

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 17, 2017

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 24

1 The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;
2 for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.

3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

4 Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.

5 They will receive blessing from the LORD,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

6 Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Selah

7 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

8 Who is the King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

10 Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory. Selah

DEVOTIONAL

The Rev. Jennifer Young-Thompson, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church / Port St. Lucie, Fla. / Parish Ministry Focus

Since the Industrial revolution humankind has sought to “subdue” the earth. Driven by greed, we have allowed the destruction of the planet in the name of progress and material gain. We have forgotten that all of God’s Creation is the Lord’s, and it is held in our keeping until the next generation becomes its caretakers. In our desire to master the physical realm we have, perhaps purposely, misunderstood our true calling.

Psalms 24 reminds us that the real work in our lives is the growth of our souls by the subjugation of our ego, our pride, and our selfishness. It is our choice, once we have given our hearts to our Lord Jesus Christ, whether we will allow the power of the Holy Spirit to transform us, thus enabling us to live out the grace of God gifted to us—to live it out humbly, with clean hands, pure hearts, and unsoiled tongues.

Those who live their lives striving to subdue their inner world by following in the footsteps of Jesus are the “generation that seek God.” It is only after this godly work that the gates and doors which stop the Holy Spirit from entering our souls can be lifted up and the King of Glory come in. Just as the Temple attendants physically labored to lift up the everlasting doors so the faithful might come to worship the Lord, so also let us be about our work to subdue our world within and welcome God into our hearts and our lives once again!

PRAYER

Glorious Lord, we live in this material world and often don’t see the wonder of its beauty. We stress over our bills and our health, we worry about our family and our friends. In a world filled with noise it is hard, so hard, to be quiet and know—no matter the misfortune or catastrophe—that You are God. Help us in the varied distractions and disasters of our lives to seek Your face—to find our strength, our peace, and our place within Your loving, faithful, heart. In Jesus’ Holy Name we pray. Amen.

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