



† **Trust the eternal Judge. (vv.12-16)**
† **Be satisfied with His glorious grace. (vv.17-21)**

In the name of Jesus, our risen and ascended Savior, dear fellow redeemed:

Graduations, confirmations, weddings – what is it that floods the minds of parents and grandparents during these major events? Memories of how quickly we went from caring for infants ...to teens...to adults! Maybe it's embarrassing when your folks talk about you as a baby, but it really is amazing, this gift of time, our time of grace, how quickly it flies by. In the middle of challenges, long days and sleepless nights, it can seem like forever. Suddenly, the time is gone and life moves on. So what did Jesus really mean saying 2000 years ago by saying twice in our text? **"I Am Coming Soon!"**

† **Trust the eternal Judge. (vv.12-16)**

Try to imagine how time must look to God. If we stretched a rope across the front of church, one end could represent creation. About a third from that end could mark the Flood, another third the first coming of Christ. The final third is where we're living now in the New Testament Era between the first and second, final coming of Christ on Judgment Day. And we are such a tiny part of this last age.

Childhood feels as if it takes forever. Then it's, "I just want to graduate!"... "I sure wish this baby would hurry up and be born!"... "Slow down, child, slow down!"... Turn around and they're grown and gone and maybe grandchildren are coming as God ordains. While we're here on this tiny side of life, God looks at all from the outside. From His viewpoint everything is in the eternal present.

So why is it taking so long? Because **the eternal Judge** has such a kind and merciful heart: ***"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. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*** (2 Peter 3:8f NIV84)

What can we expect personally on Judgment Day? Jesus says, ***"Look, I am coming soon and my reward is with me, to repay each one according to what he has done."***¹ Is that meant to frighten or to encourage? Answer: "That depends on what you have done." Jesus told His disciples, ***"When you have done everything you were told to do...say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"*** (Luke 17:10 NIV84) Even for the apostles any good reward would be pure grace. What about us?

Jesus gives the answer sweet and clear: ***"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and so that they may enter through the gates into the city."*** Notice He says, ***"...wash their robes...."*** That present tense could also be ***"keep washing their robes."*** Once is not enough.

Here's the reason why: ***"Outside are the dogs, that is, the sorcerers, the adulterers, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood."*** This feels like we're sitting

¹ EHV ~ *Evangelical Heritage Version* (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2017. NPH: 800-662-6022; also Amazon-Kindle.

way too close to the fire. Haven't *sorcerers* become popular in our children's books and video games? *Adulterers* here includes not only homosexual offenders, but anyone who has sex with someone they're not married to. Or as Jesus goes further, everyone who ever has lustful desires. (Matthew 5:28) *Adulterers* and *murderers* are "people who have lust and hatred in their hearts."² *Idolaters* includes anyone who loves things more than God – the way we sit in church and daydream about what we'll do when it's finally over. And who doesn't love a lie now and then, at least if it helps us out? We lie to ourselves about how good we are, or at least not as bad as so and so. The fire of God's law hurts on our best days because it burns us all as doomed and damned. Who could help but run away instinctively?

We were hiding with our first parents from God's wrath in Garden until the LORD God came looking for us, calling us back, promising a Savior. Now Jesus has come to suffer for every sinful thought or feeling or attitude of yours and mine. His rising from the dead proclaims the righteous verdict of **the eternal Judge**. For Jesus' sake: "God is satisfied with you!" Christ's ascension to God's right hand shouts His victory over our sin, our death, our hell. God longs for everyone to hear this for our comfort and our peace.

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star." Your grandparents may testify about what you did when you were little because they were there watching. God's good angels have been watching God's Son from eternity, before He was a baby...all the way to His glorious ascension to rule all things from God's right hand for the good of His church. Jesus is eternal as both ***the Root and the Offspring of David***, that great king of Israel (1000 B.C.). Jesus came as promised to suffer and die. God has appointed His Son to judge the living and the dead. Can you **Trust the eternal Judge**? Look at His hands and tell me; they still bear the marks of the nails where Christ was crucified for you. Can you trust His verdict in your favor? Look at His side where the soldier's spear pierced and brought out blood and water – all shed to wash your sins away with mine and all the world's sin too! See Him with the eyes of faith who loved you so much to come and suffer to free you from guilt and shame. **Trust the eternal Judge** because nothing and no one can keep Him from coming back as promised to take you to His home in heaven, forever to...

✠ **Be satisfied with His glorious grace. (vv.17-21)**

Do you realize the whole purpose of why we're still alive, the whole purpose of Christ's *bride*, His Church, can be summarized in one word? See if you can pick it out: ***"The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears this say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who wants the water of life take it as a gift."*** God wants everyone to **Come!** drink this living water which then wells up inside you like an artesian well overflowing (John 4:14) grace and goodness for everyone around you. It quenches your *thirsty* soul when you're discouraged and refreshes like nothing else. A group of college men in the Boundary Waters laughed when they discovered they forgot to bring water. "We have plenty of beer!" But after a few days, they found they were constantly thirsty, much like religions today without Christ. Your soul just needs plain, clear, living ***water of life*** from God above.

Lest we try to improve on **His glorious grace**, Jesus says, ***"I give this warning to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. ¹⁹And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of Life and in the Holy City, which are written in this book."***

Look once more at the time-life rope. From the end it looks like a tiny dot. That's all of time in the sea of eternity. So quickly and comfortingly the Bible ends: ***The one who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! ²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints.*** What more do we need than His holiness wrapped up in His promise connected with simple water, with bread and wine? He keeps free refills flowing to refresh us on our way. **Be satisfied with His glorious grace**, and your life will overflow with blessings for all, your life that says: ***Amen.***

² Becker, Siegbert W. *REVELATION The Distant Triumph Song*. Milwaukee, WI: NPH, 1985, p. 368.

For *The Preacher's Apprentice (TPA)* sermon study or copies: m.cordes@comast.net . New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church
You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at www.wels.us/newlife . 180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126