



“He Ascended to Bless His People”

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 27:7-9, 11-12**
 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Alle- | luia.*
 Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide Your face from me. Alle- |
 luia.
 The Lord is my light and my sal- | vation;*
 whom | shall I fear?
 The Lord is the strength | of my life;*
 of whom shall I | be afraid?
 Teach me Your | way, O Lord,*
 do not deliver me to the will of my adver- | saries;
 for false witnesses have risen a- | gainst me,*
 and such as breathe out | violence.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Ephesians 4:8**
 When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK
 Almighty, everlasting God, cause us always to have a devout will toward You and to serve Your majesty with a pure heart; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, 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 **We Thank Thee, Jesus, Dearest Friend** TLH 223
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| <p>1. We thank Thee, Jesus, dearest Friend,
 That Thou didst into heaven ascend.
 O blessed Savior, bid us live
 And strength to soul and body give.
 Hallelujah!</p> <p>2. Ascended to His throne on high,
 Hid from our sight, yet always nigh;
 He rules and reigns at God's right
 hand
 And has all power at His command.
 Hallelujah!</p> | <p>4. We therefore heartily rejoice
 And sing His praise with cheerful
 voice;
 He captive led captivity,
 From bitter death He set us free.
 Hallelujah!</p> <p>5. Through Him we heirs of heaven are
 made;
 O Brother, Christ, extend Thine aid
 That we may firmly trust in Thee
 And through Thee live eternally.
 Hallelujah!</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: He Ascended to Bless His People

Jesus ascends and you are blessed. St. Paul describes it in Ephesians 4:7-16. He leads a procession of captives up from their bondage to guilt, shame, and the grave. He leads them by faith in His promises of triumph. To publish those liberating promises, He gives the church pastors, the Gospel, Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar. Thanks be to God. Jesus who ascended is the Son who descended from the Father's right hand, not to judge and condemn, but to ransom sinners. In Ascension, Jesus enthrones the testimony of His atoning blood and our human nature "far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10).

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 15:26-16:4 "Comfort through Promises of Suffering"

Our Salvation is enthroned at the Father's right hand. Nothing can shake it. Our resurrected and ascended Lord conforms all things to His gracious will, the same will that conformed to the Father's decree to save you by His blood. As His gospel continues to be preached and believed, His enemies are being crushed under His pierced feet. They struggle and fight back as they're crushed. But don't be alarmed. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that just because the gospel can be opposed, it can be defeated. Jesus says, "I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away." Remember that Jesus told you these troubles would come. Find comfort in the Paraclete's testimony of Jesus' triumph. *Keep me in the Helper's testimony, O Lord. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 93 "Trustworthy Decrees"

What's the comfort of hearing about the Lord's enthronement? It seems like a truism that God's throne is glorious. How could it be otherwise? Indeed, considering our rebelliousness against God's Law, hearing about divine majesty ought to make us afraid. Christ, your brother according to the flesh, has ascended. Because He ascended with the marks of your redemption on His glorified body, God's throne has turned from the world's foundation of fear to joy. The decrees of that throne, from before the foundation of the world, have been for your salvation. You have an advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). Jesus decrees, "I have died to save these saints." *Heavenly Father, You have manifested Your glory in mercy, and therefore I am saved. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-13 "Promise Fulfilled"

Luke concluded his gospel with this promise from Jesus, "And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49) Now we're seeing that promise fulfilled powerfully and publicly. Before, Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on the apostles so their forgiveness would be God's forgiveness (John 20:22). Now the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son to give the apostles boldness and the languages to take that forgiveness to the ends of the world. Take comfort in the fact that Jesus keeps His promises. Whether He promises the Spirit for the apostles or eternal life through your baptism, Jesus is faithful. His Word is true. *Grant me faith in Your promises, O Lord. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 36:25-27 "A Promise of Baptism and Its Power"

The Old Testament is full of promises about Jesus' church. Ezekiel tells us about the regenerative effects of Christian baptism. Through God's name bound to water, you are washed clean, not merely from dirt, but from the stains of unbelief. Baptism robs you of your false gods and sets your heart on the true and life-giving God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism gives you living faith. Before you didn't know your sin or your salvation. Now, through baptism, you know that though you were lost in sin, God has made you an heir of eternal life. Before you pursued the vain passions of the flesh. Now, because you've been saved by faith, you gladly desire to think and do God's law. *Grant me to be renewed daily in heart and spirit by baptism. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: John 17:20-26 "The Unity of the Holy Christian Church"

What binds us together as Christians? How are we supposed to define our unity? Is it predicated on loyalty to some guy at the top? That's how it is in the Pope's church. Is it predicated on saying nice things about Jesus? They say nice things about Him in Mormonism and Islam too. Then what is it? Our unity is in public preaching of God's Word which makes us holy (John 17:17). Our unity is by faith in the unshakable and unchangeable Word (17:20-21). Not only do we find unity with one another as Christians. Faith is unity and communion with God the Father through the Son. The Pope, Mormonism, and Islam don't know anything about this. *Grant Your church the perfect unity of faith, O Lord, that we may be one as You are one. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:29-39 "More than Conquerors"

When you're discouraged by your sins, when you feel pain, when the whole world is turned against you, when you wonder what God's plan is for you, open your Bible and turn to these verses which you should highlight and underline. Put a bookmark on this page. You suffer because you were predestined to be conformed to the image of the crucified Son. But in being predestined, you have also been called, made righteous, and glorified. God is for you, not against you. Your sufferings are not condemnation. Your pain isn't God's displeasure. No charge stands against you because Jesus intercedes for you. Nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus, your Lord. *Thank you, O Lord, that I am a conqueror through Jesus Who loved me. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 97 "Righteousness and Justice are the Foundation of His Throne"

God's throne in heaven is terrible for the evil and wicked. Though they rebel for a time, "fire goes before him and burns up his adversaries all around." But for the daughters of Judah and Zion, the penitent who have called on God's mercy in their sin, they discover the righteousness that comes by faith. They are blessed with the justice that God has planted by Jesus' atoning cross and enthroned at the ascension. Jesus' works to save sinners, His powerful Word that brings joy to sorrowing souls, these are the tidings of God's reign that lets the earth rejoice and the coastlands be glad. This is how He preserves the lives of His saints and delivers them from the hand of the wicked. *Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to His holy name. Amen.*

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