

Isaiah 25:6-9

October 9, 2005 – 21st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I Am Trusting You, LORD Jesus!

✠ For food (v.6)

✠ For life (vv.7,8)

✠ For joy (v.9)

In the name of Jesus, our loving Friend and Savior, dearly redeemed children of God:

Let me ask you a personal question. Do you eat what you pay at the Old Country Buffet? Quality and your age mostly determine whether you get your money's worth or leave the owner some profit. But over half the people must eat below average for the business to keep going. How do you do at the doctor's? Do you get your money's worth? Doctor's take an oath to keep you alive. Can any actually do that? Can they make your quality of life what they want? What you want? How do you do at the movie theater? Do you go away satisfied, filled with joy? Some movies are meant to make you sad and scared. Fact is, not only can money not buy happiness, it can't guard itself, or our life. Money alone can't even buy food. Wheelbarrows of Deutschmark's could not buy bread in 1930's Germany because of inflation.

So why do we love it so – at least according to American billboards and commercials? Since we too are products of our materialistic age, the Lord would be doing us a fine favor to strip us of our foolish dependence on money and teach us the true meaning of the old hymn: **I Am Trusting You, LORD Jesus!**

✠ For food (v.6)

It's a little hard to imagine in America today, but what if our food chain were suddenly cut off? What if within a matter of a few hours, all the shelves were empty and you were trapped in your home with no way to even get water? We've seen the TV pictures, haven't we? Hurricane victims barely alive because they chopped through their roof to get out of the attic as water rose to the rafters. But what if no helicopter came to rescue you? Picky eaters would relish whatever they could find. And folding our hands to pray before and after every meal would suddenly make more sense – if God withheld our food.

In the chapter just before our text the Holy Spirit says through Isaiah: ***“See, the Lord is going to lay waste the earth and devastate it; he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants— it will be the same for priest as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor. The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered. The Lord has spoken this word.”*** (Isaiah 24:1-3 NIV) Why would God's green earth dry up and wither? Because ***“the earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant.”*** How foolish we are to ignore our sins of lazy, fearful silence in the face of abortion, homosexuality and injustice to the poor, especially those in poverty of soul without the Gospel. The prophets point at such sins specifically for why God will devastate the earth in the Judgment. Who of us can claim to have kept all God's laws as summarized in the Ten Commandments? Not one of us has even kept the First Commandment to fear, love and trust in God above all things.

This is why it is so shocking when God's Word breaks through the storm of our sins: ***“On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.”*** In this case the ***“mountain”*** is Mount Zion where the LORD had King Solomon build His temple. But it was not the temple that saved sinners; it was the food and drink flowing from God's temple then and now. It was not like cheap new wine, but literally the ***“wine on the lees,”*** aging in the bottle long enough for some settling to occur. This is not fat-free tofu from a place you always leave hungry. These are choice steaks in a ***feast*** served by Master Chef, ***the LORD Almighty***. His Word alone can satisfy the souls of all people. **I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus!**

✠ For life (vv.7,8)

Whom did they trust in the “New York City of the West” in the 1890’s? Galveston, Texas, trusted their weatherman who said no deadly hurricane could ever strike the city. Have you seen the pictures? Probably not of the city in tact, because most documented the deadliest US hurricane ever. Nuns died with ten orphans tied to each. Wealthy landowners and poor folk alike all had bodies burning in stinking heaps throughout the devastated city because no one could bury the dead. Some had tried to take them out to sea, but the tide washed bodies back, bloated worse than before. It was all people could do to find their loved ones in time to identify them. Some never did. And while one family in the hurricane zone last month had every reason to feel prepared, they too lost their lives by CO poisoning from a gas powered generator. It wasn’t as bad as predicted unless one of the victims was yours.

Dear friends, no one can long ignore “*the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations.*” There would be no escape except that “*on this mountain [the Sovereign LORD] will destroy the shroud...; he will swallow up death forever.*” Who but God could have imagined, then brought it about that right there in Jerusalem, God’s own Son would pass through the gates of death to suffer the hellish consequences of our sins in our place? No one but God could have predicted through prophets like Isaiah that His Suffering Servant would rise again to conquer death itself. None of the world’s religions dare make this claim even today. And none could back it up because their founders are all dead. It’s a fair question to ask your Muslim friend why the *Koran* says Mohammed is the greatest prophet, but he died, whereas at least according to the *Koran*, Jesus went right to heaven without dying.

But the Bible says Jesus did die, then rose again as promised. This is why **I Am Trusting You, LORD Jesus – For life.** Who but you, O *Sovereign LORD* could *wipe away the tears from all faces* and *remove the disgrace of [your] people from all the earth*? You were there when Peter and Paul were executed in *disgrace* for your Name. You sorrowed at the sin of Roman masses cheering while your people were covered with tar and lit as torches for gruesome games of gladiators and lions spilling the blood of your people on the arena sand. Orphaned children pressed on through life because each of them by Baptism and the Word had learned to trust you, Lord Jesus, above all things, to fear and love God more than **life** itself, especially **life** here on earth. You have promised a better **life** for all who follow you. And your own **life** taken back from the jaws of death proves both your love and power **For life.**

✠ For joy (v.9)

Bloody persecution or not, we always need the ability God’s Word provides to project ourselves beyond earth’s tribulation, **Trusting You, LORD Jesus – For joy.** If football players in the middle of the season could sense the thrill of victory in the championship game, no amount of blood, sweat and tears would keep them from their quest to victory. But for us, Jesus already won the war. These are just mop-up skirmishes on the devil and all the enemies of our souls. And through the Holy Spirit’s Good Book we can actually hear what we will be saying *in that day*: “*Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.*”

Luther was right when he said that if we could but taste the joy of heaven now, we would gladly die a thousand deaths by drowning and fire for the sake of that eternal bliss above. No one could force us to give up on God or worship idols – whether images or money – if we could see what God will deliver for us in glory. To trust in Him rather than ourselves would come easy because no amount of merit or money could buy us even a moment of the solid, lasting **joy** around the throne of God. We will know then the terrible devastation from which He has already saved us, the burning straw *trampled under him...in the manure...* with people spreading out their hands in it like swimmers – all brought down by God in their pride *despite the cleverness of their hands*” (25:10f). Movies, doctors and buffets will be no more. And we won’t even miss them. We will be too busy thanking Jesus for the awesome way He won our trust then proved Himself eternally worthy of our praise. For now this is the very best we can do: “**I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus,** Never let me fall. **I Am Trusting You** forever, And for all.” Amen.