

## THE LORD IS GOOD

**Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**

He is Risen! This Resurrection Evening sermon's theme is contained in the 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm. That is the Psalm of the Day, and though we did not recite it, we sang a paraphrase of it in the words of the hymn, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell."

That was fitting to do, as that is the intent of the order we call "The Festival Service." This service, as your bulletins remind you on the back cover is where, "hymns replace spoken portions of the liturgy." It is an appropriate Service for God's people to receive His gifts on the day wherein the readings, from morning through evening, traditionally begin with calls to God's people to raise joyful shouts, and songs of praise.

That is because, on Resurrection Sunday, the Church is reminded that we are God's people because He named us so. He made us His own as He shed His blood for us into death that we may not die in our sins. God shows us His victory in Christ, that we may know, no matter what this world, the devil, or our own sinful flesh may cast at us, that we are God's people.

That is why, by the evening of the Resurrection Feast Day, the Church offers thanks to God. She does so with a Psalm that was, at some point, chanted or sung when God's people, the Israelites of old, gave their thank-offerings at Tabernacle and Temple. Such sacrifices were part of the peace offerings given to God as part of the peoples' joy in fellowship with one another before God.

(This is where the Psalm for this evening ties in the Gospel text. There, Jesus is known in the “breaking of the bread.” That is, as the men sat down to eat in the joy of the Presence of the Lord, they recognized him only in the meal just before He vanished)! You see, the thank offering was a cereal gift back to God.<sup>1</sup> It served the purpose for the people to give thanks for God’s deliverance or His bestowal of blessings.

How right that is that this evening’s Psalm be used when God’s deliverance from death’s hold on His people was ratified in Jesus’ resurrection. Jesus, Who had begun early that day appearing to those whose eye-witness testimonies would be recorded and preserved, had walked and talked with two more disciples on the road to Emmaus, as you heard in the Gospel text.

It was with those men to whom Jesus was made known in the breaking of the bread. Again, that is a tie to the Psalm. For the thank offering for which it had been chanted was also to be eaten. Now, with those background ties between the thank offering of the 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm’s use and the fellowship meal of the disciples and Jesus in Emmaus, let us consider the other treasures in the Word for today. The Psalm proper begins:

*All of you cause to make a joyful noise to YHWH, all the earth.<sup>2</sup>*

Those words are for the people of God, in His Presence, to sing out into all this fallen creation. They show that you and I are free to be joyful before God, for all the good things He does for us. The foremost response we give to God in front of the entire

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Leviticus* 7:11-36.

<sup>2</sup> *Psalm* 100:1b. MT.

world is to offer him the sacrifice of thanksgiving. This we do as we conduct our lives in prayer. That can be as simply lived out by offering mealtime prayers wherever we may be – not making a show for sure, but giving thanks nonetheless. To serve the Lord with mirth is most fully found in our midst as we sing or chant such gifts as the Gloria hymns, or the fine Easter hymns we have received from across the generations. Our Psalm continues:

*All of you serve YHWH in gladness; all of you come to His Face in singing.<sup>3</sup>*

From the Old Covenant era, the time of Tabernacle in the wilderness, and Temple in Jerusalem, God's people were called to respond to the gifts He gives with public service. We call this, "worship." It is, for God's people in both Old and New Covenant eras of the Church, simply saying, chanting, or singing back to God that which He has given to us in His Word.

There seems to be confusion about what true Divine Service is in many confessions of the Faith, and in a few places in the Lutheran Church. The 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm indicates that Divine Service begins and ends with the Divine! That is, God reaches down to His people in their sins. He grants them His gifts – most importantly the forgiveness He won for us on the cross, and we respond to Him. If there is any confusion in your mind about that order of worship – God to man, and only then, man to God – the Psalm of the evening sets you straight with these words:

*All of you know that YHWH is Elohim;  
it is He Who made us, and not we ourselves –*

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 100:2.

First, the Psalm declares that the *Lord is God indeed*. He is the Creator God, the One Who reveals Himself as *YHWH*, the “Great I AM,” and names Himself as God, in the plural form of the Hebrew! The Psalm declares that God has made us. We are not creatures of our own devising. (Hammers the old American concept of the “self-made man” does it not?)

The Word then goes on to declares that we, as the people whom God has made are His folk. That is we are related to Him by blood – His blood shed for us on the Cross. As our loving Creator, the True God gives us food, and watches over us as does an owner-shepherd his flocks. This is the God H Who actually, for the benefit of His followers, remains with them forever. For the first forty days after His resurrection from the dead, He appeared to many of them, as they were gathered together.

The 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm teaches us that God keeps His fellowship with His human creatures who bear His Name. This He does today, as He speaks to us through His proclaimed Word. He feeds us with the Bread of Life. He invites us to His Table, and gives Himself to each of us – to the unbeliever unto judgment, to the believer for forgiveness and strengthening to eternal life. Oh, this is a day for a thanksgiving Psalm, as its words continue:

*All of you enter His gates in thanksgiving,  
and His courts in praise;  
All of you cause to give thanks to Him;  
All of you bless His Name.*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Psalm 100:3.

There is God's universal invitation to all people to come into His Presence. God wills that all people would come to know Him in the thanksgiving offering, in the Breaking of Bread. Now, those who are actually in the Lord's House, in the words of Psalm and Psalm hymn call out to those who are outside, and invite them to join us in the sacrifice of praise.

The Psalm indicates that those who come into God's Presence, we who are in the Church, are moved to give Him thanks. That is one reason that the Lord's Supper is sometimes called "The Great Thanksgiving." God gives us of Himself, and in receiving Him, we show our thanks.

Obviously if you do know behold God in the breaking of the bread, you cannot give Him right thanks. That is to receive His forgiveness, remembering that He made you. In rightly receiving God's gifts, His people actually bless His Name. For in right-reception of God, we show that we actually know His Name – and that it is our Name.

That is why we are moved to bring others into the Presence of the Lord where He might be most fully found – in His services to us. Here His Word is declared, the Holy Spirit moves and creates faith in whom He will. Here the thanksgiving is offered by God, and eaten by His people. The Psalm's ending lines read:

*For (is) good, YHWH;  
forever (is) His steadfast love;*

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<sup>5</sup> Psalm 100:4.

*and to all generations (is) His faithfulness.*<sup>6</sup>

Many of you have heard Jesus say that only God is good. This is one of the texts from which the Son of God drew that teaching. God's goodness is displayed in His mercy, which is forever sure. He continues to show His enduring love, for sinners, as His Word of Absolution continues to be proclaimed to those who are repentant. To move them to that state before Him, to get you into sorrow over your sins and to move you to will to turn from them, God causes the Word of His Jesus to be proclaimed.

That is, Jesus died to bring you forgiveness of all your sins. His death paid the price to buy back your life from the eternal Pit. His blood washes you clean. Now, His Body and Blood He offers to you that you may confess Him as one Body – Savior and Redeemer. He has given us His Memorial to eat and drink until He comes. That is God fulfilling His Promise in Christ which from age to age endures. That is why the Psalm hymn ends with this ascription of praise:

*To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the God whom heav'n and earth adore,  
from us and from the angel host be praise and glory evermore.*

Thank God: Christ is risen!

**The peace which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus**

Resurrection Evening (*LSB* One-year series)

Psalm 100; Exodus 15:1-8; Acts 10:34-43; Luke 24:13-35

April 20, 2014

*Pastor Michael A. Morehouse*

**SOLI DEO GLORIA**

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<sup>6</sup> *Psalm* 100:5.

*All of you cause to make a joyful noise to YHWH, all the earth.<sup>7</sup>*

*All of you serve YHWH in gladness; all of you come to His Face in singing.<sup>8</sup>*

*All of you know that YHWH is Elohim;  
it is He Who made us, and not we ourselves –  
His people and the sheep of His pasture.<sup>9</sup>*

*All of you enter His gates in thanksgiving,  
and His courts in praise;*

*All of you cause to give thanks to Him;  
All of you bless His Name.<sup>10</sup>*

*For (is) good, YHWH;  
forever (is) His steadfast love;  
and to all generations (is) His faithfulness.<sup>11</sup>*

*All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.  
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell;  
come ye before him and rejoice.*

2. *Know that the Lord is God indeed;  
without our aid he did us make;  
we are his folk, he doth us feed,  
and for his sheep he doth us take.*

3. *O enter then his gates with praise;  
approach with joy his courts unto;  
praise, laud, and bless his name always,  
for it is seemly so to do.*

4. *For why! the Lord our God is good;  
his mercy is forever sure;  
his truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.<sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Psalm 100:1b. MT.

<sup>8</sup> Psalm 100:2.

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 100:3.

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 100:4.

<sup>11</sup> Psalm 100:5.

<sup>12c</sup> *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*. Internet. <http://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh075.sht>, accessed April 19, 2014. Attr. Willaim Kethe, d. c.