

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE

*"The Day of Gladness"*

By Pastor Rick Rostek, Immanuel Lutheran Church

Combine a blockbuster movie ("2012"), an ancient Mayan calendar, and scores of "pseudoscientists, paranormal activity enthusiasts, and Internet theorists" and what do you get? The end of the world on December 21, 2012. Sounds scary, doesn't it? Thankfully, NASA has weighed in, stating in one news report, "There is no factual basis for these claims." Indeed, I'm sure that NASA and other reputable scientists see nothing imminent that would threaten the earth. Still, according to God's word, the end will come sometime. When? We don't know. Legions of Biblical investigators have scoured the Bible, especially the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, looking for the date of the Apocalypse. Hundreds, maybe thousands of doomsday prophecies have come and gone, all proving to be untrue. Perhaps we should just take Jesus at His word when He says, "But concerning that day or hour no one knows" (Matthew 24:36).

The day and hour of the end will, however, come at some point. The prophet Isaiah says "the heav-

ens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment" (Isaiah 51:6). The apostle Peter similarly says "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and

the works that are done on it will be exposed" (2 Peter 3:10). Jesus Himself says, "Heaven and earth will pass away" (Matthew 24:35). Is there any hope?

Of course there is. Our hope is in Jesus who came to give life and salvation to all who would believe in Him.

Christ will return one day, and when He does, the heavens and earth will pass away, making way for the "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). That righteousness is the righteousness that comes by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus. His blood shed on the cross brings forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. So, even though Christ will return to judge the world, those who believe in Him need not worry. He paid the price on the cross that all believers might escape sorrow, tears, and death. It will, indeed, be a day of gladness.

Will it be gladness for all people? No, sadly. Not all believe in Jesus. Yet there is hope. Anyone who believes that Jesus is the Savior of the world and has died for the forgiveness of sin will be received into Christ's arms on that final day. So, rather than trusting in movies or spurious doomsday predictions, simply put your faith in the One who has conquered death, Jesus Christ. His Day will be a Day of Gladness for all who trust in Him.

### First Things First



"Lost the keys again...they'll never turn up in this mess...we need some organization around here...no time right now, maybe later!" Most of us can recognize ourselves in this scenario. What can we do about it? Perhaps we can reassess our priorities and put first things first.

In Matthew 6:33, God makes this promise... "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Maybe we acknowledge our need for weekly worship, but we feel weary or just "too busy". This week, put God first! Spend time with Him and He will take care of the rest.

Sunday Psalm 64	Monday Psalm 65	Tuesday Psalm 66	Wednesday Psalm 67	Thursday Psalm 84	Friday Psalm 95	Saturday Psalm 96
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