

LITURGY FOR CREATION

Dix

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our grateful hymn of praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our grateful hymn of praise.

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights above.

Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.

Princes and rulers, men and women, old and young together,

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget none of his benefits.

He forgives our sins and heals our diseases; he redeems our lives and crowns us with love and compassion.

We have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, and confess our sins.

Gracious God, we confess to you our sins: sins of oppression, when prejudice, fear, and hate rule our hearts; sins of neglect, when we poison the earth for profit or we ignore pleas for mercy and justice; sins of pride; and sins of greed. Lord, forgive us when we feed our anger and bathe in our despair. Hear now our confessions and know our hearts.

(Silent confession)

Have mercy, O God, according to your unfailing love;

Wash away all our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. Amen.

As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

In praise of our Creator, let us affirm our faith.

Maranatha! Music

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship you.

You alone are my strength, my shield; to you alone may my spirit yield.

You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship you.

I believe in the one true God, the Father of humanity, who creates and sustains the universe in wisdom and power, who calls us into being and into relationship with God by grace, whose nature is love.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who lived that we might see God, who died that we might be reconciled to God, who rose again that we might experience the life of God, who freely accepts and welcomes all who come to him, not on the basis of their merit, but on the basis of his unconditional love.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who is God present with us now, who shows us our need for God, who assures us of God's love in all circumstances, who lives the life and the love of Jesus Christ through us.

In this faith I will seek to live in harmony with God, with people everywhere, and with all of creation. Amen.

We offer thanks to you, Creator God, for your artistry in frost and snow in the icy stillness of winter, for new life bursting forth and blooming in spring.

We thank you for sunshine and rain and for growth in summer, which you nurture into the fruitful abundance of autumn.

We thank you for the seasons of the spirit, for joy and sorrow, for pleasure and pain, for gladness and grief, for friendship and solitude.

We are grateful to you for your sustaining presence in all circumstances, and for giving us the strength through which we can do all things.

We pray for those who because of greed or selfishness exploit the gifts of the earth, that they may learn to be careful stewards of your creation.

We pray for all who by their commitment and involvement are working to preserve our planet, that you would multiply their efforts.

We pray for those who suffer from prejudice, poverty, or pain, that you would draw near to them and provide for them true justice and mercy.

We pray for those whose lives are being wasted in careless living or despair, that they may find the joy of self-discipline and the hope that comes through Christ.

We pray for your whole church, that it may become a powerful agent of reconciliation and renewal in the name of Jesus Christ.

We pray for all people, that everyone will recognize your awesome majesty and bow in obedient and joyful service.

Dix

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above, pleasures pure and undefiled,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our grateful hymn of praise.

For thy Church which evermore lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore her pure sacrifice of love,
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our grateful hymn of praise.

MESSAGE NOTES

THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE YOUR LIFE: ABUNDANT LIVING THROUGH GIVING

God is the Creator and owner of everything.
You are a steward (a manager) of what God gives you.

One of the keys to abundant living . . .

“. . . I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” *John 10:10*

. . . is when you are a _____ in life.

God is a giver . . .

“For God so loved the world that he gave . . .” *John 3:16*

. . . and God wants you to be _____ Him.

“But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” 2 Corinthians 8:7

GOD SHOWS US THREE REASONS TO GIVE

1. Giving allows you to express _____ for your blessings.

“This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:12

2. Giving allows you to examine your _____ in the present.

*“Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that our fields produce each year . . . so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always.”
Deuteronomy 14:22-23*

Giving helps keep your _____ straight.

- Jesus is more interested in the motive of the giver than the amount of giving.
- Jesus is more interested in why you give than in how much you give.
- Jesus is more interested in the quality of the giver than the quantity of the gift.

What God really wants is _____!

3. Giving allows you to enlarge your _____ of the future.

*“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”
2 Corinthians 9:6*

Your giving determines what God can _____ in your life.

Some Closing Thoughts

Giving is a responsibility, but it is also an _____!

The amount you give of your time, your talent and your treasure is really between _____ and _____.

It’s a _____ matter.

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give . . .”
2 Corinthians 9:7*

If you follow along with the Message Notes, the words that go in the blanks are: giver, like, appreciation, motivation, priorities, you, expectations, do, opportunity, you, God, personal