

Real Food

by Mike Tucker *

During the bombing raids of World War II, thousands of children were orphaned and left to starve. After experiencing the fright of abandonment, many of these children were rescued and sent to refugee camps where they received food and shelter. Yet even in the presence of good care, they had experienced so much loss that many of them could not sleep at night. They were terrified that they would awake to find themselves once again homeless and hungry. Nothing the adults did seemed to reassure them, until someone thought to send a child to bed with a loaf of bread. Holding onto bread, the children were able to sleep. If they woke up frightened in the night, the bread seemed to remind them, "I ate today, and I will eat again tomorrow."

Heaven is a feast, and God is the One preparing it. The image of the banquet is central to our communing with God. The table is intricately connected with the faith Christians profess in remembrance of the one they follow. The ministry of Christ and the call of God is resounding and specific: "Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find." (Matthew 22:9)

The images of banquet, feast, and table are intended to bring something powerful to mind. The psalmist writes, "The poor will eat and be satisfied... All the rich of the earth will feast and worship!" (Psalm 22:26, 29).

Your presence is requested at the banquet. You are invited to the feast. We celebrate a foretaste of that Heavenly banquet when we participate in a communion service.

On the night Jesus was betrayed, he took bread and broke it and gave it to those he loved. Holding onto him, like children with bread, we are given peace in uncertainty, mercy in brokenness, something solid when all is lost. In his severe mercy, we are all invited to the table: Come, take and eat.

With love,
Mike

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