

“The Discipleship Preserved and Perfected by the Spirit”



**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 27:1-2, 3-5**  
 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom / shall I fear?\*  
 The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I / be afraid?  
 When the wicked came a- / gainst me,\*  
 my enemies and foes, they stum- / bled and fell.  
 Though an army may encamp a- / gainst me,\*  
 my heart / shall not fear;  
 though war should rise a- / gainst me,\*  
 in this I will be / confident.  
 One thing I have desired of the Lord, that / will I seek:\*  
 that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days / of my life,  
 for in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pa- / vilion;\*  
 he shall set me high up- / on a rock.

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Matthew 16:16**  
 “Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”

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

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK  
 Grant, O Lord, we implore You, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Your governance, that Your Church may joyfully serve You in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

**9** PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

**10** SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK TLH 235, LSB 913  
**O Holy Spirit, Enter In** Michael Shirmer



1. O Holy Spirit, enter in  
 And in our hearts Thy work begin,  
 Thy temple deign to make us;  
 Sun of the soul, Thou Light Divine,  
 Around and in us brightly shine,  
 To joy and gladness wake us.  
 That we, In Thee  
 Truly living, To The giving  
 Prayer unceasing,  
 May in love be still increasing.

5. Thy heavenly strength sustain our heart  
 That we may act the valiant part  
 With Thee as our Reliance,  
 Be Thou our Refuge and our Shield  
 That we may never quit the field,  
 But bid all foes defiance.  
 Descend, Defend  
 From all errors and earth's terrors;  
 Thy salvation  
 Be our constant consolation.

**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: **The Discipleship Preserved and Perfected by the Spirit**

The strength of Jesus is made perfect in weakness. This is true in His suffering and death on the cross, and it is true in His care for us. Our lives in this fallen world are marked with suffering and affliction, sin and rebellion, but the Lord is with us with forgiveness, kindness, mercy, and truth. He is the Christ, the Savior of sinners, and our hope in the midst of darkness.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 6:36-42, Merciful Like Jesus**

Be like your Teacher (v. 40). Be like Jesus. And how is He? How does He act toward us? The text captures this. He is not harsh, angry, or vengeful. He is merciful (v. 36). He does not condemn, but pardons (v. 37). He gives in abundance, until the gifts are spilling over (v. 38). He is gracious and longsuffering, even unto the death on the cross. Our lives, then, are shaped by the life that Jesus gave for us. His mercy, His steadfast love, His kindness captures us. They capture our conscience with the forgiveness of our sins. And they capture our words and deeds as we live in mercy and love towards those around us. *Lord Jesus, thank You for Your abundant pardon and mercy. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 1:57-80, The Nativity of John, the Last and Greatest Prophet**

After nine months and eight days the Lord lets Zacharias speak again, and he sings the beautiful *Benedictus* to commemorate the birth of the last prophet: his son John. Could we focus on verse 77? We remember John as the sever preacher of the Law, thundering on the banks of the Jordan. But Zacharias shows the Lord's purpose in this preaching: "to give His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins." Jesus, the Sin-Forgiver, was near, and John was preparing a way for this good news. The knowledge of salvation is knowing that your sins are forgiven, atoned by the blood and suffering of the Son of God. This is the tender mercy of our God, and in it we rejoice. *O Lord, give us the knowledge of salvation in forgiving our sins. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **Romans 8:18-23, Not Worth Comparing**

How do you consider your sufferings? Most of us consider them a lot. Especially if you find your self in one of those conversations where one person's sufferings are being compared to another's. Paul is our teacher. "I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Not even worthy to compare. Not worth mentioning. Don't even bother talking about them. In comparison to the glory on the way, the afflictions in this life are nothing at all. Paul's eyes, it seems, are blinded by the light of the resurrection, and he can't see the trouble that is all around him. May God give us the same disregard for the troubles of this present time. *Amen. Come Lord Jesus. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Isaiah 58:6-12, Fasting that the LORD Chooses**

The LORD has a different idea about fasting. We think of fasting as not eating, but the Lord points our efforts and suffering away from ourselves toward the service of the neighbor. If you want to suffer, the LORD says, don't skip a meal, but stop oppressing people, give something to eat to the hungry, find homes for the homeless and clothing for the naked. Rather than becoming curators of our own holiness, wander around and find someone to help. So the Lord takes the focus off ourselves, and pours our lives out in service to the neighbor. And the Lord amplifies this service with His promised help. "Then you will call, and the LORD will answer." *Lord, give us the heart and life to serve and bless our neighbor, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 5:43-48, Enemy Love**

Even the heathen love their friends. You are not a heathen; you are a Christian. The love the Lord requires of you is more. "Love your enemies." That is hard, but it is not something that the Lord is unwilling to do first. In fact, this is exactly the business of the cross. "While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans 5:10). We were God's enemies, but there He is, bleeding and dying and praying and forgiving us, and winning a place for us in eternal life. Jesus is the lover of His enemies, the Savior of those who persecute Him, the One who prays for you, and teaches you to pray: *Father, forgive my enemies, they know not what they do. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Romans 14:7-17, Your Neighbor's Judgment Day**

"We will *all* stand before the judgment seat of God." Paul's emphasis is on the "all." We look forward to that day, knowing that our sins are put away, that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, that the crown and life eternal awaits, not because of our works and efforts, but because of the resurrection of Jesus. Paul, then, wants us to live and serve our neighbor with an eye to their judgment. We don't need to judge them, the Lord will take care of that, but we are careful to not put an obstacle in their way, so that they don't fall. Your neighbor's judgment day is your business, and the Lord gives us opportunity to help them to stand in the confidence of the Lord's mercy, and hear, "Well done." *Lord, may Your kingdom be for us and our neighbor righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 16:13-20, The Rock that Destroys Hell**

The Father in heaven has revealed it to Peter and to us: "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." This knowledge, this confession, is the rock upon which the church is established. This is the faith that destroys the gates of hell, overcomes the world, and opens the doors to heaven. Jesus alone brings the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. His is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. But this kingdom and power and glory were hidden under suffering and the cross. "From that time Jesus began to tell His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things." It was necessary for the Christ to suffer many things before He entered glory. But now He sits in glory, and He will bring us there soon. *Lord Jesus, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Amen.*

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