

# **Eucharistic Homily**

*Seventh Lord's Day of Epiphany*

*February 23, 2020*

Before the coming of Jesus, there was only one place on earth where you could draw near to God's presence. And even still, God's glory was hidden behind veils. Only one person—the high priest—was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place, and he could only do so once a year on the Day of Atonement.

But now that Jesus has come and returned to heaven as the glorified God-man, He has opened the way for us into the very heavenly throne room of God. Every Lord's Day, millions of Christians all over this world enjoy communion in God's presence by the Spirit. Jesus has done far more than forgiving our sins. In union with Him, we have priestly access to the Lord of glory. Through the Spirit, we have communion in the life-giving body and blood of the risen and exalted Lord.

If you've been baptized into Christ and are seeking to live faithfully and obediently for Him, you are invited to partake of this feast that our gracious God has provided for us. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

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Ever since the Second Great Awakening, it's become customary for many evangelical churches to have an "altar call" at the end of the service so that people can respond to the message. In that sort of setting, the focus is on what you are going to do for God. The pressure is on to do something right then and there.

But ever since the earliest days of the church, God's people have practiced a very different sort of altar call—the call to come to the altar of the Lord to commune with him. We have an important role in worship, but the invitation that Jesus gives us each week is not primarily an invitation for you to come and do anything for God. The call to worship and especially the invitation to the Lord's Table each week is to come and receive the gifts of salvation, life, glory, and peace that Jesus has already secured for us. There's plenty to do in the Christian life, but the whole point of worship is to receive God's blessings so that we can take them with us out into the world and share them with others.

So the altar call today is that same as it is every week: come and receive the gifts of our generous God. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Rest in the gracious provision of God so that you can then go and share them with others in service.