

# Divine Worship

Romans 14.17, 18

“Called to the Kingdom: The View from Here (3)”

## Preparation: 1 Thessalonians 2.10-12

## Silent Meditation

You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

## Call to Worship

## Psalm 27.7-9 (adapted)

Leader:

Hear, O LORD, when we cry with our voices!

People:

Have mercy also upon us, and answer us.

Leader:

When You said, “Seek My face,”

Our hearts said to You, “Your face, LORD, we will seek.”

All:

Do not hide Your face from us;

Do not turn Your servants away in anger;

You have been our help;

Do not leave us nor forsake us,

O God of our salvation.

## Hymn of Praise

## Psalm 27.1-13

(Joanna: *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*)

Lord, You are our Light and our Savior most dear! You guard us with might; therefore, whom shall we fear?  
Though evil surround us, our enemies fall; no harm shall confound us when on You we call.

One thing we request but to dwell with You, Lord, Your beauty to test and to think on Your Word.  
In trouble You hide us secure in Your grace; no foe may o’erride us: We sing of Your praise!

Hear, Lord, when we cry and be gracious, we pray! Lord, do not deny us Your favor this day!  
Our help, our salvation, though others may fall, preserve our good station when on You we call.

Lord, teach us; Lord, lead us because of our foes! Hear, Lord, when we plead for release from their woes.  
Had we not believed all Your goodness to see, our heart sorely grieved and in turmoil would be

## Invocation and Call to Confession

Leader:

Lord Jesus Christ, You call us to seek Your face, and Your face we would see, and the beauty of Your glory, and the majesty of Your holiness! Let Your Spirit help us and Your Word guide us as we come to You in worship. Search us now, O Lord, and lead us to confess our sins. **Hear our silent confessions, O Lord.**

**Silent Confession**

**All**

**Word of Assurance**

**Psalm 145.14, 17**

Leader:

The LORD upholds all who fall,  
And raises up all *who are* bowed down.

All:

The LORD *is* righteous in all His ways,  
Gracious in all His works.  
Thanks be to God!

**Hymn of Assurance**

**Psalm 27.14**

(Joanna: [\*Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise\*](#))

Wait, wait on the Lord; persevere in His grace. Hold fast to His Word; seek His radiant face.  
Be strong, set your heart to abide in His Word; His grace He imparts; therefore, wait on the Lord.

**Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving**

**Psalm 145.18-21**

Leader:

The LORD is near to all who call upon Him,  
To all who call upon Him in truth.  
He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;  
He also will hear their cry and save them.

All:

The LORD preserves all who love Him,  
But all the wicked He will destroy.  
My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD,  
And all flesh shall bless His holy name  
Forever and ever.

All may offer prayers of praise and thanks to the Lord. At the end of these prayers, the Leader shall **lead the people in praying the Lord's Prayer.**

**Offerings to the Lord**

Leader:

Let us now bring our offerings to honor the Lord and edify one another by His Word: a passage of Scripture which has been particularly helpful; a brief word of praise for some grace of God bestowed; an observation from creation which revealed the glory of the Lord; a word of appreciation for some aspect of the beauty, goodness, or truth of the Lord.

When as many as like have shared, the **Leader shall pray:**

We give You thanks and praise, O Lord, and offer ourselves to you in our confession of faith together (**all together, saying the Apostles' Creed**):

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Ghost,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **The Doxology**

**All**

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Him, all creatures, here below!  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts!  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!  
Amen!

### **Prayers of the People**

Leader:

Let us bring our prayers and supplications to the Lord.

All may offer prayers of intercession or supplication, seeking mercy and grace to help in our time of need. **At the end, let the Leader and people pray Psalm 145.8, 9, as indicated:**

Leader:

The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion,  
Slow to anger and great in mercy.

All:

The LORD *is* good to all,  
And His tender mercies are over all His works.

### **The Ministry of the Word**

**Romans 14.17, 18**

The Leader will read the passage for today, or ask another to read it.

In Ephesians 1.15-23, Paul prays that the eyes of our heart may be open, so that we can see the hope of our calling. As we saw last time, that hope is the hope of glory – of seeing God in His glory, of entering that glory,

and being transformed from glory to glory into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope for this in the day that we will see Him face to face; but we also hope for it here and now, to know the weighty, wondrous, gracious, loving, and all-transforming Presence of the Lord with us always, in all we do.

As Paul reminds us in 1 Thessalonians 2.12, the Kingdom of God is the context within which we may expect to know Him in His glory and live for His glory. So we need to make sure we understand what the Kingdom is and how we must seek it.

The Kingdom of God, Paul says, is righteousness. Righteousness is the true character of the Kingdom, the defining attribute of Kingdom citizens and ambassadors – all who are called into the Kingdom of God.

Jesus is the very embodiment of righteousness. As we stand in His glory, gazing upon Him in His exaltation and beauty, as He is revealed in His Word, our hearts long to be more like Jesus, that His Kingdom righteousness might increase in us.

1. How can believers encourage one another to seek more of the righteousness of Jesus?

Righteousness – Christlikeness – is the character of the Kingdom. Kingdom citizens cultivate a vision of Christ, in all phases of His existence, and they walk the path of righteousness that sees them becoming increasingly *like* Christ, on Whom they set their minds and hearts. And what happens as they do is that the Spirit of God, dwelling within them, shows them the *glory* of Christ, revealed in His Word, and works with each exposure to that glory to transform them into the *likeness* of Christ (2 Cor. 3.12-18).

As we might suppose, this kind of character, increasingly and consistently lived, creates a kind of *ambience*. Jesus is the Prince of Peace; where the followers of Jesus go, like Jesus Himself, the peace of God is the *condition* that attends to them. Paul sees the peace of God goes beyond what we can understand (Phil. 4.6, 7).

2. According to Philippians 4.6, 7, how can we increase in the peace of Jesus, and thus know more of the true *condition* of the Kingdom?

Finally, where righteousness and peace prevail, joy obtains. Joy is the *consequence* of realizing more of our calling to the Kingdom and glory of the Lord. Joy is fixed in unchanging realities that look upon us with favor and act consistently on our behalf. Let's read Habbakuk 3.17-19:

3. What was Habbakuk *not* counting on for his joy? What *was* he counting on?
4. What are some differences between joy and happiness? Which do we need most?

Righteousness, peace, and joy are our inheritance in the Kingdom and glory of God. No wonder Paul prayed that we would be able to see and know this hope of our calling! Thanks be to Jesus, Who has given Himself for our salvation, and His Kingdom for our joy!

Hymn of Commitment

**[“I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”](#)**

Timothy Dwight

I love Thy kingdom, Lord, the place of Thine abode,  
the church our blest Redeemer saved with His own precious blood.

I love Thy church, O God; her walls before Thee stand,  
dear as the apple of Thine eye, and graven on Thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall; for her my prayers ascend;  
to her my cares and toils be giv'n, till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy, I prize her heav'nly ways,  
her sweet communion, solemn vows, her hymns of love and praise.

Sure as Thy truth shall last, to Zion shall be giv'n  
the brightest glories earth can yield, and brighter bliss of Heav'n.

**Benediction**

**Psalm 145.10-13**

Leader:

All Your works shall praise You, O LORD,  
And Your saints shall bless You.  
They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom,  
And talk of Your power,  
To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts,  
And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

All:

Your kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,  
And Your dominion *endures* throughout all generations.

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