



**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 54:4-5, 1-3, 7

Behold, God is my / helper;\*  
 the Lord is with those who up- / hold my life.  
 He will repay my enemies for their / evil.\*  
 Cut them off / in Your truth.  
 Save me, O God, / by Your name,\*  
 and vindicate me / by Your strength.  
 Hear my / prayer, O God;\*  
 give ear to the words / of my mouth.  
 For strangers have risen up a- / gainst me,\*  
 they have not set God be- / fore them.  
 He has delivered me out of all / trouble;\*  
 and my eye has seen its desire upon my / enemies.

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Luke 12:34  
 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

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

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK  
 Let Your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Your humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

**9** PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

**10** SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK TLH 366, LSB 536  
**One Thing’s Needful; Lord, This Treasure** Johann H. Schroeder



1. One thing's needful; Lord this treasure  
 Teach me highly to regard;  
 All else, though it first give pleasure,  
 Is a yoke that presses hard.  
 Beneath it the heart is still fretting and striv-  
 ing,  
 No true, lasting happiness ever deriving.  
 The gain of this one thing all loss can requite  
 And teach me in all things to find true de-  
 light.

6. Wilt thou find this one thing needful,  
 Turn from all created things  
 Unto Jesus and be heedful  
 Of the blessed joy He brings.  
 For where God and Man both in one are united,  
 With God's perfect fullness the heart is de-  
 lighted;  
 There, there is the worthiest lot and the best,  
 My One and my All and my Joy and my Rest.

**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 July 28-August 3, 2024

## THEME OF THE WEEK: Faithful Stewardship of Earthly Gifts

In his 2004 book, *The Progress Paradox*, Gregg Easterbrook demonstrates that almost all aspects of American and European life—security, health care, food, etc.—have vastly improved in the past century, yet most people feel less happy than in previous generations. This is the progress paradox: as life gets better, people paradoxically feel worse. Similarly, the enigmatic parable of the dishonest manager places worldly wealth into heavenly perspective. The rest of the lessons for this week follow a similar pattern, drawing you to confess with the hymnist, “One thing’s needful; Lord, this treasure teach me highly to regard” (TLH 366.1).

SUN

### SCRIPTURE: Luke 16:1-9 The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

Question: why does the rich man (master) commend the shrewdness of his manager? Two reasons come to mind. First, the manager knew the master would be merciful, honoring the debts that he forgave in his name, reminding us that God the Father gladly reckons your debt of sin to be paid in full by Jesus’ blood. Second, the manager wisely used oil and wheat to provide for his own welfare. So also do these temporal elements aid you when pressed into heavenly use, oil for baptismal anointing and wheat for the bread of the Lord’s Supper. *[O Lord], Thy death on the cross hath death wholly defeated and thereby my righteousness fully completed; Salvation’s white raiments I there did obtain, and in them in glory with Thee I shall reign. (TLH 366.6). Amen.*

MON

### SCRIPTURE: INTRODUCTION to Psalm 119:65-72 (TETH) (to be read before praying the Psalm)

Psalm 119 has been rightly described as “a tree of two and twenty branches, each with eight boughs, from which drops of sweetness continually fall.” In this particular ‘branch’ you declare that God deals with you according to His Word (vss. 65-66); how He calls you to repentance and reclaims you according to His goodness (vss. 67-68); that, in contrast to the unbelieving heart, your heart is contrite (vss. 69-70); and the truth that even your afflictions are good for you, for they draw you to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God—of more value than silver or gold (vss. 71-72). *Thus my longings, heav’nward tending, Jesus, rest alone on Thee. Help me, thus on Thee depending; Savior, come and dwell in me (TLH 366.1). Amen.*

TUE

### SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 10:6-13 ‘Lead Us not into Temptation’

It has been said that the characters in every congregation are the same, but with different names and faces. How true! So what is St. Paul saying in today’s reading, to believers both ancient and modern? “Do not be arrogant by thinking that you are above temptation. Israel in the wilderness took for granted their relation to God and fell into idolatry, immorality, and dissension, and they did not finish the race, nor did they receive the prize. So daily repent of your sins, remember your baptismal identity, and look to Christ alone for salvation.” *Restrain me from wand’ring on pathways unholy / And through all life’s pilgrimage keep my heart lowly, This one thing is needful, all others are vain; I count all but loss that I Christ may obtain (TLH 366.7). Amen.*

WED

### SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 Farewell and Godspeed—to King David

Just before this reading, the people brought offerings of gold, silver, and bronze. Even before they were the medium of Olympic medals, these precious metals were part of Old Testament rituals. Gold was associated with Levitical priests, silver with the Levites, and bronze with the people of Israel. David’s final prayer is your daily prayer—a prayer to keep silver and gold and all earthly wealth in heavenly perspective and to confess the One who is great by “greatening” all who believe with a king’s portion of heavenly treasure. Thus do faithful kings and living creatures cast their crowns before Him and pray, *We give thanks to You, Lord God Almighty, Who is and Who was, for You have taken Your great power and begun to reign (Rev. 11:17). Amen.*

THU

### SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:32-48 Faithful Servants Wanted—Inquire Within

In Homer’s *The Odyssey*, Odysseus returns to his estate in Ithaca after a prolonged absence and finds his household overrun by servants who turned against him by lusting after his earthly wealth and even after his bride. His wrath on the unfaithful is the very definition of vengeance, while his reward for the faithful includes a permanent place at his table. And so Jesus warns both the Christian servant (vss. 35-40) and the apostolic servant (vss. 41-48) in covenant language against being “cut in pieces” for unfaithfulness, but offers grace and manifold blessings for those who endure to the end. *Wisdom’s highest, noblest treasure, Jesus, lies concealed in Thee; Grant that this may still the measure of my will and actions be (TLH 366.5). Amen.*

FRI

### SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 1:3-14 On Guarding the Deposit of the Faith

Raising up young Timothy as his ‘vicar,’ St. Paul instructed him in great detail on the doctrine of the apostles, using the Old Testament as his required textbook and the New Testament as sermons on the Old. These sacred words, along with their fulfillment in the person and work of Christ, are a sacred deposit that must be guarded with more vigor than the legendary Knights Templar guarded the Holy Chalice from the Last Supper. Thus does your pastor faithfully instruct young and old in Christian doctrine to guard you from false teaching and to guide you to the green pastures of the pure gospel and sacraments. *In faith, Lord, let me serve Thee; Tho’ persecution, grief, and pain should seek to overwhelm me, Let me a steadfast trust retain (TLH 381.1). Amen.*

SAT

### SCRIPTURE: INTRODUCTION to Psalm 139 (to be read before praying the Psalm)

Thomas Aquinas described this Psalm as “one acknowledging the power of God, and that He is present in the secret thoughts, and in all the elements.” Behold God’s personal care and involvement in all creation! Here you confess that all of your thoughts are known to God (vss. 1-5); that there is no place that God’s will can take you that His grace does not pursue you (vss. 6-12); how God Himself knitted you together in your mother’s womb, the safest place for man on earth (vss. 13-16); and how God will both slay the wicked and continue to search your heart and lead you in the way everlasting (vss. 17-24). *Therefore Thou alone, my Savior, shall be all in all to me; Search my heart and my behavior, root out all hypocrisy (TLH 366.7). Amen.*

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