

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

At the Table of God

October 11, 2020

A classic table grace uses these simple words: “Be present at our table, Lord; Be here and ev’rywhere adored; Thy creatures bless, and grant that we May feast in paradise with Thee” (*LSB* 775). The plural pronoun “we” used in the prayer reminds us of the fact that we are together in the Lord’s house and together at the Lord’s Table. Our worship here is not a solo experience but rather is experienced in community. Joyfully we celebrate God’s service to us—together!

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past” [*LSB* 733]

1 O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home:

2 Under the shadow of Thy throne, Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defense is sure.

3 Before the hills in order stood, Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

4 A thousand ages in Thy sight, Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night, Before the rising sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream, Dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last, And our eternal home!

PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God, You have called us in Christ to live as those who are joyfully assured of Your forgiveness and care. Grant us a full sense of being a community gathered together in Your love as we await the company of saints and angels in Your eternal kingdom. This we ask for the sake of Jesus, our Savior, and our King. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT *Isaiah 25:6–9* (The Lord will bring salvation to His people.)

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. ⁷ And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.

⁸ He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. ⁹ It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 22:1–14* (The parable about the wedding feast)

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ³and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ ¹⁰And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹²And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

If someone were offered a way off of a sinking ship, they would take it right? You would think so. However, many think the sinking ship is better. It seems a bit short sighted and it is. Instant gratification which is fleeting becomes the sinking ship which distracts us from God’s eternal benefits which are of infinite value. It seems many who are invited to the King’s wedding feast would rather stay home. This compares to being offered forgiveness and eternal life verses keeping one’s sinfulness so you can do whatever you feel like for only a time. In Isaiah it is plain who God wishes to benefit. “On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast.” It is also plain what this feast is meant to do. “He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces.” This is why Jesus came and died on the cross for our sins so that we might believe in Him and be granted the promise of eternal life. In Christ we have an invitation to the wedding feast; heaven. So many prefer the sinking ship but we have a way off through Christ which leads to eternal life.

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. Amen.