

## **This End Up**

Scripture: Psalm 95:1 – 10 and Luke 12:22 - 34

Have you ever noticed the writing on the side of some boxes - 'This End Up!'? My son Jake has because he was the stock boy at Sears some time ago. He found out that a whole lot of the boxes he was supposed to carry said - 'This End Up!'. Once a customer bought a plasma screen TV. There were very popular back then. He said to Jake that he did not need any help loading it into his car. The box the TV came in clearly said 'This End Up!' The customer and his friend walked along side of Jake as he wheeled the cart out of the store to their car. They then picked up the box and turned it this way and that way trying to fit it into his car. They finally got the box in his car with no help from Jake completely upside down! The next day they came back to the store and said their TV was broken! It seems that all the plasma had gone to the top of the TV screen and the color on the TV was screwed up. They got a refund and bought a digital TV instead of a plasma screen TV.

I guess the sign 'This End Up!' is important! The sign has a purpose! If you set the container in the box in any position other than this ends up, it will damage the contents or the contents will shift in an unnatural way!

In our scripture reading for today - Psalm 95:1 - 10, we have a passage which should have the words - this end up - labeled on it!

Next week we will celebrate Thanksgiving Sunday and during Thanksgiving we should focus on a life praising God before we wrestle with life's demands and unfairness. We must praise God first and celebrate the joy in Christ, rather than rant and rave.

To focus our lives in terms of its hardships and struggles can harden our hearts and it can harden us to God. That is a life turned upside down! Remember - this end up!

With praise and gratitude to God, we keep our lives in perspective and we do not run the risk of damaging our relationship with God and others. Thanksgiving is a 'this end up' holiday!

Jesus came that we might learn how to keep life in a ‘this end up’ perspective.

So this Thanksgiving season, let it be a wonderful time for such a focus!

Today we can take an extraordinary step in the right direction. As we approach Thanksgiving, let our worship be significant with extravagant sounds and extraordinary praises. This is what the psalmist says is joyful noise.

One of the most important aspects of worship is its music and singing. The harmony we achieve in our music underscores our service and makes our hearts soar. When we come together as a community of faith and sing the great hymns and anthems, we make our spirits soar. A joyful sound lifts the spirit of the worshiper. It also lifts our vision so that we can view God better.

If once a week we can do this extraordinary act of making a joyful noise to God, it will help us proclaim that with the Creator God and Jesus Christ, all of life is set in the right position, the right focus, and the right attitude for God’s people.

Let us sing and it will help us keep this end up!

There is another way the psalmist believes worship prepares us for Thanksgiving. It is the fact that worship can raise our vision to the level of seeing the world as through God’s eyes.

Are you quarantined by fear?

In 2020, an outbreak of the Coronavirus left the world in fear and still does cause us to live in fear. People were quarantined and countries were put under a lockdown. Flights and large events were canceled. Weddings were canceled.

Those living in areas with a low infection rate still were living in fear that the coronavirus would come their way. If you watched the news, it would make you sadder and more anxious. So maybe we need to shift our focus during this time of a pandemic?

Our second scripture reading from the Gospel of Luke gives us advice for a time like this, a time of worrying. It tells us to seek his kingdom. To seek God's kingdom.

When we seek God's kingdom, we will focus on the promise that his followers have an inheritance in heaven. When we face difficulties, we can shift our focus and remember that God sees us and knows our needs.

Jesus encourages his disciples, both back then and now, - Do not be afraid for your Father in heaven has been pleased to give you the kingdom. God enjoys blessing us. Let us worship Him, knowing He cares for us more than the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.

Even in difficult times like these, we can read the Scriptures, pray for God's peace, and trust in our good and faithful God.

So what causes us to fear today? Let us not fear for God is with us!

Let us pray:

Loving God, help us to keep our lives right side up. Help us to always look skyward to feel and see your glory. Instead of us living in fear or worry, help us to focus on your care for us. AMEN.

