

## “IS THERE A ROBE FOR ME!?”

Sermon Text – Rev. 7:9-10  
All Saints’ Day (Observed)  
Sun. & Wed., Nov. 6 & 9, 2011  
OT Lesson – Rev. 7:2-17  
Epistle – 1 John 3:1-3  
Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12

In the Name of the Triune God – Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit. [Amen.]

Our sermon for our observance of All Saints’ Day is based primarily on the First reading from Revelation read a moment ago, particularly the following: **After this I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands <sup>10</sup>and they crying out with a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”** (Rev. 7:9-10, ESV)

Dear friends in Christ Jesus,

As you know, from time to time I try to preach the sermon in a slightly different way from the usual. Today is one of those times. I’m going to do something that all Christians do quite frequently. I’m going to pray to our Lord, and in that act of worship, I’m going to do so out loud. The prayer that I’ll offer is one... *no doubt*... that each one of us gathered here has also prayed to our Lord on many different occasions.

So, for the next few minutes, I invite you to eavesdrop on my humble prayer to our almighty God.

### **[go to communion rail, kneel in prayer]**

Dear Lord,

Is there a white robe for me? What I mean is... is there a robe for me so that I might be included with that **“great multitude that no one can count”** when they gather before You in heaven? Heavenly Father, I, too, yearn to be included with those so blessed that they are considered to be Your children... and will rejoice before Your throne in peace, joy, and contentment for all eternity.

Will I be there with You in heaven with glorified eyes, glorified voice, and a glorified body singing with eternal joy: **“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb”**? Lord, IS there a white robe for me?

Heavenly Father, You know *exactly* why I ask this question. For all too often it doesn’t appear that I’ll be included with those with You in glory everlasting. That’s because the robe that I’ve assembled for myself is... well... frankly speaking... putrid and filthy.

I’ve dressed myself in a robe of human making. It’s a robe that I’ve sown together myself... no one else is to blame. To be sure, I do have filth upon me that I received at my conception in my mother’s womb. Yet, I dare not blame my parents for what I, alone, have done and brought upon myself.

The filthy garment that I wear was made *by* me... following the pattern given to me by Satan, that expert tailor from of old... who sells those designs at the cost of eternal souls.

Evil is alive in every seam of my robe... in every place where the pieces of cloth come together. That’s because so very often... where I could have done the right thing and

honored You with holy living and conduct... evil stepped in and stitched the sordid events of my life together.

Oh, what a wretched man I am! Part of me *loves* this filthy robe; while another part of me *loathes* it! It's as heavy as lead, hanging on my shoulders. Much as a military person wears a jacket bearing patches indicating where he has served... so does my filthy robe indicate the places where I have failed You... my fellow men... *and even myself*.

Written all over my robe is indisputable evidence where I have sinned against Your holy commandments in thought, word, and action. Filthy speech, impure thoughts, hate toward others, an unforgiving attitude toward those who beg my forgiveness – all can be found sewed onto this robe of my making.

Surely St. Paul was speaking *about me* when he quoted the OT writers: **“All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one. <sup>13</sup>Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. <sup>14</sup>Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. <sup>15</sup>Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup>in their paths are ruin and misery, <sup>17</sup>and the way of peace they have not known.”** (Rom. 3:12b-17, ESV)

Lord, I'm wearing a robe, but it's not a robe of righteousness... it's not the robe of those standing with **“the great multitude that no one can count standing before [Your] throne and in front of the Lamb,”** Your dear Son, Jesus.

No! Instead of being dressed for eternal life with You... I'm dressed for death... eternal death and torment in hell, itself! I'm dressed for what my deeds deserve.

Dear Father, how I wonder what it will be like when You see me on Judgment Day. How will it be when You see me standing there wearing my own clothes... my own filthy, putrid robe of death? Will Jesus' words of the parable apply to me? Will Jesus look at me and say to the angels: **“Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place [where] there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”?** (Mt. 22:13, ESV)

O Lord, will those words be spoken of me? I'm sorry. Forgive me. Have mercy on me. Is there... O Lord, *is there*... a robe for me?

**[go to sacristy]**

**[God speaking now (from sacristy)]**

“Oh, My dear son! How I'm so glad that you came to me once again in prayer. How I'm so glad that you freely confessed your sins. And... I must also tell you... My heart breaks in compassion for you!

“Yes, you *have* sinned against Me and so many others... including yourself! You *have* put on a filthy garment through your actions of sin. And yes... your sin *would* keep us apart for all eternity.

“But, My son, you forget one thing... My love for you is greater than your sin. From eternity I have known you... and have loved you! From eternity I knew that you would sin... that you would put on... and sometimes do so with great zeal... you'd wear that filthy, putrid robe of sin.

“But as I said before... I love you. If I were to wear a locket, your picture and your name would be inscribed within it.

“My love compelled me to send My own Son, Jesus, to offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice in your place. And He willingly went, as I'd asked Him... so that you and I... and He... might be at peace once again.

“He stood in your place... and paid the price that your filthy robe cost... eternal death in hell! He did that on a cross just outside the city of Jerusalem on that first Good Friday some 2,000 years ago. There, on that fateful day... your eternal destiny was secured... that is... the destiny of you and all who also despair of their sins... repent... and look to My Son, Jesus, as their Savior.

“You ask: ‘Is There a Robe for Me?’ It thrills my heart... and all the angels in heaven... that I can answer your question with 100% certainty. YES! Yes... there IS a robe for you! You DO have a robe of righteousness – specially and personally made with love and care... *just for you.*

“That robe was sewn together not using a needle, but large, sharp, bloody nails by My beloved Son. It was designed *from* eternity... so that you can be with Me *in* eternity.

“Through faith... and only through faith... the beautiful robe that I give to you... covers over that filthy, sin-made robe of yours! In fact... this robe of purity *isn't* something that you will receive in the future... NO! It's yours *right now!*

“The robe that you so urgently desire and need was placed on you when you received the gift of faith in your holy Baptism. The robe that you will wear in the **“great multitude that no one can count”** is yours... NOW... as a present possession. You already have it... it's just not always apparent to you as you live on this side of eternity.

“Go, my son, in peace and joy. Lift up your head and **“take heart, for I have overcome the world...”** I have overcome your sin, your filthy, putrid condition... **“so that [you] may have life... and have it abundantly!”** (Jn. 10:10, KJV)

“Yes, My son... be at peace... THERE IS a robe for you! Receive it... *and wear it...* in faith.”

### **[Return to pulpit]**

Dear Christians, this sermon wasn't *only* about me... not at all! All that you just heard *also* applies to each of you! You, too, through faith in Jesus have a robe of righteousness. Your sins... *also*... are covered over by the blood of the Lamb.

Today... as we celebrate the feast of All Saints' Day... know and believe this, dear holy ones of God, your eternal destiny is secured in Christ Jesus. The joy, the peace of the beautiful words of today's Scripture readings and hymnody tell it like it is... *for you!* They speak of what is YOURS. They speak of what God gives to you through faith in Jesus. There *is* a robe for you!

You each have God's unbreakable promise to be with you... guard you... and watch over you throughout this life *and* the life to come!

Each of you... and all who repent and believe in Christ... are a part of the hymn that we'll conclude singing in a moment. You, too, will wear a robe of righteousness and be part of the **“countless host [that] streams through the gates of pearl.”** You, too, will sing **“Alleluia”** (LSB, 677, v. 8) to our loving God who has saved us – Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

May God grant this to us all... for Jesus' sake... and in His holy name! [Amen!]

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Sing #677 (Vv. 6-8)