

## Go Up to Jerusalem with Jesus

‡ God's time (vv.1-9)

‡ God's way (vv.10-36)

‡ God's wisdom (vv.37-53)

In the Name of Jesus, the Way to the heavenly Jerusalem, dear living saints of God:

Speaking of *Life and Peace*<sup>2</sup>, do you have them? Are these fruits of the Spirit increasing in your life? *Peace* is possible in the midst of mayhem and bedlam. Just watch a faithful mother managing her children and household well, making her husband proud, enjoying the awesome wonder of God's abiding *peace* because she's into God's Word and sacrament. God makes her strong. How can you have *Life* increasing in your life? Consider that "*life* is the enjoyment of God's blessings." The more you praise God from whom all blessings flow, the more you enjoy those blessings whether much or little. Think of that little bird in the artist's winning portrait. He's sitting on his little branch and singing his heart out to God – right above a raging rapid that could kill him if he fell in! But he's at *peace* trusting his Creator. *Life and Peace* will increase as we **Go Up to Jerusalem with Jesus**. Today's the day in...

‡ God's time (vv.1-9)

Note right away: Unbelief is always ready. Sadly, we can be too much like Jesus' brothers. Matthew mentions them by name: "**James, Joseph, Simon and Judas**" (13:55), a.k.a. Jude. Later James and Jude will be pillars of the Christian church in Jerusalem. But at this point, they think Jesus is either losing His mind (Mark 3:21) or just trying to make a name for Himself. Can't you just hear them? "Won't work if you stay in the shadows, bro. Get up. Get going. Make sure everybody sees you at the big feast in temple town." Which is exactly why Jesus stayed where He was in Galilee. Then He went up secretly.

God chooses and makes the right time for the greatest blessing. Jesus let the Levites, priests and scholars all talk first. By the third or fourth day the people's ears would be tired of the tangled tradition that incessantly quoted and commented on rabbis of old. As soon God's Word spoke the message from above, people marveled at Jesus' knowledge without the typical institutional degrees. When hearts are ready by His careful preparation, **God's time** comes with grace and blessing...

‡ God's way (vv.10-36)

Contrast **God's way**, with man's fearful way. Does it ever happen to you? Fear fails to speak up. Everyone was looking for the powerful, popular Rabbi from Nazareth. He had a reputation for stilling the storm and healing the sick. Catching sight of one of His miracles would give anyone bragging rights back home. Some were asking, "**Where is he?**" but most wanted to know, *who is he?* "**A good man,**" according to many, but others, "**No, he deceives the people.**" Yet all kept quiet "**for fear of the Jews.**"

On the bright side of *Life and Peace* Jesus shows how grace teaches openly and fearlessly. All of us who proclaim the Gospel of forgiveness need training and a constant supply of God's grace to preach faithfully. But Jesus, without training or support from friends and family, in the midst of His enemies our Lord Jesus "**went up to the temple courts and began to teach.**" Just showing up is impressive.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, quotes are from a draft translation by the undersigned for the Wartburg Project – John.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Peace* is the theme of the worship service for this sermon, mentioned several times before the message.

But Jesus did more than just show up. Listen as grace teaches effectively: ***“My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone wants to do his will, he will know by experience whether my teaching is from God, or if I speak on my own.”*** You hear this throughout the Bible: Just try it! ***“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the who takes refuge in him.”*** (Psalm 34:8) Jesus promises that anyone who even wants to do God’s will – trust God’s Word, put it into practice – will find it works! Husbands and wives fall in love a hundred times in their faithful life together. Children grow up honoring their parents, gaining priceless blessings for real life work, finances and fun. Friends grow closer. Congregations flourish. Hard times soften; good times are gilded in glorious praise to God. Grace works.

And grace teaches truthfully. ***“The one who speaks on his own seeks his own glory. But he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.”*** (v.18) Some accused Jesus of having a demon. Finally ***Jesus cried out as he was teaching in the temple, “Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. Yet I have not come on my own, but the one who sent me is true. You do not know him. I know him because I am from him, and he sent me.”*** (vv.28f)

Stubborn pride refuses to believe. ***“Then they tried to seize him. Yet no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.”*** Unbelief is powerless against God, keeps banging it’s head against the wall. Unbelief hates honest questions: ***“When the Christ comes, he won’t do more miraculous signs than this man, will he?”*** Powerless unbelief enlists the authorities. The Pharisees actually ***“sent temple police to arrest him.”*** Watch them in a few minutes. Meanwhile, Jesus still astounds them.

***“I am with you only a little longer. Then I am going to the one who sent me. You will be looking for me and will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come.”*** Unbelief is powerless to follow Christ – physically or mentally. Earthbound reason imagined some Greek colony where Jews had settled in the *Diaspora*. After the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, Jews scattered all over the ancient world. But Jesus was going home to in heaven where unbelief cannot go. **Go Up to Jerusalem with Jesus** for...

### † God’s wisdom (vv.37-53)

Think Jesus was bold before? Watch this. ***On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink! Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from deep within him.”*** God’s wisdom gives continuous refreshment to faith. You hear Christ died for you, and your heart sings. Hear how He died for all, and **God’s wisdom** overflows your heart like a spring-fed river. You should see the crystal clear waters near Baniyas Springs at Caesarea Philippi. They feed the Jordan River and the beautiful Sea of Galilee. Spring water flowing over rocks refreshes as **God’s wisdom** fills your life with joy and peace.

**God’s wisdom** clarifies the facts. The crowd is still confused, arguing about Jesus: ***“This is truly the prophet.” “This is the Christ.” “What! The Christ does not come from Galilee, does he? Doesn’t the Scripture say that the Christ comes from David’s descendants, and from the little town of Bethlehem where David lived?”*** You kids have enough of **God’s wisdom** to clear up the confusion: Jesus is the Prophet, the Christ, from Galilee, and born in Bethlehem! It’s not either / or, but both / and.

Now the guards are in trouble! ***“Why didn’t you bring him in?” “No man ever spoke like this!” “Are you fooled too?”*** **God’s wisdom** impresses simple soldiers and offends the proud – left cursing.

Were you there a few weeks ago when my Lord helped Nicodemus see at night? ***“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*** (John 3:16 NIV84) Now **God’s wisdom** fortifies his humble heart in faith. Nicodemus asks if they should find out the facts first before condemning Jesus. Simple question...nasty answer. You **Go Up to Jerusalem** for *Life and Peace*, but first expect increasing violence against Jesus. “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” (CW 119) Don’t run away. Follow Him to the cross and crown. Amen.

For the study behind this sermon or for copies email [m.cordes@comcast.net](mailto:m.cordes@comcast.net) .  
You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at [www.wels.us/newlife](http://www.wels.us/newlife) .

New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church  
180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126