

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

*Rejoice!*  
Romans 5:1-11

**Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.**

## **Leaders' Responsibilities:**

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## **Prior to this Coming Session:**

### **Gathering Time Leader:**

As leader of the gathering time, you will need to carefully prepare for this session in order for the time together to begin smoothly and be effective. Arrange for someone to read the hymn that is suggested to be read. It is located in a format for copying on the final page of this session. Decide on the choruses you will use.

### **Bible Study Leader:**

**Worship Time Leader:**

Prepare pieces of paper with these words written on them “I am rejoicing today because...” You will need a piece of paper for each participant to complete – adults, youth and children.

Choose which of the various songs that are suggested will be best for your group to sing.

**Music Sources:**

**“Rejoice in the Lord Always”** *Marantha! Praise Chorus Book*, #239

**“Sunshine in My Soul”** *Baptist Hymnal* #430 and in many other hymnals

**“Open My Eyes that I May See”** *Baptist Hymnal* (1991) #502

**“Open Our Eyes”** *Marantha! Praise Chorus Book*, #91

**“In Moments Like These”** *Marantha! Praise Chorus Book*, #78

**“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”** *Baptist Hymnal* #292 and in many other hymnals

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Rejoice!*****Focal Text**

Romans 5:1-11

**Background Text**

Romans 5:1-11

**Main Idea**

God making us right with Himself through our faith enables us to rejoice in this new relationship with God now and forever.

**Question to Explore**

What's so good about being a Christian?

**Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe the benefits that being made right with God through faith brings.

**Gathering together:**

Say: "This is a day to rejoice in the Lord. In fact, **"Rejoice"** is the title of our Bible study and worship time, today. Even when King David was living the worst days of his life, he wrote hymns of rejoicing in the Lord."

Say: "Please repeat after me one of David's best known hymns of rejoicing. Try to say each line with all the joy and gladness you can feel."

Now, read the following passage with enthusiasm and joy one line at a time and have the congregation repeat each line after you.

***"I will give you thanks, for You have answered me;***

***You have become my salvation.***

***The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone;***

***The Lord has done this,***

*and it is marvellous in our eyes.  
This is the day the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.”*

**Psalms 118:21-24.**

Ask the congregation to sing the praise chorus: **“Rejoice in the Lord Always”** (and again I say rejoice).

## **First thoughts:**

### **Our Prayer of Grateful Praise**

**Leader:** Chose someone (an older member if appropriate) in advance to read, in dramatic form, the verses of this hymn:

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

For the 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 prayer of grateful praise.

For thyself, best Gift Divine! To our race so freely given.  
For that great, great, love of Thine, Peace on earth, and joy of heaven:  
Lord of all to thee we raise, this our prayer of grateful praise.

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## **Closing the Gathering Time:**

Say: “Belonging to Jesus brings so many joys in life. As we prepare to look at this topic today, let’s sing together the hymn ‘Open My Eyes That I May See’”

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won’t need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

# 2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### *Rejoice!*

#### **Focal Text**

Romans 5:1-11

#### **Background Text**

Romans 5:1-11

#### **Main Idea**

God making us right with Himself through our faith enables us to rejoice in this new relationship with God now and forever.

#### **Question to Explore**

What’s so good about being a Christian?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe the benefits that being made right with God through faith brings.

### **Introduction to your personal study:**

Think back to the time you became a new creature in Christ. What emotions does this memory evoke? As you began to see life through the eyes of Christ was it a time of rejoicing? For some this is a quiet rejoicing in the heart, while others may rise up leaping and praising God, like a calf from its stall (Malachi 4:2). Even the angels of God join in the rejoicing (Luke 15:8-10). In this session we will explore some of the reasons for such rejoicing.

### **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

## **Romans 5—The Heart of the Gospel Message**

In the previous unit we explored “**The Problem We Cannot Solve**” through a study of the first four chapters of Paul’s letter to the believers in Rome. In that long letter which we sometimes call the Book of Romans, Paul sets out the problem which every person must face: being separated from God. Romans 3:21-4:25 provides a wonderful description of God’s simple, powerful solution to our problems. Today’s passage, Romans, chapter 5, is the heart of the gospel message: God, the righteous Father, took the initiative to present a sinless Sacrifice for sinful humanity. His Gift to us, wrapped in the very essence of grace, is Jesus. He waits for our response.

### **Focusing on the Meaning:**

#### **Rejoicing in Hope, 5:1-2**

God’s precious gift to us provides a new standing, a new quality of life for those who in faith receive the Gift of Jesus Christ. True to His nature, God not only makes us right with Himself, but with that justification abundantly blesses us with hope and peace. Paul rejoices in the privileges that flow from the river of justification and belong to the justified. He trumpets notes of assurance and exultation throughout this chapter.

The believer’s new relationship to God is identified by peace, access, and hope. This peace with God is more than an inward peace of mind, Paul emphasizes a change in the individual’s status. As discussed in Romans 1-3, unbelievers struggle with both blatant disobedience and with ineffective attempts to make themselves right with God. Frustration, disappointment, and outright despair mark their struggle.

But those who have been justified by faith now have a right relationship with God. Frustration and disappointment are replaced by satisfaction and contentment, despair with hope. When we are reconciled with God, the seeds of peace are sown.

Paul discusses the ministry of reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:17. Hear the Words of God from the New American Standard Version: “**Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away, behold, new things have come!**” All this is from God! He reconciled us to Himself through Christ. The gift of reconciliation goes on through the ministry He gave us. Not only are we liberated to be at peace with God, but also with ourselves. God has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). Peacemaking is our business. The fruit and the hope that we will be reconciled to one another rests in our being reconciled to God.

What a wonder--through Christ we can directly approach the God of all creation! Paul paints a picture of the unity of God in Ephesians 2:18: in Christ we have access to the

Father by one Spirit. We have access not with timidity and in fear, but with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12). What a contrast to the limited access experienced by the children of Israel. Even God's chosen people had access only once a year and through only one individual (Leviticus 16:29-34). Even when the chosen priest entered the Temple to burn incense the rest of the assembly stood outside waiting (Luke 1:10). Because Christ entered into the Holy Place once for all, (Hebrews 9:11-12) we no longer stand outside. Through Jesus we are ushered into God's grace; it is there that we stand (Romans 5:2).

How can we not rejoice? Our joy overflows as we consider God's glory. The sobering truth is that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). The climax of justification by faith is the hope of sharing God's glory (Romans 5:2). Justification is the beginning of our journey of faith. Sanctification, being conformed to that glory, is the end result of our journey (1 John 3:2-3). We rejoice in the hope of that future glory. Just as we can now face the present with peace, we can face the future with joy.

### **Rejoicing in Our Sufferings, 5:3-5**

We have another reason for rejoicing, in our sufferings. Who would rejoice in their sufferings? But we have a God who exceeds our finite reasoning. After all why would the Sinless die for the sinful? Why would the Almighty submit to human limitations? Paul's progression from suffering to perseverance to character to hope gives a glimpse of the wonder of God's economy of grace. Even when we realize that such sufferings initiate a process which ends in hope, how often is our first reaction that of rejoicing?

Although we are new creatures in Christ we are still a part of our fallen world. God calls us to approach the sufferings that are common to the human experience with a realistic and positive attitude. Rather than deny the reality of sufferings, the believer is empowered with a solid recognition that God often uses such times for our spiritual growth and discovery. In fact it seems that for many, spiritual growth cannot happen apart from suffering. Jesus promises that if we abide in Him we will bear much fruit (John 15:5). Yet even those branches that do bear fruit He prunes so that they will be even more fruitful (John 15:2).

How difficult this concept is. We don't want to weather the storms of life; we would rather avoid them. But if we miss the storms, we will also miss the blessings. Jesus taught of God's special favour reserved for those who suffer (Luke 6:20-23). Blessed are those who face trials, hunger, poverty, or persecution because of Jesus. Such trials are not fun, they are very difficult, and the pruning usually hurts. Yet according to Jesus, we are to rejoice and leap for joy (Luke 6:23). Paul promises that the hope produced by suffering won't disappoint us. Like a soothing ointment on our pain, God pours out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:1). In this we can rejoice.

### **Rejoicing in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 5:6-11**

Finally we can rejoice in Jesus Himself. Paul's excitement is almost palpable as he describes the climactic scene in the earthly drama. You can almost imagine a celestial countdown as the clock of our need ticked toward the time of His fulfillment. "At just the right time" Jesus came. How often do we question God's timing? Or seek to sway His eternal schedule with our persuasive pleadings? Paul says elsewhere that in the fullness of time Jesus came (Galatians 4:4). What audacity do we display when we question the Author of time itself!

Paul emphasizes that Jesus came when we were still powerless. As difficult as it is for our egocentric minds to swallow, nothing we can say or do can achieve what only God in His glory did for us. And He did it not because we were worthy or because of the slightest merit we had earned, but because of His incomprehensible love for us. Now that is a reason to rejoice!

Paul summarizes the liberating theme of the Gospel in verse 8. How difficult it would be to die for someone else; although perhaps it would be a bit easier if the other person was exceptionally worthy of our sacrifice. God's unquestionable demonstration of the depth of His love for us is shown in His sacrifice not for the worthy but for the guilty!

We deserve God's wrath, yet He gave us His mercy. If we are crucified with Christ, we can truly experience the life God has for us (Galatians 2:20). That life is not just for today. Our reconciliation with God extends even to the last day. We can rest in the assurance regarding a final judgment because of what God has already done (Romans 5:10).

It is amazing that He ever reconciled us to Himself in the first place, yet while we were His enemies He displayed the magnitude of His love. That we will also be saved from the final judgment is even further cause for rejoicing in Him (Romans 5:11).

## **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

Paul triumphantly declares our reconciliation to God through faith. The only response is that of rejoicing. What's so good about being a Christian? We have: peace with God, ourselves and others; direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Himself; hope both now and forever. We have been made right with God; we are new creations in Christ. We can face the joys and struggles of this life with joy because we know that the outcome is worth the journey. Rejoice!

## **For Personal Reflection:**

1. **What have I learned from this study?**

2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***Rejoice!***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

**Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.**

#### **Focal Text**

Romans 5:1-11

#### **Background Text**

Romans 5:1-11

#### **Main Idea**

God making us right with Himself through our faith enables us to rejoice in this new relationship with God now and forever.

#### **Question to Explore**

What's so good about being a Christian?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe the benefits that being made right with God through faith brings.

#### **Connect with Life:**

Say: Think back to the time you accepted Jesus as Lord of your life and became a new creature in Christ. What emotions does this memory evoke?

Ask volunteers to share a bit of the joy they experienced when they gave their hearts to Christ for the first time. Be prepared to share a bit of your own experience if no one volunteers. Celebrate the experiences shared. Be sure to emphasize that each believer may express that joy in differently.

Share with the congregation: In this session we will explore with Paul some of the reasons for such rejoicing.

## **Guide the Study:**

Share the background information regarding the Book of Romans from your Teacher Preparation material in the paragraph entitled “**Background**”.

Ask a volunteer to read Romans 5:1-2.

Discuss the new status that every believer enjoys in Christ.

Say: The believer’s new relationship with God is identified by peace, access and hope. Explore each of these aspects using your Teacher Preparation material.

Explore the ministry of reconciliation we have in Christ using your Teacher Preparation material. Point out that this reconciliation begins with our relationship with God and extends to peace with ourselves and others.

Seek opinions on this question: What practical ways can we implement the ministry of reconciliation in our relationships?

Comment: We live in a world of heightened security. In many work places, employees have to display a security pass just to enter. Analogize how our relationship with Christ provides us an avenue or a “security clearance” so that we can approach the throne of God Almighty directly.

Using the background material from the Bible Study, contrast this access with the limited access even the children of Israel enjoyed.

Discuss the hope we have in Christ both for today and for the future. Explore the meaning of sharing God’s glory using both Romans 5:2 and 1 John 3:2-3.

Request a volunteer to read Romans 5:3-5.

Say: Although we are new creatures in Christ, we live in a fallen world. A very real part of that world is suffering. Discuss the progression Paul makes from suffering to perseverance to character to hope. Ask a volunteer to read John 15:1-5.

Ask: What does Christ say will happen to those branches that bear fruit? Ask a volunteer to share a time God “pruned” his or her life and how he or she has become more fruitful as a result.

Have someone read Romans 5:6-11.

Talk about the security that comes from knowing that God’s timing is perfect.

Look briefly at John 2:4. Discuss the importance of obeying God's timing and resisting the temptation to push ahead of God.

Encourage someone to read again Romans 5:8.

Discuss the amazing fact that Christ died for us "while we were yet sinners." Ask: How does this Sacrifice display God's love for us?

Bring this up for brief discussion: As we close this passage we again return to the theme of reconciliation. Note that this is a gift we have "now received." Discuss how this is further cause for rejoicing.

### **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Close by celebrating the salvation we have in Christ. Pray thanking God that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; for the peace, access and hope we have through Him. Ask God to open your eyes and hearts to ways of sharing the reconciling love of God in your homes and communities.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.** Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

### ***Rejoice!*** **Romans 5:1-11**

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

#### **Gifts**

Think of a favourite Christmas present you received as a child.

What made it so special? What was it like to wait for Christmas to see if you really were going to receive that special gift? Did you tire easily of playing with that gift or was it something that you enjoyed for a long time. Do you still have the gift?

Of all the things we have received, a few stand out in our memories for a long, long time. Sometimes it is because the gift was a surprise; other times it is because we had waited for a long time to receive the gift. Sometimes the gift was special because of who gave it to us.

Today we think about salvation. What a wonderful gift. Do you remember when salvation came to you? What made that day so different from all the other days you had heard about Jesus? As a young person, you may not think often about heaven. But when you do, you have the hope of an eternity with Jesus, your best friend.

If you have not yet received this best gift of all, today would be a good time to acknowledge your need of a Saviour, confess your sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask a friend to help you if you don't quite understand.

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Rejoice!***  
**Romans 5:1-11****Beginning the Service:**

Sing “In Moments Like These”

Pass out small sheets of paper with the words, “I am rejoicing today because” written on them. Ask each person to complete the sentence and place the paper in the offering plate along with the offerings given.

**Offering:**

Lord, our offering today is more than our gifts of money. We offer our “rejoicing” – our thanksgiving for things in our lives – large and small – which teach us of your provision, your kindness, your love. Amen.

**Praying for the World:**

Even as we are grateful this day for the blessings we have, we know that around the world are those who hunger, who are lonely, who suffer from AIDS, whose homes have been lost in earthquakes, tsunamis, and hurricanes who have never heard of Jesus. May we never be so comfortable in our joy that we fail to remember those for whom joy seems an impossibility.

**Sharing Guide:**

**This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God’s call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.**

**Rejoice for ALL of This**  
**Romans 5:1-11**

The central character in Rachael Field's novel, ***All This, and Heaven Too***, reflects on her good fortune since coming to America from France. She was falsely accused for causing the death of a notable man's wife, for whom she had worked as housekeeper and as a nanny to his children. With no one to come to her defense, she was forced to leave France and had come to America. She had only recently discovered that she had a terminal illness, and that soon she would pass from her life of happiness with a loving husband and many friends.

As she looked at the reflection of the rolling front yard, covered with the green grass of spring, she saw her husband slowly making his way up the hill to their cottage. The tight feeling in her breast slowly dissolved as she reflected over the wonders and joys of the life she had lived since the days of hardship and destitution in Paris. She recalled the happy but brief days as the tutor and friend of the children of a government official. The horrors of accusation of complicity in the murder of the wife of her benefactor caused a shudder to pervade her frail body. The crossing of the ocean to America and finding of new life in New York City was cause enough for happiness but the joys of the theater life, marriage to a wonderful man and their life together in the city and in their summer retreat upstate made her life a true blessing. A warm glow pervaded her being, and a smile crept over her face, as she softly formed the words to express the feeling in her heart: "All this, and heaven too."

I'm sure that Rachael Fields intended to emphasize the great joys and happiness in this life, while, at the same time, point her readers toward the beauty and glory of the life to come.

All this – this life of family and friends and children and grandchildren, and beautiful sunrises and sunsets, the soft breeze touching the face in early morning, the wind swaying the trees, the first flower of spring and the last rose of summer. All this, and heaven too.

In times of distress and sorrow the soul longs for the "sweet by and by, for the land that is fairer than day, to the land beyond the River, beyond death." But in the midst of life, in the bright sunshine of day, in the whirl and business of life, we seldom think about the time when we too, shall join that innumerable caravan that leads to that mysterious realm. It is too easy, and always tempting, to love this life and to give our energies to making it enjoyable and secure from suffering. It is natural for the human being to push thoughts of death and dying as far away from consciousness as possible. But what if we do not make provisions for that day and time when we too shall push our fragile ship from the shores of life into the vast seas of life beyond? The Apostle Paul, in this defense of salvation by grace through faith, spends only a few strokes of the pen describing the life of here and now and majors on living this life with joy and confidence that all is well because we have been given peace through the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Paul makes a reasonable, progressive, passionate picture of life for the Believer. We can follow his thoughts rather easily.

Another way to say what God has done, and continues to do for his human creatures is that of ***The Message***, a Bible interpretation by Eugene Peterson.

***“By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us--set us right with him, make us fit for him-- We have it all together with him because of our Master Jesus. And that’s not all: We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that he has already thrown open his door to us. We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we would stand—out in the wide open spaces of God’s grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise.”***

(from ***The Message: The Bible in Contemporary English***, Romans 5).

This is the here and now, not the expectation of what we will find in the sweet by and by. This is what makes this life sweet and enjoyable and worth the effort, as Paul states in verse 3.

***“There’s more to come: we continue to shout our praises even when we’re hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we’re never left feeling shortchanged; quite to the contrary—we can’t round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit.”***

(from ***The Message: The Bible in Contemporary English***, Romans 5).

You might think that with so much on our plate from God’s bounty, that it would be enough to sustain us from now to eternity. But there’s more.

In verse eleven Paul once again states a reason for rejoicing: we rejoice in God, period. In verse two the author claims that believers rejoice in the hope of sharing the glory of God: all that God is, believers share. Again, in verse three he is even so audacious as to say that believers rejoice in the sufferings through which their life must pass. Now in verse eleven he makes his boldest claim: believers rejoice in God himself. All barriers are torn down and we stand in the presence of God. And the glorious thing about shouting praises to God is that it is done through Jesus Christ. We are no longer enemies of God; no longer angry with God; no longer at odds with God. In Jesus we shout our praises to God, now and forever!

As we move further into the Epistle to the Romans we discover more and more reasons for rejoicing, especially in chapter 8. There we find many golden nuggets of truth that should enrich the soul and brighten our days, and quicken our step.

### **Call to Commitment:**

We are called today to rejoice; to rejoice always; to rejoice because of the provision Christ made for us to enter into a life on earth of real and permanent relationship to him and a life in heaven in which that relationship grows and deepens.

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**Rejoice! – 04-11-05-en**

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## **Concluding the Service:**

Close with hymn, ***“O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go.”*** (BH # 292) or a praise hymn that expresses God’s unbreakable love. The service is adequately closed with the words of the hymn, so it can be sung or quoted.

**Leader:** Chose someone in advance to read, in dramatic form, the verses of this hymn. Provide them with this copy for them to practice. The hymn, under the title, “**For the Beauty of the Earth**” can be found in many hymnals.

**Prayer of Grateful Praise  
(or, For the Beauty of the Earth)**

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

For the 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 prayer of grateful praise.

For thyself, best Gift Divine! To our race so freely given.  
For that great, great, love of Thine, Peace on earth, and joy of heaven:  
Lord of all to thee we raise, this our prayer of grateful praise.

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