

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster
Sunday, November 13th, 2022, Pentecost XXII, 2022
Isaiah 65:17-25, Isaiah 12 (canticle 3 Song of Peace)
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, Luke 21:5-19

Maybe I'm just being cynical, but I don't put much stock in end times discussion. It is not so much that I'm being naive and in denial of that possibility, but there is another factor that plays a bigger role. That for each one of us, our time on earth is limited and we could die at anytime. So, we don't need to concern ourselves with the end of the world because our own part of the world could end at anytime.

And the other part of the passage about Jesus saying, *beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and 'The time is near!' Do not go after them.*

Jesus is saying in a different way what I just mentioned previously, but there is another whole meaning in what Jesus is saying in that passage.

We are responsible for our own spiritual lives and that we need to decide for ourselves and not just passively follow someone who is saying what we want to hear and not challenging us.

This says something about the balance between individual and community. That our place is about asking questions as well as supporting and uplifting others.

In Isaiah we hear about the hope for the future, and the new heaven and new earth, and the concept of freedom. That is all well and good, but with freedom comes challenges and responsibilities.

In today's world there is enough of a temptation to do what we want right now and so we are losing the ability to delay gratification. I believe freedom and maturity lead to the ability to do what needs to be done now and delayed gratification, be willing to put off doing what we enjoy until later.

That is the danger, the added danger following someone who says the end is near. This gives us justification for enjoying all we can of life now and not delaying gratification. Not doing the things we need to do that take care of ourselves, loved ones, and our neighbors.

Maybe this too says something as to why I'm an Anglican. The middle ground, seeking to do what needs to be done to be helpful to others, while at the same time enjoying life, living in the present.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying I get it right, and am an expert on it, or even close. I believe this is part of our spiritual journeys and we all have to discern when it is appropriate to delay gratification, and when it is the right time to enjoy for ourselves living in the present.

Amen

The Lord bless *you* and watch over *you*,
the Lord make his face shine upon *you*
and be gracious to *you*,
the Lord look kindly on *you*
and give *you* peace;
and the blessing ...