



5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 54:4-5, 1-3, 7**

Behold, God is my / helper;*
 the Lord is with those who up- / hold my life.
 He will repay my enemies for their / evil.*
 Cut them off / in Your truth.
 Save me, O God, / by Your name,*
 and vindicate me / by Your strength.
 Hear my / prayer, O God;*
 give ear to the words / of my mouth.
 For strangers have risen up a- / gainst me,*
 they have not set God be- / fore them.
 He has delivered me out of all / trouble;*
 and my eye has seen its desire upon my / enemies.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Luke 12:34**
 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Jesus)

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK
 Let Your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Your humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK **One Thing’s Needful; Lord, This Treasure** TLH 366, LSB 536
 Johann H. Schroeder



1. One thing's needful; Lord this treasure
 Teach me highly to regard;
 All else, though it first give pleasure,
 Is a yoke that presses hard.
 Beneath it the heart is still fretting and striv-
 ing,
 No true, lasting happiness ever deriving.
 The gain of this one thing all loss can requite
 And teach me in all things to find true de-
 light.

6. Wilt thou find this one thing needful,
 Turn from all created things
 Unto Jesus and be heedful
 Of the blessed joy He brings.
 For where God and Man both in one are united,
 With God's perfect fullness the heart is de-
 lighted;
 There, there is the worthiest lot and the best,
 My One and my All and my Joy and my Rest.

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: Faithful Stewardship of Earthly Gifts

Within our vocations God entrusts gifts and duties to/for us. Daily our vocations demand actions, thoughts, and words as we respond to the circumstance in which we are engaged. To say it another way, each day our circumstances call us to respond. Through these readings, God's Word and Holy Spirit are working. They are enlightening and sanctifying us for our various vocations or "callings." God wishes to guide us by His Word toward that which, in the end, is good for us. That end is that we might be pressed into the image of Christ for our neighbors and those we love, whom God has put us in relation.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Luke 16:1-9 Being Cheap isn't a Virtue. Being Prudent is.

Being fiscally prudent with unrighteous wealth is important for Christians. Jesus endorses our use of finances and wealth to procure earthly friendships as days of trouble lie ahead. This is only one consequence of the broader approach Christians are to have toward money—we cannot serve two masters. Money, like reason, is to be used ministerially and under the governorship of the Word of God. Christians must be on guard to not pervert this distinction, but rather leverage their finances for the continued care and maintenance of the kingdom of God as it is present in their congregation and home. In short, give generously of your finances and don't be cheap and stingy toward God and neighbor. *God, be my Lord and not Mammon. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:65-72 (TETH) Afflictions are a Gift of Fatherly Care

Being afflicted to learn; adults convince themselves they move beyond such pedantic means for gaining wisdom. It is not so. God brings us low and makes us nothing in our vocations so that we might gain everything from His hand. This is very true for parents. Our children are our greatest gift, and through them God destroys our selfishness and makes us greater servants toward our neighbor. In each vocation God brings affliction. For David, God gave true enemies. For us, He might do the same. Whatever the case, God accomplishes His will to bring His people to nothing in their flesh so that they might have everything in the flesh and blood of Jesus. *When You send afflictions give me faith to trust in Your Goodness. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 10:6-13 The Way of Escape

St. Paul says something astounding: God will not give us more temptation than our ability but will provide a way of escape. The way of escape isn't THROUGH sin. A convincing lie the devil whispers is that we must go *through* sin to find relief and escape. Wrong. The escape is clear—talk to God, talk to your pastor, go to your parents, husband, wife, turn to Scripture or even a devoted Christian friend, the Elders of your Church—ANYTHING BUT SIN. God wants what is good for us. He doesn't want us to make the mistakes of Israel. Rather than humility and patience granted by the Word, Israel chose to find relief from their temporal circumstance through sin. *Lord, keep me from sin and destruction. Give me humility and life. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 29:10-13: Sacrifices of Thanksgiving

Being Christian is a primary vocation. Sacrifices of Thanksgiving are a response of our faith. This is, again, financial. However, David makes clear that his thankful mood and posture toward God is determined by God's continued providential care and benevolence. God is the boss of everything. This core conviction shapes David's daily demeanor towards his rule and reign. David's vocations are performed under God's tutelage and within the framework God has established. David is a servant—not a master. We, too, live in primary vocations established by God. Let us not struggle to be masters. But grow, like David, to love our place as servants to God in His expanding rule and reign. *Oh God, grant me love of service. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:32-48, Our Hearts, God's Kingdom and Promise

Jesus' promise is that it is God's desire to give us His kingdom. This promise gives us hope. This hope is foundational for our daily lives. Our daily lives are rooted in this promise, which anticipates its fulfillment in Jesus' return and judgement. This judgement is not so scary when, with faith and prudence, we order our days according to God's Word and promises. As Jesus says, "My Yoke is easy." Jesus' desire is that our hearts and minds be consolidated and mettled. If we are wrapped up in the aims and ends of this world, our flesh, or the devil's whispers—we lose everything. But, if our eyes and hearts are ever on the will and desire of our Lord and Master, we gain everything. *Dear Lord, daily give me Jesus so I have everything. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 1:3-14: Guard the Deposit

Guarding the deposit of faith and doctrine is the day job of pastors, and the daily duty of all Christians. Here, Paul strongly endorses a primary duty for pastors: being loving and self-controlled. Yet, His aim is not only for pastors. All Christians in the church are to be wrapped up in the power of love and self-control. In this way the Church and Ministry are united and symbiotic. God does not want His church endlessly assaulted and abused by humanity's pernicious penchant for power struggles rooted in fear. Yelling, screaming, and cussing in voter's meetings is a good example of WHAT GOD DOES NOT WANT—SIN. God wants us to guard the GOOD deposit. *Oh God, give me love and self-control in accord with Your Word and Will. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 139: God is the Boss of Everything

A very basic distinction we must maintain is: God is the Boss of Everything. This is perhaps a great prayer for us to say, daily. Our daily lives are lives of contingency and agency. Nothing we do, nothing we are, is apart from God and His providence. This distinction and conviction order our opening steps in the morning. This faith and conviction order our relationships to God and each other. We pray, and live, and love, and have our marriages, and raise our children, and go to Church, and do our jobs, and care and build, all under the guidance and governorship of God, our Heavenly Father. He is All-in-All. He is the Boss of Everything. *Oh God, keep me from self-deceit. Keep my eyes on You and Your decrees and providence. Amen.*

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