

## Pastor Roy's Sermon from November 1, 2015 (All Saints Day)

See, the home of God is among mortals. God will dwell with them;  
They will be the people of God, And God will be with them; (incarnation)  
God will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more;  
Mourning and crying and pain will be no more, For the first things have passed away.  
See I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

Words of comfort and promise. The Saints learn to release their life back to God and to one another.

A journey from pain and suffering in the fullness of faith. If we look carefully within the Scriptures, salvation, redemption, and spirituality are not otherworldly hopes. Incarnation, God with us, happens while we breath and eat and rest—as we live in these mortal bodies. Humans, Animals, Plants all reveal God with us. God acting in life, for goodness, for beauty, for the holy struggle of love—in every relationship. Every relationship can reflect and participate in God with us.

Life with God is our faith. Faith protects us from ourselves. We learn from Jesus Christ to live not by being preoccupied with ourselves but to learn to live by dying. Dying to our fears. Dying to our need to control our relationships and make sure everything turns out right. Jesus died every day that he lived. He gave away his life for the sake of others. Faith in Christ leads us to do the same thing.

Faith teaches us that eternal life isn't mostly about me, it's about us--God with us. And us is not just my family, or my congregation, but us is all. We are tempted to focus on me and mine.

What is your greatest faith concern? Eternal life? Surviving? How you relate to God?

Who is in charge of your spiritual destiny. For the longest time I thought I was in responsible for my spiritual life, for my faith journey. It's up to me! I'm pretty sure I'm not alone. But as I listened to the scriptures and mentors and as I pray, I am taught that I am not responsible for me destiny. God is. All that I am, all that I might hope to be is up to God. Eternal life is not about the future of **me**. Eternal life is now and the future of God with **us**. For God. Without exception. Without any need for concern.

As we trust in God with us, we can let go of our need to protect our own kingdoms, our own philosophies, our own political persuasions. God with us is compassion, listening love as we come to accept our place in creation.

As Christians, we see the ultimate picture of God with us in Jesus Christ. He called forth life from death. "Lazarus, come out!" "Unbind him and let him go."

He can boldly proclaim this life because he already has embraced it for himself. He dies on a cross of injustice. He rises to life which invites us to fearlessly live our lives on the foundation of love.

God's life among us is a life among mortals. Life among the living **who will die**. We don't want to die. But we will. We fear death because we put too much stock in our own individual lives. The only true life is a shared life. A mutual life. Therein is found our freedom. Life on earth is not mainly about each individual human, animal, or plant. It is about the life shared among us as we give and receive.

The Scriptures do not celebrate the life of great individuals, they celebrate the community of faith, the community of the living who daily die for one another and ultimately in the gracious hands of God. So it's not about me. It's not about you. It's about **us**.

All Saints' Sunday is a celebration not only of the Saints themselves, but of the Source of the Life of the Saints, which is **God with us**. A precious gift with no strings attached. Thanks be to God.