

### ***Justified by Jesus***

This passage from Luke has two senses. In its narrower sense it refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ; in its wider sense it refers to the time when God's summons enters a person's life, a call to prepare to meet our God.

There is praise for the servant who is ready. The long flowing robes of the middle-east were a hindrance to work; and when a man prepared to work, he gathered up his robes under his girdle to leave himself free for activity. The type of lamp used was like a cotton wick floating in a sauce-boat of oil. Always the wick had to be kept trimmed and the lamp replenished or the light would go out.

No one can tell the day or the hour when eternity will invade time and summons will come. How, then, would we like God to find us?

We would like him to find us with our work completed. Life for so many of us is filled with loose ends. There are things undone and things half-done; things put off and things not even attempted.

Jesus himself said, 'I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do' (John 17:4). No one should ever lightly leave undone a task that ought to have been finished, before night falls.

We would like God to find us at peace with one another. It would be a haunting thing to pass from this world in bitterness with a neighbour. We should never let the sun go down on our anger (Ephesians 4:26), least of all the last sun of all and we never know which sun that will be.

We should like God to find us at peace with him. It will make all the difference at the last whether we feel that we are going out to a stranger or an enemy, or going to fall asleep in the arms of God.

When we live attentive to the daily tasks, at peace with one another and with God we will in a most special way experience the blessed presence of Jesus as he describes it:

***truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. 38 If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.***

Those who in this life cultivated a spirit of generosity in how they live will experience both now and in eternity in a special way the generosity of God.

May we cultivate the prayerful and generous spirit expressed by David in this morning's Psalm:

***Here I am;  
in the scroll of the book it is written of me.  
8 I delight to do your will, O my God;  
your law is within my heart."***

When we allow for the word of God to dwell in us richly we discover the joy that delights in serving God.

St Paul in the reading from Romans contrasts the life that is lived in opposition to God as represented by Adam as “death exercising dominion through him.” He then speaks of those whose lives are joined to Christ by also using the word dominion. But what a different context for the word now:

*exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.*

In the first sense Adam is controlled by the power of sin, described here as death. In the second sense, those who are joined to Jesus Christ are not under the control of sin, but rather they exercise dominion in their lives. How does this happen? By knowing that as we live a life of grace-filled service we are more fully being conformed to the one who came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

This is what Jesus calls us to in the Gospel and what St. Paul says gives to live true meaning and purpose as we exercise “dominion in life”.

To discover this is to know the delight of which David speaks, when at the end of today’s psalm he says:

***But may all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who love your salvation  
say continually, “Great is the LORD!”***