

Didache Divine Service
Session 24—The Second Article of the Creed
The Great Tribulation—Mark 13:21-37
6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 2, 2023

1. Invocation and Prayer

2. Hymn: “We All Believe in One True God” LSB 954

3. **Review of the Resurrection and Ascension:**

a. Review Terms on the Resurrection and Ascension:

the descent into hell
the resurrection

justification
(verb: to justify)

the exaltation of Christ
The Ascension of Our Lord
the right hand of God

- a. **“Do not be afraid! He is risen!”** is the proclamation of forgiveness. Christ’s absolution is the word that raises the dead and restores life (reconciliation) with God because it takes away the cause of death and separation from God.
- b. By Christ’s forgiveness unbelief is rebuked and faith is restored:
- Holy Baptism
 - Absolution/preaching and teaching the Gospel
 - The Lord’s Supper
- c. **“Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”** – from the position of authority at God’s right hand, Jesus’ ministry restores life with God and gives victory over Satan (“the demons”), sin and death (“deadly poison”) – by the laying on of hands the Word of Christ’s forgiveness has been applied to sinners through the Absolution and the Sacraments since the time of Jesus.

4. **Bible Reading: The Second Coming and Judgment Day—Mark 13:21-37**

- a. False doctrine and false Christ’s (or false saviors) are characteristic of the Last Days (We have been in the Last days since the time of the Apostles)
- b. What is tribulation? Every way in which faith in Christ has been attacked down through the centuries. These attacks involve the “shaking” of those things in creation that otherwise seem stable and constant (e.g., the sun, the moon, the stars, the powers of the heavens).
- c. Devil, world, and our sinful nature cause us to interpret the signs of the end times (famine, pestilence, earthquakes, hurricanes, war, the rise of evil, etc.) as reason to fear and turn away from faith in Christ.
- d. The Son of Man comes in the clouds in the midst of such tribulation.
- e. **The Events of Holy Week and the Disciples reactions to that tribulation catechize us and prepare the Church of every age to face the end times.**
- f. His angels (“messengers”) will gather together the elect (believers who have heard the call of the Gospel) from the four winds (all over the world).

- g. **The Parable of the Fig Tree** is a parable that teaches us that the signs of the great Tribulation are actually the prelude to the Second Coming and the Resurrection.
- h. No one knows the hour of our Lord's Second Coming
- i. **"Watch and Pray"** means that the Christian and the Church are called to be evermore "in the study of God's Word"
- j. Christ gives His servants authority to protect the house—each minister is to do his duty, each Christian is to live faithfully in his or her vocation.

5. Catechism: Second Article on the Second Coming and Judgment; Terms (LSB 322):

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. + Second Coming in Judgment

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ ... is my Lord ...

+ The main clause

that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him

+ Believers are declared righteous for Jesus' sake in the Judgment on the Last Day

in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

the Second Coming
salvation

damnation
Judgment Day (or the Last Day)

6. Holy Absolution Proclaims the Judgment of God

If we faithfully hear, receive, and believe the judgment of God in Christ in this life, then we have nothing to fear at our Lord's Second Coming in Judgment. This makes Catechesis, Preaching, Confession and Absolution the indispensable preparation for Our Lord's Second Coming because they create and sustain faith in Christ AND declare us "righteous for Jesus' sake" – This is the same judgment that will be declared publicly on Judgment Day.

God's Judgment Can Be Seen in a Threefold Sense:

- i. In Jesus' death and resurrection.
- ii. In preaching Law and Gospel (repentance and the forgiveness of sins), or Excommunication and Holy Absolution; and
- iii. In the publishing of this verdict publicly and for all eternity on the Last Day.

7. Hymn: "Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won" LSB 490

8. The Holy Communion Liturgy

9. Hymn: "Christ, Mighty Savior" LSB 881