

## Pentecost 10 / August 6, 2023

### Isaiah 55:1-5

**“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.”**

Have you received any dinner invitations this summer? We have all received invitations to wedding banquets, birthday lunches and anniversary dinners. Our text is the Lord’s invitation to the greatest banquet of all, the feast of life in His kingdom. He bids us to come to Him for refreshment and nourishment that leads to eternal life. He calls, “Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” No matter how much we spend on a fine meal, we will be hungry in a few hours and need to buy food again. He asks, “Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy?” What kind of refreshments can be purchased without money? What is the bread that truly satisfies?

Certainly, He is not talking about the food and refreshments of the earth. They are purchased at our own cost and must be constantly replenished. They only satisfy for a time and only sustain life for a time. The food and refreshments of which He speaks are of the Spirit. The Spirit gives life and vitality to the food and refreshments of the earth. The food and refreshments of the earth are signs of the greater spiritual nourishment and refreshment we receive from the Spirit through the word; especially through the Word made flesh, Christ Jesus our God and Saviour. Jesus is nourishment and refreshment for the souls of those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. He calls us to come.

The Lord calls through Isaiah, ‘Come, eat and drink without cost!’ The food and refreshment of which He speaks are His grace and mercy in Christ our God and Saviour. His grace and mercy are offered for all to receive in Christ Jesus. His grace and mercy are given freely and received fully by all who believe in His name and hold Him in their hearts as God and Saviour. To people who worked so hard to earn God’s favour, Jesus said, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” Jesus was sent from God to refresh our spirits and nourish our souls to eternal life. All we need to do to receive Him is to believe Him. Jesus paid the cost for the nourishment of eternal life, through the sacrifice of His cross. He gives refreshment to the thirsty soul and nourishment to the hungry spirit, free and full as a gift of His grace to all who believe.

In the gospel of John, after He had fed five thousand with five loaves of bread and two fish, Jesus identified Himself as the true and living bread from heaven who gives life to the world. The next day, a remnant of that great crowd came to Him, seeking more bread for daily living. They didn’t realize it, but their daily hunger was a sign of a spiritual hunger for God’s righteousness. Jesus called them to see beyond the bread of the earth that perishes with use and must be replenished each day. He told them not to labour for the food that perishes, but “for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.” Jesus calls us to Himself so He may meet our deepest spiritual needs of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. He says, “I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” He calls us to come, eat, drink and receive refreshment through faith in Him.

God calls us to Himself to receive refreshment and nourishment, so we see He is the source of life in all things living. St. Paul said, “In Him we live and move and have our being.” He sends His Spirit to renew the face of the earth. He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing. He opens His heart to us and to all people in Christ Jesus. Jesus said, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him would not perish, but have eternal life.” God does this for no reason other than the kindness of His heart. The psalmist sang, “The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.” His only motivation is His loving nature. St. John said, “God is love.” He does this as an expression of His certain steadfast love, promised to all creation through Noah, to Israel through Moses and to all people through Christ Jesus.

The Lord promised His love to Israel through the covenant He made through Moses at Mount Sinai. He said, “Know that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments.” He promised His love to King David, to whom He promised an eternal kingdom and a descendant who would reign forever over all the nations of the earth, in peace and kindness. He kept His promises to Israel, David and all people in Christ Jesus. He is King David’s greater Son. He followed David in time according to His humanity. He preceded David from eternity according to His divinity. He is King of kings and Lords. He is our God and Saviour. God calls all people to Himself in Christ to receive His certain steadfast love that gives life in time and eternity. The work has been done. The food is prepared. The table is set. All we need do is come. He calls to us “Come.”

People pay large sums of money for the finest foods and best beverages. They purchase these, both to satisfy their physical hunger and to stimulate their taste buds. In Christ, God has prepared the finest spiritual food and drink. They satisfy our spiritual hunger in time and for eternity. He offers it free for all to receive through His word. He says, "Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant." The richest of food is His grace in Christ our Saviour. We receive this food and all its spiritual benefits, by listening with faith.

We eat physical food with our mouths and process it through our stomachs. We receive spiritual food with our eyes, ears and mouths, in the Sacrament of the Altar. It is processed in our hearts through faith. There is nothing more important than hearing the word of the Lord and taking it to heart. Martha and Mary were Jesus' friends. When He came to visit, Martha wanted to honour Him with a meal fit for a king. That was good. Her sister Mary honoured Him by sitting at His feet and listening to His words. That was best. When we listen diligently to His word and apply it in daily living, we eat what is good and find delight in rich food. His words are sweet to the taste. His words refresh our thirsty souls and nourish our spirits in faith unto eternal life.

The Lord offers the spiritual food and drink for us to receive without cost. He paid the cost in the offering of His Son on the cross. He offers the food and refreshment of eternal life for all to receive. He calls, "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters." He gives the food and refreshment of eternal life freely and fully to all who receive it through faith in Jesus as Saviour. He calls, "Come, buy... without money and without cost." People work hard for food that perishes with use and must be renewed on a daily basis. It gets more expensive every day. No matter what the cost, we need to eat and drink. The most necessary food is of the spirit. It nourishes to eternal life. It was purchased at the highest cost, the blood Christ shed and the life He laid down on the cross. He paid the cost and now offers it free for all to receive through faith in Him. He calls us to eat and drink of Him freely and without cost.

We need to eat and drink, which is why food and drink are signs of our spiritual need to eat of the bread of heaven and drink of the living water. We all need food and drink, but not everyone can afford the finest food and beverages that satisfy the taste buds, as well as the stomach. Many people would be happy with a full stomach, no matter how unsavoury the food or brackish the water. The Lord provides the finest spiritual food and drink. He offers it for all to receive through faith in Christ. The psalmist sang, "taste and see that the Lord is good." The Lord is good. In Christ He calls, "Come, eat and drink without cost." The Lord open our ears to hear and our hearts to believe. In Jesus' Name. Amen.