

COMMON GIFTS

THE LESSON: PSALM 65

In the beginning, God created. He created men and women in his image, and he created the earth, plants, animals, all of it – *good*. Though all of life is marred by human disobedience, the underlying goodness in creation still shines through. Romans 1:20 says that God’s “invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made”.

Whether we realize it or not, every one of us experiences God’s generous benevolence – in the very air we breathe, the life in our veins, and the goodness that still exists in the created world. Jesus told us that God “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). Even those who refuse to acknowledge the source of these blessings benefit from them.

Believers, however, recognize that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1). This is why we bring to him all of our concerns, no matter how “unspiritual” they may seem to us to be. And this is why we give thanks to God for each new day, for the beauty in creation, for the people in our lives, and for the food on our tables.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

Spend some time reflecting on and praying with the words of these prayers:

O almighty and everlasting God, who crownest the year with thy goodness, and hast given unto us the fruits of the earth in their season: Give us grateful hearts, that we may unfeignedly thank thee for all thy loving-kindness, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(THE COLLECT FOR HARVEST THANKSGIVING, BCP PAGE 620)

Almighty God, whose loving hand hath given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honour thee with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(PRAYER FOR FAITHFULNESS IN THE USE OF THIS WORLD’S GOODS FROM FAMILY PRAYERS, BCP PAGE 734)

COMMON GIFTS

PSALM 65: **WHERE TO DIRECT PRAISE**

¹Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion, and to you shall vows be performed.

²O you who hear prayer, to you shall all flesh come.

³When iniquities prevail against me, you atone for our transgressions.

⁴Blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts!

We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!

⁵By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation,

the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas;

⁶the one who by his strength established the mountains, being girded with might;

⁷who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples,

⁸so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.

You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.

⁹You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it;

the river of God is full of water; you provide their corn, so you have prepared it.

¹⁰You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.

¹¹You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.

¹²The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy,

¹³the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with corn,

they shout and sing together for joy.