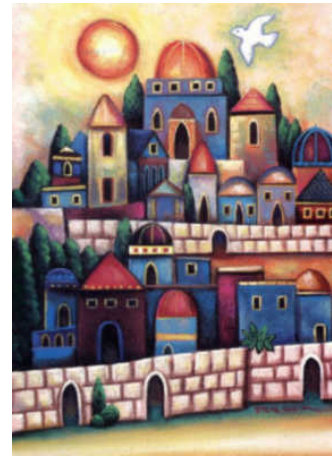


St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
December 4, 2016
2nd Sunday in Advent
WELS Series B.
2 Peter 3:8-14



But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. ¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

What kind of person are you? Are you easily frustrated – easily discouraged? I read again the other day about the invention of the light bulb! 29 years before the Declaration of Independence – there was a little Italian monk named Giuseppe – who first theorized about an incandescent light! 14 years later a guy named Ebenezer demonstrated heating a wire – to make it glow. 41 years later a guy named Humphry made a battery of immense size and lit a thin strip of platinum – but it wasn’t bright enough and didn’t last long enough – but it was a start. For the next 75 years people tried to make light bulbs. Finally along came Thomas Edison who tried 10,000 little strips of things and stuff until he made a workable light bulb! Edison also invented that thread that we probably take for granted when you screw in a light bulb! What kind of person are you? Are you easily frustrated and discouraged – or do you try and try and try? Today God’s Word doesn’t talk about the things and stuff of this world – it talks about something far *far* more important! It talks about your immortal soul as we ask the question in spiritual terms:

What Kind Of Person Are You?

- 1. A person who appreciates God’s patience?**
- 2. A person who longs for Heaven?**

The part of God’s Word we are concentrating on – is part of Simon Peter’s 1st Letter. When you think of Simon Peter what do you think of? Do you think of Peter and Andrew along with their fishing partners James and John? Do you think of Simon Peter – “Lord, if it’s you – tell me to come walking on the water – out on the Sea of Galilee to meet you?” Peter – walking on the water – Peter starting to sink – Jesus grabbing hold of him! Do you think of Simon Peter at Caesarea Philippi – who do people say I am? Who do you say I am? Simon Peter – “You are the

Christ the Son of the Living God!" Simon Peter, "Lord, this shall never happen to you!" And Jesus' sharpest ever rebuke, **"Get thee behind me, Satan!"** Simon Peter, "I will never deny you!" But he did again and again! He cursed and swore – **"I don't know the man!"** The rooster crowed and Simon Peter wept! It was Simon Peter who ran to the tomb and ran all the way in – to see the tomb empty of the risen Christ. It was Simon Peter who said again and again, **"Lord you know that I love you!"**

Simon Peter was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write two letters to believers 2,000 years ago – and to believers today! In chapter 1 Peter talks about some of the very painful things that were happening. Sometimes the gross evil we see all around us – may tempt us to be sad and discouraged! This is a 2,000 year old question. Peter wrote, **"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith – the salvation of your souls! 1 Peter 1:3-9 NIV.** Troubles make us stronger. God's Word says all things work together for good for those who love God. Troubles make you realize what's important and what isn't! "Things and stuff" are not important – people are! Our soul is important! Our faith is important! Going to Heaven where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain – is important! I was driving home from Pastor's Day – 20 minutes with 20 students from our Lakeside Lutheran High School – when it was reported that a woman who had been involved in the unspeakable abuse and even murder of a 1 year old little boy – now is accused of being involved with the death of a little 7 year old child! I hate that! I hate it! You know who is ultimately responsible? The devil – Satan is to blame – the serpent from eternal destruction that brought death and eternal destruction into this world. If you want to hate someone – blame someone – blame the devil. Then remember that Jesus was born to crush the serpent's head! The last enemy to be destroyed is death and Jesus did that – when on Easter morning he rose triumphant from the dead. Simon Peter encourages us – to live our life – close to Jesus – through God's Word – through coming to Church and Bible Class – so that when we die – we will come safely home to Heaven – to be with Jesus forever – where nothing will ever go wrong again!

Simon Peter was moved by the Holy Spirit to write, **"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."** Timing is everything! I have said that countless times – timing is everything! God's timing is everything! God is flawless in long range planning. From eternity God existed – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At just the right moment God said, "Let there be light!" And from then on – there was the click of time...12 hours of day – 12 hours of night – 60 minutes to an hour – 60 "Mississippi"s to a minute. 6 days of making new things out of nothing – or making animals and people out of the soil. Then 24 hours of rest. Mankind plunge the world into sin and our Heavenly Father promises that His one and only Son will be born of a woman to save us. For

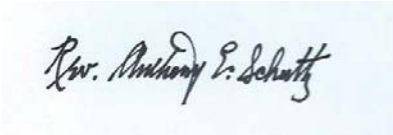
what—969 years a man named Enoch walked the earth—until he was translated into Heaven. 40 days and 40 nights it rained—and Noah and Mrs. Noah—Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives and animals two by two and 8 by 8 so there would be animals for sacrifice--were saved in the Ark. King David wrote, **“The LORD is my Shepherd.”** A thousand years later Jesus said, **“I am the Good Shepherd.”** For 2,000 years plus we have waited for Jesus to return. When the time is perfect—Jesus will be back to take us home to Heaven. We join the Apostle John who was afforded a glimpse into the peace and joy and rest of Heaven to pray, **“Even so come quickly, Lord Jesus!”**

¹⁰ **But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.** Have you ever been robbed? My home in West Chicago~ when I was away at Northwestern College—was robbed. The thieves came in the side door—the kitchen door—hidden from our neighbor by a wall of very tall very thin trees. The first thing they did was unplug the refrigerator so they could hear if we came home. They got out a pot roast and a ring baloney and fed them to our Golden Retriever Suzie. They stole my child-hood piggy bank filled with a silver dollar from each of my birthdays. They did not get my Father’s guns because they were well hidden. What they didn’t steal they stepped on—smashing things that were not worth much money but were priceless emotionally. When we were in Loves Park we were robbed—the front door knob wrenched off—the robbers escaping out the back door that they left open. These robbers even stole food—so they must have been desperate indeed. Again the greatest loss was gifts from relatives that could not be replaced! A thief gives no warning. Suddenly they are here—and just as suddenly they are gone! The Lord Jesus will come to judge the living and the dead when we least expect him. What does that mean? Could Jesus come back Christmas Eve? How wonderful would that be? The symbolism—the symmetry—born a baby in a manger—returned in power and great glory—angels singing both times? I don’t think so! Could Jesus come back on Good Friday in the afternoon. Again the symbolism—the symmetry—the day the Sun stopped shining—the bright and shining holiness when we don’t need the planet anymore? Or Easter morning—He is risen! “He is risen indeed!” And now he comes and raises up all the dead? How wonderful would that be? Churches full—Easter breakfast cooking in the basement? Again—I don’t think so? I think some Friday evening—when people are going out for fish fries! Maybe a Monday morning. Did you read your *Meditations* this week? How some people jump out of bed—hit the ground running while other people pull the covers over their heads and say, “I don’t want to get up! I don’t want to go to school or work!” That’s when Jesus might come—on a day when we least expect Him! There He will be!

¹³ **But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.** ¹⁴ **So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.** For some people—Christmas is all about best buys—the best presents and toys they can buy—and if you have to push somebody—even knock them down to get them out of the way—that’s the way it goes! I heard about a guy the other day—who wanted a new big screen flat screen high def TV. He got one—and rolled it out to his car—and tried to stuff it into his trunk—did you hear about this? It didn’t fit! The TV was too big for the trunk. So—after pushing and mushing a couple of times—with no observable sign it was going to fit—the guy smashed the trunk down again and again---until the TV was literally broken in a zillion pieces! Then he took it back

inside and told the manager – the TV was apparently busted when he bought it – so he would like a replacement and they gave him a whole new TV! This is not making every effort to be **found spotless, blameless and at peace with God** – quite the contrary. These next days and weeks – it will only be by the power of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace – that we can grow in faith – and reflect Jesus’ unconditional forgiving love – in how we treat our family and friends. Only by the grace of God will we be people of God – reflecting Jesus’ love in all we say and do to celebrate again the birth of our Savior and Redeemer! Amen!

To God alone all glory!

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature reads "Rev. Anthony P. Schertz" in a cursive script.