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.

BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS

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.

SAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, that You have kept me this night without 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 Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
**THEME OF THE WEEK:** The Repentance Wrought by the Spirit

The “moral of the story” of the lost sheep, lost coin, and lost sons, is no “moral” at all. It is the blessed Gospel. All of heaven rejoices at the repentance of sinners. Repentance means “to change your mind.” It is not simply countering a bad deed with a good one. It means coming to a new conclusion. The first conclusion is that I am wrong, and God’s Word is right. The Law convicts of sin and works contrition. But the second conclusion is the surprise: that God is faithful and just to forgive sinners and cleanse them of their unrighteousness. He works by His Word to give us a new heart, a heart that thinks according to His Word, not simply knowing good from evil, but knowing that our conscience is clean through Christ Jesus. Repentance, as the parables show, is not a comeback worked by us; it is a rescue worked by God.

**THU**

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 15:11-32—Impenitence of Self-Righteousness

There is no honor in sin, even if repentance is the joy of heaven. The prodigal is not “more saved” because of his rough past. God be praised the older son did not fall as he did. And yet, the conversation reveals his trust: not in the undeserved grace of his Father, but in his own self-righteousness. Prodigal living is impenitence, to be sure; but so is the older son’s attitude. Everyone must “come to their senses” and see that we are rescued by our Father’s grace. Repentance (and thus the joy of heaven) are to be ongoing this side of glory. Lord, preserve me from self-righteous impenitence. Amen.

**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 9:1-18—Dramatic Repentance

It is difficult to see every Christian making the 180 degree change that St. Paul made. Not everyone goes from persecuting to preaching, all with the same zeal. Then again, perhaps we should learn from Paul’s case just how dramatic the Holy Spirit’s work of repentance, baptism, and faith really is to pull evil men into God’s service. We will recover the joy of the angels if we do. We will also have a great comfort that if Saul of Tarsus can become a preacher, we are not too hard for the Spirit to rescue also. Lord, prepare me to suffer with joy for Your Name’s sake, both in repentance and in the cross. Amen.

**SAT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 25—Prayers of Repentance

Psalm 25 is a good remedy to the accusation that “the Church is full of hypocrites.” It is first and foremost a confession of our sins. But it is also a plea that the Lord would guide us, lead us, teach us, instruct us, correct us, and sanctify us. Those who wait for the Lord, endure suffering, and bear hatred are not to do so in their sins, but in integrity and uprightness. By no means can their uprightness or integrity overcome their guilt. The Lord must pardon our sin, because it is great. That is what Christ has come for. This is Israel’s redemption. Lord, instruct me in the way You choose, and deliver me. Amen.

**WED**

**SCRIPTURE:** Micah 7:18-20—Not Angry Forever

The “change of mind” of repentance is learning to think about ourselves as God thinks of us in Christ. In the first place, to be sure, repentance includes contrition—recognizing that we stand as condemned sinners before Him. But the Lord does not delight in this, certainly not forever. To think rightly of our sins and ourselves, we must see them put away in Christ, who is God’s steadfast love incarnate. We begin to tread our sins down underfoot by the work of the Spirit’s renewal. But in Christ, they are cast down entirely, which we must believe. Lord, do not be angry forever, but have compassion. Amen.

**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Peter 5:6-11—Humble Repentance Resists the Devil

Repentance spells the end of pride. Instead of thinking that we must care for ourselves, faith trusts in God. It casts itself on Him, knowing that He cares for us. Thus, the watchfulness of repentance and faith is different than the bold watchfulness of worldly watchers. We resist the Devil not by our strength, but in our weakness, firm in our faith—that is, firm in Christ who cares for us. We wait on the Lord to restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish us. We receive even sufferings as the humbling hand of God. Such is the change of mind of a Christian. Lord, humble my pride and put my anxieties to rest in You. Amen.