***Psalm 126:5-6 Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. 6He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.***

This coming week, we will celebrate Ascension Day on Thursday. Ascension Day marks 40 days since the Resurrection of Jesus. Acts 1:3 says - *to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* It’s an exciting day, knowing that our Lord went to sit down at the right hand of God. Acts 1:9 says - *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.* Imagine watching as Jesus ascended into heaven. He promised that He would go, Stephen saw Him standing at God’s right hand in Acts 7:55, and He has promised that He’ll come again. We can rest in His promise!

Our Psalm this morning is known as A Song of Ascents. It’s believed to have been written as the Children of Israel returned from Babylon after the captivity. On this Sunday before Ascension Day, there is no better time to remember that we too have been delivered from the captivity of sin, the bondage of death, through the blood sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He laid His life down and took it up again, resurrecting and ascending. that we might live eternally.

Verse 5 says - *Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.* William Blake wrote a poem called Auguries of Innocence. In this poem, he writes *Man was made for Joy & Woe; And when this we rightly know Thro' the World we safely go. Joy & Woe are woven fine, A Clothing for the Soul divine****.*** John 16:16, Jesus foretells His crucifixion and death - *A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.”* No doubt, as Christ died on the Cross, much sowing in tears took place. But, we know that the dawn is coming, and Jesus arose. Likewise, though we may sow in tears, joy is coming. Psalm 30:5 reminds us *Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.* The seeds we sow, the prayers we pray, the work we give, the time we spend, sown in tears and sadness, shall spring up fruitful, joy blooming on every branch! My friends, hard times come, sadness sweeps in, sickness surprises, and old age creeps, but we can rest in the sure knowledge, that where those tears were sown, joy will bloom. Those who sow in tears **SHALL reap in joy**.

Verse 6 says *He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall* ***doubtless*** *come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.* The original Hebrew held the idea of He will walk, and walk, and weep all the time he’s walking, while bearing handfuls of seed. This suggests strongly that the walk is not a quick one, that patience and perseverance is involved. It also strongly suggests that the persevering work and the continuous toil will be blessed. The Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 9:6 says - *But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully*. Trace Adkins sings a song called Just Fishin’. He says - *She ain't even thinkin' about what’s really goin' on right now, but I guarantee this memory’s a big’in, and she thinks we’re just fishin*'. He ends the song by saying, “*This ain’t about fishin’*.” At times, when we’re in the throws of weeping and suffering, bearing seed for sowing, we can let our mind wander from the fact that it’s not about the weeping or the sowing, but about the rejoicing and the reaping. It’s not about what is here on earth, but Who ascended into Heaven. It’s not about where we stand, but where He sits and how we serve. The faithful sower shall DOUBTLESS come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. The Hebrew holds the idea of shouting joyfully bringing abundant blessings with him. Where did these sheaves come from? The seed sown in weeping. Back in John 16, Jesus promised the disciples would not see Him, He was in the tomb, and that they would see Him, He arose. John 16:20 Jesus says - *Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.* Sorrow was turned to Joy when the stone was rolled away, the tomb was found empty, and the Savior walked the earth for 40 days, witnessed by more than 500 people.

This week, let’s focus on Christ’s ascension. He is at God’s right hand, our High Priest, preparing to come again. While we watch, let us sow. Many times it will be in tears, with much walking and much weeping… let us sow, not sparingly, but abundantly, that, when He comes to gather us home, we might meet Him with eagerness and joy, knowing that we did not waste the talents He has entrusted us with, the seed He has filled our hearts with, but we have sown, perhaps watering the seed with our very tears, that we might say – I have gained more talents Lord – and be found faithful. As we watch the sky and stand faithfully waiting for our ascended Savior to return, let us never forget, this ain’t about the sowing or the tears, but about the reaping and rejoicing in the name of our Savior.