PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 25:16, 18, 1-2, 5, 15, 20

Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me,*
for I am desolate and afflicted.
Look on my affliction and my pain,*
and forgive all my sins.
To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*
O my God, I trust in You: Let me not be ashamed.
You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day.
My eyes are ever toward the Lord,*
for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.
Keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You.

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 Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
SCRIPTURE: Luke 15:1-10—Silly Rejoicing

This silly shepherd goes and finds “the one.” He recklessly leaves the 99 to go and search for that foolish wandering sheep who couldn’t keep in the fold. He couldn’t keep himself on the path or in line with the rest. The shepherd searches over valley and vale, and when he finds the lost sheep, he throws a party. What a ridiculous thing to do! His friends surely would question this man’s sense. Why throw a party for a sheep too dumb to keep itself safe? That is how it works with Jesus. He does the unexpected thing of the Gospel, eschewing the normal and rational. A sensible shepherd would leave the one sheep in the wilderness, for that is what the sheep deserves. Jesus doesn’t. He finds us and rescues us and rejoices with the angels over our forgiveness. Good Shepherd, never stop seeking Your foolish lost sheep. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:17-24—Plotting Princes

The things of the Law, the things of God’s commands and testimonies, must be revealed to me. They are too high and good and perfect for a poor miserable sinner like me to understand, let alone keep. My eyes must be opened to them through the light of the Gospel. In this way, those plotting princes can be kept at bay. The princes that plot are the princes of darkness: the demons and the devil. They plot against me in order to keep hidden the Gospel of forgiveness. They conspire to keep me bound to the Law, a never-ending ascent whose every rung brings me further away from the destination. My prayer is that the Lord’s will be done, that He does away with the schemes of the devil so that His Gospel might be spoken into my ears and I may know that I am forgiven. Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your Word. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 5:6-11—Humble

The devil prows, seeking someone to devour. That is what he does. He never tires, never wavers, never takes a day off. His work is to bring me to damnation. Yet as I suffer the things of this fallen world and the teeth of the devil, I know for certain that I am not alone. Others also suffer. This is the Christian life, suffering under the cross. We are encouraged to remain humble, that is, we are encouraged to always know that we are nothing in and of ourselves. There is no chance that we, on our own, can resist the devil: his evil works and ways. The comfort is that, as the Lord keeps us firm in the faith, His mighty hand will always be upon us, comforting us when faint, while at the same time crushing the devil with a nailmarked fist. God of all grace, restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish us in Your promise of salvation. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Micah 7:18-20—A God Like You

Is there any other God like ours? All the false gods do things differently. They all tally good works against bad; and the result is never comforting to us. Every other god lays before us our sins and never picks them up. Every other god’s anger rages and burns forever, never quenched, never satisfied. But our God isn’t like all the others. He pardons iniquity. He has compassion. He tramples all sin underfoot. He takes all sin off of us and throws them into the depths of the sea where they will never see the light of day again. Go ahead, try and find another god like ours. Scour the world and plumb the deepest places of your imagination. Never will you find a god of forgiveness apart from the One Who dies for the sinner and is crucified for those who don’t deserve it. Dear Father, delight in Your steadfast love. Amen.


Look at the son on the long road back home. He wants to be taken back as a hired servant in order to make up for all the wrong that we have done. It makes sense. If God is mad at our sins He will be happy with our goodness. No! Our Heavenly Father comes running to us with arms wide open, embraces and kisses us, even before we have the chance to promise to work off the debt that we owe Him. Sins forgiven and welcomed back as sons, even though we had once wished our Father dead. There we are, with His righteous robe wrapped around us and His own name placed upon us with His signet ring. There we are, at a feast we don’t deserve, eating the fattened calf of celebration and salvation. For we were once dead, but now we are alive; we were lost, but now we are found in Christ. Heavenly Father, for the sake of Christ, welcome us back to You, not as servants, but as sons. Amen.


Saul is a pretty bad guy. Some might call him the worst of sinners, the least of all men. In fact, Saul calls himself that. He persecuted the Church. He put Christians in chains bound for Jerusalem and their ultimate stony end. He watched Stephen be murdered and he cheered the whole way through. Yes, he persecuted the Jews. And so he persecuted Jesus. If there was ever a man who deserved eternal death and damnation, it was Saul. Yet Jesus brings even this sinner of sinners to repentance. Jesus, miracle of all miracles, even died for the likes of Saul. And then He used him to preach the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins to the Gentiles. Who better to preach such a thing than a former racist murderer? If this is a message that should be eternally dead and yet, by God’s boundless mercy, be revealed to me. They are too high and good and perfect for a poor miserable sinner like me to understand, let alone keep. My eyes must be opened to them. They all tally good works against bad; and the result is never comforting to us. Every other god lays before us our sins and never picks them up. Every other god’s anger rages and burns forever, never quenched, never satisfied. But our God isn’t like all the others. He pardons iniquity. He has compassion. He tramples all sin underfoot. He takes all sin off of us and throws them into the depths of the sea where they will never see the light of day again. Go ahead, try and find another god like ours. Scour the world and plumb the deepest places of your imagination. Never will you find a god of forgiveness apart from the One Who dies for the sinner and is crucified for those who don’t deserve it. Dear Father, delight in Your steadfast love. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 25—Remember Me

God, remember me, not for my sake, but for Yours. Take my guilt away for it is great; so great that it has become unbearable and drugs me down to the depths of Sheol and the pits of despair. In the afflictions of my heart, be gracious to me. In the weight of my sin, be merciful to be and exchange Your yoke for mine. In the peril of death, reach down through the grave and take hold of my life. Make me to know You and Your ways. Grant me repentance so that I may hear of Your salvation and know that I am forgiven. Instruct me in the way, lead me in paths of righteousness. Humble me under Your cross so that I might be saved. Be faithful to me, a faithless sinner who deserves none of what I ask. May Your steadfast love last forever and ever. Lift up my soul so that I may dwell in Your just decrees. Redeem me from sin and death and the devil, for Your name’s sake. Amen.