

Treasure and Give Thanks

There is a piece of art in my office that is always in my line of vision as I lift my eyes from my work. Since you can't see it, I would like for you to imagine it as I describe it here.

There are two small kitchen tables and one chair at each table. The first table is what I call the table of grace. It is overflowing with a feast of foods—fruits, vegetables, prepared meat, desserts, whatever you might envision as your ideal feast. This table is so full and piled high that if you would slightly bump it, something would fall off. Yet there is just one chair for one person to sit in.

While sitting at the table of grace, you can see a second table in your peripheral vision. This table is only about one-fourth of the way covered with garbage. It's the kind of garbage that a pet would drag into your house, something you would want to remove quickly before it starts to stink or contaminate things. You would never think of putting it on your kitchen table! There is one chair at this table of garbage, and this chair has its back to the table of grace. The one who chooses to sit at this table will only see the garbage in front of them, accepting this as their reality.

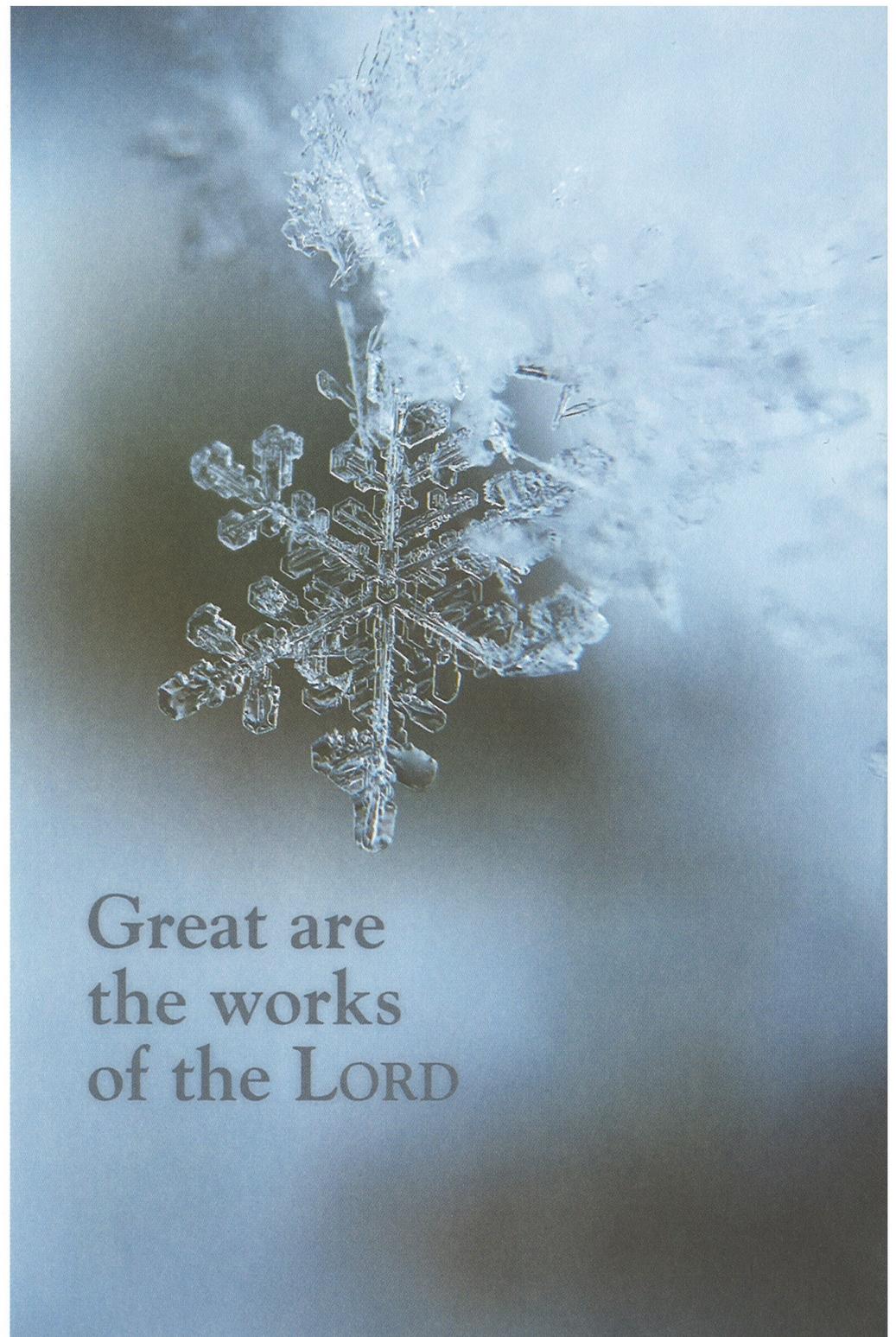
The works of the Lord are great; they are to be desired and treasured. We have been given a table of grace at which to reside that is overflowing with the blessings of God. Sitting at this table, we can still see the darker, challenging circumstances in our life, but this is not where we reside nor what we choose to dwell on.

May today be a day to recognize and treasure the works of the Lord in your life. Give thanks. You are loved! Return to the table of grace and reside in the blessings of God, as you experience the gift of life that has been given to you in such a time as this.

—Brody Rike
Eaton, Ohio

Text for today: "Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. *Great are the works of the LORD*, studied by all who delight in them. Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the LORD is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant. He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations. The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy. They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness" (Psalm 111:1-8, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111 (2); 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28.

01-31-21. Printed in the USA
Worship resource © 2021 Brethren Press



Great are
the works
of the LORD

**CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland**

MORNING WORSHIP

10:00 AM

Worship January 31, 2021

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE "O God of Earth and Altar" (Wold)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Eileen Smith, Worship Leader

One: By this I have known the presence of the Lord:
All: in the rising of the sun, in the smile of another's face,
One: in the touch of a hand or the sound of a laugh, transfer
All: in the scent of a flower holding the promise of spring.
One: By this I have known the power of the Lord:
All: in the healing of hurts, in the forgiveness of sin,
One: in the giving of gifts beyond all expectation,
All: in the shower of love that comes from God's Son.
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord with all of our heart!
All: Let us worship our God, whose presence and power endures forever!

***OPENING PRAYER**

Almighty and most merciful God, we give thanks that you know us and love us. Help us, through the power of your Holy Spirit, grow deeper, wider, and fuller in our knowledge and understanding of your ways. Help us, through the transfer of your divine Wisdom, bring others closer to you and to your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen.

***HYMN #70** "Immortal, invisible, God only wise"

[Verse 1]

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious,
thy great name we praise.*

[Verse 2]

*Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, nor wanting, nor wasting,
thou rulest in might, thy justice like mountains high soaring above thy clouds which
are fountains of goodness and love.*

[Verse 3]

*To all, life thou givest, to both great and small. In all life thou livest,
the true life of all. We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.*

[Verse 4]

*Great God of all glory, great God of all light, thine angels adore thee,
all veiling their sight. All praise we would render; O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.*

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

We have been called to reach out in understanding, in service, and in love. Our morning offering will enable us to be a beacon of hope and wisdom and service to those in our community who so desperately need to hear and see it enacted in their midst.

The giving of our tithes and offerings is a very important part of our worship, even when we are not gathered together in the sanctuary. Our giving is a response to God's call on us to fulfill our obligations to the church and to keep the ongoing ministries of the church effective. As you listen to the offertory, you can use this time to prepare your offering to mail into the church, or to drop off at the church, or to go to the HCOB webpage and use PayPal to give your offering. May we give joyfully as we participate in this significant act of worship.

Offertory "Four Seasons- Winter: Adagio" (Vivaldi)

***Response #119** "Doxology"

***Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Transform this offering into actions of love, understanding, healing, and service. Transform our lives, that we may be obedient and faithful servants to your people in a hurting world. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SPECIAL MUSIC "Brightest and Best" (Harding)
Men's Chorus

(continued)

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³ but anyone who loves God is known by him. ⁴ Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ⁷ It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹ But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹² But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

MESSAGE

“One...No More Than That”
Pastor Twyla Rowe

***HYMN #545**

“Be thou my vision”

[Verse 1]

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.*

[Verse 2]

*Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;
I ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my great Father, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling and I one with thee.*

[Verse 3]

*Be thou my buckler, my sword for the fight.
Be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul’s shelter, thou my high tower.
Raise thou me heav’nward, O Pow’r of my pow’r.*

[Verse 4]

*Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise;
thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.*

[Verse 5]

*High King of heaven, when vict’ry is won
may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heav’n’s Sun!
Heart of my heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

“To the Glory of God” (Peterson)

~~~~~

\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship  
Thank you for joining us in worship today.

~~~~~

(continued)