



5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 74:1-2, 19, 20-23**

Have respect to Your cov- / nant, O Lord;*
 oh, do not let the oppressed re- / turn ashamed!
 Arise, O God, plead / Your own cause;*
 do not forget the voice of Your / enemies.
 O God, why have You cast us off for- / ever?*

Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your / pasture?
 Remember Your congre- / gation,*
 which You have pur- / chased of old,
 The tribe of Your inheritance, which You / have redeemed—*
 this Mount Zion where / You have dwelt.
 Do not forget the life of Your poor / forever.*
 Let the poor and needy / praise Your name.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **John 13:35**
 “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK
 Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity, and as we do obtain that which You promise, make us to love that which You command; 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 **O God, Thou Faithful God** TLH 395, LSB 696
 Johann Heermann



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| <p>1. O God, Thou faithful God,
 Thou Fountain ever flowing,
 Who good and perfect gifts
 In mercy art bestowing,
 Give me a healthy frame,
 And may I have within
 A conscience free from blame,
 A soul unhurt by sin!</p> | <p>2. Grant Thou me strength to do
 With ready heart and willing
 Whate'er Thou shalt command,
 My calling here fulfilling;
 To do it when I ought,
 With all my might, and bless
 The work I thus have wrought,
 For Thou must give success.</p> |
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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: **Believing Love of All Others**

Self-justification leads to half-hearted love that seeks to fulfill selfish interest rather than seeing to the interests of others. God alone justifies the ungodly through faith in Christ. When we try to justify ourselves, we can't move past the barriers of self interest to see and know the great value and blessing of having neighbors to love. Jesus has died to redeem you, even while you were still powerless and ungodly. He thought of you, and not of the shame He would suffer on your account. Believing this, you now gain the mind of Christ. You see your neighbor with Christ's eyes and learn to love him even as God in Christ loved you.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 10:23-37 "The Law Can't Fulfill Itself"**

To the 'self-justifier' every aspect of life is defined by conformity to God's strict commands. Everything is either blessing for doing the right thing or curse for sinning. To prove the Law's impotence, Jesus gives the Lawyer a legal answer. Neither the priest nor the Levite can touch the wounded man for fear of defiling themselves, or perhaps from calloused indifference. Either way, the Law fails to provide saving mercy to the wounded man. The Samaritan is beyond the rigid demands of threat and punishment. He shows mercy, just as God in Christ shows mercy by imputing sin to his Son and righteousness to you. From faith in this Gospel, you are to learn true love for the neighbor. *Grant me believing love for my neighbor, O Lord. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 119:97-104 (MEM) "Learning to Love the Law"**

Loving the law is insanity for the man who doesn't believe in Christ. Such a man deceives himself with the assumption that he can become godly with just a little bit of willpower and effort. All the while he mires himself deep in damning sin because the smallest sin cannot be covered by even his most marvelous works. David knows God through Christ, through the forgiveness of sins and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Only a Christian can approach the Law and marvel at its beauty and righteousness because it no longer accuses him. It makes him wiser than his enemies. It holds his feet back from every evil way. They are sweeter than honey to his mouth! *Grant me joy in Your Law by first giving me faith in Christ, O Lord. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **Galatians 3:15-22 "The Precedence of the Gospel"**

Which is greater? The Law or the Gospel? The Galatians had been bewitched to think their faith needed works to complete their standing with God. Honestly, too many Christians, Lutherans included, have heard and believe this. Their teachers are so concerned with preserving outward standards of righteousness that they whisper the Gospel and shout the Law. St. Paul, full of the Spirit of Christ, breaks the legalistic spell by proving the precedence of the promise of the Seed, Who gives us righteousness freely as a gift to be received by faith, over the Law that came later to show our sin, to drive us to God's mercy revealed in Christ. God be praised that He never holds mercy back from us. *Grant me faith in the Gospel rather than in my works, O Lord. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Leviticus 18:1-5 "Law Promising Life?"**

This text seems to contradict St. Paul's sermon that the Law cannot give life. Does it? I don't think so. The Law can indeed give life to the one who keeps it. Can you? The answer is of course, 'No.' You have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Christ fulfills the Law in our stead. He gives us His own righteousness of having kept the law when we believe in Him. Does that mean that we should jettison the keeping of the Law from our lives? Absolutely not. We weren't redeemed to become idolaters. From faith comes a happy obedience to God's statutes and rules. Just remember that we don't trust in our obedience to save us. We gladly leave that work to Christ. *Give me grace and strength to love and keep Your Law, O Lord. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 20:20-28 "Whoever Would Be Great"**

The flesh tries to push its way into heaven, even to take seats at Christ's left and right hand. It thinks itself worthy and capable of this honor. But to be great in the kingdom of heaven is to become least, to give up on pretensions of inner strength and worthiness, to become the slave among your brothers because you love them more than you love yourself. Jesus instructs us in true humility. For our salvation, to become our ransom, He made Himself nothing. He alone was declared the sinner and suffered God's fury against unrighteousness on the cross. He loved us more than He loved His own glory and life. *Heavenly Father, grant me to become humble like Your Son, to love my brothers even to the point of death. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **1 Timothy 1:5-17 "The Law's Audience"**

The Law is for the "lawless and disobedient." They need their flesh to be kept from hurting others, what Lutherans call the Law's 1st use, and they need to come to the knowledge of their guilt before God, which is the 2nd, theological use of the Law. Paul knows both uses well. He remembers when Jesus stopped his march to Damascus by blinding him physically, curbing his flesh. But the Lord also opened the eyes of his heart to see that his violence was attacking the Lord himself. This revelation came, not to punish Paul, but to save him. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost," Paul testifies. God be praised! *Open my eyes to know my great need for Your mercy, O God, that I may find it in Your Son. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 84 "Behold Our Shield"**

The psalmist's imagery captures the imagination. Through his eyes you see the birds nesting above the temple's altar and you join him in the happy realization that just as the Lord provides a place for His people to worship, so He provides for the whole creation. How blessed are the mice in the sacristy and the birds in the steeple! You see through the psalmists' eyes as he journeys to Zion. You see the pools and puddles on the road from the freshly fallen rain. You follow him from strength to strength as you approach the dwelling place of God. His joy in God's presence comes from his shield, who is Christ, who obtains the Lord's loving kindness for our salvation. *Grant me to approach You with joy in Your courts, O Lord, for Christ's sake." Amen.*

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