

WELCOME- It's good that we can join together in worship

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

God's justice is always blended with mercy and loving kindness so that we have real hope . *Susan Sayer*

COLLECT

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love towards you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The Book of Wisdom ch12.13, 16-19

The Book of Wisdom was probably written about fifty years before Christ by a member of the Jewish community at Alexandria to encourage Jews who weren't living in Israel. They lived in a secular culture making it difficult for them to maintain their traditions.

There is not any god besides you, Lord, whose care is for all people, to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly. For your strength is the source of righteousness, and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all. For you show your strength when people doubt the completeness of your power, and you rebuke any insolence

among those who know it. Although you are sovereign in strength, you judge with mildness, and with great forbearance you govern us; for you have power to act whenever you choose. Through such works you have taught your people that the righteous must be kind, and you have filled your children with good hope, because you give repentance for sins.

PSALM 86.11-17

You, Lord, are gracious and full of compassion.

Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; knit my heart to you that I may fear your name. I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name for evermore. For great is your love towards me; you have delivered me from the nethermost Pit. The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a violent band seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes. But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and full of kindness and truth. Turn to me and have mercy upon me; give your strength to your servant; and save the child of your handmaid. Show me a sign of your favour, so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed; because you, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN

Adoption in Roman society was not only of children but of adults too. It was a very serious and complicated legal matter involving several ceremonies during which the adoptee lost all rights in their birth family and gained all the rights and security of a legitimate child in the adopting family. By law they in fact became absolutely the child of their new father and equal heirs to his estate with any natural children. The old life was completely erased as if it had never been, even debt and past wrongs were cancelled. In a very real sense adoptees became completely new people. Speaking to the Church in Rome Paul used this picture of adoption as a metaphor to describe God's acceptance of each new Christian, totally, with all the benefits of his love and forgiveness. Completely new people.

The letter of Paul to the Romans.

ch 8.12-25

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ - if, in fact, we suffer with him so

that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.ch13.24-30, 36-43

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this."

The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

LET US PRAY

God is just and merciful – he invites us to pour out our concerns for the Church and for the world

Lord we join with the endless prayers of Christians throughout the world. We pray for church leaders, for Archbishop Stephen, Bishop Paul, Archdeacon Amanda, and John Area Dean And for all who serve you in their various ministries.

We pray for all whose lives have been changed by illness or isolation at this time. For those also suffering from the results of war, hunger, homelessness and lack of medical care.

Lord we pray for all who have died and who now see their lives as they really are. We pray for your mercy on them and thank you for all their acts of goodness and love.

Heavenly Father we offer you our thankful praise for your steadfast and unchanging love which sustains and directs us. Help us to learn to look with your vision and act with your wideness of compassion

LET US SAY THE LORD'S PRAYER
TOGETHER

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