The Saints' Communion
(All Saints' Day - November 1st, 2026)

Announcements:

- *Africa Team - **Tim to come up and announce**, then I come up for prayer at the end...*
- *Voting Exhortation - General Election is on **Tuesday, November 3rd**.*
  - *Phil 3:20 citizens of heavenly king, 1 Peter 1:1 sojourners on earth, Mt. 5:13-16 salt/light*
  - *Jeremiah 29:7 - "But **seek the welfare** of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare…"*
    - ***Welfare (Shalom)** = complete; sound; whole; flourishing; safe. **(Seek it!)***
    - *If God called His people to seek the welfare of Babylon, a city that wasn't even theirs (and **had no say**), how much more should we seek the good where God has planted us? Voting is a practical way (not **mere** choice; **big** consequences)*
  - *Three printout on table:*
    - ***A biblical "Guide" for voting** (**Chart**: Various Issues, RNC, DNC, Biblical view)*
    - ***Examining the claims of James Talarico** (because he claims Christianity and preaches theology - **held to accountability** (unlike a non-believer) Big concerns!*
    - ***How to evaluate candidates** through a biblical lens… (**lesser of evils** at times!)*
  - *Jesus is King. No election changes that. God is in control. Our trust is ultimately in Him!*
  - ***Pray before vote:** wisdom; discernment; honest election; and leaders elected… **PRAY***

Hallowed Holidays? ***Part 2 (question mark = still intentional!)***

- *Last week:* **Trick or Truth:** ***All Hallows' Eve (Reformation Day!) - another history lesson…***
- This week: **The Saints' Communion:** ***All Saints' Day + Corporate Communion!***
- Then, *next week: back to verse by verse…* ***(Book of Titus!) - Revelation Following…***

Today is **November 1st**: ***All Saints' Day itself…*** *(denominations celebrate differently; **some don't**)*

- **Allhallowtide**: *All Hallows' Eve (Oct 31), All Saints' Day (Nov 1), All Souls' Day (Nov 2)*
- **Acknowledge disagreements** and the **goal is not to bash or belittle** but ***provide clarity to swirling waters of church history and theology…*** that ***millions around the world*** celebrate.

Today we land the plane: ***who are the saints; where are they now; what does that mean for us?***

All four on one slide please:

- **Saints Remembered** *(past…)*
- **Saints at Rest** *(present…)*
- **Saints Reunited** *(future…)*
- **The Table** *(in the meantime…)*

Anchor text: ***(after the "hall of faith" (Hebrews 11))***

- *Hebrews 12:1-2 - "Therefore we also, since we are **surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses**, let us lay aside… and let us run… **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith." - **Aphorao** = turn away from others and **fix your gaze upon**!*
- Notice ***what/where the verse emphasizes**… **not looking at the saints**, **looking unto Jesus!***
- The saints are the crowd in the stands, *They cheer us on*; **Jesus is who we run toward!**

Pray

Saints Remembered ***(The Past…)***

Quick recap from last week:

- *Recap details about Oct 31st, All Hallows' Eve, Luther, 95 theses, indulgences, relics, etc...*
- ***Show Castle Church images***
- *"**The true treasure of the church** is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God." (Luther, Thesis 62)* ***- not a building, indulgences, power from dead saints, or their relics…***

Who are the saints: ***(raise your hand if you're a saint! Ain't…?)***

- ***Hagios** = "sacred, set apart, belonging to God; a holy person or item; saint" (Hebrew: **qadosh**)*
- *Psalm 16:3 - "**As for the saints (qedoshim)** who are on the earth, 'They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.'"*
- ***All three on one slide** (if fits… if not, **then three separate slides**…)*
  - *Romans 1:7, CSB - "To all who are in Rome, loved by God, **called as saints (hagios)**"*
  - *Phil. 1:1, NKJV - "**To all the saints (hagios)** in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi…"*
  - *1 Cor. 1:2, CSB - "To the church of God at Corinth… **called as saints (hagios)**"*
  - ***Corinth** - the messiest church - **still saints!** Greek: **"called saints," not called to "become (to be)" saints someday**. Based on **position in Christ, not performance!***

Historical Development of Sainthood: ***(A quick walk through history…)***

- ***(All on one slide please)***
- *c. 155 AD — **Martyrs remembered** (Polycarp)*
  - *"Christ we worship as the Son of God; the martyrs we love as disciples and imitators of the Lord." (Martyrdom of Polycarp 17, paraphrased)*
  - *…also recorded in the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (Paragraph 957).*
    - *Summary of universal Catholic beliefs and teachings (Pope John Paul II, 1990s)*
- *300s–700s AD — **Shrines, relics, and saints' intercession grow**… (post-Diocletian)*
- *787 AD — **Veneration of icons vs. worship of God** (Second Council of Nicea)*
  - *"...honourable reverence, **not indeed that true worship**… which pertains alone to the divine nature." (Second Council of Nicaea, 787; NPNF, Second Series, Vol. 14)*
    - ***Supporting Iconoclasm.** Icons receiving veneration: bowing, kissing, candles.*
  - *"For the honour which is paid to the image **passes on** to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented." (Second Council of Nicaea, 787; NPNF, Second Series, Vol. 14)* ***Smells like idolatry…***
  - **Worship vs. Honor** ***(in Catholic terminology)***
    - ***(all on one slide)***
    - ***Latria:** worship, for God alone **- Strictly for Christ as supreme.***
    - ***Dulia:** honor given to saints and angels **- heroic martyrs***
    - ***Hyperdulia:** the highest honor, given to Mary (protodulia for St. Joseph)*
    - ***Absolute dulia:** honor given directly to a saint*
    - ***Relative dulia:** honor given to an image or relic, for the saint it represents*
  - **But in practice** the line between ***honoring & worship blurs easily**… **various areas (Latin America)** (**Vatican II** urged against "**gross exaggerations**" in Marian devotion)*
- *993 AD — **First papal canonization of a saint** (Pope John XV) **(Ulrich of Augsburg)***

    - ***"Saint"*** shifted from *what every believer is* to a title *granted after death to a select few*.
- *1530 AD — **Protestants: Christ alone is Mediator** (Augsburg Confession)*
    - ***Painting of presentation of Augsburg Confession to Emperor Charles V in 1530***
    - *"…the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works… But the **Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints or to ask help of saints**, since it sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor." (Augsburg Confession, Article 21, 1530) - **official protestant position***
- *1563 AD — **Catholics: saints' intercession affirmed** (Council of Trent) **- formal response…***
    - *"…that it is **good and useful suppliantly to invoke them**, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid, and help for obtaining benefits from God, through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our alone Redeemer and Saviour…" (Council of Trent, Session 25, 1563)*
    - Notice that even Trent called Christ ***"our alone Redeemer."*** **We all agree there** - we ***differ on whether we need anyone or anything else*** to approach Him...

Where things stand today:

- ***All on one slide:***
- ***Catholic:*** *canonized saints · veneration (not worship) · intercession*
    - ***Patron saints:*** *baptism or confirmation (Catechism 2156) - assured of intercession*
- ***Orthodox:*** *similar, with icons central to devotion · intercession*
    - ***Greek Orthodox Iconostasis image(s)*** *- some places **kiss** an icon (home **icon corner**)*
- ***Protestant:*** *every believer a saint · remember and imitate · pray to God alone (through Christ)*
- ***Universal:*** ***Apostles' Creed:*** *"I believe… in the communion of saints."* ***(title of message!)***

Remembering rightly:

- *Hebrews 13:7-8 - "**Remember** those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."*
    - ***Remember*** them, ***imitate*** their faith, **look to Jesus**. *Leaders change, **Christ doesn't!***
    - *"Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace…" (v. 9)*
    - *Who spoke God's Word into your life?* Thank God for them! But ***don't worship/idolize***
- *1 Timothy 2:5-6 - "For there is one God and **one Mediator** between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all…" God and men, **gap**; God became **man**.*
    - ***In context***: that ***chapter is about prayer*** for *one another* and *those in authority* (***alive!***)
    - Old *saints can point you* to Jesus; **only Jesus can give** a right relationship with God.

Saints at Rest ***(The Present…)***

The universal question: ***what happens when we die?***

- ***One slide if easier*** ***- all four = Catholic-rooted, blended with local customs (syncretized)***
- ***Image: Mexico Day of the Dead - "ofrenda" with photos, marigolds, and candles.***
    - ***To welcome loved ones home…*** ***(blend with Aztec, catholic bells welcome home)***
- ***Image: Guatemala giant kites over cemeteries of Sumpango/Santiago Sacatepéquez.***
    - ***To carry messages to the dead…*** ***(blend with Mayan)***
- ***Image: Poland Powazki Cemetery in Warsaw on All Saints' night glowing w/ candles.***
    - ***All Souls' Day prayers: purgatory*** *(candles on unknown graves so no soul is forgotten)*

- ***Image: Philippines "Undas" ceremonies - picnicking at gravesites. (Asia largest catholic)***
  - ***Similar to Poland…****; many through the night. Some believe dead draw near that night.*
- ***Different cultures, same longing***: we *don't want to forget those we love... the value of a soul!*

All Souls' Day ***(November 2nd)***

- ***Cluny Abbey (Benedictine monastery in Burgundy, France) "all souls' day" originated…***
- ***All Saints*** honored *those believed in heaven*; ***All Souls*** prayed for *those believed not yet there*.

Purgatory through the ages: ***(how the belief developed)***

- ***(All on one slide please)***
- *c. 200 AD — **Prayers and offerings for the dead** (Tertullian)* ***- doctrine not yet defined…***
- *c. 600 AD — "**Purifying fire**" after death popularized (Gregory the Great)* ***- Masses offered…***
- *998 AD — **All Souls' Day begins** (Odilo of Cluny)* ***- November 2nd***
- *1274 & 1439 AD — **Purgatory formally defined** (Councils of Lyon & Florence)*
  - ***Purification after death*** ***(medieval images of physical location and fire, not dogma)***
- *1537 AD — **Luther rejects purgatory** (Smalcald Articles)*
  - ***Lutheran confession,*** *10 years before death.* ***A Final Statement of Faith****.*
  - ***Rejected:*** *Mass as a sacrifice; purgatory (a specter of the devil); invocation of the saints.*
- *1563 AD — **Catholics reaffirm it** (Council of Trent); Anglicans reject it (Thirty-Nine Articles)*
  - *"...that **there is a Purgatory**, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar." (Council of Trent, Session 25, 1563)*
  - ***"Suffrages"*** *= prayers, alms, good works for the dead;* ***"sacrifice of the altar"*** *= Mass. (**holy eucharist** to Christ's sacrifice present:* ***offered to the living & dead (purgatory)****)*
  - *"The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints,* ***is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.****" (Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. 22, 1563)* ***-*** *The* ***Church of England*** *wrote in 1563; remains historical standard for* ***Anglicans/Episcopalians****;* ***Methodists*** *adopted.*

Where things stand today:

- ***All three on one slide***
- ***Catholic (Catechism 1030–1032):*** *purgatory · prayers and Masses for the dead · indulgences*
- ***Orthodox:*** *no purgatory (as Rome defines it) · awaiting final judgment · still pray for the dead*
  - *But they still believe in an i**ntermediate state** awaiting… (prayers benefit "somehow")*
- ***Protestant:*** *immediately with Christ · awaiting the resurrection · no prayers needed for the dead*

What Scripture teaches about the believer's death:

- *2 Cor 5:8 - "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be* ***absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.****"*
  - Paul joins *leaving the body* and *arriving with the Lord* into *one movement*. He even plays on words: *away from home, at home. (Ekdemeo/Endemeo)* **No 3rd address** in between.
- *Luke 23:43 - "Assuredly, I say to you,* ***today you will be with Me in Paradise.****"*
  - ***The thief*** had *no time for good works or purification* - yet Jesus said ***"today."*** If anyone needed purgatory, he did. Instead… ***grace!***
- *Heb. 10:14 - "For* ***by one offering He has perfected forever*** *those who are being sanctified."*

- ***Perfected… forever!*** Nothing left to purge; nothing left for prayers or payments to finish.

A pastoral word:

- *1 Thess. 4:13-14 - "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep [died], **lest you sorrow as others who have no hope**. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.**"*
- ***Some of you are grieving*** this year. ***We do sorrow… but not without hope***. Our loved ones in Christ don't need our prayers to get there - **Christ finished it.** ***Blessed assurance!***

Our hope belongs to those in Christ:

- *Heb. 9:27 - "And as it is appointed for men to die once, **but after this the judgment.**"*
- *John 5:24 - "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment**, but has passed from death into life..."*
  - **No second chances** after death; **no purgatory** to fix it later.
  - ***Have you passed from death into life? Today is the day…***
  - ***(Gospel invitation) - before communion…***

Saints Reunited ***(The Future…)***

The resurrection of the body:

- *Phil. 3:20-21 - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body**…"*
- *1 Thess. 4:16-18 - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words…"*
  - ***"Together with them!"*** Not just with the Lord - **with each other!**
    - Paul's goal *isn't necessarily a timeline* here; ***it's comfort (v. 18)***.

The great multitude:

- *Rev. 7:9 - "...and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb…"*
  - ***Remember those images*** from *Mexico, Guatemala, Poland, and the Philippines?* ***Every nation and tongue*** - **the gospel answers every culture's longing!**

All things made new:

- *Rev. 21:4 - "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; **there shall be no more death**, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*
  - ***No more graves to decorate or candles to light***. **Death itself, dead!**

The marriage supper of the Lamb:

- *Rev. 19:9 - "Blessed are those who are called to **the marriage supper of the Lamb!**"*

- *Matt. 26:29 - "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on **until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.**"*
- **Jesus is saving us a seat at His table**… *So in the meantime, we come to this one...*

The Table ***(In The Meantime…)***

All three on one slide:

- ***Remember*** *— look back (humble)*
- ***Unite*** *— look around (grateful)*
- ***Proclaim*** *— look forward (dependent)*

Remember — look back ***(humble)***

- *1 Cor. 11:23-25 - "He… took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; **this is My body** which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' …He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant **in My blood**. This do, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of Me.**'"*
    - **We bring nothing to this table** - *no merit, no relic, no indulgence. **He did it all!***

Unite — look around ***(grateful)***

- *1 Cor. 10:16-17 - "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the **communion** of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the **communion** of the body of Christ? **For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.**"*
    - ***Koinonia:*** ***Unity with fellow brethren at the Table…***
- *Heb. 12:22-24 - "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, **to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven**, to God the Judge of all, **to the spirits of just men made perfect**, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant…"*
    - Saints who've gone before *aren't waiting to be cleaned up*. Hebrews says they've been ***'made perfect,'*** by the **same one offering that perfects us**. When we worship, we join them. *Not in some mystical sense*, only that, *we're the same body!*
    - ***The table reminds us*** *we are part of **a much bigger congregation** than this room!*

Proclaim — look forward ***(dependent)***

- *1 Cor. 11:26 - "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, **you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**"* ***- Look back, look around, look forward...***
    - ***We depend on Christ alone*** until we ***eat it new with Him!***

Communion ***- a time of examination and reflection…***

Two weeks ago we asked: **Hallowed holidays?**

- ***The days themselves*** aren't what make anything holy… **Christ does!** And through Him…
    - ***every believer is a saint…***
    - ***every saint who died in Him is at rest…***
    - ***and every saint will be reunited at His table…***

PRAY - *The Blessing…*

Shorter closing chorus *after communion due to time…*