

The Second Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 14:16-24
June 30th, 2019
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas+

A Great Supper

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks unto Thee, that through Thy holy word Thou hast called us to Thy great supper, and we beseech Thee: Quicken our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not hear Thy word without fruit, but that we may prepare ourselves rightly for Thy kingdom, and not suffer ourselves to be hindered by any worldly care, through Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

A certain man offered a great supper—a sumptuous buffet—that was the feast of all feasts, and everyone refused. This is the problem with mankind. It has been the problem with mankind since our first parents—Adam and Eve—refused all of the other food in the garden to eat from a tree which they were forbidden to eat. We do not want to enjoy the good gifts that our Lord God has given to us. We complain about what little we have, and we complain about the things that we do have, saying that they could be greater or better. We are rarely content with the situation in life in which we have been placed. Instead of being content with what the Lord God has given us, we look in all the wrong places for comfort and hope.

Our Lord God has prepared a great feast for us—an eternal feast in Heaven—and we cling to earthly things and forsake the heavenly, eternal things. We had a great example of this last week. The rich man, we are told, “fared sumptuously every day.” He feasted every day of his life. But all of his feasting was pointless without faith. So then, instead of enjoying an eternal feast in Heaven at the Lord’s great wedding feast, he was sentenced to eternal torment in Hell where he was forced to beg for even a drop of cool water to quench his parched lips.

Lazarus, on the other hand, lived a life of faith and trust in the Lord God. In the eyes of the world, he had nothing—he was nothing. He was nothing more than a poor, sickly, man who could only beg for crumbs from the rich man in this life. But on account of his faith in the One, True, Triune God, his life of suffering was rewarded with a seat at the heavenly banquet of our Lord. So then, last week we heard about crumbs of bread and drops of water, this week’s Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke gives us a great feast; we hear of a great meal prepared for us.

We get a foretaste of the heavenly, eternal meal when we come to this altar and eat our Lord’s Body in, with and under bread, and when we drink His Blood given in, with and under the wine. In our Lord’s Body and Blood, we are given the gifts that He won on the tree of the holy cross. He had fulfilled the Law perfectly—the Law which we were and are unable to keep; the Law we break every day continuously. And in love for us, and for all mankind He chose to offer up His life as a payment for our

sins. He took upon Himself our punishment, so that we could go free. And then, He gave us this wondrous meal of His Body and Blood so that we might be gifted with forgiveness of our sins, eternal life with Him and all the saints in Heaven, and so that we might be rescued and saved from our enemies of sin, death and the devil. This is the meal that our Lord God heavenly Father prepared for us through the works and merits of His Beloved and Only-Begotten Son, our Lord + Jesus Christ.

When we eat this meal—this feast prepared for our salvation—we remember the once and for all time sacrifice that our Lord + Jesus made for us, and all mankind, on the tree of the holy cross, and we cling in faith to that cross, and His Body and Blood, for our redemption from our enemies. Our faith clings to our Lord's Body and Blood for all good things in this life. Through faith in our Lord's works and merits, we can be like Lazarus last week. He had nothing in the eyes of the world, but through faith He had everything. For he clung to the eternal rewards that were promised him through the preaching of Moses and the Prophets.

We have this same message preached to us every time we come to this holy sanctuary. We hear over and over again of what our Lord + Jesus has done for us. We hear over and over again, that we have an eternal home in Heaven. We hear over and over again that our Lord God does not count our sins against us, because through faith in our Lord's death, we have the rewards that He won for us. We hear over and over again that our Lord + Jesus defeated our enemies of sin, death and the devil on the tree of the holy cross, so that even though they may attack and rage against us in this life, they cannot harm us at all. Our home is in Heaven. Our salvation is sealed in Heaven by the wounds of the Lamb Who was offered up for us on the cross, so that we might feast upon His flesh for all eternity.

We have an eternal feast waiting for us in Heaven. We will feast upon the Lamb in His Kingdom forever and ever. We have here in this life a foretaste of that feast; a feast of bread and wine, which grants us forgiveness, life and salvation. This is why we should take every opportunity to be in this holy sanctuary and hear our Lord's promises preached from the pulpit, and be reminded of our Holy Baptism in the Divine Liturgy, and partake of the foretaste of the feast that we will eat in Heaven when we come to this altar and receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine.

Do not be like the world which refuses the Lord's invitation to the great Supper. Frankly, it sounds unbelievable to us that anyone would refuse our Lord's invitation. Why would anyone not want to come to the great Supper? Why would anyone not want to share in our Lord's gifts? It boggles the mind why anyone would not want to sit at the Lord's Table and eat bread with Him. But the world does it continuously. They have been doing it since Adam and Eve first refused the fruits of the Garden of Eden, for fruit from a tree which they were forbidden to eat.

Our Lord + Jesus explains this to us in today's Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke. This parable is a response from our Lord + Jesus at the words of someone who said in the previous verse before our reading, "*Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!*" Such was the response to our Lord's preaching. And it is also our response to our Lord's preaching. Truly a person is blessed who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God. But we know that many people refuse this blessing. This is what prompts our Lord's parable.

Three excuses are outlined by our Lord: the first one had to go look at some ground he bought; the second had to test out some oxen he bought; and the third one had just become wedded. Three lame excuses. The world makes the same excuses today.

The first excuse is really all about earthly possessions. Our earthly possessions, or rather our trying to keep and maintain our earthly possessions get in the way of our coming to our Lord's feast. We are never satisfied with the possessions we have, so then we have to work harder and longer to maintain the ones we have, and to get new ones which we desire. In this we see the second and third

excuses also summed up. For our business, our employment gets in the way of our enjoying the great Supper. And our fleshly desires—for the things of this world—also get in our way of enjoying the great Supper.

The world has made these things their idols. They would rather worship these things than waste their time in some stuffy old church. They refuse the eternal and enduring gifts that our Lord God has prepared for us—the refuse the eternal feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom—for things that will pass away, and for things that they will not carry with them into the next life. For this, much of the world will end up like the rich man from last week’s Gospel reading: being eternally tormented in Hell. Only those who cling to the works and merits of the Lord + Jesus will get to enjoy the feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom.

The world may refuse to come to the Supper outright, but we can also refuse the invitation to come to the Great Supper of our Lord, when we let these things control our lives and actions. And you can tell when this is happening to you—that you are being drawn away from the Great Supper—when your daily reading of the Holy Scriptures is diminished; when your prayer and daily devotion time falters; when your desire to come to worship decreases. This is the lies of the devil, the world, and your sinful flesh, driving you away from these things. For, they do not want you to come to the Great Supper. They do not want you enjoying all of eternity at the Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom. They want you to suffer torment with them for all eternity in Hell.

So then, let us not forsake this great meal prepared for us by our Lord’s suffering and death. Let us not refuse the invitation of our heavenly Father that is made through the voice of the pastor to come and hear God’s holy Word, and to receive our Lord’s Body and Blood in bread and wine. Come, my dear friends, to the Great Supper of the Lord. He has prepared this meal for you. For it is you whom He loves, and for whom He cares. He desires that we spend all of eternity with Him in Heaven, with all of the saints who have gone before us in faith. Cling to the promises that He has made to us. For He declares through these promises that you are His own dear child, and that you have a seat at the Great Supper waiting for you. Come, for all things are now ready. Come and kneel and receive our Lord’s Body and Blood given and shed for the remission of all your sins. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty and Everlasting God, the Source of all life and joy, Who, by the glad sound of the Gospel, hast called us to have part in Thy kingdom and glory: shine into our hearts, we beseech Thee, by Thy Word and Spirit, and draw us with the cords of Thy constraining grace, that we may heartily choose that good part which shall not be taken away from us, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

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

Soli Deo Gloria!