

Lessons for Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 14, 2022

Psalm 119:81-88 ~ *Trust clings to God's promise behind the turmoil of trouble and pain.*

Jeremiah 23:16-29 ~ *False prophets preached a false hope that encouraged rebellion against God.*

Hebrews 11:17-31(32-40)12:1-3 ~ *The cloud of witnesses who lived by faith direct us to trust in Jesus.*

Luke 12:49-53 (54-56) ~ *We anticipate the weather better than we recognize God's kingdom in Christ.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Peace for All Time

British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain bargained to win "peace for our time" before the outbreak of World War II. He was prepared to give up rights and compromise principles to preserve the peace. God's ultimate goal is not peace for our time, but for all time. Prophets who encouraged unholy alliances were expendable. God's people of faith were sustained in difficult times as they stood firm in God's covenant. Jesus warned that division, confrontation, and finally judgment and sacrifice would be necessary to bring about his mission, which was not peace on earth, but salvation for God's fallen creatures.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Holy God, You know I don't like conflict; my heart longs for peace. Too often I try to make peace when Your truth is at stake. Never let anything I do or say stand in the way of Your redemption for all people. Help me share Your gift of peace for all time with others. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: When we use our material blessings to accomplish our hopes and dreams, we should make sure that they are in line with God's plans for His kingdom and for our eternal well-being, and not ours alone, but also the eternal salvation of our neighbors.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, give us dreams consistent with Your will
And hopes based firmly on Your Kingdom's grace.
Then bless these offerings; give us purpose still
To share Your love and show the world Your face. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We anticipate the weather better than we recognize God's kingdom in Jesus, and we don't predict the weather very well! We let our hopes for short term goals cloud our vision of God's long term promises, so that we are ready to sell out eternity for present pleasures. The cloud we should pay attention to is the host of faithful people who have lived by trusting God's Word. Then we would be able to endure short term suffering, rejoicing in the redemption Christ has won for us, as we share this vision with others.

Questions to Consider: What kind of clouds obscure our vision of the future?

- Why did God denounce the message of the false prophets?
- What is the significance of this "great cloud of witnesses" for our lives?
- How does Jesus' message cause division among its hearers?
- When is it worthwhile to endure short term suffering?

Bonus on next page: Poem: Windows in the Sky

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 .