



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

August 20, 2023 A.D.

The 12th 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 other parts of the service 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 28

The LORD is the strength of his people;

he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

To you, O LORD, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me,
lest, if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.

Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help,
when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.

Blessèd be the LORD!

For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;
my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

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 Nicene Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(Matthew 15:21-28)

²¹Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²²And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." ²³But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." ²⁴He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven
and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of
God,**

begotten of His Father before all worlds,

God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,

**begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;**

**who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;**

and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered and was buried.

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.**

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. 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

- Andrea - (relative of Steggalls) teaching in Bulgaria
- David - (friend of Angela Yuza) cancer
- Students and staff as they return to school
- Michelle Hedtke - employment search
- Francis (friend of Larsons) - hospice care
- Those in nursing homes/care centers
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Charlie Stoelting - health issues
- Donna Stranathan - recovering after surgery
- Natalia (friend of Karstens) - cancer
- Wendell (friend of Larsons) - health issues
- Cindy (friend of Larsons) - hospitalization
- Lucie (7-yr-old relative) - seizures, in drug induced coma
- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering after fall
- Prudy Petersen - recovering at home
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Shirley Kellogg - Terrace Glen Village, Marion

Mourning, friends and family of

- Priscilla (sister of Prudy Peterson) - died 8/13
- Alta Dort (former Bethany member) - died 7/14

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - Army, deployed to Poland
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting Father, You give Your children many blessings even though we are undeserving. In every trial and temptation grant us steadfast confidence in Your loving-kindness and mercy; through 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.



✠ Great Faith ✠

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

Among the many challenges that Christians face today is the notion that God does not care how we live our lives. Of course, very few Christians will ever admit this, however we see almost all Christians acting like this at some point or another. The way it looks or plays out is something like this: a Christian knows that she is justified by faith. Perhaps she even thinks of Paul writing to the Romans where he says, “*For we hold that one is justified by faith, apart from works of the Law*” (Romans 3:28). So, it is certainly true and even the essence of our faith, that we are forgiven and saved by believing or trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sin. However, many Christians then use this biblical truth as an excuse to ignore or, live in ignorance of God’s, will for us. Again, few Christians will say that they are purposefully sinning with the intent to confess those sins later on. But what seems to be happening more and more often, is that people don’t care what God says in His Law, because we’re justified by faith. So they don’t care to think about the Law, or they simply ignore it when it comes into conflict with a desire from within.

And so why bother learning the commandments and how they apply to our lives today when it is true that we can break any or all of them, and still be forgiven? If I want something in life, why should the Law of God stop me from using any means at my disposal from getting it? If I should sin while I satisfy my desires, won't God forgive me because I believe in Jesus? With this kind of logic, the door has been opened, even in the church, to do whatever it is that we want. To, in essence, do away the Law of God and make ourselves out to be tiny little false gods.

I say this because of our Scripture reading today. In Matthew we read of a Canaanite woman who has her prayers answered by Jesus. Because she was a Canaanite, and because Jesus says, "*O woman, great is your faith*", this has caused some to believe, that it does not matter what you do in life, just believe in Jesus and He'll take care of you. You see, the Canaanites were one of the biggest enemies of God's people in the OT and it wasn't because they were on the land that God had promised to Abraham. In Deuteronomy 20:17 God commands the Israelites to completely destroy the Canaanites. Every man, woman, and even child and animal were to be killed because of their sinfulness. This sounds awful, and it must have been, but God says this was to be done for the wicked things the Canaanites had done themselves and so that the Israelites would not fall into the same temptation they had.

And now, here in our Scripture reading, this Canaanite woman comes to Jesus. Her daughter is being tormented or possessed by a demon. And if you have ever had a sick child or a child who is in trouble, maybe addicted to drugs or gambling, or just a child who has made bad choices in life, you know that this woman has tried everything she could to help her daughter. And somehow, she has heard of Jesus and she comes to Him asking – pleading – begging for Him to help. Begging for Jesus to have mercy.

But Jesus does not answer her. So the disciples beg Him to send her away. This of course, echoes the reaction the disciples had when hungry crowds came to Jesus in Matthew 14. But there, the disciples wanted Jesus to send crowds away so that they could find something to eat on their own. Perhaps having learned their lesson, here they ask Jesus to send the woman away after helping her. But Jesus responds, "*I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*".

Hearing this, most people would turn away. But the woman persists in her pleading. And if Jesus' words to her seemed harsh before, now they seem even worse! "*It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs*", is what Jesus says. And how does the woman respond? She responds like someone who has just seen Jesus feed 5000 people with a few loaves of bread and a few fish, with 12 baskets left over.

Of course it is true, Jesus is the Messiah from the line of David. He was sent to lost sheep of Israel. But she knows that with Jesus, there is always enough mercy for everyone, even a Canaanite. How does she know this? The same way the Magi knew to come and worship Jesus at His birth. The same way the Centurion knew He was the Son of God at His crucifixion. This woman knew who Jesus was because it had been revealed to her from God and she had faith. Great faith, as Jesus would say and He healed her daughter that very hour.

When Jesus heals this Canaanite's daughter because she has "faith", does this mean that we can do anything we want, even the idolatry and murder that the Canaanites were infamous for, as long as we believe? Of course not! As James writes, "*For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.*" (James 2:26). Jesus could see into this woman's heart. But he also saw her persistent cry for mercy to the Lord, the One who can always give more than enough mercy and hope.

Today, only God can truly look into any of our hearts to see our faith. And it is through that faith, and only through faith in Jesus, that we are forgiven all of our sin and saved by God's

mercy. When we have broken God's Law we are forgiven through our faith. When we put our hope and trust in any other thing besides God, we are forgiven through our faith.

But if Jesus sees faith in our hearts, then He and those around us, will also see our good works. Good works that are not dictated by our own desires, or by whatever "feels right" according to our sinful flesh and our sinful minds, but good works that God commands in His Word. Perhaps coming to Him in prayer in times of need. Perhaps it is loving God with all of our hearts. Perhaps it is loving our neighbor as ourselves. For most of us it is probably all of those things.

And so let us rejoice and sing that Jesus is our Savior and that we are saved through our faith in Him. But let us not neglect what we are now called to do as His forgiven people. Let us love God and love our neighbors, not so that God will love us. But because He already does. Amen.

