



[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for the Memorial Celebration Service for Andy Bailey
November 10, 2016

See, This is our God!

Isaiah 25:6-9

⁶ 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."

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Have you ever faced the question about who is God, and how do you know? I guess I have in a number of forms. The one time I saw the question asked in the most direct and interesting way was when I was at the bedside of Andy, a few weeks ago. Andy's Doctor came in and said, "Your too young to die!" Andy responded, "If I die God has made my body whole again. If I live God has given me a restoration of this body for a while. Either way may God be praised!

Andy, Susan, and his entire family were always a witness to Christ and this text. **"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."**

So today we say, "See, this is our God!"

This text pictures for us the Gospel. It has no cross, and does not use the word, **"resurrection"**, but it is all there anyhow. What is pictured for us in this prophecy is heaven. The trouble is, I can't point to anything that says it cannot be right now, with the possible exception of **wiping tears away from all faces**. That is why I say that this is the Gospel, pictured for us in terms of the results, and when we face those results, we will proudly say, **"See, this is our God!"**

This prophecy rests on the understanding of the truth that our faith is something that might well be described as, **"already / not yet."** Already we know this is most certainly true, but not yet



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do we perceive these things with our senses. Already we possess these treasures, but not yet do we fully enjoy that possession. There is nothing about our salvation which is unfinished, or which we do not possess already. Nevertheless, there is much about it that is not yet within our experience. We have resurrection already. We have eternal life already. We have life with God in His presence already. The not yet part is our sense and personal experience of these things. We don't see it. We don't feel it. So it seems to us to be **“not yet”**.

But it is! Christ is Risen!

“In that day,” says our text. Well, today is **that day**. The **Lavish Banquet** is prepared! We have been invited and we have been brought in to the banquet! That has to be the facts, because we are **the Mountain of the Lord**. This is where the banquet is to be served - at least until we sit at table with Jesus in glory. Remember, **the Mountain of the Lord** is the place where His glory dwells. Well, we, the Church, are the place where the glory of God dwells among men. The Gospel is His glory! Those in whom the Gospel bears its blessed fruit are His glory! God dwells in each one of us that believes. He is present among us **wherever two or three are gathered together in His name**. This is the place where God promised in this prophecy to prepare the Lavish Banquet - and He has prepared it.

Look at the language used to describe it. **“Aged wine, choice steak, and refined, aged wine.”** The image presented here is of the finest and choicest and absolutely magnificent banquet fare. *And what could be better than the banquet of the Lord's Supper?* It is there we receive Him in His true body and very blood and, with Him, we also receive everything He has won and, by His grace and promise, everything the heavenly Father has given him.

This banquet is resurrection from the grave - for us, not just for Jesus! It is life everlasting beyond sin and all of its effects - no more pain, no more cancer or tumors, no more sorrow, and no more dying ever! This banquet is the one Jesus spoke of as **“The Wedding Feast”**. He included it in several parables. We call it **“the Wedding Feast of the Lamb to His Bride, the Church.”** The banquet is eternal life and salvation. Yet, consider this: we possess those things already, right now! We do not experience them as present realities - not yet. Nevertheless, the Lavish Banquet is before us - for it begins in the Church!

One item on the menu of this banquet is the veil that covers the nations. That veil is death, and while it is mentioned on the menu, it is not for us, but for God to swallow it up. God will bring an end to death.

But that is another reason why I say that the banquet has already begun! God has already **swallowed up death**. He put an end to death by putting His Son to death on the cross in our place. Death is all done with! That is the good news of the Gospel. Jesus has destroyed death; God has swallowed up the covering which rests on all people everywhere. Death (that is the



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Devil) is dead, and he is dead for everyone! Death was killed by the death of life (that is Christ), because life could not be destroyed by death, and when life rose from the grave on Easter morning, He destroyed death in His path.

Of course, this is the already / not yet part, again. All of this is true, already, but not yet do we see it and enjoy it fully. That is why, on that great day when everyone experiences it, we will shout for joy, See, this is our God! This is the salvation that we waited for! This is what the people of old waited for! Our victory is won! Our death has been destroyed! When we do what people today call dying (as Andy has), we will discover that it is the door to everlasting life!

But we as Andy will physically die, at least out from this world and from this flesh. That is a certainty, unless Christ returns before that day comes for us. And that day is always accompanied by tears and sorrow. For those of us who understand and who believe, it is rightly sorrow at being left behind, and sorrow at the separation, but not sorrow about the beloved. None the less, there is sorrow and pain and grief. That is the nature of death, and why it is rightly called an enemy. The Gospel is about the end of all that.

Because Jesus has risen from the dead, we, too, shall rise! His resurrection guarantees and demonstrates what our resurrection shall be. That is why we Christian cry out **“Alleluia!”** We can see the joy, even on those days when we cannot feel it. But the day is coming when we shall also rise. This is also what the Gospel is all about.

We will rise from our graves. We will have transformed bodies and will rise to eternal life and to a reunion that is joyful and delightful beyond all expression here and now. That is the day when the promise of our text shall be accomplished, **“And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces.”** Sorrow will be a thing of the past. It will be gone because all that causes sorrow will be ended, wiped away like a covering of dust on the furniture.

Sin causes death, but it also causes sickness, and sorrow, and frustration, and anger, and fear, and impatience, and despair. All of those fruits of sin will be gone as well. God will remove all of the sources of sorrow and dismay, and will give us a clear understanding of the true joy of our circumstances - as if seeing those we have loved and lost again will not be enough. We will be us, and they will be them and we will know one another and delight in one another in that day. And that is the day that we will shout for joy, See, This is our God! This is what we have waited for!

That day is the day that we are still awaiting, when the treasures of our salvation are not hidden from sight, but fully experienced and fully sensed and fully realized! That is the ultimate day of the Banquet, when we shall relish the feast as we should, as it deserves. And on that day we shall see God, and know Him without reservation or doubt or uncertainty. Then we shall shout for joy the words of our text, **“Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He**



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might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

See, This is our God! And we know this. All of this is certain because it is the Word of God! It is not merely pious and wishful thinking, but the promise of God and the very substance of our faith. And it is important to remember that it is already true and real, even if not open to our immediate senses. Jesus has accomplished it all, already. But we do not possess it in its fullness, not yet. We still look forward to sharing completely with Jesus - in the resurrection, and in this lavish banquet. But even now we have the answer to the question about who is really God and how do we know: See, this is our God! Amen.