Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!* 
Shout to God with the voice of triumph! 
For the Lord Most High is awesome!* 
He is a great King over all the earth. 
He will subdue the peoples under us,* 
and the nations under our feet. 
Sing praises to God, sing praises!* 
Sing praises to our King, sing praises! 
For God is the King of all the earth;* 
sing praises with understanding. 
God reigns over the nations;* 
God sits on His holy throne.

BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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.

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER
Morning. 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 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: Submission to the Lord of Compassion**

The Lord gives compassion in ways that He sees fit, in times of His own understanding. He grants to His people precisely what they need whether they understand it or not. And He does so in all situations. He is not a God who works fatally, but instead is a God who has the past, present, and future all placed under His feet. He works through all things for the good of His people. He grants them the forgiveness of sins and gives them life and salvation through the Word of the cross and the simple things of water, bread, and wine. For all of this, we give thanks and praise to Him, serve and obey Him. We trust that He will accomplish all that He has declared despite all of our doubts and fears. His promise is for me today and every day.  

**SCRIPTURE:** Mark 8:1—9—Once Isn’t Good Enough  
Jesus feeds another group of people. He did it once already, and He will surely do it again. His heart-wrenching, gut-churning compassion will never end. The disciples don’t get it. “How will we feed them?” Neither do we, “How will God care for me?” He has shown me already before: no, more often than I can count. But that doesn’t matter. I will always be surprised by the gifts that my Lord gives to me, but He will never stop giving them. “They need bread? I will give it to them!” “They need to be forgiven? Here, let’s have a feast. My body given for them. My blood shed for them. It is what they need, right here right now. They don’t have to go and get it themselves. I will serve them.” *Lord Jesus, have compassion on me. Amen.*  

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 19:49—56—Hope In The Promise  
Our hope comes in God’s Word and His promise, not in the immediate actions that we see before us. What hope do I have in the midst of suffering except the promise that my Lord is with me in that strife? The Word that I have from my Lord is not that I will be free from suffering, nor that I will be relieved from temporal strife. Instead, it tells me that His grace is sufficient for me. It is a hard thing to believe: something that I don’t want to believe and if it were up to me, I wouldn’t. But then God’s Word is proclaimed again and the voice of Jesus is spoken into my ears. My sins are forgiven, my life is restored, and salvation is granted, even in the midst of this suffering. This is His promise to me. *Heavenly Father, may Your Word grant me hope. Amen.*  

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 6:19—23—Slaves  
You are either slaves to God or slaves to sin. There is no middle ground. There is no gray area. And there is no choice. If you are a slave to sin then you sin. As a slave to sin you go where sin goes and do what sin demands: eternal death. But if you are a slave to God (and you are through your gracious baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus) then you present yourself to righteousness. You can do no other. You are a branch of the tree that cannot help but bear fruit in keeping with repentance. For if you are united with Christ, what other fruit could you bear? *Lord of righteousness, keep me from the chains of sin so that I might be enslaved only to You. Amen.*  

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 14:8—23—Worshipped And Stoned  
Paul is both worshipped and stoned in the course of a couple paragraphs. What else could happen to him? To the unbeliever, the apostle is either a god on earth or a heretic that must be killed. His words speak foolishness that the world cannot understand. It is this foolishness that causes Paul to march right back into the lion’s den and proclaim Christ crucified all the more. With prayer and fasting he sets up churches to distribute the gifts of God. The cross makes you do foolish things (like believe in forgiveness and proclaim salvation and peace with God through the death of His Son). The cross speaks foolishness and then it delivers what it promises despite how foolish it sounds. *Lord, grant that I may cling to the cross in all things. Amen.*  

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 125—The Lord Surrounds His People  
Written during the time of the exile, this Psalm speaks outlandish promises when faced with the realities of the people. Verse two is the most important promise in this Psalm. While sitting in slavery in a foreign land with Jerusalem a hundred miles away, God promises that He is still their God and will be until the end. He will protect. He will execute righteousness. He will punish the wicked and uplift the downtrodden. He will protect His people even in the midst of danger and persecution. God will be their God and they will be His people. Why? Because God has promised it. What more do the people need? He has made that same promise to you. *God of our salvation, never cease to be our God and keep us always as your people. Amen.*