

“Daylight Savings”

Isaiah 2:1-5; 1 John 1:5-2:2

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Today is a strange day. All year long, Time is one of the fundamental things that governs our lives – everything we do is guided and ordered by what time it is, our schedules and timetables, alarm clocks and speed limits, all based on a system of time that is permanent, absolute, and inescapable, this basic reality of the universe. And then twice a year, we just change it. After months of telling everyone that 12 o’clock is 12 o’clock and always will be, we all wink at each other and change it so that 12 o’clock is now 11 o’clock, and everyone (except Saskatchewan) just goes along with it. And we do this for a very good reason – we like sunshine.

It’s nicer to spend time outside when it’s day instead of night, so we just shift the whole schedule all summer to give everyone (except Saskatchewan) one more hour of daylight in the evenings. And doing that helps you realize that maybe Time isn’t quite as solid and permanent as we might think. Daylight Savings Time makes you see our old world in a new way, it makes you recognize that our system of time is a human invention designed to help humans get along with each other, something that we can change when we want to spend more time in the light.

Of course, today isn't just the day we turn our clocks back from Daylight Savings Time. Today is also the day our church recognizes Remembrance Day, the day when we remember the sacrifices of those men and women who have fought and who continue to fight on behalf of our country. And just as Daylight Savings Time makes us reconsider our world and see it in a new way, Remembrance Day does the same. For 364 days of the year, the loudest and most consistent message we hear from the world around us is that everything is all about YOU. You control your destiny, you are powerful and significant, you are an intelligent, discerning, beautiful human being and that is why you deserve to own this beautiful luxury automobile, the latest high end consumer electronic product, or this facial beautifying cream.

Every part of our culture, advertising to media to government to technology, it builds up the cult of the individual, builds up the myth that we are self-determined, self-made, self-empowered individuals who can do anything and everything we put our mind to, and just about everything in our world, including far too often the church, buys into this mantra that everything is all about you. And then, for one day of the year, all of this self-focused machinery grinds to a halt, and for one day we remember that in order for all this to exist, in order for us to enjoy all the luxuries and liberties around us, people had to die.

Men and Women left their homes and their families and travelled to a distant land and there fought other men and women who had left their homes and families, and many were wounded, and many died, and our whole world is what it is in part because of their sacrifices, because they continue to fight and die today. Our world has been created and shaped and made possible by war and

death and sacrifice, and for most of the year we forget that, but on Remembrance Day, the illusion cracks just enough, and we recognize and remember the sacrifices that have been paid, that are being paid, by men and women around the world so that we can live in peace. Remembrance Day forces us to see our old world in a new way, to shift our focus away from ourselves and our own wealth and comfort and onto those who gave up their comfort and safety for our sakes, and recognizing that forces us to take stock of our world and ask if it's worth the sacrifices that formed it and sustain it, if we are living in a way that is worthy of someone giving their life.

But as much as both Daylight Savings Time and Remembrance Day can challenge the ways we understand our world and make us see things in a new way, there is something even more important that is happening today, something that reshapes and reorients our world far more than anything else. Today is Sunday. Today is the Day of the Lord, the Day when we gather as the church to worship and praise our savior Jesus Christ, to hear his word and share his love and celebrate his death and resurrection.

And Sunday changes everything. When the church comes together to hear what Jesus Christ has done for us, when we understand what God accomplished for us by entering into this human world and living alongside us, sharing our trouble and pain and then conquering death through the power of the cross, that knowledge changes the way we look at the world around us. John's letter to the church tells us that God is light, because seeing God reveals the world around us for what it truly is – when we come out of the darkness and into the light of Jesus Christ, we are able to see ourselves and our world for the first time, and all of a

sudden, all those things that seemed so permanent and absolute and invincible, all of a sudden we can see them in a new way. When we're living in darkness, war and pain and death seem to be all around us, impossible to escape – no matter how hard we try, we keep making the same mistakes, we keep making things worse and worse, and for all our ingenuity and wealth and power, it seems like things will never get better, never change. But when we stand in the light of Jesus Christ, when we see our world knowing that Jesus has already conquered death when he laid down his life for us on the cross, then we realize that all the enemies that stand in our way have already been defeated.

The battle has already been won – the light of God's love has already dawned, and the new world is about to begin, the world where swords become plowshares and spears become pruning hooks, where all the nations travel to Jerusalem in peace to learn God's ways and walk in the light of the Lord, that world is already on its way, and nothing can stop it. Nothing in this universe can destroy or delay what Jesus has accomplished; nothing in this universe can separate us from his love.

That is always true: no matter how strong and sturdy the darkness might seem, it cannot prevail against the light of Christ. And when we forget that – when we start to live as if darkness is all there is and all there can ever be, the voice of Jesus Christ still calls us back to the light, calls us to shift and reset the way we see the world from the light of Sunday, and choose to walk in the light, choose to live in the light, choose to build our world and our lives around the light of Christ.

Everytime we gather to worship God, we are resetting our vision, shifting our perspective, we are changing the ways we order our lives so that we can turn back the darkness and instead choose to walk in the light, not only on Sunday, but every day, all throughout our lives. Because when you know what Jesus Christ has done for you – when you know that the transformation of this universe from darkness into light was made possible through the greatest sacrifice, the greatest act of love that humanity has ever known, that in order for us to be made right with God, Jesus had to die, then you want to try to start living a life that might be worthy of that sacrifice, you want to let that light shine in you and through you, so the world around can see what you see, because they see what you do.

When we live in the light, when we see the world around us from a place of worship and service and sacrifice, we want that worship to become part of our lives every day, we want the light of Sunday morning to shine all week long, we want to keep our eyes open to what Jesus is doing in this world and in the world to come, here in this place and everywhere we go. God's light is shining here. Today, O house of Jacob, O people of God, O body of Christ, come. Let us walk in the light of the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ – Amen!