



**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 13:5-6, 1-4**

O Lord, I have trusted in Your / mercy;\*  
 my heart shall rejoice in Your sal- / vation.  
 I will sing / to the Lord,\*  
 because He has dealt bountiful- / ly with me. (Psalm 13:5-6)  
 How long, O Lord? Will You forget me for- / ever?\*

How long will You hide Your / face from me?  
 How long shall I take counsel / in my soul,\*  
 how long will my enemy be exalted / over me?  
 Consider and hear me, O / Lord my God;\*

enlighten my eyes, lest I sleep the / sleep of death;  
 lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed a- / gainst him”;\*  
 lest those who trouble me rejoice when / I am moved.

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Luke 16:31**  
 “He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

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

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK  
 O God, the Strength of all those who put their trust in You, mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing, grant us the help of Your grace that in keeping Your commandments we may please You both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

**9** PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

**10** SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK **Lord Jesus Christ, With Us Abide**

TLH 292, LSB 585  
 Nikolaus Selnecker



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| <p>1. Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,<br/>                 For round us falls the eventide;<br/>                 Nor let Thy Word, that heavenly light,<br/>                 For us be ever veiled in night.</p> <p>2. In these last days of sore distress<br/>                 Grant us, dear Lord, true<br/>                 steadfastness<br/>                 That pure we keep, till life is spent,<br/>                 Thy holy Word and Sacrament.</p> | <p>4. Oh, keep us in Thy Word, we pray;<br/>                 The guile and rage of Satan stay!<br/>                 Oh, may Thy mercy never cease!<br/>                 Give concord, patience, courage, peace.</p> <p>9. Oh, grant that in Thy holy Word<br/>                 We here may live and die, dear Lord;<br/>                 And when our journey endeth here,<br/>                 Receive us into glory there.</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: The Spirit's Words in Holy Scripture

Our meditations this week present to us these two great truths: First, that the Holy Scripture is God's definitive and final Word to us Christians, that we would believe in Jesus and receive life in His name. Second, that because this Word of God is the greatest of riches that we could ever hope for in this life, earthly riches and other gifts from God should be kept in their proper place - as our daily bread and instruments for the care of our neighbor and the Lord's congregation - and not let earthly goods deceive us into false security or allow them to become our gods.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Luke 16:19-31 Scripture > Miracles

In Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*, the ghost of Jacob Marley is sent back from the dead to warn the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge of his sinful ways. In Luke 16, The Rich Man wants to give his brothers a similar warning. But Father Abraham tells it plain: "If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead." If the scriptures cannot convince you of the truths they contain, then no apparition, no miracle, not even the fact of Jesus' resurrection will give you joy. If you would have Jesus (and a very Merry Christmas besides), hear the Holy Scriptures and trust what God promises you there! *Lord Jesus, I want to hear You. Open my ears and heart to hear Your all-sufficient Word. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:1-8 (ALEPH) Seeking God

It is really quite simple. If you would seek God, you must hear what He speaks. It is our sinful nature which would seek God apart from what He says and promises. The Psalmist knew this - "Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart." These statements are variations of the same theme - to treasure God's Word and promises, to cherish what He has revealed to us, is to seek God with one's heart. You cannot have one without the other. The humility of faith accepts what God says to him, as a loving child accepts and holds to the promises of his dear father. You want God? You want to be close to him? Open your ears. Hear what He says and hold to them. *Father in heaven, open my ears to hear what You promise. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 John 4:16-21 Love Your Brother

Love begins with God, for He Himself is Love. He extends that love to us through His Son, whom He gave as a propitiation for our sins. We love God because He first loved us. But that is not all. John says that if you love God, you will love your brother. That is a tall order. Some of our brothers are pretty unlovable, at least to our sinful eyes. In this we always return to the love of God, namely, how we who were utterly despicable and unlovable in our sins nevertheless received the mercy of God. He loved us "unloveables". Now look at your neighbor. He starts to look a bit better. God loves him too. He is your brother, an object of your mercy, and a cause for joy. *Lord Jesus, show me Your love and help me to love my brother as You have loved me. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 9:23, 24 Our Cause for Boasting

The Lord here mentions some common causes for boasting among us sinful men: Wisdom, might, and riches. Throw in pleasure and you just about have all our false gods covered as well. These things are not bad in themselves, not even pleasure. They all have their place, but they are insufficient for a truly blessed life. What then should we boast of, what should we pursue if not these worldly goods? Namely, that we know and understand God and His righteousness. That we hear and meditate on His Word to us. That we revel in that we are His beloved. This is the cause for our boasting, for in this there is true blessedness, far beyond all goods, a peace which the world cannot give. *Lord, show me Your righteousness through Your Word. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:13-21 Riches Toward God

The foolish rich man's actions were not necessarily sinful in themselves. It is not sinful to have plentiful fields or to build bigger barns for your goods. Nor is it sinful to eat, drink, or be merry. Indeed, one should be suspect of the sourpuss who does not find joy in the stuff of God's creation. The man's foolishness lay in that he took no thought at all for his soul. He was not rich toward God. We need to realize this world is not all there is. At death there is a judgement and if we live our lives heedless of this pressing reality, we are just as foolish as this rich man. So have a care. Your last hour comes soon. Repent. In Christ, there is forgiveness and joy and riches immeasurably better than mere creature comforts. *Lord Jesus, prepare my heart to receive You. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 6:6-19 Our Fake Life

Timothy is to exhort the rich in his congregation to true contentment and faith, so that, as Paul teaches, "they may take hold of that which is truly life." True life. In other words, our propensity is to assign life to things that do not matter. This is not true only for the rich. Everyone believes that if only he had this or that he would be okay, that he would have the stuff that makes for real living. But as Jesus instructed us yesterday with the Rich Fool, true riches and thus our true life, is tied up in being loved by God, trusting His promises, and living as He has ordered our lives. If we live any other way, it's a fabrication. A fake life. So embrace goodness. Hear God's Word. Live a real life which is found in God. *Lord Jesus, give me life, that I may truly live. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 34 None.

*"The Lord redeems the life of His servants; None of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned."* (vs. 22). Those who need refuge are those besought by enemies from without and from within. Refugees by definition need a strong castle, a guardian, solace, succor, and asylum precisely because they cannot withstand in themselves the onslaught they face. For us, sin and the devil attack from within. Enemies of the cross attack from without. We cannot fight them. We need refuge. We do not contribute to the refuge. We do not earn our way. Rather, we hide. He fights for us. And that is just what He wants. None, no one, grievous sinner or pious saint, will be condemned who takes refuge in Christ Jesus. *Jesus, I take refuge in You. Amen.*

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