

How Do We Respond to God's Bounty?

Sermon Notes for Jan 7, 2018 at Brentwood

Psalm 147:12-20 (571) & Jeremiah 31:7-14 (720)



**He grants peace and prosperity
within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat.
(Jeremiah 31:14b)**

Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

- Many painters have a thing for brightness, for light, for the startling ways that light plays around this creation and penetrates its darkest corners – that light, we believe, comes from the bounty of God – so, on this Epiphany Sunday, I'd like to play around with the idea of the brilliance of God's bounty and how we respond to it – in short, it helps us sense God's loving energy, to see others as God sees them, and to see ourselves as God intends us to be
- After re-reading that opening bullet point, I noticed that I used the phrase 'play around' – I must be hanging out with too many jazz musicians these days – but I'm becoming more and more convinced that 'playing around' is precisely how God wants us to respond to his bounty – the response is with all of our beings – instinctual, emotional, and intellectual – all of our means of perception aligned to love God's bounty – knowing that is rooted in delight for what we love most – and the invitation of the Christian faith is that the primary cause of our delight is the love of God we see shining forth in the brilliance of Jesus
- As we said together this morning in our Prayers of Approach and Confession, that light does not often shine forth from places of privilege and power – that kind of bounty is too often a temptation to rebel against the limits God places on our responsibilities – rather, the light is most often found in ordinary people of all types – perhaps one way to think about it is this = it's found wherever the light of God's love shines – and that's everywhere in God's creation, nourishing the riches of God's bounty to flourish for the delight of everyone – it's in the sun that seeps through the grey of this morning's clouds – it's in the simple smiles we use to appreciate each other – it's in the wheat and the grapes that went into the bread and juice that the triune God will use this morning to deepen our sense of communion with God, with others, and within ourselves this morning at this table
- Here, in the delight of Holy Communion, the light of the ordinary becomes the light of the divine – and we are invited, yet again, to respond with loving loyalty by playing around with God's bounty – imagining better ways of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God in the paths of peace and prosperity for all our brothers and sisters who are equally beloved by God - this is what God made us for, our true callings, our authentic vocations

*Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,
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So, what are we going to do with this ...

There is a brightness to God's presence that is worth our renewed attention, especially in these days of darkness and despair – it shines with healing forgiveness everywhere we look – but we need to notice it, honour it, and play around with it, in conscious companionship with our Creator, Redeemer, and Reformer – cultivating God's bounty, for the peace and prosperity of all, is the best way to respond to God's bounty

Your Notes ...

Today's Framework for our Prayers

Thanks – for the surprising and even startling ways in which your light shines into our lives and opens up possibilities to us to play around with your delights ...

Help – in see, by the light you shed, your forgiving and healing grace in the ordinary things of life, in the ordinary people we meet, in the ordinary tasks that make up our daily lives – sensing in the ordinary the extraordinary power of your brilliance ...

Awe – at the brightness of your light and the countless ways in which it enlightens our lives as we grow into our authentic responses to your bounty ...