PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK  Psalm 74:1-2, 19, 20-23
Have respect to Your coven/ nant, O Lord:*
oh, do not let the oppressed re/ turn ashamed!
Arise, O God, plead / Your own cause:*
do not forget the voice of Your / enemies.
O God, why have You cast us off for / ever?*
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your / pasture?
Remember Your congre/ gation,*
which You have pur- / chased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, which You / have redeemed—*
this Mount Zion where / You have dwelt.
Do not forget the life of Your poor / forever.*
Let the poor and needy / praise Your name.

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 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.
This week we will be looking at the distinction between the Law and the Gospel. We will see what Scripture tells us about not only righteousness but also that of service. How do we serve? More importantly, how are we served? We will see how Jesus is the example of both the servant and the one who walks in righteousness for our sakes. These are the topics for our consideration this week from the gracious and bountiful Word of our God.

**THEME OF THE WEEK:** Believing Love of All Others

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 10:25-37 – Being the Good Samaritan

This text is familiar to all of us. And why is that? It is a simple story that captures not our imaginations, but our hearts because we all desire to be like the Good Samaritan. We all want to think of ourselves as the one who would surely stop what we are doing to provide aid to someone in need. But how many times have we failed to do just that? How many times have we driven by a vehicle stopped on the side of the road or driven past someone begging at an interstate on-ramp? It turns out that we aren’t good Samaritans. Rather, we can see that in our sin, we have more in common with the poor man who was beaten and left for dead. And it is Jesus who comes and cleanses us and cares for us. O Lord, help me to see the love that You have for me, that I may show that love to my neighbor. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 119:97-104 (MEM) – Boasting in the Lord

These are arrogant words, aren’t they? If we heard our children speaking like this, we would surely correct them and talk about the value of humility. And yet, what is the Psalmist speaking about here? The Psalmist is not speaking about his own inherent goodness or how great he is. Rather, the Psalmist declares the value of keeping the things of God before us. Through faith, the Holy Spirit works by means of the Word to create in us a desire to be the people who would indeed hate every evil way. While we ought not go around extolling our virtues over and against others, we can rejoice in the goodness and love of God that we have received. Almighty God, do keep Your Law always before my eyes to call me to serve You in faith and righteousness that only You can give. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Galatians 3:15-22 – The Superior Gospel

Yesterday we rightly saw the value of rejoicing in the Law. Today we are pointed to that which is greater than the Law, the Gospel. The message of Jesus is the single most important message in all of history, but it can become something that we take for granted. When we do that, we have lost the ability to grasp the glory of Jesus. Jesus is the source of all of the promises of God’s love. Out of the love of God through Jesus, our Lord takes the role of the Good Samaritan to bind our wounds. He sets us on the path of righteousness. All of the good that we have received, we receive from the hand of Jesus. O Lord, I pray that You would hold Your glory ever before my eyes that my gaze and attention would not wander from You. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Galatians 3:15-22 – The Superior Gospel

O Lord, I pray that You would hold Your glory ever before my eyes that my gaze and attention would not wander from You. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 20:20-28 – Called to Serve

This account shows us that the very exemplar servant was our Lord Jesus. We have talked a lot this week about service and walking in the paths set for us. Let us never forget that it was Jesus Himself who came to serve us and, in so doing, perfectly walked the path of righteousness that our heavenly Father demands. We know that we will never be as perfect or as righteous as Jesus on our own. He gives us a share in His righteousness and in His perfection through faith. Jesus shares with us all that He has, just like the Good Samaritan shared what he had with the injured man. This is what our Lord has chosen to do for us. Almighty God, bless me that I may keep me eyes always fixed on He who has saved me and redeemed me. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Timothy 1:15-17 – Salvation and the Law

The Law is given for sinners, just like you and just like me. Through the Law, God makes His perfect will known for us and we see where He would have us tread. However, because we are sinners, the Law stands to always accuse us, reminding us of how we have failed. It is only through the light of Christ that we see the Law in a different way. We no longer see the Law as a list of things that we must accomplish, but it is an example of how we can show our appreciation to God for what He has done. In Christ, the threat of the Law is gone and is instead replaced with a joy and an eager heart to serve. When we focus on Jesus, the Law becomes much easier to properly see. O Lord, help me keep my eyes ever fixed on You, and in so doing, the rest of Your Word becomes clear to me as well. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 84 – The Rewards of Service

As we move on from this week after thinking about service and walking in the way that we should go, it is important for us to remember where this path that our Lord sets before us leads. It leads us into the Father’s house. Though it is a difficult path set with many dangers on all sides, the journey is worthwhile because, at the end of it, we are given a place in the presence of our God. No matter what place we may receive, it is a far greater reward than anything that the world or the devil may offer to us. Almighty God, keep me steadfast in this faith that I may come to the place that You have prepared for me and that I may continue to serve You into eternity. Amen.

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