

# Sent Out with God's Blessing to Be God's Blessing

## Luke 2:25-32

Sent out by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
the people of God from his dwelling take leave.

*LHS hymn 844*

So go the words of the hymn we're singing at one of this morning's services.

When you leave here today, what will you do with that blessing? What will you say? What will you do? What does it mean for you in your life, this Father's Day?

When we commenced this series six weeks ago, we started at the place of blessing; God's blessing. Today when we gathered (or to put it more accurately, we were called and gathered by the Holy Spirit to come to God's dwelling for worship) at the beginning of the worship service, God met us with the baptismal words of blessing by giving his name anew and blessing us to come into his grace-filled house.

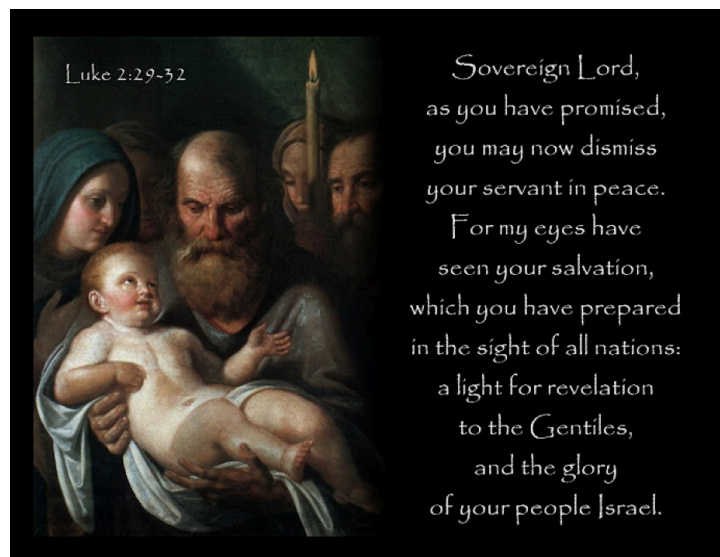
And we complete our worship in joy, saying like Simeon, "for my eyes [the eyes of my heart] have seen your salvation", for God has blessed us to behold and hold Jesus in our hands and in our hearts in Holy Communion. And so we go from here in peace and with God's blessing. Lutheran worship, then, begins and ends with blessing: blessing from Almighty God who made heaven and earth; God's blessing for us.

And this shouldn't be surprising, I think. I am a Lutheran Christian by joyful confession of faith. What I love about being a Lutheran Christian is our clear focus on what is God's clear focus in Scripture; that God is *for* us! That almighty God knows you and me, and loves you and me; that this God loves us to life when we face eternal death because of sin. As Paul beautifully says in Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

*Ephesians 2:8-9*

God's blessing! Another song which proclaims God's blessing so beautifully is Robin Mann's *A Christmas Blessing*, which we'll sing as we leave the band service today:



Sovereign Lord,  
as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss  
your servant in peace.  
For my eyes have  
seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared  
in the sight of all nations:  
a light for revelation  
to the Gentiles,  
and the glory  
of your people Israel.

May the feet of God walk with you and his hand hold you tight.  
May the eye of God rest on you, and his ear hear your cry.  
May the smile of God be for you, and his breath give you life.  
May the Child of God grow in you, and his love bring you home.

As you go to your earthly home today, know that God is with you, and remains with you, as he promised at your baptism (always, even to the end of the age); and know the promise that God has prepared for you and me a heavenly home, an eternal place of peace which brings both rest and praise in the heavenly realms.

As we leave God's house of worship today, we go with God's blessing and in the peace of the assurance that God is with us and we have a home in God's eternal kingdom.

Our heart eyes have seen God's salvation in Jesus today again, as we are together in worship, and we can live in the assurance, the peace, and the blessing of God. Never doubt this. Never doubt this because God is faithful.

But there is something more, something amazingly and wonderfully more.

Let's go back to hymn 844 again:

The seed of his teaching, receptive souls reaching,  
Shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
His grace did invite us, his love shall unite us  
To work for God's kingdom and answer his call.



As we leave God's house of worship today, we go with God's blessing, to bring and to be his blessing in the world.

So I repeat my earlier question: when you leave here today what will you do? What will you say? You are going with God's blessing, and God's commission, and God's song in your life. What does this mean for us?

Well, I want to share with you the story of some other disciples who worshipped Jesus and who sat at his feet.

Like us today, these disciples worship at the feet of the risen Jesus; and like us they too have their earthly joys, their earthly struggles, they have their spiritual faith and their doubts and their fears. It's a story I want you to go with today, and to consider what it means for you and what it means for us as a community of worshippers, a community of disciples. It goes like this, and it's found in Matthew's Gospel:

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son

and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

*Matthew 28:8-10, 16-20*

The women at the tomb are met and welcomed by the risen Lord Jesus. "Greetings!" What do these women, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (the sister of Martha), do? Well, as you might expect, they worship at the feet of Jesus... they are so overjoyed that not only do they sit at his feet, they take hold of his feet. My eyes have seen your salvation! They are so overjoyed by his resurrection, and resurrection life for them. They take hold of his feet, just as the songs of the faith bring us emotions at the presence of Jesus for us. And they tell the eleven that Jesus is waiting to meet them at Galilee.

And what happens there?

Matthew tells us:

When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

*Matthew 28:17*

They too worship. To know the risen Jesus is to worship him, for he comes among us to bless. But as Matthew tells us, some held fears and some doubted. They weren't perfect in faith. With hand on heart, does this not speak to you and me too? Hand on heart, we know the struggle of walking with Jesus with our doubts and sins. And Jesus keeps calling us by the Holy Spirit to keep on coming to worship (keep on turning up!), because he grows us and he sends us just as we are. Here as Matthew tells us all of us, with our faith and our doubts, our courage and our fears, whoever and whatever we are going to from here today, this week, in life... joys, struggles, loves, hurts, fears, doubts, bravery, in sickness and in health, to each and every person you go to from here.

Jesus says to you and me,

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

*Matthew 18:18-20*

For each one of us, this is the call and the promise, until we are called home to worship eternally at throne of God. In all that life is now, God calls you to come back again to sit at Jesus' feet and worship; and now God sends you out with the commission and the promise to bring good news and make a difference. May the feet of God go with you, and his love bring you home. Amen.

*Video of the service including the above address: <https://youtu.be/lfdukmydNyk>*