

Second Week After Pentecost  
January 15/16, 2026

Change is coming. This has always been true. The more things are the same, the more they change. This world is in a spiral of sin and rebellion against the One who made all things. “For Zion’s sake, I will not keep silent,” says the Lord. “For Jerusalem’s sake, I will not rest.”

There seems, at least to me, an increasing hostility in thinking deeply about things. The mystery of the universe is an intriguing thing. The more I come to know, the more I realize how little I know. The more people seem to be steeped in our culture, the less they seem to know and the less they seem to want to know. God has created us with indelible characteristics, abilities, and desires. We have, for the time being, absolute freedom to think as we will and therefore, limited only by cultural protocols, worldly legality, and acceptability, the ability to do as we please. These traits, created by God have one of two directions they can go. They can go inward or they can go outward. Going inward, they produce what the church has called the seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. The world seems to be encouraging increasing tendencies in this direction, from the lack of what we used to call common courtesy to the lack of people who seem to be willing to work. This has happened before.

Change must come. Change has come. The Good News of the Gospel is as relevant today as it has ever been. Jesus has come to set us upon the right course, bringing us to repentance, changing direction and going against the tide of the world. The world specializes in that which ends up killing, for that is what the seven deadly sins do. Our Savior saves us from death, changes the course and brings us to life. The Christian life is one which learns to trust the Lord, His leading, the direction He is heading, and moves that way against the tide that is pushing in the other direction.

Our Lord has not kept silent. All we need to know to embark upon the journey has been spoken by the Lord. Once we realize that God is Sovereign, to be honored, and that our rest is in Him, there are the seven actions we can take to combat the prevailing tide of this world. Learning to honor, respect life, seek purity, be content and truthful, not coveting others circumstances nor their possessions – in other words, the ten commandments – we walk away from the way of this world. The Lord has offered these things to everyone. Love does that. Love does not envy or boast, but perseveres for the sake of the other.

This age we are living in is forsaken. So many are bereft of hope. Listen to the prophecy of Isaiah, “For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.” God loves you. He loves you enough to do what seems to us impossible.

You have been equipped. Through the water of your baptism, you have been given all that you need to make the journey. You have the Lord’s presence, always, everywhere, and in all circumstances. The Lord is with you. He has given you abilities, proclivities, and places where you can engage in the journey set before you. The one and same Holy Spirit of God which indwells you has given you the ability which is needed for the journey ahead. We are not better and worse people, but those who seek righteousness and those who seek the way of the world. The ten commandments slay the deadly sins. It is a daily battle, which is why we are instructed to daily put on the armor of God. It is why you have heard that daily we must die to sin.

See the simplicity of the story of Jesus at the wedding. Our Lord loves weddings. It is a part of the order which He created. Our Lord is love and He loves it when love is evident. Weddings are very festive events. Two in love, binding themselves together to be one. Do not

jump out of the moment or think of the failures. See the purity with which every wedding intends to create with lifelong pledges of fidelity. Yes, this is good. It will take a lifetime of struggle to grow and prosper, but it is good. It is the order of things that God created and He is there celebrating. There has always been a difference between the rich and the poor. This has been a reality in this age of sin, but God shows up at the weddings of both the poor and the rich.

By all appearances, this wedding that Jesus attended was one supported with folk of means. It was a big party with lots of wine. It was the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. His mother put Him into a bind. Mothers sometimes do that. Jesus demonstrated that He honored by honoring His mother's request in spite of His spoken inclination to the contrary. Is it any wonder people over the ages have appealed to Mary to get things done when it seems that God is not listening to them. Of course God is listening, but we are insistent sinners who want what we want and when we want it.

As we hear this story, in a way that only God can do, there are so many symbols wrapped up into the story, symbols which point us to the path of redemption and hope. We do well to not overlook them. Yes, in what we call a miracle, the water was changed into wine. With God, all things are possible.

The ceremonial cleansing pots were kept by the door of entry at a house of means. Remember that people walked everywhere and the roads, unpaved, were dusty. The feet of the guests were washed by the lowest servant in the house. Jesus took off His outer garments and washed the feet of His disciples. It was these jugs which were filled with water. In the water of our baptism, Jesus unites us with Himself. If we have been united with Christ in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. Take and drink, this is my blood, shed for your forgiveness of sin. The water changes to wine. What we drink changes to His life-giving blood coursing in our veins. The story of redemption is told over and over again with all that Jesus does. He has come to redeem us. He has come to save us. He has come to lead us by repentance in a new direction with a new life, a life of love.

Of course it is the best. Would you want to be resurrected and live in a place filled with what is going on in this age? Of course not. We all desire perfection, completeness, where all act as they should. Heaven is perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect. We are on a journey through which we will be shed of everything that rebels against God and His ways. As He came to us humbly, so also we are to go to Him humbly.

Our good and great God, who knows all things has already put into motion all that is needed for our circumstances. As the pandemic plays out, I remind you of one simple but seemingly overlooked thing, the real healing will come because of what God has created. Even if a perfect vaccine were created, it only encourages the body to do what the Lord has already created it to do and that is to overwhelm that which seeks to kill us. The world may call it the herd instinct, I call it God's provision. It will happen because God is good and fighting on our side in this world filled with evil. Prudent and cautious, yes, but not forgetting that the real healing – of every medical issue – is because of what God has created.

Jesus has come to create in you a new life. We are born moving in the direction of the rebellion, but we are offered redemption to move in the direction of living eternally in love with Love Himself. As Jesus changed the water into the best wine, using dirty violated jugs, so also He will change us from selfish, inward heading beings into children of the Heavenly Father. Jesus specializes in killing death and raising life. It is this into which you have been poured that You might join with Him now and forever. Praise be to our good and gracious God! Amen.