

Cantate

10 May, Anno Domini 2020

St. John 16:5-15

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In the Name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

God has indeed done marvelous things. Just a short walk through the Holy Scriptures turns up countless mighty deeds of our God. Consider how He preserved believing Noah and his family in the ark, eight souls in all, while the destruction of the world-wide flood raged all around them. He drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh and all his hosts in the Red Sea, yet led His people Israel safely through on dry ground, delivering them from slavery and bondage. The walls of mighty Jericho came crashing down at the blast of the trumpets and the shout of God's people at His command. And what about the innumerable Midianites whom the Lord delivered into the hands of Gideon and his three hundred men?

And all of these mighty deeds have foreshadowed and culminated in the most marvelous of all God's deeds - the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the sin bearer for the whole world. Because of this mighty deed, death itself has been emptied of all its power to harm you. Satan has been robbed of his most potent weapon - your guilt. And it was not done with armies or political prowess or cunning. Instead the God of heaven and earth took upon Himself the form of a servant, bearing human flesh and willingly gave Himself as a sacrifice in our stead. The single greatest work of God was the redemption of sinners - not counting our trespasses against us but instead reconciling us to Himself by the Blood of His only-begotten Son.

And there is simply no more fitting response to this glorious good news than that the redeemed of God lift up songs of praise, proclaiming before the whole world this mighty deliverance. Cantate Domini! Sing to the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song with loud shouts of joy! You were once hopelessly chained to death. Apart from God's mercy, we all would suffer the torments of God's righteous judgment eternally because we made ourselves His enemies. We willingly aligned ourselves with Satan, choosing death over life. Like Israel before the golden calf, we sang the foul songs of hell as we gave ourselves over to works of death - pride, envy, slander, deceit, selfishness, lust, worry, and all manner of idolatry.

But no longer! The Son of God has delivered us by His Blood. He has cut loose the chains of Satan and sent us the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Helper. Let

your voice be heard throughout the world and to the highest heavens. Your Old Adam has been drowned and died in the waters of Holy Baptism. God has removed your sins as far from you as the east is from the west, never to lay His eyes upon them again. Consider that! What has any of us done to deserve that?! What could any of us offer to God in repayment? Nothing, of course. And that's the most marvelous part of all - it is free! God gives eternal life as a free gift to any and all who receive it by faith.

This is why we will sing! We will sing because we have so much to sing about, so much to rejoice in. By the Holy Scriptures the Spirit has led us into all truth - the truth of sin, the truth of righteousness, the truth of judgment. The father of lies has been exposed and judged. God has not left us to simply suffer sin and death forever. The true doctrine of God's Word is a brilliant light that scatters the dark gloom of death and illuminates the perilous path of works righteousness that leads to destruction. It alone comforts terrified consciences and strengthens the weak. The truth is that there is only one sin from which all other sins emanate - a rejection of Jesus. He and He alone is the One sent by the God the Father to atone for sin and open the way of everlasting life. He is our salvation. He is the only way to the Father. There is no other righteousness than that which He bestows through His Word. Not one of us has even a single drop of righteousness or good by which we can make satisfaction for our sins. But the sinless Lamb of God has poured out every last drop of His Blood so that our unrighteousness might be completely covered by His.

That is THE truth, the only truth that matters for all eternity. And God has made it known to you so that you might believe, so that you might not be filled with despair, so that your heart and your mouth might be filled with songs of hope and joy. This is the song of God's people - the Lamb of God for sinner's slain has risen from the dead and He bestows His life and His righteousness to all who believe with their hearts and confess with their mouths that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Cantate Domini! Sing to the Lord!

In the Name of +Jesus.