it was also a day shrouded in darkness and not only because from noon until three that sun failed to give its light. No, every witness of that day was clouded, darkened, in his understanding of what was happening. It was, it is the day from which all days are counted, but no one saw.

Not until the Spirit, which our Lord gave up that day, came at his sending fifty days later. Only then did God's people understand that from the day of Jesus' crucifixion, a whole new day had dawned. But now we are living in that day, and the Lord, in our text, would have his light shine on us so that we do see just that, that the victory of Christ the Crucified over the world has brought the faithful to a new day of knowing the truth and the right to pray to the Father.

The resurrection and the gift of the Spirit bring a new "Day." This new day is a time of prayer to the Father. And we pray "*in the name of Jesus,*" that is, on the basis of his death and resurrection. In praying such a prayer, we are united with the Son in his death. In hearing such a prayer, the Father gives to us all that the Son has won for us through his obedient suffering and death.

In this praying and hearing, we are united with the Father as Jesus, the Son, is united with the Father and our joy is full and complete.

The new “Day” is a time of Christian clarity and confidence by knowing the truth (vs 25–28). In his willing sacrifice, Jesus makes known the Father as the God who out of love sent his Son for the life of the world. This affirmation of the Son in his willing, sacrificial death is the grounding for the Christian’s knowledge of God and his confidence. As a result, when the Christian now prays to the Father ***“in the name of Jesus,”*** it is in confidence. The Father will answer such prayer because he loves the one who is praying. The Father loves the disciple who prays because the disciple loves and believes in the Son. The Father loves the disciple with the same love with which he loves his own Son.

Prayer to the Father ***“in the name of Jesus”*** arises from and so gives witness to that mutual love in which Father, Son, and believer are one (John 17:21–26). ***“²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in***

them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

United with the Son in his willing sacrifice, the Christian is joined with the Son in his prayer to the Father: ***“Your will be done.”*** As the prayer of the Son was accomplished in his voluntary death for the life of the world, so Christian prayer is ordered toward a life of faith and a confident steadfastness as children of the Father. The new “Day” is a time of faithful discipleship. The life of faith and faithfulness is lived in the crucified as our peace. The certainty and confidence of faith lies in the Son’s own steadfast faithfulness (v 32).

The Son alone suffered for the freedom of faith to live according to the will of the Father. Yet, the Father was with the Son in his willing sacrifice.

The willing sacrifice of the Son was the Father's will for the life of the world. United with Christ in his death, we are with the Father and the Father with us. In the crucified, the Christian has peace (*"in me you have peace,"* v 33).

In our steadfast faithfulness to the Father's will, the Father's will is made known to the world. Christian resolute faithfulness arises from the Son's victory over the world. In and by his crucifixion, Jesus has thrown the ruler of this world out (John 12:31).

The cross of Jesus is the place of freedom for faithful living, for the Crucified "draws" the believer to himself (John 12:32). In Baptism, we are united to Christ the Crucified and receive the Father of Jesus as our Father. ¹² *So then, brothers,^[a] we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.* ¹³ *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* ¹⁴ *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons^[b] of*

God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Romans 8:12–17).

In the partaking of Christ’s body and blood, we are united to his sacrificial death. Thus united, we are one with him in his coming to the world for the life of the world. In steadfast faith and faithfulness, the Christian gives witness to and manifests in deed the victory of Christ over the world.

A new day has dawned! We know; we pray; we witness. ***“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven”*** (Matthew 5:16).

So this Ascension Day, I pray we all take time to come together in faithfulness and thankfulness for all our Lord has done and continues to do . Amen