**Waiting For Glory**

Based on [Luke 14:1-11](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk14.1-11)

Preached on October 4, 2020

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Pastor Nathan Fuehrer

Jesus famously says that when you are invited to a banquet, you should take up the lowest seat. Don’t promote yourself, or insinuate yourself...because you cannot give yourself glory. Neither can you save the world by your power. Be content and wait for God to deliver.

It’s a simple truth, Glory and honour and recognition must come from someone higher than you, and distinct from you. A police officer cannot authorize himself to enforce the law, he must be authorized by the government. A pastor cannot ordain himself, he must be ordained by the church. A military service man cannot award himself a badge of honour. This is a universal truth. One who is worthy of honour does not honour himself, he must receive it from one greater than he.

This truth must be impressed upon us, because our sinful flesh wants to be recognized, commended, even loved by the world. We are reminded to be humble, take the lowest seat, and wait...because God has plans to prosper you and not to harm you. This is the hope and comfort we have through our faith.

This is also the story of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came down from heaven, and was invited to the banquet of the world. He did not come in kings clothing, nor with silver spoon in hand. He grew in humble estate and, given to preach repentance and faith in the midst of a fallen world. He did not honour himself. He did not say, I am the messiah, honour me. He said, “Who do people say that I am...who do you say that I am?” And when given the opportunity, kings and princes and governors and the religious authorities refused to acknowledge him.

But he wasn’t seeking their honour anyways. He was seeking the honour of his father. As he said in Jerusalem, “The glory that we shared before the foundation of the earth” He says, “I do not seek my own glory...there is one who seeks it and he is judge.” And though the rulers of the earth cast him on a cross, he waited in the tomb for his father to raise him up, and take him up to heaven to rule all things. So are we to not seize our inheritance of this earth, for we will inherit it. But we are to wait patiently for our father to honour us, through the mediation of his son, who will say on the day of our glorification, “well done good and faithful servant” and “Friend, move up higher.”

But until that day, we live in this world of self-promotion. And we must remember the charge that we are to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. We are told that worldly people are better at dealing with the world than we are. The unjust steward was quick to sacrifice to his God, mammon...if only we were as quick to sacrifice our mammon for God. The reason we are not, is because we still hold out some hope for this world, that we can perfect it, end all disease and famine and wars and natural calamities before christ comes again. It won’t happen.

The first of the 2020 US Presidential Election Debates was held last Tuesday, and it got pretty bad reviews. I remember one news article saying that who lost the debate was the American people. For our purposes, consider how candidates for public office by and large talk about the good things they have done and promise to do...and how the other guy hasn’t done anything good, and he won’t be able to do what he says. This isn’t that one guy is a braggart and the other is humble, both candidates are self-promoters. And the reason is that they are competing for public office in a world that wants prosperity always and forever. But no man can promise that.

The economy was doing well and then, COVID. Who can plan for that? Jesus says that before the end there will be pestilences...yet the world wants someone to blame for covid. He says there will be wars...still, the world wants someone to blame for hostilities. He says there will be famines...yet the world wants to blame and fix poverty and inequality. He says there will be natural disasters...still, the world wants to assign blame and fix the environment. These four topics, disease, war, hunger and the environment, Jesus says these will never be fixed by man. And yet we keep placing our hope in a politically arranged salvation. We keep looking for that leader who will take his seat at the head of the table and fix the world so we can live comfortably, and since that will never happen...we end up heaping up vitriol and blame upon them when it doesn’t work.

The amount of scapegoating that is happening in the world is the activity of Satan. Those who look to blame others for problems tend to think they don’t deserve to have them. COVID is a virus, it doesn’t target people; it doesn’t care about the economy, or making this or that candidate look bad. Unless you are of the fringe that is saying COVID was planned, you have to say it is something that happened beyond our control. And that’s precisely what the world cannot abide...to say that there is something it can’t overcome and control. That there are wars and pestilences and famines and things that are always going to happen, and that they are not of failing to elect the right administration, or to blame the right people. They are the result of having eaten forbidden fruit....

I’m told that in Alcoholics Anonymous the first step is to admit you have a problem. We need to admit we have a problem. We are addicted to promises of success, progress and power. We have believed the lie that we deserve to live in a world that is not fallen, and we deserve to have leaders that can bring about heaven on earth. And if we have to suffer, we behave like spoiled tantrum children who didn’t get exactly what they wanted for christmas. There is a virus. It kills people. Nobody planned it. Nobody is in league with it. Don’t judge people about it. Obey the law and then, let each one be convinced in his own mind about what to do. And live in peace with one another, as much as is within your power.

If you need someone to blame for COVID, blame God. Blame God. He’s the only one you can be sure of, knew about it before it happened. He’s the only one who undeniably had the power and he didn’t do anything to stop it. When you realize that your anger for the problems of the world, all of it, is properly directed at God, then you can see just how you share in the guilt of those who shouted crucified *Him*. God has allowed the world to be such as it is. It is not a banquet where you fight your way to the top. It is a place where you can be assured you are only here for a short while. Live in peace, serve in love, and God will decide where you will sit while here. It is, after all, only a temporary arrangement. He will bring salvation in his own time. On this we shall hope, for all who trust in the lord and have found no place to lay their head in this world, to you he will say in that day, “Friend, move up higher, cast your crowns and take a seat with the lamb who died and behold, he lives forever.”