THE LAST DAYS ARE HERE

June 4, 2017 Acts 2:17-21

Dear friends in Christ. Today is Pentecost, which is the traditional birthday of the Christian Church. Jesus planted the seed while He was on the earth. He gave it a booster shot after He rose from the dead by giving the disciples a quick refresher course about how Jesus Himself was connected with the prophesies in the Old Testament.

Then, as it is recorded in Luke, Ch. 24, Jesus said to them: “Behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Then Jesus went back to heaven.

A few weeks later, what Jesus had promised came to pass. And what happened is what the prophet Joel had prophesied in Chapter 2 of his letter: “And in the last days it shall be, God declared, that I will pour out My spirit on all flesh, and your sons and daughters will shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

The disciples, according to Acts 2 had tongues of fire on their heads and were able to speak languages that they had no knowledge of.

God was speaking to people from all over in their own languages about the mighty works of God in Jesus Christ.

Who learns a new language in a matter of seconds? The disciples did by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Why? To declare the wonders of God and What His only Son Jesus Christ had done to save us from eternal damnation.

The great wonder of Pentecost is that people from all over the area heard of God in their own language. This is still happening today around the world as Lutheran Bible Translators are hard at work putting the Bible into different languages so that more can learn about the Triune God and Know that Jesus has paid for their sins with His holy blood.

It’s happening in America. Go to some churches and you will hear the message in Spanish, Vietnamese, tagalog(which is Filipino).

Everyone has to know about Jesus Christ. That He came to obey every commandment we broke. He came to suffer for every sin we committed. He came to die the death we deserve. He suffered our hell and He has given us heaven as a free gift.

These are the wonders that compelled the disciples to say, “We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” These are the wonders that heal sin-sick souls; These are the wonders that converted 3,000 souls in one day. These are the wonders that reached out in our language so that we have the faith in Christ that has put on the road to heaven.

Do you sense the urgency of declaring these wonders to others? The Holy Spirit gave the disciples the ability to speak other languages for a reason. The word needed to get out. It still does.

Part of our offering goes to District and a part of District funds go to Synod and Synod sends out Missionaries to share the Law/Gospel message with people around the world.

Many Congregations in Synod are a part of the TIM program—Together in Missions. In this program, the congregation commits to supporting a portion of the amount needed for a certain missionary.

The urgency is still the same. As you look at the obituary in the paper each day----how many of those died in the faith and are in heaven?

How many people know that the signs of the end are happening all around us, according to Matthew 24. Wars and natural disasters are warning us that the end is near---blood, fire and billows of smoke. On the last day the whole universe will go dark. Then Jesus will be seen by everyone as He descends for the day of judgment.

Are you ready? Is this not what preaching is for? If no one points out your sin, what will you continue to do?

If no one shows you what you are really like, what will you continue to be?

If no one tells you what will happen to you if you keep heading the wrong way, where will you end up?

Preaching repentance is absolutely an act of love. It comes with the same hope and desire the Lord has: “not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But that is only half the message that is needed. The other half is the Good News of forgiveness won on Calvary by our Savior Jesus Christ. The promise of eternal life at the end of life on earth is a tremendous comfort for the elderly, the sick and the dying.

And everyone, from all walks of life and of every color and creed, who calls on the name of the Lord, will be saved. From the flames of hell; from everlasting suffering; from being separated from God forever.

Are you ready to be saved? Does your neighbor know Jesus? Your children? We are in the last days and there are still many people who are not ready for that day. We can help. Amen