

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 15, 2014

The Rev. Dr. L. Roger Owens, Associate Professor of Leadership and Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 145

- 1 I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
- 2 Every day I will bless you,
and praise your name forever and ever.
- 3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.
- 4 One generation shall laud your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.
- 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
- 6 The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,
and I will declare your greatness.
- 7 They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness,
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
- 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- 9 The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.
- 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your faithful shall bless you.
- 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,
12 to make known to all people your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
- 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.
The Lord is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.
- 14 The Lord upholds all who are falling,
and raises up all who are bowed down.
- 15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
- 16 You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.
- 17 The Lord is just in all his ways,
and kind in all his doings.
- 18 The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.

- 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry, and saves them.
- 20 The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
- 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

DEVOTIONAL

Descartes said, "I think therefore, I am." A Christian might say, "I desire, therefore I am." Human beings are creatures of desire. Growing in the Christian life is about learning to have our desires reordered.

My children had a friend over a few weeks ago. They were looking together at Christmas toy catalogue. One of my kids said to the friend's mom, "You should buy this for her; it would make her day." She replied, "We hope she might find satisfaction in other things besides toys." In other words: We are trying to help her desire the right things.

Psalms 145:16 says of God, "You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing." This doesn't mean God satisfies all of our shallow, fleeting desires. Rather, God knows our deepest desire is to rest in God. *That's* the desire only God can satisfy.

May God give us, this Advent, the stillness we need to discover this deepest desire for God, and then joy when we see the fulfillment of this desire in the face of a Child.

PRAYER

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set they people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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