The fifteenth Psalm opens with two questions, both of which regard who will inhabit heaven. "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?" These are rhetorical questions for the Psalmist immediately answers both questions by describing those who will. Eleven characteristics or personal descriptions of the heavenly bound are listed one after the other: (1) "He who walks uprightly," (2) "[He who] works righteousness," (3) "[He who] speaks the truth in his heart," (4) "He who does not backbite with his tongue," (5) "[He who does not do] evil to his neighbor," (6) "[He who does not] take up a reproach against his friend," (7) "[He who] in [his] eyes a vile person is despised," (8) "[He who] honors those who fear the LORD," (9) "He who swears to his own hurt and does not change," (10) "He who does not put out his money at usury," and (11) "[He who does not] take a bribe against the innocent." The Psalmist concludes, "He who does these things shall never be moved." These eleven characteristics mark the person who is on his or her way to heaven.

Among several striking things about these characteristics is that Jesus manifested every one of them in His life. And so, we can easily make the transitive thought that those who will inhabit heaven will be those who on this earth were like Jesus. But we know that no one is completely, totally, continuously without exception like Jesus. Our flesh wins some of the wars that are waged against our spirit. And this, holy brethren, is where grace, mercy and forgiveness is so crucially needed. Thank God for His grace else no one who comes to this Table will be saved.

But there is one of the eleven characteristics that is perhaps most appropriate to focus upon as we gather at this sacred Table of our Lord and it is that those who will dwell in heaven for eternity with his or her Lord will be one who "fears the LORD." It is so stated in verse four of this Psalm.

Most people who do not know the only holy God and His Word completely misunderstand what is meant by fearing "the LORD." Their mistaken understanding of fearing "the LORD" has led to an ignorant characterization of "the LORD" as being a God who with delight zaps whoever He wishes by sending lightening bolts and sending
them to hell while He sits on a throne with a gleeful scowl on His. This is not the God of the Bible. Those who do not know our God as we do but who do acknowledge that He is picture Him as a God from whom they need to hide and cower in some corner with horror fearing what He may do to them. This is not the God who we know and worship.

And yet, we are to "fear the LORD." Fearing "the LORD" is simply to revere Him, to respect Him, to hold Him in awe, and to acknowledge who He really is — our Creator, our Redeemer, our Provider, and, yes, also our Judge. But it is a holy fear, a righteous fear, and a fear that leads one to obey Him and keep His commandments. It is a "fear" in one’s heart that stirs and motivates him to love, worship, and adore Him. *Psalm 15:4* says that "He honors those who do this.

This is our motivation for being at the Table today. We do this not because "we have to." We do this not because "we have been commanded to," although we have. We do this in remembrance of Him because we "fear" Him — love, worship, and adore Him for what He has done for us through the cross and the resurrection that followed.

There are those who tell us that remembering Him at the Table each Lord’s Day is too often; a weekly observance makes the Supper too common place. Can one love, worship and adore Him too often? Can one remember Him too often? Can you love your spouse or your children or your parents too often? Can you remember them too often? Most people would admit that they cannot love their loved ones too much or think of them too often. How much more is this true of the One who has graciously, without any merit on our part, forgiven us of innumerable sin?

And so once again we lift both the loaf and the cup to our lips and mouths remembering "in fear" the sacrifice of His body and His blood — His life — for us in anticipating the day that we will dwell in heaven with Him and His.

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**PRAYER**

Our Father who dwells in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom has come and we praise you for allowing us to be a part of that kingdom. We come to this table today "in fear" believing that you will honor us some day by granting us entrance into your eternal, heavenly kingdom that will be inhabited by people who are described in *Psalm 15*. We fail to meet these eleven descriptive characteristics of those who will be with You some day and because we do we kneel and bow our hearts at your Table asking that you forgive us and accept our thanks for allowing us to have a chair at this place. In the name of Jesus we pray and ask these things. Amen.