

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Nov 28th 2014

As we draw ever nearer to the end of the liturgical year, the language of the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of Luke continue to paint vivid pictures of “the end”: cosmic battle, great tribulation, judgment and, most importantly, the passing away of heaven and earth. On the other hand, the Scriptures also record that, when all these tumultuous events have taken place, some things remain: the words of Jesus and the deeds of the just.

I recall two lines of a poem that express these truths quite succinctly: “Only one life, ’twill soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last.” These lines present a sharp contrast with the picture painted by our casual observations of daily life: the buildings we occupy, the things we possess, the plans we make—they all look so solid and firm. Only a deeper look reveals the quiet truth: all these things only last so long. Most especially, WE only last so long.

Well then, what’s the point? Why all the fuss? Why do this or that, if all is passing away?

The conviction that “what’s done for Christ” actually survives this life gives us great confidence in the living of our daily life. It ALL matters because the words of Jesus and our good deeds survive the dissolution of everything else that is. So, what am I engaged in today? What am I pursuing that passes? What am I pursuing that lasts? What words fill my ears, my mind and my heart? Small talk? Gossip? Petty concerns? Or perhaps the words of Jesus—the ones that last?

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