PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 25:6, 2, 1-2, 7-8, 11

Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness, for they are from of old.

Let not my enemies triumph over me.

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all their troubles!

To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

O my God, I trust in You; let me not be ashamed; do not remember the sins of my youth; according to Your mercy remember me for Your goodness' sake.

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He teaches sinners in the way.

For Your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

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 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.

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.
**Around the Word Devotions + the week of March 8-14, 2020**

**THEME OF THE WEEK:** He Suffered the Weakness of His Disciples

This week, as we move into the heart of the Lenten season, we will be focusing on the value and the place of faith in our lives. Most importantly, we will see how faith is trusting in Jesus. This divinely implanted trust in Jesus draws us close to our Lord by finding refuge in His promises in every time of trouble. Our faith also spurs us to action in our good works and in our prayers. The work of the Holy Spirit granting us faith is something that we rejoice over and we pray for our gracious Father to strengthen us in our faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

**SUN**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 15:21-28 – The Works of Faith

“Great is your faith!” What a wonderful thing to hear from our Lord. How many of us would love to hear such praise from our Savior? In the text today, what did this woman do to garner such praise? Did she perform great acts of service or charity? Did she tell everyone she knew about Jesus? She did none of those things. She simply trusted Jesus to answer her prayer. She trusted and believed that Jesus could heal her daughter. This is faith in action. It isn’t always seen in big, grand actions or events. Sometimes it is simply doggedly following after Jesus, trusting that He will do what He has promised – to forgive our sins and to rescue us from every evil of body and soul. I thank You, Lord, for the faith that You have granted to me. I ask that You would keep me in this faith and that through this faith, I may continually trust in You and Your mercy. Amen.

**MON**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 130 – Faith in Promises Kept

In this text today, we see again the trust that comes through faith. Even in our woe and time of trouble, our Lord hears us. These are words that are likely familiar to many as they are words that we say often in the liturgy. And yet, here we see them in their context and as a whole. These are words of a faith that trusts in God’s promise to hear His people. It is faith that trusts that God will cleanse us of our sins. It is faith that trusts in God’s steadfast love and plentiful redemption. These are all things that God has given to all of His people, even you! O Lord, You do hear my prayers, for You are faithful. I praise You for all of the blessings You have lavished upon me and I ask that, through Your mercy, I would continue to live in trust of You. Amen.

**TUE**

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7 – Sanctification: Faith in Action

This text is significant because in it, Paul tells us the will of God. Did you catch it? Too often we worry and fret, wondering what the will of God is, as though it is something that He has hidden from us. But He hasn’t. God’s will is our sanctification. Sanctification simply put, is our growing in holiness. Paul gives us here a number of concrete examples of what that looks like. In essence, they boil down to us living out our faith. The salvation that is ours in Christ leads us to look and act in a way that reflects this truth. It doesn’t save us, as that is done already. Rather, we are free to live as God’s people. O Lord, You have set me free from the toilsome works of the Law. Strengthen me in my service toward You and my neighbor. Amen.

**WED**

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 45:20-25 – The Call to Faith

This text can be a bit intimidating. In this text, God is calling people to account for their sin and for idolatry. But within these stern words of judgement, the Lord’s desire to save His people is made clear. He calls us to turn to Him to be saved. Out of His mouth comes His Word that brings faith and life. Righteousness and strength belong to our Lord. And these are things that He shares with us through faith. He gives us His righteousness. He gives us His strength so that we can live in the sin-infested world. These are the gifts that God has given to you through faith. Almighty God, Your power is great and worthy are You to be feared. Yet I come before You as a beggar and I know that in Your goodness, You will preserve me. For this I thank and praise You. Amen.

**THU**

**SCRIPTURE:** Mark 9:17-29 – Struggling Faith

Have you ever gone through a time when it was hard to trust God in His promises, a time when His goodness seemed to be far away? This is not an uncommon problem. There are times when we often find ourselves reacting to Jesus much like the father in this text. “If you can,” we say to our Lord. If He can do this or do that, we would appreciate it. But Jesus makes it clear that He can do all things because he is Lord, the Son of God. That includes forgiving us of our sins and upholding us in our weakness. Jesus does not chastise the father here. He simply receives the plea for help and responds. Lord, there are days when I too need You to help my unbelief. Please be with me and grant me Your aid throughout this day and all others. Amen.

**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** James 5:13-20 – Prayer of Faith

In this text, we see faith given voice. The prayer of faith spoken of here is a prayer prayed over someone who is sick. It is the prayer of a believer who prays in faith of the Lord’s mercy. The faith that we pray in is a confidence in the promise that the Lord will raise us up. Whether He raises us from our sickness in this life or He simply waits to raise us from the dead on the Last Day, we have sure confidence that Christ will raise us up. Truly, whether we live or we die, we are the Lord’s. Prayer gives voice to our faith, not only as we speak to God, but our prayers can also be a witness to those around us. Hear my prayer for Your mercy, O Lord. I trust that You will give what You have promised. Bless me, that I will live forever in Your kingdom as I am in Your kingdom now. Amen.

**SAT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 25 – Trusting in the Promises

This week we have looked at various aspects of faith. One thing that I hope you have taken away from this is that faith in essence is trust in the Lord to keep His promises. Faith is the assurance of what we hope for in Christ. In this Psalm, we see David’s words of trust in the mercies given to him by God. In the same way, we trust that God in His mercy will protect us, uphold us, and defend us from harm. Most importantly, by faith in the Gospel we know that God has redeemed us out of all of our troubles. Gracious Lord, You have made many promises to me and I trust that You will keep Your promises, particularly Your promises to forgive my sins and to grant me eternal life. Amen.

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