

“The Lord’s Call to Repentance”



5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 85:5-6; 18:1-2, 27, 32, 49

The sorrows of Sheol sur- | rounded me;*
 the snares of death con- | fronted me.
 In my distress I called up- | on the Lord,*
 He heard my voice from His | temple.
 I will love You, O | Lord, my strength.*
 The Lord is my rock and my | fortress.
 For You will save the humble | people,*
 but will bring down | haughty looks.
 It is God who arms | me with strength,*
 and makes my way | perfect.
 Therefore I will give thanks to | You, O Lord,*
 and sing praises | to Your name.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Jeremiah 1:5 (KJV)

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”

7 READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O Lord, we implore You favorably to hear the prayers of Your people that we, who are justly punished for our offenses, may be mercifully delivered by Your goodness, for the glory of Your name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Salvation Unto Us Has Come

TLH 377, LSB 555
 Paul Speratus



1. Salvation unto us has come
 By God's free grace and favor;
 Good works cannot avert our doom,
 They help and save us never.
 Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
 Who did for all the world atone;
 He is our one Redeemer.

6. Since Christ hath full atonement made
 And brought to us salvation,
 Each Christian therefore may be glad
 And build on this foundation.
 Thy grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
 Thy death is now my life indeed,
 For Thou hast paid my ransom.

1 BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
 In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
 I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth.
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
 Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
 under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
 and was buried. He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the
 dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
 the right hand of God, the Father
 Almighty. From thence He will come to
 judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
 Christian church, the communion of
 saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
 resurrection of the body, and the life
 everlasting. Amen.

3 PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER
 Our Father, who art in
 heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth as it
 is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily
 bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those who
 trespass against us;
 and lead us not into
 temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and
 the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have kept me this night from all
 harm and danger; and I pray that
 You would keep me this day also
 from sin and every evil, that all my
 doings and life may please You.
 For into Your hands I commend
 myself, my body and soul, and all
 things. Let Your holy angel be with
 me, that the evil foe may have no
 power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have graciously kept me this day;
 and I pray that You would forgive
 me all my sins where I have done
 wrong, and graciously keep me this
 night. For into Your hands, I
 commend myself, my body and
 soul, and all things. Let Your holy
 angel be with me, that the evil foe
 may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: **The Lord's Call to Repentance**

Today begins the Church's little season of "Pre-Lent" - that time of preparation before our long journey in Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday. This week, the readings at Divine Service and through the week call us to repent of our sins and appropriate the audacious grace of God for us sinners.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 20:1-16 Ridiculous Grace**

The grace of God is such that it strikes us as ridiculous. The vineyard owner, who is in this parable an image of the Father in heaven, pays for work not performed and treats the undeserving as though deserving of the excessive wage. Is this not a picture of divine grace for sinners, that we who deserve nothing for our sins but to be ignored by God all the way to hell nevertheless are counted as God's own children? The danger here is that we would be indignant at this grace for others. "These last have only worked one hour!" We say in our hearts. We need to repent and rest in the Lord who calls sinners, even us and them to Himself. *Lord, keep me faithful and humble, always content to serve and be served in the vineyard of Christ the crucified. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 23 Lost without Him**

Sheep need shepherds. Without them they are threatened by wolves and thieves, deep ravines and cliffs, poor food and water, disasters of every kind. When David says here that the Lord is our Shepherd, he is not only confessing God to be gracious and merciful, powerful with the rod and staff of His power and word. No, he is also commenting on his, and our own, foolishness. Without God and His Word we fall into a ditch (Matt. 15:14). We all like sheep have gone astray (Is. 53:6). Apart from God we are lost and doomed to fail. But the Lord is indeed our shepherd - with Him we are safe and secure, in Him and nowhere else. *Lord Jesus, bring us to the safe waters and pasture of Your holy Word and guide us unto our everlasting home. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **1 Corinthians 9:24-10:5 Godly Discipline**

Most modern English translations obfuscate the verb in verse 27 to say "discipline" (NKJV, ESV, NASB). But the verb in the Greek literally means "beat" or "strike" even "harass". Since he still lives with his sinful flesh, Paul beats, buffets his body, how we do not know, to bring it to submission to his will. This should give us pause. Are we any less fleshly than St. Paul? Bodily discipline is of some value, Luther says in the catechism, and so we should not be surprised that it should be beneficial for us. Is your Old Adam in control and need drowning in baptism and repentance? Could you benefit from saying "no" to your wants and desires? *Lord Jesus, show me the things that keep me from You, that I also should not be disqualified. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Jeremiah 1:4-10 The Call**

Notice here that Jeremiah (like all the prophets at their call from God) draws attention to his inadequacies: "I cannot speak, for I am a youth!" As with Moses, or Isaiah, or St. Peter, it does not matter what you can or cannot do. It is the Lord who is the source of all good, and if He chooses you to be His instrument, so be it. This means also that if you have any good in life, it must come from God and not from you. Stop focusing on yourself! Do not say "I could never live a holy life" or "God would never want me." God raises up from nothing. He works salvation for you and fills you with His life. *Lord, fill me with Your love and take me to Yourself. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 25:14-30 Hiding What is the Lord's**

The one servant went and hid what the Lord had given him. That in itself, despite all the difficulties of this parable, should be able to make clear what the problem is here. If the Lord God gives you anything, whether that be forgiveness, faith, life, Scriptures, family, house, or anything, it does not belong in a place where it is of no use, no enjoyment. Hiding what the Lord has entrusted to you, keeping for yourself that which is granted for the benefit of many is the greatest ingratitude, a work spawned by faithlessness and fear. Has the Lord given you a gift? Broadcast it. Enjoy it. Revel in it, especially His saving gospel. *Lord make me a good steward of all Your gifts that You will say to me "Enter the joy of Your Lord." Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Acts 17:22-34 Preaching To The Religious**

There is one true Religion; the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the faith which declares sinners forgiven by faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, Who will come again to raise and judge the living and the dead. But of course there are false religions. Many of them dimly reflect some aspect of the divine revelation, but lead astray into idolatry in the end. In pagan Athenians, Paul recognizes that there is perhaps an unknown deity as a jumping off point to speak about the true God. He does not overlook the differences. He will preach to them. Doctrine matters. The truth will set you free. *Lord Jesus, help me to see the good in others and witness to Your truth which You have revealed in the Scriptures. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 95 Worship and Obedience**

This psalm is sung every morning in the prayer office of Matins, where it goes by its Latin name, The Venite. This psalm is the reveille, the wake-up call of the morning prayer office: "O Come! Let us sing!" It begins by calling to mind and heart the mighty works of the Lord; His power over creation, His fatherly provision for us. And then it encourages us toward the obedience of faith: "Today if you will hear His voice: do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." This is the constant danger of the Christian, that he would turn away from faith in his God, that he would embrace rebellion. Turn your hearts toward God, O Christian. Hear His words. Trust in Him. Harden not your heart. *Lord, strengthen me for faithful service. Amen.*

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