



5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Ecclesiasticus 36:16-17a; Psalm 122:1, 6, 8-9

Give peace, O Lord, to those who / wait for You:*
 and let Your prophets be proven / faithful.
 Hear the prayer of Your / servants,*
 according to the blessing of Aaron upon Your / people.
 I was glad when they / said to me,*
 “Let us go into the house / of the Lord.”
 Pray for the peace of Je- / rusalem:*
 “May they prosper who / love you.
 For the sake of my brethren and com- / panions,*
 I will now say, “Peace be with- / in you.”
 Because of the house of the / Lord our God*
 I will / seek your good.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK 1 John 3:1

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God and so we are.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, forasmuch as without You we are not able to please You, mercifully grant that Your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Lord, Thee I Love With All My Heart

TLH 429, LSB 708
 Martin Shalling



1. Lord, Thee I love with all my heart:
 I pray Thee ne'er from me depart,
 With tender mercies cheer me.
 Earth has no pleasure I would share,
 Yea, heaven itself were void and bare
 If Thou, Lord, wert not near me.
 And should my heart for sorrow break,
 My trust in Thee no one could shake.
 Thou art the Portion I have sought;
 Thy precious blood my soul has bought.
 Lord Jesus Christ,
 My God and Lord, my God and Lord,
 Forsake me not! I trust Thy Word.

3. Lord, let at last Thine angels come,
 To Abram's bosom bear me home,
 That I may die unfearing;
 And in its narrow chamber keep
 My body safe in peaceful sleep
 Until Thy reappearing.
 And then from death awakened me
 That these mine eyes with joy may see,
 O Son of God, Thy glorious face,
 My Savior and my Fount of grace,
 Lord Jesus Christ,
 My prayer attend, my prayer attend,
 And I will praise Thee without end.

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: Singlehearted Love of God in Christ

From Norman Vincent Peale to Joel Osteen, a host of celebrity pastors have preached a positive message, apparently assuming that the Word of God is too negative for itching ears. But whoever controls the categories controls the argument. Positive and negative are not paradigms for Lutheran preaching. Rather, the God-given categories are Law and Gospel. Sunday's Gospel Lesson (Mt 22:34-46) is a "Q & A" on the greatest commandment (Law) and Jesus' identity (Gospel), with Jesus giving the answers. The subsequent readings present the full condemnation of the Law and the full consolation of the Gospel for the children of God.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 22:34-46 A Question of the Law and of the Gospel

A Rabbi was once asked to summarize the Law while standing on one foot: "Love God. Love your neighbor. Everything else is just commentary." How true! On these two commands hang the Law and the Prophets, which bring you to repentance. But Jesus replied with a question of the Gospel: How could Jesus be David's Son (fully man) and David's Lord (fully God) according to Psalm 110? This question silenced His opponents and helped to shape the Christian creeds. So love God and your neighbor, O Christian. But greater than your love is the One who loves perfectly, David's Son and David's Lord. On Him hangs your sin. On Him hangs your life and salvation. *Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication! (LSB 350.4). Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Introduction to Psalm 119:137-144 The Righteousness of God in Christ

Each eight-verse strophe (think of hymn stanzas) of this acrostic Psalm begins with a letter of the twenty-two vocables of the Hebrew alphabet, an acrostic "Portals of Prayer." This strophe begins with the first letter of the word "righteousness." A few key words preach the Law to show you your need for His righteousness: you are *small, despised*, and full of *trouble* and *anguish* in this life. Repent! But the word "righteousness" appears in various forms six times. God alone is righteous in Christ, whose promises are true. His Word gives you faith in His righteousness, which is yours now and evermore. *Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous: Bright with Thine own holiness, Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess (LSB 578.3). Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 1:4-9 St. Paul's Thanksgiving for the Saints in Corinth

See how the singlehearted love of God in Christ embraces the church's past, present, and future! All of the gifts mentioned in this reading were first given to you in Holy Baptism: God's grace, the entire Christ, and every gift of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of God in Christ are yours here and now, for all who live by baptismal grace "are not lacking in any gift" (v. 7). And St. Paul is an especially forward-looking or end-times writer, promising the church of all ages that Christ will sustain His people to the end, guiltless at His second coming. Thus it is fitting for you to make the sign of the cross at the words "and the life of the world to come" and to pray with the hymn writer, *Teach us to bear Your blessed cross, To find in You all pleasure (LSB 647.4). Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 10:12-21 The SINGLEHEARTED Love of God in Christ

One cannot overestimate the significance of Deuteronomy as Moses, from the plains of Moab, preached the longest sermon in the Bible (maybe the longest ever?) on God's singlehearted love for you. After a forty-year training, Israel is addressed as God's own heart, about to enter the promised land and prepare for the Messiah's coming. His 'last will and testament' still rings in your ears to bring you to repentance. Then Joshua (Yeshua = Jesus) led Israel into the promised land, foreshadowing One greater than Moses, the new Jordan of Holy Baptism, and your life in the New Israel of all believers. *Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free: From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee (LSB 338.1). Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: John 15:1-17 The Singlehearted Love of God IN CHRIST

This saying is trustworthy and true: "The Gospel presumed is the Gospel denied." See how modern American Evangelicalism presumes that everyone is justified but no one is sanctified, resulting in preaching more Law than Gospel! Jesus clarifies the relationship between faith and works with a simple and vivid metaphor. He is the true vine, the source of all that you are and all that you have. You are His branches, drawing your life not from motivational speeches or end-times panic, but rather from Christ's holy word and sacraments. Thus does Christ sanctify and keep you, O Christian, in the one true faith. *Give us faith to trust You boldly, Hope, to stay our souls on You; But, oh, best of all Your graces, With Your love our love renew (LSB 851.4). Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: 1 John 3:1-8 The Singlehearted LOVE OF GOD in Christ

Yesterday's lesson clarified the relationship between faith and works by speaking of vine and branches. Today's reading, also from St. John the Apostle, uses an equally straight-forward metaphor: little children. God the Father loved you so much that He made you His own baptismal child. Indeed, John's frequent use of "little children" reflects the self-giving love of the Trinity that flows from the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit. Under the Law, then, those who persist in unrepented sin are of the devil. But in Christ, the perfect Son, your sonship is eternal, for He will not let you, His own child, out of His nail-pierced hands. *Lord, grant that I in ev'ry place / May glorify Thy lavish grace / And help and serve my neighbor (LSB 708.2). Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Introduction to Psalm 54 "Deliver Us from Evil"

One church father describes this Psalm as "The voice of Christ to the Father, or of any faithful one, entreating God's help against sins." Here Christ prays for deliverance from His enemies, who falsely accused Him and delivered the innocent One to the death of an insurrectionist. David prayed this Psalm for deliverance when he hid from Saul among the Ziphites (1 Sam 23). And you pray this Psalm in every hour of need, knowing that God will help you and uphold your life (v. 4). God's help might be delayed, but as he did for Jesus, He will vindicate you in the final resurrection of all flesh. Let no false doctrine me beguile; *Let Satan not my heart defile. Give strength and patience unto me / To bear my cross and follow Thee (LSB 708.2). Amen.*

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