



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

October 23, 2022 A.D.

20th Sunday after Pentecost

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the psalm and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm

(From Psalm 56)

When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.
In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?
I must perform my vows to you, O God;
I will render thank offerings to you.
For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God in the light of life.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(Luke 18:8-17)

⁹[Jesus] also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹⁵Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁷Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Sermon – † *Finding Faith* † (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

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.

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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Entrusting into God's Care

- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Elaine Cook - recovering after cataract surgery
- Doug Knutson - recovering after surgery
- Betty Hein - hospice care at home
- Lorelei Hackbardt - upcoming surgery 10/24

- Philip Hackbardt - upcoming tumor treatment 11/3
- Joyce Fritz - recovering at Heritage rehab
- Donna Birkicht - health issues
- Trevor (son of Mike and Dawn Thomas) - recovering at home
- Dave Dohrmann - recovering after surgery
- Sam (friend of Carol Grimminger) - cancer treatment
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Faye Sieck - relief from pain
- Abi Clark - health issues
- Norm Rutz - cancer treatment
- Angela Yuza - recovering after surgery
- Lee Rathje - health issues
- Cindy Broadwater - relief of foot pain

Homebound

- Nadine Wax - at home

Mourning, friends and family of

- Keith (uncle of Kristi Montague) - died 10/12
- Kitty (relative of Doug Knutson) - died 10/2
- Erika (friend of Linda Patten) - died 9/30

Serving Our Country

- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, deployed to Poland
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - National Guard

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, You are always more ready to hear than we to pray and always ready to give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour down on us the abundance of Your mercy; forgive us those things of which our conscience is afraid; and give us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask except by the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **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.**

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



✠ *Finding Faith* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There are simply no works, (not the works of unbelievers, not the works of “good” people, not even the good works of Abraham or St. Paul that flowed from true faith), that can earn eternal salvation. Anyone who trusts in their own deed, anyone who trusts in themselves to be saved from sin and eternal damnation, will most certainly be lost forever. St. Paul writes in Galatians 2:16, “...we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.” So, being that we can only be saved by faith in Jesus Christ, is it any wonder that just before our reading today Jesus asks, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth” (Luke 18:8)? And now in our reading, the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, Jesus shows us what this type of saving faith looks like.

Two men are in the Temple. They are there praying in the presence of God. And one of them, a Pharisee, is praying a prayer of thanks. The only problem is, he seems to be thanking God for the gift of himself! This Pharisee, this religious leader of God’s people, thanks God that he is so much better than some other Jews. He then goes on to tell God about all of his good works, that truth be told, do go far beyond anything that would have been required. But remember, Luke tells us Jesus teaches this parable to “some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt” (Luke 18:9). Therefore, despite the Pharisee thinking he is better than so many others, and despite his multitude of good works, we are told that he was not justified before God.

Contrast this to other man who Jesus says was justified and therefore, must have had faith. He wasn’t a Pharisee. He was a tax collector. Now tax collectors at this time were looked at as the scum of the earth. Like many governments even today, the Roman Empire made its money by collecting taxes. But the Romans didn’t let people figure out what their taxes were themselves and then mail them in by April 15th. Rather, the Roman Empire auctioned off the authority to collect taxes for huge sums of money. That’s how the Empire filled its’ treasury. Then, those who bought that authority would go out and squeeze whatever they could out of the people in order to get a return on their investment. But many times these people wouldn’t want to get their hands dirty with this, so they would hire locals to do their dirty work, who would themselves collect as much as they could from each tax payer. This last position was the tax collectors that we read of in the

Bible. And being how corrupt this whole system was, it's easy to see why the tax collectors were so despised.

But shockingly, here was one of them in the Temple praying. And rather than giving a self-centered prayer of thanks like the Pharisee, this tax collector is crying out for mercy. His plea is sincere because we are told that he can't even lift up his eyes to heaven. We're told that he beat his chest in lament, (something that's only done elsewhere in the New Testament after Jesus is killed [Luke 23:48]). He confesses not only that he is "a" sinner, but in the original Greek he says he is "the" sinner. He's like Paul in I Timothy 1:15 when Paul writes, "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.*" This tax collector knows that he is not as good as the Pharisee. He knows that he is not as good as anyone for that matter. And he doesn't trust in himself. He trusts in God's mercy to save him and therefore...he is the one whom Jesus says went home justified.

That is what saving faith really looks like. It's not trusting in your own works, even though they may be really, really good works! They may even be done because you love Jesus. But if you trust in those works to justify yourself; if you think that you are righteous before God because of your church attendance and your tithes and offerings; and certainly if those works cause you to treat others with contempt - than you might have faith, but it is not saving faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Rather you have faith in YOU as your savior, And that, quite simply is idolatry.

But the faith that the Son of Man will be looking for when He returns (Luke 18:8) is not faith in one's own works, rather it is faith that is built upon the knowledge of one's own sin. With faith in Jesus there are no excuses. There's no ignoring this part of God's law that we don't like. Or changing that part of God's holy law to make our selves look or feel better. True faith simply begins with our acknowledgement of our sin, which can only come about from knowing the law of God.

But even that is not enough. For in addition to knowing our sin, we must also know the consequences of our sin. A person who knows they have sinned in the eyes of the Lord, but believes that God will simply forget about their sin or give them the proverbial "slap on the wrist", will believe they have no need of Jesus. They'll take their chances in eternity without Jesus, trusting once again in themselves. But when one knows that they have sinned, and the price of that sin is an eternal separation from God and suffering in Hell where "*the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*" (Mark 9:48), then and only then can true faith be found. Then and only then can we join, not with the Pharisee of our text, but with the tax collector to cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" and be justified.

Trusting in God and not ourselves, we know we will be justified. We know that whatever sins of arrogance, pride, contempt, or idolatry we may have committed, they have been forgiven and covered with the blood of Christ. Because in the greatest instance of the exalted being humbled, the Son of God left the throne of heaven, took upon Himself our human nature so that He could willingly die on the cross. And He did this because of His love for His Creation. He humbled Himself on the cross so that all of us who humble ourselves before him will not just be forgiven – but be exalted ourselves. This is often called the Great Reversal of the Christian faith. This is the love that God has for each one of us. This is the work of Jesus Christ, and it is the only work that saves us from our sin. Amen.

