

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 93:5, 2, 1, 3-4**

Your testimonies are | very sure;*
holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, for- | ever.
Your throne is established | from of old;*
You are from ever- | lasting.
The Lord reigns, He is clothed with | majesty;*
The Lord is | clothed with strength.
Surely the world is es- | tablished,*
so that it can- | not be moved.
The floods have lifted | up their voice;*
the floods lift | up their waves.
The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many | waters,*
than the mighty waves | of the sea.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Galatians 4:4-5**

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O heavenly Father, as You gladden our hearts again to celebrate the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, mercifully bestow on us the joy to receive Him as our Redeemer and so welcome Him when He comes again to be our judge; through the same Jesus Christ, 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
To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

TLH 103
Martin Luther



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|---|--|
| 1. To shepherds as they watched by night
Appeared a host of angels bright;
Behold the tender Babe, they said,
In yonder lowly manger laid. | 4. What harm can sin and death then do?
The true God now abides with you.
Let hell and Satan rage and chafe,
Christ is your Brother--ye are safe. |
| 2. At Bethlehem, in David's town,
As Micah did of old make known;
'Tis Jesus Christ, your Lord and King,
Who doth to all salvation bring. | 6. Ye shall and must at last prevail;
God's own ye are, ye cannot fail.
To God forever sing your praise
With joy and patience all your days. |



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.

Around the Word Devotions + the week of December 27-January 2, 2020

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Cost of Discipleship

Now that we have celebrated the Nativity of Our Lord, we must ask ourselves if we are ready to bear our crosses in this world for His sake. The spirit of Herod is not dead, after all. If we are honest, the answer is no. We are not ready. Peter said much the same during Holy Week. But in faith we will live daily by the words and promises of God who will strengthen us in time of need and supply the grace sufficient for life's day. There is a cost to follow after this Jesus. We pray that we would not faint or grow weary.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 21:20-24 – The Crosses of Others

Jesus tells Peter that his worry for John's future trials is needless. "...what is that to you? You follow me!" The Lord will take care of John in his crosses and suffering, just as he has promised a cross for Peter. In C.S. Lewis's *The Horse and His Boy*, the lion Aslan tells the girl Aravis - concerned for her former slave and the crosses that she is enduring - "I am telling you your story, not hers. No one is told any story but their own." Everyone's cross is unique to them and we trust that Christ works through it for our good. Fretful worrying never helps anyone. But we do know our story - we are redeemed, we follow after the Lord and we know that in Christ, no matter what, the ending is a blessed one. *Lord, help me to follow You and entrust others to You. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:13-18 – Evil's Perverted Kingdom

The newborn King of the Jews was a threat to Herod's rule and power, so Herod lashes out with the sword against his true Ruler, causing Bethlehem to weep. Evil always wants its own space to rule. "Better to rule in hell than to serve in Heaven" said Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost*. Evil would rather rule in misery than pay homage to the Good. This tendency is in us as well. What prevents you from receiving your King as you ought? Is He a threat to your autonomy or your pleasure? Good. Be threatened. Your kingdom is plastic and never satisfies. Do you live in shame? Be comforted. The true King, your King, does not come to deprive you of a kingdom, but to give you a better one, an everlasting one, by His grace alone. *Jesus, You are my king! Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 4:1-7 – Holy Father...Your Father

The Father sends the Son to redeem, that is, to buy back all of those who are under the burden of the Law. He purchases them with His own precious blood. And now from the Father and the Son proceeds the Spirit which cries out from believing hearts, "Abba, Father!" The entire blessed Trinity accomplishes your salvation. The blood of Jesus has covered your sin, acquiring for you a good conscience before the Father, and now the Holy Spirit fills you with the comfort which is found in that same Christ, that you would cry out with the Spirit to the Father made YOUR Father. Paul is clear here. By faith you too are a son of God, an heir of His kingdom, and a recipient of all His love and grace. *Holy Father, by grace I am Your child! All praise to You. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 11:1-5 – Jesse's Stump

Jesse's son David would rule and his reign would be great, but eventually David's line after Solomon would be cut off in judgment, like a tree hewn down at its base. And yet from that stump would arise a living shoot, not a mere descendant of David, but another David whose reign would be everlasting, who would bring peace even to the tooth and claw of creation. This greater David was born in the city of David, the Savior Christ the Lord - the living shoot from the stump. Those who abide in His words, they are grafted into Him, into this living Shoot of Jesse. Risen from the dead, He will never die again, and those who abide in Him will never perish. *Lord Jesus, Living Vine, graft me into You by Your Word that abiding in You I may never die. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:22-32 – He Comes and is Coming

Simeon is the stand-in for all the people of God. Adam and Abraham, Moses and David, Ruth and Ezekiel all had awaited the consolation of Israel in the One promised in the Garden, "He shall bruise your head, you shall strike His heel." And now after the long wait, that very He comes suddenly to His temple, held in His virgin mother's arms. Simeon can depart in peace. We wait as well. Simeon stood with one foot in the Old Testament and one in the New. We stand with one foot in the New Testament and one in the world yet to come. All the promises are fulfilled in Christ. He washes you and blesses you. All is accomplished. There is no need to fear. And He will strengthen you, like Simeon, for the day of His coming. *Amen! Come Lord Jesus! Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:9-16 – Suffering Glory

Glory for us is a wiggly thing. We men think of glory in terms of earthly praise or fulfillment. But the author of Hebrews links glory with the suffering and death of Jesus. He is crowned with glory *because* He made propitiation for our sins and suffered the wrath of the Law to reconcile us to the Father. His suffering, His cross, is the honor and glory of Jesus. We Christians need to ponder this. Faithfulness to God likely may cause us to suffer in this world. A servant is not greater than his Master. But because He has suffered for us, our crosses and even our deaths are not in vain. There is a hidden glory there, for they too end in resurrection and the glory of the world to come. *Jesus, strengthen me for the good confession of Your Name. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 111 – Worship is Remembering

The praise and worship of the Lord is principally a matter of remembering - remembering His mighty works and pondering what He has done for His people. This is what the assembled congregation does in this psalm as she gathers for worship. Without the remembrance of the Lord's promises and works, our worship quickly becomes an inward focused thing, more about me and my feelings and piety than about the Lord. We hear, we study, we ponder, we remember. And we need to keep remembering until the Lord brings us to the Promised Land. So it is that the chief worship of Christians, the Holy Communion, Jesus has commanded to be done "In remembrance of me." Indeed *"He has caused His wondrous works to be remembered..." (Vs. 4). Amen.*

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