PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK  Isaiah 35:10; Psalm 39:4-5, 7-8
The ransomed of the Lord / shall return,*
and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy / on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and / gladness,*
and sorrow and sighing shall / flee away.
Lord, make me to know my end, and what is the measure / of my days,*
that I may know how / frail I am.
You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing be - / fore
You,*
certainly every man at his best state is but / vapor.
And now, Lord, what do I / wait for?*
My hope / is in You.
Deliver me from all my trans - / gressions;*
do not make me the reproach of the / foolish.

SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Psalm 103:10
[God] does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

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

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: The Second Coming of Christ**

The second coming of Christ brings up many questions. We ask: When? How? Where? All these questions that rack our brains would be better left unanswered until that actual day that He returns. For what do these matters? And how many days can we add to our life worrying about them? Instead, let us fill our hearts with the promises of what we have in Christ, even right now. For the gifts of eternal life and salvation are ours right here and now, even as we wait for them in full. We shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, for Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away our sin and brings us into His heavenly wedding feast as our perfect Bridegroom.

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**SUN**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 25:1-13—The Ticket to the Wedding

Five are wise and five are foolish. The wise ones bring extra oil, even though that doesn’t make sense. Why would you prepare for the Bridegroom to be late for His own wedding? They do prepare and so they get to go into the wedding. The others run off to get more oil when they hear of the Bridegroom’s approach. They think it important to have oil to shine there when the Bridegroom shows up. But the oil doesn’t get you into the wedding; neither does the lamp nor the trimmed wick. The only thing that gets you the wedding; neither does the lamp nor the trimmed wick. The only thing that gets you into the wedding feast is the Bridegroom. Enter with Him, or not at all. Jesus is your ticket in. Not your works or preparedness or good thoughts or intentions; just Jesus. He is ready to bring you in to His eternal wedding feast based upon nothing except His for-giveness for you. Bridegroom, may our eternal life be based on nothing but You. Amen.

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**MON**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 103—Getting What We Don’t Deserve

Why does David bless the Lord in this Psalm? Why do we? Are we blessing and praising God because of how majestic and powerful He is? Yes, but more. Who doesn’t have a god like that? What other religion out there doesn’t praise a god who is bigger than his followers? We have a compassionate Father. Our God knows that we are but dust, that He could wipe us off the face of the earth with a flick of His wrist and we would deserve it. But instead of treating us according to our sins, He forgives us. Instead of repaying us for our iniquities, He clears our debt and wipes the slate clean. We have a big God, but more, we have a loving and forgiving Father. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Amen.

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**TUE**

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11—What Do We Do While We Wait

Many look at the world and are sure that Christ is coming soon. He is! But “soon” also means waiting. Paul doesn’t write to us anything about times and seasons. He doesn’t need to, because it doesn’t matter. Oh, be awake and prepared, that is certain. But that means nothing more than to be one of the wise virgins that we talked about on Sunday. Our salvation belongs in the hands of Jesus, our Bridegroom. Whether He comes today or tomorrow or next millennium and whether we are awake or asleep, we have the promise that we will live with Him. So what do we do while we wait? Encourage each other, just like you are doing. Then stand next to your fellow Christian with faith and love around your breast and the hope of salvation covering your head. God, may we obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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**WED**

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 65:17-19—What Do We Know While We Wait

The Christian gets to do a funny thing while we wait for the coming of our Lord: Not only do we have the promise that He will come again and will bring about a new heaven and new earth and new body; but we may speak of it as if it is ours today. When God makes a promise it is as sure as done: and so we may delight in it as if it were already accomplished for and in us. Where is this new earth and new heaven? Right there, in the sure promise of God. Where is this new body I have been promised? Right there, in God’s Word pledged for you. Where is this new Adam of mine? Right there, standing next to the old. But the old will one day vanish just like the old earth and this fallen flesh of mine. Then I will enjoy all things new. Gracious Lord, may I rejoice in the new creation as if it were mine today. Amen.

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**THU**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 5:13-16—“Hide It Under A Bushel…”

As light we shine in the darkness. We do this so that others may see our good works and give glory to God. And this is important, for even though God doesn’t need our good works, our neighbor does. But Jesus here, in this “salty-lightness” talk, doesn’t just mean handing out sandwiches and shoveling your neighbor’s snow. It’s more than that! It’s about what you do when no one is looking. And the one who does this, can’t be deceiving. (And if truth be told, sometimes they are even done better by unbelievers.) No, here in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus wants us to be a light of the Gospel. The good works that will cause our neighbor to give glory to God are the preaching and teaching of Christ crucified and the forgiveness of sins. In this proclamation, the whole world may rejoice. Father, may we always be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Amen.

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**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** The Festival of St. Andrew/John 1:35-42a—We Have Found The Messiah

Andrew finds the Messiah and he tells his brother about it. What else could be done? This Jesus is the Anointed One, whom all of Israel has been waiting for. He is different than John the Baptist, for John is no Messiah, no Christ, no Lamb. But here, in Jesus, is the Messiah; and oddly enough He is a Lamb, He is the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Andrew knows everything he needs to. A Lamb doesn’t take a day sin by might and power, or an army or by the strength of His arm. No, the only way that a Lamb can deal with sin is to have its flesh torn open and its blood poured out. Now, perhaps this wasn’t the Messiah that Andrew and Peter were expecting (us either), but Jesus is the Christ of God, our Savior. He is the exact Messiah that we need. Lamb of God, take away our sin and the sin of the world. Amen.

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**SAT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 27—David Prays Our Prayer

Often times, in this Valley of Tears, we are surrounded by foes of every kind. Sin assails, death encroaches, the demons whisper and we are fearful. No one needs to. A Lamb doesn’t take a day sin by might and power, or an army or by the strength of His arm. No, the only way that a Lamb can deal with sin is to have its flesh torn open and its blood poured out. Now, perhaps this wasn’t the Messiah that Andrew and Peter were expecting (us either), but Jesus is the Christ of God, our Savior. He is the exact Messiah that we need. Lamb of God, take away our sin and the sin of the world. Amen.

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